“IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE”

SOF LEADERSHIP IN THE CONTEMPORARY OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

EDITED BY: DR. EMILY SPENCER

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SOF Leadership in the Contemporary Operating Environment

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce this book on Special Operations Forces (SOF) leadership, which is a direct output of the 2016 Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) symposium on the same subject. This volume, *In Pursuit of Excellence: SOF Leadership in the Contemporary Operating Environment*, represents yet another example of CANSOFCOM's quest for continuous improvement. Notably, we will always be adapting.

The Command has always prided itself on its professionalism and tactical acumen. Importantly, much of CANSOF's effectiveness and success is due to leadership. Quite simply, there is a unique capability in SOF due to the fact that each operator must, and is able to, rise up and lead. I have always been impressed that even the lowest ranked SOF operators are professionally prepared for success and empowered to make decisions daily. As a result, the Command has done well earning the trust of those it works for and with.

Within the context of Canadian SOF operations, it is not uncommon for sergeants deployed abroad to lead small elements and thus report directly to the Commander, who reports to the Chief of the Defence Staff, who in turn reports straight to the Minister of National Defence. This is a unique reporting relationship that instills a deep sense of personal accountability in young leaders and their subordinates, for everything that SOF does. Moreover, the margins are much reduced and accountability, as a concept and as a pillar of our operating ethos, is crucial.

Notably, it all comes back to leadership, that amalgamation of motivation, inspiration and influence on others to do the best they can, and to be the best they can be. But, leadership is hard. Even under the best of circumstances such as in a garrison setting or an office building, without the threats to life and limb that can occur

in an operational environment, providing the 'right' leadership can be exceedingly challenging.

If leadership is not difficult enough, the contemporary operating environment simply underscores its importance and adds to its complexity. It is an understatement to say that the world has become increasingly more complex, chaotic and ambiguous. The current mission in Iraq where SOF advisors are advising and assisting Iraqi security forces in bringing the fight directly to *Daesh* is a perfect example. The leadership challenges involved are legion. As such, the Irregular Warfare capacity-building activities SOF are known for, and which are provided in a chaotic environment with very tailored medical or logistical support, are exactly what is needed. SOF's ability to fill the role of warrior-diplomat and provide the necessary leadership is crucial to the success of the national and international objectives in that country.

It is the critical role that SOF fulfills and the leadership it shows in the national defence and national security domains that make this book so important. This volume represents a philosophy of not resting on one's laurels or being content with the status quo. It is demonstrative of a "learning organization." In fact, this book promotes a mindset of learning, where past experiences are assimilated by CANSOF leaders as lessons for the future to ensure an optimal level of preparedness for that threat, that event, that no-one is even able to conceive of in the present. It also speaks to the climate and culture we seek to build where honest failure is a necessary component of growth. In the end, it comes down to leadership, both at the personal and institutional levels, to prepare individuals to deal with the multitude of challenges they will face in the operational environments of today and tomorrow.

Mike Rouleau
Major-General
Commander Canadian Special Operations Forces Command

INTRODUCTION

COLONEL (RETIRED) DR. BERND HORN
AND DR. EMILY SPENCER

Leadership is a nebulous concept. Arguably, while the term is used liberally in all sorts of arenas, the concept of leadership is not always well understood or articulated. The difficulty in conceptualizing and defining leadership is not necessarily hard to understand since so much of leadership is intangible, and thus challenging to quantify and/or precisely pinpoint. As such, although we can often recognize good leadership when we see it, it is a different matter to explain it.

Complicating this issue is the confusion over related concepts. For instance, in the military context, leadership, management and command are frequently used interchangeably to describe or explain how the institution is controlled and led, yet there are distinct differences between these three concepts. Additionally, there is often reluctance to acknowledge that a single generic concept of leadership does not necessarily apply to an entire organization, at all levels and at all times. For instance, the leadership elements required at the Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO), junior-officer and senior-officer levels are not necessarily identical. Additionally, the leadership required of a conventional platoon of young, inexperienced infanteers is nowhere near what is required of a small team of special operations forces (SOF).

Ultimately, leadership is a dynamic, situational process. In order to maximize leadership potential, it is important to gain an understanding of the concept so that nuances are not just well understood but also applied appropriately and effectively.

In this vein, it is useful to explore evolving definitions of leadership, particularly within a military context. Leadership has been defined in terms of individual traits, qualities, behaviours, power relationships, influence over other people, role relationships, occupation of positions, and roles and perceptions held by others. There are virtually as many different definitions of leadership as there are people defining it. Napoleon alone identified 115 characteristics of good leadership. Moreover, two pre-eminent sociologists, Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, noted that empirical studies tended to show that there is no normative (best) style of leadership and that successful leaders are normally those who can adapt their leader behaviour to meet the needs of their followers in a particular situation.[1]

From a military perspective, the concept and understanding of leadership has often been limited, archaic and ill-defined. Quite simply, historically within the military environment, the term leadership has been habitually misused. Specifically, the military has focused on the cogitation and emulation of "Great Captains" and individual traits as the tools for studying and understanding leadership. The fundamental tenets of these approaches view leadership as a "top down" process. For example, Michael Howard, the decorated World War II veteran and renowned military historian, felt that in professional armies, leadership was almost simply a function of built in followership. Similarly, Gilles Paquet, the Director of the Centre on Governance at University of Ottawa observed, "Leadership in the military has often been regarded as a forceful top-down thrust by those in authority." He added that this view of leadership "was derived from a notion of governance characterized by hierarchy and vertical lines of command."[2]

In fact, one can argue that the military gauge of leadership was results-based rather than involving an examination of the processes. The military interpretation was basically centred on the premise that to be a successful military commander is to be a great

leader and, thereby, by default to have shown great leadership. The fact that the results may have been achieved in spite of a poor leader has often been ignored. Simply put, effective mission outcome has almost always been categorized as the result of effective leadership whether it was the case or not.

This "top down" hierarchical interpretation of leadership is reflected in the definitions that have been used by many military institutions. For example, prior to the creation of leadership doctrine in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) in 2004, the Canadian Army defined leadership as the "art of influencing others to do willingly what is required in order to achieve an aim or goal." It continued, leadership "is the projection of the personality, character and will of the commander."[3] Similarly, the 1986 US publication *Army Leadership* defined leadership as "The process by which an individual determines direction and influences others to accomplish the mission of the organization."[4]

Quite clearly, the military concept of leadership was institutionally focused. The achievement of organizational goals was equated to effective leadership. These definitions embraced a classical "industrial-age" understanding of the notion of leadership, namely desired results/achieving an objective clearly means that the leader has demonstrated good leadership (and, paradoxically, if failure was realized, then somehow the followers let down their leader).

Joseph Rost, in his examination of leadership in his pivotal work, *Leadership in the Twenty-First Century*, noted that the problem with the traditional approach to leadership was its focus on peripheral and "content" issues such as traits, personality, characteristics, goal attainment, effectiveness, styles, and management of organisations. This former approach, he believed, stressed the determinants of leadership effectiveness instead of the processes of leadership itself, namely the comprehension of leadership as a relationship and the connection between followers and leaders.[5]

Rost identified that part of the reason for this disconnect was the absence of consensus on what leadership actually meant. His analysis maintained that sixty per cent of authors on the subject since 1910, both scholars and practitioners, had not actually defined what they meant by leadership. Rather, they assumed their audiences shared their understanding of the word. Notably, without a common understanding of leadership, it is difficult to agree on what activities or behavioural processes represent its defining characteristics. Differing from many of his predecessors, for Rost, leadership was a dynamic relationship whereby the leaders and followers related to one another to achieve a purpose.[6]

According to Rost, leadership studies since the late-1970s have been in a definite paradigm shift away from the "industrial model" based on "great men and women" who demonstrated specific traits capable of influencing followers to achieve organizational goals. Leadership in this traditional model was simply good management. However, Rost asserted that leadership studies have progressed and must be looked at in a new post-industrial model which recognizes leadership as an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes.

Accordingly, since the late-1970s a new school of thought was established reflected in the work of the Pulitzer Prize-winning author James MacGregor Burns who argued that leadership is a process that focuses on the relationship between leader and follower. A central precept to this concept is that ideas such as authority, headship, command, and obedience are not leadership. Rather, leadership is explained as a relationship that must be created and nurtured instead of a skill or technique to be refined and improved. "Leadership," Correlli Barnet, the British military historian, noted "is not imposed like authority. It is actually welcomed and wanted by the led."[7] In other words, to understand the true nature of leadership meant accepting the idea that leadership is not a function of a single individual but rather the function

of others accepting voluntarily the lead of another. In fact, Carl Grauman, an American sociologist, felt that leadership, "is neither a quality of an individual person nor in a position or office, nor is it merely in the eyes of the beholders." Rather, he argued, it is "a quality of a dynamic whole, a group property which like cohesiveness cannot be inferred from individuals taken alone."[8] Essentially, leadership is a group phenomenon.

This school of thought credits leaders with infusing vision into an organization. It further engenders the necessity that leaders understand and be sensitive to group values and beliefs, and imbue all members with a sense of belonging, equity and opportunity for growth. "Effective leaders," Paquet stated, "lead change from the bottom up by reflecting and confirming the values of their followers, after having done considerable listening."[9] Elmar Dinter, noted that "leadership is a conviction – subordinates must be convinced intellectually and if possible emotionally."[10] In short, this school of thought argues that leaders are agents of change, individuals who are capable of influencing other people through their attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. "The final test of a leader," the great scholar Walter Lippman stated, "is that he leaves behind him in other men the convictions and the will to carry on."[11]

Key to this new outlook on leadership is a number of central concepts. First, influence within the relationship is non-coercive and is multi-directional, both upwards and downwards. Second, there is more than one leader and more than one follower, however, relationships may be unequal, because of unequal influence. Third, the leader must intend real change and followers purposefully desire certain changes. Finally, leaders and followers develop purposes not goals and the intended change reflects their common purposes. In essence, the ultimate test of practical leadership is the realization of intended real change that meets peoples' enduring needs.[12] In this concept, leadership is not a function of position but rather a transfer of ideas in which followers are active agents.

As such, many contemporary scholars would argue that leadership is a process by which individuals in a group voluntarily follow the vision and direction of a certain individual to attain a mutually agreed purpose or outcome. This view may seem as anathema to military leaders because it does not necessarily associate leadership with the image of the strong dashing and forceful individual commander who through sheer willpower and personal presence never fails to accomplish the mission at whatever cost. After all, many military writers on the subject of leadership stress the importance of tenacity, willpower and the ability to impose direction. This recurring necessity in the military is not questioned. But, it is imperative to get the terminology and concepts straight. What is important to understand is that leadership is not authority or position power. In the military context there is nothing wrong with the use of authority or the use (and obvious need) for management skills. Some policies and rules in the military are non-negotiable and rightly so. Unquestionably, often there is an exigency for a commander to make a decision and issue directives regardless of what their subordinates may desire. There are times when instant decisions are essential. According to Bernard Bass, from the Centre for Leadership Studies at the State University of New York, "in emergencies, when danger threatens, subordinates want to be told what to do, and in a hurry." He added, "leaders who fail to make decisions quickly would be judged as inadequate."[13]

Clearly then, it is important to acknowledge and recognize leadership for what it is and what it is not. In order for individuals to lead it is important that they understand what leadership is, namely a relationship between those being led and those leading. It is the difference between inspiring followers and driving or managing them. It entails subordinates willingly attempting to accomplish specific outcomes because they identify with the importance of the objective and it meets their purposes as well. As followers, they have bought into the vision and follow not because of authority but because they support the end result of the group's

action. It must be realized that results alone do not represent successful leadership. In the end, officership is like a toolbox with many different implements. Leadership is but one of those tools, some others are authority and management.[14] Quite simply, being a leader does not necessarily imply a person has authority or position power. Conversely, people with authority are by definition managers but not necessarily leaders.[15]

Based on the debacle of the 1990s, or "Decade of Darkness," the CAF created a distinct leadership doctrine that embraced some of these new leadership concepts.[16] In fact, the new doctrine recognizes the importance of transformational leadership, defined as "a general pattern of influence based on shared core values and mutual commitment and trust between the leader and led, and intended to effect significant or radical improvement in individual, group, or system capabilities and performance."[17] For the purpose of this volume, the CAF doctrinal definition of leadership, namely that leadership is "directing, motivating and enabling others to accomplish the mission professionally and ethically, while developing or improving capabilities that contribute to mission success," will be used as the baseline when referring to leadership.[18]

Using this "precis" on leadership as the starting point, this book will explore the complex nature of leadership. It begins with some perspectives on the broader nature of leadership but then quickly focuses on a SOF-centric examination. This focus is important as SOF operations in the current security environment, require a particular leadership approach. SOF small teams, or special operations task forces, operating at distance, within an integrated framework, in volatile, often non-permissive environments, with the full glare of media and social media platforms capturing every action, requires even the most junior SOF members to be capable of leading effectively and ethically.

As such, this book provides insights into a myriad of SOF-specific leadership topics from SOF leadership through education, the

importance of SOF leadership to mental health and well-being, preparing SOF leaders for military assistance missions, as well as combat, to preparing the SOF leaders of the future. The intent is to provide as much knowledge and vicarious experience as possible to ensure our SOF leaders are as prepared as possible to face the challenges of today and, particularly, those unknown trials and tribulations of tomorrow.

NOTES

1 W.R. Lassey and M. Sashkin, eds., *Leadership and Social Change* (San Diego: University Association Inc., 1983), 147.

2 Gilles Paquet, "The Challenges of 2020: a citizen's perspective," Unpublished discussion paper prepared for the Special Advisor to the CDS (Professional Development), 9 March 2000, 5.

3 Canada, *Land Force COMMAND* (Kingston: DND, 1997), 6 & 12.

4 "Official Army Leadership Definitions," <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/army/cmd-hdbk-appa.pdf>, accessed 20 June 2016.

5 Joseph C. Rost, *Leadership in the Twenty-First Century* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1993), 1-22.

6 Ibid.

7 Anthony Kellet, *Combat Motivation* (Boston: Nijhoff Publishing, 1982), 152.

8 Carl F. Grauman, ed., *Changing Conceptions of Leadership* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1989), 93.

9 Paquet, 5.

10 Elmar Dinter, *Hero or Coward* (London: Frank Cass, 1985), 53-54 and 92.

11 <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/w/walterlipp100564.html>, accessed 20 June 2016.

12 Ibid., 102-103.

13 Bernard Bass, *Transformational Leadership – Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact* (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998), 35-36.

14 The concept of management is easily understood. Management is designed to control complexity and increase group effectiveness and efficiency. Its focus is staff action such as budgeting, controlling, organizing, planning, supervising and ensuring adherence to policy and timelines. Management is unequivocally results orientated. It ensures goal completion through problem solving and controlling the actions of others. Rost explained that management is based on authority and position, and that leader-follower expectations are derived from that relationship. A critical difference is evident. Management relies on the use of authority while leadership relies upon influence. Management is transactional (relies on contingent reinforcement, either positive or negative) and leadership is transformational (motivates others to do more than they originally intended and often more than they thought possible). Transactional leadership is dependent on authority/position and stresses reward and punishment mechanisms to achieve compliance/followership. Simply put, the leader rewards or disciplines the follower depending on the adequacy of follower's performance. Conversely, transformational leadership refers to the process where an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. Bass felt that transformational leaders move their followers beyond self-interest and are charismatic, inspirational, intellectually stimulating, and/or individually considerate. See Bass, 2-6; P.G. Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practise* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Ltd., 1997), 131; and R.M. Steers and L.W. Porter, *Motivation and Leadership at Work* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996), 628-639.

15 The other often confused concept is Command. In military parlance, "command is the authority vested in an individual for the direction, co-ordination and control of military forces." Command is a mix of leadership, management skills and authority. The reliance on, or focus, of any one particular component of command based on their style and personality is the reason different commanders create a unique or distinct command climate. *Land Force COMMAND*, 4.

16 Four specific leadership doctrinal publications were created between 2004-2007, namely *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* / *Doctrine* / *Leading the Institution* and *Leading People*.

17 Canada, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* (Kingston: CDA, 2005), 133.

18 Ibid., 30.

CHAPTER 1

THE SECRETS OF LEADERSHIP

SENATOR VERN WHITE

"If you don't like change you're going to like irrelevance even less."
General Eric Shinseki, US Army[1]

We expend a lot of energy working on the challenge of leadership, specifically the focus on leader development. Quite often the emphasis is on what leaders should become, namely an approach based on the leader traits and characteristics that they should demonstrate to be successful. However, I will endeavour to identify what leaders should do to make others become the best they can be, and in doing so, become successful. Importantly, we tend, within our leadership roles, to try to find a way to work within a system that we have "inherited," whereas our focus should be on the transformation of the existing system to make the required changes to move an organization forward. Quite simply, leaders may adapt to their environment, but real transformational leaders change the system and make a difference by being that difference. When we look at transformational leaders throughout history, it becomes evident that they have placed their focus on starting a revolution, not just being a part of an evolution. Historically, if one examines individuals such as Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Lester Pearson and Terry Fox, as well as people such as Peter Drucker and many more individuals who have been the type of leader with the innate ability to shift the thinking of the people around them, it becomes evident that they all had something in common. They were able to grasp that a change in the manner in which we think, a change that focused on action,

could create and achieve incredible results. It is more than simply inspiration, as inspiration often ends after the "feel good period." Rather, transformation brings people to new places and exciting opportunities, literally changing their worlds.

Many would identify leadership success as personal success, but the true leaders are those who have shifted the paradigm in which they operated, as well as that of their organizations or cause, which may or may not have meant personal success or accomplishment. In my world, policing, having worked in three provinces, three territories and for three different police organizations, I have seen leadership at every level of those organizations. I have seen some leaders with the ability to get things done regardless of the system that was in place, which they had inherited. However, the real transformative leadership I have witnessed occurred when the leaders changed those very organizations. But there is a paradox. The police officers with spectacular performance evaluations, much like students with straight "As" in all of their courses, seldom translate directly into the type of leader who brings the necessary leadership an organization needs to make a dramatic shift in its organizational culture and leadership. I have found that it is only the truly transformational leader that can help an organization make the necessary shift.

In short, what is required is individuals who can listen, understand the challenges and requirements of the day, and then ignore what has been done prior, or what is currently in place. Those individuals must be willing and able to take a new path, a new direction for the organization, country or cause that they are working to change, leading the transformation from within the organization itself. As the renowned poet Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."[2]

THE CHALLENGE

When we start our careers, in particular in military or paramilitary organizations, we are tasked with taking on roles in a highly structured, resilient and hierarchical bureaucracy that is designed to garner control, not free thinking. As author Bill Deresiewicz wrote in *Leadership and Solitude*, when discussing membership in such organizations, the rules that are present and the manner that reward and punishment are meted out are clear and obvious. He notes that in his experience, and I have seen the same phenomena, it is not uncommon that the leaders found within are mediocre, walking carefully to gain personal advantage. They are not the risk accepting, free thinkers required to bring change.[3]

It is a strange phenomenon. We join these organizations, policing in my case, but the military as well, with a desire to be challenged, to make a difference and to risk it all, even your life, for the cause. What happens on the way up the corporate ladder is startling. One day you are willing to risk your life and the next you are not willing to risk a promotion, or even risk being wrong, to do the right thing. How does one square that circle?

From a personal perspective, whether I was the Commanding Officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in Nunavut, or the Chief of Police in Ottawa, the police officers who worked with me would go out every day, strap on their equipment, leave our buildings and they were willing to run head on into danger, risking everything they had, including their lives to do their job for their communities. We all grew up in our respective careers carrying weapons fully ready to kill, or be killed, to save the lives and liberty of others, as tragic as that sounds. So, the question must be asked, when do we lose that drive, that willingness to risk everything and that need to make a difference?

What happens to that perspective and leadership when individuals take on higher leadership roles? Or, is it just the type of individuals who pursue such roles? I would argue that some do chase those roles. I have seen them up close and can attest to it. But, many do not. These individuals are not pleased with the lack of intestinal fortitude shown at the higher levels of management and leadership at the top and they would rather remain in the operational jobs they have where they can trust who and what they can see, as well as leading those they trust to do the same.

Deresiewicz speaks directly to specific examples of leaders, where there is more than a need for physical courage, specifically the requirement for moral courage. This is an area where I believe we are greatly lacking – the moral courage to be wrong, to take chances, to pursue change when it is unpopular and to challenge the status quo at every turn. It is exactly that type of leadership that is absent from many of the leaders in our communities. Moreover, it needs to be pursued if we wish to make as much of a difference as possible.

Our challenge is that our world has never been under more stress and risk. "Traditional" wars are being fought alongside non-traditional wars (e.g. hybrid warfare, role of non-state actors, proto-states). For example, one of our greatest perceived threats is from a terrorist organization that acts as a proto-state and operates a large army that employs both traditional soldiers and lone-wolf mercenaries around the world. Significantly, all of their "soldiers" are willing to die for their cause. The impact of this threat requires our traditional models of military and para-military operations to shift. It requires an approach that is both fluid and yet disciplined.

We have seen the impact of these "non-traditional" wars over the past five years. As a result, our new normal is a constant menace of internal attack from unknown and unsuspected sources. The need for the courageous leader, with a willingness to take chances and challenge the status quo has never been greater. Quite

simply, maintaining the status quo is an impossible aspiration today. Finding, developing and supporting those new leaders that are required to meet the challenge of the new security environment will allow an opportunity for success against the myriad of new threats we face. Conversely, failure to do so will bring about a void of the necessary leadership to take on the perils we face.

LEADERSHIP: WHAT IS IT REALLY?

I consider three factors when I analyze leadership. These are: what it is to me; what it is not to me; and lastly, the realization that I may not be the best judge.

What leadership is to me

Leadership expert Frances Hesselbein observed, "Culture does not change because we desire to change it. Culture changes when the organization is transformed – the culture reflects the realities of people working together every day."[4] As mentioned previously, the great leaders are change management gurus. They look for new ways to do old things and pursue with a vengeance that need for transformational change. They are the visionaries with an ability to think strategically and then operationalize it. The demand for people to grasp the need for change and then move personally and organizationally toward that change will be what separates mediocrity from excellence. But transformational leaders do not just change an organization, they also take all those around them along for the ride. They ensure that everyone is part of the solution and the organization's success. They build relationships and show others the importance of the change process.

The courage that these leaders show is an essential ingredient to their success. Finding that form of courage is what all of us should be looking for in our future leaders. Specifically, it means finding those who are willing to fail, if it means a chance to succeed. The leaders with that type of courage of conviction, the courage to step

out in front of a crowd, the courage to be wrong when trying to do the right thing, the courage to lose their job doing what is right for their job/organization/community, or for their men and women who depend on them.

I experienced an example of this type of leadership when I was with the Ottawa Police Service. We had officers wanting to serve in International peacekeeping roles, as police officers, or as reservists with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Many senior leaders in the organization felt it was too high risk and that we should focus on our core business, namely policing in Ottawa. When challenged, these leaders were clear that the risk of losing an officer in an international role was too high, and while that would indeed be a tragedy, a number of us felt that the opportunity for personal and organizational growth, as well as the opportunity to serve one's country, was a value that could not be passed up. Over the next five years the service sent more than 100 officers overseas, in theatre and non-theatre locations, in both policing and military roles. By 2012, we were serving in seven countries, representing Canada, Ottawa and the Ottawa Police Service. The experience these well-trained and qualified police officers gained, many of whom had previous military service, was extremely valuable to the service, to the community and to their gaining a greater understanding about many of Canada's next Canadians, migrating from many of the respective operational zones. I would argue that it is why and how we train, learn and grow as police officers. Moreover, with regard to "putting officers in harm's way" in an overseas theatre, we do that every day in our own communities.

The point is that transformational leadership is primarily found in those who are willing to take risks, the way we started our career in policing and in the military. Not knowing what is around the next corner, not knowing what or who is in the car we check, what is in the pockets or the minds of the person we are about to deal with. When do we stop being courageous enough to do what others expect us to do? When do we stop taking chances and

become risk adverse and lose the leadership edge we were born with in these roles?

Those engaged in the mission were ready to put themselves in harm's way, however the hierarchy was resistant to "risk it." The question must be asked, risk what? Risk possible embarrassment, risk being wrong? In the end, our men and women have the courage needed to do their jobs, therefore, the leadership needs to get it right. If our followers/subordinates are willing to risk everything, then their leadership needs to do the same. Real leaders understand that point.

What leadership is not to me

If leadership is about moving something forward and creating something that did not exist before, as well as creating an environment where change is valued and new ideas are encouraged, then the opposite of leadership is staying within the limitations of the status quo, keeping things the same, staying where you are, and often keeping an organization there as well. The fear of failure will ensure mediocrity, which is what a failure to produce leadership will entail – mediocrity. Furthermore, leadership is not:

- being a follower – you may understand the need to follow when others lead, but leaders are always focused on being in that leadership role, or part of that role. Leaders bring others into the tent.

- saying "Yes" to everything. As a leader you must be able to say "No".

- doing the same thing over and over. Stop following the past. Stop following what others are doing and take on the responsibility for being different and moving in other directions to get the job done by finding new ideas and being innovative.

- keeping things as they are because it is easy and because things have always been done that way. Leaders know how to do things differently in order to get desired results.

- avoiding conflict at all costs – either by being in denial that a problem exists, or by giving up because it is too difficult to manage. Leaders know how to resolve, accept, or move through conflict.

The choice to be a leader is sometimes made intentionally and sometimes forced onto a person by circumstance. I have seen people who are very strong leaders in one aspect of their lives, yet may not necessarily have that strength in other aspects. It is a lifelong path to develop and expand your leadership style. Leadership is not a rank or title; rather, it is the ability to make a difference by bringing about change while motivating others to be a part of that change.

The realization that I may not be the best judge

I would like to think I know what to look for in great leaders, however, I am not certain that I have been around enough to be sure. I have learned more from poor and weak leaders about real leadership and what it is not, than I have from great leaders who were able to show what it should be.

From a personal perspective, the expectations I place on leaders around me are clear, I demand they focus on our community, internally and externally, which means those who work for you and those you work for. I demand that leaders understand that Canadians want to trust our organization and we owe them for that trust. My viewpoint stems from the belief that we may challenge the work of our government agencies, our police and military, immigration, border services, corrections and the myriad of other agencies serving Canadians, because as citizens we have expectations and a right to challenge governmental organizations since they work for us.

In any case, to have the capacity to identify greatness as a leader I would need to see more of it. I am afraid that today in Canada we are facing a void of the transformational leaders needed to carry Canada forward and continue to possess the ability for Canada to "punch-up" against the challenges we are facing. The leadership dilemma is not lost on me. In short, do you focus on getting to a position to make a difference, or do you make a difference to get to a position? There are arguments for both, although I would suggest that masking a difference to get to a position will be a clearer path to where you can focus on doing the right thing, regardless of the impact. I have tried to live by the adage, "when you know what the right thing is, you are out of options."

LEADERSHIP IN OUR NEW WORLD

Domestic

The need for strong leadership, as a country, but in particular in the military, law enforcement, security and intelligence fields, has never been greater. Domestically we are continuing to see reduced crime rates and overall we are living in safer cities and communities. Concurrently, we are battling new drug challenges, where manufactured synthetic drugs are addicting masses of people and killing hundreds every year. Moreover, gangs are increasingly using gun violence and the threat of domestic terrorism has never been greater. Significantly, the domestic terrorist threat is coming from Canadians who are radicalized and influenced by external forces to commit acts of terror against citizens in our country. Our new reality is one which means we must shift our focus and energy to combat the problems we face. Our models of security and policing require leaders who can grasp the issues and move their respective organizations into position to deal with these challenges and be ever ready to transform their thinking strategically and their actions operationally, to be successful.

Internationally

Canadian troops have been in theatre for longer than the First and Second World Wars combined. The theatres have been shifting, from country to country, primarily in the Middle East. Moreover, a renewed commitment to peacekeeping is on the horizon. Strategists anticipate that the future engagement of our forces will not be less than the past decade and the requirement for robust leadership in the military is essential to our success. If our military hopes to succeed, it must be focused on developing capabilities and building capacity, as it has never been more important than now as the operational tempo remains persistent, if not constantly increasing.

Canadians have a high level of trust with their military, law enforcement and security agencies. It is, and has been, a foundation of strength for Canada. It is not to be taken for granted. It must be remembered that failure to succeed at our mission, or to ensure safety and security at home or abroad, can quickly erode that trust. I expect our leaders to understand the importance of that reality. Not only to comprehend the significance of that trust, but to ensure that their actions are able to transform themselves and their organizations as necessary to meet the challenges of the security environment so that they can succeed and maintain that trust. The level of fragility in our relationship is often forgotten until there is a serious breach and we quickly see the results.

Without question, Canadians support those who are engaged in their protection. I have personally seen the respect Canadians have when a soldier or police officer is killed in the line of duty, taking on roles and tasks that although Canadians may be uncomfortable with, they understand their importance. As such, society respects the loss of its guardians.

In addition, Canadians comprehend that all of those serving them are doing so with the best of intentions and that there will be

times when mistakes are made. It will not be how we manage the mistake that allows us to maintain trust with those we serve, but rather how we assure them that we have learned from that mistake and are doing everything possible to ensure it is not repeated. The reason is simple. We all need something that we can look to with an inherent level of trust. Canadians expect those they count on to not only do things right, but also to do the right things.

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

An examination by Forum Research of trust in Canada in 2014 revealed that the most trusted institution in Canada was the Department of National Defence.[5] The military ranked ahead of the Auditor-General, the Supreme Court of Canada, the RCMP and every other federal institution. The most trusted institution in the country is our military. One must ask, how many democratic countries could say that? This trust is not based on the premise that the military has not made mistakes, or had some bad days. In addition, it is not because the public agrees with what the military is tasked to do. The trust is based on the fact the military has ethical leaders who are assuring the public as well as their membership that the institution is doing the right things, the right way, as expected by Canadians.

The need for ethical leadership is not lost on Canadians, or military leaders in Canada. We had our bad days in Somalia in 1993, when leaders failed to curb abhorrent behaviour and allowed activities go unchallenged. The result was the disbandment of a proud regiment and damage to the reputation of the men and women of our military.

The challenge is that many leaders face is that they want a safe road to follow that will be risk free and not jeopardize their position or future. However, this safe-route is not what we expect from our followers/subordinates. Leaders expect them to get the job done even if that means putting themselves at risk. Yet, many leaders fail to accept the same challenge. If leaders fail to accept

such risk when imposing it on others, then it represents a loss of ethical leadership.

The problem is that all too often people see leadership as a position. Rather, leadership is a function of what every one of us does, regardless of rank, title, position. If we work in a federal institution we have a responsibility to lead ethically. Canadians have expectations, they do not care what our role, or our rank is, they expect us to lead ethically, representing this country and every Canadian. Simply put, ethical leadership is that important.

CLOSING WORDS

The leaders we choose must have the ethical standards to be truthful and accountable for their actions, as well as the actions of their subordinates. This is not to say they must "own" every action of every subordinate, but they are responsible for how individuals, events and especially transgressions are managed. Importantly, loyalty only matters if acting with integrity. Loyalty is not about covering for those who have acted unethically and have betrayed the trust of their organization and fellow Canadians.

As a leader of a military or para-military organization, law enforcement, or security agencies, you must be able to develop trust internally and externally if you expect to have the authority to lead. Within the Canadian context, the public's perception of what you do, what you stand for and what you stand up against will more often than naught come from the mouths of others, rather than from your own organization. Their perceptions will most likely be shaped by the media or foreign entities. Reality does not always enter the picture. Yet, it is the reality that matters most. As a result, leaders must be able to bring our stories to life for Canadians. It is this type of leadership that will ensure Canadians will know who you are, what you do, what you need and where you should be. Real leaders will recognize the importance of being a trusted part of Canadian society as they act on their behalf.

In closing, there are a couple of things I look for from people I engage with in leadership roles. I look for people who *believe in what I believe in*. Some of the greatest change movements I have been involved with have come with this as a foundational ingredient. I do not need them to be the same as me. I do not need another friend and I certainly do not need someone who thinks like I think. I just need them to believe in what I believe in. The second factor I look for in leaders around me are people who understand that the moment they became a leader they subordinated personal focus. As leadership guru Bishop Gerald Brooks stated, "When you became a leader you gave up the right to think about yourself." The greatest gift a leader can receive is the opportunity to lead and they must realize that they now carry with them the added responsibility of caring for people around them.

NOTES

1 <http://www.wisdomquotes.com/quote/general-eric-shinseki.html>, accessed 21 August 2016.

2 <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/r/ralphwaldo101322.html>, accessed 21 August 2016.

3 <http://people.terry.uga.edu/bostrom/Leadership_Articles/Solitude%20and%20Leadership_American%20Scholar.pdf>, accessed 25 August 2016.

4 <http://www.leadershipnow.com/changequotes.html>, accessed 21 August 2016.

5 <http://www.forumresearch.com/forms/News%20Archives/News%20Releases/64082_Fed_Trust_News_Release_%282014_05_26%29_Forum_Research.pdf>, accessed 21 August 2016.

CHAPTER 2

COMPETENCE, CONFIDENCE AND COMMUNICATION: THE FOUNDATION FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

DR. EMILY SPENCER

The study of leadership is as vast as the practice of leadership. Undeniably, truly great leaders are unique in their craft of inspiring others towards a common goal. Consequently, there is no easy way to study leadership as there are multiple variables to take into account and leadership is indeed an art, not a science. Unlike a science, in which the results can be replicated under the same conditions, an art has an unidentifiable *je ne sais quoi* that often challenges exact replication under even the most parallel of circumstances. As such, the study of leadership, much like its practice, is diverse and will continue to evolve.

Regardless of its complexity and its ever evolving nature, however, there are three necessary elements for effective leadership in any environment. These elements are competence, confidence and good communication skills. Unlike Meatloaf's 1970s rock hit, "two out of three ain't bad," when it comes to leadership, two out of three of the above mentioned criteria can be very bad. Importantly, all three are necessary, (although perhaps not sufficient), components of great leaders.

COMPETENCE

Competence in general refers to one's ability to do something successfully and/or efficiently. As such, it is the bedrock of success, and this statement is particularly true of great leaders. There is no substitute when it comes to competence. Indeed, a leader who

is confident and has good communication skills but lacks competence is arguably the most dangerous type of leader, especially if he/she is bolstered by position-power. While such a leader may be able to motivate others towards an end, incompetence is generally not strongly associated with mission success and achieving the *desired* end-state.

Competence is important for many reasons not least of which is that only a competent person can lead effectively by example. Simply put, if you cannot do your job efficiently and effectively, then you cannot set the example for others to do so as well.

Competence also helps build trust, both in your own ability to succeed, as well as the faith and reliance that others put in you to succeed and/or lead them to success. Along the same lines as the old adage "success breeds success," competence, as the bedrock of effectiveness and efficiency, is the foundational pillar in building trust in one's own abilities as well as between leaders and followers.

Importantly, with trust comes credibility, a quality that is normally only achievable if it is founded on competence. Credibility is important for leaders because it enables followers to place trust in their decisions even under the most dire of circumstances. Credibility is earned through continual and consistant displays of competence.

Competence is a skill and, as such, it can be developed. Training, education, self-development and experience can all help grow competence in specific areas. Importantly, being competent does not mean always being correct but it does imply that there is a high level of proficiency and that every effort has been made towards achieving success through continual skill development and pursuit of knowledge. It also implies that when gaps in competence are recognized, mechanisms are put in place to solve these deficiencies. As such, developing competence is a continuous process

and, in an ever changing world, no one should ever be satisfied with simply maintaining the status quo.

Ultimately, there is absolutely no substitute for competence when it comes to good leadership. Thankfully, the incompetent *effective* leader will remain as much of a myth as the Loch Ness Monster. Competence alone, however, is not enough to be a good leader. The competent leader must also be self-confident in his/her abilities in order to be effective.

SELF-CONFIDENCE

Self-confidence is a state of mind that is expressed as a way of being. It reflects one's ability to be self-reliant and believe in one's abilities to succeed.

Self-confidence is particularly important in a military context because it is a principle ingredient of courage. As Australian Major Reg Crawford recorded, "We wouldn't be able to do the things we do if a guy knew he was going to be faced with a degree of danger and didn't have the confidence to confront that and carry out the task regardless."[1]

In general, self-confidence increases the more one practices a specific task and is thus reflective of one's increased competence in that arena. For example, researcher and author Malcolm Gladwell wrote "ten thousand hours is the magic number of greatness" in reference to how much practice it takes in a specific task in order to truly excel at it.[2] Part of this journey toward greatness is the growth in confidence that is developed through those seemingly endless hours of practice. As researcher and former military officer Anthony Kellet observed, "one of the most valuable assets that training can confer onto a soldier is confidence, not only in his own military skills and stamina, but also in his weapons and equipment."[3]

Self-confidence is, undoubtedly, bolstered through training and continual practice, but it also relies on other elements as well. Specifically, self-confidence can be enhanced through the inter-related elements of:

1. Maintaining a Positive Outlook

Maintaining a positive outlook and believing in oneself is an essential element of self-confidence. If you do not believe in yourself, then it is quite likely that no one else will believe in, or trust, your abilities either. As such, optimism and an unbiased self-evaluation of your abilities and trust in your capabilities are central to being confident;

2. Feeling the Part

Feeling capable and sure of your abilities is also important to exhibiting self-confidence. Even if faced with a novel situation, the ability to rely on hours of training and education and to thus feel you can face the challenges that are being presented to you will also help you maintain your confidence in being able to elicit a desired outcome;

3. Acting the Part

Not only do you need to feel capable and sure of your skill-sets and knowledge, you also need to act the part. Even when faced with uncertainty and unknowns, decisions need to be made and actions need to be followed through. The self-confident leader does not bemoan the "what-ifs" in stressful situations but rather embraces the "what can be" in these circumstances;

4. Embracing Challenges

Not surprisingly then, the ability to embrace challenges is also an important element of self-confidence, particularly within a military context, as self-confidence is a strong contributor to being able to be adaptable which is often

an essential skill within the evolving military operating environment. In this context it is often not enough to feel confident in what you know how to do, you also have to be confident in your abilities to adapt and embrace new challenges; and

5. Accepting Failure when Everything was Done to Mitigate Its Occurrence

In order to be able to embrace challenges and to have self-confidence in this pursuit, it is important to be accepting of failure as long as everything was done to mitigate this occurrence. In essence you cannot be confident in trying new things or embracing challenges if you fear the consequences of failure. Nobody likes to fail but the ultimate failure is lacking the confidence to embrace challenges and somehow find a way to overcome them.

Beyond having a culture that promotes improvement, and encourages and promotes individuals to be their best through continuous training and education, receiving constructive feedback is instrumental to improving self-confidence. Feedback that highlights the positive while showing areas for enhancement as well as mechanisms to put in place so that you can improve (i.e. extra training, education, access to resources, etc.) helps to increase self-confidence. Notably, feedback that stresses, or only focuses on, what was done wrong diminishes self-confidence.

