



Military #Leadership in the 21st Century



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Military #Leadership in the 21st Century

By: Nathan K. Finney

Leadership is simultaneously the least expensive and the most expensive resource our military possesses. Its fiscal cost is minuscule in comparison to the acquisition budgets for high-end equipment, but its cost in terms of time is measured in decades and must be codified in consistent prioritization by our institutions. In the end, the price of failing to effectively resource the development of leaders can be enormous at both the personal and institutional level. No matter the domain in which a military service fights, leadership is the key to all successful military efforts. It is

a factor that shapes organizational culture in ways that directly affect outcomes and the performance of both military units and their people.

We come to the issue of leadership at a time when the military services are reducing overall end-strength and consolidating programs. Simultaneously the military is re-focusing on its core missions of conventional, joint and combined arms combat after more than a decade of protracted warfare. Leadership will play a significant role in preparing both individuals and units for a future that will

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inevitably include combat and significant institutional change.

To assess the current state of leadership in the military and identify key elements that will be required of leaders in the future, we have collected dozens of articles from leaders across the services and from academics steeped in the theories of leadership. Over the next two weeks, The Bridge is proud to open our forum to these voices – from junior leaders to combat-tested general officers – to provide their analysis of issues and opportunities for leading men and women, on and off the battlefield. From the art of command to the science of control, developing subordinates to institutional education, our authors will delve into key aspects of military leadership that must be addressed to continue to improve our profession.

We are thrilled to welcome many new writers to The Bridge community with this first #series of 2016. The Bridge would love to see even more writers join our ranks. If you have responses or additional thoughts, please send them our way.

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The Heart of #Leadership

By: Jeffrey Smith

The heart of leadership, especially within the profession of arms, is summarized with a single word: influence. Influence is the ability to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something.[1] As leaders, we must begin by first and foremost understanding this fundamental principle. People can be influenced one of two ways: through mandate leadership or through organic leadership. Understanding these two very different approaches to influence will in large measure determine not only what type of leader we are, but

also the effectiveness of our leadership in shaping the behavior of others.

The most important place to start in the leadership development journey is understanding the foundational attributes of mandate versus organic leadership skills. Mandate leadership is also better known as positional leadership. This form of leadership basically says, “You will do this because I outrank you...because I am your boss...because I have the ability to punish you if you do not do it.” While there are many examples where this type of

leadership is appropriate, especially in time-intensive scenarios (e.g., combat), for the majority of our interaction with subordinates this is the weakest and most ineffective form of leadership. Unfortunately, it is also the most used and is routinely the go-to approach for those who lack the ability or understanding to lead through trust and inspiration.

Organic leadership focuses less on the authority provided through a position and more on the people's trust, commitment, and loyalty to the process or objective. Organic leadership requires an understanding of one's subordinates, knowing their stories, appreciating who they are as individuals, and then tailoring your interaction with them based on their unique capabilities...all with the deliberate design to establish trust. When a leader takes the time to lead his or her folks organically, production increases, retention is higher, problems have better more lasting solutions, and those involved feel rewarded simply by a job well done.[2] Why? Because all of us want to feel we make a unique difference. All of us want some degree of ownership in our work. All of us find more satisfaction in personally accomplishing something positive than merely doing a job.

One might say at this point that organic leadership appears overly soft or not applicable within the profession of arms. While one might have that perception, the empirical analysis and results of what is often called "servant leadership" is clear: higher productivity, greater buy-in, better solutions, increased subordinate commitment, and overall healthier work environments.[3] Furthermore, organic leadership is anything but soft. There remains a high degree of accountability, individual responsibility, and by-name visibility of outcomes. When work is made more personal, not only does the production increase, the accountability also increases because folks can no longer hide.

In the traditional leader-follower model that most mandate (positional) leaders rely on, followers are less plugged into the end state, have little to no buy-in to the problem solving process, and often fail to take any responsibility for the success or failure of the outcomes. While in an organic leadership environment, where individual capabilities are tailored and engineered to take part in the developmental process, the environment changes from the traditional perspective of leader and follower to "leader and leader-in-training." The result of this environment is one where everyone on the team has a part to play, adds to the success, and has ownership of the outcome. Leaders are responsible to develop this environment, or not.

So if production increases, motivation rises, and solutions are better under an organic leadership style, why do so many, especially within the profession of arms, use the mandate or positional leadership approach? Because it is easier. Organic leadership is an art, requires tough habits of thought, and takes people skills. These attributes are not only rare within the profession

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of arms, they are not necessarily taught. A quick assessment of professional military education shows a lack of courses in human bias, mental entrenchment, or the consequence of power, let alone the physiological realities of personal decision making and individual behavior within the context of human neuromodulators (i.e., oxytocin, adrenaline, dopamine, etc.).[4] In those few examples where a class or two surfaces on these subjects, a very small fraction of the military leadership team ever have the opportunity to actually receive that specific education. So, unless one is lucky enough to have had a mentor, or coach, or even a parent who taught organic leadership skills, leaders are left with only one way to get others to do things—mandate leadership.

Additionally, nearly all the current performance evaluation systems fail to measure the most important attribute of leaders: their human relationship skills. In nearly thirty years of military service as an officer, I never read an officer evaluation report that said, “Make this officer a commander because he/she knows how to build trust with their people.” Moreover, I never read an enlisted performance report that said, “Make this leader a supervisor because they are gifted at building commitment and loyalty in their teams.” I have read a lot about the number of successful flights, physical fitness scores, and how much money was managed or saved, but little to nothing about the human condition, the level of mentorship, council, or the level of humility that great leaders require. Why? Because like most institutions, militaries tend to make important only those things that can be measured. This myopic perspective risks promoting individuals to high ranks who are toxic, lack integrity, or fail to get past their own self-worth.

So, what do we do and where do we go from here? First, we should re-examine how we are growing our leaders. From the moment we first engage with new recruits in officer accessions, the goal should be to build trust. Trust that they made the right decision to serve their country. Trust that the limitations they have placed on themselves are artificial and that they can do more. Trust that their decision to serve will provide a better future self; not necessarily a wealthy, comfortable, or easy future self; rather, a future self that takes extreme pride in a job well done, pleasure in the charity their life provides to mankind, and joy in knowing they are building a life worth living. We must then deliberately engineer a continuum of education, opportunities, and learning that teach them the human code: personal bias, generational diversity, consequences of power, mental entrenchment, listening skills, leading

Leaders with evidenced attributes of charity, optimism, humility, and empathy build trust with those around them (at home and work) which in turn allows for a high degree of influence—recall that at the heart of all leadership is influence.

through tragedy, emotional balance, and critical thinking to name a few.

This is the profession of arms; human lives are often the target. Within this profession, leaders must be more than simply positional figures of authority; they must be

masters of the human condition, experts of influence, decision making, and relationship. They must be capable of inspiring others even in tragedy, motivating their people to go beyond their self-imposed limits, and fostering a sense of worth, respect and ownership within every environment they own. In short, they must be leaders—real, thoughtful, skilled, leaders.

To develop these kind of leaders, we must start by examining, in detail, the evidence that a judge or jury could convict you on that involves the following four violations: charity, optimism, humility, and empathy.

Charity, Optimism, Humility, Empathy

Ask yourself what evidence in your life (marriage, parenting, work environment) exists that could convict you as a man or women in regard to these four attributes. In other words, could you be convicted if charity was outlawed? How about if humility was a crime? Would there be enough or any evidence to bring you up on charges of empathy? You may have a couple of them in your life but need a couple of them to be grown. What you will find is that the more these four characteristics are present and evidenced in your life—in you—the better parent, spouse, and leader you will be. Why? Because with these attributes you will begin to be the type of leader that brings out a better version of the people around you. Leaders with evidenced attributes of charity, optimism, humility, and empathy build trust with those around them (at home and work) which in turn allows for a high degree of influence—recall that at the heart of all leadership is influence.

The result will be that your people will have greater buy-in, show increased loyalty to the end-state, be proud of taking part in the processes, and they will help to ensure that everything you need them to do is done with excellence, from garrison to combat. So, what kind of leader are you going to be?

Dr. Jeffrey Smith is the Senior Executive Advisor to the Profession of Arms Center of Excellence for the United States Air Force. He served nearly thirty years as an officer, pilot, and commander before retiring from the Air Force in 2015. He has published in the areas of leadership, character development, and Air Force organizational change.



The Keys to Effective #Leadership

By: Mick Ryan

Lifelong professional education and development is a core undertaking for military professionals. Central to this is the theory and practice of leadership. My thoughts on leadership in this article are based on my service as an officer in the Australian Army. I have been fortunate to have served alongside people from other military services and academia, as well as different government departments from Australia and other nations. So I would offer these thoughts and hope they provide readers with some insights into the contemporary and future needs of our leaders at all levels.

Provide the Why

Providing the "why" is a central responsibility for leaders; purpose or rationale is more important than the "what." Leaders inspire through giving their people meaning. As a leader, continually ask yourself: Why we trying to achieve this? And you need to be able to articulate the answer clearly and concisely. If you can't answer it, how can you explain it to your subordinates? This requires personal understanding and effort something that staff can help with, but not do for you.

It also requires a deep understanding of the military profession and culture of the nation and organisation that the leader serves. All military professionals share a contract with the nation they serve. There are many forms of this, and an example from the Australian Army is its Contract with Australia. This is about knowing, understanding and living the values that go hand in hand with service in the profession of arms. Understanding the ethics of our profession as well as the nuts and bolts of day to day leading of soldiers is an integral part of providing meaning; it is important in barracks and during exercises, but vital when under pressure on operations and has tactical as well as strategic ramifications.

Embrace Variety and Listen

The higher you get, the more the keys to success lay outside your organisation.

Leaders need to network, meet different people, and expose themselves to different ideas. The only way to solve complex problems (what we do as

military professionals) is to generate a variety of options. Destroy silos and single issue zealots—these are an anathema to variety, our profession and operational success. Gillian Tett's recent book *The Silo Effect* is a great examination of the pernicious impact of exclusive approaches and institutional silos.

Key to leaders embracing variety is the capacity to listen. My observation is that military officers—especially men—are really bad at this, and (my generation at least) were not well prepared for this in our officer training continuum. But it is fundamental to good leadership and a non-discretionary skill when dealing with the great young Generation Y (and soon Generation Z) service personnel that are the majority of our respective workforces. If it doesn't come naturally, leaders must train themselves to be a good listener. As a guide, use your ears to mouth at a

ratio of ten to one. You cannot do your job as a leader and add value to your team without listening to the expertise of others.

Influence

As noted above, many of the paths to successful leadership lay outside your immediate organisation. Command authority has limits. Therefore, leading through influencing is crucial. Clear intent statements assist. But it requires leaders to personally invest in developing the logical and emotional appeal of tasks and missions, and then communicate using various mediums with those they are trying to influence.

The art of influence includes the capacity to lead up, or influence one's boss. This means that leaders should be lifting some burden off their superior's shoulders, being prepared for every engagement and providing frank, honest advice on options for action.

Command authority has limits. Therefore, leading through influencing is crucial.

Read, Think, Write

Williamson Murray has written (and I paraphrase a bit) that the military is not only the most physically demanding of all the professions, but also the most demanding intellectually and morally. The cost of slovenly thinking at every level of war can translate into the deaths of innumerable men and women, most of whom deserve better from their leaders. You need to find time to reflect and think. I steal time to read every day and every night. It helps build my knowledge; I read military history, current events, a little philosophy, as well as thrillers and science fiction. Read broadly and critically, and not just books and journal articles; embrace social media and blogs. Doing so will show just how much our world and our profession is changing (and how rapidly) and expose one to a broad variety of ideas.

Learn also to write critically, using plain English without acronyms or jargon. Writing helps to hone a

leader's research, critical thinking, and communication skills. Excellence in these areas are the hallmarks of good leaders. It also assists in developing the capacity to explain purpose to subordinates in a clear and succinct fashion—this is not a common skill! Finally, writing gives leaders a professional voice to contribute to the development of their profession.

Lead Education and Change

We are members of a profession. It is an institutional imperative to build and nurture what Richard Meinhart recently called a committed learning environment. Leaders must play their part in this and lead ongoing education about the military profession.

It demands a climate where good ideas are nurtured, embraced and acted upon—and where leaders are not afraid to be interrogated by their subordinates on ideas. This leadership includes encouraging professional debate and contribution to journals and online blogs. It leads to intellectual discipline; building intellectual discipline underpins battle discipline.

Leading education and change also infers an obligation on leaders to mentor those that will eventually assume leadership of their organisation. A leader's mentoring of junior leaders not only builds organizational cohesion, it ensures your subordinates can step into your shoes when required. It is also the best way to pay back a military institution that has invested so much in you over years or decades.

