WORKING WITH OTHERS

SIMPLE GUIDELINES TO MAXIMIZE EFFECTIVENESS

DR. EMILY SPENCER AND COLONEL BERND HORN

THE CANSOFCOM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

MISSION

The mission of the Canadian Forces Special Operations Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) Professional Development Centre (PDC) is to enable professional development within the Command in order to continually develop and enhance the cognitive capacity of CANSOFCOM personnel.

VISION

The vision of the CANSOFCOM PDC is to be a key enabler to CANSOFCOM headquarters, units and Special Operations Task Forces (SOTFs) as an intellectual centre of excellence for special operations forces (SOF) professional development (PD).

ROLE

The CANSOFCOM PDC is designed to provide additional capacity to:

1. develop the cognitive capacity of CANSOFCOM personnel;

2. access subject matter advice on diverse subjects from the widest possible network of scholars, researchers, subject matter experts (SMEs), institutions and organizations;

3. provide additional research capacity;

4. develop educational opportunities and SOF specific courses and professional development materials;

5. record the classified history of CANSOFCOM;

6. develop CANSOF publications that provide both PD and educational materials to CANSOF personnel and external audiences;

7. maintain a website that provides up-to-date information on PD opportunities and research materials; and

8. assist with the research of SOF best practices and concepts to ensure that CANSOFCOM remains relevant and progressive so that it maintains its position as the domestic force of last resort and the international force of choice for the Government of Canada.

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Teamwork is often a sacrosanct principle for achieving difficult tasks and is based on the belief that the collective effort of the whole is often stronger than any single individual could achieve working alone. In the military, especially in special operations forces (SOF), working in small teams is critical to mission success. Nonetheless, working with others is rarely easy. Different personalities, individual circumstances and the situation, as well as differing interpretations and expectations, complicate interpersonal relations and make working in teams a challenging process. These challenges are exacerbated when dealing with individuals from other nations, whether allies, coalition partners or other countries. Under these circumstances, different languages and cultures may increase the level of complexity and difficulty involved in working effectively with others.

Given the challenges of group work it is important to remain focused on the mission at hand. In fact, in order to maximize productivity and minimize tensions, there are a number of principles that can assist with providing the proper mindset when working with others. As such, this monograph is designed to help individuals conducting training missions or operations, particularly with other organizations or armed forces. These principles have been derived from personal experience, as well as numerous interviews with those who have worked extensively with others in training, mentoring and/or operational roles. Importantly, these principles also provide a good guideline for any type of group endeavour.

PART I – BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

In brief, the ten "simple" principles of working effectively with others are as follows:

1. Be patient;

2. Be adaptable and manage your expectations;

3. Recognize that actions speak louder than words;

4. Appreciate that perception is more important than reality;

5. Remember that the message sent is not always the message that is received and it is the message that is received that is acted on;

6. See the world through the eyes of those with whom you are interacting;

7. Do not judge the behaviours of others and, instead, observe, learn and try to understand;

8. Always be respectful;

9. Deal with frustrations privately; and

10. Do not adhere to unrealistic standards.

Although these principles may seem simplistic and elicit the criticism that they are "motherhood statements," their application is often difficult and many individuals fail miserably in putting them into practice, particularly in a training environment. As such, it is well worthwhile to give thought to what they actually mean in order to appreciate how they can contribute to effective relationship building. After all, being aware of a potential problem is the first step to solving it.

1.   Be patient.

On the whole, Western society has seemingly become a whirlwind of activity and expectations. Fuelled by a myriad of social networking devices, widespread communication networks and infrastructures, technological innovation and accessibility, and increasingly user-friendly and accessible services (e.g. mail-ordered products, drive-through banking, coffee, meals, even weddings, etc.), people have become more and more impatient and expectant of instant gratification and results with little to no human interaction required. For the most part, people are no longer willing to wait for what they want.

Western military members are not immune to the world of instant gratification that engulfs many industrialized nations. Indeed, the aggressive, hyper, military work ethic and results-orientated attitude of SOF operators can simply add fuel to the fire when requirements are not being met. These characteristics, which are generally seen as desirable among SOF operators, can nonetheless contribute to misunderstandings, frustrations and even personal conflict when interacting with other people's expectations and beliefs about how the world works, or at least should work.

When working with others it is important to realize that your schedule is not always a valid blueprint for success. Not all countries, cultures and people are accustomed to, or accepting of, the Western industrialized tempo of activity, much less that of a SOF level of activity. Impatience and trying to force others to work at your accepted rhythm can be counterproductive and create alienation and bad feelings.

As such, it is always important to try and determine the geographic and cultural dynamics of why there are delays to achieving the expected results. Always remember that there could be a number of reasons for the slower than desired execution of activities

on the part of others. Part of the problem could be a question of resourcing. Often things such as transport, logistical support and even photocopying etc., items Canadian SOF may take for granted, are not readily available. Nonetheless, these delays may be the norm for the group of people working within these circumstances and can lead to the expectation of a slow tempo. Additionally, one needs to consider that training partners may not want to share these realities with you due to potential embarrassment over their lack of resources. In addition, geographic and subsequent cultural dynamics may also be at play. For example, people living in southern regions that suffer from excessive heat have adjusted their pace of life accordingly over time. The culture most likely has adopted an attitude to dealing with the sustained long-term condition. Parachuting in for a short duration and expecting all to adapt to the faster tempo may be an imposition that is not welcomed or accepted.