Self-confidence is a powerful mindset, if not skill, to possess, but there can also be a dark-side to self-confidence when it is either not coupled with competence, or when it is so excessive that it comes across as arrogance and/or hubris. Humility should always be the counter-part of self-confidence and the two should share a yin-yang-like relationship. Ultimately, one should be proud of his/her accomplishments and confident in his/her abilities but also recognize that he/she is only one piece of a very large puzzle to which others contribute as well. Humility in the face of collective

goals is a virtue that is enhanced through self-confidence in your value to the team and your contribution to the whole.

Importantly, self-confidence contributes to other people feeling confident about your ability, as well as your likelihood of succeeding in a given task. In this sense, confidence begets confidence. When coupled with competence and a dose of humility, it can be a powerful combination. Notably though, without good communication skills, this potential will likely not be realized.

COMMUNICATION

Effective communication in any mode – verbal, nonverbal, written, etc. – is the key to unlocking the full leadership potential that competence and self-confidence promise. Effective communication is achieved when the receiver understands the complete intent of the sender's message. Effective communication is thus a two-way relationship with responsibilities resting on both the sender and the receiver to ensure that the message is being transmitted effectively.

The content of a message is important and should be organized in such a way as to minimize ambiguity. Communication should be clear, precise and direct to help to mitigate the gap between what is being said and what is being heard (or what is being written and what is being read). Notably, much of the language we use is subjective in nature and has no real quantifiable meaning outside of its shared context. As such, when communicating every effort should be made to use precise language. For instance, the enemy is two hundred meters ahead is much more precise than the enemy is near us. This is also a clear and direct statement that leads little to the imagination (unless one is unclear as to who the enemy is and/or which direction one is pointed).

While the content of the message is important, how it is delivered and, consequently, received is far more important. Researchers

suggest that approximately ninety per cent of the impact of a message comes from nonverbal elements such as tone, facial expressions and body language versus the actual linguistic content. For instance, if someone has all of the visual cues of being sad but says he/she is happy, one is much more likely to interpret the individual as being sad despite the proclamations to the contrary.

Consequently, effective leadership is dependent on good communication both in terms of the content of the message as well as, and arguably more importantly, the way it is being expressed. For leaders, particularly within the military, the message should be delivered with confidence in a decisive manner and in a way that resonates with the group and the situation.

Confidence in the delivery of the message builds confidence amongst the audience and, in a military context, can importantly help to dissolve fear. In his memoirs of World War II, Guy Sajer described a combat situation in which a veteran commanded authoritatively, "'Nobody move!'" Sajer described the results: "In our terror we obeyed him." His argument was that "His voice sounded … confident …"[4] and ultimately this confidence helped to assuage their fears.

Communicating decisively, even in the face of the ambiguity of combat, is another element that followers desire of leaders in combat situations. In an informal study described in this book, Dr. Bernd Horn interviewed 60 experienced military personnel and asked "what is the single most important factor for leadership in combat or a crisis situation?" The top two responses, collectively garnering nearly seventy per cent of the feedback, were presence/setting the example and decisiveness.[5] Clearly it is not just what you are communicating but how you are passing on the message that is important.

While crafting your message using precise language, and delivering your message with confidence and decisively helps to ensure

that your intent is being properly understood, there are other methodologies that can also help to mitigate potential gaps between what is being said/communicated and what is being heard/received. Specifically, when possible you should also ensure that you:

1. ask your audience to explain what they understood the intent of your message to be. While not always possible, especially in the heat of combat, asking your listener to repeat the message to you in their own words will help you realize if there are any discrepancies in your understandings that you need to work through. In the end, as much as you may think you are communicating clearly, it is the listener who will always be the one who determines that fact as he/she is the one who ultimately will be executing your intent;

2. are consciously aware of your non-verbal cues. Non-verbal signals carry far more weight that words alone yet people often do not focus on this element of communication. Things like stature, body position, eye contact and tone, deserve as much attention when crafting the message as the words you plan on saying;

3. seek and accept feedback about your communication skills. Requesting feedback and giving it credence even if it is not all positive will help you better appreciate how others see you and will thus help you be better at crafting your messages the way you would like them to be heard. Immediate feedback is better than feedback after the fact for tweaking the content and/or delivery of your message;

4. recognize that as long as someone can see or hear you, whether intentional or not, communication is taking place. Everybody is communicating something all of the time but it may not always be the message we want to

be communicating because in some moments we are not even aware that we are sending a message. Be cognizant that you are always communicating if there is a receiver, regardless of whether or not you know that the receiver is present; and

5. continuously strive to improve your communication skills through reading, courses, and practice for example.

Ultimately leadership is about building trust between the leaders and the followers in order to work effectively as a team. Communication is a central element of this process. It is not just the content of the message that is important but, equally, if not more so, the delivery of the message. In leadership dynamics, it is what followers interpret and act on that is vital rather than simply what the leader thinks he/she directed.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Great leaders may be imbued with many unique and outstanding attributes and skills making no two exactly alike and emphasizing the point that leadership and the study of leadership are indeed an art, not a science. One common denominator for all great leaders, however, is that they are competent, confident and have good communication skills. These skills – all of which can be learned and improved on (see Table 2.1) – should thus be considered the foundation for effective leadership. While they may not be sufficient components of effective leadership, they are all necessary elements.

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES		
Competence ⟷	*Confidence* ⟷	*Communication*
- Embrace a life-long learning attitude - Continually seek knowledge and new experiences - Review and stay up-to-date on trade/ profession skills and knowledge - Stay current on global affairs - Participate in, observe and study new experiences and activities - Seek vicarious experience through self-study (i.e. reading) and talking to others who have experience related to activities you are involved in	- Always ensure you are prepared (i.e. do your homework) - Prepare yourself psychologically for whatever event, activity you will participate in – visualize what you must do/how you must do it/how you will execute the task - Act the part (i.e. ensure you are well turned out whether in uniform or civilian attire and speak and comport yourself with self-confidence) - Be deliberate in thought and action - Incorporate constructive feedback	- Be clear, complete and precise with your message - Avoid ambiguity between what you say and your non-verbal message - Never assume there is shared knowledge of details or intent - Avoid jargon/slang - Ensure that your message is well understood by having your audience repeat your intent in their words - Remember that non-verbal cues (i.e. body language and facial expressions) are more powerful than words - Appreciate different cultural views

Table 2.1 – Improvement Strategies

NOTES

1 Major Reg Crawford, Australian SASR, Phil Mayne, "Professionals Accept High-Risk Employment," *Army*, No. 907 (27 June 1996): 3.

2 Malcolm Gladwell cited in Drake Baer, "Malcolm Gladwell Explains What Everyone Gets Wrong About His Famous '10,000 Hour Rule,'" (2 June 2014), <http://www.businessinsider.com/malcolm-gladwell-explains-the-10000-hour-rule-2014-6>, accessed 7 November 2016.

3 Anthony Kellet, "The Soldier in Battle: Motivational and Behavioural Aspects of the Combat Experience," in Betty Glad, ed., *Psychological Dimensions of War* (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 217.

4 Guy Sajer, *The Forgotten Soldier* (New York: Brassey's, 1990), 180.

5 See Bernd Horn, "Dynamic Small Team Leadership," Chapter 13 in this volume.

CHAPTER 3

SELF-AWARENESS AND THE SOF LEADER

COLONEL DARRYL MILLS

"We lead by virtue of who we are."
Kevin Cashman, *Leadership From the Inside Out*

Arguably, the demands and challenges placed on our special operations forces (SOF) leaders have never before been so prominent, or so complex. With numerous challenges triggered by the emerging and sophisticated nature of threats in the security environment, the manning and personnel pressures of any modern sustainable organization, the political/strategic subtexts and at times competing agendas within an institution, the foreseeable operational tempo, funding constraints, generational dynamics of our workforce, as well as the constant drumbeat to do more with less, the pressure on our leaders to perform at their best is enormous.

But the complexity and challenge does not end there. In addition, the institutional pressures of any large organization or business, as well as the continuum of directed professional development requirements, and the compelling desire and responsibility to lead subordinates to the best of their abilities can challenge even the greatest of leaders. As such, to be successful in this complex arena, SOF leaders will need to maximize their leadership abilities and potential, of which a substantial concentration and dedicated effort will need to be on their personal development.

Despite running contrary to every fibre in our bodies, there are times when we, as leaders, have to put ourselves first if we are

to be the best leaders we can be. We must invest in ourselves; our warriors deserve it and our nation expects it. The intent of this chapter is to demonstrate how knowing and understanding yourself is the first step in maximizing leader potential and development.

So what does this mean and where do we begin? It means we have to get in touch with who we are, and it begins with self-awareness. As leaders, we cannot lead others until we fully understand ourselves. That is, we must truthfully recognize our traits, personality, behaviours, attitude, preferences, bias, strengths and weaknesses not only for our own self-comprehension and understanding, but also for how we are observed by our subordinates, peers and superiors alike. In essence, this process is the start point for self-awareness development.

To be self-aware means we are conscious of the different aspects of our *self*. It is principally an abstract state in which oneself becomes the focus of our own presence. While self-awareness is ever-present in our conscience, it is not something that we are intuitively attentive to at every moment of every day. Yet, at different points along the way, depending on the external situation and our own temperament, our *self* becomes interlaced into the framework of who we are and how we act.

With the multiple demands placed on our SOF leaders, it is challenging to find time to think about who we are, our strengths, weaknesses and blind spots, our motivations and personalities, our habits and beliefs. We are just not well programed to self-reflect, especially when we do not think about it, or think that we need to do it. Consequently, it is not surprising that many of us have a gap in our self-awareness. This gap is unfortunate, because self-awareness can heighten our judgment, increase our understanding of how our actions affect other people and help us isolate opportunities for both professional development and personal growth. It can make us better leaders.

CHAPTER 3

Leading SOF operators in often-complex situations and environments requires SOF leaders to harness every ounce of self-awareness to be had, as there is little room for error or misinterpretation within and amongst the teams and the warriors we lead. Seasoned leaders just do not just *arrive* at greatness. They have been shaped, developed and morphed along their life/career path, influenced by many factors and experiences along the way. Our great leaders have learned to harness these experiences and interconnect them into how we lead our people. They have learned to play to their strengths while equally acknowledging and minimizing their weaknesses.

To be able to harness our strengths we must know who we really are, where we came from, what we believe in and why we believe in it. We must recognize why we are the way we are. We must assess not only why we do the things we do but why we behave and act the way we do. We must understand ourselves to our core, the good and the not-so-good things we like about ourselves. We must understand what makes us tick, what causes us to have joy, what causes frustration. Why? Because understanding ourselves better will allow us to best determine how we are going to *show up* in and handle life's situations.

With that basic knowledge of the *what* of self-awareness, the next step is to look at some of the characteristics of self-awareness that can be studied and probed. Our personality attributes, habits, emotions, principles and expressive needs that govern our behaviours are just some of the key areas that should be explored, understood and developed. Self-awareness can assist leaders in identifying gaps in their leadership skills and knowledge. This awareness can stimulate proficiency development while be aware of blind spots. Self-awareness can also encourage leaders to cultivate situations and opportunities where they will be highly effective, strengthen intuitive decision-making, motivate self and teammates, all while decreasing harmful stress and finding a healthy work/life balance.

Knowing your strengths and weaknesses will help you exploit your strengths while minimizing your weaknesses. Everyone has weaknesses, but they do not have to be detrimental to our leadership. Simply being aware of our weakness will allow us to acknowledge this space and seek ways to mitigate these shortcomings. Just being mindful will allow you to maximize this knowledge.

Another aspect that needs to be discussed is the comprehension of how we perceive ourselves in relation to others. If we can understand this space, then we can ask the deeper question, "Is my perception of myself reflected in how others perceive me?" If we were to ask others this question would our answers and/or perceptions match? We can learn a lot by being *present* in the moment. Taking into account the situation, the moods, the observations, the emotions, and the responses (e.g. verbal, tone, body language) from others will help us better understand our presence. What kind of presence do you have?

At this point the question arises, "What can you do to become more self-aware?" There are activities and tools available, some are self-administered while others use external feedback. This final section of the chapter will recommend some of the self-development opportunities and suggestions to help one become more self-aware. These practices, combined with an attitude of *never stop learning,* will create a cycle of continuous self-improvement.

To begin, our greatest sense of self-awareness comes from asking others for or seeking feedback about ourselves. This feedback can come from not only your work relationships (e.g. the 360 Evaluation) but also from friends and family. All sources of feedback will provide valuable observations that you can analyze and incorporate into your expressed behaviour and actions. However, although all feedback is appreciated, it may not always be an accurate depiction of your authentic self. Notwithstanding, it is what and how people perceive and observe about you, so just be

mindful to suitably evaluate each piece of information. Look for trends, themes and consistency (or inconsistencies) in the feedback you receive; adjust if need be, or discard if not accurate. Also, understand that while many people will provide feedback when asked, it may not always be candid enough to be useful. While critical feedback is the type that has the most potential to help us learn and grow, it is the most difficult to give and to accept. One way to solicit this type of feedback is by allowing it to be given anonymously.

Finally, to set the conditions for open and honest feedback, it is the leader himself/herself that must create the atmosphere/climate for a frank exchange. If colleagues (and loved ones for that matter) feel they can communicate in an open, receiving and non-retributional way, there can be many positive long-term outcomes to this type of engagement. Open feedback can be a tremendous advantage not only to the leader, but also to the cohesiveness of the team. As SOF leaders we should strive to create a team climate that is rooted in valued, honest and open feedback.

To achieve this state, mutual respect, determination to exploit our potential and professionalism will need to the bedrock of behaviour. Imagine the true strength of a team if we can scrape below the surface as individuals. We should learn what makes each other strong, or weak. If we can get our team to this honest and open level of trust and sharing, then much can be accomplished in a more productive, efficient and synergistic way.

A second forum for feedback is through personality assessments and surveys. There are numerous organizations that provide this service. These surveys are developed and structured in such a way to maximize the accuracy of the feedback they generate. I would encourage one or two different assessments to gather an accurate picture of your traits. While the most effective surveys come with structured and interactive feedback from a facilitator, you can also complete them for yourself as a

means of self-assessment. Another advantage of the assessments and surveys is that you can do them within your team and share the results with each other. This process can assist with group dynamics and improve the overall performance of the team.

Seeking professional assistance is something every SOF leader should do on a regular basis. Executive coaches can be a great source of feedback to assist us in developing our self-awareness. They not only can help us get a better interpretation of who we really are, but they can also guide us with our own self-improvement. Good coaches – you must do your homework to find one that is right for you and your organization – gather evaluations, which can be open or anonymous, from their client's network (lower, higher and peers) or anyone else who is in a position to offer constructive views. Effective coaches know how to distil this feedback and translate it into helpful, and in many cases, actionable solutions for the client. A good coach will rarely provide answers, rather they will create an environment that will force the client to think, reflect, and push perceived limits and boundaries while challenging one's own assumptions. A growth opportunity is really possible with the services of an executive coach but only if the client is willing to surrender to this process.

Another type of coaching is the use of Performance Coaches. These specialized experts, at one time only available to high-performance athletes, are becoming more and more valuable in business organization, especially in High Reliability Organizations, such as the SOF community. They can maximize our skills and ability, increase our focus, help us eliminate distractions and improve the intended outcome and results.

Additionally, we should consider other forms of professional resources such as counselling and psychologists. Counsellors can provide inventories of our personality and interests. We sometimes only think about resources such as this when we are contemplating a second career. Nonetheless, they can be a valuable resource

at any point in our self-development. Equally, psychologists can help us understand and work on aspects of our personality and habits that inhibit our livelihood, including helping us be better individuals and better leaders.

A final note on professional assistance is that it should not be seen as only a resource when something has gone wrong. Professional assistance should be part of our day-to-day routine of self-development, even professional development. It should be viewed like any other preventative measure we take to remain healthy, active and on top of our game, personally and professionally. We use this mentality when we get annual medical check-ups, go to dentist, review our long-term financial investments and even in training and daily workouts.

Equal investment and time needs to be spent on developing ourselves to be the best we can be and reach our true intended potential. Every SOF leader needs to embrace and maximize every resource and opportunity available to become the best leader we can be and the best version of ourselves. We need to front-end load this way of thinking and take advantage of these professional assets before a crisis arrives. We owe it to the men and women we lead.

Mentorship is another great example of how a SOF leader can be helped and guided by a more experienced operator throughout the trials and tribulations of leadership challenges within the SOF community. Mentoring is a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and the psychosocial support perceived by the recipient as relevant to work, career, or professional development.[1]

While I believe each SOF community has some form of a mentorship program, I suspect it is informal or *ad hoc* at best, or worse, a forced relationship where a mentor is "assigned" randomly to a protégé. The partnership between a mentor and protégé needs to

be created from mutual respect and willingness to participate and engage, a desire to exchange ideas and information, and a genuine level of openness and transparency. Mentorship is not simply a relationship or friendship with an "old boss." It is a professional rapport that requires connectivity, work and commitment by both parties. A successful and enduring mentorship relationship cannot only improve our own self-development but has the ability to strengthen our leadership abilities while improving team proficiencies and operational outcomes. I strongly encourage you as SOF leaders to not only secure a mentor, but to also create a mentorship program within your organizations.

The above recommendations have been discussed as a means of helping with individual self-development. However, the most important part of self-development is to embrace the mantra, *never stop learning*. Take advantage of challenging your mind and your assumptions. Reading, watching podcasts, taking a course or engaging in meaningful and educational conversations are just some examples. Allow yourself to learn something new each day. There are an infinite number of resources available for learning. We also need to consider the diversity of our education, training and development. While our service institutions are strong in the military professional development domain, they can lack the multiplicity offered by the growing number of external academic and professional bodies. We should champion asymmetric educational and professional development and push the limits of our comfort zone. Additionally, as SOF leaders we must continue to create an environment of learning within our organizations, not only from a professional military education point of view but also from a personal growth and development perspective of each of our warriors. If we invest in ourselves and we invest in our people, then we will be a much more agile, adaptable, educated and synergistic force that will be better able to face the challenges of the future.

In summary, to perfect our leadership skills, the best place to start is with self-awareness. While challenging to think about

ourselves, we must do this as a matter of routine. To be self-aware means we know how we tick, respond, act and behave. It means we really know and understand ourselves. We can comprehend the good (and, at times, not-so-good) aspects of our personality, values, needs, habits, emotions, strengths, weaknesses, etc. By having a sense of who we are, with real authenticity, and a vision of the person and leader we want to become, we can chart a course with an actionable plan for personal and professional growth. Our challenges in life, be they personal or professional, will continue to mount and become even more complex. To remain advantaged against the internal and external pressures we will face, we must leverage all of our potential and seize every opportunity to grow.

NOTES

1 B. Bozeman and M.K. Feeney, "Toward a useful theory of mentoring: A conceptual analysis and critique," *Administration & Society* 39, No. 6 (October 2007): 719-739, <http://aas.sagepub.com/content/39/6/719.full.pdf+html>, accessed 30 August 2016.

CHAPTER 4

LEADERSHIP BEST PRACTICES IN HIGH RELIABILITY ORGANIZATIONS

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The 1980s were seen by many as a decade of industrial disasters with significant human, environmental, and social consequences. The partial nuclear meltdown at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Plant near Middletown, Pennsylvania in 1979 released radioactive gases into the environment, and cost almost US$1 billion in cleanup. There was an industrial accident in Bhopal, India in 1984, where a gas leak at a Union Carbide chemical plant killed thousands, injured thousands more, and polluted the area around the plant. The Space Shuttle *Challenger* disaster in 1986 killed all seven aboard, damaged American national pride, and curtailed the American space program. And in the same year, 1986, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Ukraine experienced a catastrophic failure that killed several, affected hundreds with acute radiation syndrome, and contaminated a large area around the plant.

During the same decade as the accidents described above, other large organizations operated largely without accidents. Thousands of aircraft took off and landed safely at commercial airports. Hospital emergency rooms quickly assembled teams targeted to the requirements of the patients brought through the doors. Chemical plants operated thousands of hours without accidents, and most nuclear reactor complexes generated gigawatts of electricity without a radiation release or a meltdown.

Clearly, the operational goal of all these organizations, both those with reported accidents and those without, is to operate as high

reliability organizations (HROs), as organizations that either avoided an accident or were able to effectively continue operations in the face of unexpected events.[1] Ideally, the unexpected would either be eliminated entirely (the entire system would be predictable) or it would be detected early and corrected. Some organizations have been able to achieve this operational goal; others have not. This chapter describes the nature of the types of systems that make up these organizations, and explores how leadership can be a factor in positioning a high *risk* organization to operate as a high *reliability* organization.

The large organizations in questions all operate as complex sociotechnical systems. A complex sociotechnical system is *simultaneously* a highly complex technical system with all the attendant assumptions of purpose-built design based on scientific and engineering principles, *and* a human organization, designed with mindfulness but with some component of emergent social relationships that may or may not be evident to those in power and authority. In a *sociotechnical* system, these two qualitatively different types of systems must interact. Organizational operations in sociotechnical systems thus involve optimizing both the social and the technical systems *and* the interactions of the two systems as they work together. Organizational dynamics, arguably influenced in some way by leaders, ensure that the right individuals engage with the right technologies at the right times in the right ways.

Complex sociotechnical systems – and so HROs, which are a subset of these systems – exhibit certain characteristics. They are *highly* or *hyper-complex* and are *tightly coupled*. This means that the system has many interlocking components, sub-organizations, and sub-systems. It thus is more than just complicated. To be complex means that there are interactions among parts of the system that its designers did not – and, more importantly, could not – envisage and so could not design out if necessary. Furthermore, the operation of the system will yield outcomes that could not be

predicted through an understanding of the workings of its parts. And should a failure happen in one part, all the parts of the system are so closely interwoven that it is not possible to separate them (this is what is meant by tight coupling). The high level of complexity that is characteristic of these systems means that the probability that the unexpected (often socially designated as an accident) will happen is high. The tight coupling would cause this unexpected event in one part of the system inevitably to lead to an unstoppable cascade of the unexpected throughout the system.

University of California Berkley business professors Karlene Roberts and Denise Rousseau describe eight primary characteristics that distinguish HROs from the general class of all large organizations. These characteristics are as follows, (note that all but the last two describe the complete *sociotechnical* organization, organizations where the human and the technical are intimately intertwined. The last two focus only on the human, the organizational side): [2]

- *Hypercomplexity* – HROs have a wide variety of components, suborganizations, and subsystems. Each of those subgroups also is often highly complex – and the integration and interaction of these components, organizations and systems presents significant opportunity for failure;

- *Tight coupling* – Roberts and Rousseau (1989) describe this as "reciprocal interdependence across many units and levels."[3] Many processes are time dependent, operate in invariant and invariable sequences, and are relatively unforgiving in terms of process direction;

- *Extreme hierarchical differentiation* – the systems and subsystems and organizations and sub-organizations operate in a nested and interdependent fashion, each with its own control and regulating mechanisms;

- *Simultaneous critical operations* – hypercomplexity and tight coupling means that critical activities can and do occur frequently and simultaneously;

- *Large numbers of decision-makers in complex communication networks which requires redundancy* – these communication networks have both technical and human components and are themselves often hypercomplex and tightly coupled;

- *Compressed time factors* – critical operations are often measured in seconds;

- *High standards of accountability* – accountability is exercised at all levels and for all activities; and

- *Immediate feedback* – quick decision-making and feedback are characteristic of operational decisions.

These characteristics mean that many see failures or accidents (the social labels for a system not functioning as planned) in complex sociotechnical systems as inevitable. Yale University Professor Charles Perrow, an early writer in this field, called these 'normal accidents.' He said, "The odd term, *normal accident* is meant to signal that, given the system characteristics, multiple and unexpected interactions of failures are inevitable." (emphasis in original).[4] According to Perrow, accidents *will* happen.

Others are more sanguine, claiming that although the unexpected may occur, effective leadership and management can create an organization that will, in the words of organizational theorists Karl Weick and Kathleen Sutcliffe, "manage the unexpected" and so avoid a catastrophic failure scenario. This assumes that imbuing the members of an organization with certain attitudes towards work will create a social system that will be able to engage with the technical side in a way that keeps the initial, small unexpected event from cascading through the system. Weick and Sutcliffe

offer the following five guidelines on handling the unexpected as necessary components of the social side of an HRO:

- *Preoccupation with failures*: the culture in these organizations is not one of zero accidents, or of "failure is not an option" (a statement made famous by Gene Kranz, the NASA flight director of Apollo 13). Rather it is a culture that recognizes that failure is but a step away, that there is a need to pay continuous attention to anomalies that could be symptoms of systematic failures;

- *Reluctance to simplify*: Assigning events or processes to generic classes, or using general labels to describe them causes organization members to ignore specific signs that the unexpected is evolving. Each event or process is unique. (This is not "just another flight run.") If the system is truly a complex, interdependent system, ignoring either or both complexity or interdependencies can be dangerous;

- *Sensitivity to operations*; a focus on plans, policies, or standard operating procedures (SOPs) takes attention away from actual activity, which is where failure happens. Failure does not happen in an SOP. It is through behaviour – the instantiation of the SOP at the point of the interaction of the social with the machines and technology – that the sociotechnical system is actualized;

- *Commitment to resilience*: "The signature of a high reliability organization is not that it is error-free, but that errors don't disable it;" and

- *Deference to expertise*: Expertise, not rank, routine, or policies, should underlie all operating principles.[5]

Although this discussion will focus primarily on the social side of this system, it is worth noting that there is increasing attention

paid to human engagement with purpose-built technologies on the science and engineering side. Fields such as user experience (UX) are recognizing the importance of understanding perceptions and responses that result from the use of products, systems or services, and incorporating them in product or service design.[6] Other approaches, sometimes described as system of systems analyses, are using tools such as computational models to help understand the emergent properties of these complex sociotechnical systems.

Failures do not just "happen" in the tightly coupled, hypercomplex sociotechnical system that can function as an HRO. They are not events, but processes. Something small performs unexpectedly. The tight coupling of the system means that this affects something else in the system, and the unexpected cascades rapidly into large uncontrollable system activities with negative social consequences – an accident or a failure. Early detection of the anomaly can be critical in averting an accident or failure.

As Weick and Sutcliffe explain, "Failures evolve, which means that detection involves a judgment that something is fail*ing*."[7] If the social side of the system can be aware of the possibility of the unexpected, recognize it when it occurs, and propose workable mechanisms to deal with it in a constructive fashion, accidents and failures should be avoided and a high risk system can function as an HRO. Note that this approach is not suggesting that the unexpected can be avoided, just that the unexpected can be managed, and if there are accidents and failures, they are of low impact. As Professor of Psychology James Reason said, "Human fallibility, like gravity, weather and terrain, is just another foreseeable hazard …The issue is not why an error occurred, but how it failed to be corrected…We cannot change the human condition, but we can change the conditions under which people work."[8]

Although Reason talks only of human fallibility, the complexity argument suggests that the failure or the unexpected event also could occur on the technical side. In either case, once the

"failure" or the unexpected is identified, resources must be at hand that are able to generate an understanding of the unexpected and propose workable mechanisms to deal with it. The accident at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Facility, for example, was a cascade of errors that occurred when the original unexpected event was misdiagnosed and so handled incorrectly.

Detecting the unexpected early in the cascade and mustering the organizational resources to engage with it immediately is critical to effectively function as an HRO. This requires an organizational value structure "preoccupied with failure," and a recognition of the importance of expertise to deal with the problem. It also requires the ability to quickly shift organizational structure and associated modes of functioning in the face of the unexpected, and to later shift back as activity resumes the routine. In both areas – attitudes and organizational structure and function – the role of the leader is critical.

Attitudes are the aspects of an HRO with which many are familiar. The most well-known attitude required to function as an HRO is "preoccupation with failure" – or, to rephrase this a little less judgmentally, anticipation of the unexpected. An HRO is an organization that recognizes that the unexpected *will* occur, that there is a need to pay continuous attention to anomalies that could be symptoms of systematic failures. The sociotechnical system is simply too complex for failure-free design on both the human (socio) and technical sides.

It is important to point out that the complexity of the system also allows operational successes even with failures or anomalies in one part of the system. The series of near misses in deep water wells during the same procedure (i.e. cementing) that preceded the catastrophic "blowout" at the *Deepwater Horizon* well in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 are instructive. For example, many Gulf of Mexico wells had suffered minor blowouts during cementing (dozens of them in the past two decades); however, in each case chance

factors – favourable wind direction, no one welding near the lead at the time, for instance – helped prevent an explosion.[9]

Each of those minor blowouts could have been an event of *Deepwater Horizon* magnitude and consequence: the *Deepwater Horizon* blowout began in the same way those minor blowouts did. The *Deepwater Horizon* escalated to a system failure because other conditions were right for the original anomaly to cascade through the system. Had that anomaly in the system – the one that led to the minor blowouts elsewhere – been seen as something fail*ing* and addressed as such, the *Deepwater Horizon* blowout might have been averted.

To recognize those minor blowouts as the system fail*ing* would require a preoccupation with failure or anticipation of the unexpected as described above. This attitudinal posture requires that organizational attention is focused on *actual* behaviour of both the social (human) and technical systems, not on what is expected to happen or what should happen. The assumption that behaviour is the same as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or rules (e.g. personnel trained in appropriate procedures will execute them infallibly) needs to be discarded, and the individuality of particular processes recognized. When an anomaly is recognized, those who recognize it – usually far down the organizational hierarchy – have to believe they have the authority to stop or change the operation without penalty.

This would require an organizational culture that was willing to stop or modify productive activity with no clear evidence that anything was wrong (after all, this had happened before and on other deep water wells with no consequence, right?). Leaders and managers throughout the organization must demonstrate through their own behaviour that they support this attitude. An organization that insists that every individual is empowered to stop operations for safety reasons, yet visibly rewards behaviour that focuses on cost and schedule, talks in corporate communications

materials and venues of the importance of customer satisfaction in these areas, and emphasizes completion of training protocols but has no mechanism to observe and focus on actual operations, is not supporting a "preoccupation with failure," or exhibiting the leadership that will result in an HRO.

The evolution of a perception that activities which exhibit small system anomalies fall into acceptable risk profiles without carefully analyzing them first is called "normalization of deviance."[10] It is a process of simplification, of classifying what are potentially different types of activities as "the same." To follow the *Deepwater Horizon* example a little further, a well undergoing cementing where there is no welding nearby is *not* the same as well undergoing cementing with welding nearby. Normalization of deviance allows ignorance of features that might be present in the behaviour of the sociotechnical system which will cause the initial event to cascade in one instance where it had not in the previous several similar but critically different instances.

The organization must recognize that the unexpected will happen, support those who identify and report the anomalies, and, at the same time, neither celebrate failure or blame those who reported the problem. Blame or punishment for those who report problems can come as unintended consequences of reporting systems.

Suppose an individual working in a general maintenance group in a large manufacturing facility notices behaviours in his subsystem-level group that could lead to safety problems.[11] Under a new safety program focusing on safety at the behavioural level, the employee reports those behaviours to management. He is commended for his reporting, and then asked to write a report describing the problem, and appear before a safety board to discuss the situation. Neither report writing nor public speaking are part of his normal repertoire of work behaviours and are difficult and uncomfortable activities for him. Furthermore, he is not relieved of any of his normal duties while performing these extra tasks.

Additionally, in this scenario, the sub-system where the risk was reported was taken off-line for a day while the behaviours were examined by a safety team, significantly impacting the ability of other tightly coupled sub-systems in the facility to perform. Finally, the safety team assigned to investigate the targeted process was composed of safety, not domain, experts. The individual who initially reported his concerns had no role in the safety analysis other than as a descriptive source of information about the behaviours that caught his attention in the first place.

In the manufacturing facility where this problem occurred, there was an increase in reports of potential problems for a short period of time after this safety reporting program was instituted, and then a significant dip in reports. Employees said that not only was there no benefit to them to report, but they were, in fact, feeling penalized for reporting. They were given extra work in areas for which they felt unqualified, and were getting negative feedback from colleagues in other parts of the organization who were impacted by the system interruption. They (and their immediate colleagues, who worked in the area and were considered the domain experts on the process) also were excluded from the analysis of the risky behaviours, except when they served as the subject of interviews by a safety team brought in by management, a situation in which they felt their behaviours were under scrutiny for fault, not valued as contributing to an understanding of the problem.

In this example, the sub-organization where the problem appeared was charged with a rather diffuse goal – maintenance and support of the factory, to keep the operation running. As this was a private sector organization working under a very tightly coupled and highly interdependent manufacturing system, down time in one part of the organization rippled through the manufacturing line and affected output – and ultimately affected stock prices. As some employees held corporate stock, and the minute-by-minute stock price was flashed on an LED display in some of the

work areas, a dip in stock prices was felt by many personally and communicated by management to all as an event of importance.

As a counterexample, take the deck of an aircraft carrier during take-off and recovery (landing) operations.[12] About twelve to seventeen planes will take-off during a launch/recovery operation. Launch/recovery operations are time-critical because of the fuel limitations of the planes and the absence of alternative landing sites while at sea. A launch/recovery cycle can involve about 150 men and can take hours to set up and execute. During execution, there are usually about a dozen pairs of eyes watching the approaching aircraft and the carrier deck, looking for something out of the ordinary as the operations unfold.

During one of the cycles, a refueling helicopter on an aircraft carrier at sea landed on the deck, took its load on board, and took off. After take-off, the deck was readied to accept returning aircraft. During that process, an enlisted man found an unidentified part on the deck, reported it, and the deck was called 'foul' and closed to activity. No one on the flight deck or in the flight tower could identify the part. Meanwhile, aircraft which ran on tight fuel margins were waiting for the deck to reopen so they could be recovered. The helicopter was retrieved, in case it was the source of the loose part, and a substitute readied and sent up. While this was going on, the part was passed around to all involved with the flight deck with everyone able to contribute hypotheses as to its origin, doing so regardless of rank or formal function. The primary operating goal was to identify the source of the part and ascertain if the deck could be reopened before a crisis situation developed with fuel-limited aircraft.

In the case of the aircraft carrier, the operational goal at this point was clear: safe landing for all aircraft involved. As part of that activity, all participating personnel understood that an important part of their responsibility was to halt operations if something appeared to be unsafe. There was a simultaneous recognition that

any problem that did halt operations needed to be solved very quickly, or the 'problem' could rapidly escalate. To quickly address the problem of the loose part, individuals with domain knowledge coalesced around the problem, regardless of rank or function. Once the problem was solved (the part identified, or at least danger associated with it eliminated) and the deck re-opened to arriving aircraft, all personnel went back to their assigned functions, and rank and associated authority were reinstated.

These abbreviated examples highlight three areas that are peculiar to HROs, as exemplified by the aircraft carrier. There was an acceptance of the possibility of the unexpected at the intersection of the social with the technical (at the level of behaviour), an acceptance recognized by the many pairs of eyes assigned to watch and follow what actually were highly scripted operations around take-off and recovery. While the manufacturing organization invested heavily in safety programs and training, there was not the focus at the behavioural level or the sense of living on the edge that was present in the carrier environment. Corporate messages, exemplified in this abbreviated scenario by the stock ticker on the LED display, were as often about profitability as they were about safety. During take-off/recovery operations on the carrier, the operational goal was clear, and was well-understood by all participants. In the manufacturing plant scenario, as mentioned earlier, the operational goal for the maintenance group was fairly diffuse. During specific tasks, the maintenance goal was focused on speed: down time at the plant negatively affected a higher level goal (output, which translated into profit) that was clear to everyone. And finally, on the carrier a respect for expertise allowed the quick creation of resourced, problem-focused social networks to address the unexpected, unlike the manufacturing organization which brought in a process-focused team (a safety team) to explore the problem behaviours, and sidelined the domain experts.

The attitudinal position which recognizes the possibility of failure, as described previously, is one of the more common characteristics

associated with HROs. The second characteristic, the ability of the organization to provide the space to allow expertise-based, problem-focused teams to emerge is not as well-known but is equally important and leadership-dependent. The importance of the clarity of operational goals also has not been widely discussed, but it becomes very important in a discussion of leadership in an HRO as leaders often must manage the tension between local operational goals and broader strategic goals.

Understanding how organizations work, and how to manipulate organizational form to support high reliability is a key attribute of leaders of HROs. HROs, with their high level of complexity in both the social and technical domains, are large organizations. Large organizations like these generally operate as highly structured, enduring and bounded entities. They are organized for efficiency and perform very well under clearly defined and stable conditions. Activities, associated job functions and relationships among the jobs are defined by rules, processes, policies, laws and SOPs. These types of organizations are called bureaucracies. These are traditional "line and box" organizations, where the "box" is defined by a function (e.g. director or manager), not a particular individual (e.g. Susan Smith or George Jones). Individuals occupy boxes, but boxes endure beyond the particularity of the occupant.

In a bureaucracy, the organizational gaze is vertical: power inheres in roles at the top, and direction and instruction flows down. Loyalty is local, to one's job. To refuse responsibility by saying "It's not my job," is to recognize this local loyalty. Success is defined as a particular job well done, even if the organization fails to meet its goals. Leadership in bureaucracies, and so in HROs, is based on a person-centric approach, organized around a tripod of leader, followers (or those led) and goals.

In this environment leadership is conceptualized as a relationship of a single individual to a group. Understandings of leadership today in bureaucratic environments focus on the ability of the

leader to influence overall group effectiveness. Leadership thinking today focuses less on personality traits than it has historically, and more on the interactive relationship of the leader and the group. This relationship often is distinguished by activity type (task-based and relationship-based activities) and differences in the task maturity of the followers. Note that although the leadership discussion is about a reciprocal relationship between a leader and follower(s), there still is a power asymmetry in the relationship. The underlying question is how the leader influences the group, not vice versa.

Considering HROs as bureaucracies also brings up the question of the difference between managers and leaders. Very briefly, managers help the organization operationalize the behavioural processes outlined in the rules, policies and SOPs of the organization. Managers are a function, a "box": the specific individual is secondary. Given the rules and SOPs that define the organization, there is an implicit assumption that every individual who occupies one of the boxes on the line and box chart will perform every function described as adhering to that box in the same way. Managers focus on the required. Leaders, on the other hand, operate through interpersonal influence. They forge connections with the individuals who occupy the boxes or perform the functions in the line-and-box diagram. Specific persons and interpersonal relationships become important to a leader. Leaders are engaged with the discretionary. As leadership gurus Bernard and Ruth articulated, "Leadership is path-finding; management is path-following."[13]

As noted earlier, bureaucracies are well-suited for organizations operating in a stable, routine environment. As with most organizations, HROs spend most of their time in this mode. HROs also operate in what may be called an up-tempo environment. This is a time when the organization operational tempo increases significantly, but around an expected and recognized problem. Organizational structure may shift and interpersonal relationships increase somewhat in importance, but operations still remain

within bureaucratic bounds (e.g. think of a firefighting unit called out for a structure fire).