Leaders who nurture a business-as-usual professional education and development program underpin informed change in an institution. Leaders lead change and push the boundaries of the status

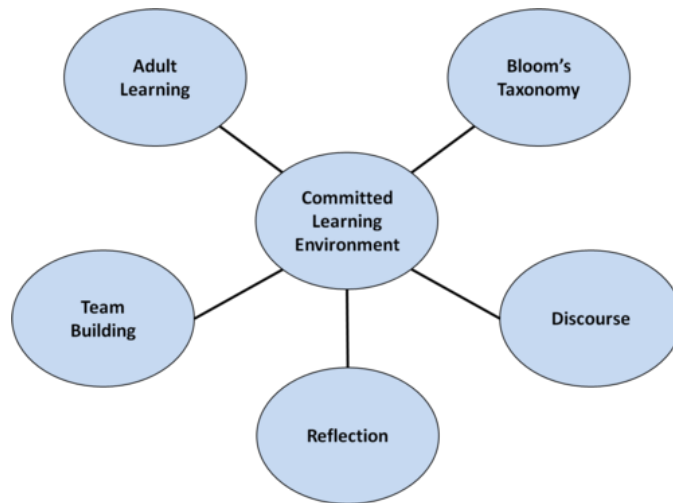
quo to continually improve the institution and keep it competitive. It is not about coping with change; change must be anticipated and it needs good people to lead it.

Understand Failure and Take Risk

Risk should not be written off in planning. I believe the best way to manage risk in your command is to educate and train subordinate leaders to think through problems, understand risks, and develop the capacity for bold decision making. To do this, we need to be able to fail as part of learning. Leaders must oversee education and training that creates a culture that accepts a level of failure in training. This builds understanding about the reasons for

organizational and individual failure and how to prevent, mitigate, assess, and learn from it.

This should be underpinned by a command environment where risk is maximized safely, not minimized. Training with risk builds resilience in our people and enhances a leader's self-confidence. This will enhance a leader's capacity to embrace chaos and ambiguity.



Committed Learning Environment (Richard Meinhart)

Understand Surprise and Chaos

Finally, we must accept that we almost always get the next war wrong. Leaders must develop and sustain a culture where surprise is accepted as a natural part of our environment; no matter how clever or enabled we are, we will continue to be tactically, operationally and strategically surprised. To embrace this is to build a culture of adaptation. In essence, the side that overcomes shock, understands the changed situation, and adapts quickest wins.

This is underpinned by an integrated approach to developing mental resilience in commanders and soldiers. This resilience is what helps overcome the shock that is generated by surprise. Additionally, training cannot always emphasize that we always win. History demonstrates this is not the case. Train your leaders and soldiers to respond to surprise, shock, and tactical failure, but to also exploit the resulting chaos.

Conclusion

Good leadership is learned through experience, observation, study, reflection, and embracing variety in all of its forms. And throughout this journey, leaders also learn that cooperation and collaboration are integral parts of good leadership. Constantly honing the capacity to lead is an ongoing journey and if done right, it is a journey of immense personal satisfaction.

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#Leadership: The Death of Command and Control

By: Kurt Degerlund

Command and control systems were designed in ages when information was considered key to controlling the universe. In Newton's physics, if you knew a few key pieces of information, you could predict the future. Over time command and control systems were refined to give commanders more and more information in the belief that more information meant more control over a battlefield. Inherent in command and control is the assumption that information must be fed up to a commander, refined and calculated, then decisions fed down to subordinates. But modern experiences in warfare are

invalidating the traditional command and control model of leadership.

For answers to how create adaptive, creative, and resilient leaders I turned to two military thinkers. The first is Colonel (retired) John Boyd and his presentation "Organic Design for Command and Control."^[1] The second is General (retired) Stanley McChrystal's *Team of Teams*, based on the lessons he learned and changes he made to a command and control structure that was being defeated in the cities

of Iraq.[2] Interestingly, without reference to each other both come to very similar conclusions.

Boyd's fundamental worldview was that organizations had to be externally facing, organized to interact with the external world and the enemy. He taught that you cannot defeat the enemy unless you are prepared to act against them. Consequently, leaders must "suppress the tendency to build up explicit internal arrangements that hinder interaction with the external world." [3] His historical analysis indicated that winning organizations have insight and vision, focus and direction, adaptability, and security.

Boyd believed that the atmosphere of war is friction and that organizations must minimize internal friction while maximizing the enemy's friction. Friction is diminished by implicit understanding, trust, cooperation, simplicity, and focus. The goal is to pair variety/rapidity with harmony/initiative in your own organization to break down the enemy's ability to cope with change. Balance is required too, because harmony/initiative without variety/rapidity lead to predictable, and non-adaptable organizations.

Boyd concludes that command and control, especially when it comes with a large volume of information, will drive leaders to seize as much control as they can in a situation, and that this will only increase subordinates' need to be inward facing, providing more information and requiring more decisions while minimizing interaction with the external environment/enemy.

Instead, command and control should be replaced with appreciation and leadership. Appreciation is the ability to understand or grok friendly and enemy actions.[4] Leadership is the ability to provide direction and interact with the system to shape its character. Notably, appreciation and leadership rests on the idea that humans have an implicit ability to cope with uncertainty and change.

...winning organizations have insight and vision, focus and direction, adaptability, and security.

McChrystal's Team of Teams describes his leadership of the Joint Special Operations Task Force from 2005-2007. He inherited one of the best organized, most efficient, and capable organizations in the

United States Military. However, on the streets of Iraq he found himself being defeated by a poorly equipped and trained terrorist force. He and his staff realized that the problem was not equipment, training, or tactics, but how the Task Force was organized.

The Task Force had been optimized to accomplish a few, well organized operations a year with high risk to those conducting the operations but low risk to the organization overall. Al Qaeda was organized to accomplish numerous operations at high risk to both the operators and the organization. Consequently, al Qaeda in Iraq was a resilient organization capable of withstanding traditional counter-terror operations while striking at a rate to which the Joint Special Operations Task Force could not replicate or respond.

McChrystal rebuilt his organization along three core ideas: information sharing, delegation of authority, and becoming a "gardener." These changes would see exponential increases in the Joint Special Operations Task Force's ability to fight the war, both increasing the number and frequency of operations while decreasing internal friction.

Information sharing was accomplished through three initiatives. The first was a daily operations and intelligence brief that was open to everyone in his organization and any stakeholders outside of his organization. Second, an open organizational structure that had everyone in the organization (operators, intelligence, logistics, legal, etc.) working next to each other without either physical or organizational barriers to communication. Third, a network of liaison officers and cross organization attachments where an operator might be attached to a partner organization or operators and intelligence

analysts might spend months in each other's units to create a human network within and between organizations.

Decision-making authority was delegated to the person on the ground. Everyone in the organization was empowered to make decisions in collaboration with each other instead of focusing decisions, and thus power, to the top of the hierarchy. Power was distributed across the organizations, not centralized with the man at the top.

And finally, McChrystal became a gardener. This meant taking care of each person in the organization, ensuring that they knew their place in the fight and their organizations values and goals. His job was to grow his subordinates by fertilizing their environment, ensuring they had the right amount of sunlight and water, trimming where necessary, and sharing the produce.

After taking apart both Boyd and McChrystal's work, let's compare them and reassemble them into a new structure that points to a better method of leadership in the complex world.[5]

First is the leader's relationship with information. A leader does not hoard and control information, the leader ensures information is shared. A leader's job is to ensure the flow of information throughout the organization, to promote collaboration. The leader breaks down barriers and clears log jams where information is bottlenecked. This simultaneously increases understanding of the enemy, reduces internal friction, and empowers members to act.

An example of this General Yashayan Gonen in the June 1967 war. Gonen focused his battlefield role on collecting and disseminating information at every level of the battlefield. He spent his time at subordinate headquarters observing their interactions, listening to unit radio nets to sense what they were experiencing, reading dispatches and intelligence from higher headquarters on what was

occurring around the country and sharing those dispatches with his subordinates. In one case this allowed him to correct an "entirely false" impression of the battlefield that was being developed by a subordinate headquarters. He did not use his superior understanding of the battlefield to override the orders of that headquarters and take control of their decisions. Instead, he used his understanding of the battlefield to correct the subordinates' understanding and allow them to continue making decisions with the correct information.

Next, leaders provide vision. Organizations are the most adaptable and resilient at the edge of chaos. This is where there is rapid change, many interrelated decisions to quickly respond to developments. All of these interactions have the potential to dissolve into chaos. The leader's vision becomes the reason that the organization exists and the basis for every decision that members make. In cases of conflicting decisions, members know to make a decision that maximizes achievement of the shared vision, instead of decisions made in the individual's short term benefit. And, because each decision is made toward a single unifying vision, these decisions become mutually reinforcing, accelerating achievement at an exponential rate.

Finally, leaders grow leaders. In a fractal view of modern leadership, each sub organization should bear the same attributes as its parent organization. Each sub-leader should be a steward of the flow of information, provide a unifying vision complementary to the parent organization's, and grow their own sub-leaders. Leaders train future leaders to make decisions. Sub-leaders have to be allowed to make decisions within their own organization and allow their own sub-leaders to make their own decisions. Decisions are delegated down to the leader who needs to make that decision, not to the commander who wants to make that decision.

Growing your leaders by teaching, sharing, and nurturing builds common shared experience,

language, and trust between and among yourself and your subordinates. This reduces friction within your organization and allows your organization to understand itself and trust the other members of the organization. When your organization has a strong common understanding of the mission and trust in themselves and their partners, the enemy has a harder time driving wedges between the members of the organization.

The phrase “command and control” must be dropped from the leader’s lexicon. Words have history and power. The former command and control structures focused information and decision making onto one supposed superman in a rigid hierarchy and expected him to make infallible decisions with omniscient knowledge. These structures are being defeated, bankrupted, and destroyed as we speak.[6] Even when we remove the history of the words, there is power in them and in their implicit directive to centralize information and control. But the defeat of these systems in modern wars does not support the command and control structure. We should replace the phrase with something that reflects a greater understanding of the relationship between leaders and their organization; let’s call this idea of building effective, resilient, winning organizations...leadership.

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#Leadership Through Example

By: H.R. McMaster

LIEUTENANT GENERAL DON HOLDER'S FREE, NON-BINDING ADVICE FOR BATTALION AND SQUADRON COMMANDERS

Battalion and squadron commanders have a profound influence across our military. In the late 1990s, before assuming command of a squadron, I sought advice from then-Colonel Don Holder. The “free, non-binding advice” he sent me proved invaluable. Since that time I learned more about command at the battalion level by observing effective commanders in combat and in training. What

follows, printed with his permission, is a revised version of what now Lieutenant General, retired Holder sent me. I added a few things and compressed or edited out others to help make his advice applicable across our Army. Battalion and squadron command is particularly important because it is the last level of command in which a commander knows well all of his or her subordinate leaders from squad to company. Battalion and squadron commanders not only have a profound influence on the readiness of our Army, they also have a profound influence on the discipline, morale, welfare, and

professional development of every soldier in their organization.

Understanding Your Role

Commanders are incredibly influential. People will watch you closely and adopt your attitudes and standards. If you say training is the most important activity, be there and demonstrate that you know what you are doing. If you are emphasizing maintenance, be in the motor pool or arms room. If you expect people to treat each other respectfully, treat people respectfully yourself. Admit mistakes when they affect the unit. Everybody makes mistakes; units forgive them in their commanders if those errors are infrequent, honestly made, and corrected.

You have enormous power as a commander. So do all leaders in your organization. It is unnecessary to shout, threaten, or intimidate. Your words—or at least your orders—are literally the law. Enforce orders calmly and consistently. (Remember [Marshal de Saxe](#)—“Few orders are best, but those must be rigorously enforced.”)

Your mission is very simple. Make your piece of our Army the best it can be. Your battalion’s or squadron’s readiness and contribution to our Army’s ability to fight and win is the only sensible measure of success. Use your mission essential task list. Set high standards and measurable objectives. Expect excellence; compete for, and recognize it; then—Colonel Holder followed then-Colonel Bob Wagner’s lead and recognized the top third of all units every quarter. Soldiers like competition and recognition and want “rematch” opportunities for unit honors.