As such, patience is an important quality to minimize stress and maintain personal equilibrium. It is also important in maintaining good relations with those with whom you are working. Additionally, it demonstrates professionalism and an ability to adapt and innovate.

In the end, when working with others, it is important to be mentally prepared to adapt to the unique set of circumstances that is present. Steel your mind with the understanding that patience and self-discipline will always be necessary and contribute more to mission success than a frenzied approach that will likely do more to aggravate the situation than contribute to a solution.

2.   Be adaptable and manage your expectations.

Theory and practice are often worlds apart. Indeed, the best plans and ambitions may not survive contact with the training audience.

It is important to plan to a high standard and set ambitious goals but, above all, they must be achievable. Important in this respect is to set and promulgate clear and realistic objectives. Nonetheless, ensure that you prepare yourself to adjust according to circumstances on the ground, whether due to weather, terrain, personnel or equipment. Understand that various dynamics that you do not control will undoubtedly change the schedule, your plan and potentially even your training objectives.

The key to adapting and providing valuable training is the realization that you are there to work with the partner nation or training audience and, more often than not, they will determine the schedule. The fact of the matter is that not all countries have the same resources as North American SOF. Moreover, their organizational culture will often be dramatically different. As a result, try to learn as much about the training audience as possible. Develop a plan you feel meets the aim of the mission. Do your best to execute according to the plan but realize you may have to adjust the schedule, plan, level of instruction and/or outcomes. Do not let this frustrate you but rather remain open-minded and agile in your thinking so that you can rise to the challenge and create the necessary effect. Additionally, remember it is better to under-program and be able to add extra activities that were not scheduled than it is to over-program and not achieve the promulgated training. The first carries a nuance of excelling and achieving more than anticipated while the latter carries an undercurrent of failure.

3.   Recognize that actions speak louder than words.

As the adage goes, talk is cheap. It is easy to create a verbal image of yourself or your organization in an attempt to create credibility. However, if you are unknown to a training audience, this verbiage will likely be inconsequential. You must remember that actions speak louder than words. Never explain what you can demonstrate.

5

Credibility and trust are based on actions, not just words. The sooner you can show the training audience that you are an expert at what you do, the sooner they will give you their undivided attention.

Conversely, it is important to also consider the reverse. The description of capability that your training audience may have expressed is not always an accurate reflection of their ability. Before undertaking complex, potentially hazardous, activities, ensure you determine the level of competency and capacity of your partners through actions not just words. This knowledge will help you determine the level of training, rehearsals, planning, etc. that will be necessary prior to the event. It may entail lowering or raising the level of activity previously envisioned but either way it will maximize time and effort and lead to a greater overall effect. Importantly, exercise tact when "organizing" an opportunity to observe capability.

4. Appreciate that perception is more important than reality.

Quite often we discount the opinions, criticism, or comments of others because, rightly or wrongly, we feel they are not accurate reflections of the reality on the ground. The attitude of "well that's what they may think but the truth is completely different," often staves away acting on perceived problems or grievances. However, perception often becomes reality. How the training audience or partners perceive you or the mission is more important than the reality you are convinced exists. For example, your mission might be critical to providing them with important training, and you and your team may be the eminent experts in the field and the best and most personable operators on the globe. Nonetheless, if those you are trying to help feel the activity is a waste of their time and you as the trainers are a bunch of arrogant, pompous, over-rated or second-rate players, the task will become difficult,

if not impossible, to accomplish. In this case, the perception is more important than the reality.

When trying to get buy-in from others, what is important is not what you think but rather what they think. Therefore, ensure you keep abreast of atmospherics and the general prevailing attitude and work quickly and aggressively to clear-up any misunderstandings, grievances or complaints.

In the end, communications are key to developing any partnership. It is critical to always attempt to provide others with a clear understanding of the five "Ws" (what, where, why, who and when), as well as "how", to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. Finally, explain any changes to the plan and immediately address any misperceptions that may have been, or are, developing. Never assume your impression of yourself or of the activity you are undertaking is the same as everyone else's and continuously do your best to mitigate any potential differences.

5. Remember that the message sent is not always the message that is received and it is the message that is received that is acted on.

Communications are often "lost in translation." Simply put, the message you think you are sending is not always the message that the intended recipient is actually understanding and acting on. There are a number of reasons for this disconnect. First, we often use words, jargon, slang and concepts that we are familiar with but that have different meanings to different people, particularly when they are from different cultures. Even within the same language set, the meaning is not always the same.

In addition, we are all often guilty of a lack of clarity in our communications. In our minds we understand the situation, and what we are thinking and communicating is crystal clear to us.

However, what we forget is that in communicating we often leave out key information that is assumed as "understood" between the parties. As a result, for those not privy to the inner workings of another's mind it becomes difficult to follow and the message or intent is confusing. As such, ensure you properly formulate your message. Do not assume the receiver is privy to all you know or are thinking.