Recognized procedures to operate at this level are in place. Where things get interesting is when the organization operates in a crisis mode. It is here that the differences between a high risk organization and a high reliability organization come into play, and the role of the leader is highlighted.

As described earlier, during a crisis, or an unexpected event, an HRO allows an expertise-focused network to form around the problem. Before exploring this expertise-based network further, it will be useful to discuss this networked organizational form and highlight its differences with bureaucratic structures.

Social networks are dynamic, temporary configurations of relationships of individuals. Note that they are made up of individuals, not functions. That it is Susan Smith and George Jones and not Lucy Griegos and John Takai with whom this relationship is forged is important. Their function, or box, that they work as a manager or a director, is not. The organizational gaze is horizontal to colleagues, not vertical to a superior or inferior. Relationships are consultative and advisory, not directive, and are based on trust in persons not on power and authority derived from position. Loyalty is global, to the enterprise. No one succeeds unless the enterprise succeeds. "It's not my job," is not an acceptable way to delineate responsibility in a social network. All participants are responsible to the whole, to solving the problem or resolving the issue.

Social networks are highly ephemeral. They usually coalesce around some problem or issue. Members are recruited (or volunteer) on the basis of their knowledge or expertise relative to that issue. Once the problem or issue is solved or resolved, the network disappears, or the ties fade and become what are known as weak ties – infrequently activated, but providing crucial connections when they are.

All organizations have elements of rule-based and relationship-based relationships among participants. In some cases, engagement with others is based on function; in others, on problem or issue. No organization operates purely as one or the other. However, in all organizations at any given time, one of these operational modes is dominant.

In large organizations, including HROs during routine and up-tempo operations, the bureaucratic mode dominates. What distinguishes HROs is their ability to move quickly from a bureaucratic to a network-based, expertise-focused mode of operation when faced with the unexpected. The unexpected may be discovery of an anomaly early in a process, or a radical change in the organization's external operating environment. If an anomaly is recognized, the leader must allow the organizational space for the formation and resourcing of expertise-based problem-focused networks to address it.

Take, as an example, the behaviour of Task Force (TF) 714, a highly trained, elite American military counterterrorism organization that had been extremely successful with its historic missions.[14] However, in 2003 it was deployed to Iraq and faced an environment quite unlike the one under which it had previously been successful. Initially, it was operationally very successful in Iraq, but was failing to accomplish its task. That is, it was able to conduct operations that individually were successful according to historic criteria but which collectively were not achieving the task the task force was set in Iraq.

TF 714 was tasked to dismantle the al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) insurgency, but found instead that it was "losing to an enemy…we should have dominated," according to Retired U.S. Army General Stanley McChrystal, then-TF 714 commander.[15] Behaviours that had worked previously, were now failing. Under the existing system, the task force conducted a raid, and collected what materials it thought would be useful and detained appropriate individuals.

Both materials and personnel were sent behind the operational lines to analysts from the Department of Defense (DoD) and other agencies who were trained in intelligence analysis and exploitation. Often weeks later, intelligence deemed useful by the exploitation and analytic organizations was returned to the operational front and used for planning future raids.

By 2009, TF 714 was able to accomplish its task. It went beyond mounting operations that individually were successful, and was able to defeat AQI. It accomplished this by transforming itself from a relatively traditional, hierarchically oriented military organization to an organization that created networks of experts around operational problems, moving decision-making, moving it closer to the point of action. In the process, TF 714 morphed from a relatively closed and self-sustained direct action unit that handed off functions such as intelligence analysis and exploitation to other organizations, to a unit that engaged in strong partnerships with other organizations, using those partnerships to fully integrate intelligence into its operations.

Leadership was key to making these changes. General McChrystal hand-picked key individuals to liaise with intelligence organizations and other key partners (such as the Department of State), individuals who already had strong relationships with key players in those targeted partners. He restructured his command space, opening it up both physically and through rewiring of lines of communication so those with expertise relevant to a particular problem could quickly engage with others in analytic and operational networks appropriate to a problem. And he moved decision-making for operations closer to the operation itself, again to allow those with knowledge of a particular operation to make appropriate decisions.

How TF 714 will operate post-Iraq, when operations return to the routine and up-tempo environment of surgical strike, hostage rescue and counterterrorism that made them so successful

pre-Iraq remains to be seen. However, on the front end of the HRO story, the movement into crisis mode, the tale of TF 714 was a success. Leadership recognized that behaviours that had worked well previously now were failing, and facilitated the development of an organizational structure that allowed the emergence of expertise-based networks focused on the problem of each operational mission. While rank, and the power and authority that accrued to it, did not completely disappear from TF 714's internal interactions, operational experts were given much greater latitude in defining the role of the organization than they had been in the operating environment prior to the deployment to Iraq.

Note that the focus of these expertise-based networks is *operational*, not strategic. The question for the aircraft carrier crew was not the role of aircraft carriers in maintaining a national strategic posture. For TF 714, the question was not about the usefulness of AQI as a target, or even if the types of measures offered by TF 714 were appropriate. Given that AQI was the target, and given that the countermeasures offered by an elite team such as TF 714 were to be used, the question was how to effectively employ them and avoid the catastrophic failure of the inability to complete an assigned task.

The role of the leader *does* lie at the level of strategic questions. And it is here that the role of a leader in an HRO is further complicated by conflicting demands. In the private sector, those demands often come from profit-related goals as illustrated earlier in the example of the manufacturing organization. In the public sector, where most HROs operate, there are increasing social demands upon organizations for greater transparency and accountability, goals which can support high reliability. However, these same organizations are usually not relieved of historic demands for efficiency and efficacy, goals which often can be in conflict with highly reliable performance. These multiple and sometimes incompatible demands need to be balanced carefully through the organization.

The Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA, provides an interesting example of competing goals in a quasi-public organization. Sandia is one of three nuclear weapons engineering research laboratories under the purview of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and one institution in a broad complex of organizations and facilities DOE oversees. At most of the sites, the government owns not only the buildings but the furniture, office supplies, laboratory supplies – everything needed to complete the laboratories' mission. Returning to Sandia, the laboratories' staff officially works for Sandia Corporation, a private sector entity. DOE contracts management of both the physical plant and Sandia Corporation (the people) to a third party, in this case at this time, to Lockheed Martin. Lockheed Martin gets a fee for management of this socio- (Sandia Corp) technical (the physical plant and infrastructure) system. These interlocking systems of management and control, combined with the potentially high-risk and complex research that is conducted at the labs, create a complex sociotechnical system – a high risk organization.

DOE's fiscal year 2016 agreement with Sandia Corporation charges the organization to achieve what could be seen as conflicting goals. Under the heading, "mission performance," is the following: "Protection of worker and public safety, the environment and security are essential and implicit elements of mission performance."[16] However, a later section notes that an accident or security breach may downgrade the performance ratings for the labs and negatively impact the fee the managing contractor (in this case, Lockheed Martin) will receive. The agreement goes on to state:

> Sandia Corporation is expected to manage in a safe, secure, efficient, effective, results-driven manner, with appropriate risk management and transparency to the government, while taking appropriate measures to minimize costs that do not compromise core objectives and mission performance.[17]

In short, Sandia must thus be poised to work at the edge of capacity and capability at any moment, and yet maintain an accident-free operating environment. It must accomplish this in a resource-constrained environment ("minimize costs").

The increased pressure on the military to accomplish goals phrased as military objectives with a minimum number of casualties is another example of a public sector organization operating under similar contradictory objectives. This pressure required American forces in the Middle East theatre to manage the tension between force protection and counterinsurgency (COIN) campaigns. American COIN doctrine calls for high levels of engagement with local populations including the requirement to capture and/or kill certain elements of that local population, while minimizing the loss of life and injury to American personnel. Strategic Studies professor Elliot Cohen and former military officer John Nagl, and colleagues in an article in *Military Review* called it a "paradox of counterinsurgency," pointing out the "the more you protect your force, the less secure you are" while also recognizing the political cost of the loss of American lives.[18] When the pendulum swung too far in the direction of force protection, American Marines were moving through the streets of Iraqi and Afghan villages in up-armored Humvees with little or no opportunities for local engagement.

How an organization manages to achieve an accident- or failure-free operational environment, and simultaneously manages the tension between an accident-free operational environment and strategic goals (whether those goals are defined as some level of profitability or the eradication of a counterinsurgency) within a resource-constrained world is the purview of the leader and the secret of an HRO. Studies of organizations that have been successful at managing the tension between the complexity of a sociotechnical operation and strategic success detail a leader clear on his/her place in a strategic community while supporting an organization-wide focus on behavior that is expressed through clear, shared goals at the operational level. Leaders create a culture

that embraces failure, emphasizing that the unexpected *will* happen. Perhaps the most difficult job in an HRO is the requirement to convince organizational players (including those at the top) that there are times when routine is important, and other times when it is critical to put aside rank and its associated power and authority in favour of expertise. In times of crisis, letting the individual who knows the most and is closest to the behaviour create a network of those with related expertise to deal with the unexpected, assess the anomaly or engage in required behaviours to contain or eradicate it, will keep that small thing from becoming a big thing.

It is worth pointing out that the surest way to achieve an accident- or failure-free environment is for everyone to stay home. Eliminate half of the sociotechnical equation, and the problem is solved. Obviously, that does not happen. So given that there are large, bureaucratic organizations managing complex, tightly coupled sociotechnical systems, the unexpected will occur. Keeping the unexpected from becoming a failure or an accident by crafting an organization that operates by the principles outlined here is the role of a leader in an HRO.

NOTES

1 An HRO is generally described as an organization that operates in a high-risk, complex environment but has been successful in avoiding accidents or catastrophes even though normal accidents could be expected due to the nature of the task.

2 Karlene H. Roberts and Denise M. Rousseau, "Research in Nearly Failure-Free, High-Reliability Organizations: Having the bubble," *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management* 36, No. 2 (1989): 132-133.

3 Ibid., 132.

4 Charles Perrow, *Normal Accidents: Living with high risk technologies* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 5.

5 Karl Weick and Kathleen Sutcliffe, *Managing the Unexpected: Assuring high performance in an age of complexity* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), 94-95.

6 Effie Lai-Chong Law et al., "Understanding, scoping and defining user experience: a survey approach," in *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems,* (ACM, 2009), 719-728.

7 Weick and Sutcliffe, *Managing the Unexpected*, 47.

8 James Reason, *Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents* (Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 1997), 25.

9 Catherine H. Tinsley, Robin L. Dillon, and Peter M. Madsen, "How to Avoid Catastrophe," *Harvard Business Review* 89, No. 4 (2011): 90-97.

10 Ibid.

11 The following short case study description is based on work the author performed as part of a safety culture evaluation for a large American-based manufacturing organization in 2005-2006.

12 This short case study is adapted from Karlene H. Roberts, Suzanne K. Stout, and Jennifer J. Halpern. "Decision Dynamics in Two High Reliability Military Organizations," *Management Science* 40, No. 5 (1994): 614-624.

13 Bernard M. Bass and Ruth Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications* Fourth Edition, (New York: Free Press, [1974] 2008), 654.

14 This short case study description is adapted from a description of TF 714 as a learning organization. See Richard Schultz, *Military Innovation in War: It takes a learning organization*. JSOU Report 16-6. (MacDill Air Force Base: The JSOU Press, 2016).

15 Shultz, *Military Innovation in War*, 1.

16 Fiscal Year 2016 DOE/NNSA Strategic Performance Evaluation and Measurement Plan (PEMP) for Los Alamos National Laboratory (redacted) <https://nnsa.energy.gov/sites/default/files/FY14%20Los%20Alamos%20PEP_Redacted.pdf >, accessed July 2016.

17 Ibid.

18 Eliot Cohen et al., *Principles, Imperatives, and Paradoxes of Counterinsurgency* (Washington DC: Johns Hopkins University: School of Advanced International Studies, 2006), 52.

CHAPTER 5

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE BUILD BETTER SOF LEADERS: PROPOSING A NEW SOF LEADERSHIP MODEL

DR. PETER MCCABE AND RAY KRUELSKIE

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."
John F. Kennedy

The subject of leadership in general, and more specifically Special Operations Forces (SOF) leadership, is an important topic for discussion and study, especially in light of the recent prominence of SOF. Colonel Bernd Horn contends, "Education is a key component to the development of the next generation of military leaders."[1] Special operations centric education along with Service professional military education (PME) provide SOF leaders with the tools needed to address today's challenges. As Horn notes, "The need for education in today's complex security environment is repeatedly stressed by practitioners who, through the experience in the chaos of conflict, clearly understand that education, rooted in critical thinking, problem solving and analytical research, better prepares individuals to think, as well as cope with problems and situations that are unexpected."[2]

This chapter will address the current SOF Leadership Competency Model, and recommends replacing it with the SOF Learning Leader model. The SOF Learning Leader model will show how the SOF leader is able to adapt and grow through incorporating education, training and experience. Although joint and Service leadership models demonstrate how the Services develop leaders to face their

challenges, the SOF Learning Leader model expounds upon this argument to highlight how education, training, and experience shape SOF leaders to meet special operations mission demands.

SOF differs from conventional forces (CF) in multiple ways. Three distinct differences that stand out are the mission(s), the people, and technologies available to SOF. This chapter will explain the current SOF Leadership Competency Model, and then take a quick glance at the draft Future SOF Operator (FSO) concept before exploring a new model. The shortcomings of the current SOF leadership model are identified, and a recommended SOF Learning Leader model is proposed. Updating the SOF Leadership Competency Model will help develop SOF leaders to leverage people and technology to effectively operate in the 'gray zone'[3] and succeed in 'no-fail' national missions. The authors conclude that the new model more accurately reflects special operations uniqueness; the influences of education, training, and experience; and offers a better roadmap for SOF leader development.

Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, *Special Operations*, defines special operations as "requir(ing) unique modes of employment, tactics, techniques, procedures, and equipment. They are often conducted in hostile, denied, or politically and/or diplomatically sensitive environments, and are characterized by one or more of the following: time-sensitivity, clandestine or covert nature, low visibility, work with or through indigenous forces, greater requirements for regional orientation and cultural expertise, and a higher degree of risk." The manual continues, "Special operations provide joint force commanders and chiefs of mission with discrete, precise, and scalable options that can be synchronized with activities of other interagency partners to achieve United States Government (USG) objectives."[4] The 'people' differences in SOF are highlighted by their work with or through indigenous forces, and greater requirements for regional orientation and cultural expertise than CF. The 'mission' differences are evident in those missions conducted in hostile, denied, or politically and/or diplomatically sensitive

environments, and are characterized by one or more of the following: time-sensitivity, clandestine or covert nature, and low visibility. Finally, the technology piece is evident in the unique modes of employment, tactics, techniques, procedures, and equipment.

U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) has Title X authority to train, equip, and organize SOF, and the SOF enterprise plays a huge role in training SOF leaders. Within USSOCOM, the Force Management and Development (FMD) Directorate J77 is the education division, and oversees language and culture training, and the SOF education program (SEP). The SEP budget line funds SOF participation in Department of Defense regional centres, special operations support team (SOST) and special operations liaison officers (SOLO) training, some SOF leadership development efforts (led by FMD J1), and special operations centric education efforts. Special operations-centric education concerns the study, research, programs of instruction, and academic pursuits related to core SOF mission areas, SOF specialties, and/or items and topics of particular interest to special operations and SOF.[5] By its nature and design, special operations-centric education must be joint – that is, it must be applicable to at least two component special operations forces.

Examples of special operations-centric education efforts include the development of social network analysis (SNA) courses developed and taught at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) along with the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) developing special operations-centric courses related to countering weapons of mass destruction (CWMD) education courses. The SNA and CWMD courses are SOF-focused, not necessarily funded or offered by the Services. Special operations-centric education is also part of the reason JSOU exists. JSOU helps prepare SOF leaders by providing specialized joint PME, developing SOF-specific undergraduate and graduate level academic programs, and fostering special operations research, analysis and outreach.

WHY SOF EXPERIENCE MATTERS

Many in SOF possess extensive CF experience, and they are often mature combat veterans of various operations in multiple locations. As an Army SOF example, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Kirila notes:

> Operational employment of Army SOF officers results in a broad range of international experiences that span the range of pre-conflict activities through large scale joint and combined operations. It is common for Army SOF company grade officers to act as senior military advisers to U.S. Ambassadors. Similarly, Army SOF field grade officers develop and implement multi-national operations by synchronizing GCC (Geographic Combatant Command) strategy objectives with U.S. diplomatic mission's strategic or regional priorities. Operation Enduring Freedom – Caribbean and Central America is one recent example that illustrates the complexity of collaborative multi-national operations loosely coordinated and influenced by small teams of special operators.[6]

Although direct action operations are more recently associated with SOF, indirect actions are also a key component of the SOF experience. Additionally, SOF are expanding indirect capabilities through working by, with, and through its allies and partners. "The modern version of the indirect approach is where networks of like-minded actors on today's game board of international security achieve strategic presence through proactive and preventative insertion and activity to undermine the balance and equilibrium of the adversarial networked actors."[7]

To continue with the Army vignette, before anyone can begin to train as a Special Forces (SF) soldier, the following training must be complete: basic combat training, advanced individual training and airborne school. Training for a SF soldier takes place over

many phases and courses. These include Special Operations Preparatory Course, Special Forces Assessment and Selection, Special Forces Qualification Course (individual skill, military occupation specialties, collective training). Additionally, after completing this training, SF soldiers are required to take language training as well as the Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape course. Other types of training could include live environment training which provides fluency in a country's language, customs, and traditions.

Each Service provides similar detailed and extensive training for its requisite SOF. Special operations-centric training prepares their special operators to operate in varied and often dynamic operational environments. Special operations-centric training is frequently found at the individual and collective levels. Examples of individual training include pre-mission training and rehearsals prior to deploying SOF; theatre special operations commands conducting SOF-specific theatre training for assigned forces; cybersecurity training (at all levels) such as accession pipelines, professional, and leadership development; modeling and simulation which provides tactical proficiency; and collective battle staff training and SOF interoperability, interdependence, and integration.[8] Collective training events support SOF leadership through integration of interagency and international partners, SOF mission command and control, and joint and NATO training exercises. Through both individual and collective training, SOF leaders achieve the tactical and technical competence that makes special operations the go-to force to address today's complex and ambiguous threats.

Additional training and education is provided to the SOF Enterprise in various special operations-centric subjects such as social movement theory, social network analysis, cyber, unconventional warfare tools and methods, influence operations, non-standard logistics, negotiation and mediation skills, popular mobilization dynamics, subversion and political warfare, and sociocultural analysis, as well as necessary regional, cultural, and linguistics

studies. USSOCOM continues to work with the Services to expand educational opportunities for SOF. Further refining USSOCOM's role and budget for SOF leaders, combined with refining special operations-centric education opportunities will produce better leaders.

SOF LEADERSHIP

Richard Kohn finds the challenge to military professionalism in the twenty-first century lies in three interconnected areas: intellectual, political, and moral. Kohn argues that leaders who "cannot change themselves from within … cannot enforce standards of behavior … while also inspiring the admiration and loyalty of their own members are in trouble."[9]

Examining the USSOCOM 2016 Commander's Reading List[10] highlights a few these works on special operations-related leadership. Retired General Stanley McChrystal's book, for example, focuses on how to build an aggregate organization or institution out of smaller elements – a team of teams – to better facilitate positive leadership outcomes. McChrystal recaps his argument on leadership by acknowledging that effective leadership in the new environment is more akin to gardening than chess. As he notes, "The move-by-move control that seemed natural to military operators proved less effective than nurturing the organization – its structure, processes, and culture – to enable the subordinate components to function with smart autonomy."[11]

THE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY MODEL

JSOU's Leadership Competency Model was proffered in 2006 as a model to help train senior enlisted and officer leaders within SOF. Its stated aim was to "provide a new and comprehensive instructional methodology to more efficiently and effectively meet the educational needs for us to develop and prepare SOF's leaders for those emerging operational challenges."[12] (See Figure 5.1.)

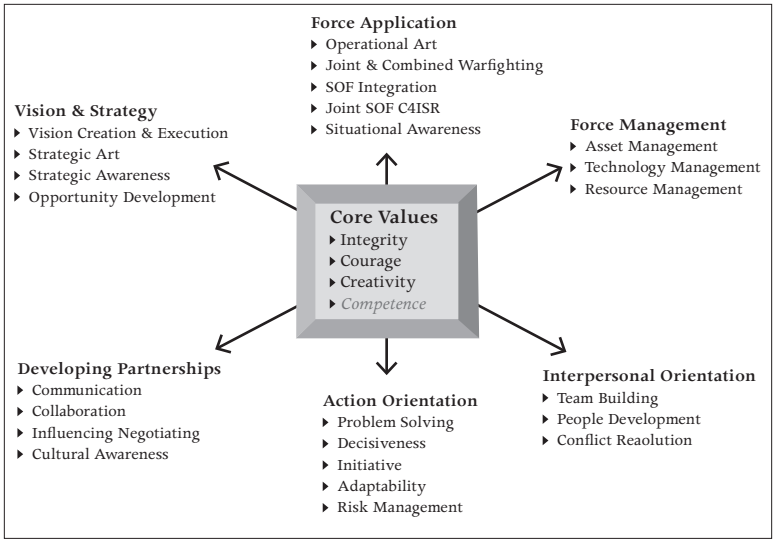

Figure 5.1 – The SOF Leadership Competency Model[13]

As Figure 5.1 shows, the Leadership Competency Model begins with four core values: integrity, courage, creativity, and competence. These values, while not taught, are assumed inherent in individuals selected into special operations. These are similar to Service core values such as the seven U.S. Army values (loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage[14]) or the three U.S. Air Force core values (integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do[15]). The figure above shows the arrows radiating out from the core values pointing to the six competency clusters. Each of these clusters (in no particular order) is briefly explained below.

The "Force Application" cluster describes the five elements (operational art; joint and combined warfighting; SOF integration; joint command and control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR); and situational awareness) a leader must understand to apply the correct amount of force (lethal or non-lethal) on a target. This process not only requires understanding one's own doctrine but also the concepts

and capabilities of joint and combined partners, as well as the operational environment.

The "Force Management" cluster describes the management of assets, technology, and resources. Assets include human, material, and information resources to accomplish the mission. Technology management includes equipment and weaponry (legacy and advanced systems), including partner nation capabilities. More importantly, this cluster addresses how a leader addresses a lack of technology or when technology fails.

The people part of the model resides in both the "Interpersonal" and "Action Orientation" clusters. The Interpersonal cluster includes elements such as team building, people development, and conflict resolution. Focus is on those leadership traits that involve effectively leading and managing a team. These skills involve developing a team through: coaching, mentoring, and delegating authority; building team trust, confidence, and cohesion through developing working relationships; and resolving conflict within the team through communication and finding solutions.

The next cluster is "Action Orientation," one that focuses on a leader's ability to: solve problems, be decisive, take the initiative, be adaptable, and manage risk. These leadership traits, like "Interpersonal Orientation" elements, are the basis of most self-help books on leadership.[16] The goal of these books is to hone one's leadership ability to solve problems, maximize opportunities, and work well with others to be successful.

The last two clusters of this model are "Vision and Strategy" and "Developing Partnerships." Organizations create visions to focus its members on an end state, strategy that links vision to current reality (typically using intermediate objectives to get there). Specifically, vision and strategy focus on vision creation and execution, strategic art, strategic awareness, and opportunity development.

Within SOF, leaders must understand an organization's vision, how to implement that vision – either alone or as a joint or

combined operation – how SOF fits within that vision, and anticipate changes to requirements to meet the vision. The leader then documents and implements these actions in a strategy.

Finally, leaders must know how to develop partnerships by communicating, collaborating, influencing/negotiating, and through cultural awareness. Developing partnerships has much in common with the "Interpersonal" and "Action Orientation" clusters. The same elements previously discussed (team building, conflict resolution, problem solving) are critical to working with other cultures on a common goal.

A key issue with the SOF Leadership Competency model is that, despite its name, it is not truly specific to special operations. As previously stated, while this model's core values are similar to Service ones, they do not add to a SOF-specific competency variation. In addition, the Leadership Competency model falls short in capturing all SOF leader development attributes. For example, the "Force Management" cluster has less to do with a SOF leader and more to do with managing and support to the SOF operator.

FUTURE SOF OPERATOR COMPETENCY MODEL

Another competency model currently in development is the FSO Competency Model (see Figure 5.2). While this model is not discussed at length here, it is important to note some of the changes from the Leadership Competency model in Figure 5.1. First, this model is not specifically a leadership competency model, but does include leadership as a component. In contrast to the Leadership Competency Model, the FSO takes a more holistic view of the SOF operator via four enduring and four targeted competencies. Second, attributes (intellect, commitment, and character) focus on traits important to the SOF operator in particular (vice focusing on generic core values). Third, the model visually keeps the focus on the operator at the intersection of attributes and competencies.

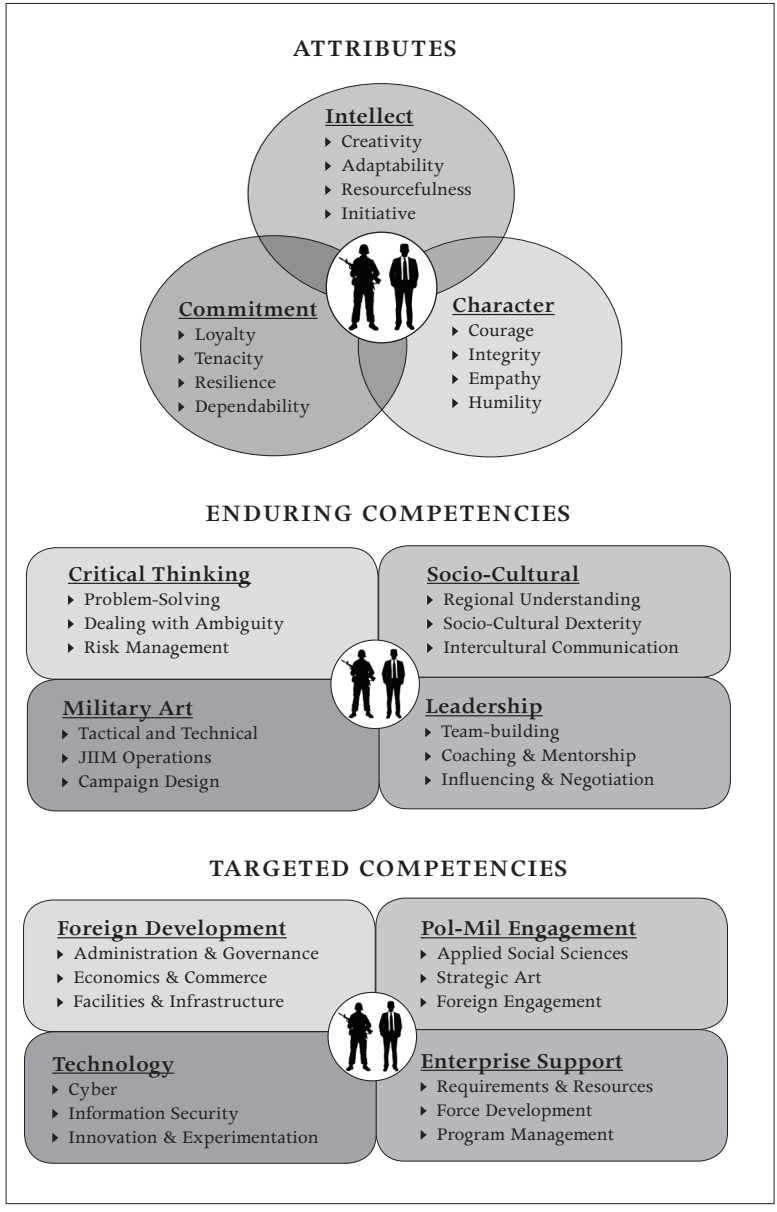

Figure 5.2 – Future SOF Operator Competency Model[17]

SOF LEARNING LEADER MODEL

The proposed SOF Learning Leader model differs from the SOF Leadership Competency Model and FSO in a number of ways. (See Figure 5.3.) First, in the new model, the SOF Leader is now central. Another significant difference is the new model's depiction of SOF leadership development as a process that continues and renews, and includes both Service (or Services) and SOF enterprise education and training programs as inputs that create and build the leader. It also incorporates a feedback and mentorship loop that refines and continuously feeds and updates the experience, training, and education injects.

In sum, this model more accurately captures the idea that SOF leader development is an ongoing process. Service and SOF education and training continuously further prepare and shape a leader, as does his/her SOF experience. Another departure from the old model is that the SOF leader now sees, reacts, and then engages the five competency clusters through the lens (filters) of mission, people, and technology. The various parts of the SOF Learning Leader model are explained next.

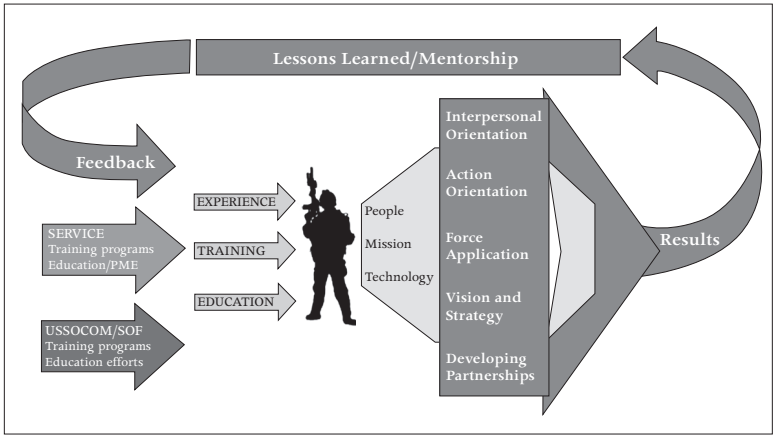

Figure 5.3 – SOF Learning Leader model[18]

Structurally, the SOF Learning Leader model keeps five of the six competencies from the 2006 model, ones likewise similar to those found in the FSO model. "Force Management" is now removed as a distinct cluster from the Leadership Competency model and the applicable aspects, technology and asset management, are included in the lens the SOF Leader sees the situation through (people, mission, and technology). The SOF Learning Leader model is also joint, and includes Service training and education programs. The model implies a SOF Leader is a product of his/her combined Service, component, joint, and SOF education, training, and experience. USSOCOM's education and training efforts are therefore additive and complementary to existing Service education and programs.

In this model, core values do not change leadership. Thus, the SOF Learning Leader model removes the distinct "Core Values" block (as depicted in the centre of the Leadership Competency model). While core values are important and central to any leader, depicting competency clusters as an outreach of core values (as per the Leadership Competency model) is arguably neither accurate nor useful. Service, joint, and SOF core values are all very similar, and subtle differences do not account for measurable changes in a leader. At the core of the Learning Leader model is the SOF leader, who views the situation and adjusts his/her leadership style through a 'filter' or 'lens.' The filter consists of three facets: mission, people, and technology. These factors colour and affect how a leader views (makes judgment on) and leverages the model's five competency clusters.

'Mission' includes the size, scope, and often greater range of SOF missions from high priority, no-fail missions (such as the capture of Bin Laden, or shooting the pirates on the *Maersk Alabama*) to engaging with tribal elders in remote areas without conventional force reach back, also pre-Phase 0 operations that affect outcomes and influence situations before conflict. The no-fail national priority mission requires a SOF Leader to have the absolute best

training and education. This concept aligns with the SOF Truth that "quality is better than quantity."[19]

'People' refers to the first SOF Truth: "humans are more important than hardware."[20] This domain includes the leader, those he/she is leading, and the leader's chain of command. The very nature of SOF and special operations missions require a different and distinct type or style of leadership. Toward this end, special operators, through selection processes and training pipelines, typically have greater language and cultural skills, closer personal bonds with teammates, increased stress resistance and tolerance, and they are more self-reliant. They are usually older, more experienced, trained to think more outside the box, and less likely to be rigidly conforming that CF members. These characteristics, both individually and in SOF units, require different leaders and leadership approaches than CF.

'Technology' is the lens that describes how a leader views the five competencies. SOF possess the newest technology and the best weapons, as well as other technologies that might provide SOF with an offset capability. These better capabilities can provide SOF a decisive advantage, an asymmetrical view or approach that allows them to offset the enemy's advantage.

Finally, the lessons learned and mentorship arrow connects the results of the five competencies to the SOF leader via feedback and is an important aspect of the model. Service and special operations centric education and training provide the SOF leader valuable injects for improvement, lessons learned, and mentorship through experience. This feedback loop stresses adaptability to respond rapidly to a changing security environment. The current USSOCOM commander, General Raymond Thomas, states SOF are valued by the nation due to operators who are "adaptive, agile, flexible, bold and innovative – who allow us to seize opportunities early, and have strategic impact with a small footprint."[21] This continuous feedback loop between competency results

and experience, training and education injects is the engine for non-stop improvement for the SOF leader.

CONCLUSION

SOF leaders face different challenges than their CF counterparts and the new SOF Learning Leader model more accurately captures this discrepancy by depicting a SOF leader as the focus of a system. That system builds on existing education, training, and experience in the context of SOF people, missions, and technology to help build broad, flexible capabilities in five competency clusters. Displayed feedback further refines the education, training, and experience for the next mission or event. Still, the Services, via training and education, leadership development, and logistical support, will remain key parts of any model. As every SOF leader originates within a Service (to include potentially returning to it on subsequent assignments), this relationship cannot be stressed enough. Likewise, relationships with SOF partners will ensure training and education standards are at the highest global standards.

NOTES

1 Bernd Horn, "Education – The Key Component to the Development of the Next Generation of Military Leaders," *Developing the Next Generation of Military Leaders*, ed. Julie Belanger and Psalm Lew (Ontario: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2011), 23.

2 Ibid., 33.

3 Gray zone is defined by U.S. Special Operations Command (Strategy, Plans and Policy paper dated 10 February 2016) as competitive interactions among and within state and non-state actors falling between

the traditional war and peace duality. It is characterized by ambiguity in the nature of the conflict, the parties involved, or the relevant policy and legal frameworks.

4 Joint Publication 3-05, *Special Operations* (16 July 2014), ix.

5 USSOCOM D 621-1, Joint Special Operations Education System (18 April 2016).

6 Lieutenant Colonel Robert M. Kirila, U.S. Army, "Golden Arrows: leveraging Strategic leadership Potential of Special Operations Leaders," (U.S. Army War College, March 2013).

7 Scott Morrison, "Redefining the Indirect Approach, Defining Special Operations Forces (SOF) Power, and the Global Networking of SOF," *Journal of Strategic Secur*ity, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Summer 2014), <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/jss/vol7/iss2/7/>, accessed 2 August 2016.

8 USSOCOM Commander's Training and Education Guidance, Fiscal Years 17-19, (13 May 2016), 2.

9 Richard H. Kohn, "Tarnished Brass: Is the U.S. Military Profession in Decline?" *World Affairs*, Vol. 171, No. 4 (Spring 2009): 83.

10 USSOCOM Commander's Reading Lists can be found at <http://jsou.libguides.com/readinglists>.

11 Stanley McChyrstal, *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World* (New York: Penguin Publishing Group, 2015), 225.

12 Joint Special Operations University, *Strategic Plan Academic Years 2006-2013*, (May 2006), 29.

13 Ibid., 7.

14 U.S. Army website, <https://www.army.mil/values>, accessed 11 July 2016.

15 U.S. Air Force website, <https://www.airforce.com/mission/vision>, accessed 11 July 2016.

16 See: S.R. Covey, *Principle centered leadership* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999); and S.R. Covey, *The 8th habit: From effectiveness to greatness* (New York: Free Press, 2004).

17 Obtained from USSOCOM J-9 briefing (April 2016) titled, "Competencies of the Future Special Operator," <https://jsou.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/xid-683379_1>, accessed 28 June 2016.

18 SOF Learning Leader model created by authors by modifying the Leadership Competency model.

19 One of five SOF Truths, <https://sof.hq.socom.mil/Narrative/SOF%20Truths.aspx>, accessed 22 August 2016.

20 Ibid.

21 Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Raymond Thomas, U.S. Army, Nominee for Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command before the Senate Armed Services Committee, March 9, 2016, <http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Thomas_03-09-16.pdf>, accessed 25 August 2016.

CHAPTER 6

SOF LEADERSHIP: A KEY COMPONENT TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

DR. PAUL S. LIEBER AND DR. YAEL D. LIEBER

With a decade plus of sustained combat, as well as simultaneous service drawdown, stresses placed on special operators and their families remain the highest in the existence of special operations forces (SOF). With a continued spread of violent extremist ideology and factions to support it, there is no reason to believe that demands on these "global scouts" will lessen for the foreseeable future.[1]

Specifically, current enemy types and conflicts are tailor made for special operators. With a premium on both unconventional warfare and gray zone challenges, individuals deliberately trained to excel within these domains are the logical first choice.[2] With this being said, this choice comes with a toll. It therefore stands as little surprise that the previous U.S. Special Operations Commander, General Joseph Votel, tabbed the "Preservation of the Force and Families"[3] mental and physical health resiliency program as his number one priority.[4] This emphasis was echoed to the U.S. Congress in his *2016 Posture Statement* requesting sustained funding and policy advocacy for this special operations initiative.[5]

Still, there is no cure, per se, for the special operations mental health problem. Increased exposure to trauma, extraordinary physical duress, and separation from a traditional support network will produce corresponding hardships on operator psyche.[6] Combined, many of these individuals return to the home front as completely changed men and women. Unfortunately, what was once a haven of safety and familiarity – the home – no longer serves as such.

MENTAL HEALTH TRENDS

Cross-sectional and longitudinal research demonstrates that sustained exposure to war results in higher rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms.[7] Additionally, branches of service with heightened exposure to combat experience a dose-response relationship: as exposure increases, so too do levels of PTSD and depression.[8] In a recent study of reserve units across branches of service, a clear pattern emerged in which chronic exposure to combat zones resulted in much higher rates of mental health struggles, as well as reintegration difficulties upon return from deployment. Additionally, no difference was found between the mental health symptoms of reserve or active-duty personnel, indicating that chronicity of combat related exposure (versus branch of service) was *the* key factor in mental health symptoms levels.

These findings have clear implications for the special operator community, whom, as mentioned earlier, have some of the highest rates of deployments and exposure to combat trauma. Thus, it stands to reason that special operators are more vulnerable to higher rates of PTSD and depression given repeated and prolonged tenure in war zones. As a snapshot, a recent study of Sri Lankan Special Forces revealed that more than 80 percent of their elite operators engaged in direct combat and were also exposed to dead or wounded combatants (including their fellow members). Additionally, of this 80 percent, it was common for special operators to report poor overall general health, extreme fatigue and excessive alcohol usage.[9]

In another study of the entire U.S. military population scholar Jeffery Hyman and his research team uncovered a clear pattern of suicide risk, one pattern demonstrating the negative impact of increased deployments, as well as exposure to other risk factors.[10] Overall, suicide risk increased sharply from 2005 to 2007, and was highly correlated with number of deployments as well as

sleeping problems, mental health difficulties and marital relationship challenges. For regularly deployed special operators, these figures are even more worrisome. The near daily suicides within the SOF community serve as a jolting reminder.