Communications are very important. Send a clear, simple message almost continuously. Repeating those things may make you feel you’re overdoing it, but young leaders want the assurance that they’re pursuing the goals you think important. Write guidance to your leaders and soldiers in “spot reports,” standard operating procedures, training

guidance, and policy letters. Develop your leaders to communicate clearly in their own reports, orders, and written products. Talk to your leaders and your entire unit regularly. Take advantage of monthly physical training formations, awards ceremonies, after action reviews, and mandatory training sessions. Meet with your key leaders at least once a quarter to discuss goals and objectives and the coming events. Use the quarterly and semi-annual training plans as the vehicles. Review objectives and accomplishments of the past quarter, state the goals for coming quarters, review the calendar, and then talk about whatever is on your mind. Solicit their assessments and suggestions.

Focusing on Key Efforts

Develop commonly understood standard operating procedures. Battalions and squadrons are tactical formations. Tactical formations base their actions on standard operating procedures. Stress formations, maneuver techniques, battle drills, integration of all arms and joint capabilities, and standard unit fire.

Foster initiative. Insist that young leaders take action; mistakes of commission are acceptable, passivity is not. Deliberately build opportunities for initiative into your training plans and make leader responses part of your after action reviews.

Take care of soldiers and their families. Never underestimate your soldiers. They are young people with lots of energy, courage, and ambition. They expect the Army to be hard—and they are disappointed when it’s not. Soldiers usually want to do the job they enlisted for. Do not tolerate hazing, talking down to troops, sexual harassment, and other forms of abusive behavior. Establish sponsorship and welcoming systems. Family readiness groups are helpful if they understand their mission. When you learn about a problem from a soldier, jot it down and follow up on it until resolved. Be consistent in disciplining troops. Realize that some good people are going to let you down. It is tough business, and

occasionally unpleasant, but discipline has to be impartially and consistently applied.

Building Your Team

Train your staff. Battalion/Squadron is the first level of command with a staff. Staffs are combat multipliers. Invest time to train them. Make it a continuous effort to compensate for personnel turnover and inexperience. Do not do the staff's work for them. Emphasize anticipation and working within intent. Check their written products and teach them to write clearly and concisely. Always write your own intent statement and concept of the operation. Minimize the use of PowerPoint.

Train your field grade officers. The executive officer leads and trains the staff and runs the battalion/squadron. Put him in charge of details. Tell him where you want to go and let him find the way. The executive officer speaks for you; accordingly, back him/her up. Commanders can always appeal the executive officer's direction but, if your executive officer is mentally with you, you will end up supporting him/her 90 percent of the time. The same applies to your operations officer and your command sergeant major.

Build your relationship with the command sergeant major. Command sergeants major vary in their individual experience, talents, and strengths. Trade on their strong points. Make them responsible for developing non-commissioned officers. Ensure that the command sergeant major sees all personnel actions affecting enlisted soldiers. Schedule one-on-one time with the command sergeant major regularly if it does not occur naturally. Ask the command sergeant major about his/her expectations of you and what you should expect in return. Discuss your basic interests, priorities, and expectations. Ensure the command sergeant major is responsible for coming to you with any concerns he/she has about policies or plans.

Make captains men and women of consequence. Delegate every bit of authority you can to them and assure that everything gets to the soldier through his or her chain of command. The reason for this is that it builds confidence in and the custom of obedience to captains. In combat, captains make life and death decisions. Soldiers must look to them as leaders in all things.

Recognize lieutenants as combat leaders. They fight alongside their soldiers and control a substantial amount of combat power. Build them up as leaders; all soldiers look to them when things are tough and they have to lead by example. Although lieutenants must learn and grow on the job, do not countenance any view of them as apprentices or novices. They are not "LTs." They are lieutenants and platoon leaders.

Focus on sergeants as the foundation for combat readiness and effectiveness. Non-commissioned officers not only provide the unit with tactical and technical expertise, they ensure the discipline, training, and motivation of their soldiers. If you have a problem with a soldier, ask him to "go get his sergeant." Recognize and promote your best sergeants. Stress the squad leader's and platoon sergeant's role in fostering confidence. It is soldier's confidence in their own training, their team, and their squad leader that allows them to suppress fear, fight, and win in battle. And it is sergeants who ensure all members of their team are committed to the Army's professional ethic.

Preparing to Fight and Win

Make training the first priority. Be there. Use the training schedule as your guide to what is happening and do not call ahead. Be uncompromising about training standards. Insist that training is well-planned and well-executed. Realize the damage your commanders and non-commissioned officers do to their reputations when they preside over screw-ups. Inspect training and do not accept excuses for poor administration. Watch for over-scheduling,

inadequate preparatory time, changes to the training schedule, soldiers absent from training, uncritiqued training, and absence of training objectives at every level. Do this: ask leaders for their training objectives, then ask "why". Fight late taskings and the diversion of resources. Consider the semiannual training briefing a binding contract and arrange for external support through that medium. Insisting on execution of the training schedule as it was published five weeks ago is a form of respect for your soldiers. If you jerk them around on planning their own time, they may conclude that you are either indifferent to them or incompetent.

Train based on your vision of war. Replicate as best you can the complex environments and hybrid enemy organizations we fight today and will fight in the future. Build change, casualties, and bad information into all training. Rush things from time to time.

Develop leaders. Do this through training, education, and experience for your officers and non-commissioned officers. Conduct seminars on mission essential tasks to develop a common understanding of your unit's mission. Develop other venues for captains and lieutenants to talk about our profession and warfighting (such as breakfasts and brown bag lunches). Link leader professional development to developmental counseling. Be the lead trainer for your platoons and companies/troops/batteries. Take your officers on staff rides, training exercises without troops, or other professional development trips to build mutual understanding and to promote free exchange of ideas up and down the chain of command. Encourage your command sergeant major to do the same with the squadron/battalion non-commissioned officers.

Stress maintaining communications, fighting and reporting, simple orders, and complete reports. Have a plan for mission command that covers movement of command posts and placement of key leaders. Use multiple control measures to facilitate fragmentary orders and flexibility. Take the time to think before issuing orders. Rely on standard

operating procedures for orders production and internal coordination. Think ahead of where you are, anticipate opportunities and problems, set conditions for future operations, and consolidate gains.

Prepare a clear mission statement, intent, and concept of operations. Focus on key tasks for intent. Make the concept of operations - the how, when and where of the plan - the centerpiece of your orders and assure it is understood two levels down. The concept guides your subordinates for as long as the plan holds up. It preempts a lot of questions and uncertainty if it is well done. We have put so much emphasis on commander's intent, and more recently on over-abbreviated mission templates, that our ability to articulate clearly how we will execute operations is diminished. The cost is that we fail to get the most out of our organizations initially and we deviate from our plans prematurely.

Assessing Your Battalion or Squadron

Remember that good units typically:

- Share and borrow ideas eagerly;
- Communicate freely;
- Respect others and expect strong performance from them;
- Want frank assessments of readiness and effectiveness;
- Understand that failures occasionally occur because they push the limits of their capability;
- Laugh a lot.

Again, remember how influential you are as a battalion or squadron commander. You can have a positive, profound effect on generations of soldiers and leaders by developing a unit in which excellence is self-sustaining.

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Tactics: Mandatory Imagination in #Leadership

By: Rémy Hémez

War is both a science and an art. Therefore, it requires certain qualities that, prima facie, are not those of the military leader. Among them is imagination, a creative capacity that offers the opportunity to represent objects that are not perceived or to make new combinations of images.

Set in complex environments and subject to severe budgetary constraints, military operations – today more than ever – require us to shape innovative solutions. Accordingly, using imagination in military tactics should no longer be restricted to a few genius

leaders, but institutionalized among the army. This requires every leader to intellectually work on oneself but overall to be able to promote an organizational culture that allows this skill to develop.

The Tactical Imagination, A Key to Victory

Imagination does not dissipate the fog of war but it helps the tactician to have a vision of what could be beyond it. Always facing a lack of information, military leaders must adapt and decide a maneuver

based only on a situation they have conceived. Tactical imagination can also help to compensate for an unfavorable force ratio. At the Battle of Bir Hakeim (26 May-11 June 1942), General Koenig of the Free French Army ordered the establishment of an innovative defensive system, coupled with a bold offensive capability inspired by English methods: the "jock columns." This allowed an unexpected resistance from French forces though they were highly outnumbered. Moreover, tactical imagination can achieve surprise by offering new and unexpected solutions. This is what the Germans intended to do at the end of the First World War by developing the *Sturmtruppen* concept. Finally, tactical imagination is crucial to adapt our tactics, techniques and procedures to the incessant arrival of new technologies that are often force multipliers. These innovations always remain inefficient if they are not backed by an appropriate doctrine. Tanks were not immediately catalysts for change when they arrived on the battlefield, as can be seen during Cambrai in 1917.

The issue is that relation between armed forces and imagination is not simple. This was quite different until the eighteenth century in Europe. Fancy was an aristocratic attribute and encouraged among officers.[1] This culture was devalued from the nineteenth century and gradually disappeared with the development of military administration and the growing technical nature of armies. In fact, armies are facing a paradox: to meet the combat requirements, they must obtain orthodox tactical behaviors while encouraging imagination and originality. For leadership, this means a permanent and difficult balance between initiative and control.

Power to the Imagination

What can be done to foster imagination in the military institution?

Of course, education has a major role to play. To think "out of the box" on tactics we must have a complete

knowledge of its contours and contents. Doctrine is a foundation for this understanding and must be known. As a basis for thinking, it is also necessary to acquire an "intellectual library" and to form basic tactical principles through - mainly - military history. Finally, "creative methods" could help better analyze a tactical problem - either in an individual or collective manner - and find innovative solutions. But beyond those basic requirements, tactical imagination relies on five key qualities for leaders.[2]

The first is **questioning**, which allows us to interrogate the tactical problem as it is and go beyond our habits. Indeed, our culture and education courses often push us to focus on linear and standardized approaches. François Jullien wrote about this: "I believe that the Greek way of thinking about efficiency can be summarized like this: to be effective, I build a - perfect - model form, which becomes a plan and which I place as a goal, then I start to act according to the plan, depending on this goal." [3]

Secondly, tactical imagination enjoins us to **look at the world with fresh eyes** and detect the origin of the problem we are facing. This is difficult in the military field where action is largely a priority and can sometimes restrict our perception because: "Before philosophizing, we must live; and life requires us to put blinders, we don't look to the right, left or back but straight ahead in the direction we need to walk." [4] The tactician should take the time to look at his surroundings, and - like the artist - develop the innocence of the eye.

The third required quality is the spirit of **experimentation**. Though experimentation could be fostered through training sessions, these often follow a scripted scenario and an orthodox course of action. We should be able to carry out real experiments. To do this we would need to accept that some exercises could be "spoiled" by testing an iconoclastic course of action.

*Imagination is a Good
Servant, and a Bad
Master*

The fourth quality needed is **the ability to associate** different sorts of knowledge, not directly linked to tactics, in order to get out of our usual patterns. Admiral Mike Mullen says about his experience of studying in a business school: "I learned a lot there, and one of the things I learned is that there are always ideas out there that you don't know anything about. The more senior I got over time, the more I tried to seek those areas of diverse opinion to incorporate into my own thinking in making decisions." [5]

Finally, **networking** - that is to say exploring and testing ideas through a network of individuals - is the last essential quality to foster tactical imagination. Blogging is a great way to do so, but is not enough. Tolerance and encouragement from the hierarchy regarding debate, iconoclast ideas, and criticism is crucial to help develop the debate.

Conclusion

This article does not advocate mindless tactical imagination: taking unnecessary risks and focusing solely on the "beauty" of a maneuver would be dangerous. However, tactical effectiveness can only be achieved through an unbridled imagination passed through the sieve of a decision-making method. Eventually, the real challenge for any military leader might be this: encourage creativity within his unit and abolish the feeling that any criticism is a criticism of the leader.

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#Leadership: A Bedrock of Trust

By: P.J. Neal

Leadership must be built upon a bedrock of trust.

This need is obvious in combat, when soldiers must trust their officers to make sound judgment and not to risk the lives and safety of their men needlessly or carelessly. In turn, officers must trust their soldiers to do their duty, and to strive to fulfill not only the specific order given, but the spirit of what the mission is trying to accomplish.

Equally important, but often overlooked, is the need for trust in the staff roles so critical to the functioning

of our armed forces. If we want our military to continue to evolve and advance, we require the overall organization – and the individual men and women who comprise it – to innovate. Innovation requires personal and professional risk: of failing to achieve an objective, trying something new that doesn't work, and possibly looking foolish in the eyes of those we respect and report to. That risk requires trust.

Yet we often fail to take the time to purposefully build that sense of trust. Small critical actions and

behaviors that can have a large impact in the long run are abandoned in a rush to get “just a little more” done, or to complete a task “just a little bit” faster. Leaders worry about how they will be perceived and judged if the people under them fail, regardless of the consequence of that failure (or lack thereof).

