

MICHAEL J. DESA
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SUMMARY

Professional and initiative-based leader with seven years of leadership and managerial experience within the U.S. Marine Corps. Practiced international agricultural land owner and foreign investor. Published author and skilled communicator. Experienced in establishing and achieving organizational goals, leading teams across diverse departments in chaotic environments, and directing large-scale, highly visible operations to resolve complex issues while maximizing organizational performance that positively impact the bottom line. Capable of translating leadership vision into actionable goals within financial constraints.

KEY QUALIFICATIONS

- Organizational Leadership
- Project Management
- Financial and Market Analysis
- Agriculture
- Strategic Planning/International Affairs
- Personnel Education & Training
- Communication
- Latin American Agricultural Investing

EXPERIENCE

Organizational Leadership

- Served as the Chief of Staff for a diverse 250-personnel organization, accounted for US\$35M in itemized assets, and supervised a geographical area up to 350 square kilometers. Directed and coordinated organization cohesion across logistical, administrative, and operational lines for the organization.
- Developed and executed independent joint-forces training programs for U.S. and foreign militaries, gaining the attention of the American Embassy in Jordan and dignitaries in Djibouti.

Project Management

- Planned and executed ten instructional exercises for 1800 personnel. Coordinated logistics and instructional requirements for 920 hours of training over a 23-month period.
- Forecasted, developed, and implemented 8 months of training to prepare 250-personnel for deployment to Afghanistan, resulting in 100% unit readiness and mission success during combat operations
- Budgeted and allocated over \$60,000 for infrastructure projects for the Government of Afghanistan.

Strategy Planning/International Affairs

- Instrumental in the establishment of the Marine Corps' first Enhanced Advisor Unit, an emerging organizational structure concept that maximized mentorship to the Afghan National Security. This model was adopted as the ideal mentorship organization across all Marine forces in Afghanistan.
- Advised senior and foreign supervisors on curriculum development leading to instructional packages with refined learning objectives, more effective learning environments, and efficiencies in resource utilization and management.

Personnel Education/Training & Communication

- Presented over 70 hours of formal lecture to classes that ranged from 80 to 250 students and led over 400 hours of small-unit field training events.
- Hand-picked to implement multiple higher-level organizational policies, directly impacting the direction of an 800-personnel unit.

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

Foreign Investing/Financial Analysis

- Earned nearly 20% ROI from the sale of property in Ecuador in just over two years.
- Partner in the ownership of a fully-operational, mixed agricultural investment in San Rafael, Argentina.
- Designed, built, and executed a 6-month, 6-country investment research trip to Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay. Conducted over 100 unique agricultural site visits in more than 50 different regions in six countries. Performed financial reviews on over 12 of these opportunities.
- Spanish – Professional working proficiency.

EMPLOYMENT

- 2009 – 2010: Infantry Officer, Platoon Commander of 43 personnel, USMC
- 2010 – 2011: Unit Chief of Staff of 250 personnel, USMC, ranked 1st of 27 peers
- 2011 – 2012: Organization Operations Chief of Staff of 800 personnel, USMC
- 2012 – 2014: Instructor Staff at Infantry Officer Course & The Basic School, USMC, ranked top 10% of 96 hand-selected peers
- 2014 – 2015: Travel Journalist/Blogger, Huffington Post
- 2016 – Present: Owner/Founder of AGD Consulting. U.S.-based company offering strategic advisory services and customized due diligence trips for investors seeking an agricultural-based investment in Latin America
- 2017 – Present: Associate with AgriThority.

EDUCATION

- EXPEDITIONARY WARFARE SCHOOL: Professional education focused on strategic development, problem solving on an organizational level, and decision-making amongst uncertainty.
- U.S.M.C, ENTRY-LEVEL OFFICER TRAINING & THE BASIC SCHOOL: Graduated in top 1%.
- TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY: Bachelor of Science Agricultural Engineering, Marine Corps Four-Year Scholarship recipient, and Society of American Military Engineers Scholarship recipient.

PUBLICATIONS

- DeSa, J. Michael, “The Fray in Our Institutional Fabric: Why we must address a cultural slip in the ethics of our Corps,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, 14 (December 2014).
- DeSa, J. Michael, “7 Countries, 7 Months, 3 Kids – A Search for a Simpler Life”, *Huffington Post Travel*, January 21, 2015. 3:55pm EST. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-desa/the-southern-americas-7-c_b_6445668.html.
- DeSa, J. Michael, “Top 5 mistakes new investors make in LatAm agri”, *Agri Investor*, August 29, 2016, 8:30EST. <https://www.agriinvestor.com/top-5-mistakes-new-investors-make-in-latam-agri/>.
- DeSa, J. Michael, Wilfred, Morren, Ganley, Monica, “The Case for Ag Investments in South America”, *Global AgInvesting News*, April 24, 2016, 9:15EST. <http://www.globalaginvesting.com/case-ag-investment-south-america/>.
- DeSa, J. Michael, “Agriculture as an Asset Class”, *Global AgInvesting News*, July 11, 2017, 9:00EST. <http://www.globalaginvesting.com/agriculture-asset-class/>.

- DeSa, J. Michael, “Agriculture in Panama – The Investment Landscape and Opportunities”, *Global AgInvesting News*, August 7, 2017. <http://www.globalaginvesting.com/agriculture-panama-investment-landscape-opportunities/>.
- DeSa, J. Michael, “Is Potash Rising from the Investment Ashes?”, *Global AgInvesting News*, August 24, 2017, 10:00EST. <http://www.globalaginvesting.com/potash-rising-investment-ashes/>.