Every suicide also leaves a series of question marks and consequences. Fellow operators, healthcare providers, and – most of all – family and friends, are left wondering what they could have done sooner or better to prevent an operator suicide. A series of sister studies therefore explored key factors in mitigating suicide risk. They recommended increased group cohesion, transformational leadership, and reduced organizational and personal stigma for mental health problems and treatment as ways to decrease the risk of operator suicide.[11]

Thankfully, in response to rising suicide numbers, unprecedented amounts of resources are now available to special operators and their families for both preventative and acute mental healthcare. Simultaneously, internal initiatives to reduce stigma associated with treatment are aggressive and gaining traction. Notwithstanding the advances, with every successful suicide attempt, there is a reminder of a gap between treatment availability and willingness to pursue it. Of course, not every individual, even with infinite resources, will always seek out care. Thus, it is imperative for this gap to be filled by leadership within the special operations community at all levels.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Specifically, special operations senior enlisted leadership should become better acquainted through formal education and/or seeking treatment themselves on mental health warning sign identification and interventions. These individuals must become the eyes and ears of their headquarters, as well as first responders (by formal designation) to warning signs. Formal educational requirements for senior enlisted personnel could be augmented

immediately, through a series of courses and/or a certificate program, to improve mental health counseling, referral and stopgap treatment (until appropriate to include hospitalization).

One approach for mental health education could be to up-skill senior enlisted leadership in 'Psychological First Aid,' a multi-day training program that helps laypeople spot mental health concerns and intervene effectively.[12] The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' National Center for PTSD already acknowledges Psychological First Aid as a meaningful tool following a disaster or terrorism event.[13]

Psychological First Aid or 'Mental Health First Aid,' as it was originally called, was developed in Australia by a husband and wife team (a psychologist and nurse, respectively) who recognized huge gaps in public knowledge of fairly common mental health problems such as depression and suicidal thoughts.[14] While many health professionals and laypeople train in basic, but rarely needed, first aid interventions such as CPR, few have any training or knowledge on how to support someone in emotional distress, a much more common ailment.

Psychological First Aid can empower laypeople with knowledge and skills to confidently intervene in support of someone in emotional peril and then connect them with professional help. In no way, however, does Psychological First Aid replace the work of skilled mental health professionals. Rather, it supports their work by helping those in need survive a crisis, and receive sufficient encouragement and support to subsequently pursue professional guidance.[15]

Logistically, standard Psychological First Aid training includes two, six (6) hour didactic and interactive courses on how to spot and understand warning signs of depression, anxiety, trauma, psychosis, eating disorders, substance use disorders and self-injury. Additionally, information about the nature and impact of

these difficulties is discussed, as well as key evidence on reasons people develop these issues. This training is aimed at demystifying and clarifying causes and factors that perpetuate mental health problems.[16]

Beyond basic knowledge, participants are likewise trained how to develop and implement a five-step action plan for someone headed towards, or in, a state of crisis, including how to conduct a suicide risk assessment. Further, participants are taught, as part of this five-step process, how to intervene with those in crisis, including: listening non-judgmentally; providing reassurance and useful information; encouraging connections with professional help; finally endorsing self-help and other support strategies, when appropriate. These skills are accomplished through highly interactive training in which participants are run through several exercises that simulate aspects of mental health problems, such as auditory hallucinations or severe depression. Participants are exposed to a window of understanding of what it is like for someone living with these issues, and how hard it can be for them to seek out help.[17]

Collectively, this action plan is of special salience to the special operations community, where deployed operators in near or acute status can directly impact their own safety, as well as that of the entire team or unit. Employing senior enlisted leadership as first responders and conduits to professional, longer term assistance can literally make a difference in saving one or multiple lives.[18]

1. ***Contact and Engagement***

   Goal: To respond to contacts initiated by survivors, or to initiate contacts in a non-intrusive, compassionate, and helpful manner.

2. ***Safety and Comfort***

   Goal: To enhance immediate and ongoing safety, and provide physical and emotional comfort.

3. ***Stabilization (if needed)***

   Goal: To calm and orient emotionally overwhelmed or disoriented survivors.

4. ***Information Gathering: Current Needs and Concerns***

   Goal: To identify immediate needs and concerns, gather additional information, and tailor Psychological First Aid interventions.

5. ***Practical Assistance***

   Goal: To offer practical help to survivors in addressing immediate needs and concerns.

6. ***Connection with Social Supports***

   Goal: To help establish brief or ongoing contacts with primary support persons and other sources of support, including family members, friends, and community helping resources.

7. ***Information on Coping***

   Goal: To provide information about stress reactions and coping to reduce distress and promote adaptive functioning.

8. ***Linkage with Collaborative Services***

   Goal: To link survivors with available services needed at the time or in the future.

Figure 6.1 – Psychological First Aid Core Actions[19]

These core actions of Psychological First Aid constitute the basic objectives of providing early assistance within days or weeks following an event. Providers should be flexible, and base the amount of time they spend on each core action on the survivors' specific needs and concerns.

Recent research on Psychological First Aid, both in Australia and the United States, supports the utility of this approach.[20] In particular, the program demonstrated an ability to boost participant empathy for those with mental health problems and increased their confidence to intervene and support those in emotional distress. In general, participants of this program were noted to have positively shifted their attitude and beliefs about those with mental health problems, and had increased their ability to recognize warning signs of emotional distress in others. Participants similarly increased both confidence and actual helping behaviour (i.e. willingness to intervene and support others they perceive as experiencing emotional and behavioural problems).[21]

Psychological First Aid Training workshops could be taught on a yearly or bi-annually refresher course basis. They would typically require only two to three days of training. Within the proposed model, it would be ideal for a senior enlisted leader to serve as training instructor who could provide the training and serve as a resource for other senior enlisted personnel. Typical Psychological First Aid coursework involves education on understanding the reasons individuals may struggle or develop emotional distress, common responses and warning signs, ways to support and help individuals, managing crisis situations, and how to contact and reach out to available mental health resources for further support.[22]

There are multiple ways to track effectiveness of this type of program. For instance: assessing senior officer and senior enlisted leadership thoughts on confidence and ability to intervene on issues of emotional and behavioural distress within a headquarters; assessing special operator perceptions on comfort in going to

senior leadership if they are under emotional or behavioural distress; and by evaluating overall climate, culture and beliefs about how mental health is viewed within a headquarters. Researchers Dawne Vogt, Annie Fox and Brooke Di Leone found that reducing a military member's personal beliefs about mental health stigma increases their likelihood to access treatment.[23] As personal beliefs dictate actual behaviour, conducting regular surveys about personal and organizational beliefs on mental health treatment could prove helpful in gauging the benefits of a Psychological First Aid or similar approach.

SHIFTING THE PARADIGM

While special operators commonly experience acute stress reactions while in theatre, including intense anxiety, anger and sadness, they often believe themselves alone in their emotions. An acute stress response is much more likely to persist and become a post-traumatic stress one if a person is left feeling isolated and unable to discuss their feelings (normal and valid responses to extreme life threatening situations and/or loss of life). Empowering operators to discuss thoughts and feelings with trained senior enlisted leadership, counselors and para-professionals can go a long way to helping process and normalize such things. This process, in turn, could reduce emotions like shame and guilt, allowing the operator to feel supported and accepted by a peer group likely having very similar reactions. Additionally, a cultural shift in which expression of thoughts and feelings are permitted could reduce feelings of isolation and shame, sentiments that often lead to lingering symptoms upon return from deployment.[24] Not surprisingly, research on military leadership finds leaders possessing higher amounts of extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness as most effective.[25]

Under this cultural shift, achieved through example, intervention, and observation operators could honestly recognize and admit to signs of emotional distress without being ostracized by colleagues

or unfairly labeled as burdens by leadership and/or peers.[26] Research reveals stigma reduction among military members is shown to improve member outcomes by both reducing self-judgment as well as judgment by others.[27]

Trained individuals, in this instance the senior enlisted special operations leadership, must likewise be fully capable and willing to educate and inform senior officer leadership within a headquarters on how to create safe spaces for impacted operators without decreasing capability of the entire unit. Too much emphasis on an impacted individual may produce an undesired effect. For instance, an impacted operator can become ostracized and seen as a burden to overall operational effectiveness if too much focus, accommodation, or too many resources are perceived to be lavished on the individual. In tandem, the leader can set a poor precedent by signaling mental health struggles immediately equate to extreme outcomes of removing an individual from any/all unit obligations.

Neither outcome is beneficial to an individual struggling with mental health challenges. Therefore a measured and balanced response is required of both supervisors and the overall headquarters. As noted above, this middle-ground involves reducing stigma associated with seeking out help and support, as well as increasing access to mental health treatment (by authorizing members time in their schedules to access the necessary help). Research on Canadian military members in a deployed setting showed that when individuals perceived less organizational barriers to receiving care, they were much more likely to access these services.[28]

Utilizing the Psychological First Aid model, senior enlisted leadership would be better prepared to spot warning signs of severe stress reactions, and appropriately support affected individuals. Support in a deployed setting can take many forms, but may include: allowing an individual to talk through their feelings; help them seek out professional guidance; or simply provide reassurance and comfort along with supporting self-help strategies.

The power of normalizing a military member's reactions and giving them the space to talk can significantly improve outcomes. Research on this topic reveals that inclusive settings with supportive employment decreases psychiatric symptoms while augmenting the use of mental health services.[29] Moreover, introducing basic mental health training, through proxy and senior enlisted leaders, could provide needed support to operators in acute distress by educating them on the possibility they may need to return from deployment early to receive more intensive professional help. While being "sent home" is not ideal for any special operator, this is certainly a better outcome than losing a member to acute depression and suicide while deployed.

Once again, a culture shift is required in which mental health problems are not viewed any differently than physical health issues. As a person would not be able to stay in theatre with several broken ribs, and equally it is not helpful to keep someone in theatre who is acutely and severely depressed.

INTERVENTION BY EXAMPLE

In any of these two extremes, an operator will eventually return home a fragile individual. He/she will question the purpose behind a career of service he/she has been advised he/she is no longer suited for. Seen as damaged goods, shunned by former buddies and with a slew of medical appointments that act as reminders of their current condition, the reality becomes a stark existence. At best or worst, depending on the individual, a medical board could provide the separation of individual and military service.

Here too the senior enlisted leader can serve a valuable purpose. Proactive self-identification of his/her own mental health challenges, likewise seeking needed mental health treatment while in theatre, will make the individual more skillful in dealing with those around him/her. Concomitant, this leader can perform an invaluable, legacy service in discussing his/her treatment with

subordinates. "One of the key tasks of leaders is to develop subordinates," an expert on coaching noted and continued, "they should apply their knowledge and experience to develop others—both within and outside their chain of command as appropriate."[30] This transfer of knowledge and culture, as discussed, is a core tenet of the Psychological First Aid program. The advisor could discuss the realities and challenges of mental health struggles and treatment, as well as how to look toward others as support versus isolative structures. Ideally, a modeling effect will emerge, with subordinates mirroring this action.

Approaches like Psychological First Aid are therefore vital. In the absence of formal training, many senior enlisted leaders may lack the confidence to effectively discuss mental health problems with subordinates. While the majority of senior enlisted personnel are highly trained professionals capable of giving guidance and support on a wide range of issues, it is likely that many would struggle when it comes to talking candidly about a subordinate's current or potential mental health problems. In fact, many senior enlisted leaders may be fearful of even bringing up the issue or, unfortunately, believe they are doing their member a favour by ignoring or dismissing the problems.

Finally, individual biases and stigma may get in the way of being able to have this conversation in a beneficial manner.[31] To help support others, senior enlisted leadership must be willing to empathize with those in distress. It has been shown that reducing anxiety about discussing mental illness increases effectiveness in helping others.[32] This reduction is hard to achieve without any formal training and practice such as Psychological First Aid. In the end, this process is a very "big ask" for senior enlisted personnel to simply take on without the requisite educational support.

CONCLUSION

The current mental health care situation in the special operations community is like the proverbial ostrich who thinks it can avoid the earthquake by burying its head in the sand. While the ostrich is yet to see the waves of destruction, it most certainly will be in its path when it hits. Today's special operator would be better served by leadership acknowledging (by empowering senior enlisted leaders, increasing training and education, and implementing the required paradigm shift) that mental health problems are common and often a normal response to highly abnormal and extreme circumstances for both regular and reserve military personnel.[33]

A cultural shift that allows individuals to discuss thoughts and feelings in the aftermath of extreme stress without a punitive response would help tremendously in reducing the likelihood of operators holding onto feelings of shame, blame and guilt. Looking at ways to further train and educate already highly-trained senior enlisted leaders in approaches such as Psychological First Aid could be the lynchpin in achieving and sustaining this cultural change. Simply put, stigma-change programs specifically created by/for military personnel, featuring education and direct contact with respected peers/veterans who have coped with mental health problems, work.[34]

In stating this proposal, it is not intended as a criticism of ongoing initiatives and programs designed to address a very difficult and complex problem. Current efforts *are* making a difference and special operations leadership remains ready and willing to address the mental health challenge reality inherent in its unique community. The ideal healthcare approach will always be a preventative one. Empowering senior enlisted leaders to serve in such a capacity is a needed additional step.

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CHAPTER 7

THE SOF SENIOR NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER AND THE COMMAND TEAM

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER DAVE PREEPER

Historically senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) have represented the "back-bone" of a professional military. They have been responsible for a myriad of functions such as instilling/training/maintaining drill, discipline and morale; training junior officers; acting as tacticians; providing advice and furnishing the necessary model of military courage and decorum. Traditionally, particularly within a conventional framework, the training and development of senior NCOs has been rooted in training and experience. Education was never deemed important as the NCO role was seen as tactical, normally within a constrained command and control framework.

However, times have changed. The nature of SOF missions, combined with the requirement to maintain high readiness and rapid deployability, requires SOF organizations to continuously strive to ensure their processes are as effective and efficient as possible, as well as to maintain an advantage over possible opponents. Maintaining this edge, in turn, requires a continuous cycle of selecting the best possible people; staying abreast of technological advancements; validating and adjusting internal processes; as well as updating equipment, tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). Moreover, there is an inherent necessity to comprehend the strategic context of each and every unique problem-set.

The underlying element that links all of these activities is people. Not surprisingly, SOF recognizes that people are the key ingredient to its success. Within SOF the primary focus is on ideas,

innovation and creativity rather than rank. Normally, particularly in conventional settings, the degree of military expertise is equated with rank and command authority; however, the demands of modern conflict challenge military professionals of all ranks, especially our non-commissioned members (NCMs) who are on the "coal face" of conflict to acquire greater levels of expertise and knowledge in order to meet the requirements of the current and future battlespace. As such, SOF NCMs are increasingly required to be knowledgeable about all levels of conflict (tactical, operational, and to a lesser extent, strategic) in order to clearly understand mission objectives. Furthermore, this expertise and knowledge is also critical to enable them to employ critical/creative thinking in order to rapidly assess diverse situations, make rational decisions and take decisive action.

Increasingly, actions taken by SOF NCMs functioning at the tactical level have the potential for significant impact at the strategic level, both good and bad. Moreover, based on the requirements of the contemporary operating environment, SOF is required to work within the framework of integrated operations, namely in a joint context, as well as in cooperation with other governmental departments and agencies, coalition partners, allies, international organizations and potentially non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Additionally, they will also need to cooperate and work with host nation governments and populations. This wholesale interaction will require a heightened cultural intelligence, both from an organizational and personal context. Quite simply, SOF NCMs must be comfortable with developing networks of personal relationships, as well as operating in increasingly chaotic and ambiguous environments. After all, non-kinetic activities such as influencing, negotiating, mentoring and facilitating will become skills as powerful and relevant as the more kinetic and traditional "think, shoot, move, communicate" methodologies.

As a result, innovation, initiative, agility of thought, and the ability to adapt to new and changing circumstances and situations

will increasingly be the hallmarks of SOF NCMs. Therefore, training and educating these individuals will mean that organizationally we must develop and grow our personnel by ensuring that they are exposed to leadership methodologies earlier in their career than would be the norm within the conventional forces. Moreover, there is a greater need to have Joint/SOF Operational Planning, as well as education in employment within a joint, interagency, coalition environment within their development earlier in their careers once again compared to their conventional brethren.

The in-depth and holistic development of SOF NCMs, particularly the SOF NCO corps, is vital to the long-term success of SOF. Not only do they represent the "backbone" of the operational force, on which so much of SOF credibility is built, maintained and advanced, but they also represent a critical component within the "command team."

Clearly, effective command in the current complex operating environment is critical to success. Central to the concept of command, however, is personality and the ability to work with others. Although command is the vested authority given to an individual to exercise control and direction over military personnel, resources and operations, a commander is normally only truly effective if he/she demonstrates the necessary leadership and ability to create an environment conducive to teamwork. It is within this context that the SOF senior NCO has an important role to play. After all, the Senior NCO, as mentioned earlier, is the other half of the "command team." He/she is the commander's confidante, advisor and sounding board. This relationship is particularly crucial within the SOF context, therefore SOF must get it right.

I speak to the command team relationship from a perspective of experience, which has been accumulated over 30 years of military service, including being part of a command/leadership team as the senior enlisted leader/advisor. This experience spans the tactical troop/platoon/company/battalion/battle group/special operations

task force (SOTF) through to the operational/strategic levels with employment at the brigade and command level (i.e. one-star to the four-star level). The command teams I was part of included varied regimental and corps backgrounds, as well as national and international (NATO) frameworks.

Initially, it is important to start with first principles, namely the time-tested officer/NCO relationship. Importantly, this relationship has evolved over time. When I first enlisted, now nearly 40 years ago, I never witnessed much of a "team" concept. There was simply an "us" and "them" understanding. From the perspectives of platoon warrant officers (or platoon second-in-command (2IC)) and/or company sergeant majors (CSMs) the only matters we were responsible for were the five "Ds" (i.e. drill, discipline, dress, deportment and duties). Over the span of my career, however, there has been a great amount of change. NCMs are now empowered by their commanders with a great deal more responsibility, influence and importance. They truly are members of the "Command Team." This transformation is largely due to the trust that has been established between commanders and their senior NCMs, which is a function of the fact that the newer generation of NCMs are better educated and trained than their predecessors. Notably, NCMs today have a better understanding of the tactical/operational/strategic environments than during earlier periods.

This greater trust, built on a more knowledgeable and capable NCO corps, has allowed for the evolution of the command/leadership team concept. Importantly, it is a lasting concept that will be with us well into the future. This durability is not surprising since the foundation of the new command/leadership team concept focuses on a unified purpose, namely the goal to win and to succeed in building strong organizations that are capable of triumphing in operations.

As important as the command team concept is, however, it is important not to equate it with a democratic process whereby the

majority rules. The military, by necessity, will continue to have a hierarchical structure with command being vested in a single commander responsible for making decisions and subordinates tasked with following them. As such, for the team concept to work, everyone must have strong core values which drive behaviours and decisions. In this regard, CANSOFCOM has identified its core values as:

1. Primarily, adherence to the CAF core values of Duty – Loyalty – Integrity – Courage;

2. Secondarily, CANSOFCOM has identified additional core values:
    a. Relentless pursuit of excellence;
    b. Determination;
    c. Shared responsibility;
    d. Creativity; and
    e. Humility.

In addition to strong values, for the command team concept to work, all members must have the ability to build strong and effective relationships. These relationships are a function of mutual respect, strong personal values that mirror those of the Command, and good communication, all elements that instill trust within the partnership. Without one of these key functional factors, it is impossible to have the others.

Needless to say, even in the command team, officers and senior NCOs have distinct duties and responsibilities. Equally, there are some responsibilities, such as accomplishment of the mission and looking after the welfare of the troops, which are seen as mission critical by all. As such, the senior NCO is a key and valuable member to the command team because he/she brings unique perspectives and insights to the Commander. For instance, the senior NCO, based on roles, responsibilities and experience brings a very different perspective to his/her Commander's "inner circle." This

inner circle is of course different based on the respective level of headquarters that is being considered (i.e. from a platoon/troop level to a four-star headquarters or from the tactical to the strategic level). From my experience, the Commander neither wants, nor needs, the senior NCO to think like an officer because he/she already has enough of them providing input. Rather, what the Commander requires from his/her NCOs is a unique perspective/insights to ensure he/she has all the information/views required to make an informed decision.

As such, as an invaluable member of the command team, the senior NCO must be able to forecast the decisions that the Commander may be faced with and provide the boss with as much pertinent information as possible to help inform his/her decision before he/she has to make a public assertion. Once the decision is made and it has been promulgated, it is too late to bring vital information into the mix.

Another important role that the senior NCO in the command team performs is that of confidante and sounding board. Quite simply, command is very lonely. As the senior appointment in any respective command, the Commander has very few people who can act as a sounding board or release valve. As such, the senior NCO in the command team acts as a primary release valve. To allow this function to work, the Commander must know that he/she can trust that any discussion remains within the command team.

Another critical component of the command team is the reality that you must get along or, at a minimum, appear to get along. It is always easier if both personalities mesh, and a deep effort must be made to cooperate and get along. Unfortunately, I have seen command teams where it was more important to "win" and avoid "losing" a discussion than it was about ensuring the well-being of the organization. Conversely, it should always be about doing what is right. A simple issue such as talking behind each other's back will undermine everything you are both trying to achieve.

As the SOF senior NCO component of a command team, we have a privileged position where we are able to talk to the Commander on behalf of the personnel and provide important information that the Commander requires to make the best decisions possible for the benefit of the mission and the troops. This responsibility must always be kept in view.

Nonetheless, despite the importance of the command team, they sometimes fail. When this happens, it negatively affects the entire unit or organization. This situation is very bad for everyone and generally results in poor morale and discipline, as well as a myriad of other administrative and performance issues. In the cases where there were problems it was normally a case of the following factors (in priority):

1. Undefined roles – a lack of clarity with regard to duties and responsibilities;

2. One or both of the individuals have a poor understanding (and/or application) of the CANSOFCOM core values and ethos;

3. One or both of the command team members have weak leadership skills; and

4. Strong personality differences – often, one or both individuals fail to park their ego at the door. In addition, one or both maintained an "us" and "them" attitude.

In the end, a strong command team relationship is vital to the success of an organization. Both the Commander and the senior NCO within the team bring to the mix their respective insights, knowledge and experience. Together they can achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness to ensure mission success. However, an effective command team is not a function of chance. Rather it is the outcome of trust, self-less service and good communications.

The SOF senior NCO must strive to fulfill his/her half of the "contract" and provided unvarnished information and advice to the Commander and provide the necessary "reality check" when required. However, the SOF senior NCO must also remember that, although the command team is a combined endeavour, there always remains only one commander.

CHAPTER 8

GROWING SOF IN CHAOS: COMMANDING, LEADING AND MANAGING

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL (RETIRED) D. MICHAEL DAY

Perception is everything. It determines what we value and what we ignore. It is the foundation of our personal and professional relationships and at the institutional level within a military it defines what capabilities are to be supported and which are deemed "non-core." The difference between being value-added or being relegated to being a distraction is sometimes merely a matter of "perspective." Notwithstanding the ever-evolving nature of the security environment, it remains a truism that the only thing more difficult than getting an old idea out of the military mind is getting a new one in. Conversely, in defence of Canadian military leadership, their analysis and ultimately decisions, are conducted and made based on deep knowledge and understanding of what works. It is not happenstance that Canada's conventional military force has produced a world class, albeit small, military.

However, nothing reinforces the status quo more than repeated, generational and demonstrable success. The military leadership have much of which they should be proud and therefore there is a large downside in rolling the dice with regard to investing in something new. Additionally, there is little upside to the opportunity costs leveled on the other capabilities, which by necessity must suffer in a zero sum game.

These were the circumstances under which the Canadian Special Operations Forces (CANSOF) were nurtured and grown. By no means was the progress uniform and, indeed, sometimes

the Command regressed, but over the longer term it gradually has established itself as a strategic tool for the Government of Canada, one which can be used discreetly when required, cheaply (in a relative sense) and with the added benefit of being almost infinitely adaptable in a timeline that is unachievable by others. As such, it represents a close to perfect fit for most international engagements.

The journey continues to this day and should continue indefinitely as the moment CANSOF becomes satisfied with its current status and capability is the "day after" it should have been dissolved. Coming up on 25 years since the establishment of the first unit of CANSOF, it is useful to pause and pull a few lessons that might have some resonance for the future, thereby offering some basic principles to inform decisions as well as to reinforce some of the methodologies that have allowed CANSOF to be so successful.

STAND UP: TRANSFORMATION, TRANSACTION AND SURVIVAL

It was certainly my experience during the initial years in command of CANSOF that there were no silver bullets or supporting fires from senior leadership: neither should there have been. The option of appealing to a higher authority was not only unavailable but it was clear that any attempt to do so would result in a diminishment of the "perception" of CANSOF's ability, indeed viability, to remain an independent command. The translation of this into practical terms was quite simply understood to be that there were no cheques to be written on the Chief of the Defence Staff's (CDS) account.

General Rick Hillier, former CDS, created the opportunity, and during the initial phase of transformation put his shoulder behind the effort. However further capital would have required him to challenge his senior leadership who were already taxed to maintain the pace of change he was setting for them at the institutional level. As a consequence, it was clear that going forward the

Command had to conceive of a path that could not be argued with or diminished. There had to be value for little cost or distraction.

Fortunately, with the Afghanistan campaign underway, concurrent to the preparation for the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver, a focus on tactical excellence, operational relevance, and strategic (national) resonance was a natural expression of the strengths that the men and women brought to the fight every day. The key, of course, was to remain focused and not get distracted by the unimportant stuff.

In order to achieve effectiveness there was a requirement to remain focused on internal coherence. No outliers were allowed and a clear determination was required to ensure not just managerial adherence, but true excellence, to Department of National Defence (DND)/Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) requirements. This approach meant engagement at all levels, in all corners, at all times. Given its size and the rank of the Commander of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) there was never a moment where CANSOF could state "we're doing it this way, because we said so." That remained the domain of what a later CDS often described as the "Big Predators," referring to the Environmental Chiefs of Staff (later to be rightfully rebranded as the commanders of the Navy, Army and Air Force). Equally it was clear that there was no head-to-head engagement in which I could do any better than a draw, and even that was a loss. The clear conclusion was to avoid the "meeting engagement". The better course of action was to build the case, and let logic and national requirements determine where progress could be made.

It is an understatement, for any new organization, to claim that its stand-up is hard, especially when you misstep at the frontend, but also doubly so when you are in a competitive game where you compete not just for resources but also support, time, process and decisions. Our essential credibility was built on core strengths and communicating a ruthless adherence to doing nothing but what

we said we were doing: we had no hidden agendas and offered no spin. The perceptional audit needed to be "This is what we said, that is what we did."

This approach also meant deliberately constraining ourselves to agreed-upon parameters that put us in stark contrast to other institutional actors of the time. Nobody should underestimate the frustration felt by many ranks at this time, but I want to believe that in hindsight, they will see that the Command as it exists now (with its strategic positioning and independence, relatively speaking) was built on the confidence that was inspired by their performance and discipline.

To help create this discipline it was necessary to coalesce the Command around a few simple ideas:

- Domestic centricity of the capability;
- Task force employment concept (vice unit independence);
- Discipline to a regional engagement strategy led by Government of Canada priorities; and
- Managerial and resource steward excellence.

The final idea, which perhaps was the most important, was that no one person was more important than the Command and its vision. It was, and remains, acceptable to not agree with or be unable to adapt to this construct, as there were many other places in the CAF for those individuals to serve. Ruthless adherence to and execution of this construct was key. With this construct as a start point, and the basic framework in place, it became clear that the more we knew and saw about our operating environment, the more we saw the requirement for engagement and outreach.

TURNING THE CORNER: SUSTAINING, EVOLVING AND SETTING THE CONDITIONS

As we survived the second year, it was clear perceptions were beginning to change in some areas. It was equally clear that institutional change was going to be a multi-generational effort. In hindsight, I assess this slow turning of the ship was the result of a combination of two factors. Firstly, both in the work being done overseas in Afghanistan, as well as the preparation for the 2010 Olympics there was clear, unequivocal and continued excellence at the tactical level with the type of success that resonated at the national level across a broad range of offices within Ottawa. It was hard for detractors to claim that there was a change needed when the efforts of the Command were so clearly meeting the mark.

Secondly, this strategic effect was combined with a profile that was not associated with a constant demand signal or a requirement for others to solve problems. With this increased credibility came the opportunity for a broader inclusion in the discussions and for an around the town involvement where the real work of shaping decisions is done. Although I will refer to this later in the lessons learned section of this chapter, the idea of taking the "wins" where we could and consciously avoiding losses was all part of the approach that was based on strategic (from a timing perspective) incrementalism as opposed to looking for big wins.

A consequence of this approach and greater institutional involvement was a lessening of the pressure on all fronts, which in turn allowed the Command writ large to collectively lift our heads and start to bring the same level of coherence to our future as we had initially achieved for our then current circumstance. We were able to shift the language from defending and/or explaining "why are you…" to discussions on "what and where next…"

There was, and always is of course, a double-edged sword to this institutional progress in that continued success and attention

moves the dialogue from managing the current discussion to managing the challenges of rising expectations. Although, on the whole, this was positive progress, it would be a mistake not to recognize that this development would need an equal amount of work. In fact, my own experience would suggest it is here that many government organizations peak and start to fall down the other side of the progress slope.

The reality is that when more is demanded, in terms of the scope and difficulty of employment, so too must more be demanded of the effort to consciously work these issues as opposed to merely "riding the wave" of short term populism. Experience in Ottawa might suggest that most organizations have occasional days in the sun but spend the majority of their time in the shadows slogging out the everyday work. How they manage their Warhol 15 minutes of fame often plays out in the longer term and has a direct impact on retaining relevance when the spotlight is not shining on you.

This increased confidence in the Command led to increased exposure, which in turn led to an increased need for unity of branding and message. Although the development and demand seems reasonable and self-evident, what is, and remains, less clear to those on the outside is the challenge faced by any CANSOF chain of command in enforcing that unity. The strength of the Command is clearly its strong willed, independent, thoughtful, engaged and articulate men and women. The challenge of gaining and maintaining coherence, however, is also clearly the strong willed, independent, thoughtful, engaged and articulate men and women. Giving voice is one thing, allowing independence of message is an altogether different issue. In the end, the concept of "many voices: one message" remains core to allowing for different ways of expressing core concepts and values which are underlined by a ruthless adherence to some very simple common ideas and values.

LOOKING FORWARD: GROWING CAPABILITIES AND CAPACITIES

The Command has always had more than a small number of individuals who bring a personal clarity of what we should be doing and how. They are, for the most part, but certainly not universally, informed by experience, talent and analysis. The challenge was, and I believe remains, that there are some things that can be achieved and others that cannot. Furthermore, and I continue to think this is a critical element, for some things that cannot be achieved any effort to achieve them actually diminishes an organization's ability to progress other issues. This connection is true regardless of how strongly we want something or believe in its importance. The capacity to tilt at these metaphysical windmills increases based on time, credibility, and the military rank of the senior team and size of the organization.

In the early days, and I believe to a lesser degree something that will continue for the foreseeable future, CANSOF had a relatively small and most certainly finite capacity to move on issues. For example, whether it be tan berets or maintenance of operational command of deployed forces, both take currency from the same credibility bank account. Perversely the non-operational challenges often take more. The same is true of moving into areas previously not well understood as being part, or a natural extension, of the CANSOF skill-set. The idea of a precision parachute insertion, multi-mission canine, and support to other government departments (OGDs) all are a consequence of seeing the opportunity in time and space, being positioned with a concept, rapidly exploiting the opportunity, and finally, and most importantly, being measured, effective and non-threatening in the confidence building execution.

Disciplining ourselves to avoid overreach and the associated diminishment of the Command was, and I believe remains, central to the development of an overarching capability. Small steps,

meticulously taken, coupled with strict adherence to the avoidance of failure allows for future progression. Bold, large risky moves may make us feel good, but when they fail, as surely at least occasionally they will, the cost is almost irreconcilable.

Lastly, calculating the internal cost and the dilution of effort on other initiatives remained central to this incrementalism. Core to this idea was the balance between expeditionary and domestic roles, or phrased another way in much more politically astute terms, discretionary and non-discretionary. It was clear, as the threat of worldwide terrorism grew on the political radar screen that no Canadian government would countenance let alone support a move away from the provision of a domestic capability. If there was any sense that CANSOF was "thinning out" domestic capacity and or capability in order to serve our discretionary overseas missions, then it would have been, and remains, at the direct cost to the Command's credibility and influence. It would be a direct, tangible and irrefutable example of the senior CANSOF leadership, "just not getting it."

With the balance of domestic/expeditionary demand clearly understood at the headquarters level there was, nonetheless, the ability to undergo some re-weighting of effort by Commander and staff, in part to ensure we were positioned to seize opportunities as they appeared. As time moved on, and due to a number of singular events, a series of opportunities appeared such as supporting the then-Foreign Affairs Counter Terrorist Capacity building program. Greater exposure of some of the work in Afghanistan demonstrated that the Command was carefully calibrated about knowing when not to use force, as well as understanding how to build an indigenous Afghan capability. Consequently, there was increased confidence to utilize CANSOF as an agent of Foreign Policy.

Public deployments to places like Jamaica and Western Sahel provided a perfect marriage between the Policy directorate and CANSOF in order to achieve national objectives. But in every

instance the strategic handrail was to choose things that always had a tiered set of objectives with the benefit of CANSOF being the third objective and the primary benefit being for the good of Canada, and the secondary being for the good of those with whom we were working. The transparency of this strategy was central to ensuring that CANSOF could not be accused of engineering events and or activities merely for their own benefit. Although this occasionally meant employment that was not ideal, or conversely, a missed opportunity occurred from time to time, the overall effect was achieved, progress was made at the institutional level and as a consequence every mission added to Canada and ultimately CANSOF.

However, as previously mentioned, success creates its own problems not just in the management of expectations but in addressing the challenge that these successes increasingly created internally and institutionally as we were seen as a competitor. I will admit to remaining puzzled as to why this was so, given the reality of the relative size of the demand signal we presented being immaterial. Nonetheless, if even only just perceptional, in a zero sum game for resources (primarily people and money), as well as decision space, this situation in turn laid on another layer of demand.

In practical terms what this situation meant was a re-weighting of effort to rebuild those internal relationships so our contribution was seen to be additive not subtractive to the Environments (i.e. Services). In this endeavour we continue to be only partially successful. Serendipitously it was, and will always remain, a truism that CANSOF is stronger the more involved and supportive it is of the Environments, and vice versa. Finding ways to demonstrate that reality going forward is always the challenge. There is a view that any competent individual can "do Special Operations" and this belief is especially true from Army personnel. Sidestepping a closer examination of the rationale for this belief, it was sufficient at the time to communicate clearly that Special Operations did not mean better, but merely different. Using the

analogy of asking a captain of a submarine to lead a squadron of CF-18 fighter jets always seemed to conjure up the required image. Specific skills derived from a dedicated professional development process that had unique aspects to its training, education and experience was and is required in order to produce a specialist: special operators were a result of that system much like any other trade or classification in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

Without laying claim that the path we have collectively experienced is the only or even the main influence on how we think about going forward, it is nonetheless important to unpack those experiences to determine, from a macro and institutional level, what if any lessons might be learned and what if any principles might be derived from our collective experiences.

MY THOUGHTS THAT MIGHT PROVIDE LESSONS THAT CAN BE LEARNED

With this little bit of a sweeping history much of which would be familiar to many, there is one central concept that resonates with me to this day. It is simply that during different phases of our past we were required to act differently, respond differently and that these adjustments could only be done deliberately. Without conscious thought these opportunities would be squandered, we would have failed to continue to make progress, or in the worst case we would have fallen prey to the circumstantial pitfalls that lay along our path throughout. From this conclusion I believe that the central message is actually two fold.

a. One, there are always at least two requirements at play for every issue: What you want to get out of the situation; and how you plan to achieve that objective. Each requires a different thought process, sometimes dramatically different, the former being an internally driven thought and planning consequence with the latter only achievable through broad and deliberate engagement; and

b. Secondly, we are in charge of our destiny despite lacking the size, power and influence (and we must never fool ourselves into thinking we are not). What we can do, indeed must do, is learn to navigate the stream and to do so deliberately.

So let us turn to some things that I believe are timeless.

Learn to Recognize and Accept Reality

In its simplest form the idea that we should see the world as it is and not simply as we wish it to be also underlines the idea that there must be a focus on progressing those things you can do and not just those you wish to. I think that one of the flaws I often have seen over years is the two-sided blade of our determination to get something done, to achieve a goal, create a capability that we believe is needed. We often take this objective further by believing that if only we can get a chance to explain things to people we can move it on the timeline we want and to the desired end state. We too often forget that the pesky idea of perception of need is often different from what you actually need. We sometimes get lost in our vision. Tactical brilliance, foresight of the demand for certain capabilities is not an easily transferrable perspective. In applying this view we, as most humans do, tend to see what we want. It takes true discipline and an internally robust system of checks, balances and challenges to remain objective. Just because something is our top priority does not mean it will be the first thing to move on our agenda, if it ever moves at all. To use a battlefield analogy: it may be clear that removing the leader of a certain network is the most impactful thing we can do, and we can certainly turn our all energies towards that end developing plans and capabilities that would allow us to execute, but if that individual is not in our Joint Special Operations Area (JSOA), no end of wishes and dreams will make that a reality. Furthermore, denying reality and not progressing or not treating Government of Canada (GoC) priorities as our own ignores the fact that

governments will move the things they wish to move and nothing else. They also recognize those who are not helping.

Play the Long Game

Always be willing to take a hit in the short term in order to make a strategic win in the more permanent game. Unless it is a clearly principled stand (and do not fool yourself in what is a principle and what is merely a "desire"), always avoid taking a short-term win if it will cost you in the long-term. We have to constantly remind ourselves that we are in it for the long haul. This view is particularly true for our future. Given the operational success and the increasing credibility of our Senior Leadership we are increasingly in a position where we can, with applied effort, stand a reasonable chance of winning select battles. What we cannot do is win every battle and should we choose to engage everywhere we will be nowhere. Additionally, we must never lose sight of the fact that winning can be counterproductive. There is power, beyond the avoidance of defeat and credibility, that can be gained by retiring with grace and dignity from the battlefield. But these ideas all presume that you cannot play that game if you do not understand your operating environment, do not have a clear set of objectives and do not recognize, let alone understand, others' equities.