Yet if trust is so critical to our own success as leaders and to enabling the success of those who we are mentoring and leading, we must take the time to build that bedrock today--before we have to rely on it in a time of need. How can we do that?

Psychologists and organizational behavior experts argue there are four key elements critical to establishing trust: compassion, communication, competency, and consistency.

- Compassion comes from a belief that individuals care for each other and will work to protect each other, as well as protect those they care for.
- Communication is the two-way sharing of information, both positive and negative, that leads to the perception of openness and honesty.
- Competence emerges through direct viewing of behaviors and actions, as well as from an awareness of external measures (awards won, rank achieved, etc.).
- Consistency occurs after numerous and frequent interactions; it is measured in both words and actions, and enables predictability, reducing threatening feelings, and increasing feelings of safety.

Rather than providing a theoretical discussion of trust, analyzing a leader’s performance from history, or giving recommendations completely out of context, this article will analyze a presentation General Mark Welsh gave at the Air Force Academy in November 2011, breaking down that presentation,

segment by segment, and showing how Welsh systematically (if perhaps unintentionally) built the audience’s trust in him by repeatedly demonstrating and reinforcing the four traits of compassion, communication, competency, and consistency.

To see the full analysis, please continue reading online at The Strategy Bridge [site](#).

PJ Neal is currently the Director of Leadership Programs at Harvard Business Publishing and the editor of the forthcoming United States Naval Institute Guide to Mentoring. Follow P.J. on Twitter [@PJNeal](#).



Accruing Tacit Knowledge: A Case for Self-Study on Behalf of Professional Leadership

By: David Hodne

Developing leaders is one of the most important endeavors within the military profession. More specifically, establishing the core of “expert knowledge” essential to winning wars defines the profession. In spite of senior leader emphasis to commit to self-development, one of the paths critical to accruing tacit knowledge, many leaders fail to adequately commit themselves to goal-oriented self-study. Considering this important context, while today’s leaders arguably constitute the most

“combat-experienced force” fielded in recent memory, much of this experience reflects over a decade principally focused on counterinsurgency that may be only partially relevant for other strategic challenges.

The military services must ensure leaders are capable of operating in an increasingly uncertain, dynamic, and volatile international security environment. Ironically, the military services’

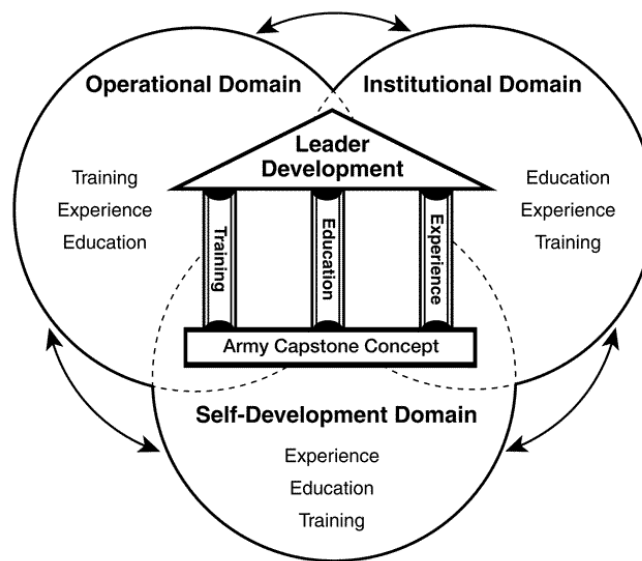
comprehensive approach to developing leaders requires individual participation in independent study, yet years of surveys sponsored by organizations such as the Center for Army Leadership acknowledge that competition for time available to personal study limits these efforts. While the most recent report shows improvement in self-development from previous years, in the case of the Army just over half of leaders believe that their self-development has a “large impact” on their development. Some of these studies reveal more significant shortfalls that leaders do not know how to focus their personal strategy for learning, or worse they simply expect that “development is something provided by others.” The resulting imbalance in leader development efforts not only limits personal development, but also limits the potential of the profession writ-large.

Given these unexceptional statistics, as leaders progress through more senior levels of leadership they will inevitably find themselves promoting, justifying, convincing, or mandating that their subordinates participate in self-development. The refrain, “it worked for me,” is no longer sufficient explanation for younger cohorts accustomed to accessing information on virtually any topic in an instant. As a result, young leaders may not appreciate that effort invested in rigorous study is essential to accruing tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is not “received wisdom” or something you can look up. The journey and reflection in study results in knowledge on a range of topics that is difficult to codify or transfer between leaders. Tacit knowledge is also essential to intuition and practical and emotional intelligence. Lastly, not only is tacit knowledge important to the

profession, but it is also available to leaders without the use of their smartphone or other device.

The Army Leader Development Model

As an example of how the military services develop their leaders, we can assess the Army Leader Development model (Figure 1), which is based on the relationship among the three mutually supporting domains of learning that contribute to developing leadership skills and attributes progressively throughout a career. These domains include the operational, institutional, and self-development domains, all of which prepare leaders for assuming additional responsibility.



Army Leader Development Model

The operational domain includes experience gained during contingency operations, training activities at home station, rotations at a Combat Training Center, or unit level leader professional development sessions. The institutional domain accounts for attendance at schools and professional military education (PME) to obtain knowledge, skills, and practice necessary to perform critical tasks. Both

the operational domain and the institutional domain develop leaders in establishing explicit knowledge, easily codified and articulated.

The self-development domain is an individual responsibility and consists of independent study to enhance learning in the operational and institutional domain, address gaps in skills and knowledge, or prepare for future responsibilities. In addition, the self-development domain includes three types of self-development: structured, guided, and personal. Structured self-development is required, planned, goal-oriented learning sponsored by the institution.

Guided self-development is optional learning that follows a progressive sequence with contributions from the chain of command, and personal self-development is initiated and defined by the individual. Self-development also includes personal reflection on learning and experiences from both the operational and institutional domain. This reflection and self-study builds the foundation of tacit knowledge that, when combined with their range of explicit knowledge, allows leaders to better achieve their potential.

Each of these domains is necessary for effective leader development, but none is sufficient by itself. Yet the combination of time constraints, pace of operations, and personal choice result in less attention paid to the institutional and self-development domains. While leaders rely heavily on experience in the operational domain, the decreased reliance on institutional and self-development results in a narrow range of expertise only partially relevant for future scenarios. This situation is a source of great risk in the next “first battle.”

In hindsight, today’s imbalance in leader development efforts is easily explained. Repeat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan provided unprecedented opportunities for learning within the operational domain. In some cases, however, frequent deployments reduced opportunities within the institutional and self-development domains. Primary examples of this case include the backlog of mid-grade officers needing to attend professional military education and the lack of time available for self-development opportunities given the pace of operations. In the effort to address short-term challenges and keep “combat seasoned leaders in the fight,” officers are delayed or waived attendance at professional military schools. Ultimately, this compromised long-term benefits of progressive learning within the institutional domain. While the Army recently returned to the practice of selecting the top half of their most talented

officers for intermediate-level education, professional military education venues generally lag in documenting operational lessons to share within the institutional domain.

Again, perhaps as an example of poor self-development within the military writ large, Army doctrine already directs leaders to participate in self-development, yet the statistics reveal an outcome otherwise. The Center for Army Leadership’s Annual Surveys of Army Leadership reveal the negative trend that leaders, particularly company grade officers, pay less attention to the self-development domain than the others. In addition, all leaders surveyed maintain that education from the institutional domain is less beneficial to their development than experience gained in the operational domain.

Tacit Knowledge Defined

In highlighting personal self-development, this article does not discount the importance of the operational and institutional domains. These domains clearly serve as a foundation in developing critical thinking and problem solving skills essential to preparing leaders and units for dynamic environments. Yet experience, education, and training gained in the operational and institutional domains simply cannot address all possible future scenarios.

The accrual of personal knowledge, whether explicit knowledge gained through training, education, and repetition, or tacit knowledge gained from personal study, experience, and reflection, enhances the ability to implement creative solutions and mitigate uncertainty. Where increases in explicit knowledge result directly from formal instruction or traditional study, tacit knowledge “resists introspection and articulation...[and is] defined as knowledge that people do not know they have and/or find difficult to articulate.” Tacit knowledge is also “personal knowledge drawn from everyday

In Hindsight, Today’s Imbalance in Leader Development Efforts is Easily Explained

experience that helps individuals solve real-world practical problems.” Tacit knowledge is not only a measure of practical intelligence, but it is also essential to intuition and provides more innate opportunity to adapt to and shape the environment around us.

A 1998 Army Research Institute study of tacit knowledge revealed its many practical benefits. This study compared tacit knowledge inventories among a sampling of platoon leaders, company commanders, and battalion commanders, and evaluated the relationship between tacit knowledge and military leadership; quantified whether tacit knowledge was an indicator of success; and assessed applicability of tacit knowledge in leader development. The study revealed that at all three echelons assessed (platoon, company, and battalion), tacit knowledge ratings directly correlated with ratings of effectiveness among superiors, peers, and subordinates. Furthermore, increased tacit knowledge among battalion commanders clearly assisted them in “communicating a vision, helping subordinates identify strengths and weaknesses, and using subordinates as change agents.”

Intuitively combining tacit knowledge with broader explicit knowledge gained through personal self-development improves practical intelligence and cannot help but improve the profession’s ability respond to uncertainty. When leaders face an uncertain and unpredictable environment, success on the battlefield places a premium on improvisation, an essential component of mental agility. Improvisation is about “making something out of previous experience and knowledge.” Self-development efforts that deliberately seek to explore a wide range of unfamiliar topics only broaden the foundation of explicit knowledge necessary for problem solving in uncertain, complex environments.

Commit to Self-Study

The significant limitation of personal self-development is that it remains an individual responsibility. As Army doctrine acknowledges, “For self-development to be effective, all Soldiers must be completely honest with themselves to understand personal strengths and gaps in knowledge...and then take the appropriate, continuing steps.” In reality, the 2011 Annual Survey of Army Leadership (documenting the worst trends in self-development) revealed that only about two-thirds of leaders specifically understand what to address in support of their own self-development. This deficiency was particularly evident in the ranks of company grade officers, where only 56% of these officers understood where they should focus self-development efforts. In

addition, the survey reflected less time afforded to participate in self-development. Only 59% of leaders surveyed believed their superiors expected them to participate in self-development (down from 64% the year prior). Among the leaders who thought their superiors supported self-development,

only half agreed that the chain of command provides the requisite time to accomplish self-development.

Internalizing Self-Development Efforts Throughout Entire Cohorts of Military Leaders Will Increase Intellectual Capacity, Leverage Practical, Emotional, and Social Intelligence, and Increase Attention and Awareness

Conclusion

Given these statistics, the profession is left with two options. The first option would be establishing an “accountable and reportable” self-development program (separate from structured self-development for non-commissioned officers that more closely resembles learning in the institutional domain). Accountability will increase dialogue and awareness to better focus self-development efforts, and reporting these efforts would offer opportunities to identify sources of tacit knowledge among the force that could be applied to yet unknown challenges. The second option is to remind officers of their sworn

commitment upon commissioning, as captured in Brigadier General S.L.A. Marshall's first edition of the *Armed Forces Officer*. This commitment both inspires and reminds, "the commissioned person must constantly and relentlessly acquire and reacquire the justifications of officership in order to be worthy of the title of officer." Marshall specified that this depended on an officer's willingness to acquire knowledge and internalize duty and service.

The varied operational and institutional opportunities inherent to the Army Leader Development Model already reinforce critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Internalizing self-development efforts throughout entire cohorts of military leaders will increase intellectual capacity, leverage practical, emotional, and social intelligence, and increase attention and awareness. This team effort will also invest in the long-term development of leaders better prepared for the uncertain strategic horizon.

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The Strategic Development of Tactical #Leadership

By: Matt Rasmussen & Andrew Steadman

Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Braddock was nothing but grateful with how his career had gone so far. Properly mentored as a junior infantry officer, he had succeeded in key leadership positions along the way and was now beginning battalion command. His training and assignment experiences were almost entirely at the brigade level and below, which made him a knowledgeable, confident tactical leader.

Braddock had also once been an avid student of military history and doctrine, but the pace of his self-development had slackened in recent years.

Understandably, his free time was going to his three exuberant children, his wife, and her aging parents. He no longer had the mental energy or the margin in life to be as focused on tactical warfighting as he once was.

Then one morning in his office after physical training, Braddock found a moment to scan the latest military headlines: “Army Chief of Staff Speaks on Countering ISIS,” “Soldier Modernization Program Stalls in Congress,” “Defense Secretary to Recommend Pay & Allowance Reform.”