Due to these factors, it is important to actively confirm and ensure that the message you are sending is actually the message that is being received and that it is not being "lost in translation." To do so you can, among other things, ask the person you are dealing with to explain the concept/idea back to you in his or her words; observe the individual explaining the concept/idea to a larger group; or ask for the best method to carry out the task and determine if it makes sense.

Communications are key to the success of virtually any activity, particularly when working with others. They are not something that should be taken for granted or assumed. A major effort must go into communications, whether non-verbal, verbal or written, to ensure the intent, spirit and exact meaning of the written or spoken word are accurately delivered and received.

6. See the world through the eyes of those with whom you are interacting.

Culture and experience are powerful forces. Our attitudes, and consequently behaviours, are shaped by our beliefs and values which in turn are formulated through cultural understandings and personal experiences. These lenses create a filter through which we see the world, which in turn shapes how we react to stimuli.

Notably, assumptions, priorities and even our definition of "ground truth" will often vary significantly from those with whom you are

working. Therefore, it is vital to be able to see the world through the eyes of those with whom you are interacting if you wish to have a desired impact. Our assumptions of the world and how things are done are not universal. How we do things will not always be how others will conduct drills and/or training activities nor will it be necessarily representative of how they want to conduct their business. Furthermore, as mentioned, what we take for granted (e.g. availability of transport, logistical and administrative support, training area, etc.) may be a major challenge for others. Thus, to achieve a desired effect, it is important to see their perception of reality.

Additionally, this perspective will help you appreciate how others see you. Your mannerisms, assumptions, attitudes and behaviours may not be acceptable to those you are working with. For example, although Canadian Special Operations Forces (CANSOF) personnel pride themselves on being "straight shooters"/"speaking truth to power"/being able to critically assess and challenge one another in an open setting, these types of behaviours are often seen as aggressive and offensive to others given their organizational culture. Understanding how others see the world may help you realize that the way you see yourself is actually quite different than the way they do.

As such, you should learn how to read the body language of others in order to gain cues about how your behaviour is being interpreted. Additionally, learn to self-reflect and assess your personality and personal approach prior to working with others. However, if your self-assessment fails you, be prepared to adapt your behaviour/deportment accordingly based on the reactions from those around you. If you feel you must apologize for your behaviour prior to even beginning your statement, such as beginning a talk with the words "I don't mean to be rude, but …" you should likely stop immediately and reassess the situation. If you identify that

what you are about to say is potentially offensive, then it probably is and you should find a different way of expressing your point.

In the end, if developing a partnership or simply working with others is important to your task, then it is critical that you take the time to reflect on, assess, and understand "reality" as it is seen by those you work with. You need not philosophically accept their outlook or version of reality, but you need to understand it and how it will affect their attitudes and behaviours, as well as how it impacts on your attitudes and behaviours.

7. Do not judge the behaviours of others and, instead, observe, learn and try to understand.

It is always important not to exude an attitude of arrogance and/ or superiority. Quite often, many of the personnel who are part of the training audience have a depth of operational experience in their own country or from other missions. They all have unique operating circumstances, cultural dynamics, and traditions, habits and attitudes. Simply because it is not "how we do things" does not mean it is wrong, invalid or inappropriate to the specific situation or socio-cultural-geographic area. As such, it is best never to simply judge a behaviour without fully understanding it. Rather, observe and learn what you can that may assist your own skills and comprehension of working in the geographic area.[1] Provide commentary on how you and your organization would handle a similar situation but do so in an anecdotal and descriptive manner that explains your methodology and philosophical approach rather than providing a judgemental comparison or critique.

In the end, do not try to tell others what to do and/or how to do it. You do not live in their reality. Something may work well for you and your organization but it may not fit in their context/reality.

However, do not give anyone the benefit of the doubt. Check and confirm that they have the requisite skill/knowledge/background/ qualifications required before undertaking an activity, particularly if it is a hazardous one.

8.   Always be respectful.

Everyone is more cooperative when treated respectfully. Nonetheless, quite often we fail to demonstrate respect. In fact, on many occasions individuals, without even consciously knowing it, will act disrespectfully or at least be perceived to be doing so. Particularly when in a training or mentor role in a foreign cultural setting, one's behaviour might be seen as being dismissive, overly casual with those of senior rank and, at times, even rude, especially when things are not going as planned or according to the "time table" and patience is wearing thin. Additionally, what one might consider a show of confidence might instead be interpreted as arrogance, with obvious negative effect. Finally, though humility is touted as a SOF virtue, equally, if not more often, hubris and ego show through and some individuals feel their status as a specialist or expert merits special status compared to others, an anathema to equality and respect.

How you treat and interact with others is important. Treating others with respect conveys a valuable message of not only what you, but also your organization deem is important. It demonstrates character, humility and professionalism. Within the military, nowhere is this more evident than in according the proper deference and respect to military protocol when dealing with those of higher rank, a fact that is sometimes neglected by some SOF personnel. This behaviour underscores respect of the individual and their national armed forces and speaks to professionalism and humility.

Additionally, it is important to understand that as the trainer, mentor, or partner you represent your organization and your nation. Your behaviour will not only determine how others see you, but also how they will form their perceptions of all other national representatives, both SOF and conventional forces.