Identify the Benefits You Want and Privilege Them

Equally important we must continue to identify the costs you cannot afford to pay and work to avoid them, which naturally leads to knowing what it is we truly need not merely what we want. We have had a tendency over the years to be a little like magpies. With the wealth of energy, intellect and experience we tend to be unfettered in our aspiration and the "Good Idea Fairies" (and we have many!!) gravitate towards the proverbial shiny object. I think this aspiration can be distracting and it communicates a disjointedness concerning the community. It is difficult, and an emotional challenge, but sometimes opportunity needs to be ignored. Clearly

knowing what you need to achieve and what you need to avoid is critical. I fear we do the former really well but sometimes do not always see the latter. Treating our engagement within DND/CAF and, indeed, within Ottawa as an Operational Theatre gives a sense of the level of analysis and strategy that is required. We would never deploy without doing a Command level estimate but too often elements across the CAF fail to execute this step when engaging internally. We abandon the very skill-sets that make us so effective when operating. Strategic discipline coupled with internal cohesion through the touchstone of unity of thought, purpose and action is critical in this regard. Sadly, I continue to see outliers, possessed by the rightness of what they "want" and who therefore cannot stop themselves from introducing issues, challenges or ideas even when ultimately it is destructive to the larger agenda. Predictably these well-meaning but destructive actions are normally prosecuted by those who are not in a position to know better lacking the experience, exposure and perspective and who therefore charge ahead regardless of direction and or warning. I can cite almost dozens of cases where this has been the case. Perhaps a secondary lesson, which applies to much of this discussion, is the need for ruthless leadership in these cases, ensuring there is no confusion as to what is and is not offside.

Build Constituencies

Although having just argued for accepting reality and being ruthless in our adherence to our priorities, there is still and always will be the space to progress difficult and challenging issues and or capabilities. The devil, as in all things, is in the detail. This is the concept of building the file, on whatever issue it is, so by the time you introduce the issue there is more than just acceptance, there is keenness and support. Be patient in doing so as too often we become programmatic in our approach using a project management style which is at once both premature and ill-directed. The creation of a sequence and associated timeline is not only almost certainly destined to fail but, more worrisome, it may result in the type of

"no" which is difficult to recover from. We must separate out the creation of the conditions for a concept or project to succeed from the actual project management process of conceive, design and build. Echoing some of the previous comments, the development of an engagement plan, carefully identifying stakeholders, the central issues, conflicting pressures and the circumstances under which the conversations can progress is, in my experience, for the most part wholly ignored. I would spend at least as much time thinking and planning the "how to get acceptance" portion as I would spend on what we were developing. In fact, I would go as far to say that the bigger issue, the more complex the capability, then the more the Command Teams should focus on creating the conditions under which it will be supported at the senior level. If we truly have trust in our people, we should presume they can deliver the "what." Setting the conditions where an issue can be developed becomes the leadership lesson. Too often, senior (read "old") operators and staff officers tend to be the worst at this part, we want to drive into the details of the specifics, when in reality there are others, sadly for us, who can do this better but who cannot do the conditions setting.

CANSOF's history has been one of successes and failures like any organization. I can almost always point to those moments that have been instrumental in our success and it is, almost always, because of successful engagement and the building of support. Equally when we have not achieved the results we wanted, it was because we did not or were not able to build a supporting cast. In the game of thrones that is Ottawa the strong can force an issue through based on an accommodation with others or sheer bloody-mindedness or just waiting for "their turn". CANSOF does not have, and for the foreseeable future will not have, the means to work like that. As suggested previously, consider Ottawa, in this context, a deployment and think of it as Operating Environment. Create the relationships necessary to get the job done. If you are not absolutely assured that you have them in place, then do not move on the issue. We need others to survive and continue to

excel in order to enable us to serve our country as we have been designed. We shortcut these relationships to our long-term cost and peril.

Be the Very Best Managers in the CAF/DND

Relentless pursuit of excellence must include stewardship of resources. Never subordinate this focus to other priorities. It is not mutually exclusive to the strong conduct of operations it is a necessary condition and mutually supporting. If you cannot manage a relatively small and simple budget, then you cannot be trusted to run independent high-risk operations around the world. It really is that simple. Too often over the course of my career, and certainly within CANSOF, I heard complaints about "administrative issues" getting in the way. This complaint was always quickly followed by the plea to find a better way, side-step a process or look for some type of special status to get something approved.

I think it is critical to remember that in Ottawa, regardless who the players are, there are two primordial instincts. They are: the management and minimization (rightfully so) of operational risk and exposure; and fiscal probity. We are using taxpayers' money and how we use it directly reflects on the perception others have of us. The intent behind the rules and regulations guiding the CAF must be seen as the gold standard against which we are all measured. It is not sufficient to be brilliant on operations and lousy on the "everything else" part. That will merely result in CANSOF being absorbed into a more dependable, reliable Level 1. Instead of pushing back, but always trying to improve of course, we need to continue to see business planning and resource stewardship as one of the quintessential skills as leaders and commanders. In the end, in this town, if you cannot manage your financial affairs how do you expect to be trusted with your nation's security? Everything we do must be seen as a "Confidence Building" measure in that it allows for trust to grow and, in turn, casts either a shadow or halo on the idea of independence on operations. Equally, and

a constituency not to be ignored, it also allows for exposure to and credibility gained with the deputy minister (DM) and his/her team, because those are their accountabilities.

Don't Lose Your Focus on Your Purpose

In the end, it can all be wrapped up into a relatively simple premise. If you keep the focus on the idea and responsibility to serve our Country to the best of your ability, then most of the lessons we should have learned are natural extensions of this thought. The world is what it is and our job is to make as good as it can be for Canada, not just today but in an enduring way. This responsibility in turn means making hard choices about the capabilities and activities that are absolutely critical and those that, although nice to have, are too costly from any number of perspectives. Lastly, much like we should have learned from Dr. Spock, we need friends and lots of them. CANSOF cannot even conceive of being, or let alone aspire to be, a truly independent actor. We play a role within a team of teams and doing so means reaching out and building a support network, and contributing in kind when needed.

It is all about perspective. If we are able to place ourselves, even momentarily, in another's position and consider their interests and values, account for them in our planning and execution, reminding ourselves that we serve our country and its interests, not the other way around, then our progress will continue along its remarkable path. Our path has been neither easy nor marked by unbroken success. It has, however, been characterized by some elements which carefully applied going forward will continue to serve us well. It is all about perspective.

CHAPTER 9

NOT LIKE THE OTHERS: THE UNIQUENESS OF SOF LEADERSHIP

DR. BERND HORN

The concept of leadership is a chimera. Scholars and practitioners have used a multitude of approaches, explanations and theories to describe it, often combining views from a variety of different fields. Leadership has been explained in terms of Great Captains, personality traits and behaviours, and power relationships, to mention just a few. Most people have a hard time explaining good leadership but know it when they see it. Notably, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) has tried to remove some of the uncertainty concerning leadership by providing a doctrinal definition. Specifically, the CAF has defined effective leadership as "directing, motivating and enabling others to accomplish the mission professionally and ethically, while developing or improving capabilities that contribute to mission success."[1]

From this definition, leadership appears as the confluence of influence, inspiration and motivation to assist others to achieve a mutually desired outcome. However, what is somewhat lost in the doctrinal leadership explanation is the fact that leadership is also very situational. It is dependent on specific circumstance and individuals, both at the leader and follower levels. These elements, which are constantly adapting, have an enormous impact on how leadership is actually applied and practiced.

Consequently, not all leadership is the same. Instead, there are a myriad of situational factors that determine best leadership styles, approaches and behaviours. As such, special operations forces (SOF), because of their make-up, as well as the tasks they are

required to perform and particularly because of the environment in which they conduct those tasks, require a unique approach to military leadership to ensure operational success.

MILITARY LEADERSHIP DEFINED

Having already defined the CAF concept of leadership, it is insightful to examine some other definitions of military leadership to shed light on this seemingly elusive concept. The US Army defines leadership as "the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission and improve the organization."[2] Effective leadership in the British Army is characterized by the projection of personality and purpose onto people and situations in order to prevail in the most demanding circumstances.[3] Central to their concept are leadership definitions articulated by former high ranking and very successful British generals. For instance, the British leadership manual quotes Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery when he explains, "Leadership is the capacity and the will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character which will inspire confidence." The manual also cites Field Marshal William Slim's definition of leadership as "the projection of personality," noting that "It is that combination of persuasion, compulsion and example that makes other people do what you want them to do."[4] Finally, the Australians define leadership as "the art of influencing and directing people to achieve willingly the team or organisational goal."[5]

These definitions share common tenets, specifically influencing, motivating and compelling others to achieve a desired outcome. But, the underlying tone is that of a leader using a fairly narrow spectrum of approaches and behaviours from influence to compulsion to achieve an organizational goal. Accordingly, like the CAF explanation, the emphasis is focused largely on the leader. Little weight is actually ascribed to the "followers" or those being led.

This focus is the departure point for truly understanding SOF leadership. Due to the environment in which SOF operate, the tasks they are expected to conduct, as well as the type of individuals that gravitate to SOF, it should be no surprise that the approach to leadership is notably different from the mainstream military practice and focuses equally on the leader and follower within a dynamic context.

THE IMPACT OF THE CONTEMPORARY OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The contemporary operating environment (COE), which is the milieu in which SOF operate, is a major situational determiner of the required manner in which SOF apply leadership. The contemporary operating environment is uncertain, complex, which generally means it is unpredictable and ever-changing, as well as ambiguous. The threat environment encompasses everything from conventional military threats to asymmetric challenges (e.g. improvised explosive devices; operations in population-centric urban environments; opponent use of human populations as camouflage as well as shields; use of religious structures for sanctuary, weapon storage, staging and mounting attacks; and the use of internet and social media to pass disinformation and to attack political will). The overwhelming use of the human domain by opponents to shield operations and increase manoeuvrability has placed a premium on precision in operations, as well as the ability to operate with and amongst the population.

Moreover, the reliance by antagonists on hybrid warfare, in essence a task-tailored mix of conventional and irregular forces and tactics, as well as the use of terrorism and criminal activities within the context of a confrontation, conflict or war, further exacerbate the difficulties of conducting operations in the COE.[6] It is often difficult to ascertain whether an incident(s) is political, a law-enforcement issue, or a military problem. As such, those operating in this geo-political minefield require agility of thought

and action, as well as a risk accepting, proactive mentality. In an age where the speed of information is virtually instantaneous, ponderous hierarchies and rigid, deeply layered decision-making structures have arguably become antiquated.

The reality is the COE has become "live theatre". The delivery of news and events is no longer fully controllable. The media is no longer represented by a credentialized series of actors (i.e. formalized news organizations) but rather the COE has become a virtual space. Unfiltered, instantaneous feeds on real-time activity, emanating from social media, have the capacity to fuel conflict and instability around the globe. Furthermore, through social media individuals can generate flash mobs, as well as widespread, if not global, protests and discontent. Every individual has the power to act as a sensor, activist and/or reporter. As such, the ability to act in the margins, in a discreet manner, will become increasingly difficult and the likelihood that events can be easily suppressed will be extremely problematic, if not impossible.

The net effect is a COE that will only increase in ambiguity, chaos, complexity and uncertainty. Persistent conflict, based on hybrid warfare, will be the strategy of choice by adversaries who will both feed, and attempt to take advantage of, global instability. Within this volatile, fluctuating and constantly transforming operational environment, individuals capable of adapting and empowered to make decisions based on the situation at hand become key. Rear-Admiral Ray Smith, former Commander of the Naval Special Warfare Command explained, "We want a kid who can think… who can make decisions on his own….You have to have a young man [SOF operator] who has the capacity to think on his own under very stressful conditions."[7]

THE SOF NEXUS

Within this complex environment, governments have consistently directed SOF to carry out traditional SOF tasks such as direct

action, special reconnaissance, counter-terrorism, irregular warfare and military assistance.[8] In turn, as a result of the reliance by governments on their SOF to conduct high-risk, high-value special operations in hostile, denied or political sensitive areas to achieve military, political, economic or informational objectives, it has necessitated the requirement for not only specially selected and trained individuals, but also a unique approach to leadership.[9]

This unique approach is rooted in the requirements stemming from both the COE and the tasks SOF must conduct. Specifically, individuals operating in the disparate, murky operational theatres to conduct sensitive information gathering, military assistance (particularly advise and assist missions), not to mention more kinetically orientated operations in the complex "human domain" (i.e. within the context of host nation populations, as well as under the critical eye of the respective domestic and international audiences), must be empowered to develop their plans and make the necessary decisions. The ability of those executing the plan, who are also normally the most familiar with the environment, to create the plan of manoeuvre themselves, namely bottom-up planning, is key.

Importantly, those individuals must feel they possess the ability to make the necessary plans and take the necessary decisions without fear of consequences. As one Delta team commander revealed, "Many times we had to think and act instantly, with no guidance at all, but that is why Delta picks the kind of operators that it does. They have to be able to think as well as fight."[10]

As such, the SOF leadership demonstrated must create a conducive environment that values and promotes trust, critical thinking, risk taking, as well as agility in thought and action. As the Commander of CANSOFCOM consistently reinforces, team leaders, who can be the rank of sergeant, who are deployed internationally are only "four steps removed" from the national power centre. They report directly to the Commander, who in turn reports to the Chief of the

Defence Staff, who reports to the Minister of National Defence, who is responsible to Cabinet and the Prime Minister. Once again, this flat hierarchical structure requires a unique approach to leadership and is a major reason SOF leadership is unique from that generally found in the rest of the CAF.

It is the specially selected and trained individuals who gravitate to SOF who represent the last situational variable with regard to SOF leadership to be discussed. SOF organizations seek individuals who are:

1. *Risk accepting* – individuals who are not reckless, but rather carefully consider all options and consequences and balance the risk of acting versus the failure to act. They possess the moral courage to make decisions and take action within the commander's intent and their legal parameters of action to achieve mission success.

2. *Creative* – individuals who are capable of assessing a situation and deriving innovative solutions, kinetic or non-kinetic to best resolve a particular circumstance. In essence, they have the intellectual and experiential ability to immediately change the combat process.

3. *Critical and Agile Thinkers* – individuals who can conceptualize, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information, as well as reason and reflect on experience and situations, and take the necessary actions/decisions as required. In they are able to transition between tasks quickly and effortlessly. They can perform multiple tasks at the same time, in the same place with the same forces. They can seamlessly transition from kinetic to non-kinetic or vice versa employing the entire spectrum of military, political, social and economic solutions to complex problems to achieve the desired outcomes. They can react quickly to rapidly changing situations and transition between

widely different activities and ensure they position themselves to exploit fleeting opportunities. Moreover, they can work effectively within rules of engagement (ROE) in volatile, ambiguous and complex threat environments and use the appropriate levels of force.

4. *Adaptive* – individuals who respond effectively to changing situations and tasks as they arise. They do not fear the unknown and embrace change as an inherent and important, dynamic element in the evolution of organizations, warfare and society. They possess ingenuity and can "make something of nothing."

5. *Mature, Self-Confident and Self-Reliant* – individuals who exercise professional military judgment and disciplined initiative to achieve the commander's intent without the necessity of constant supervision, support or encouragement. They accept that neither rank, nor appointment solely define responsibility for mission success. They function cohesively as part of a team but also perform superbly as individuals. They continue to carry on with a task until impossible to do so. They take control of their own professional development, personal affairs and destiny and ensure they strive to become the best possible military professional achievable. They demonstrate constant dedication, initiative and discipline, and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct. They understand that they are responsible and accountable for their actions at all times and always make the correct moral decisions regardless of situation or circumstance.

6. *Decisive* – individuals who have an unconquerable desire to fight and win. They have an unflinching acceptance of risk and a mindset that accepts that no challenge is too great. They are tenacious, unyielding and unremitting in the pursuit of mission success.

7. *Capable of Working Independently or in a Team* – individuals who are totally dependable and embody a belief that first and foremost is service to country before self. They have an unwavering dedication to mission success and an acceptance of hardship and sacrifice. They strive to achieve mission success at all costs, yet within full compliance of legal mandates, civil law and the law of armed conflict. They are able to do this working independently or as part of a team.

8. *Culturally Attuned* – Individuals who are warrior/diplomats, who are comfortable fighting but equally skilled at finding non-kinetic solutions to problems. They are capable of operating individually, in small teams or larger organizations integrally, or with allies and coalition partners. They are also comfortable and adept at dealing with civilians, other governmental departments (OGD) and international organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They are culturally attuned and understand that it is important to "see reality" through the eyes of another culture. They understand that it is not the message that was intended that is important but rather the message that was received that matters. They strive to be empathetic, understanding and respectful at all times when dealing with others. They comprehend that respect and understanding build trust, credibility and mission success.[11]

9. *Effective Leaders and Communicators* – individuals who through their own dedication and willingness to perform can motive and inspire others. They consistently demonstrate an uncompromising, persistent effort to excel at absolutely everything they do. Their driving focus is to attain the highest standards of personal, professional and technical expertise, competence and integrity. They have an unremitting emphasis on continually adapting,

innovating and learning to achieve the highest possible standards of personal, tactical and operational proficiency and effectiveness. Through this behaviour they set the example for others. In addition, through their ability to effectively communicate through their words and action, they are able to share their vision and intent, thus motivating and inspiring others to strive for excellence and mission success.

10. *Possess High Levels of Perseverance/Stamina* – individuals who have achieved an exceptional level of physical fitness and have the stamina to perform under constant physical and mental stress.

11. *Work Well Under Stress and in Ambiguous Environments* – individuals who continually overcome heavy workloads, tight deadlines and time constraints, fear, risk and personal responsibility, etc. to accomplish the mission. Moreover, they are not intimidated or flustered by change, the unknown or ambiguous circumstances. Furthermore, they use critical thinking, as well as personal and vicarious experience to overcome unknown, new or ambiguous situations.

It is the type of individual that SOF organizations recruit and, more importantly, the type of individuals that self-select to volunteer for SOF selection and service that help to drive the unique SOF leadership approach. Successful candidates are normally "Type A" personalities, strong-willed and full of initiative and drive. They are consistently natural leaders, confident and outspoken, whether or not they are in an official leader or follower position.

These characteristics tend to represent SOF from its modern day origins in the Second World War. For example, David Stirling, the founder of the Special Air Service (SAS) confided that the "Originals" were not really "controllable" but rather "harnessable."[12]

Similarly "Commanding the Rangers," William Darby, their first Commanding Officer, explained, "was like driving a team of very high spirited horses. No effort was needed to get them to go forward. The problem was to hold them in check."[13] Dr. Peter G. Bourne of the Department of Psychiatry at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research observed in a 1966 study, "As a result both of various selective processes and of training, these Special Forces soldiers were marked by an intense faith in their own capabilities, and a belief that the need to rely on others carries with it the implication of weakness."[14] More recently, one SAS officer affirmed, "In the Regiment [SAS] we thrived on impossible missions. They were our lifeblood. Our job was to make the impossible possible."[15]

It is this cocktail of strong personalities and wills, hyper-confidence in self and others in the team, as well as an almost exaggerated dedication to duty and the mission, combined with the tasks they must perform and the COE in which they perform them in, that impact on the requirements for SOF leadership. The normal conventional military chain-of-command, hierarchical, top down driven leadership model designed for an audience that is an assemblage ranging from the highly-motivated and talented to the uninspired and unwilling, (who seek medical exemptions whenever a potentially trying task arises), is simply inapplicable for SOF.

As a result, SOF leadership is in many ways a communal concept. Everyone is capable of acting as a leader. Everyone expects to exercise leadership when appropriate and everyone expects others to step-up and lead when situationally required. Moreover, with strong personalities comes the expectation of having a voice. Everyone wants to have input into the plan. This communal spirit helps to set SOF apart and makes it more effective for the tasks they are required to perform.

However, this benefit does not mean that position power, or in other words, command, namely "the authority vested in an individual

of the armed forces for the direction, co-ordination, and control of military forces," does not exist within SOF.[16] It does, and it is extremely important. It sets the parameters in which leadership at the grass roots level is allowed to flourish.

In essence, SOF relies on two concepts: mission command and transformational leadership. Although many organizations tout to practice these concepts, very few in the military actually do. They require incredible degrees of trust, empowerment and risk acceptance. These are normally "deal breakers" for conventional forces, but not for SOF.

MISSION COMMAND

Mission Command is a philosophy that promotes decentralized and timely decision-making, freedom and speed of action, as well as initiative that is responsive to superior direction. It entails three enduring tenets: the importance of understanding a superior commander's intent; a clear responsibility to fulfil that intent; and timely decision-making. At its core, the fundamentals of mission command are: unity of effort; decentralized authority; trust; mutual understanding; and timely and effective decision-making.

In simple terms, mission command equates to a commander issuing his/her orders in a clear and detailed manner that ensures subordinates fully understand the Commander's intentions, their specific assigned missions, as well as the significance of their own missions within the context of the larger plan/framework. In essence, subordinates are given the effect they are to achieve and the reason why they must achieve it. Importantly, subordinates are also allocated the appropriate resources to achieve success.

In this context, the Commander imposes the minimal amount of control measures to ensure that he/she does not unnecessarily limit the initiative or freedom of action of their subordinates. This approach allows subordinates to decide how best to achieve their

assigned mission. Research has shown that when a supportive and developmental positive atmosphere is created, individuals "work with a positive mind-set, [and] performance on nearly every level – productivity, creativity, engagement – improves."[17]

Commander's intent is the critical component of mission command. The Commander's entire effort (as well as that of his/her staff and subordinates), whether in planning, directing, allocating resources, supervising, motivating, and/or leading, is driven and governed by the Commander's vision, goal, or mission and the will to realize or attain that vision, goal, or mission. The Commander's intent is the Commander's personal expression of why an operation is being conducted and what he/she hopes to achieve. It is a clear and concise statement of the desired end-state and acceptable risk. Its strength lies in the fact that it allows subordinates to exercise initiative in the absence of orders, or when unexpected opportunities arise, or when the original concept of operations no longer applies.

Equally important to leadership success in this type of environment is an effective and positive command climate. This climate has a direct impact on the morale and level of performance of the personnel within an organization. Positive leadership, sincerity and compassion by the Commander stimulate subordinate confidence, enthusiasm and foster mutual trust and teamwork. In addition, encouragement to think independently, use initiative and accept risk, as well as inclusion of staff and subordinates in the decision-making processes contribute to an effective command climate.

For mission command to be successful, the command climate must encourage subordinate commanders at all levels to think independently, take initiative and not be risk averse. After all, the strength of mission command is the ability of leaders at all levels to react quickly to developing situations in an ambiguous, complex, fluid and chaotic battlespace. In such an environment, it is critical to

gain and maintain the initiative. Delay in decision-making can have serious consequences. As a result, leaders, acting within the Commander's intent, must make the requisite decisions and take action as required, when required.

This process entails trust. Senior leaders must trust their subordinates to act in accordance with the Commander's intent and to make reasonable decisions regardless of the circumstances the subordinate leaders find themselves in (which in an ambiguous and chaotic security environment may not necessarily be those the superior Commander had originally envisaged). This trust is critical since, for mission command to function, the superior must minimize control mechanisms and allow the subordinate the necessary freedom of action and initiative to achieve the necessary effect.

Subordinates must also have confidence that they have not been given an unachievable task. They must trust their superiors to provide the necessary direction, guidance and resources to successfully achieve the assigned mission. Importantly, for subordinates to fully exercise initiative and accept the necessary degree of risk, they must be able to trust their superiors to provide the necessary support should errors (notably, neither malicious, nor due to negligence) occur.

Importantly, it must be understood that mission command is situational. It does not apply to all people or all situations. It only works when one has leaders who trust their subordinates and are willing to take risk, as well as individuals who are not only capable, but also willing to take on the mantle of decision-making and risk. Quite simply, subordinates must be well-trained and possess the ability and skill to be able to execute decentralized tasks.

This cocktail of capability, trust and willingness, is exactly why SOF leadership is unique in practice. Within the framework of SOF tasks, the complexity of the COE, as well as the attributes sought

in SOF personnel, mission command becomes a powerful tool to increase the effectiveness and efficacy of SOF. Quite simply, it is a leadership approach that enhances the characteristics of SOF.[18]

Notably, the reliance on, and application of, mission command is not the only leadership concept that sets SOF apart. It is also reliant on transformational leadership, which is defined as "a pattern of leader influence intended to alter the characteristics of individuals, organizations, or societies in a fairly dramatic or substantial way so that they are somehow more complete, or else are better equipped to deal with the challenges they face or are likely to face."[19] Transformational leadership is about inspiring, motivating, nurturing and developing followers with the intent of assisting them to achieve more than they thought possible.

Transformational leadership is achieved through the ability to garner high levels of respect and trust, which in turn generates dramatically increased subordinate/follower performance. This outcome is achieved within a SOF context by leaders:

- Exemplifying personal, sometime self-sacrificing commitment to the mission;
- Stimulating thinking in subordinates and encouraging innovation and creativity;
- Taking the time to explain meaning and importance of missions and tasks;
- Exhibiting optimism and inspirational appeals to evoke a positive emotional response; and
- Providing individualized consideration for the social, emotional and developmental needs of subordinates.[20]

In essence, transformational leadership empowers followers by investing in their development, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, tools and resources to complete assigned tasks. It also entails a commitment from leaders to invest in their subordinates/followers by providing time to coach, counsel, guide and mentor them. It also means providing opportunity, resources and space to make mistakes and learn from them. General Stanley McCrystal noted, "A leader decides to accept responsibility for others in a way that assumes stewardship of their hopes, their dreams, and sometimes their very lives. It can be a crushing burden, but I found it an indescribable honor."[21]

As McCrystal alludes, despite the heavy investment, the returns are worth it. As one study indicated, "transformational leadership fosters capacity development and brings higher levels of personal commitment among followers to organizational objectives."[22] As such, the SOF leadership's reliance on transformational leadership both strengthens the individual and also the organization.

Transformational leadership is also achieved through the exercise of effective influence behaviours as shown in Figure 9.1 below.

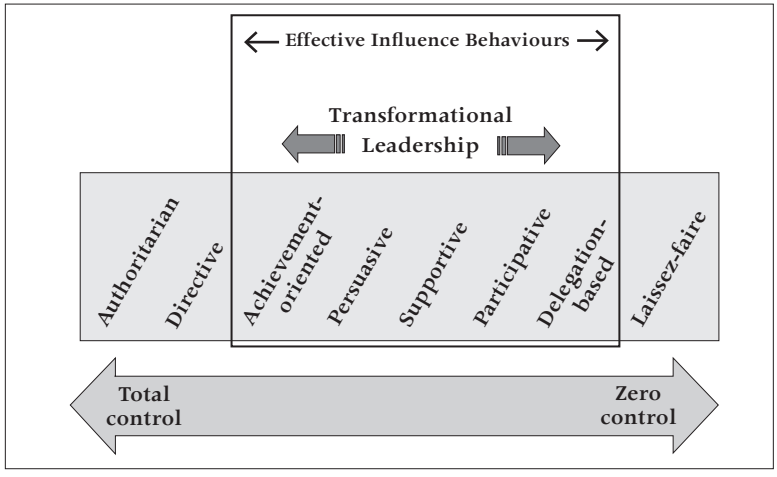

Figure 9.1 – Spectrum of Leader Influence Behaviours[23]

As mentioned earlier, it is the focus on individual development through such effective influence behaviours as delegation, participation and support that create a more inclusive environment which provides empowerment and voice to individuals to contribute to organizational decisions and plans. It also builds an environment of trust, pro-active action, decision-making and risk acceptance that is critical for SOF effectiveness in the COE. These behaviours are central to the uniqueness of SOF leadership. In short, SOF leadership is not simply a matter of rank or position or appointment. Rather, SOF leadership is a community concept, built on the foundation of highly capable individuals, trust and empowerment.

CONCLUSION

The reality that SOF leadership is unique is not difficult to understand. The effects governments expect from their SOF organizations, particularly in the ambiguous, complex and dynamic security environment in which they must operate, require highly trained and educated individuals capable of agility of thought and action. These highly capable individuals, in turn, require a greater degree of freedom of action and decision-making than their conventional counterparts.

As such, as a result of the flatter hierarchical chain-of-command, dispersed operations, dynamic operational realities and often requirement for rapid decisions, SOF leadership has evolved to a unique blend of mission command and transformational leadership. Specifically, SOF leadership is more collaborative, more decentralized and more participative than conventional force leadership. Additionally, it is more values based and relies to a greater extent on innovation and creativity. Moreover, it minimizes, albeit does not reject or exclude, position power. In the end, through the power of mission command and transformational leadership, SOF both empowers and strengthens the individual, and in so doing increases the effectiveness and potency of the SOF organization.

NOTES

1 Canada, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Doctrine* (Kingston: CDA, 2005), 5.

2 US Department of Defense, *Army Leadership ADRP 6-22* (Washington D.C.: HQ US Army, 2012), 1-1.

3 UK Ministry of Defence, *Developing Leaders. A British Army Guide* (Camberley: Director General Leadership, 2014), 4-5.

4 Ibid., 5.

5 Australian Army, *Command, Leadership and Management LWD 0.0* (Canberra: Australian Defence College, 2005), 1-7.

6 See Colonel Bernd Horn, *On Hybrid Warfare* (Kingston: CANSOFCOM PDC, 2016).

7 Susan L. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare. Rebuilding US Special Operations Forces* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1997), 47.

8 Definitions, in accordance with the *CANSOFCOM Glossary 2015 Edition* are:

Direct Action: Short direction strikes and other small-scale offensive actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied, politically sensitive environments and which employ specialized military capabilities to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover or damage designated targets.

Special Reconnaissance: reconnaissance and surveillance actions conducted as a special operation in hostile, denied or politically sensitive environments to collect or verify information of strategic or operational significance, employing military capabilities not normally found in conventional forces.

Irregular Warfare: a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations(s). Irregular warfare favours indirect and symmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities, in order to erode and adversary's power, influence and will.

Counter-Terrorism: Actions taken directly against terrorist networks, and indirectly to influence and render global and regional environments inhospitable to terrorist networks.

Military Assistance: a broad category of measures and activities that support and influence critical friendly assets through organizing, training, advising, mentoring or the conduct of combined operations.

9 Canada, *Canadian Special Operation Forces Command. An Overview* (Ottawa: DND, 2008), 7.

10 Dalton Fury, *Kill Bin Laden* (New York: St. Martin's Griffen, 2008), xxvi.

11 Canada, *CANSOFCOM Capstone Concept for Special Operations 2009* (Ottawa: DND, 2009), 4-5.

12 Anthony Kemp, *The SAS at War* (London: John Murray, 1991), 11.

13 William O. Darby and William H. Baumer, *Darby's Rangers. We Led the Way* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, reprint 1993), 184.

14 Peter Bourne, MD, "Observations on Group Behavior in a Special Forces 'A' Team Under Threat of Attack, *The Airborne Quarterly,* Vol 15, No. 2 (Summer 2002): 74.

15 Cameron Spence, *All Necessary Measures* (London: Penguin Books, 1997), 151.

16 Canada, *Command* (Ottawa: DND, 1997), 4.

17 Shawn Anchor, "Positive Intelligence," *Harvard Business Review* (January-February 2012), <https://hbr.org/2012/01/positive-intelligence>, accessed 14 July 2016.

18 SOF characteristics include:

1. Small footprint/small team deployments;
2. Ability to operate clandestinely, covertly or overtly;
3. Operations that are often conducted at great distances from a supporting operational base;
4. Utilizing sophisticated means of insertion, support, and extraction to penetrate and successfully return from hostile, denied, or politically sensitive areas;

5. Employing sophisticated communications systems;
6. Proficiency with, and enabled by, application of advanced technologies;
7. Utilizing unorthodox tactics;
8. Development, acquisition, and employment of equipment that are not standard for others;
9. Conducting operations "General Purpose Forces" cannot perform;
10. Being well-suited for operations in denied and politically sensitive environments;
11. Conducting operations not only against military objectives, but also to support the application of the diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments of national power;
12. Being capable of working independently or in conjunction with conventional forces or other government agencies, or host nations/partner nations;
13. Proficiency at inter-organizational coordination; and
14. Missions that are differentiated by physical and political risk, operational techniques, modes of employment, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets.

19 Canada, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* (Kingston: CDA, 2005), 67.

20 Ibid., 68.

21 General Stanley McChrystal, *My Share of the Task* (London: Portfolio/Penguin, 2013), 394.

22 Quoted in Mike Rybacki and Chavesco Cook, "Switching the Paradigm from Reactive to Proactive: Stopping Toxic Leadership," *Joint Force Quarterly,* No. 82 (July 2016), <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jfq/jfq.htm>, accessed 16 July 2016.

23 Canada, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* (Kingston: CDA, 2005), 64.

CHAPTER 10

LEADERSHIP DURING SOF MILITARY ASSISTANCE OPERATIONS IN NORTHWEST AFRICA

MAJOR GEOFF MUNDY

Military Assistance (MA) operations are not new. They have been employed in various forms by governments throughout history in order to support foreign and defence policy objectives. Recent historical examples include the American Lend-Lease programs of World War II, Canadian military assistance programs in Ghana and Tanzania in the 1960s and 1970s, and the more contemporaneous North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM-A). Although it has previously been categorized as a type of foreign aid, MA has definitive applications in both peacetime and during war.[1] Retired United States (US) military officer and academic William Mott describes MA as an act of transferring resources from a donor to a recipient, be it intellectual (leadership and training), material (weapons and equipment), financial, or a combination of the three.[2]

Over the last decade, MA has been complicated by new terms such as Security Forces Assistance (SFA), Build Partner Capacity (BPC), Security Force Capacity Building (SFCB), train-and-equip programs, and advise/assist missions. At the root, this diffuse terminology describes an alternative approach to the direct application of military force; that is, an indirect approach based on the development of mutually-beneficial relationships that are designed to enable, support and influence actions by the recipient nation that achieve donor objectives.[3] This indirect approach is often characterized by a smaller number of deployed personnel in the recipient or

host nation (HN) and a lower profile of those forces, but limits donor control over timing, methods and outcomes.

Although generally slower and less precise than direct applications of military force, this approach restrains the political and operational risks incurred by the donor. Perhaps as a result, MA has arguably become an increasingly popular policy choice for Western governments in the aftermath of large-scale Counter-Insurgency (COIN) campaigns, and these same governments have turned more frequently to Special Operations Forces (SOF) to execute these missions. In particular, this approach has been employed to address the threat posed by transnational Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO) inhabiting remote and under-governed spaces around the world. As *Washington Post* journalists Souad Mekhennet and Missy Ryan explain, "much of this hands-on support has taken place in Africa, where the growth of militant groups, often allied with al-Qaeda or the Islamic State, has outpaced under-equipped and under-trained militaries."[4]

This chapter is an expanded version of my briefing delivered to the Annual Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) Symposium, whose theme in 2016 was "SOF Leadership in the Contemporary Security Environment." In framing the comments that follow, I have drawn on my experience conducting MA operations in North West Africa, with a focus on leadership at the Task Force (TF)-level. I will attempt to highlight various aspects of leadership that I found to be important to our missions' success. These lessons require context. I will briefly describe my operational environment, outline our mission framework and describe our programmed activities in general terms, before devoting the balance of my discussion to eight lessons I have chosen as most pertinent to leadership during MA operations.

THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The Sahel is a vast, arid expanse situated below the Sahara Desert and stretching from the Atlantic coast to the Red Sea. The states

in this area are among the poorest in the world. The most unstable suffer from a combination of weak state institutions, corruption, and government collusion in illicit networks. Marginalized ethnic minorities, such as the nomadic Tuareg, have repeatedly emerged from the desert to rebel against ruling elites in Mali and Niger, threatening the state, and in the former, contributing to its collapse. These conditions permitted radical Islamism to gain a foothold and exacerbated the security challenges for Western policy-makers.[5]

Much of the response has been led by the United States, who has gradually established a significant military presence on the continent spearheaded by US Africa Command and its SOF component. As reported by the *New York Times* Magazine, forces numbering 700 were deployed in small groups across the continent. According to journalist Eliza Griswold:

> these Special Operations teams, which can be as small as one commando, deliver aid to places where it has generally been too risky to dig wells or hand out eyeglasses, don ties to work at US Embassies and train with Africa commandos... They are adaptable enough to shift as the nature of the threat shifts, fighting a kind of asymmetrical warfare…[6]

For its part, the Government of Canada (GoC) established the Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP). Administered by Global Affairs Canada, this program is designed to share GoC expertise with designated recipients in thematic areas such as counter-terrorism, law enforcement and intelligence training among others.[7] Programming of this kind was delivered by CANSOFCOM in the Sahel.

THE CANSOFCOM APPROACH

CANSOFCOM CTCBP engagements in the Sahel were built on multi-year projects with episodic training visits harmonized

within a much larger US operational framework. These were training missions where the CANSOFCOM elements were present under the consent and protection of the Host Nation (HN). They were executed by widely distributed semi-autonomous self-sustaining Special Forces (SF) Teams, sometimes grouped into a Task Force, who were partnered with HN units on rest cycles in their forward garrisons. The SF Teams delivered training packages tailored to the indigenous unit, their tactical tasks, and the local threat. Due to the very low capability-baselines of many of these units, individual combat skills training formed the basis for most training plans.

The primary tactical problem facing many of these units was the interdiction of fast-moving VEO across the desert; therefore, improving their ability to conduct mounted patrols was prioritized. As their skills improved, the partnered units progressed to collective tactical training, including ambush, as well as cordon and search operations. In addition, training was also provided in enabling skills, such as air-ground cooperation and aerial re-supply.

As the missions progressed, attention was also devoted to HN tactical headquarters to improve their ability to manoeuvre these same ground tactical elements through improved mission planning, intelligence processes, and battle tracking. In this way, we strove to build sustainable capability gains in our partner. Although this describes a seemingly simple recipe, the execution of our mission was affected by leadership at all levels.

LEADERSHIP LESSONS

To begin, I would like to address the single most important factor that affected the execution of our mission: the development and maintenance of strong professional relationships with our partners in general and their tactical commanders in particular. As Task Force Commander (TFC), I viewed this role as one of the most important. During deployments where I had the flexibility

to determine myself the level at which to "plug-in" to our partner, I sought out the highest military decision-maker responsible for the geographic area in which my SF Teams were operating. Once determined, we co-located our own tactical headquarters. To buttress this single relationship, we always attempted to embed our elements at as many levels in the HN military hierarchy as possible. Whether employing carefully placed manoeuvre elements, liaison teams, or even individual staff members embedded within the headquarters of other formations, all of these nodes provided a framework for our relationship. Where a permanently established presence was impractical, we supplemented with leader's visits as often as possible. This framework was designed deliberately to mirror the HN decision-making pathway, with the desired end result of speeding processes, facilitating approvals, and to rapidly mitigating frictions.