A realization came over him, "I could be dealing with these high echelon challenges in just five short years. And I'm not prepared for any of it."

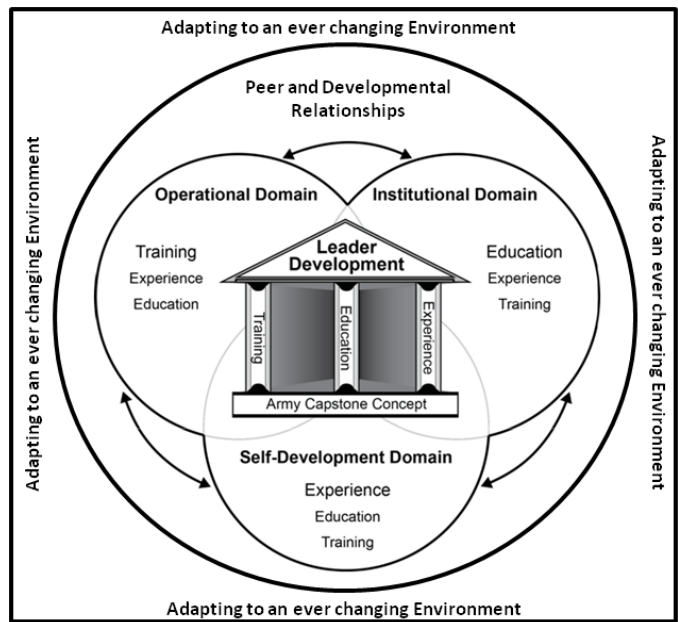
To those in most of today's military career tracks, Braddock's feeling of unpreparedness would be rational. Today's mid-level military leaders looking upward at the complexities of future strategic leadership and back at their personal experiences must acknowledge that their current competencies are predominantly tactical. A natural question arises: Should I be preparing for strategic leadership now? This article tackles that question.

A Natural Tension, Growing Upward and Teaching Downward

Each service's professional military education path gives leaders a glimpse of life at the highest echelons, but brief weeks of schooling is not enough. As they ascend the ranks, those who will lead at senior levels must gain the needed skills from operational experiences, personal mentorship from more senior leaders, and through their own self-development.

Leaders like Lieutenant Colonel Braddock realize that they must shift their focus of self development to higher echelons as they become more senior; they must "grow upward" into operational and strategic leadership. But growing upward can come at the cost of "teaching downward," that is, preparing their current organization for success.

Growing upward is a leader's personal effort to prepare for success in future years, while teaching downward is that leader's effort to grow those for



Army Leader Development Model 1

whom he or she is responsible. The two components compete for the time and mental capacity of the leader and create a natural tension for those who know that to continue leading, they must continue learning. Growing upward can be seen as selfish and career focused, even overly ambitious. On the other hand, teaching downward is selfless and fulfills the leader's responsibility to the profession and their institution as teacher, coach, and mentor.

How then should leaders balance the requirements of developing the current team while preparing to lead future ones?

A Balancing Act

Every hour is a choice, a statement of priorities. And every hour of self-development carries with it the decision to develop some areas and ignore others. Leaders who decide to intellectually prepare for their upcoming years of service must evaluate the terrain to determine what is appropriate for their current job, their station in life, and their goals. They should keep a few principles in mind.

First, leaders must lead at the level to which they are assigned. If in command at the tactical level, like Lieutenant Colonel Braddock, they cannot divert their attention from preparing their unit for its mission. Readiness is a non-negotiable priority. Depending on the strength of that unit's junior leaders, this may require that leaders spend substantial time personally teaching the fundamentals of tactical competency to the formation. In these instances, it could be inappropriate for the leader to spend his time

ruminating on defense spending or the status of civil-military relations. These topics surely have their place, but not at the expense of mission-critical development.

Company and field grade leaders serving at the operational and strategic levels, maybe as aide-de-camp or working on a staff or initiatives group, have a similar responsibility. They must master their current assignment, but cannot ignore the fact that leadership at the tactical level may still await them. These leaders must balance their growth accordingly and avoid getting lost in the lofty ideas of their current assignment. Warfighting expertise, especially in the warfare of the 21st century, demands that leaders regularly revisit the basics.

Next, when there is room for leaders to grow upward, they must not confuse self-development with unit development. With good reason, for example, the previous Army Chief of Staff's Professional Reading List separates "Battles and Campaigns" from "Strategy and the Strategic Environment."

The leader's particular niche of study may not be appropriate for junior leaders and, frankly, might be a waste of time. Imagine a battalion intelligence officer, a finance major in college, spending hours to create a class that explores the various retirement benefit models that Department of Defense is considering. What's interesting for her is irrelevant for her team members, especially at the expense of their tactical intelligence competencies.

Honest self-assessment is the start of this growth process. Leaders must be objective about their self-development and their unit's development, asking key questions that include but are not limited to:

- What areas of study will improve my capability as a proficient and trusted leader?
- What knowledge does my team need to fulfill the mission of one and two echelons higher?

- What distractions can I eliminate from my team's environment that will allow them to focus on core competencies?
- What areas should I cultivate for myself (as well as for my team) that will improve my overall effectiveness (i.e. personal/family resiliency, study of leadership, productivity, health and fitness, etc.)?

The leader's professional development journey should be intentional and designed to achieve specific effects—for both the officer and the institution.

The Intangible Quality

It is safe to say that the institutional domain of leader development, professional military education, cannot alone prepare leaders to achieve strategic success.

Self-development is a crucial component of long term service, but so is individual talent. The most successful leaders have the ability to adapt to the environments in which they find themselves,

regardless of the echelon. They learn people and processes very quickly, and rapidly adjust to organizational norms, bringing early value to the team. Prior experience and professional schooling are less important for the leaders who can seamlessly reorient to new conditions. One might call this *intellectual agility*, and although it's an intangible quality and likely impossible to teach, it might be the decisive factor for career-long success.

Tactical Focus for Strategic Success

Continued service brings with it the obligation to prepare for increased responsibility. The program of professional military education accounts for some of this development, but leaders cannot hope for future success without mentorship and dedicated self-development. Leaders must take charge of this process, but not at the cost of their unit's readiness.

Instead, they would be wise to heed the advice of a senior officer who said, *“Lead at your level, think at your boss’s level, and accept that you’ll just have to adapt to everything beyond that.”*

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#Leadership in an Ambiguous World

By: Steven L. Foster

In the 2015 National Military Strategy, then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey referred to the global security environment as “the most unpredictable I have seen in 40 years of service,” and called for “greater agility, innovation, and integration.”[1] Recent events and trends such as the rise of the Islamic State, Russian and Chinese challenges to global order, increased cyber attacks, and an uncertain global economy all portend the Chairman’s description will remain the case for years to come. In light of this trend, America’s national security community must be led by men and women

who thrive in the ambiguity that comprises the current and future environment. To further develop the current generation of leaders and to grow the next generation, the military must adapt its training and education pipelines, reform its promotion and assignment mechanisms to reward a more diverse set of leadership traits, and embrace a new paradigm of leadership in coming years.

The quote at the beginning of this article was highlighted by Alan Beyerchen in his noted article, “Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Unpredictability of

War,” a highly-regarded examination of Clausewitz’s seminal work.[2] When Beyerchen published this article in early 1993, little evidence existed that would suggest or indicate that America could face the sort of conflicts it would find itself in a decade later. The “nonlinear” systems that dominate war that Beyerchen proposes have emerged as the norm within the Global War on Terror, yet could be applied as easily to the emerging challenges America faces today, and will continue to face for years. Rapid change in global factors such as technology, economics, social trends, and globalization all lend additional layers of complexity that leaders must be aware of in order to be successful in combat, and further exacerbate the “ill-defined problems” our doctrine seeks to counter.[3] Doctrinal manuals alone while necessary, are insufficient to help leaders overcome the complexity of the wars of the future.

Instead, Clausewitz posits an internal trait that must be cultivated in order to develop the next generation of leaders, one he terms “genius.”[4] These “peculiar qualifications of understanding and soul” represent the innate abilities of a leader to overcome the

uncertainty of combat. War alone in the present and near future is not the only province in which uncertainty will dominate, however, thus lending further to the assertion that leaders should be groomed to rethink the assumptions that drive planning and executing military operations. Just as Clausewitz said, “In war, the end result is never final,” the era of global terror and “gray zone” conflicts will continue to perpetuate the notion that ambiguity will define the next generation of conflict. The global problems we now face, stemming from issues that are additive and do not happen in isolation, cannot be solved by regional solutions alone. If leaders cannot or will not embrace this fact, they will struggle in this environment.

Often, particularly at the strategic level, ambiguity in guidance, direction, and problem identification rules

the day. Translating strategic documents into a clear, direct understanding of the operating environment derived from a nebulous array of facts and assumptions is a process deeply ingrained in the training and education of operational and strategic level planners. While operational design is only one step, it is for the most part only as good as its practitioners. In many cases, the problems that frequently present themselves emerge from even less guidance, and at the most inopportune times. It is not uncommon for today’s military leaders to be required to begin planning on a blank sheet of paper or whiteboard, from only a cursory background of the issue to be solved. While not ideal of course, this is often the environment in which we operate.

So, how can the military cultivate these traits in our current leaders, as well as the next generation? It

starts with recruitment, accession, and leader development. Noted astrophysicist Neil Degraffe Tyson recently Tweeted, “In science, when human behavior enters the equation, things go nonlinear. That’s why Physics is easy and Sociology is hard.” The same logic could be

applied to military leadership. Human agency plays a key role in the complexity that permeates our environment on many levels, but it need not be the cause. Too often in the military, organizational inertia may stifle creative thought and emplace barriers to the creative process due to overly regimented communication and planning mechanisms. This carries over to professional military education venues, where the oft-quoted maxim is “We won’t teach you what to think, we’ll teach you how to think.” Unfortunately this is often not the case, and regimented rubrics and constructs restrain disruptive thinking. Antithetical to this paradigm though, the cognitive domain is where the skills to lead in the world of tomorrow truly lie. We should look for ways to not only embrace and capitalize on the importance and value of relevant doctrine, but to

Although our intellect always longs for clarity and certainty, our nature often finds uncertainty fascinating.

Clausewitz, On War, Book 1, Chapter 1

further leverage educational opportunities that challenge leaders to think beyond textbook solutions where the results contribute to learning rather than mission success or failure.

Pending reform to the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which turns 30 this year, is already on the agenda. This provides a prime opportunity for those influencing the next generation of military structure and its accompanying education requirements to relook at the manner in which we train our leaders.

Professional military education is not the only venue for potential opportunity to nurture and develop leadership. Through “broadening opportunities” with industry, international partners, joint assignments, and advanced education in civilian institutions, the services can further hone the innovation and critical thinking skills of leaders. Moreover, our recruitment and accessions programs must focus on seeking out and developing those with the cognitive skills to excel in a world that is no longer made for textbook solutions.

The nature of serving as a military leader lends itself to an innate desire to be in control of one’s circumstances whenever possible. That said, the future is not, and likely will not be so clear, and future leaders must be prepared to succeed in this environment. By embracing a new standard in training, and more importantly education and development, we can capitalize on the ability of innovative leaders to link new explanations to old problems. If so, the military can create a new paradigm in leadership, and capitalize on the potential of those who possess the *coup d’oeil*, and who can thrive in the ambiguity and uncertainty that will no doubt encompass the next generation of conflict.

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#Leadership: What Did You See?

By: Steve Luczynski

When describing the fundamental rules of leadership, the phrase "see-think-do" is an especially useful framework; these words summarize the basic technique for assessing student performance among student pilots. The best way to determine where a student's problem began is by asking a series of questions—What did you see? What did you think? What did you do? Once you know these answers, you are able to offer specific techniques to fix the exact mistake that created the student's problem. As a result, your instruction is more effective because you

quickly get to the point and fix the root cause of the problem.

Instructor and Student

Imagine a debrief between an instructor pilot and his student after a one-versus-one training mission where the instructor does not closely follow this technique:

Instructor: "Let's take a look at this part of the engagement and see how you could have avoided getting shot. Tell me what was happening right here."

Student: "I was thinking about how I was getting closer to the floor since we had been maneuvering and descending quite a bit and as I maneuvered towards it I was also thinking you might start moving into a position for a gun solution."

Instructor: "That's good thinking, but you didn't maneuver out of the way in time and that is why I was able to achieve a valid gun kill on you. Next time that happens, I want you to think this way instead...(detailed explanation)...and here's how I want you to maneuver...(more detailed explanation). Any questions?"