As such, being respectful of others is an important enabler. It can generate goodwill, cooperation and friendship; lack of respect will deteriorate these factors. Additionally, respect demonstrates professionalism and helps to foster the bonds that create personal and organizational networks. Respect is a key ingredient in establishing and maintaining positive relationships.

9.   Deal with frustrations privately.

It is always important to be conscious of how others see you. At times, your true feelings may be counterproductive to the task at hand. On these occasions, it is best to remain focused on your goal and to refrain from showing counterproductive thoughts and/or emotions. This advice is particularly valid when frustrated. At such points you must be particularly conscious of your body language (e.g. rolling of the eyes, posture, muttering, impatience, etc). Although easier said than done, remain calm and unperturbed at all times as showing frustration will only erode trust and credibility and make the task more difficult. Deal with frustration once in the privacy of your living quarters. Rant and complain to your close colleagues. Discuss the frustration and pet peeves with the team in private when those you are training are not around. Always ensure you are in a secure location where you cannot be overheard by others. However, in the presence of others calm, cool, patient behaviour will earn trust and respect and will strengthen personal relationships. Failure to do so will have exactly the opposite effect.

10. Do not adhere to unrealistic standards.

Striving for excellence is a noble pursuit and one should never adopt an attitude of accepting mediocrity. However, one must be conscious of time and resource realities and how much one can realistically achieve under these circumstances. As such, incremental steps to improve should be accepted and applauded. Excellence can only be achieved once the foundation is solid. Building a foundation takes time and experience, which may not be immediately available. Learning incrementally in these instances may be the best course of action.

In this vein, it is better that the training audience accomplish a task themselves, even if it is "a bit rougher around the edges" than if you had conducted the major actions for them. Remember you are there to help train and mentor, not to overtake their areas of responsibility. View excellence as a long-term goal and always strive towards it, but do so along a graduated scale so that the training audience develops the necessary skills and attributes, as well as confidence. This process will help build a solid foundation upon which to improve and attain professional excellence.

PART II – DEBRIEFING OTHERS

Part of working with others, particularly in a training role, is assessing strengths and weakness, what went right and what went wrong, and, of course, how to improve performance, as well as tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). The process of constructively providing feedback on ways to improve is never easy, however. It is always a fine line, often due to personal perceptions about what is deemed personal criticism and what is professional observation/constructive criticism. As such, there are also a number of "considerations" that should be kept in mind when providing feedback. These include:

1. Being respectful, particularly when speaking to someone of higher rank;

2. Never being condescending;

3. Remembering that a few key points are more manageable than providing an overwhelming number of areas to improve on;

4. Being conscious of the words you choose;

5. Attempting to have individuals identify their weaknesses/failures/areas to improve themselves;

6. Utilizing techniques that make use of sound operational experience;

7. Using non-attribution when providing constructive criticism;

8. Ensuring you always include at least some positive feedback;

9. Rewarding the behaviour/activity you are trying to promote; and

10. Remembering not to take anything personally.

1.   Be respectful, particularly when speaking to someone of higher rank.

As mentioned, it is important to always show respect. In particular during debriefs, ensure that cultural dynamics are considered and addressed. For instance, some militaries have a very conservative and traditional culture. For example, they may have a culture of engendering trust in the officer and/or stress the separation of

rank, particularly at the officer level. As such, it is important to demonstrate that you respect their military culture and protocol, regardless of your own practices with regard to debriefing training activities. Where possible try to have officers debriefing officers, senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) debriefing peers etc. Again, this process is meant to show respect for their system and provide the best possible advice to improve their performance without creating undue tension for the training audience.

Additionally, use discretion when debriefing others, particularly when there are negative messages to pass along. Always follow the mantra "praise in public, counsel in private."

2.   Never be condescending.

Never exude an attitude of superiority or put yourself in a position where that impression might be drawn by others. Avoid standing aloof and becoming the arrogant visitors who think they are better than those they are working with. Never stand at a distance and assess; rather, mingle, eat and talk with the training audience/personnel from the partner nations. Participate in activities, (although be careful not to overshadow). Work actively to build relationships. Share experiences and approaches. Ask questions and show interest in their methodologies and experiences. Treat your training partners as equals. Rather than criticize, explain how your organization handles similar situations. Use operational experience as a means of helping them develop better TTPs. For example, share that certain equipment or techniques did not perform as well as expected on real operations and how the shortcomings were overcome. This explanation becomes an indirect means of "correcting" deficiencies without blatantly criticizing their way of doing things.

3. Remember, a few key points are more manageable than providing an overwhelming number of areas to improve on.

When working with others there is often a desire to do everything, fix all perceived shortcomings or deficiencies, and cram as much into a short period of time as possible. This process can lead to frustration, impatience and an end-state where not everything gets accomplished and everyone feels rushed and seemingly lacking a sense of real accomplishment. Moreover, although a wide range of skills were introduced, no-one feels expert or competent in any of them. This situation should be avoided. It is important to consider the audience, to understand their level of knowledge and experience, language of instruction, cultural predilections, expectations and requirements. This consideration will go a long way to dictating how much, and what form of training should take place.