In a military bureaucracy where authorities were concentrated and resources controlled at the highest level, it was always tempting to remain close to the HN senior leadership at the national military headquarters. Unfortunately, the national capital tended to act as an "echo chamber," where all Western actors tended to repeat the same situational information that was seldom accurate or complete. Due to legitimate security concerns, the personnel of many supra-national and non-governmental organizations suffered from restrictions to their freedom-of-movement; therefore, they had difficulty accessing areas of greatest concern (or where their programs were being executed). We did not suffer from these same restrictions. Relevant assessments derived from accurate information not only assisted the achievement of our own mission, but also provided real currency in our relationships with Western partners, which we leveraged to great effect in order to bolster our mission success.

Strong relationships built on respect and trust can also enhance force protection. This lesson was best illustrated during the establishment of tactical infrastructure for one of our SF Teams in a

small regional city. The local Zone Commander, a full colonel, allocated several buildings within his garrison for our use, and was unsurprisingly amenable to our desire to renovate prior to occupying the site. The Colonel offered the name of a general contractor who could perform the work, which we accepted only after many assurances of brisk timelines. The work included structural improvements, defensive hardening, and construction of sanitation for a total cost of approximately $70 000.

The contractor was rapidly overwhelmed and our occupation was delayed by almost a month, which not only caused serious inconvenience but also created a security issue due to the incomplete perimeter wall coupled with the large number of labourers continuously present in the living and working area. In the end, the work was completed and the SF Team moved in. Toward the end of the deployment, I asked a senior non-commissioned officer (NCO) from our partnered force what impression our presence had given to the local population. He responded that they held a strongly positive view, based in large part from our willingness to engage a local contractor who employed local labourers. In short, the community had benefitted from our presence. If this sentiment had indeed been accurate, the $70 000 was money well spent.

A different case on a subsequent deployment illustrated the value of merely attempting to develop a relationship. The Task Force was in transit to our operational area and we had overnighted at the HN garrison in a large regional city. Prior to departing the next morning, I decided to seek out the Zone Commander to pay my respects. Unfortunately, this objective was not straightforward and as the hours accumulated I was tempted several times to admit defeat. I finally gained an audience with the colonel and had a very pleasant conversation, albeit brief, during which I explained the reasons for our presence and thanked him for his hospitality.

Not long after, our convoy had halted temporarily on the outskirts of the city and a civilian mini-bus approached from the opposite

direction at high speed. The driver lost control as he passed our convoy and rolled his over-crowded vehicle into a ditch, causing a fatality and several injuries among his passengers. As we managed the scene, a crowd formed quickly and tempers began to flare. Sensing the situation deteriorating, particularly in the week following violent riots in the city, I placed a call to the Zone Commander whom I had just met and explained our circumstance. He intervened on our behalf with local law enforcement and facilitated our swift exit.

These examples illustrate the centrality of relationship to the mission, and the tangential benefits that can accrue to force protection and freedom of movement. In many ways, the relationship with our partner was not merely a means to an end, it was the mission. Indeed, the goal of an MA mission is not merely to build capability, but also to influence the manner in which that capability is employed.

Secondly, persistence creates accountability, especially in military organizations with little or no culture of training. The African militaries with whom we interacted were adept at *doing*; planning and preparation were not emphasized. Personnel and materiel resources were stretched so thin and threats so present, there was no allowance for the maintenance of individual skills and collective competencies. Every one of their soldiers was required for operational duty and each piece of serviceable equipment was dedicated to this purpose. While understandable, this situation also created a culture of complacency and fatalism, which posed challenges in the execution of our training mission.

Persistence provided us one solution. It is necessary to monitor training progress, substantiate claims of performance, ensure formalization of new processes, and verify designated resources are delivered to the appropriate destination and applied to the intended purpose. Applying this concept is a leadership function. It requires calibrating the appropriate degree of firmness,

skepticism or persuasion while simultaneously protecting a functioning relationship.

A leader must also manage the tension created by the dissonance between your assessment of the partner's needs and their desired training focus. On every deployment, we were asked by senior HN military leaders to provide their forces with night vision goggles and close quarter battle training – the first is an expensive and sensitive item, and the second is an advanced skill-set with elevated injury risks in training if not executed properly. Instead, we chose to focus on more fundamental issues, such as driver training.

Our partner's primary tactical fighting element was based on the Toyota Hilux vehicle: a small civilian pattern pick-up truck normally equipped with a 12.7mm machine gun and responsible for transporting as many as a dozen dismounted soldiers. During my deployments to the region, the single greatest cause of soldier injury within our partner forces was due to vehicle roll-over. Indeed, it was not hard to draw a conclusion based on the aggressive driving techniques of military drivers, treacherous road and traffic conditions, and customary over-loading of vehicles.

This issue also had an important impact on force generation and training. Very few soldiers were qualified as military drivers. Those who were belonged to a common driver pool that was controlled by the garrison. The line combat companies did not have dedicated vehicles or drivers, a fact we did not discover until well into our training program. During a training module on mobility operations, our SF Teams would spend a whole day teaching mounted formations and drills, only to arrive the next morning to continue the syllabus and find a new batch of drivers assigned to the platoons. Thereupon, they would have to start the training over.

Our solution was to fund and coordinate the training of additional military drivers, who we ensured were drawn from the sections

and platoons to which they belonged. Although this proposal was hardly earth-shattering, the amount of effort required to propose, negotiate, coordinate and implement this training with the partner's military bureaucracy took months. Once delivered, our SF Teams needed to be present to ensure the newly-qualified drivers we had selected in fact remained with their original tactical organizations and did not simply disappear back into the common driver pool.

Another example of our focus on "first principles" was driven by the lack of a traverse and elevation (T&E) mechanism for the machine gun mounts on these same Hiluxes. The absence of these T&E mechanisms prevented the machine guns from firing accurately from a stationary platform, let alone providing effective fire support to a dismounted manoeuvre element. On one occasion, we demonstrated the results of a concentrated period of range training using several improvised gun mounts. The local Zone Commander could not believe his machine gunners were actually hitting their targets.

Both of these examples are also useful in illustrating an important second order impact. The lack of expertise in basic skills, coupled with the poor status of their weapons and equipment led HN commanders at every level to inflate the size of their tactical elements, sometimes drastically. For example, a routine mounted presence patrol tasked to follow a hazardous routing was reinforced to almost 100 soldiers where 20 were likely sufficient. This habit by leaders not only exacerbated their already acute manning pressures but also placed additional transportation demands on the small number of available tactical vehicles, which were overloaded in the first instance.

Unfortunately, cross-country driving and T&E mechanisms do not hold the same cachet as close quarter battle (CQB) training, and it was a constant struggle to maintain focus within the partnered force, especially as teams from other Western military forces

were much more willing to provide more advanced and exciting training. At times during our training programs, we would insert limited periods of instruction on more advanced skills in order to satisfy the desires of the local commander and to retain the attention of the training audience. In the above examples, we deliberately built on capabilities and resources our partner already possessed. We were careful to ensure the sustainability of the skills we taught. Finally, we were mindful of the powerful local perception of technology as a panacea to all their problems, if only we would share it. In every case, we needed to be present to ensure our efforts were having the desired impact.

Transparency of motive and action builds trust with a partner. At the root, this lesson refers to information sharing and communication. The concept of operational security forms one of the core principles of special operations. Implemented together with five other principles, a tactical condition can be created wherein the vulnerabilities of a small, lightly armed force are masked, thereby providing temporary advantage over an adversary.[8]

As a SOF officer, Admiral William McRaven's theory and its application formed an important component of my training. Upon our arrival in Africa, I was faced with the difficult task of calibrating the depth and breadth of our communication with the partner. Although our mission was not to conduct a daring raid on a fortified enemy position, my force was indeed small and lightly armed. We would be operating in a remote area, far from any traditional mechanism of support, and in close proximity to VEO. Our security depended in some measure on our discreet profile and tactical agility. Could we trust the HN to safeguard information regarding our disposition and strength, our movement patterns, and the location and times of our training evolutions? As a leader, it was difficult to rationalize the assumption of risk especially when it directly impacted the safety of my operators and supporters. In the end, I felt the advantages of transparency outweighed the potential risks. The HN was not only formally responsible for our

safety but also had strong incentives to ensure we remained safe. As such, we prepared a sanitized Concept of Operations (CONOP) for every major training evolution or intra-theatre movement, and our liaison officer (LO) in the capital personally briefed a member of the HN senior military staff on each occasion.

The following example illustrates the value of transparency. During one deployment, the SF Team situated in a large regional city delivered a training module that instructed their partnered force how to conduct a Cordon and Search (C&S) mission. The training plan included several days of progressive tactical training inside the garrison, followed by a culminating event whereby the partnered platoons were tested on their new skills. To enhance the realism of the training, the SF Team Leader requested permission to use a small civilian building complex inside the city. Working together, we prepared a CONOP and solicited its approval from military and civilian authorities in the city. Public announcements were coordinated and the venue secured. Finally, a copy of the CONOP was briefed by our LO to a senior officer in the national military headquarters.

Despite our efforts, the event unraveled with surprising speed on the day of execution. The SF team leader made the very reasonable decision to walk his force from the garrison to the nearby venue; however, the sight of forty armed soldiers, dressed for battle and moving with purpose into the city created alarm among the local population. By the time the platoon had completed the training evolution, the local radio station was broadcasting details of a military operation against a terrorist target hidden in the city. The provincial governor was notified rapidly, as was the Chief of Defence (ChoD) in the capital. After the excitement subsided and the radio station forced to correct its reporting, it became clear how beneficial our prior coordination had been. As result of our transparency, the senior national military commander understood the context and dismissed the issue. In fact, he later chose to highlight this example humorously in public to a very large

multinational audience. In this case, my embarrassment was a much preferable outcome to the alternative. Although the region was exceptionally poor and the terrain inhospitable, our African hosts were proud of their country and fiercely protective of their sovereignty. We respected their authority, which created trust.

There was incredible value in being able of communicating with my partnered tactical commander without the assistance of an interpreter. Although it is exceedingly difficult for military organizations to match the personal language abilities of its members with a prospective theatre of operation, in this case I was fortunate to possess a base knowledge of French. As my relationships with our partnered military commanders developed and a sufficient level of trust was established, they began to confide more sensitive and personal information. This humanized our relationship and gave me a greater understanding of the pressures facing these leaders. For example, one zone commander admitted to me one day how embarrassed he felt having to sign personally each individual request to draw fuel from the garrison depot. Another explained the internal dynamics of the Army's relationship to the Gendarmerie, one of whose duties was to detect the seeds of an Army-led coup. "It's complicated," he lamented. A full colonel admitted that although their signal corps had established an encrypted electronic mail service for official correspondence among their senior leaders, his peers distrusted these means and believed the use of their personal cellular telephones was more secure.

Developing a personal relationship through an interpreter is much more difficult, and I am convinced the presence of an unfamiliar person in the room would have significantly altered the dynamic; either the information exchange would have been shallower, or worse, the interpreter himself could have acquired over time personal power disproportionate to their status.

Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that language ability can blind you to local conditions. For example, one particular SF Team

possessed very strong French language skills amongst their members. Recently deployed but feeling confident, they embarked on their training program with enthusiasm. After several days, they became concerned at the lack of participation and feedback from their partnered force. The grizzled platoon sergeant finally admitted that his soldiers spoke ethnic languages not French, but they had kept quiet because they did not want to embarrass the new Canadian team. We solved the issue with appropriately skilled interpreters, but we had to repeatedly justify their salaries to our higher headquarters as those staff officers continued to make the same initial poor assumption that I had.

The next lesson resulted from an imbalance between on our primary outcome, mission success, and an enabling outcome, the commitment of our members. In other words, someone has to care about content. Due to the nature of these missions, the content of the training program was less important than where, when and to whom the assistance was being delivered. In every case, however, my subordinate teammates who were tasked to execute the program considered the content to be vitally important. It can be very easy to dismiss the concerns of these subordinates, especially under circumstances where measures of effectiveness were difficult to quantify, progress was regulated by the relationship, and capability development was trapped on an extended time-horizon.

To illustrate this point, a leader at some level must display empathy when the precise type of target paper is not available; must accept a slightly better training calendar even though the resulting changes create local coordination challenges; must be willing to enhance realism through better training venues even though they are difficult to secure; and must apply the appropriate deliberation when asked to decide which variation of a drill to teach on a flat range. It is reasonable to expect my superior Commander would be less interested in these details than the status of the military relationship, capability gains in the partnered unit, or changes in the threat situation. Somebody in the chain-of-command has to

care about content, however, and at the Task Force-level, it was my responsibility to devote the additional time and energy to do so. In the end, I hope that it served to display my profound respect for the professionalism of my teammates and their impressive commitment to the mission.

The sixth observation is to avoid becoming a burden to your partner. Many of the countries in North West Africa are among the poorest in the world and their militaries are resourced commensurate to their very limited national wealth. In my enthusiasm to accomplish our mission and to maximize the effectiveness of our training program, I sometimes failed to understand the impact of my plans on their ability to support them. As I discovered later, this mistake was exacerbated by our host's cultural tendency to avoid saying "no." I have two examples that illustrate this point.

When deployed, our HN was responsible for our protection and the requirement for armed vehicle escort was a common stipulation to our ground movement. Unlike other Western military forces in the region who employed air transportation for intra-theatre movement and who benefitted from continuously-manned forward tactical infrastructure, our deployments were far more transient and episodic. These factors drove a requirement to repeatedly re-establish a new footprint in each operating location, necessitating lengthy road movements from our air points of disembarkation with large convoys of palletized equipment. Each convoy required armed vehicle escort and each new team house required the negotiated lease of a portion of their garrison infrastructure.

Furthermore, the force laydown of our Task Force was distributed across great distances. Lacking intra-theatre airlift, but needing to develop professional relationships with the partnered military commanders in each of our areas, I travelled often. Each time I did, the HN was forced to generate an escort, which it struggled to do routinely, much to our growing frustration. Moreover, as

my long-distance travels also represented the cross-jurisdictional movement of military forces, however small, it also created an administrative burden. Over time, these seemingly small demands on our partners' meager resources and our blindness to their cumulative impact created fissures in the relationship that required subsequent deliberate effort to repair.

In the lead up to a major collective training exercise, the senior HN military planner agreed to my suggestion that indigenous helicopter aviation platforms be paired with our own deployed helicopter detachment to practice airmobile operations. I remember vividly the meeting in his office where he seized this idea as his own and became so animated that he leapt from his chair and excitedly explained his concept of operations for a grand aerial movement by sweeping his hand across a large-scale topographical map on his wall. Leaving the military headquarters feeling pleased with myself, I did not fully comprehend the months of painstaking coordination required to bring this concept to fruition. In preparation, a large helicopter landing zone was surveyed and constructed in the remote forward location, and half of our partner's entire air force helicopter fleet was dispatched with their crews and maintenance support.

In the end, the training was hugely successful. It was observed favourably by a parade of visiting senior officers, and the HN ChoD described it proudly as the first instance of integrated tactical air operations in five years. But it came at a cost. At the conclusion of the exercise, the HN air force comptroller contacted me through my liaison officer and presented us with a rather large bill. We had been very careful to articulate the extent of our financial support from the outset, which included the provision of training hours for certain platforms in their fleet. I stood my ground, but the negotiations to resolve the matter became tense and our relationship suffered – each side probably feeling somewhat exploited. It did not matter that air platforms of a greater type and quantity than were requested had been dispatched to participate in the exercise,

or that senior HN military commanders at each level had enthusiastically endorsed the CONOP. It was a valuable lesson in the need to be selectively self-limiting in our goals.

The seventh lesson is to empower subordinate teams to build local networks to solve their own problems. As described previously, our Task Force was distributed in small teams across a remote and austere operating area far from traditional mechanisms of support. As a result, the Task Force itself was designed to be as self-sufficient as possible, and not just for the purposes of logistical support. We devoted much effort to creating a network of local relationships that was developed by leaders at all levels, the most important of which were maintained by embedded or collocated elements, or by direct liaison authorities. In practice, these relationships meant that even when our higher headquarters wanted to assist us in resolving a particular issue, our deployed Task Force was almost always better positioned to react more rapidly and effectively.

The following example describes our efforts to facilitate access to a large regional airport in a forward area by Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) CC-177 Globemaster aircraft. The flights in question were needed to deliver the Special Operations Aviation Detachment (SOAD), consisting of a number of rotary wing aircraft, maintenance tooling and parts, airfield equipment, and personnel. Projecting the SOAD directly into the forward area obviated the need to conduct a two-day 1,000 kilometre (km) intra-theatre movement from the capital, as well as eliminating the need for time and space at the capital's international airport to restore the helicopters to flight status, contract heavy truck transport for the palletized equipment, coordinate a secure overnight location enroute, plus arrange the armed escort.

These were all issues that we wished to avoid, especially as the intended employment window for the SOAD was fast approaching. At our forward location, the airfield itself was suitable for use by the CC-177, but the taxiway and apron were not. Therefore,

the heavy airlifter needed to remain on the runway to unload its cargo. This circumstance was less problematic than it sounds because there was no regularly scheduled civilian air traffic. The Task Force had arranged and coordinated the required landing clearances. However, less than a week before the insertion date, an additional requirement was imposed. The RCAF wanted the airfield formally shut-down for the period during which the CC-177 was on the ground and they wanted formal written confirmation from the airport authority.

The Task Force swung into action. Our logistics officer promptly drove to the airport and found the manager, who informed him that he had no authority. Only the national office could grant the request. Our LO in the capital proceeded to locate the national headquarters of the civilian aviation authority. Over the course of several days, he tracked down the official who could grant the clearance; however, this necessitated a formal request on our part.

After our own self-generated request failed to satisfy this official, we contacted the Canadian diplomat at the accredited embassy located in a neighbouring country, and with whom we had developed a relationship. He immediately produced and transmitted a diplomatic note, but having failed to receive a swift response from the authorities, we dispatched the LO to hand-carry a hard copy back to the national office. This act finally generated the necessary clearance and satisfied the concerns of the RCAF. Had the Task Force not established our own network of local connections, maintained them through a distributed structure, and benefitted from direct liaison authorities with the Embassy, the deployment and projection of the SOAD would have been much more difficult.

The final lesson that I wish to illustrate is the challenge of integrating our efforts within an operating environment saturated with actors and organizations trying to help. As a conflict-affected area in one of the poorest regions of the world, our operating environment was inhabited by a multitude of national, supra-national and

third party actors. These included but were not limited to the military forces from several Western countries in well-established frameworks, European Union (EU) civilian counter-terrorism capacity-building programs, various law enforcement and intelligence officials, and numerous aid agencies such as USAID, the World Food Program (WFP) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).[9] This collection of players created a confusing environment where objectives overlapped, agendas were not frequently aligned, projects completed with no discernible sponsor, and priorities competed for attention from the HN.

Quite simply, there existed no formal coordination mechanism. Instead, there was simply a loose network of officials, program officers and soldiers who could sometimes collaborate to find mutually beneficial ways to deliver their programs. It took time to understand this system and establish ourselves as a legitimate actor; however, continuous presence was crucial as opportunities for cooperation could be fleeting and personality-based. I was often surprised at the amount of personal attention that was required to establish and maintain these relationships, but as Task Force Commander, it was my responsibility to determine which ones fell within our mission parameters and my liaison authorities.

While developing a plan to improve our partner's military Command and Control (C2) processes, we discovered the EU had an ongoing project to fund computer and audio-visual equipment, local power generation, and infrastructure improvements at district-level Command Posts (CP). Due to this organization's threat-based restrictions, their officers had difficulty accessing the forward garrisons at which the CPs were located. In return for accelerating their timelines, we agreed to coordinate the delivery of these resources and ensure they were employed as intended.

In a second example, our Task Force was responsible for the tactical command, control and coordination at one of several forward

locations during a large-scale multinational counter-terrorism exercise. At each location, a civil-military outreach event was mandated, but not prescribed. Not wanting to execute the standard medical civic action program (MEDCAP) event, we sought out a small USAID project office that had planned a short-term youth employment scheme in our area to clear brush away from the shoulders of the national highway. We agreed to coordinate our execution timelines and add a public event with key local leaders. While this event was ultimately not executed for reasons unrelated to our coordination, it would have amplified the visibility of their program while enhancing the pertinence of ours.

Identifying opportunities, establishing common ground, negotiating access to the resources of external agencies and sequencing their actions with ours, was a leadership and command function. This tactical creativity permitted the Task Force to stretch its modest resources, enhance its operational impact and burnish a reputation as a collaborative actor.

CONCLUSION

Although Military Assistance is essentially an act of transferring resources from a donor to a recipient, its effectiveness is predicated on the development of mutually-beneficial relationships established over the long-term that are intended to influence human behaviour. During SOF missions, the operational environment is further influenced by heightened restrictions and sensitivities that constrain the employment of the force. As such, MA missions place unique demands on the SOF leader. This chapter has described several leadership lessons that highlight themes of trust, empowerment, risk acceptance, creativity and responsibility. I hope the lessons described above, placed into the context of our mission, will have relevance to future practitioners.

NOTES

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9 UNICEF is now called UN Children's Fund.

CHAPTER 11

LEADERSHIP AND COMPLACENCY IN COMBAT: THE SEVEN WARNING SIGNS

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
FRANCISCO MELENDEZ

The enemy that we are fighting today is different from the one against which we war-gamed in staff college and/or in operational headquarters. Moreover, our current antagonists continue to evolve. Consequently, today's combat environment requires a change in our leadership style and approach. Quite simply, it is easy for military leaders to grow complacent. Too often "good enough" becomes the mantra. No one, even if they feel it is necessary, likes to take a few steps back to review or instill basic fundamentals, before they are able to make headway and find their footing in today's changing environment. As a result, combat leaders become more vulnerable to environmental and operational pressures because they lose strategic focus and do not see the looming or emerging threats which they may potentially face. In other words, complacency and its effect on leadership in combat can have catastrophic consequences.

This chapter will address complacency and its effect on leadership in combat. It will describe the warning signs, provide recommended actions to mitigate complacency, as well as provide "real-world" examples. These warning signs, recommended actions and examples are not all inclusive, but hopefully they will provide today's SOF leaders a starting point to reflect on improving their leadership in combat.

Initially, it is important to clarify what is meant by complacency. Complacency can be defined as "a feeling of confidence or security

that is unwarranted because it overlooks actual shortcomings or threats."[1] An alternate description further emphasizes its negative impact:

> Complacency is a disease that saps energy, reduces attitudes, and causes a drain on the brain. The first sign is satisfaction with things as they are. The second is rejection of things as they might be: "Good enough" becomes today's watchword and tomorrow's standard. Complacency makes people fear the unknown, distrust the untested, and dislike the new. Like water, complacent people follow the easiest course — downhill.[2]

Importantly, there are some early warning signs to avoid complacency in leadership. These are:

1. Persistent feeling of fear;
2. Lack of attention to detail;
3. Mounting of stress and tension;
4. Thinking in a reactive mode;
5. Leaders stop leading;
6 Individuals believe they are invincible; and
7. Failure to analyze the situation.

The first warning sign, a nagging, persistent feeling of fear is very telling. However, the ability not to allow fear to settle in is easier said than done. It is a combat reality that every leader must address immediately after a "bad," or "worst" combat experience (i.e. there is no such thing as a good combat experience) because it is easy for this fear to sink in with the leader and potentially impact their decision-making. Therefore, all team members must be vigilant and be on the lookout for that unexpected leader

decision that just does not make sense in view of the tactical situation. When a decision makes everyone's "back of the neck" hair stand up, it is time to double-check. In essence, the more complacent the leader, the more unpredictable the environment becomes, particularly the ability to control and lead in it.

One recommended action is taking a tactical pause (if possible), which can benefit the leader, as well as the team. Another is to re-assess the environment/situation, brainstorm possible solutions and approach the problem with an alternate, sound course of action. Ensure that you always use all the support mechanisms that are available. Another recommended course of action is to ensure that everyone is following the standing operating procedures (SOPs). This process will help focus the leader and the team.

> **Example:** A Leader is shaken by an ambush and departs the ambush site leaving a disabled vehicle with wounded behind. During the early stages of the deployment this leader already showed signs of complacency regarding the actions he would take when confronted with a life or death situation. Moreover, prior to the ambush, his previous comments and decisions demonstrated a lack of action in confronting the enemy, as well as an inability to determine positive disengagement strategies from similar situations. Had earlier action been taken to address the shortcomings this terrible situation could have been avoided.

The second warning sign, "lack of attention to detail" is incredibly important. When combat stress mounts, details quickly slip away. This can have an accumulative effect. As such, when the leader's attention to detail starts to fade through the length of a deployment, it gives the first indications that complacency is settling in. Dealing with the many different details of combat is critical to maintaining one's focus and keeping eyes locked-in on the situation at hand. When leaders cut corners, performance and quality wear away. If leaders do not know how to cope with combat stress, their good plans, goals and intentions can spiral out of

control and they can potentially generate negative consequences for the element, team, unit and/or the organization.

> **Example:** During an engagement with the enemy, a squad leader directed his squad members to stand behind a mud wall to take cover. This type of complacency with regard to concealment and protection could have dire consequences. The leader did not realize that the wall provided no protection from rounds penetrating the wall. Luckily, a senior Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) corrected the situation preventing any casualties.

> **Example:** An element deployed on a mission assuming it was short term only to find out that the mission duration was actually three days. As a result, they deployed without night vision capability or planned support. Consequently, this element was ambushed and pinned down by the enemy. The element did not plan for Close Air Support, artillery/mortar support, medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), or night operations, because they were under the impression that they would return before night fall.

> **Example:** While operating a firing range for partner nation police trainees, Allied service members were not in possession of their personal weapons. This provided an opportunity for a "green on blue" attack. The element training the local police conscripts became complacent by not adding security, or a plan to react to a green on blue incident. Since the training cadre had not personally experienced any previous adverse training events the element was satisfied with current procedures even though other training elements within the coalition had experienced green on blue events. This complacency led to thinking that "this will not happen to us."

The third warning sign is mounting stress and tension. When leaders grow fearful, stress and tension begin to mount.

Detectable symptoms usually include a change in a leader's behaviour. In essence, they begin to act differently, lose the required attention to detail, fail to perform effectively and start making unsound decisions. When this takes place, leaders must lose their decision-making authority. Their lack of attention to detail, impatience and complacency can quickly infect the element, team or unit. Leaders must remember that they are always in the spotlight and their subordinates are always observant of everything they say and do. They set the standard, high or low. As such, ensure that you do not allow complacency to detract from the organization's objective. Moreover, if anyone suspects a leader is suffering from stress and tension, professional help should be sought.

> **Example:** A leader lost unit members and a close friend in combat and felt responsible. The event affected how the leader behaved for a short period of time, until the leader committed suicide. We cannot become complacent with our leaders. We need to take the time to observe them for signs of stress. They too could suffer from the scars of combat tension until it becomes unmanageable.

The fourth warning sign is that leaders start to think in a reactive mode. Leaders are expected to take the initiative and make decisions in a timely manner. When leaders are complacent, they become sluggish in their thinking and actions and slow to make decisions. Furthermore, they begin to acquire bad habits and their attention to detail, as well as their ability to identify pressing issues gets blurred and unclear. As this degradation in concentration and focus continues to occur throughout their combat rotation, they become reactive rather than proactive. Importantly, options and courses of action that are presented to them that may assist in solving potential problems or issues before they occur are ignored. Quite simply, complacency can obscure a leader's wisdom or rationality – making it more likely for them to miss a probable course of action.

Example: A forward operation base element allowed its guard down when they trusted an Afghan police element to enter their base. An enemy infiltrated Afghan police officer entered the base and easily entered an unattended vehicle with a loaded machine gun. The infiltrator quickly mounted and operated the machine gun killing three service members and wounding four others before the unit was able to react and kill the infiltrator. This tragic event occurred because of leadership complacency that allowed minimal base security during regular police visits, As a result, the unit set a "guard down" pattern by not enforcing security procedures. The infiltrator was waiting for the right moment to engage a group (in this case with a machine gun) to cause a mass casualty situation.

Example: Not taking the time to do a background check on translators and rehiring translators that were previously fired. In one case local Afghan translators left the base without notifying anyone after they received information regarding an imminent attack on the base. They returned two days later and explained their absence by lying about the incident. These three translators were fired and upon searching their belongings compact disks were found with photos of every unit member and equipment located at the base. Letters were provided to higher headquarters explaining the incident to prevent re-hiring these translators. However, two rotations later these same translators were re-hired by other units.

Yet another warning sign of complacency is when a leader reaches a point where he/she stops leading and begins to take the back seat instead of driving the mission. Over time in a combat environment, complacent leaders begin to play it too safe or not play at all. When this happens, their composure and self-assurance begins to wane. Consequently, they lose confidence in their own abilities and in their decision-making, as well as their trust in others. This behavioural change makes them feel

inadequate and weak. Therefore, they fail to lead and become are more comfortable following others. However, this failure is unacceptable as they have the vested authority, professional development and experience to drive the mission.

> **Example:** A Complacent leader allowed personnel to continuously drive vehicles through the same crossing point developing a recognizable pattern. During one of the vehicle patrols, one soldier felt something was not right and decided to walk the crossing point first, but did not see anything. The soldier returned to the vehicle and once the vehicle started to move forward, it hit an improvised explosive device resulting in four casualties.

> **Example:** A soldier loads training ammunition on a gun before going on a combat mission. A complacent soldier forgot to inspect his weapon system ammunition before going on a mission only to later find out his mistake during a combat patrol. A leader's adherence to pre-combat checks and following SOPs should have prevented this incident. Not only did the soldier fail to load the correct ammunition but his supervisors failed to complete pre-combat checks and follow established SOPs. The outcome could have been disastrous.

An individual feeling invincible is the sixth warning sign of complacency. This form of complacency stems from the arrogant belief that one's own forces are unstoppable and invincible. The danger that could result is the fact that individuals may become complacent in the planning of operations. The feeling of invincibility creates a sense of complacency in that the belief that there is nothing to worry about since the perceived sense of martial superiority translates to victory on the battlefield. Quite simply, leaders begin to tell themselves that "We can do this with one hand tied behind our backs." Complacency is also evident in producing superficial battle plans, a practice that stems from believing that

one's own military superiority is enough to ensure victory. This sense of complacency lulls leaders into believing that the enemy is incapable of effectively impacting friendly actions because of the supposed superiority of friendly forces.

> **Example:** The combat team departed on a short mission in all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and motorcycles and decided to leave their armored vehicles behind. The element got in an ambush and almost lost the complete team due to a lack of protection. Thanks to an uncommitted fast mover aircraft nearby, the team was able to receive close air support to break contact and return to base. This element clearly experienced the consequences of "Victory Disease."

> **Example:** Allowing the base perimeter to be guarded with only Afghan security forces without any supervision. Multiple friendly elements in the same base became complacent by excessively trusting the local Afghan Security force that provided outer perimeter security. This security force did not have enough ammunition, night vision devices, or an early warning mechanism for uncovered areas. To make things worse, some of these security forces were using drugs at their security towers.

> **Example:** Due to a lack of base security at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, fifteen heavily armed Taliban insurgents infiltrated the base in September 2012 and attacked the airfield. In the ensuing battle, two Marines died, eight U.S. and eight U.K. personnel were wounded, as well as a civilian. The Parliament's cross-party Defense Committee reported that "insufficient attention was given to the fundamental requirement of defending the camp from external assault." The Committee noted it "believes this was a case of complacency."

The final warning sign is the failure of leaders to adequately apply critical thinking and fully analyze the situation at hand. A failure

to fully become knowledgeable and continually update the comprehension of the enemy, his culture, decision-making, practices, etc. will lead to failure. After all, a superficial understanding of the enemy's culture will not determine accurately his likely course of action, or how he might react to our actions. A leader must engage at both the cognitive and physical levels of the battlespace. A leader must always continue to analyze all cues in the environment to best optimize solutions to tactical problems. Moreover, they must ensure that the enemy does not use his knowledge of our ethical and moral way of thinking against us.

> **Example:** The enemy using our ethical reasoning to their advantage. A unit cleared a compound in search of a Taliban finance facilitator/recruiter, but only did a cursory check in a room that was found with 10 babies lying on the floor. The enemy, knowing our ethical values to respect innocent lives, particularly children, used the room to hide the Taliban facilitator. All the mothers were outside without their babies (note: no mother normally leaves their baby behind) while the assault force looked for the facilitator. The mothers were called to retrieve their babies, at which time one of the mother provided information regarding the location of the facilitator.

SUMMARY

Although not exhaustive, these seven warning signs of complacency in combat highlight the complex challenges facing leaders today. The given warning signs and the real-world examples simply scratch the surface of the dangers of complacency. Author Matt Perman notes that "everything about complacency is the opposite of leadership."[3]

While complacency in combat puts missions and soldiers at risk, there are actions that can be taken that can help prevent complacency. First, a tactical pause (if possible) can benefit the leader and team. Take the time to re-assess the environment/situation,

brainstorm options and approach the situation with a sound course of action. Furthermore, always maximize and use all support mechanisms available. Second, adhere to SOPs. Develop checklists and follow them. This will lead to good risk assessments and focusing energy and actions during periods of high stress or tension. Third, involve others. Everyone has good ideas and everyone has the potential to be a leader. In addition, it is also especially important to check on your leaders to ensure their health and well-being. Fourth, think about how the enemy could use your societal values and rules of engagement for their benefit. Discussing these scenarios with the team will reveal "what if" situations and possible solution sets. Finally, plan for contingencies as much as possible. Avoid patterns in behaviour to make it more difficult for your adversaries to target the team. In the end, combating complacency is a leadership challenge that has dire consequences to military "blood and treasure" if it is ignored. Recognizing complacency in the team and in oneself is the leader's responsibility and one of the leader's greatest challenges.

NOTES

1 U.S. Army website, "Company Command: Building Combat-Ready Teams," <https://cc.army.mil/pubs/armymagazine/docs/2008/CC_0805-Complacency.pdf>, accessed 9 August 2016.

2 Alex and Brett Harris, *Do Hard Things*, quoting the daily periodical *Bits & Pieces*, cited in Matt Perman blog, *Complacency: The Opposite of Leadership* (28 September 2011), <https://www.whatsbestnext.com/?s=complacency>.

3 Matt Perman blog, *Complacency: The Opposite of Leadership* (28 September 2011), <https://www.whatsbestnext.com/?s=complacency>, accessed 8 August 2016.

CHAPTER 12

COMBAT LEADERSHIP

JOHN BAYCROFT

To be a combat leader means to be a leader of troops in battle. Although one can argue that leaders, much like great artists, are born and not made, the reality is that even great artists require years of hard study and physical training before they can fully master their art. The combat leader is no different. If he/she is to learn the art of war, he/she must then study and train hard physically with all of the tools of that chosen field.

Predictably, during times of peace there is always the concern and likelihood that the military, as well as other agencies will breed managers instead of leaders. Equally likely, is that these individuals will lack the leadership skills necessary for combat operations. In fact, managers may often times feel threatened by combat leaders who tend to be aggressive, risk accepting, innovative and eager to experiment in order to change or update tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). This difference in philosophical approaches highlights key differences between a manager and a leader, but does not totally define the difference.

As such, the focus of this chapter will be the "on the ground" combat leader, specifically warfighters within tier one Special Forces (SF) and the key skill required of them, namely, physical courage. Quite simply, combat leaders require physical courage to achieve full effectiveness.

When one discusses combat leadership it is not easy to boil it down to a single characteristic. Rather, the effective combat

leader must possess and master a number of characteristics, attributes and skills. These include:

- Knowledge of the job
- Interest in subordinates
- Mental and physical energy
- Human understanding and compassion
- Stubbornness
- Imagination
- Character
- Ability to follow
- Competitiveness
- Discipline
- Intelligence
- Stamina
- Courage
- Patriotism
- Humility
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Endless pursuit of excellence

Importantly, combat leadership is demonstrated by an individual's ability to influence others and to have them follow enthusiastically, as well as instinctively, without hesitation whilst engaged in combat. Although the long list provided highlights many of the characteristics, attributes and skills required, there are arguably just three key components that are essential to combat leadership:

- Courage
- Stability
- Training

Much like the list provided above, each of these three components are mutually supporting and intertwined. Nonetheless, each will be addressed individually.

COURAGE

Leadership in combat requires courage, both moral and physical. Moral courage is required of a leader routinely in peace and war, but physical courage is another matter. Physical courage can certainly be demonstrated occasionally in peacetime, but normally cannot be fully tested until one is on actual combat operations. Importantly, courage is not the absence of fear, rather it is managed fear and the ability to do what should be done in spite of that fear. Quite simply, it is the domination of will over instinct, and as such, it is a skill. Some people appear to manage fear naturally, while others can be taught the skill, or at least enhance their ability to control the emotion of fear. However, the fact is that for some it is unmanageable.

A soldier feels fear in direct proportion to their belief that they may fail or be seriously injured or killed. To assist individuals overcome these issues, the combat leader must build competence and confidence by arduous training and setting the example. By developing this confidence and trust in self and others, the combat leader prepares individuals for high intensity, severe combat operations.

Combat leaders should view courage as an essential binding influence for unity of action. In holding strong to fundamental principles of leadership, effective leaders see themselves under a continuous challenge to prove, by one means or another, the quality and character of their person. In this vein, courage is indispensable if combat leaders expect to give direction that may impact the very lives of their men and women.

However, displaying courage is difficult for two reasons. The first reason is that it cannot be learned from books or the Internet. It is a function of trial by fire by putting individuals into situations where they are required to face their fears. The second reason that displaying courage is difficult is due to the fact that

characteristics of individual behaviour in peace are completely changed in combat. Soldiers react differently in combat than they do in the garrison or exercise environments. Therefore, combat leader must manage them differently according to the environment.

The management of soldiers in combat starts with direct leadership. This entails confronting the enemy and having a full understanding of your soldiers. For instance, it is important to know who the true warriors are (these soldiers are invaluable in time of war, but often a disturbing element in time of peace). It is high intensity combat operations where an innate understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses pays dividends so you know who to task with what responsibilities, who will be reliable and who will require shoring, to provide just a few examples.

Courage is also an understanding of the atmosphere of violence. This means that you must know how to keep your head and to think intelligently in the midst of danger. In battle the worst possible behaviour is paralysis. A combat leader masters his/her own fear and learns how to kill, and lead by example. As a result, soldiers will follow.

In the end, courage is a pre-requisite for combat leadership. However, the reality is that we cannot be totally sure of its presence in an individual until they are truly tested. As such, we must mitigate the issue the best we can. That means we must we train hard and relentlessly.

STABILITY

What are the benefits of stable units with stable leadership? What is it that adds to a person's courage and makes the combat leader and soldier more apt to succeed in combat? In short, there are two factors. The first is the bonding/cohesion that is generated through shared hardship and experience, as well as comradeship, mutual confidence and the knowledge of each other.