Student: "Only one. Do you have any techniques for knowing your altitude so you don't have to keep looking forward? I understand what you told me, but I never saw you move into that position since I was looking forward at my altitude during that time."

The student's decision to stay above the minimum altitude and his execution to do so were correct based on what he saw, which was his decreasing altitude on his displays when he looked into his cockpit. The instructor's techniques for deciding when to maneuver against a threat and how to execute those maneuvers were also correct for what he assumed the student saw. The instructor's feedback was not effective because it did not address the root cause of the student's problem, which was not seeing the same thing the instructor saw. The instructor could have avoided this problem if he simply asked the student, what did you see?

Leader and Follower

Now replace instructor and student with leader and follower. Think about situations where you have been in either role where a simple difference of perspectives unnecessarily created problems. I believe the differences in what a leader and follower sees creates the majority of the friction and bad

situations. While not addressed in detail here, decision-making and execution are also significant contributors and worthy of further discussion.

The value of discussing ways to fix a bad situation and prevent it from happening again cannot be emphasized enough, whether in a formal debrief like this example, a "hotwash," or a regular staff meeting. After the fact, when time is not a constraint, it takes effort on the part of the leader to initiate this type of follow-up and not get tied up in simply moving on to the next task. I have found it difficult to gain open and honest feedback without leading the discussion to some extent, but these three questions are effective. I have also found these questions to be the best means for helping me reason through why a mistake occurred and focus on asking the right questions to address it. This is a veiled way of saying these questions help me calm down if I get mad about a particular outcome and find myself getting angry at my subordinate, or even my peers, for what I perceive to be a particular mistake. By asking myself these questions, I am often able to understand better what their perception may have been and how it led to their decision to execute a particular action. More often than not, I discovered it was merely a difference in perception typically stemming from a lack of clear guidance on my part.

This way of thinking can also be useful for a follower. If leadership is discussing a problem and is already asking these three questions, you can contribute more effectively by offering specific ideas to fix its true cause. If not, you may be able to drive the conversation by asking these questions because they are less likely to invoke any sense that you may be questioning his or her actions. Asking to know more about your leader's perceptions not only yields insight into his or her way of thinking and perception of a situation, but also into the thinking and perception of those leaders above who greatly influence your own leader's actions.

So far, I have only focused on these concepts in the context of a discussion that occurs after the fact. As

important, though, your effectiveness as a leader and a follower increases when you can answer these questions before a mission begins. As a leader, you set your

expectations for your followers when you brief before a mission. The details you provide ensure everyone shares a common view of the situation you all will face, the tasks needed to accomplish your mission, and how you will go about doing them. Your brief should convey what decisions you will likely make and how you expect everyone to execute the operation.

This also applies in a staff or office environment. Staff meetings, working groups, and other interactions are opportunities to discuss expectations based on the conditions surrounding that particular project or task. These opportunities also allow you to provide insight into the decisions you will make along the way. This manner of thinking helps you maximize the time spent in these meetings by focusing your discussions towards aligning the perceptions of you and your followers.

Your responsibilities as a follower during this preparation phase are the same as previously discussed in the debriefing phase. When you recognize your leader's use of these three questions, you are able to contribute more effectively by asking specific questions to clarify any of these three key points. If your leader is not using this construct, focusing your questions on these three areas allows you to clarify any misunderstandings without dominating the limited time available.

Asking the right questions to fix a problem as early as possible is even more critical during execution. Time will likely be of greater concern with less of it available to have drawn-out discussions trying to answer these questions. Too often, military leaders feel obligated to make immediate inputs as a means to demonstrate their competency and increase confidence in their ability to lead. By keeping these three questions in mind, you are more likely to

Asking the right questions to fix a problem as early as possible is even more critical during execution.

identify where a subordinate's problem is just beginning despite your inevitable lack of complete situational awareness. Use the time available, no matter how

limited, to ask these questions and confirm your perceptions, then offer your inputs to prevent further issues. If you do not have time, then you must rely on your experience and judgment, still focusing on these questions to make the best input possible.

In the military, we know that followers must immediately execute the orders given to them without question. This framework does not change that principle. Your leader cannot possibly brief every detail for every possible contingency you will encounter. Using this framework should simplify your decision to seek further guidance once a situation differs from your leader's original expectations, or to execute as your leader expects using your own best judgment.

What did you see, think, and do are three powerful questions for determining where to offer inputs to prevent relatively small mistakes from becoming much larger problems. This three-question construct is applicable for both leaders and followers to use and most often thought of in terms of learning from mistakes after a mission or project is complete. While true, the best use of this construct is before those begin as a means to synchronize perceptions and expectations. Even in benign staff environments, this construct can be useful, if for no other reason than to inculcate this framework into the thinking of leaders and followers so they are both better able to use it in more critical and stressful situations.

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On Joint #Leadership: The Importance of Communication

By: Stewart Welch

When I first arrived at the Pentagon to work on the Chairman of the Joint Chief's staff, I was a major with no staff experience and much to learn. Fortunately, a Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant gave me two helpful nuggets of wisdom. First he said, "Sir, most problems I've seen are from a) not knowing who is in charge, b) not using the chain of command, or c) not understanding the commander's intent." Sage advice for any officer: know your chain of command, know your boss, and understand his or her intent. Second, "Remember... *communication is the key.*" This is spot-on advice. Effective communication is conveying a

message clearly, and it is an essential part of leadership.[1] In my short experience on the Joint Staff, I've observed how senior leaders practice good communication in three primary ways: on a personal level through speaking and writing, at an organizational level from commander to subordinate, and on a national level in developing foreign policy.

Personal Leadership

General officers are usually exceptional communicators. Most of them write clearly and speak

articulately in almost any situation and on almost any subject. Their secret is simple: preparation. Generals and admirals prepare for everything. Public speaking comes naturally to some, but thorough preparation makes extemporaneous speaking look easy. Many will not speak in public without preparing ahead of time. Furthermore, when talking to the press, most senior officials are keenly aware that they are only responsible for *an* answer, regardless of the question.

Whether writing or speaking, effective communicators do not sacrifice clarity for accuracy. Regurgitating every minute fact of an issue is usually not helpful. It is better to present *sufficient* details to tell the story. Clarity is essential. A rookie staff officer might write three paragraphs, which must then be reduced to a single paragraph by his colonel or general officer boss before going to the Chairman. The ability to condense complex thoughts into simple and clear language is challenging, but it is essential for any staff officer. This is the art of the elevator speech. Learning *what* to say and *how* to say it concisely takes time, but practice makes perfect.

Good writers know their audience and get to the point. Shorter is better. No fluff, no clutter. Delete unnecessary words. If you can't say it in one page, you probably need to rethink your premise. For good or ill, generals don't have time to read four pages on every issue, so remember the infamous quote: "*I'm sorry this letter is so long, I didn't have time to write a shorter one.*" [2] Writing is hard and editing takes time, but a concise message is like gold to a busy reader.

Convincing Versus Compelling

The best general officers understand the difference between convincing and compelling. To *convince* is to elicit a voluntary decision. To *compel* is to force compliance absent a voluntary decision. Consider Saddam Hussein - in 1991 he voluntarily retreated from Kuwait after he was convinced he could not withstand the continued U.S./Coalition assault. He had multiple options (stay and fight, surrender,

negotiate) but he freely decided to do what we wanted. In 2003 however, he was compelled to climb out of a hole in the ground in Tikrit after he was captured at gunpoint. Compulsion means he had no choice in the matter. Effective leadership requires both convincing and compelling, and the wisdom to know which to use in what situation. Most generals are able to convince their troops and compel their enemies. Truly exceptional leaders can convince anyone to do what they want (think Colin Powell).

In the joint world, the art of convincing is particularly important. This is especially true in interactions with civilian employees, who may or may not be familiar with military issues. Effectiveness as a joint leader is directly dependent on one's ability to persuade. In order to make headway in a room full of non-military policy-makers, one must be knowledgeable enough to distill an issue to its basic premise or dilemma, and then walk people through the range of options on how to respond. This requires stating reasons on why a particular course of action is better than the others, and doing so without losing your audience in a maze of military jargon and acronyms. Most senior officers understand this, and they know the importance of persuasion.

Organizational Leadership

Effective leaders do not need to compel their own troops; they inspire them. They motivate people to want to accomplish the mission. Ineffective leaders might resort to compelling subordinates through rank or intimidation, but in my experience, the results are never as good as those who can inspire. Effective leadership hinges on conveying trust in subordinates and peers. If people understand the importance of the mission, and they know the importance of their individual contributions to the mission, then they will perform beyond expectations. Joint teams operate at the speed of trust, where the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts. [3] This is what the American military does better than anybody on earth, and it demands effective communication.

Effective leaders understand what an organization is *for*, not just what it *does*. They begin by evaluating purpose and only then distribute and manage tasks. Organizational duties should match an organization's purpose. Effective leaders are also careful to develop necessary forcing functions to realize organizational goals. They identify what is important and then measure progress in those areas while communicating clear priorities to subordinates. As the old saying goes, *plan your work and work your plan*.

Effective joint leaders are strategic thinkers who ask big questions and encourage their staffs to do the same. They do not get hung up on small solutions or insignificant details. They define problems before running off to solve them. They welcome feedback and accept push-back on their ideas. Furthermore, joint officers often support decision-makers who must know and continually re-evaluate planning assumptions. Because conditions change rapidly in today's complex world, they must identify both assumptions and risk, since these are the weakest parts of any plan. This is all part of strategic thinking.

National Leadership

Joint leaders must distinguish between *can do* and *should do*. In the policy world, there are two types of recommendations: what you think *should happen*, and what *has a chance of happening*. It is easy to confine one's thinking to the second category, particularly in an era of tight policy restrictions where the reluctance to use the military instrument of power is pervasive. For instance, military planners might exclude recommending certain kinetic courses of action because they know civilian leadership will likely reject lethal options. But this should not be the case. Just because certain policy-makers are hesitant to use ground forces does not mean that those options should go unconsidered, particularly if they could accomplish a national security objective such as "degrade, dismantle, and destroy ISIL."^[4] A range of options are available in most situations, and interagency discussions should

consider the whole spectrum of responses that advance national security objectives, not just that narrow portion deemed politically acceptable. Senior military leaders must therefore know when to push the limits of policy limitations, and when to back off before losing credibility.

In this respect, joint officers need the right combination of boldness and tact. They need to be the contrarian when necessary, and use sufficient tact to present a case in an unemotional, convincing way. Advising a room full of young, well-educated political appointees on keeping all options on the table may not be easy, but it is crucial. Senior military leaders must also strive to keep the issues of policy, strategy, operations, and tactics in proper alignment. These issues should remain nested within one another, although they often become convoluted in practice. Policy committees in D.C. should not be pining over insignificant tactical details of operations occurring seven thousand miles away. This is akin to playing checkers while our opponents are playing chess. In this author's opinion, military leaders in the interagency should encourage long-term strategic thinking, and facilitate an interagency dialogue that allows the combatant commanders both the space and authority to deal with the day-to-day issues of war. Again, this hinges on trust.

Can Speak Versus Should Speak

Finally, knowing when *not* to communicate is also important. My boss told me about his first time on Capitol Hill to address staffers from the Senate Armed Service Committee. He was the lone uniformed officer sitting on a panel of civilians from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and Department of State, and he was feeling pretty important just to have a seat at the table. After about ten minutes, the tone of the questions changed and a legislative affairs assistant sitting behind him quietly passed him a small folded note that read, "Stick to talking points—this is about to get ugly." He didn't say a word for the entire hour and wisely avoided the wrath of angry staffers who focused their frustration on those doing

the talking. He was prepared to talk, but he knew better than volunteering answers to questions he was not asked. This illustrates two important lessons: First, know when to keep your mouth shut. Second, trust knowledgeable staff and co-workers. They will keep you out of trouble.

Summary

Leadership is demanding, and effective communication is critical for any military leader. Clear writing and speaking helps them to build and maintain personal relationships. It enables them to run effective organizations, whether in combat or on staff. It allows them to connect task with purpose to turn organizations into teams, whether squadrons, battalions, platoons, or military staffs. In a joint environment at the highest levels of government, crisp communication is necessary to present best military advice to civilian leadership. This requires more convincing than compelling, and in this author's opinion, it is more of an art than a science. Decades of military experience and the greatest idea in the world amounts to nothing if you cannot convince decision-makers that your course of action is the best option available.