The key is to focus on a few key training points, skills, or issues. Do not try and fix everything all at once or cover too wide a spectrum of training activities. In the same vein, keep advice or critique points to only a few key/critical issues that can be absorbed. Do not inundate others with lots of minutiae that bury the really important points to be addressed. It is better to ensure one or just a few skills, attributes, activities, etc. are mastered as opposed to introducing a wide spectrum of such matters that are subsequently lost, forgotten or poorly practiced and executed because they were not adequately learned. By ensuring a limited focus that allows the mastery of a subject matter, one builds a base that can then be expanded on. Failing to create a solid foundation condemns individuals and organizations to perpetual basic level instruction that does not allow them to evolve.

4. Be conscious of the words you choose.

As explained earlier, just because you may be speaking the same language does not necessarily mean that words or phrases you are using have the exact same meaning to all parties. Do not assume all words/concepts have the same meaning in a different culture even though the language may be the same. This practice is particularly true when using jargon or slang specific to a country or organization. Therefore, be careful of the words you choose. Avoid confusing the audience and, as an added benefit, you will also avoid creating extra frustrations for yourself. Use only terms and concepts of which all share a common understanding. Additionally, ensure that you confirm this shared understanding. Be conscious of rank, position and/or situation. Remember not all organizational cultures are similar to your own. Many militaries, whether SOF or not, have more rigid hierarchical cultures that maintain strict barriers between the enlisted ranks, senior NCOs and officers. Moreover, many cultures place great emphasis on "saving face" and derogatory/disrespectful words (or those perceived as such) will have a very negative effect. For example, if swearing is common practice within your organization, do not assume that it is acceptable in a different environment.

5. Attempt to have individuals identify their weaknesses/failures/areas to improve themselves.

Avoid lecturing or directly criticizing others. Although we normally soften criticism with platitudes of how well an event went and what great improvement was shown, receiving negative criticism (sometimes known as constructive criticism) is always hard for people to take, particularly from others from a different organization/country, and especially from individuals who may hold a lower rank. As such, attempt to do a mutual assessment of the exercise. Rather than lecture, attempt to draw out the points from the individuals themselves. Start with asking what they felt they

(or better yet, if applicable, what "we") did right. Then ask what they felt they/we could have done better or what they think they can improve on for the next time. If this draws a blank, provide observations that are based upon your own experience. For example, "one of the things I noticed that we have always had trouble with...." Individuals are always more open to critique when it is not specifically targeted at them and when it is made to appear as a point of weakness or difficulty for others practicing the same craft. Always be conscious of personal feelings and allow everyone to "save face". One need not lie or turn a blind eye, but remember it is all about communicating effectively and building personal relationships.

6.   Utilize techniques that make use of sound operational experience.

Everyone values operational experience. After all, training is designed to prepare individuals for operations and combat. As realistic as we try to make training, it never fully replicates the real thing. Therefore, whenever possible, utilize real operational experience, case studies, events or TTPs to underline a training point. Utilize techniques such as "we've found by experience that ..... works even better/is more efficient. ..." This takes some the sting out of personal critique. It is no longer perceived as one individual's, or organization's, theoretical or doctrinal approach; rather it is seen as a proven operational methodology. In addition, it also underscores your organization's experience and current relevance in the field in question.

7.   Always use non-attribution when providing constructive criticism.

As explained, choose only a few debrief points to pass on after any given activity. Focus on the key issues that will have the greatest

impact and effect the greatest improvement. When commenting, avoid singling out negative individual behaviour in a group situation. Speak to actions in a general manner thereby focusing more on the collective rather than an individual. By utilizing "we" rather than "you" or naming individuals, there is less of a personal sting to the comments. If individuals need to be debriefed on actions, ensure they are taken aside privately, preferably by a peer or superior, and counselled accordingly. Importantly, remember that you are there to work with them, provide advice, assist them in improving specific skills, practices, and perhaps a degree of interoperability; notably, you are not there to make them a reflection of your organization.

8. Ensure you always include at least some positive feedback.

No-one likes to be dumped on or made to feel that everything they did was not up to standard. As such, always provide positive feedback. Find something to speak about that was legitimately well done, even if just speaking to motivation, energy, effort, etc. Do not forget that you must be honest and ensure your comments are genuine or else the words of praise will be seen as hollow platitudes and you will lose trust and credibility. When debriefing start and end your comments with something positive or, at a minimum, end on a high with positive commentary.

9. Reward the behaviour/activity you are trying to promote.

As noted earlier, actions speak louder than words. It is not what people say or write that is a true indicator of what is important to them; rather, it is what they do that really shows what is important to them. By rewarding or showing active encouragement/ support for the actions/behaviours you are trying to reinforce,

you will reinforce what you are trying to achieve and the desired standard. Reward behaviours that you desire in a culturally correct way. To do so, you will need to know what motivates them. Learn quickly the drivers to performance, as well as what creates a lack of motivation. As a general rule, honest praise works wonders. As with everything, however, do so in moderation. Praise should be used to reward the behaviour/actions you wish to promote but, if overdone, it loses its value. In particularly special cases, the use of "coins" and/or other tokens takes the idea a further step. But again, it must be done in moderation in order to maintain the "specialness" of the gesture.

