

# 10 suggestions on becoming an Arctic-minded leader

1. Don't focus exclusively on the Arctic region, because it's just one part of a larger globe (galaxy and universe). You need to know and consider the larger context.
2. Embrace and explore new ideas, complexity, inconsistencies, the unknown, and even the unknowable. You must commit to being a life-long student.
3. While the military may teach you otherwise, my mom taught me to question authority (with her caveat, "but not mine"). Just because someone says something, doesn't make it true.
4. Although it's tempting to assess issues or situations as black or white, they rarely are, and deeper understanding and appreciation comes from wrestling in the grey.

*"America has no permanent friends or enemies, only interests."* – Henry Kissinger

5. Be curious and read broadly, from credible sources. Consume info and news, but also opinions, including those you personally disagree with. Read and study deeply, in certain topics, to become a subject matter expert.

6. A selected, personal reading list that's shape my views:

- “The Thousand-Mile War: WWII in Alaska and the Aleutians,” by Brian Garfield
- “The Firecracker Boys,” by Dan O’Neil
- “50 Miles from Tomorrow,” by Willy Hensley
- “Coming into the Country,” by John McPhee
- “The Whale and the Supercomputer,” by Charles Wolforth
- “Billion-Dollar Fish: The Untold Story of Alaska Pollock,” by Kevin Bailey
- Anything by Seth Kantner, such as “Ordinary Wolves” or “Shopping for Porcupine,” or his opinion pieces in the Anchorage Daily News.
- Publications from Kawerak’s Social Science Program (including those co-authored by Julie Raymond-Yakoubian)
- “The Ice at the End of the World: An Epic Journey into Greenland’s Buried Past and our Perilous Future,” by Jon Gertner.
- “States of Knowledge: The Co-Production of Science & the Social Order,” by Sheila Jasanoff
- “Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry,” by Frances Widdowson and Albert Howard
- “Who Owns the Arctic?: Understanding Sovereignty Disputes in the North, by Mike Byers.

7. Excerpts from “The End of Intelligence,” by Gen. Michael Hayden, *New York Times*, 4/28/18.

“To adopt post-truth thinking is to depart from Enlightenment ideas, dominant in the West since the 17th century, that value experience and expertise, the centrality of fact, humility in the face of complexity, the need for study and a respect for ideas.”

“In this post-truth world, intelligence agencies are in the bunker with some unlikely mates: journalism, academia, the courts, law enforcement and science — all of which, like intelligence gathering, are evidence-based.”

“Intelligence shares a broader duty with these other truth-tellers to preserve the commitment and ability of our society to base important decisions on our best judgment of what constitutes objective reality.”

Hayden cited historian Timothy Snyder’s pamphlet, “On Tyranny.” “To abandon facts is to abandon freedom. If nothing is true, then no one can criticize power because there is no basis upon which to do so. Post-truth is pre-fascism.”

8. Early in your career, specialize in one or more topics or skills, so you can make valuable contributions, but as you advance in your career, consider becoming a generalist, because some of the best ideas emerge from combining insights from fields and disciplines that don't seem connected. I've always been impressed by AK Native and American Indian perspectives on connectivity to their communities, to their ecosystems, and to the physical and spiritual world around them.

**9. Climate change. It's real, and it's primarily caused by human activity. Let's move on to what we're going to do about it.**

10. The five rules that US Navy Capt. George Newton, a submariner, taught me about the Arctic operations:

- Nothing ever works the same in the Arctic.
- Always buy a roundtrip ticket.
- Never miss a meal.
- Never give up a reservation south.
- An Arctic Expert is one that has been there less than twice or more than 20 times.