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#Leadership and the Art of Restraint

By: Jo Brick

'I spend a great deal of time imprisoned in my office, captive to the demands of Canberra. As much as possible I shield the unit commanders in Afghanistan from the deadening touch of Defence bureaucrats and political wrangling, but not always successfully. I tear my hair out in frustration when I am second-guessed, undermined or contradicted by staff officers half a world away; sometimes I get actual help. I have a bit of a blue with my boss, a turf war; we patch it up and get on with it'. - Major General John Cantwell (Retired, Australian Army)[1]

Major General Cantwell's words articulate the frustration of having to justify actions at the tactical level to those far removed from the area of operations. There are certainly important reasons for having to do this, such as the need to update higher levels of command with the progress of operations, and to explain why certain incidents have occurred. Indeed, accountability for decisions made and actions taken is an enduring feature of civil-military relations in democratic nations.

The accessibility and ubiquity of communications technology in modern times has been a boon for military forces by enabling greater cross-domain connectivity and coordination between sea, land, and air forces, and also across coalitions. However, this increased connectivity has often tempted higher commands to exert interference with the details of war. Just as 'helicopter parenting' can stifle a child's independence, learning, and growth 'helicopter leadership' can undermine a subordinate commander's confidence and innovation. At worst, it can distract subordinate units from planning and conducting operations to achieve the mission, caused by the need to invest staff time to answer seemingly inane questions from officers far from the fight and devoid of detailed understanding of operational context.

Success in warfare will continue to rely on communications technology to enable coordination of effective fires and the manoeuvre of forces across different operational domains. The challenge is for higher commanders to exercise restraint by avoiding the use of this technology to unduly interfere in the operational details. The temptation to interfere can be mitigated by reinvigorating mission command principles, focusing on professionalism, and investing in human relationships.

Auftragstaktik Revisited

Sonnenberger's paper on the importance of initiative to the effective implementation of the philosophy of *auftragstaktik* (called 'mission command' in contemporary command and control doctrine) explains the origins of the concept:

Auftragstaktik originated from an acceptance of the idea of decentralized execution based upon the mindset that commanders and soldiers who cannot be directly controlled have to act independently within their superior's intent.[2]

The very concept of centralized command and decentralized execution is consistent with modern

military forces that have the ability to project forces regionally and globally. 'Commander's Intent' embodies the former and is a common feature of planning for operations and is found in operational orders. It is a means of expressing the Commander's broad concepts and desired end state, with the details of the method for achieving this intent left to lower echelons and subject matter experts, embodying the latter. The concept is bounded by the overall mission to be achieved, so there are some limits to the exercise of initiative.

Mission command is essential because of von Moltke's axiom that no plan survives contact.[3] When subordinates are allowed to exercise initiative, they are able to adapt to the needs of the operational environment they have been dealt, not the environment they planned for. This enables them to formulate a more rapid and decisive response without having to wait for higher command to issue orders.

While the concept of mission command is attractive on paper, there is one complicating factor: humans. In the Napoleonic era, when the concept was first articulated by the Prussians for the military forces of their time, higher commanders had no choice but to trust their subordinates to act within their intent as there were very little means to monitor subordinates in detail.[4] By contrast, contemporary military operations are punctuated by increased oversight enabled by communications technology. Commanders have the ability to reach down to the 'weeds' and take control of the minutiae of war, which tends to undermine the effectiveness of leadership throughout the command chain. Restraint from the lure of technology as a means of micromanaging lower command elements can be mitigated by respecting the professionalism of lower commanders and building relationships of trust.

Professionalism and Trust

Generally, the creation of a continuum of military education – from initial training to command and

staff colleges – coupled with the inculcation of codes of conduct has created professional military forces. Major military forces conduct training exercises to test existing capability and doctrine. Members of the profession of arms generally develop the ability to operate in more complex environments through experiential learning, mentoring, and leadership. The key point here is that these experiences, formal education, and training processes create the members of the profession of arms who are generally competent at undertaking the duties and responsibilities of their role.

However, an understanding that subordinate commanders are professional and capable is only half the story. The other half relies on the establishment of relationships of trust throughout the command chain. These relationships can be established via a number of means, including conducting mission rehearsal exercises prior to deploying a force, which provides the deploying unit with an opportunity to bond as a team for a specific operational deployment. This enables commanders to work through complex problems and establish the human connections that are vital prerequisites to trusting relationships. As Sonnenberger points out in his paper, mission command is dependent on both professionalism and trust, which also contribute significantly to mitigating against the use of the so-called ‘1000 mile screwdriver’ by higher command.

Conclusion

‘Everyone hates their higher headquarters’ is an axiom within the military profession, borne out of the shared experience of commanders reaching down to the tactical level. It does not need to be this way. While higher commanders have a myriad of communications technologies at their disposal to coordinate military operations, this technology should not be used to intervene unnecessarily in the realm of subordinate commanders, specifically in situations where personal preferences may differ rather than for any other reason related to operational requirements.

Subordinate commanders are not likely to appreciate the higher command second-guessing their plans or critiquing their decisions. ‘Helicopter leadership’ is likely to create a negative command climate and sour relationships throughout the command chain. Wasting time on dealing with bad relationships between commanders distracts from the fight. The ability of higher command to restrain from interfering with subordinate commanders can be mitigated by a revitalisation of the concepts of mission command, relying on the competence of subordinate commanders, and building strong relationships of trust throughout the command chain.

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The Silver Bullet of #Leadership

By: Ross Coffman

For countries to be successful in the complexity that is modern warfare, they must be an adaptable and agile force. Recent experiences around the world, including in Iraq and Afghanistan, demand that we develop cohesive teams that can thrive in the adversity found on the battlefields of today and in the future. These teams enable our nation to apply military instruments across every domain, present multiple dilemmas to our enemy, and compel outcomes by our presence. The U.S. Army's *Human Dimension Strategy*, though Army-specific, presents a long-term vision for how military organizations can

build these tools.[1] It outlines the objectives and lines of effort needed, such as the need to develop agile and adaptive leaders with social intelligence. In its most basic form, the human dimension is the interaction of two or more people that enables leadership. Leadership is, and always will be, a human-to-human endeavor. A key piece of being successful in this endeavor is when leaders have enhanced awareness and embrace social intelligence. It is an often neglected but critical component that empowers units to flourish in chaotic environments. The military needs trusted professionals who can

navigate through complex social environments, build relationships, and communicate effectively. Leaders can build these skills today and in the future with social intelligence.

Leadership is the critical component to developing this adaptable and agile force. It is timeless and the most important attribute our military requires to win decisively. The future is and will remain uncertain, so our training and leader development must focus on these skills. Effective leadership is enabled by social intellect and requires leaders caring about their people and their organization. Although our great military leaders come from a variety of backgrounds and possess unique traits, *Army Leadership* doctrine, identifies twenty-one common character traits of an effective leader:[2]

1. Effective leaders allow space for subordinates to experiment within the bounds of intent-based orders and plans.
2. Effective leadership and leader development require mutual recognition and acceptance of leader and follower roles.
3. Personal courage is not the absence of fear. It is the ability to put fear aside and do what is necessary. Personal courage takes two forms: physical and moral. Effective leaders demonstrate both.
4. Effective leadership begins with developing and maintaining a leader identity
5. Effective leaders are careful not to require their people to violate their beliefs by ordering or encouraging unlawful or unethical actions.
6. The confidence of an effective leader is contagious and permeates the entire organization.
7. Effective leaders control their emotions.
8. Effective leaders are steady, level-headed when under pressure and fatigued, and calm in the face of danger.

9. Units achieve high morale through effective leadership, shared effort, trust, and mutual respect. High morale results in a cohesive team striving to achieve common goals. Competent leaders know that morale holds the team together and sustains it during operations.
10. Effective leaders explain the standards that apply to their organizations and empower subordinates to enforce them.
11. An effective leader instills discipline by training to standard, using rewards and punishment judiciously, instilling confidence, building trust among team members, and ensuring they have the necessary technical and tactical expertise.
12. Effective leaders negotiate around interests rather than positions that tend to be static and unyielding. Negotiation situations often involve multiple issues such as lives, security, resources, and alliances.
13. Effective leaders connect with their followers by sharing hardships and communicating openly to clearly see and feel what goes on from a subordinate's perspective.
14. Effective leaders observe their organizations by getting out to coach, to listen, and to clarify.
15. Effective leaders strive to leave an organization better than they found it and expect other leaders to do the same.
16. Effective leaders encourage open communications and candid observations.
17. Effective leaders recognize that reasonable setbacks and failures occur whether the team does everything right or not. Leaders should express the importance of being competent and motivated, but understand weaknesses exist. Mistakes create opportunities to learn.
18. Effective leaders update in-depth assessments since a thorough assessment

helps implement changes gradually and systematically without causing damaging organizational turmoil.

19. Effective leaders make thoughtful trade-offs between providing too much or too little guidance.
20. Awareness, proper training, and open and frank discussion mitigate some of these factors. Army leaders must consider these external influences and plan accordingly. An effective leader recognizes the tools needed to adapt in changing situations.
21. Effective leaders at the strategic level not only make timely decisions but also sense at what level of detail to engage and what to delegate.

Similar lists of character traits, displayed by effective leaders, can be found in other leadership references, books, and articles. The list below summarizes the common traits, skills, and techniques needed to be effective according to several bestselling authors.[3] The human dimension is again, at its core a human-to-human interaction. Those marked with a star (*) deal specifically with the human dimension of our profession; as can be seen, the human dimension permeates leadership:

- Be honest with yourself and your team*
- Be knowledgeable about your trade/profession
- Character matters*
- Invest in your people*
- Lead and follow with equal passion*
- Be loyal to those around you and yourself*
- Remain self-disciplined
- Do not feel entitled/remains humble
- Communicate effectively*
- Put people first*
- Be the best individual, team member, manager, and leader you can be*

- Have respect for people, the company, and the standards*
- Do what you say you are going to do*
- When you need help - ask*
- Have a positive attitude*
- Put your subordinates in positions to maximize their strengths and enable their development*
- Seek advice and counsel when you are unsure*
- Give great guidance to empower subordinates*
- Clearly articulate the vision of the organization*
- Create opportunity for the company and your people*
- Make the company a place where others want to come to work*
- Learn the power of no*

A leader has many areas to master in order to gain effectiveness. Almost all of the recommendations proposed by military and civilian authors require an increase of human interaction. To become better at human interaction, a leader needs *social intelligence*:

Social intelligence is the ability to be an effective team member that thrives in complex social environments, adapts to diverse cultures, communicates effectively, and builds relationships.[4]

Social intelligence is paramount to effective leadership. Our leaders must possess this ability to successfully lead our forces today and in the future. This enables leaders to maximize their organization's potential, regardless of the environment. However, training techniques for this skill are largely absent from leadership references, professional military education, and military doctrine.

How do we as an institution train this skill to our leaders?

The skill required improve social intelligence is simple: care. Caring is the common thread within all examples of social intellect. Focus leader development programs to instill the following traits to increase this intellect:

- Care for subordinates
- Care about the organization's success
- Care less about yourself than others by embracing servant leadership

Caring for Your Subordinates

Effective leaders care about their subordinate's capabilities, well-being, and interests while maintaining a professional relationship. Standards must be enforced and candor is essential during this process. They are your Soldiers, not your friends. Do not compromise your authority by developing an inappropriate relationship. Caring is ensuring your Soldiers know how to fight and win. You are the primary trainer to develop proficiency in assigned duties and responsibilities. Care enough to prepare them for their combat mission.

Care about their well-being, life challenges, relationships, and financial situation. Care enough to be interested in what makes your Soldiers unique. Learn about their interests and why they serve. You cannot apply situational leadership without knowing who they are as individuals.

Leaders that care for their men and women remove the majority of a unit's friction. Removing this friction significantly increases available energy. Each leader will use different techniques to care for their Soldiers, but as long as the feeling is genuine the leader will be successful in this endeavor.

Caring About Organizational Success

Leaders that care about the organization's success see the big picture, solve problems that help the entire team, and identify areas for improvement. Leaders that see the big picture and care about the success of the greater team are invaluable. These leaders quickly improve the organization as all are focused on our combined success. If the collective success of the organization always outweighs that of the subordinate team, everyone wins.

Leaders must also identify roadblocks to the organization's mission accomplishment. Once identified, the leader must either fix the issue or ensure another member of the team removes the roadblock.

Lastly, leaders must find ways to improve the organization every day. All of us must find ways to improve our unit's systems, processes, and efficiency. When all leaders care about the organization in these three areas the result is predictable; success.

Caring Less About Yourself Than Others

Leaders are entitled to nothing, while Soldiers are entitled to everything. Care less about your individual success and more about the success of others. This is a great measurement of your character.

