Colonel Leon "Lee" Ellis, USAF (Ret)

For additional information such as book cover graphics or high-resolution photos of Lee, please visit **LeadingWithHonor.com/Media/Public-Relations**

For sample presentations and media interviews, please visit **LeadingWithHonor.com/Media/Video**

Military Biography

A native of Commerce, Georgia, Colonel Lee Ellis graduated from the University of Georgia in 1965 as a Distinguished Graduate of Air Force ROTC. He received his pilot wings in August 1966 at Moody AFB, GA and was assigned to fly the F-4C Phantom fighter-bomber. In 1967 Colonel Ellis was assigned to Danang Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, where he flew 68 combat missions with 53 over North Vietnam. On November 7, 1967, he was shot down, captured and held as a prisoner of war for more than five years.

After repatriation in March 1973, he returned to flying duties with increasing positions of leadership. His assignments included duty as a T-38 instructor pilot, flight commander and section commander at Moody AFB GA and Randolph AFB TX, (560 FTS). At Randolph AFB, he also served as chief of flight standardization and evaluation (12th FTW), ATC staff officer, and flying squadron commander of the 560th FTS. After graduating from the Air War College in 1983, he served as Vice-Commandant Squadron Officer School (SOS) and Commander AFROTC Det. 160 (PAS) at the Univ. of Georgia. He retired as a USAF Colonel on February 1, 1990, completing 25 years of service.

Colonel Ellis is a command pilot whose decorations include the Silver Star with one Oak Leaf Cluster; the Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster; the Bronze Star with Valor Device; the Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters; the Purple Heart; the Air Medal with eight Oak Leaf Clusters; and the Prisoner of War Medal. Lee is also a 2014 inductee into the Georgia Military Veterans Hall of Fame and the 2015 DAR Medal of Honor Recipient for a lifetime of patriotic service as a military officer and spokesman for leading with honor.

Colonel Ellis is founder and President of Leadership Freedom® LLC, serving for more than fifteen years as a nationally recognized leadership coach, author, and expert presenter. He has authored or co-authored five books and two workbooks on leadership and career development. His award-winning 2023 book is entitled *Captured by Love: Inspiring True Romance Stories from Vietnam POWs.* His award-winning book, *Leading with Honor: Leadership Lessons from the Hanoi Hilton* has won book-of-the-year awards and was selected in 2013 for the USAF Chief of Staff Professional Reading List. Colonel Ellis and his wife Mary reside in the Atlanta GA area and have four grown children and six grandchildren.

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Post-Military Accomplishments

RESEARCHER/DEVELOPER

As the Director of Career/Life Pathways from 1990 – 1998, Lee led the development team that researched, developed, and validated *Career Direct®,* a vocational assessment package and two personality assessments with software applications. From 1998 – 2008, he was responsible for product development of three more behavioral and leadership assessments as well as the launch and Internet deployment of these resources. In total, these assessments have been used worldwide by more than 200,000 individuals and are the instrument of choice in many organizations, including Fortune 500 companies and nationally recognized not-for-profits. Lee's point-of-view on maximizing leadership performance and organizational leadership during crisis is framed by his extensive research and experience in the assessment of human behavior.

AUTHOR/SPEAKER

A prolific writer, blogger and thought leader, Lee's latest bestselling book is entitled *Captured by Love: Inspiring True Romance Stories from Vietnam POWs*. His last two award-winning books, *Leading with Honor®: Leadership Lessons from the Hanoi Hilton* and *Engage with Honor™: Building a Culture of Courageous Accountability*, share his POW experiences and the leadership principles that helped him and his compatriots resist, survive, and return with honor. He also started his own publishing company, FreedomStar Media® to develop these resources. Additionally, Lee co-authored seven books and workbooks on human behavior and career planning. He is a nationally recognized Certified Speaking Professional™* (CSP®), Certified Virtual Presenter (CVP), and expert on the subjects of leadership and performance, team building, mentoring, and career planning. Some of his appearances include interviews on networks such as CNN, CBS This Morning, C-SPAN, ABC World News, Fox News Channel, plus hundreds of engagements in various industry sectors throughout the world.

EDUCATOR

Lee holds a B.A. degree in History from the University of Georgia and a M.S. degree in Counseling and Human Development from Troy University in Alabama. He is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College and the Air War College. Lee supervised, educated, and trained officers for the last 17 years of his Air Force career. He served as the Vice Commandant of the Squadron Officer School, the Air Force's leadership school for captains. He completed his Air Force career as Professor of Aerospace Studies and Commander of Air Force ROTC at the University of Georgia. More recently he has developed and presented leadership curricula in numerous organizations including Fortune 500 companies, and major sectors of the Department of the Defense focusing on management performance, leadership accountability and principle-based management strategies.

*The Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation involves a rigorous 5-10 year certification process. It is the highest speaking designation in the industry, and only 1.5% of speakers worldwide can claim this special title.

Condensed Military Biography/Introduction (427 words)

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Colonel Ellis is founder and President of Leadership Freedom® LLC, serving for more than twenty years as a nationally recognized leadership trainer, coach, author, and keynote. He has authored or co-authored seven books on leadership and career development. His latest bestselling book is entitled *Captured by Love: Inspiring True Romance Stories from Vietnam POWs.* Two additional, award-winning books share leadership insights gained from his POW experience. *Leading with Honor®: Leadership Lessons from the Hanoi Hilton* won book-of-the-year awards and was selected in 2013 for the USAF Chief of Staff Professional Reading List. His follow-on book, *Engage with Honor™: Building a Culture of Courageous Accountability* was selected best in class in the "Leadership" category. Colonel Ellis and his wife Mary reside in the Atlanta GA area and have four grown children and six grandchildren.

Condensed Military Biography/Introduction (149 words)

Lee Ellis is president of Leading with Honor®, a leadership and team development training and coaching company. He serves Fortune 500 senior executives in the areas of hiring, teambuilding, human performance, and succession planning. His media appearances include interviews on networks such as CNN, CBS This Morning, C-SPAN, ABC World News, and Fox News Channel. As a fighter pilot in Vietnam, he was shot down, captured, and repatriated in 1973 after more than five years as a POW in Hanoi. He resumed his Air Force career, eventually retiring as a Colonel. After his military retirement, he has worked almost 40 years as an educator, researcher and developer, leadership coach and trainer, and award-winning author and professional speaker and spokesman for leading with

honor. Lee has authored seven books, and his latest bestselling book is entitled *Captured by Love: Inspiring True Romance Stories from Vietnam POWs.* Learn more at leadingwithhonor.com.