

JOE POLANIN
Captain, U.S. Navy (retired)
Founder and CEO, The Alaka'i Leadership Group, LLC

Joe deployed around the world frequently for combat operations, has served and lived in over 75 countries, and was competitively promoted to the top 1% of senior leaders during a 30-year U.S. Navy career in Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). He has more than 23 years as a successful CEO and COO inspiring highly specialized, globally integrated organizations to exceed expectations, defeat complex threats, and succeed in high-risk environments despite every obstacle. The largest enterprise for which he had ultimate responsibility was over 3,900 people spanning three continents, 69 countries, 19 business units, and an \$847M annual budget. Joe led several successful global enterprise transformations and reorganizations that endure, the largest was over 123K people and a \$79.8B fiscal value, and completed advanced leader development professional education valued at over \$2M.

After transitioning from the Navy in 2020, Joe and his daughters founded *The Alaka'i Leadership Group, LLC*, a unique Strategic Accelerator that delivers fractional C-suite leadership through a proprietary methodology that integrates best practices from the battlefield to the boardroom seamlessly. Today, they support rapidly growing companies in six industries whose collective earnings are projected at \$4.5B over the next five years. Joe is a strategist and mentor for several Veteran service organizations, an advisory board member for two explosive technology startups, COO of Remarkable Reasons – a Tampa, FL nonprofit ecosystem, President of the Board of The Veterans Ranch – a nonprofit dedicated to ending Veteran suicide, and was recognized as the Top Executive Global Strategy Leader of the Year 2023 by the International Association of Top Professionals.

From 2003 through 2007, Joe demonstrated unmatched change leadership acumen that earned him by-name selection and recognition from senior Generals and Admirals (CEOs/COOs) at five global corporate headquarters. He designed and implemented lasting transformations that increased effectiveness, improved morale, and saved over \$300M while delivering X-factor results. Between 2007 and 2016, Joe learned that the crucible of combat magnifies a leader's good and bad qualities. As a calm, resilient, and compassionate senior leader of an elite U.S. Navy EOD Mobile Unit, Counter Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Task Force, Major Expeditionary Combat Task Force, and Deputy Commander of a Special Operations Regional Enterprise, he has led 1,000+ successful combat and counter insurgency operations across the Middle East and Africa. Scores of Warriors and units under his Command were decorated for valor and meritorious service in combat. Despite tremendous adversity and often inheriting units with low morale, poor performance standards, and unethical behavior, Joe fixed those problems quickly and inspired loyalty and admiration during over 10 years in Command/CEO, the pinnacle of Navy leadership, which more than 96% of Officers do not achieve. He cares deeply about the people whom he serves — the heart and soul of every profession.

In 2016, Joe was selected from the military's elite top 1% to advise the President of the United States, Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, top U.S. military and diplomatic leaders in global operations for 412,000+ people and a \$518B annual budget. He led 300+ personnel in developing and implementing strategic military responses for the President during increased provocations by North Korea, which significantly reduced their hostilities and opened the door for historic diplomacy. He was hand-picked to represent the military persistently at the National Security Council during a 300%+ increase in operational tempo to enforce United Nations Security Council resolutions for North Korea.

By leveraging his vast experiences with 82+ client relationships in 17+ sectors, Joe has focused his consulting practice on three interdependent pillars of excellence: 1) Developing and implementing corporate vision, 2) Enacting comprehensive strategies that deploy all organizational capabilities to achieve that vision and 3) Mobilizing and inspiring talented people to exceed expectations, live the vision daily, accomplish strategic milestones early and under budget.

Joe was the Valedictorian of Carteret High School's class of 1986 and the first student in the school's history to be appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, MD where he earned a BS in History, Russian language minor in 1990. He earned an MBA with honors in 2007 from Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, AZ; and an MA in Strategic Security Studies as the Distinguished Graduate (#1 of 76) of the 2014 Combating Terrorism Fellowship at the College of International Security Affairs, National Defense University, Washington, DC. Joe wrote, "*Defeating Violent Radical Islamism*," a precis of his MA thesis, published in U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, October 2016. Joe compiled the 11 Rules of Leadership, and The Principles of Winning Operations, distilled from 30+ years of best practices and lessons learned leading through crises. He is a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell Air Force Base, AL and the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, VA. His personal honors include the Defense Superior Service Medal (three awards), Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Combat Action Ribbon (two awards), various unit & campaign awards, the Delta Mu Delta Honor Society for business leaders, and a Department of State commendation for transformational diplomacy. Joe resides in Tampa, FL with his wife of 29 years, Deanne and their daughters Kiana and Sydney.

[Joe Polanin LinkedIn](#)