Leaders must care enough to remain humble and unentitled. Some leaders develop a sense of self-importance and entitlement to the detriment of their organization and profession. These character shortfalls ruin morale and culture. As a leader, care less about yourself and more about your people. When in doubt, put yourself last in priority. The team will succeed because of your humility and focus. Be proud of that accomplishment more than anything else.

Conclusion

Future wars and missions will be fought under a variety of conditions. These include situations of extreme stress, complexity, and uncertainty. All of these factors are enhanced through social intelligence. By adding the principles of care, leaders will learn empathy and improve their comprehension of their units. They will develop the habit of mind that leads to social awareness. A greater mindfulness of people and what frames their actions will empower leaders and units to better understand their operating environment, opening the door to creative solutions.

The demands on the military leaders of the future will change. However, effective leadership empowered by social intelligence allows our men and women to lead and inspire their followers today and in the future. Leaders that care enable our collective success through their social intellect. Caring is the silver bullet of leadership; everything else is technique.

Ross Coffman is a U.S. Army officer with extensive leadership experience. He has held numerous command and staff positions over the past 20 years at home and abroad. He currently serves as the chief of staff of the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division. Follow Ross on Twitter [@Ross_Coffman](#).



Learning Experiences in #Leadership – Ten Lessons from the Circle of Trust

By: Steven M. Leonard

As we settled into the cramped seats of the C-21—the Air Force designation for a Learjet 35A—the aide-de-camp handed *the* boss his BlackBerry and he began thumbing through the email that had flooded his email inbox during the past several hours. Most of it was routine, the types of messages that allowed him to keep his thumb on the pulse of the organization while we traveled. As the aide dug around in his backpack for things the boss might need on the two-and-a-half-hour flight, the rest of the

team focused on tasks specified before takeoff: research questions posed during Congressional visits, the close-out report from the trip, draft emails for the boss to send to leaders with whom he had met, or fine-tune products for our next scheduled stop.

“Hmm...” The sound was less a quizzical expression and more of a growl, low and guttural. Not a good sound. We all paused in mid-keystroke and looked at one another, then the boss. His eyes were fixated on

the small BlackBerry screen in his outstretched hand, staring with an intensity that we recognized. He didn't like what he was reading. After several minutes, he sat up straight in his seat, took off his reading glasses, and handed the BlackBerry over to us. "Read that. The whole thing. Then let's talk."

The boss had been reading a blog post. Not just any post, but one written under a not-so-secret pseudonym by a relatively senior leader, someone who had an axe to grind and did so in a very public way. It wasn't what he said, but how he said it that upset the boss. The post was critical of our strategy in a wartime theater—by itself, not usually a problem—but in a way that was blatantly disrespectful and insulting toward our military and political leadership. That was a problem. A big problem.

For us, it was what we like to call a "learning experience" in the military. It was an opportunity to expand our leadership "skill set," to learn from a mistake, and even better that we could learn from someone else's mistake rather than one of our own making. Over the course of that assignment, there were a lot more similar experiences. Some seemed relatively obvious while others more subtle. Some were generally painless and some clearly "left a mark." But all of them proved essential as we moved on to other assignments; we were far better leaders as a result.

1. **Provide Value.** No matter who you are, what you do, or where you work, you want to be perceived as someone who provides value to the organization. When we talk about a personal leader brand, this is a significant component. If others question your value or wonder aloud what it is that you do for the organization, your perceived value is in jeopardy. To be successful, you have to be value added.
2. **Live the Values of the Organization.** The values of an organization are the mortar that holds the institution together. As long as you are a part of the organization, you should live

those values. If you find that the values of the organization do not reflect your own, then you would be well-served to separate yourself from the organization before those values come into conflict.

3. **Be Honest.** The truth is a powerful, if often misunderstood, tool. It isn't just being honest, it's having the courage to tell the truth when others might not want to hear it. It's understanding that bad news isn't fine wine and it doesn't get better with age. And it's being willing—and able—to be the honest broker when the situation calls for it.
4. **Be Loyal.** Trust and loyalty go hand-in-hand. Demonstrate loyalty, and you are likely to be seen as a trusted member of the organization. Violate that trust, and bad things happen. If you're going to be part of an organization, commit to the cause and give it your all. It will pay benefits beyond your imagination.
5. **Be Humble.** No matter who you are or where you go, there will always be someone else faster, stronger, smarter, and more talented. Never let your ego get in the way of being a valuable member of a bigger team. Never allow yourself to actually believe that you're always the smartest person in the room.
6. **Embrace Risk.** Nothing good comes from playing it safe all of the time. Risk creates opportunities, which in turn bring value. If you really want to be value added, then you need to be comfortable with embracing risk.
7. **Be Your Best.** Giving your best should be the status quo, but it's not. More often than not, people find themselves just trying to keep up, or maybe outperforming someone on their left or right. To truly be your best, you have to challenge yourself, not anyone else. That means setting a bar that pushes you to your limits, then setting it again when you hit it. If you set that bar against someone else's performance, you'll never know for sure just how much you can do.

8. **Be a Team Player.** As a member of an organization, you're a part of something bigger than you, part of a team, part of a family. Don't be the drunk uncle who ruins Thanksgiving. Be positive, be proactive, be reliable. Support your other teammates and celebrate their accomplishments just as they support yours. Be that "go-to" person everyone trusts and admires.
9. **Be a Change Agent.** Change is inevitable. You can either be part of the change or watch it pass you by. And if you continue to find yourself on the sidelines as a spectator in the crowd, you might want to revisit your value to the organization.
10. **Take the Moral High Ground.** Be polite, be professional. Always. The minute you allow yourself to be dragged into a conflict, you give parity and validity to your opponent, while often causing embarrassment your own organization. Never hit "Send" when you're compromised. Take a knee, take the moral high ground.

We didn't do a lot of talking on that flight. Mostly, we listened. We closed our laptops and we shared a very personal lesson in leadership from one of the U.S. Army's senior commanders. Our lesson that day focused on mistakes. People make honest mistakes, and good leaders underwrite those mistakes. But this wasn't an honest mistake, it bore the mark of hubris, of disrespect. It wasn't a mistake he could ignore. He didn't get angry, though: "Facts, not emotions," he said. "Learn from this. Remember this. We're all on one big team here. If you can't play by the rules, you won't be on the team for very long."

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Source Material

Select source material authors used for their posts on *The Strategy Bridge* organized chronologically. Only applies to articles that had sources.

The Heart of #Leadership

[1] https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=influence

[2] While there are numerous sources that have shown the relationship between effective leadership and productivity, see for example Savolainen and Hakkinen, "Trusted to Lead: Trustworthiness and its Impact on Leadership," *Technology Innovation Management Review*, March 2011, <http://timreview.ca/article/429>.

[3] While this term has been used for a number of years and has even been the title of some publications, the original work can be credited to Robert Greenleaf. See <https://www.greenleaf.org/what-is-servant-leadership/>

[4] Multiple and widespread literature within the discipline of neuroscience. For one example of many, see https://edge.org/conversation/molly_crockett-molly-crockett-the-neuroscience-of-moral-decision-making

Tactics: Mandatory Imagination in #Leadership

[1] Thomas Flichy, *La fantaisie de l'officier*, DMM, 2012. (French)

[2] Inspired by Jeffrey Dyer, et al, "The Innovator's DNA," *Harvard Business Review*, December 2009.

[3] François Jullien, *Conférence sur l'efficacité*, PUF, 2006, p.16. (French)

[4] Henri Bergson, "La perception du changement," *La pensée et le mouvant*, PUF, 1975, p.152. (French)

[5] Geoff Colvin, "Adm Mike Mullen: Debt is still bigger threat to US security," *Fortune*, 21 May 2012.

[6] Agatha Christie, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007).

#Leadership in an Ambiguous World

[1] Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America*, June 2015, http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/2015_National_Military_Strategy.pdf.

[2] Alan D. Beyerchen, "Clausewitz, Nonlinearity and the Unpredictability of War", *International Security*, 17:3 (Winter, 1992), pp. 59-90.

[3] U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operations Planning*, 11 August 2011, p. III-3.

[4] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), Book 1, Chapter 3.

On Joint #Leadership: The Importance of Communication

[1] Communication formally requires a sender, a receiver, and a message. This article focuses primarily on the what the sender controls: the *message* and the *means* of transmission.

[2] Various versions of this quote have been attributed to many people over time, but is generally accepted to have been said by the French philosopher Blaise Pascal in 1657.

[3] Stephen Covey, *The SPEED of Trust: The One Thing that Changes Everything* (Washington, DC: Free Press, 2006).

[4] President Barack Obama, "Address from the State Floor of the White House" September 10, 2014, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/09/10/president-obama-we-will-degrade-and-ultimately-destroy-isil>.

#Leadership and the Art of Restraint

[1] John Cantwell. *Exit Wounds* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press), 2013.

[2] Martin Sonnenberger. 'Initiative within the Philosophy of Auftragstaktik: Determining Factors of Understanding the Initiative in the German Army 1806-1955'. *Art of War Papers* (US Army Command and General Staff College Press: Fort Leavenworth), 2013.

[3] The original quote is: 'Therefore no plan of operations extends with any certainty beyond the first contact with the main hostile force' from Daniel J. Hughes (ed). *Moltke on the Art of War: Selected Writings* (Toronto: Presidio Press) 1993.

[4] Sonnenberger, 2013.

The Silver Bullet of #Leadership

[1] U.S. Army, *The Human Dimension Strategy*, Fort Leavenworth, KS, May 24, 2015. http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/20150524_Human_Dimension_Strategy_vr_Signature_WM_1.pdf.

[2] U.S. Army, Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, *Army Leadership*, Fort Leavenworth, KS, http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_a/pdf/adp6_22.pdf.

[3] These include: Achua, Christopher F., and Robert N. Lussier. *Effective Leadership* (Mason, Ohio: South-Western, 2010); Collins, James C. *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap—and Others Don't* (New York, NY: HarperBusiness, 2001); Hersey, Paul. *The Situational Leader* (New York, NY: Warner, 1985); Hesselbein, Frances, and Eric K. Shinseki. *Be, Know, Do: Leadership the Army Way: Adapted from the Official Army Leadership Manual* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004); Ruggero, Ed, and Dennis F. Haley. *The Leader's Compass: Set Your Course for Leadership Success* (King of Prussia, PA: Academy Leadership, 2003); and Sullivan, Gordon R., and Michael V. Harper. *Hope Is Not a Method: What Business Leaders Can Learn from America's Army* (New York: Times Business, 1996).

[4] U.S. Army, *The Human Dimension Strategy*, p.8.

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Gunnery Sgt. Scott Dunn via The United States Marine Corps/Flickr.

Military #Leadership in the 21st Century:

U.S. Army Soldiers refine their leadership skills at Officer Candidate School in Fort Benning, Ga. Soldiers who graduate from OCS commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army. OCS training prepares Soldiers to lead squads and platoons in the field.

The Heart of #Leadership:

General Dwight D. Eisenhower gives the order of the day on June 5, 1944, "Full victory — nothing else" to paratroopers somewhere in England, just before they board their airplanes to participate in the first assault in the invasion of the continent of Europe. (Library of Congress)

#Leadership: The Death of Command and Control

Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, commander of NATO's International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, works on board a Lockheed C-130 Hercules aircraft between Battlefield Circulation missions. (U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Mark O'Donald, NATO)

#Leadership Through Example:

An M-1A1 Abrams main battle tank lays a smoke screen during maneuvers in Operation DESERT STORM.

#Leadership: A Bedrock of Trust:

Army Emergency Relief has launched its annual campaign which runs from March 1 through May 15. This year's campaign theme is "Army Emergency Relief -- A Soldiers First Choice," AER officials announced. They said the purpose of the campaign is to create...

Accruing Tacit Knowledge: A Case for Self-Study on behalf of Professional #Leadership

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

The Strategic Development of Tactical #Leadership:

Soldiers attending Ranger School learn additional leadership, and small unit technical and tactical skills, in a physically and mentally demanding combat-stimulated environment. (U.S. Army Photo)

#Leadership in an Ambiguous World:

Paul Denbow, Jan 15, 2014

On Joint #Leadership: The Importance of Communication

Allison Shelley

#Leadership and the Art of Restraint:

U.S. Department of Defense | photo by Cpl. Joseph Scanlan, U.S. Marine Corps | released Printed in the United States of America.

Learning Experiences in #Leadership – Ten Lessons from the Circle of Trust:

Brig. Gen. Robert Johnson, Brig Gen. James R. Wilson, and Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler, Adjutant General of the Michigan National Guard, get a view of Fort Custer as they depart Battle Creek on the first flight of the C-21 from the 110th Fighter Wing Air National Guard Base. (ANG Photo, Master Sgt. Dale Atkins)

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