Bonding and cohesion is a key ingredient in SF. It is the reason SF units with good leadership and good soldiers are so effective. It is the bonding of the shared extreme danger whilst achieving strategic effect that brings the operators together. Quite simply, everyone has needs: physical, security, and social. Social needs include the need for self-respect, status, comradeship, love and appreciation, as well as the need to belong to a special group and to be respected by others in that special group. The incredible bonding and cohesion that results from the sharing of extreme danger and the implicit trust conveyed in the phrase "cover me," are the real factors that keep an individual motivated and why there is always a constant operational prowess. From a personal perspective it kept me fighting in 22 Special Air Service (SAS). The most important factor was that I knew as a combat leader that with respect comes trust. The soldiers knew that I would not let them down. I was of course fighting for Her Majesty the Queen and country, but all of that came second to the fact that the real reason I fought was for my comrades who were with me in the arena.

Generally, the SF private soldier at the front thinks only in terms of the present. He/she lives from day to day. If a combat action is successful, he/she is pleased. He/she is not normally concerned with the strategic results of combat. Rather, his/her thoughts revolve only about himself/herself, his/her comrades, and his/her immediate surroundings and gains. With time, the longer that one is in a unit, the more attached one becomes to it. As this attachment grows, the more allegiance and output one has for the unit and comrades.

Combat leaders must understand this dynamic as well as the operational and strategic requirements. Some leaders fail to build the bonds of "mutual respect, trust, confidence and understanding" that are fundamental to a disciplined and cohesive fighting unit. For instance, a wise combat leader ensures that personnel, particularly combat teams and larger groups, change as little as possible,

so that comrades in peacetime manoeuvres or exercises shall be comrades in combat. Trust, confidence and knowledge of one's colleagues increases cohesion and enhance combat effectiveness.

TRAINING

Good training and stable, cohesive units will provide the combat leader the best opportunity to be a courageous leader. Nonetheless, to understand and motivate people, as well as to develop a cohesive, disciplined, well-trained unit, you must understand human nature. In order to prepare individuals for combat it is essential to train as closely as possible to the conditions they will encounter on operations. Therefore, you should always train for the realities of combat. For instance, deploy your personnel and equipment into unknown, high intensity challenging environments (e.g. jungle, desert, mountains, maritime) and at night. Then, do it again, and again and again. Never stop training. Training builds skills and knowledge, which in turn feeds confidence, trust and operational prowess.

CLOSING REMARKS

We must strive to create cohesive, well-trained units in order to give our combat leaders the best advantage in managing their fear and leading their personnel in the cauldron of combat. Ultimately, some will fail even then, and we must be prepared and willing to replace those who demonstrate shortcomings and in their stead create opportunities for emergent courageous leaders.

Finally, if combat operations become a necessity, then formed units or sub-units must be sent, not individuals cobbled together to form ad hoc groups or organizations. Furthermore, combat leaders must be replaced from within a unit or organization through the process of promotions and/or battlefield replacements. When the unit becomes incapable it should be withdrawn and replaced by a like unit. Again, individual replacements to form ad hoc groups are a

recipe for failure. Only when reconstituted and retrained should a unit return to combat. In the end, only the deployment of formed cohesive units will provide combat leaders and their subordinates the ability to effectively lead, persevere and absolutely triumph in combat.

CHAPTER 13

DYNAMIC SMALL TEAM LEADERSHIP

DR. BERND HORN

The concept of leadership can be quite idiosyncratic. Although leadership theories and doctrinal definitions abound, its application and practice is very subjective. Almost everyone has their own interpretation and understanding of what constitutes good leadership, as well as the most effective manner in which to express it. These are some of the reasons why the study of leadership is so varied and complex.

Not surprisingly, these challenges extend to small team leadership. In particular, small team leadership in crisis and/or combat situation calls for unique leadership behaviours. Yet, even in this context, the single most important requirement for effective leadership is not self-evident nor universally agreed upon. An informal unscientific survey of experienced military individuals, supported by an in-depth literature review, demonstrates that there is a range of perceived "single most important" leadership behaviours that are required to lead effectively during small team situations, which often involve combat and/or high levels of stress.

Notably, when using the term "leadership," for the purpose of this chapter, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) definition will be used. Specifically, CAF effective leadership is defined as "directing, motivating and enabling others to accomplish the mission professionally and ethically, while developing or improving capabilities that contribute to mission success."[1] Key to the doctrinal definition is the idea that leadership is not a function of appointment, position power or authority. Rather it is a process built on influence and trust.

This definition is relevant to small team leadership in dynamic situations during operations. Specifically, small team leadership in these circumstances is all about leading people using direct influence or, in other words, direct leadership. Direct influence refers to "face-to-face influence on others which has an immediate effect on their ability, motivation, behaviour, performance, or attitudes, or related psychological states, or which progressively modifies the slow-growth attributes of individuals and groups."[2] Direct influence allows the leader, through personal presence and example, to have a direct impact on follower behaviour and performance on a regular, if not continuous, basis.

Notably, small team leadership characteristics include both enablers as well as impediments to effective leadership. Specifically, these characteristics include:

1. Direct Leadership – as mentioned earlier, it is about face-to-face interaction, where verbal and non-verbal communications are direct and potentially easily understood. The leader can motivate and influence their team by setting the example, correct aberrant or reward desired behaviour on the spot, explain/clarify direction or intent, as well as provide instantaneous feedback.

2. Unity of Thought/Shared Vision – small teams allow for a melding of minds, spirit and action. As US General Stanley McCrystal identified, "that real magic resided in small teams…we knew that in small teams communication flowed effortlessly and we seemed to think and act as one. When part of such a team, we could analyze a situation, decide, and act as though it was a single, uninterrupted motion, like catching and throwing a baseball."[3]

3. Cohesion – based on shared experience and hardship and the bonding that grows from those experiences, whether training, operations or combat, small teams generally

become extremely close. Cohesion has been shown to improve group functioning and performance by buffering the effects of high-stress situations.[4] One researcher noted, "the most significant person for the combat soldier are the men who fight by his side and share with him the ordeal of trying to survive."[5]

4. Collaboration and Teamwork – the small size, unity of purpose, as well as cohesive personal relationships that are normally established and nourished create an environment of cooperation and mutual support. In essence, the success of the team is based on the commitment and performance of all members. Each individual succeeds or fails within the scope of the team.

5. Participative Decision-Making – formal bonds of authority and position power normally erode in small teams, making way to more informal participative decision-making processes. "Bottom-up" planning, where those responsible for executing a plan/conducting a mission, actually develop the scheme of manoeuvre to be undertaken is the norm. Within small groups the expectation that everyone has a say normally prevails. This process follows the logic that more minds attacking a problem are better than less. Moreover, research has shown that "high quality leader-member exchanges lead to less turnover, more positive evaluations, greater organizational commitment, greater participation, better job attitudes and more support given to the leader."[6]

6. Innovation and Dynamic Problem-Solving – the close relationships, awareness of personality quirks and lack of concern of being judged within small teams lowers inhibitions and increases creativity, thereby, creating an environment where a myriad of possible solutions, including the outlandish/inconceivable, may be considered.

This cooperation is not always the case in larger, more rigid forums.

7. Mission/Task Focused – small teams, directly due to their size, normally have a very limited mission/task set. As such, members of the team, particularly by reason of the characteristics already mentioned, focus sharply on their assigned task. Additionally, failure becomes directly associated with the team and its members. There is no larger organization within which to hide the failure to achieve an assigned task. Therefore, the honour and reputation of the team and its members are at stake.

8. Responsible and Accountable – once again, for the reasons noted above, small teams are immensely responsible and accountable to higher authorities and themselves. Team actions are directly attributable to the team and its members. They cannot hide in the anonymity of a larger unit/formation. For this reason, there is a positive interdependence between team members. Their ability to perform impacts all other members. Therefore, technical competence, physical fitness, effective cognition are all key factors for team members to achieve, maintain and enhance. As one soldier in Iraq revealed, "I know as far as myself, I take my squad mates' lives more importantly than my own."[7]

9. Trust Based – due to the close personal relationships, unity of purpose, shared values and beliefs, as well as the cohesive nature of small teams, it is no surprise that effective small teams are trust based. In essence, trust is a prerequisite since it enhances morale, loyalty and cohesion and tends to foster a positive team environment. Research has shown that "collective efficacy gained through loyalty works harder on behalf of the group, sets more challenging goals, and persists in the face of difficulties and obstacles."[8] Moreover, trust promotes open communications and decreases adversarial behaviours.

Furthermore, the necessity to achieve mission success correlates to members trusting each other to perform and deliver on "game day."

10. Communication Based – as repeatedly mentioned, the dynamics of small teams and their cooperative, interactive nature requires frequent, open and transparent communications. Due to the positive interdependence of its members and the mutual support and reliance for mission completion small teams must ensure all members have full situational awareness at all times, therefore, calling for constant communication.

Although the aforementioned characteristics demonstrate the potential strength of small teams, small team leadership is not without its fair share of challenges. In fact, due to these same characteristics, small team leadership can often be mired in conflict and confrontations. These difficulties may be due to the following tribulations:

1. Personalities/Egos/Interpersonal Relationships – small teams, particularly those dealing with elite organizations are filled with strong-willed, "Type A" personalities who can constantly vie for "leader of the pack" status. Due to close bonds and cohesion, organizational culture and norms of practice, authority and position power are often marginalized within the group allowing for challenges to those in designated leadership positions. Moreover, if there are personalities within the small team that clash, then this combination can become a toxic mix difficult to mend since a small team by its very nature leaves little scope for moving people around or avoiding one another. As such, if a toxic personality or personalities exist, they must be removed.

2. Communication – although noted earlier as a strength, communication can also be a weakness. Based on unity

of purpose, small size, shared values and beliefs, and cohesiveness, which makes communications theoretically open, transparent and fluid, these same traits can also create issues. Often, due to the "oneness" of spirit and mind, clarity of thought and word are not always carefully or fully articulated creating the potential for confusion, misinterpretation or outright failure of action/follow-up. In addition, the close relationships, daily contact, high intensity of activities, etc. can create tensions due to real or perceived slights in verbal and non-verbal communications, particularly when egos are in play. As such, team members must always remember that the message that is delivered by the sender is not always the message that is received by the recipient. This disparity is both a function of the clarity of the message, as well as the state of mind/focus/interpretation of the receiver. Care to ensure clarity must always be sought in communicating. In addition, care must be taken, particularly during periods of fatigue or when nerves are strained, not to lash out at others.

3. Decision-Making/Power Dynamics – small team synergy in brain-storming and planning is invaluable, however, the informal or "loose" power structure within small teams can lead to power struggles as egos/personalities clash to get their voice heard and their perspective/ideas implemented. Consequently, strong leadership and professionalism are required. One American SOF officer explained, "There is no confusion that bottom-up planning also means bottom-up leadership. Leadership can't be abdicated. But the practice of bringing in these quick minds on decisions is one of the greatest virtues of Delta."[9] In essence, although it is beneficial to be inclusive in decision-making and execution, the appointed team leader must always ensure to clearly identify when the discussion is over and when it is time to fall in behind the plan as directed by the team leader.

4. Group Think – individuals who have self-selected to volunteer to join a particular organization have: passed through the same rigorous tests of selection and training; shared hardship and experience; developed tight bonds of cohesiveness; and share the same strong organizational culture, often see the world and solution sets to given problems in a similar way. Moreover, camaraderie and the desire to be seen "on-board" and supportive often kills objective dissent or alternate views. As such, the group can easily suffer from collegiality and a lack of critical thinking with the result being a poorly thought out plan or decision. Professor Wilfred Trotter observed, "He [Mankind] is more sensitive to the voice of the herd than to any other influence."[10] In addition, small teams must always ensure the "devil's advocate" role is played by a member(s) of the group. Furthermore, bringing in knowledgeable outsiders to act as an objective voice is also recommendable.[11]

5. Organizational Culture – this represents the collective repertoire of thought, perception and behaviour that has enabled a group to successfully adapt to, and react to, the internal and external environment. The organizational culture is rooted in basic underlying assumptions that have evolved over time and have been accepted as the only method to resolve issues. Importantly, strong organizational cultures frequently develop a sense of invulnerability and over time can develop an intractable unwillingness to change. The culture in turn drives attitudes and behaviours (as well as fuelling group think). Quite simply, the existing culture within an organization socializes those within the group, particularly newcomers, and shapes their attitudes and behaviours to correspond to the existing framework in place. In sum, it creates common expectations of what is and is not acceptable behaviour. If the culture is dysfunctional, then it in turn

creates problems. "Conduct," one SOF practitioner observed, "is largely governed by the culture of that unit. This extends to right and wrong conduct on the part of an individual warrior and what is tolerated by those who may themselves act properly."[12] Therefore, it is critical to continually assess your culture and ensure that aberrant behaviour is immediately and ruthlessly addressed and remedied.

6. The Brotherhood – this is an extension of the group think and organizational culture challenges. The existence of a "brotherhood" or the "cult of the elite" can create dramatic leadership challenges within a small team. As part of a close brotherhood there is always a resistance to self-examine group or member behaviour or actions, as well as a reluctance to criticize others. As one researcher observed, "The more the group is centred on itself, thus increasing its cohesion, the less it is interested in it environment. An already existing behavioural pattern is thereby reinforced....What matters to the group is only what affects it directly. The desire to distinguish the group from other groups is not restricted to insignia and ritualism, but leads, in addition, to a spiteful attitude towards others."[13] This attitude and behaviour can become self-destructive as it erodes the value base of the organization and creates a dysfunctional culture. Moreover, it attracts the enmity of others to the detriment of the long-term health of the organization. As one experienced SOF practitioner explained, "physical courage is the easy part because of training and the people we select. Making guys be accountable; being accountable yourself – that can be a hard task." Once again, strong leadership, which is intolerant to non-acceptable behaviour and promotes critical self-reflection is fundamental to ensuring the "brotherhood" promotes cohesion and group identity but does not translate into an untouchable cult of the elite.

Leading small teams clearly has substantial advantages based on their characteristics, however, they also have potential challenges as a function of their close-knit make-up. Importantly, a significant trial in leading small teams, or any size team for that matter, is leading in a dynamic situation such as combat.[14] In such situations, experts have concluded that even "warriors might experience impairments to vision, judgment and hearing, or they might experience reduced motor skills"[15] As a result, leaders whose own judgment, as well as those of their followers, might be impaired, face a difficult task.

So what then is the most important leadership behaviour to effectively lead others through the crucible of combat? Despite the stakes involved, or perhaps because of them, the most important leadership behaviour is not easily identified and singled-out. Leaders all have different perspectives on what is crucial to succeed in leading their followers in dynamic situations.

In an informal survey of 60 experienced military personnel of leadership rank there were a number of different responses to the question of "what is the single most important factor for leadership in combat or a crisis situation?" Individuals often cited a number of different key leadership behaviours or factors, however, during the interviews, they were "forced" to identify a "single" most important factor.[16] The results form the basis of the discussion to follow.

In priority, the following list represents the five top responses:

- Presence/Setting the example (45%);
- Decisiveness (23%);
- Staying calm (18%);
- Communication (7%); and
- Trust (7%).

Clearly all of the factors above are mutually supporting and required for leading in a dynamic situation. It is interesting to note

how the importance of these factors breaks-down when a "single most" important factor is asked to be culled from the list, however.

PRESENCE/SETTING THE EXAMPLE

The idea of "presence" of the leader at the forefront of chaos setting the example of duty and courage, as well as spurring followers to action was the prevalent leadership behaviour identified as being the single most important factor required of effective leadership in combat. This ranking is not surprising.

Indeed, the importance of presence to fighting efficiency has long been known. During World War II (WWII) one combat leader bemoaned, "not one man in twenty-five voluntarily used his weapon" even though they were under attack.[17] The renowned American historian, S.L.A. Marshall, based on his WWII battlefield studies, reported that on average only 15-20 per cent of soldiers fired their weapons during an engagement.[18] Similarly, a Canadian military instructor complained in 1951 during the Korean War that "the problem is not to stop fire, but to start it."[19] Once again, presence of the leader was the key. Marshall noted "if there was a leader present ordering soldiers to fire, then almost everyone would do so."[20]

Importantly, evidence clearly demonstrates that leaderless groups normally become inactive.[21] As such, combat veterans during WWII overwhelming confirmed to interviewers that leadership from in front was very important.[22] In fact, the German 2nd Panzer Division After-Action Report from Normandy revealed, "The best results have been obtained by platoon and section commanders leaping forward and uttering a good old-fashioned yell."[23]

This connection is also not surprising. "A brave captain," affirmed Sir Philip Sidney, "is as a root, out of which, as branches, the courage of his soldiers doth spring."[24] Major Tony Balasevicius believed presence allowed for the ability to "inspire others, which was an important factor in giving them hope and assurance." General

Stanley McCrystal asserted that "when things look their worst, followers look to the leader for reassurance that they can and will succeed."[25] Private Alexandre Huton confessed, "I was getting jittery but the sergeant was steady as a rock. What a soldier! He tried everything himself first before he would allow the rest to follow."[26] Commandos at Dieppe spoke highly and with great respect of their regimental sergeant major, who was described as "quiet but decisive manner – firm but fair. Men knew where they stood with him and he gained the respect of all ranks by providing a good example of guts and determination."[27] Historian John Keegan concluded, "Those who impose risk must be seen to share it."[28]

Chief Warrant Officer (CWO) Stu Hartnell provides a real-life example of this association. He insisted that "voice, eye-contact, your presence sets the tone for everything." Hartnell recounted, "a RPG [rocket propelled grenade] HEAT [High Explosive Anti-Tank] round cut through under my feet and ignited a box of 25 mm ammunition under my seat. I fought on leading my crew through the fight." A 25mm round had cooked off and hit him under his protective armour. He fought and led his troops for another five hours until he was able to get medical attention. He had a collapsed lung, two broken ribs and a large hematoma. He knew his presence was critical to ensuring his subordinates would pull through the fight and for that reason he refused evacuation.

Further deduction shows that most of those interviewed believed presence could be captured in six fundamental principles:

- Be Seen
- Be Heard
- Share the Risk
- Lead from the Front
- Have Situational Awareness
- Set the Example

An important component of presence that deserves additional attention due to the emphasis that interviewees placed on it is the principle of setting the example. The leader that sets an example by being calm, cool and collected impels similar behaviour in others. Major Ralph Shelton, an experienced Special Forces (SF) officer who fought in Korea and had operational deployments to Laos, the Dominican Republic and Bolivia explained, "The leader sets the tone. If he was confident, his men would follow confidently."[29] Private Bill Gates of the Royal Marines recalled, "I rushed on behind one of our Sergeant, a great big bloke who seemed afraid of nothing, and I felt so long as I stayed behind him I'd be OK."[30] Company Sergeant-Major (CSM) John Kemp provides another example. An official report recorded, "CSM Kemp who had assisted in organizing the men for the attack, with complete disregard for his own safety, led his men against the farm house in spite of the heavy fire. By his personal example, he enabled the small force to overrun the enemy defences and capture the position."[31] Yet another account captured:

> The commander strolled across the battlefield issuing orders in an icily calm voice. By setting such a courageous example [Lieutenant-Colonel A.A. "Bert"] Kennedy stiffened the determination of his regiment. The riflemen advanced again into the face of the enemy fire.[32]

Sergeant Andy Anderson who fought with the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion throughout all its campaigns in WWII observed, "you have no idea what confidence is carried to the troops when you have great leadership."[33] Similarly, Australian Victoria Cross winner Lieutenant Charles Upham's "men found themselves watching the boss, wondering at his apparent indifference to fear, prepared to rush in and follow so long as he led."[34]

With regards to setting the example, most of those interviewed believed that a powerful example could be achieved through demonstrating:

- Professionalism
- Competence
- Adaptability
- Uncompromising Standards
- Mission Focus
- Loyalty

In summary, presence and setting the example are critical to leading in dynamic situations. The ability to inspire, motivate and compel through personal example the desired, if not required, behaviour in combat can best be achieved through direct influence and presence. These benefits are heightened when leadership is delivered in a cool, confident and calm manner.

DECISIVENESS

When participants were forced to prioritize the single most important leadership behaviour in a dynamic situation, the second greatest response was the quality of decisiveness. Simply put, in a crisis or combat situation many felt that the leader must be able to make a quick decision on the action to be taken and to see it through. Conversely, hesitation, lengthy reflection and second-guessing were seen as detrimental to instilling confidence and trust in followers. Whether the decision was right or wrong, decisiveness in making the decision was seen as key to inspiring action and achieving success.

The importance placed on the role of decisiveness was overwhelming. Chief Warrant Officer, now Major, Dan Brissette asserted, "Never second guess your decision. There is no time. Rely on your training, personal experience and instincts. When you second guess your decisions you create doubt in everyone's mind." Similarly, an experienced SOF sergeant identified, "Take action – do something. When chaos hits everyone is looking for that direction." Major David Suffoletta agreed. He affirmed, "Decisiveness is the most important. Even if it's not the 100 per cent solution,

an aggressive decision sooner is better than a perfect decision too late." Another SOF sergeant echoed his thoughts. "Indecision is the worst thing," he confirmed, "it's better to have a decision, even if it's not the best one rather than something after the fact." Yet another SOF sergeant declared, "Make a decision. If it turns out to be wrong – fine – but make a decision and stick with it. People will follow." General Stanley McCrystal agreed. He believed that "soldiers want leaders who are sure of their ability to lead the team to success."[35]

Experienced soldiers were not the only ones who recognized the importance of decisiveness in good leaders during stressful, life-threatening situations. The famous novelist Bernard Cromwell described of one of his heroes, "To them he was certain, decisive and confident, and so they trusted him."[36] Moreover, Professor Bernard Bass, from the Centre for Leadership Studies at the State University of New York, affirmed, "in emergencies, when danger threatens, subordinates want to be told what to do, and in a hurry." He added, "leaders who fail to make decisions quickly would be judged as inadequate."[37] Even US President Theodore Roosevelt acclaimed, "In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing."[38] British Special Air Service (SAS) veteran Alan Bell counselled:

> Anticipate every situation which can arise in battle and think of your reaction to it well in advance. The split second which you gain will be decisive. As soon as trouble strikes, shout out an order. It matters little what it is as long as you let your men know you are in command. "Take cover," for instance – obvious enough and something which they will do in any event, but the fact that you have reacted immediately to the situation and given an order is a relief to your men.

Moreover, most believed decisiveness was shown by the leader being able to:

- Quickly assess the situation (time permitting)
- Obtain input from team members (time permitting)
- Make a decision and stick to it (unless there are overwhelming compelling reasons to seek a new plan)
- Trust instincts/experience/judgment

STAYING CALM

Once again for many staying calm was seen as part of presence, setting the example and being decisive. However, when forced to identify a single most important factor, then staying calm ranked third on the list. Overwhelming, however, most, if not all respondents, noted that the best small team leaders in combat were always those that remained calm in dynamic situations. In essence, their calmness percolated throughout the team.

This association is also supported in the literature on the subject. Based on a survey of 300 American volunteers who fought in the Spanish Civil War, Professor Dollard reported, "The overwhelming majority of men [94 per cent of those surveyed] felt that they fought better after observing other men behaving calmly in a dangerous situation."[39] Field Marshal Slim's biographer asserted, "[General Slim's] remarkable calmness in crisis, despite his own inner fears and anxieties, contributed significantly to a lessening of the storm of panic which erupted at every new and unexpected Japanese move."[40]

More recent real life examples confirm the infectious nature of calmness. Dan Brissette explained, "The Commander who is calm will calm the entire group; it trickles, makes its way down." He described, "During an ambush, the ground force commander gave direction as if it was a normal exercise. He didn't raise his voice and he wasn't aggressive. That was powerful." In the same vein,

an American SOF operator recalled an example of calm leadership during the cataclysmic crash at Desert One in the desert outside Tehran. He and members of his squadron were caught in the inferno that ensued after a helicopter crashed into their C-130 Hercules aircraft, which also contained a full fuel bladder in its fuselage. He described:

> the squadron sergeant major quenched the initial confusion with a short command: "Fall in, boys and hit the door like a jump." That's what everyone did and that's what saved us. The logjam at the door cleared immediately and the line moved with fire-hose urgency…[his] calmness and presence of mind saved many of us.[41]

Similarly, Chief Warrant Officer Joe MacInnis acknowledged, "A leader must provide concise direction in a calm manner in complete contradiction to what is going around them." He elaborated, "When things start going to shit, take a step back and see it, don't step in it." A SOF signals sergeant explained, "The ability to remain calm in the face of chaos and fear is the most important trait, as panic will spread through your ranks rapidly if your leaders are not able to keep composure in those types of situations." Colonel Clyde Russell said simply, "Maintain a calm, professional demeanour no matter what happens. The troops cue on you."

The requirement for calmness is clear, yet the ability to deliver such calm, confident leadership can be trying. It becomes a function of being technically competent, and trusting in your own abilities as well as those of your followers. In addition, it entails careful planning and preparation, running through all potential scenarios and possible reactions to them. In essence, planning for the worst case so anything better becomes "gravy." As Brigadier-General Gavin Duncan, Commander Australian Special Forces identified, inspirational leaders were those who "were never flustered or frustrated; who remained calm under pressure and were able to make unexcited decisions."

COMMUNICATION

The necessity to communicate was tied with trust as the final key behaviour that was raised as being crucial to effective leadership in combat. Communication is always essential in leadership. Most failures or breakdowns, whether in relationships, planning, or operations has a nexus with a failure in communication. It is a behaviour that is so simple, yet so difficult to perfect. Often, individuals feel that they are too busy to explain; assume others already know; or pass on cryptic/inarticulate messages that lack clarity or sufficient detail. Additionally, many leaders fail to remember that the message sent is not always the message that is received. Misunderstanding, miscommunication, flawed interpretation based on vague or ambiguous wording, particularly if individuals are tired, scared, hungry, cold, wet, distracted, etc., will create obstacles to smooth, effective communication.

In addition, some leaders feel that as long as they know the details, then that is enough and it does not need to be shared. Others treat information as power and feel it should only be measured out in small dollops to conserve as much power as possible.

However, the passage of information is absolutely critical. Once experienced leader explained, "Information is like gold in combat; clear, concise reporting in a calm, steady voice is the irreducible bottom line."[42] A veteran British officer observed, "If a soldier knows what is happening and what is expected of him he is far less frightened than the soldier who is just walking towards unknown dangers."[43] President Roosevelt insisted that "fear can be checked, whipped and driven from the field when men are kept informed."[44] Quite simply, individuals want to know what is going on, especially in clutch situations. Moreover, in today's information saturated society there is an individual, if not societal, expectation that information will be instantaneously available.

Whether expected or not, a steady, reliable flow of accurate timely communications just makes sense for leadership in a dynamic situation. Professor Dollard noted that 89 per cent of those surveyed emphasized the importance of getting frequent instructions from leaders when in a tight spot.[45] Chief Warrant Officer Hartnell affirmed, "Under effective fire, everything cooking off; the vehicle on fire – the troops need firm direction. I barked out orders as I would in training and they did exactly as they were told." Lieutenant-Colonel Chris Allen described, "Even during the fight walking around talking to the guys, it exports confidence. They will calm down and remember their drills even when things are going to hell in a handbasket." A war correspondent caught up in a panicked retreat from the Golan Heights during the 1973 war demonstrated this connection: "In ourselves we did not know what to do. Had there been someone in authority to say, 'stand here. Do this and that' – then half of our fear would have vanished. I badly wanted to receive orders. And so, I think, did the others." [46]

Quite simply, communication is key at all times but it is absolutely vital in combat. First, it provides guidance and direction to followers. Moreover, it allows the team to know they are not alone and comrades are nearby. Third, communication helps keep them grounded – they know the leader is still in charge, they understand what is being done, as well as the plan moving forward. All of this knowledge helps dissipate fear and instils confidence and trust.

TRUST

Trust is central for effective small team leadership in combat. The leader, as well as all members of the team, must feel confident that the other members of the group will always be there for them. In addition, they have the expectation that they will be trusted to do their job, make the necessary decisions and not feel the burden of unnecessary supervision. In essence, trust refers to positive expectations about the behaviour of others. Trust within a group

in turn will increase group cohesion and morale, as well as team performance. As one Delta Force veteran repeatedly reiterated, "trust the guy on the ground."[47]

The issue of trust is a complicated one. The old adage, "trust me," seldom works unless there is already a degree of trust present due to a previous relationship, (and, if that is the case, then the words are generally redundant). Admiral William H. McRaven, a former Commander of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) consistently reminded everyone that "you can't surge trust." In essence, his message was that trust had to be built over time, generally through shared experience and hardship.

To build trust leaders must:

- Demonstrate personal technical competence and professionalism;
- Exercise sound judgment (tactical and otherwise);
- Show high levels of integrity;
- Empower others – delegate responsibility; avoid micro-management; allow participation in planning and decision-making;
- Respect others and display consideration;
- Maintain open, transparent and timely communications – keep everyone informed at all times;
- Live by setting the example/sharing risk – never ask others to do what you are not prepared to do yourself; and
- Display genuine interest/concern for the welfare of those you lead.

SUMMARY

Small team leadership is imbued with a number of characteristics that empower small teams with the ability to perform efficiently

and effectively. Their small size, cohesion and unity of purpose, as well as the ease of communication and shared vision allow small teams to remain agile and adaptive. However, strong leadership is required to ensure that these same qualities are not allowed to metamorphose into dysfunctional characterized by an aberrant organizational culture, group think, or personality clashes for example.

Leadership in small teams is furthered challenged during dynamic situations such as crisis and combat for example. In these instances, experienced military practitioners have identified that it is critical to ensure a presence at point of risk, as well as to set an irreproachable personal example. In addition, they insisted that decisiveness of intent, direction and execution were fundamental to success, as was the requirement to remain calm and composed. Equally important, were good communication and trust. Together, these five leadership behaviours were seen as vital for effective leadership in a dynamic situation. In many ways, Lieutenant-General Mike Day encapsulated the leadership requirement in dynamic situations when he opined, "it is a combination of energy, composure and perspective." In the end, remain calm, stay positive and always be solution oriented.

NOTES

1 Canada, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Doctrine* (Kingston: CDA, 2005), 5.

2 Canada, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* (Kingston: CDA, 2005), 6. Indirect influence refers to "influence on other mediated by purposeful alterations in the task, group, system, institutional, or environmental conditions that affect behaviour and performance." Ibid. This type of influence normally refers to senior or

executive leaders who command formation or institutions and have little daily contact with the rank and file of their organizations. They provide institutional leadership that is focused on visioning, long-term strategies and creating the correct culture.

3 General Stanley McCrystal, *My Share of the Task* (New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2013), xii.

4 Alistair McIntyre, "Cohesion," in Colonel Bernd Horn and Dr. Robert Walker, *The Handbook of Military Leadership* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2008), 59.

5 W.D. Henderson, *Cohesion: The Human Element in Combat* (Washington DC, National Defence University, 1985), 5. The renowned historian S.L.A. Marshal in his seminal battlefield studies observed, "I hold it to be one of the simplest truths of war that the thing which enables an infantry soldier to keep going with his weapons is the near presence or presumed presence of a comrade." S.L.A. Marshal, *Men Against Fire* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1947), 42.

6 Peter Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007), 129.

7 Leonard Wong, Thomas A. Kolditz, Raymond A. Millen, Terrence M. Potter, "Why They Fight: Combat Motivation in the Iraq War," Unpublished paper, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, May 2003), 3.

8 Patrick Sweeney, Mike Matthews, and Pual Lester, *Leadership in Dangerous Situations: A Handbook for the Armed Forces, Emergency Services and First Responders* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2011), 5-6.

9 Dalton Fury, *Kill Bin Laden* (New York: St. Martin`s Griffen, 2008), 43.

10 Richard Holmes, *Acts of War. The Behaviour of Men in Battle* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 25.

11 One Delta commander shared, "My job as a subordinate commander was not to have all the answers but rather to guide the process,

keep it moving…and prevent groupthink from taking over." Dalton Fury, *Kill Bin Laden* (New York: St. Martin`s Griffen, 2008), 44.

12 Dick Couch, *A Tactical Ethic. Moral Conduct in the Insurgent Battlespace* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2010), 74.

13 Elmar Dinter, *Hero or Coward* (London: Frank Cass & Coy Ltd., 1985), 70.

14 Interestingly, many would argue leading in garrison, office, day-to-day settings, specifically in a resource constrained environment is much more difficult than leading in a dynamic situation. Normally during a crisis or combat everyone is focused; there is unity of purpose – survive and prevail; and people want direction. Conversely, in a benign setting people often resent direction and prefer autonomy and to be left alone.

15 Lieutenant-Colonel Dave Grossman with Loren W. Christensen, *On Combat* (War Science Publications, 2008), xvii.

16 Specifically, 60 interviews were conducted by the author between February 2013 and May 2016. During each interview, respondents were asked to identify the single most important leadership factor that they considered vital to effective leadership in combat. Although individuals may have shared more than one "critical" leadership factor, they were asked to choose the one that they felt was the most important. The five top factors were then distilled with the percentage of the number of participants who identified them noted. Interestingly, these five factors were the only factors listed (i.e. the sum of their totals equals 100 per cent.) Please note, data pertaining to these interviews is not further footnoted and responses from this pool are simply described in the text.

17 Marshall, 72.

18 Ibid., 54.

19 Captain W.R. Chamberlain, "Training the Functional Rifleman," *Canadian Army Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 9 (February 1951): 29.

20 Marshall, 54; and Grossman, 78.

21 Dinter, 92.

22 Anthony Kellett, *Combat Motivation - Operational Research and Analysis Establishment (ORAE) Report No. R77* (Ottawa: DND, 1980), 299.

23 Holmes, 166.

24 Grossman, 85.

25 McChrystal, 393.

26 L.S.B. Shapiro, "I Dropped Alone," *MacLean's* (1 August 1944): 5-6.

27 Will Fowler, *The Commandos at Dieppe: Rehearsal for D-Day* (London: Harper Collins, 2002), 31.

28 Cited in Colonel B.P. McCoy, *The Passion of Command. The Moral Imperative of Leadership* (Quantico: The Marine Corps Association, 2006), 68.

29 Mitch Weiss and Kevin Maurer, *Hunting Che* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 2013), 190.

30 Edmund Blandford, *Two Sides of the Beach. The Invasion and Defense of Europe in 1944* (Edison, NJ: Castle Books, 2001), 222.

31 Jean E. Portugal, *We Were There. The Army. A Record for Canada, Vol 2 of 7* (Toronto: The Royal Canadian Military Institute, 1998), 968.

32 Daniel G. Dancocks, *The D-Day Dodgers* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 182.

33 Letter, Sergeant Andy Anderson to Bernd Horn, 10 January 2003.

34 Kenneth Sanford, *Mark of the Lion* (London: Penguin, 2003), 76.

35 McChrystal, 393.

36 Bernard Cromwell, *Sharpe's Trafalgar* (London: Harper Collins, 2000), 224.

37 Bernard Bass, *Transformational Leadership – Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact* (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1998), 35-36.

38 <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/t/theodorero403358.html>, accessed 16 June 2016.

39 See John Dollard, *Fear in Battle* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1944), 28 and S.J. Rachman, *Fear and Courage* (San Francisco: W.H.Freeman and Company, 1978), 76.

40 Robert Lyman, *Slim, Master of War* (London: Constable, 2004), 108.

41 Eric L. Haney, *Inside Delta Force. The Story of America's Elite Counterterrorist Unit* (New York: A Dell Book, 2002), 247.

42 McCoy, 33.

43 Lieutenant-Colonel Colin Mitchell, *Having Been a Soldier* (London: Mayflower Books), 41.

44 Cited in Canada, *CDS Guidance to Commanding Officers* (Ottawa: DND, 1999), 230.

45 Dollard. 44.

46 Holmes, 229.

47 Pete Blaber, *The Mission, The Men and Me: Lessons from a Former Delta Force Commander* (New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2008), 106, 129 and 295.

CHAPTER 14

"NO TURF MINDSET": LEADERSHIP IN THE NATIONAL SECURITY JOINT OPERATING CENTRE

SUPERINTENDENT STEVE NORDSTRUM

The current and emerging national security environment has demonstrated that government agencies can no longer work in isolation. Quite simply, similar to our opponents who are networked and constantly adapting to become more effective, our security, intelligence and defence institutions must strive to out-network and out-innovate our enemies. This chapter proposes an improvement to countering terrorism in Canada by augmenting information available to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in order to advance terrorism investigations. Despite the existence of the broader Government of Canada security-intelligence apparatus, as well as how it meshes with those of our allies, the reality is that there are too few personnel available to Canada and its allies to counter the myriad of threats posed by terrorists. This deficiency necessitates doing whatever can be done with the resources currently available. With the above caveats out of the way, this chapter focuses on how to demonstrate the necessary leadership to transform the National Security Joint Operations Centre (NS JOC), a whole-of-government entity with a proven track record of success dealing with High Risk Travelers (HRTs), into a Counter Terrorism (CT) JOC that will identify actionable information to counter all new terrorist matters, not just HRTs.

WHY CHANGE WHAT WE ARE DOING?

Terrorism is becoming an existential threat to many countries, particularly in Europe. The current blood-letting arising from the

duel for supremacy between the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (hereinafter referred to as Daesh) and al-Qaeda, including those groups' regional affiliates, really drives home the point that all of us who are not "with" them are considered infidels and apostates and are therefore legitimate targets – something that should drive us all closer together. Without question, the intentions of the enemy are clearly stated. As such, Canada should clearly articulate what its responses will be to these threats.

What is it about the threat, or acts, of terrorism that causes it to be existential and, therefore, distinguishes it from normal crime? If it is that the fear of terrorism erodes the confidence of the citizenry that its government can maintain safety, thereby undermining the social contract between citizens and their government and weakening a democracy, then that creates the "existential" aspect. As a result, this existential aspect distinguishes terrorism from "normal" crime. As such, a government must utilize all of its tools to counter the threat of terrorism.

The requirement for a broader group to counter the threat posed by HRTs arose with the well-publicized acts of Daesh, coupled with the well-publicized travels of young Canadians who left the country to become foreign terrorist fighters. These realities led security experts and government decision-makers to a realization that Canada was actually contributing to, rather than degrading, Daesh's capabilities.

Significantly, the importance of the concern with regard to Canadians becoming foreign terrorist fighters overseas are numerous. One need only look at historical events to learn from the past and seize those opportunities. For instance, the Columbine High School shooting, in 1998, was not the first active shooter event but it certainly was recognized as a failure given that unarmed students died while armed police waited outside, pursuant to existing tactics.

As such, failure provides a catalyst for change, as does the evolving methods and participants in conflict. Police changed how they responded to active shooters as a result of Columbine. So too must there be change based on the type of terrorism countries now face. As a rule, the threat posed by a person who has played violent video games but has little training and no exposure to shooting under pressure, is minor compared to the individual who has had training in weapons and small unit tactics, as well combat experience. Persons who are radicalized to the point that they commit a violent attack, but have low training and low tactical skill levels, will be significantly easier to neutralize when confronted by police whose "active shooter" techniques have evolved steadily since Columbine. That equation changes, however, when police must confront those persons possessing both training and combat experience.