10. Remember not to take anything personally.

There are an infinite amount of challenges to working in cross-cultural groups. It is important to strive for your best while also ensuring that you do not take all setbacks personally. Many challenges will not be directly related to how you comport yourself and these obstacles, while potentially surmountable, may take years to overcome. Strive for perfection but bear in mind the difficulty of your task and that you are being seen not only as an individual but also a member of a specific group to which others have already made long-standing assumptions and judgements.

Moreover, accept that others may not wish to accept what you have to say. Remember, they have their own way of doing things and, importantly, live in a reality to which you are not totally familiar. Provide the best advice and support possible. Always, explain your rationale and the logic behind your comments. Provide them with your experience and wisdom. And then, step back and allow them to determine how best they wish to use your input.

CONCLUSION

In today's contemporary operating environment (COE) success is often dependent on winning the support of the people, whether the domestic population who ultimately drive government engagements across the globe, or the host-nation population that is instrumental in force effectiveness and operations within the theatre of operations. As such, understanding those with whom you interact is critical. In particular, understanding the beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours of a group of people can mean the difference between success and failure.

This monograph was designed to provide some practical advice and tips on working with others, as well as debriefing others. Although outwardly simplistic and in some ways "motherhood" statements, the reality is that in practice these principles are often forgotten, ignored or simply poorly executed. What must always be remembered is that working with others entails relationships, which are always difficult. As such, communications, common sense and a concerted effort at understanding the dynamics of working in a group are critical to success. Hopefully, these pointers (and in many cases reminders) will be of assistance to those who are tasked with building partnerships at home and abroad.

ANNEX A

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE

In order to work effectively in cross-cultural settings, which is representative of many contemporary work environments, understanding culture and how it shapes personal perceptions is often paramount to achieving one's goals. Undeniably, understanding others is a critical enabler when trying to build partnerships whether at home or abroad. As such a conceptual understanding of culture becomes very important.

In the simplest of terms, culture refers to a set of common beliefs and values within a group of people that, combined, transform into attitudes that are expressed as behaviours.[2] (See Figure 1) Culture helps to create individual and group identity. Cultural beliefs, values and attitudes are generally long lasting and resistant to change. They are passed down through generations and are often unconscious in nature.

$$\boxed{\text{BELIEF}} + \boxed{\text{VALUE}} \rightarrow \text{ATTITUDE} \rightarrow \textbf{BEHAVIOUR}$$

FIGURE 1. The Relationship between Beliefs, Values, Attitudes and Behaviours[3]

Beliefs

Beliefs represent perceived "facts" about the world (and beyond) that do not require evaluation or proof of their correctness. For example, Hindus believe in many gods, Christians believe in one God and Muslims believe in Allah. None of these competing religious "beliefs" has been unequivocally proven correct. Some beliefs may even continue to be held within a group of people in spite of refuting "facts." This can lead to attribution errors in which a cause

and effect relationship is misconceived because of the rigidity of a certain belief. For instance, if you believed without question that technology improves quality of life, then, as technology advanced, you would either take it for granted that quality of life was also on the rise, or, faced with blatant evidence to the contrary, you would assume that it was not technology that caused this decline. Despite the limitations that certain beliefs place on an individual or group's ability to fully evaluate their surroundings, common beliefs remain at the core of cultural identity.

Values

Values place a moral and/or pragmatic weight on beliefs. For instances, Christians do not simply believe in God, they use this belief to build an understanding of what is important in life. In this sense, "Christian values," provide a type of moral shorthand for determining "right" from "wrong." From a pragmatic perspective, if you believe that university education enables individuals to earn more over the course of a lifetime, and economic advancement is something that you deem important, then you will attach a high worth, or "value" to university education.

Believes + Values

The relationships between beliefs and values are complex and dynamic. Values are generally attached to beliefs, yet adhering to certain values can also strengthen beliefs or create new ones. Paradoxically, individuals and groups can simultaneously have competing beliefs and values. Often the weight attached to a certain belief will determine the course of action. For example, a moderate pacifist may at once be against all forms of violence and also believe strongly in self-preservation and the right to self-defence. In a situation in which the alternatives are shoot or be shot, this pacifist might choose to kill his/her attacker. In the same situation, someone with strong pacifist beliefs may rather be shot than go against his/her pacifist beliefs. Thus, what may appear as

irrational to some may be completely sane and logical to others based on their beliefs and values.

Attitudes

In combination, beliefs and values create attitudes. Attitudes reflect a consistent emotional response to a belief-value pair. To change an attitude, either the belief or its associated value must be altered. To return to a previous example, if you believe that university education increases lifetime earnings and you value economic incentives, then you will have a positive attitude towards higher education. For your attitude toward higher education to change, either you must no longer believe that education leads to higher earnings, or the value that you place on economic incentives must be altered. Notably, many belief-value pairs may combine to form, strengthen or weaken an attitude. To continue with the university education example, in addition to higher earnings, you might also believe that a university education allows for more career flexibility, something that you consider to be important to quality of life. Your positive attitude towards higher education would thus be strengthened.

It is important to see attitudes as distinct from simply the combination of beliefs and values because once formed they may not be so easily broken down into their component parts and it is attitudes, rather than simply beliefs and values, which predict behaviours. That being said, however, the best way to alter attitudes is to target their core belief-value pairs with the understanding that there could be several pairs in operation at once. Notably, information and knowledge can help create a shift in attitudes.

Behaviours

Behaviour is the way in which individuals express themselves and, for the purposes of our discussion, can be verbal or non-verbal. In addition to being influenced by attitudes, motivation plays a

25

role determining behaviour. Motivation can be influenced by the strength of beliefs and values that form attitudes (internal motivation) or it can be external, such bribery, yet the applicability of external influences will also be influenced by beliefs, values and attitudes. For example, bribing someone with money to motivate a certain behaviour would only work if that person valued money.

Culture

It is often helpful to conceptualize culture as an iceberg. In this way, beliefs, values and attitudes represent about ninety per cent of the cultural iceberg yet remain hidden from sight. Behaviours, representing a mere ten per cent or so of the cultural iceberg are, however, the only observable part of culture. (See Figure 2.)
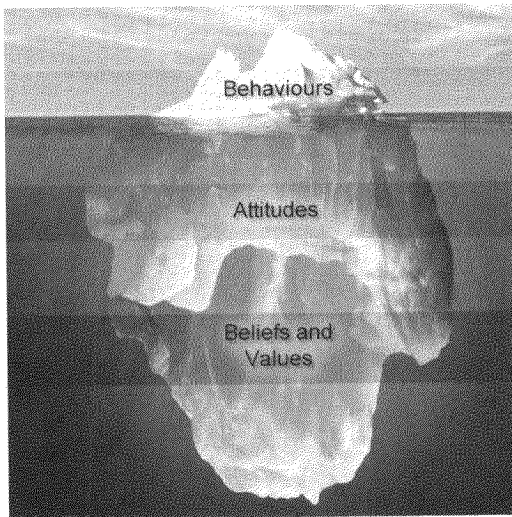

FIGURE 2. Culture Conceptualized as an Iceberg

Culture is expressed through shared behaviours that include language, religion, work habits, recreation practices, etc. It helps people to classify their experiences and communicate them symbolically. Generally, our daily lives reflect our beliefs, values and attitudes in a multitude of ways. They shape our lives and contribute

to our sense of identity. Culture influences what we do and who we think we are. Additionally, our beliefs, values and attitudes, as demonstrated through our behaviours, also shape how others see us. As such, examining a region's history, their expression of self and group identity, religious practices and affiliations, their distribution of power and resources, and their mean of communication are all valuable indicators of underlying group beliefs, values and attitudes.

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is the ability to understand the beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours of a group of people and, most importantly, to apply this knowledge toward a specific goal. Not surprisingly, CQ is a vital component of working effectively with indigenous forces. In order to behave appropriately, CANSOF personnel need to understand the national objective or goal, have the proper region specific knowledge/awareness, and have the ability and/or skill set and motivation to exhibit appropriate behaviour. (See Figure 3.)

Clear national objective or goal

Region specific knowledge/awareness

Mission Success

Ability and/or skill set and motivation
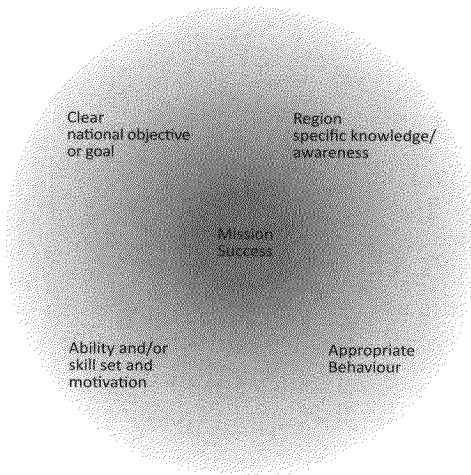
Appropriate Behaviour

FIGURE 3. CQ Components

Importantly, CQ is an applied concept. It is about translating information into knowledge and finally into action in the face of many, often competing, inputs. Indeed, "behave appropriately" is an easy concept to understand and yet a difficult one to implement, particularly as situations often arise in simultaneous, competing cultural spaces. Specifically, it is important to remember that CQ needs to be continuously applied with respect to the national, international and host-nation domains, as well as the antagonist/enemy domain. (See Figure 4.) An understanding of all the players involved and how they see you is an important enabler in the COE.
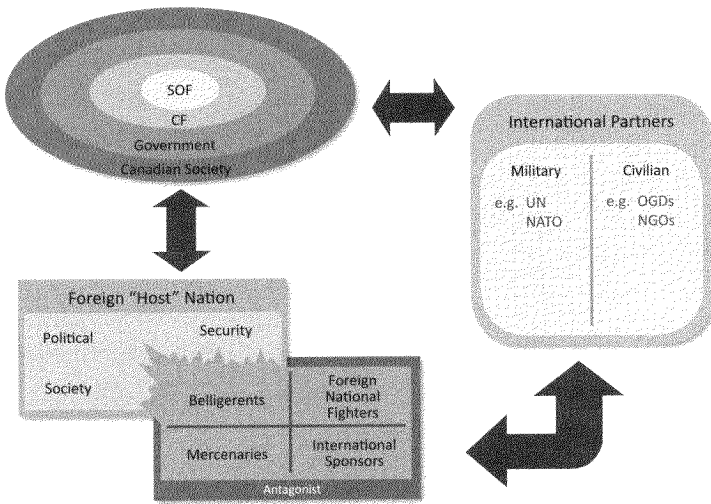

FIGURE 4.   Four CQ Domain Paradigm.