Active shooters come into play in the context of HRTs because it is better to keep those individuals who would become radicalized to violence here in Canada, where the chances are higher that the police will neutralize them, rather than permitting them to go overseas and acquire the skills and experience that would make them more difficult to deal with after their return to Canada.

To address the HRT phenomenon, the RCMP created the HRT Case Management Group which then transitioned to become the NS JOC, which included: the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Passport Canada, Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA), Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSEC) and Public Safety.

The work of the NS JOC has led to successful interdictions; however, there have also been some Canadians who have successfully travelled to become foreign terrorist fighters. The method by

which the NS JOC has achieved its mandate can best be described as a cooperative venture, namely partner agencies utilizing their respective databases and mandates to analyze information and determining the best way forward on any given case. However, the threats of domestic and international terrorism have stretched the capacities and capabilities of Canadian agencies, including the RCMP. Therefore, much as the Columbine example demonstrated, there is a requirement to evolve and change, nebulous threats emanating from abroad, and an increasing number of reports demanding investigation, are affecting the ability of the RCMP's enforcement units to advance investigations to prosecution as teams are being diverted to address the new threats.

Against this backdrop, the proven success of the NS JOC, as a cooperative venture, could be harnessed and its scope broadened beyond the narrow scope of HRTs to address all terrorist threats. Variants of the CT JOCs exist around the globe but this would be a made-in-Canada solution to expeditiously and effectively triage incoming information from foreign or domestic sources, conduct all-agency analysis and provide as much information as possible to fuel the investigations of enforcement units. This process would be done with the aim of addressing the threat of terrorism to Canada and its allies.

Adding the Financial Analysis and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) and the Canadian Revenue Agency to the CT JOC would augment the existing analytic base and enhance opportunities to investigate or interdict terrorism threats to Canada. The broader governmental representation, and different perspectives, also reduces the likelihood of common psychological barriers to decision-making such as confirmation bias, tunnel vision or group think. Examples of the work that would be done by the CT JOC include:

1. Upon receipt of terrorist-related information, the CT JOC members would conduct analysis pursuant to their

agency or department's mandate. The results of the analysis would then be the subject of discussion in order to build a package of information for an enforcement unit to work with, or may result in a One Vision discussion to determine the most effective means by which the threat may be addressed, as well as by which agency or department;

2. Receiving all information provided by international agencies and expeditiously determining the restrictions on the use of that information, if at all, to advance an investigation. This is a "front end" process to determine what may be disclosed to avoid expending time, effort and resources.[1] Where the information may not be readily linked to a specific geographical location within Canada, the CT JOC would initiate and advance an investigation until such time as an enforcement unit is identified that may receive a package of investigative material;

3. Receiving information resulting from international law enforcement agencies' online, or cyber, undercover operations in which, again, the location of the Canadian person who has become a target of the operation may not be readily apparent. In these cases, the CT JOC would serve to both coordinate and advance the investigation as proposed in point one above as well as ensure conformity to Canadian norms by engaging the RCMP HQ Covert Operations Branch; and

4. Providing timely support with regards to what Canadian information may be released to assist international partners to advance CT investigations.

Thoughtful leadership of the CT JOC will be an absolute necessity. If led correctly, differences in organizational culture and process will be recognized, but the inherent competitiveness of high performing individuals will be harnessed, critical thought will be stimulated and the overlapping analysis, albeit potentially

duplicative, will create a fail-safe to minimize threats being overlooked or neglected.

The current NS JOC is led by an RCMP Inspector. The working level, however, is a rather flat hierarchical structure that emphasizes collegiality, discussion and shared responsibility to safeguarding Canada and its allies. There is no reason to change this structure for the CT JOC. Since the mid-1990s there has been a recognition that law enforcement needs to work more cooperatively. As a consequence, there has been a major effort in suppressing organizational ego and accepting that partners can share the responsibility. This has become the new normal.

In addition, there is no reason to suspect that the CT JOC will not build upon the experiences of the NS JOC where trust among the various partners was quickly established and led to mitigation of threats to Canada and its allies. Similar results by the CT JOC will build credibility, which will yield political value and influence upon which the Government may capitalize. As it is widely recognized that terrorism is a crime against the state, the state's ability to assure the public that it is doing all that can be done to thwart such crime would be enhanced by promoting the existence, as well as the duties, of the CT JOC rather than keeping it in the shadows. In fact, a potential political capital opportunity could be realized with few additional resources.

A useful comparative blueprint in addressing national security threats can be seen in the United Kingdom (UK) with its Joint Operational Team "Gatekeeper Exchange". This is a tactical level decision-making process to assess information and intelligence in order to determine risk, identify and develop investigative leads and the appropriate lead agency. The UK backs up its tactical process with the Executive Liaison Group "Gatekeeper Meeting", a weekly, scheduled review of all major CT investigations that includes de-confliction and strategic decision-making similar to the CSIS – RCMP "One Vision" of strategic case management.

The United States (US) provides another example. Terrorist attacks in the 1990s led to the creation of the first Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) in New York City. Comprised of New York Police Department (NYPD) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) members, the JTTF sought to couple the intelligence/investigative abilities of FBI members to the local knowledge and investigative abilities of NYPD personnel to counter emergent threats. The attacks of 11 September 2001 (9/11) led to the recognition by the 9/11 Commission that, among other things, more timely sharing and analysis of information and intelligence was required to prevent future attacks.[2] The FBI itself received numerous recommendations to improve its criminal and national security investigative capabilities and, in 2015, the 9/11 Review Commission released its report following an extensive review of the steps taken to implement the 9/11 Commission Report recommendations.[3]

The FBI seized on the 9/11 Commission recommendation that focused on the centralization of command and control of CT operations at headquarters.[4] As cited in the 9/11 Review Commission Report, "This was a significant departure from past practices at the FBI and not without controversy. Special Agent in Charge (SACs) of field offices no longer had sole control of their counterterrorism cases and did not have the authority to adjust resources within their offices away from the national counterterrorism priority. Every terrorism lead was to be investigated with results reported back to Headquarters."[5]

Similar to the FBI changing as a result of the 9/11 Commission of Inquiry, the RCMP adopted the National Security Governance model as a response to the Commission of Inquiry into the Actions of Canadian Officials in Relation to Maher Arar (more commonly referred to as the O'Connor Commission) recommendations that included exercising central control over national security criminal investigations to ensure conformity to the RCMP's mandate.[6] This change led to the creation of the RCMP's National Security

Criminal Investigations section, within which was the National Security Criminal Operations Branch, which worked with investigative units across the country to exercise central control and coordination of investigative efforts.

While these changes within the RCMP did realize gains, both it and the FBI were similarly challenged, as revealed by the 9/11 Review Commission that found that the FBI did not have a national picture of the information collected by its disparate offices in order "to realize the benefits of intelligence analysis…within the Bureau as a whole or with other intelligence agency partners."[7] In addition, the Review Commission found that "The FBI's information technology was inadequate to support intelligence analysis within a case, and the FBI lacked the mechanisms to allow for the information sharing necessary to support intelligence analysis on a broader basis."[8]

Yet, while the FBI continued to improve following the 9/11 Commission findings, the RCMP re-structuring of its Federal Policing program led to the dissolution of National Security Criminal Investigations and the creation of Federal Policing Criminal Operations – a generalist model in which resources were apportioned as required to National Security, Serious and Organized Crime, and Financial Crime investigations. Subsequent to the terrorist acts of October 2014, Federal Policing Criminal Operations created three distinct teams to address the three areas of crime referred to in the preceding sentence. This return to specialism led to an increase in the number of personnel conducting review and oversight pursuant to the National Security Governance model, which approached the numbers of personnel in this area prior to the O'Connor Commission recommendations being adopted.

There are startling parallels between the Canadian experiences post-2014 and the American experiences post-9/11. Specifically, a significant number of non-National Security investigative and analytic personnel were re-assigned from criminal investigative

units to National Security investigations similar to that which happened in the aftermath of 9/11, the result of which ultimately led to creation of the O'Connor Commission. It remains to be seen whether the re-assignment of investigative and analytic personnel following the attacks in 2014 will lead to a similar result.

Finally, the 9/11 Commission also recommended that the creation of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) "be based upon the existing Terrorist Threat Integration Centre (TTIC) and combine strategic intelligence and joint operational planning, staffed by personnel from various agencies."[9] The NCTC is led by a Senate appointee who would be the principal advisor to the Director of National Intelligence on, inter alia, "effective integration of counterterrorism intelligence and operations across agency boundaries, both inside and outside the United States."[10] While not similarly legally mandated, or as high-powered as, the NCTC, the new CT JOC could conduct such integrative and operational duties to the benefit of Canada's national security.

In the end, the transformation from the NS JOC to the CT JOC will lead to the provision of a more fulsome package of information to enforcement teams that can then concentrate on the job of gathering evidence to successfully prosecute those who would jeopardize the safety of Canadians, Canada and our allies by committing terrorist offences. The CT JOC concept can be immediately initiated with existing resources. What is required is strong leadership to make it happen in the contemporary security environment.

NOTES

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CHAPTER 15

PREPARING SOF LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE

MAJOR-GENERAL MIKE ROULEAU

Following success on operations, setting the conditions for effective future leader development and succession must be every commander's next highest priority. As former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, stressed in his guidance to the force, "develop agile and adaptive leaders with the requisite values, strategic vision and critical thinking skills necessary to keep pace with the changing strategic environment."[1]

As such, preparing our junior and subordinate leaders to be ready to take on the mantle of leadership and command in the future in order to be able to not only cope in, but to thrive in, an environment of ambiguity, chaos and complexity is a critical responsibility. And, importantly, it is a no fail task, particularly for special operations forces (SOF) who are expected to be able to deal with "threat next," which has not yet even been defined or identified.

The challenge is daunting. The future is literally now. The young officers and non-commissioned officers (NCO) who joined the community in the new millennium will be our senior leadership cadre in the next decade. Consequently we must work hard to prepare them as of now.

Part of the difficulty of course is that there are no crystal balls that can clearly articulate what the future will look like. As the renowned historian Sir Michael Howard cautioned, "No matter how clearly one thinks, it is impossible to anticipate precisely the

character of future conflict. The key is to not be so far off the mark that it becomes impossible to adjust once that character is revealed."[2] As such, as a community we must do a good job nesting into the wider Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) force employment/force generation capability planning to ensure our personnel are well positioned and knowledgeable about the full spectrum of national military capabilities. Moreover, tough decisions must be made today in order to secure the future (e.g. on succession planning, equipment, capability investment).

In preparing SOF leaders for the future, it is also important to look at leadership through the filter of a weapon system. The leader we need to develop is first a *technician* capable of performing tactical drills, and applying skills and knowledge to problem-sets to achieve solutions that promote institutional and governmental objectives. Importantly, with personal investment and commitment, supported by institutional resources and support, the leader evolves into a *craftsman* capable of higher level planning, command, and application of knowledge and skills to not only lead other personnel but also to lead and steward the military profession and institution. Specifically, the leader evolves from a simple tactician to a strategist capable of mastering the connections between means and ends. Moreover, that "craftsman" also acts as a mentor sharing experience and knowledge, as well as a facilitator capable of opening dialogue and setting the conditions for a conducive environment that fuels open-discourse and a learning organization.

Critical to preparing our leaders is our perspective on leadership itself. We must concentrate as much on the "up and out" ensuring we connect with, and are responsive to, our strategic level of command and our sister services, as we do "down and in" focused on our internal processes and personnel. This leadership approach is the *prima facie* ingredient of our success: it is not just an "operations thing"; rather, our leaders must understand the entire operational/institutional context of everything we do and why we do it.

As such, in preparing our personnel, we must all see beyond the troop/squadron/unit paradigm and understand the larger Canadian Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM)/CAF model of succession planning. Our future leaders must have experience throughout the entire institution and understand the larger joint/interagency/civilian-military relationships, which are core to our business. Demanding this experience also implies an ability to learn through experience, in essence, the ability to make mistakes and to learn from them. It entails utilizing mission command, which provides clear commander's intent, and also the leeway and trust to allow subordinate commanders the creativity to find innovative and unique solutions to problems.

The preparation of our successors is not an easy task. It requires some deep and heavy thinking about our future and a willingness to not just allow the future to happen but instead to shape and create it as much as possible. It requires an operational focus that is centred on an unquenchable desire to win, yet to do so smartly and ethically. As one matures, both in age and experience, the nuances of the "real" world become greater. Moreover, causality and perceived solutions to problems become less "black and white." One grows to realize that the reality is that there are greater organizational inter-dependencies than one had initially thought; political context is all important; the issues become more complex with no clear-cut solutions; and there are always a myriad of second and third order effects to consider.

Such is the reality of command at the SOF enterprise level, a fact germane to CANSOF commanding officers and senior staff officers who exercise their responsibilities just one level removed from the Level One (L1) Commander himself. This is one of the realities of an organization as flat as CANSOFCOM. This "flatness" has several effects. First, it increases the requirement for each subordinate commander, and senior staff must deliver with precision because of their position just below the CANSOFCOM Commander, who is a strategic military L1 leader. No commanding officers, and

only very few colonels, in the CAF find themselves in this position. In addition, each of those senior leaders is assisting to "lead the CANSOF institution" out of proportion to their rank, position and professional military education (PME) that they have received to that point.

This reality is important to understand and convey to our future leaders. After all, as a high reliability organization (HRO) – an organization that operates in a hazardous environment where potential failure is costly but the case of such an occurrence is extremely low – upholding our reputation and "brand" becomes extremely important and is everyone's responsibility. In the end, CANSOF credibility is our vital ground. As such, our future leaders, much as I am today, must be seized with ensuring we have the right leaders, the right culture, the right mission(s), the right risk envelope, the right network, and the right professional development (PD). These components are critical to ensuring our future leadership is prepared.

Again, trying to ensure the lenses and filters are correctly calibrated becomes the challenge. The security operating environment of today and tomorrow is defuse and complicated. Our adversaries have become more integrated, yet more decentralized. They exploit technology, utilize asymmetric, hybrid methodologies and operate in the seams between countries. "Our security environment is changing at a rapid rate that's no longer linear," Admiral (retired) William McRaven observed. He continued, "higher education should play a prominent role as the nation seeks to solve complex national security issues."[3] In short, we must operate in an opaque and multi-dimensional threat environment. This complex operating environment, as McRaven alludes to, necessitates more judgement, experience and cognition (i.e. the ability to acquire knowledge through senses, thought and experience). This must not necessarily all be personal experience. As strategist Basil Liddell Hart noted, "Direct experience is inherently too limited to form an adequate foundation either for theory or application.

At best it produces an atmosphere that is of value in drying and hardening the structure of thought. The great value of indirect experience lies in its greater variety and extent."[4]

As a result, professional development (i.e. training, education, experience and self-development) becomes critically important when discussing the preparation of future leaders. Not surprisingly, CANSOFCOM has taken an aggressive approach to PD, particularly PME, in order to prepare its officers and Senior NCOs to lead at senior levels within the Command and CAF. A fundamental tenet driving this initiative is the idea of continuous individual and organizational learning to ensure that everyone is attuned not only to the requirements of the Command and CAF, but also the larger ecosystem in which the CAF exists, including the whole-of-government structure, Canadian society, as well as the international arena.

To achieve this larger level of awareness, various initiatives are pursued along the entire PD/PME spectrum. Training has always been a strength within both the Command and CAF and is a primary PD line of operation. Training is focused largely on the technical aspects of warfighting such as individual and collective skills, as well as the conduct and planning of operations. Additionally, even within the training realm, the Command fosters and initiates interaction and exercises within an integrated framework (i.e. Joint Services and Other Government Departments) ensuring that CANSOFCOM personnel are exposed to the widest array of players in the national and international defence and national security domains. This exposure is intended to develop relationships and operational understanding, as well as a situational awareness of our defence and security partners. Furthermore, a robust internal "lessons learned" process is in place not only at the unit level but it has also been formalized through a specialized cell at the Command's training centre, which is fused with the larger CAF lessons learned process, as well as that of its interagency and international partners.

Focus on education is a second PD line of operation that is strongly emphasized in the preparation of officers and Senior NCOs for senior appointments. A very wide and comprehensive strategy is used to enable and grow personnel in the most substantial manner. After all, education, "the shaping of the mind,"[5] is an important tool in enhancing our cognition and reasoning ability, which is vital in allowing individuals to respond to unanticipated circumstances. In essence, you train for certainty and educate for uncertainty. In accordance with a Department of National Defence (DND) Defence Science Advisory Board (DSAB) report, "education is seen as being fundamental to the building of the breadth of knowledge, judgment, adaptability, maturity and professionalism which Canada's new roles demand of even very junior officers." Indeed, the report concluded, "complexity of thought and maturity of judgment are the products of strong education, and its application to the interpretation of experience."[6]

Notably, education within the Command is not focused on credentialization. Instead, it emphasizes expanding an individual's ability and understanding of how to think (e.g. critical thinking, creativity, tolerance, agile and adaptive intellectual thought), rather than what to think. From the PME perspective we do not train leaders how to fight, but rather we train them how to think about how to fight.

An essential tool used to educate the Command's senior leadership is the "Context and Strategy Session" concept. Every quarter, at a minimum, as the Commander I hold a day-long retreat for my entire senior leadership (i.e. colonels, command teams and key staff officers) at which we discuss CAF and Command strategic issues, security environment realities, as well as domestic and international issues that may affect the Command, CAF and the nation. In addition, every week I send "Priming and Framing" missives that I believe will assist my subordinate commanders and senior leaders in better understand the context of the DND/CAF world we are living in. The "Priming" aspect refers to pre-loading

organizational/cultural attributes, or activating a desired positive ethical culture or climate. Quite simply, it is about directing attention toward a certain feature of a situation in order to influence leader attitudes, decisions and behaviours. "Framing" is about directing attention to salient aspects of a particular situation. It is about contextualizing your interpretation of language. Since every subordinate commander and senior leader influences CANSOF outcomes, positively and negatively, I want to be purposeful in shaping our environment.

In sum, the intent of these initiatives is to ensure that everyone understands the interconnectedness of what we do and comprehends the implications of our activities. In essence, my goal is to increase situational awareness, as well as to cue individuals to the possible knock-on/second order effects of actions taken or, in some cases, not taken. This approach of developing a more strategic awareness in leadership is also reinforced during monthly Orders Groups.

The educational component is further reinforced through the provision of university level courses, workshops and seminars on targeted subjects such as strategic thinking, cultural intelligence, whole-of-government, military strategy, irregular warfare and military history to name a few. In fact, the Command has established an Education and Research Centre (formerly the Professional Development Centre) staffed with two university professors who deliver much of this material, as well as conduct research and provide academic advice, supervision and guidance to all CANSOFCOM personnel. In addition, they assist with a host of other PD functions, including battlefield studies that encompass the larger military/political dynamics of conflict.

Additionally, CANSOFCOM and its units invite various speakers on a regular basis to share their knowledge and experience on a wide array of topics, and conduct and participate in targeted conferences and seminars, as well as deploy individuals to attend

diverse executive multi-disciplinary courses at civilian universities, colleges and allied PD institutions. Moreover, the Command encourages writing on contemporary subjects of importance and has supported its own academic publications of timely, pertinent books and monographs that are used throughout the Command for educational purposes, many of which have been picked up by our allies and security partners, as well as civilian universities for development of their personnel and students.

Finally, the educational initiative includes a very active outreach component, in which we actively engage with our joint, civilian, governmental and allied partners in research, shared instruction and the sharing of information. This cooperation ensures a constant stream of new and different ideas and perspectives, which once again opens the aperture to the larger "eco-system" in which the military, specifically SOF operates.

Although education in itself is important, particularly its objective of inculcating a desire to learn within individuals, it is PME on which I place my emphasis. Education, specifically its role in developing critical thinking and cultivating an intellectual curiosity are crucial. However, as noted earlier, PME provides additional focus and direction to the development of the "why and how to think" provided by education. As Professor Williamson Murray explained, "Professional military education is designed to prepare professional militaries to deal with the ever increasing ambiguities and multi-layered contemporary security environment and battle space." He expounded, "[PME is required] to prepare military personnel for missions across the full spectrum of conflict, ranging from deterrence at the high end to peace keeping and enforcement at the low end."[7]

In short, PME is about growing as military professionals. Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, stated the purpose of PME was to "develop leaders by conveying a broad body of professional knowledge and developing the habits of

mind essential to our profession."[8] Specific to the "habits of mind" is an intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and challenge function.

Importantly, PME is about developing more strategically minded thinkers. For instance, junior leaders must comprehend how their tactical actions and missions connect to the larger strategy. Mid-grade leaders must be able to draw potential and real strategic consequences from tactical/operational or strategic plans. They must be able to analyze information and events and pull the necessary implications and possible courses of action for senior decision-makers. Finally, senior leadership must be able to master those requirements to design effective strategies that match national goals and objectives. The US Congress dictated that the military requires "Critical and reflective thinkers who broadly view military affairs across an array of academic disciplines, are capable of identifying and evaluating likely changes and associated responses affecting the employment of U.S. military forces. Graduates should possess acuity of mind at the highest level, gained as a result of a continuum of lifetime learning."[9]

The Canadian requirement is no less. PME should focus on developing leaders at all levels to have a better understanding of: strategy; operations across the spectrum of conflict from SOF specific, to Joint/Coalition, to interagency; to various cultures, to name but a few. In this vein, my efforts in the "Context & Strategy" sessions, weekly "Priming & Framing" missives, as well as the more general curriculum, programs and activities are focused on achieving a higher level of understanding of the profession of arms and its interconnectedness with the world in which it operates.

The third PD line of operation, experience, is a crucial component of the continuous development of CANSOFCOM personnel to prepare them for the future operating environment. Theoretical knowledge is important, but nothing can take away from the ability to actually exercise that theory in the furnace of reality,

where the simplest of tasks can be complicated and frustrated by the effects of human behaviour and emotions, as well as unforeseen or unpredictable environmental factors. As such, the Command endeavours to provide the widest array of experience in as de-centralized a manner as practicable through deployments, exercises and training events. Although consideration is given to all, often key deployments and positions of responsibility are limited. Therefore, a careful succession framework is used to provide those selected as having the potential to become commanders and senior leaders within the Command and CAF the important, but limited, opportunities.

The pursuit of experience extends to joint and integrated exercises, as well as domestic and international deployments. Importantly, the Command has also reinforced its duty to post its personnel throughout the larger CAF. Although the individual desire is almost always to stay posted within their respective Unit or, at a minimum, the Command, CANSOFCOM personnel are carefully selected for appointments throughout CAF that will provide them with the exposure to the larger institution. This process has paid enormous dividends. First, the individuals return with a broader understanding of the larger "eco-system." In particular, they have specific knowledge on how the institution and its processes operate, they have developed a wider network of partners to draw from and they have provided insight to others with regard to the quality of CANSOFCOM personnel. Along this line, the Command is now exploring secondments of its people to other governmental departments, as well as private industry, in order to provide an alternate experience that may provide new insights into leadership approaches, innovation, problem solving and creative solutions to name but a few possible benefits.

Notably, the experiential pillar is underlined by one key concept: trust. The individuals are empowered by absolute trust to fulfill their appointment and responsibilities to the best of their abilities. As noted earlier, they are given the latitude to make decisions,

solve problems (within their arcs as explained by the Commander through his "Commander's Intent") and make honest mistakes without penalty. This allowance for error is what makes the experiential pillar so powerful. After all, the infamous founder of the Office of Strategic Services, Major-General "Wild Bill" Donovan professed, "We were not afraid to make mistakes because we were not afraid to try things that had not been tried before." He elaborated, "You can't succeed without taking chances."[10]

Next, the fourth PD line of operation is self-development. Individuals in the profession of arms have a responsibility to continually learn. The Command encourages and supports this process. As such, it has developed a comprehensive Virtual Library available on CD-RoM that houses hundreds of books, monographs, reports and articles filed by a myriad of topic folders that allows individuals to access current, expert publications on many subjects of importance to the military professional from doctrine, to military history, to political analysis, to contemporary issues. In addition, the Command supports individuals in their pursuit of university and college level education. Moreover, targeted readings are passed to key staff to enhance their understanding of the world we live in and the Command also offers and creates opportunity for individuals to take time for individual study.

In the end, the future cannot be known but we must plan strategically for it. We must get the trends right in order to position the force advantageously. More importantly, we must set the conditions now – every day – to enhance trust, confidence and credibility in the CANSOF personnel the leaders of tomorrow will inherit. Finally we must grow our next generation of leaders to be optimized in uncertainty – an excellent hedge to SOF retaining its competitive advantage of speed and precision regardless of environmental factors. Regardless of how ambiguous and complex the environment becomes, SOF must continue to thrive within it. We must be anti-fragile in the chaos of tomorrow.[11]

And, how we will accomplish this ambition will not be a function of chance and good fortune. It is the result of conscious decisions and deliberate actions through the use of creative and innovative PD opportunities to arm and empower an individual to step into a leadership appointment confident that he/she has the skills, attributes and background knowledge to understand and operate in whatever operating environment they find themselves in. The future is now and how we prepare the leaders of tomorrow today will determine CANSOF's success in the future.

NOTES

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CONTRIBUTORS

BAYCROFT – John Baycroft was a member of 22 Special Air Service (SAS) where he planned, coordinated, and led the full spectrum of 22 SAS operations, which included warfighting, hostage rescue, counter terrorism, counter narcotics, covert surveillance, covert intelligence gathering, and peacekeeping operations with linkages into high end law enforcement and other governmental agencies in some of the world's most austere environments over a 20 year period. Prior to joining 22 SAS, John spent three years in the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, where he learned the tradecraft of a war fighter. John is currently employed in the private sector, specifically in commercial risk management where he advises governments, multinational corporations and private clients worldwide.

DAY – Lieutenant-General (Ret'd) Mike Day joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1983 and was subsequently commissioned as an infantry officer into the 3rd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI). In 1992, he successfully completed Joint Task Force Two (JTF 2) selection and the Special Operations Assaulter Course. Lieutenant-General (ret.) Day has held command positions which include Commanding Officer (CO) of 2 PPCLI, CO of JTF 2, Commander of CANSOFCOM and Deputy Commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples. He has deployed operationally to the Middle East, Africa, the Balkans and Afghanistan. Amongst other awards, he has received the Meritorious Service Cross and the US Legion of Merit for these deployments. Lieutenant-General (ret.) Day has a BA (with distinction) in Political Studies and History from the University of Manitoba and a Masters in War Studies from the Royal Military College of Canada.

HORN – Dr. Bernd Horn is a retired infantry colonel who has held key command and staff appointments in the Canadian Armed Forces, including Deputy Commander of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment and Officer Commanding 3 Commando, the Canadian Airborne Regiment. He is currently the Director of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command Education and Research Centre (ERC). Dr. Horn is also an adjunct professor of the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary, as well as an adjunct professor of history at the Royal Military College of Canada. He has authored, co-authored, edited or co-edited 40 books and well over a hundred monographs/chapters/articles on military history, Special Operations Forces, leadership and military affairs.

KRUELSKIE – Ray Kruelskie is a contractor at USSOCOM. He works supporting education and training programs and efforts for SOF. He is a retired Air Force colonel and MH-53 and UH-1 helicopter pilot with over 2,800 flying hours and 26 years of SOF experience. He served as the Air Mobility Requirements officer and worked supporting the CV-22 modifications to the MH-47 and other projects that support SOF. He was the Deputy Operations officer at Special Operations Command Europe and oversaw counterterrorism, humanitarian demining, as well as other SOF operations in that theatre following 9/11. His last tour in uniform was as the USSOCOM Inspector General. He has three Masters degrees, three joint tours and over 16 years experience serving at Headquarters USSOCOM.

LIEBER – Dr. Paul Lieber is an award-winning scholar and practitioner on global strategic communication. A Senior Fellow at United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM)'s Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), he served as the Command Writer for two USSOCOM Commanders, likewise Strategic Communication Advisor to the Commander of Special Operations Command-Australia. Within academic environs, Dr. Lieber was a

member of the Graduate faculty at Emerson College, University of South Carolina, and the University of Canberra, respectively. Within these roles, he taught across the entire strategic communication curriculum while authoring more than a dozen peer reviewed scholarly publications. Additionally, within corporate settings, Dr. Lieber led an array of comprehensive organizational improvement, strategic communication and/or assessment programs for organizations across North America, Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australasia.

LIEBER – Dr. Yael Efreom-Lieber is an international expert on psychological intervention and assessment among both youth and adult populations. She has served as a psychologist within hospital and school in- and outpatient settings, including New Orleans School District, Franciscan Hospital for Children, and Calvary Hospital (Australia). She currently operates out the 6th Medical Wing at MacDill Air Force Base (Tampa, Florida), where she specializes in pre- and post-deployment, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) treatment. Her research mirrors these experiences, and focuses on identification and assessment of PTSD and exposure to community violence symptoms. Dr. Lieber has taught at Tulane University and Australia National University in their under- and graduate programs and she has also supervised psychologists in military and civilian settings. She currently resides in Tampa, and is a Florida-licensed clinical psychologist.

McCABE – Dr. Peter McCabe serves as a Resident Senior Fellow with the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) Center for Special Operations Studies and Research. He came to JSOU from the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) where he worked as a Strategic Policy Planner. Prior to that, Dr. McCabe retired from the U.S. Air Force as a Colonel in 2011. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Florida in 2010, with a focus on International Relations and Comparative Politics. His dissertation addressed U.S. coalition building strategies in the last two Gulf wars. Dr. McCabe has three Master's Degrees in

Political Science, National Security Strategy and Aeronautical Science, and a Bachelor of Science in Physics. His current research interests include foreign policy decision making and national security strategy.

MELENDEZ – Command Sergeant-Major Francisco Melendez assumed duties as the Commandant, Joint Special Operations University Enlisted Academy in August 2015. Previous assignments and duty positions include Engineer and Intelligence NCO, Team Sergeant, Company Operations NCO, First Sergeant, Company Sergeant Major, Battalion and Group Operations SGM, and 1st Battalion CSM for the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne). He has 5 combat tours in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Other assignments of importance include Senior Chief Instructor and Battalion Sergeant Major for the University of Puerto Rico ROTC program and CJSOTF-A J3 SGM at Bagram Air Force Base, Afghanistan.

MILLS – Colonel Darryl Mills is 33-year veteran of the Canadian Armed Forces. He is currently the Deputy Commander of the Canadian Special Operations Forces Command. He has a very diverse background with Infantry, Airborne and Special Operations organizations. Colonel Mills has multiple combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan and has served on Exchange with both the UK and US forces. Colonel Mills was educated at the University of Calgary, the Royal Military College of Canada and has an MBA from Royal Roads University. He is currently pursuing his Doctorate in Philosophy focusing on *positive psychology leadership*. He is a graduate of the Canadian Army's Command and Staff College, the United States Army's Command and General Staff College, the British Army's Combined Arms Tactics Course and USSOCOM's Special Operations Component Commanders Course.

MUNDY – Major Geoff Mundy joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1997 as a Reserve Infantry Private. After graduating from the Royal Military College (RMC) in 2002, he was

commissioned as an Infantry Officer in the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI). He served four years at 3 PPCLI and then three more as an instructor at the Canadian Forces Land Advanced Warfare Centre (CFLAWC). In 2008, Maj Mundy was selected for service at the Canadian Special Operations Regiment, where he has occupied the roles of Platoon Commander, Regimental staff officer and Company Commander. He currently holds the position of Chief Instructor. Maj Mundy has deployed operational experience in Afghanistan, Africa and the Middle East. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from RMC; he is married and has three young children.

NORDSTRUM – Superintendent Nordstrum graduated from the University of British Columbia in 1989 with a BA in International Relations specializing in Soviet and East European Studies and joined the RCMP in 1990. Following six months at the RCMP Training Academy in Regina, Saskatchewan, he was posted to a variety of detachments in British Columbia including uniformed policing, Drug and Serious Crime Investigations, and as an assaulter and Team Leader with the ERT in the 1990s. He transferred to the Headquarters Emergency Response Team in Ottawa in 2003 and then moved from operations into the Strategic Policy and Planning Directorate in 2005. He was commissioned as Inspector of the RCMP Team for the Air India Flight 189 bombing and later assumed Command of the National Security Criminal Investigation Office of Investigative Standards and Practices. In 2010, he was posted to London, England as an RCMP Liaison Officer and in 2012, Supt Nordstrum became a member and eventually Team Lead developing changes with the Enhancing RCMP Accountability Act. Supt Nordstrum currently serves as Director of National Security, Federal Policing Criminal Operations.

PREEPER – Chief Warrant Officer Dave Preeper joined the Reserve Force in 1976 and transferred to the Regular Force about a year later. He has served in all four Infantry Battalions of The Royal Canadian Regiment (RCR), as well as the Land Force

Central Area Training Centre Meaford, Canadian Airborne Regiment, Airborne Holding Unit and the Infantry School. CWO Preeper's appointed positions include Regimental Sergeant-Major (RSM) of the 3 RCR, RSM of JTF 2, Command Sergeant-Major (CSM) for CANSOFCOM and CSM for NATO's Joint Force Command. He has been deployed operationally to Croatia, Bosnia and Afghanistan. CWO Preeper has been awarded the Canadian Order of Military Merit (MMM) and the US Bronze Star.

ROULEAU – Major-General Michael Rouleau is the Commander, Canadian Special Operations Forces Command. He was commissioned as a Field Artillery officer in 1986 and served Regimental tours in Valcartier, Quebec, and Lahr, West Germany, until 1992. In 1994 he joined the ranks of a nascent Joint Task Force 2 (JTF 2) serving as Adjutant, Assault Troop Commander and Sabre Squadron Commander until 1999. In July 1999, MGen Rouleau retired from the Canadian Armed Forces and joined the ranks of the Ottawa Carleton Regional Police Service as an Emergency Response Officer. Owing to the events of 9-11, MGen Rouleau re-enrolled in the Canadian Armed Forces, returning to JTF 2 as Chief Instructor in September 2002, then briefly as regimental Second-in-Command of 5 RALC in 2004/05. He assumed command of JTF 2 in May 2007, a position he held until June 2009. MGen Rouleau served as the Canadian Joint Operations Command liaison officer to USCENTCOM HQ (Forward) in Jordan in 2013. He also served as the Director Special Operations Forces from 2011 to 2013. He holds a BA in Political Science from the University of Manitoba, a Master of Defence Studies and a Master of Arts Degree in Security, Defence Policy and Management, both from the Royal Military College of Canada.

SPENCER – Dr. Emily Spencer has an MA and PhD in War Studies from the RMCC. She is currently the Director of Research and Education at the CANSOFCOM ERC. Her research focuses on the importance of cultural knowledge to success in the contemporary operating environment, particularly as it applies to SOF,

as well as the role the media plays in shaping understandings of world events. Dr. Spencer has published widely in these areas, as well as in the field of gender and war.

TURNLEY – Dr. Jessica Glicken Turnley is president of Galisteo Consulting Group, Inc., Albuquerque, New Mexico and a senior fellow with the JSOU Strategic Studies Department. She provides services in the national security arena, in strategic business planning, organizational development, corporate culture change, policy analysis, and economic development to a wide variety of clients in the public and private sector. Dr. Turnley works directly with the intelligence community, including service on the Defense Intelligence Agency's Advisory Board and with other agencies in both programmatic/analytic and organizational development capacities. She has worked with various offices in the Department of Defense as well as with United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).

WHITE – Senator Vernon White was sworn in as Chief of Police of the Ottawa Police Service in May 2007. Prior to this, he led the Regional Police Service in Durham, Ontario, and spent over 20 years with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, leaving as an Assistant Commissioner. Mr. White holds a Diploma in Business Administration from the College of Cape Breton, a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology and Psychology from Acadia University, a Master's Degree from Royal Roads University in British Columbia in Conflict Analysis and Management and a Doctorate of Police Leadership at the Australian Graduate School of Policing. Mr. White has been honoured with a number of awards and commendations over the years, including a Commissioners Commendation, a Queen's Jubilee Medal, and a United Way Community Builder of the Year Award.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

2IC	Second-in-Command
9/11	September 11 2001
AQI	al-Qaeda in Iraq
BPC	Build Partner Capacity
C&S	Cordon and Search
C2	Command & Control
C4ISR	command, control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CANSOF	Canadian Special Operations Forces
CANSOFCOM	Canadian Special Operations Forces Command
CATSA	Canadian Air Transport Security Authority
CBSA	Canada Border Services Agency
CDS	Chief of the Defence Staff
CF	Conventional Forces
CHoD	Chief of Defence
COE	Contemporary Operating Environment
COIN	Counter-Insurgency
CONOP	Concept of Operation
CP	Command Post
CQB	Close Quarter Battle
CSEC	Communications Security Establishment Canada
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
CSM	Company Sergeant-Major
CT JOC	Counter Terrorism Joint Operations Centre
CTCBP	Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program
CWMD	Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction

DND	Department of National Defence
DoD	Department of Defense
DOE	Department of Energy
DSAB	Defence Science Advisory Board
EU	European Union
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FINTRAC	Financial Analysis and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada
FMD	Force Management and Development
FSO	Future SOF Operator
GCC	Geographic Combatant Command
GoC	Government of Canada
HEAT	High Explosive Anti-Tank
HN	Host Nation
HRO	High Reliability Organization
HRT	High Risk Travelers
JSOA	Joint Special Operations Area
JSOU	Joint Special Operations University
JTTF	Joint Terrorism Task Force
Km	Kilometre
LED	Light-Emitting Diodes
LO	Liaison Officer
MA	Military Assistance
MEDCAP	Medical Civic Action Program
MEDEVAC	Medical Evacuation

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCM	Non-Commissioned Member
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NCTC	National Counterterrorism Center
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
NS JOC	National Security Joint Operations Centre
NTM-A	NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan
NYPD	New York Police Department
OGD	Other Governmental Department
PD	Professional Development
PME	Professional Military Education
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RCAF	Royal Canadian Air Force
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade
SAS	Special Air Service
SEP	SOF Education Program
SF	Special Forces
SFA	Security Forces Assistance
SFCB	Security Force Capacity Building
SNA	Social Network Analysis
SOAD	Special Operations Aviation Detachment
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOLO	Special Operations Liaison Officers
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SOST	Special Operations Support Team
SOTF	Special Operations Task Force
T&E	Traverse and Elevation
TF	Task Force

TFC	Task Force Commander
TTIC	Terrorist Threat Integration Centre
TTPs	Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
UK	United Kingdom
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
US	United States
USG	United States Government
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
UX	User Experience
VEO	Violent Extremist Organization
WFP	World Food Program
WWII	World War II

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