National Domain

Within the domestic realm there are a number of audiences that are critical for SOF to fully understand. The first is the Canadian general public, as public confidence and support is crucial to the continuing vitality of the Canadian Forces (CF) and CANSOF. Additionally, a "cultural" comprehension of the Canadian public can have an impact on recruiting. Finally, understanding what is

important to Canadians helps to prevent alienation, passivity or even active resistance particularly while assisting law enforcement agencies (LEAs) in a domestic context.

Another key domestic audience for SOF, and one for which CQ is especially important, is other governmental departments (OGDs). In the contemporary and future operating environments, integrated operations are increasingly the norm. Personal relationships and trust are key in effectively working toward a common goal. Cultural understandings will help to remove suspicion and build credibility and trust, which often equates to freedom of action.

Importantly, CQ is also fundamental to achieving optimal cooperation between all CF elements. CQ can help build the foundations for cooperation, resource sharing, and operational support. It can also assist in recruiting the necessary individuals from the other services if SOF are seen as a partner and sister element vice a competitor or rival.

International Domain

The international benefit of CQ for SOF, whether dealing with allies, coalition partners, government agencies, international organizations or agencies, or non-governmental organizations follows a similar rationale, as already noted. Quite simply, understanding those you work with makes for smoother relationships, better communication and understanding, and, therefore, more effective operations.

As such, CQ is vital to the CANSOF task set of Defence, Diplomacy and Military Assistance (DDMA). Whenever training foreign or indigenous forces in counter-terrorism, internal defence, guerrilla warfare, or any form of security operations, understanding your audience is fundamental. What resonates with them? How do you get them to listen and fully participate? How do you develop

bonds of trust and credibility? How do you appeal to their sense of duty and honour? How do you create lasting bonds of friendship and commitment?

In short, CQ is an important force multiplier for SOF in their relations and operations with international affiliates, both military and civilian. The proper utilization and application of CQ will enhance comprehension of, and communication with, our partners resulting in more effective outcomes.

Host-Nation Domain

Expressing CQ can help to generate support from the host-nation population, which has a direct impact on operations and assures that SOF are doing more good than harm. The support and cooperation of the population will create a more effective operating environment for friendly forces and deny the same to the enemy. Globally, expressing CQ can enhance force protection and reconstruction and development, while increasing information flow. Specifically, it can increase your ability to:

a. Provide information on adversary movements, identities and intentions;

b. Warn of adversary weapons and explosive caches, safe houses, ambush locations and IED placements;

c. Provide information on "communities" and define who belong and who do not; how authority and power are defined and codified; who are the power brokers and how resources are managed;

d. Provide information on key personalities, decision-makers and facilitators that can assist in mobilizing a target audience;

e.   Define rules for interaction;

f.   Explain relationships and social networks;

g.   Provide information on local/regional atmospherics with regard to culture, economics, demographics, social issues;

h.   Provide information on topographical issues such as best routes, environmental/ground limitations and restrictions;

i.   Enhance cooperation and participation in development, governance and reconstruction initiatives;

j.   Generate support and participation for local security initiatives; and

k.   Increase overall support for national government and supporting coalition.

In sum, to win the support of the people, or in popular military jargon their "hearts and minds," it is critical to understand them. Specifically, it is essential that SOF operators be able to see through the eyes of the host-nation populace and comprehend how their own words, behaviours and actions are actually seen, interpreted and understood by the host-nation population. This ability requires detailed CQ.

Antagonist/Enemy Domain

With respect to the antagonist/enemy domain, applying CQ represents a valuable return on investment. Specifically, it can:

a.   Provide insight into enemy motivation that could allow for diffusion of grievances or the co-opting of moderates;

b.   Assist with debunking enemy information operations, propaganda and recruiting messages by highlighting

discrepancies, contradictions and falsehoods;

c. Provide understanding of decision-making processes and value systems, thus, furnish possible weaknesses or stress points that can be manipulated;

d. Assist with the understanding of a pattern of behaviour that can provide insight into targeting (both the enemy's and your own), attack preferences (i.e. timing, locations, type, targets); likely reaction given situational circumstances (e.g. if faced with military or police actions), and normal pattern of life;

e. Assist with understanding history and symbology, which in turn provides insight into possible "safe areas" (sanctuary), historical and/or preferred attack positions/zones, targets and dates (i.e. historically, religiously or ideologically significant);

f. Provide insight into historic alliances and sponsors, which can lead to illuminating financing, supply nodes and routes, leadership engagements and possible sanctuaries; and

g. Provide insight into social networks, which in turn provide information on targeting of key personalities (i.e. leaders, facilitators, specialists) and intelligence gathering activities.

This list is not meant to be definitive. Rather, it is meant to highlight the types of information that can be obtained from applying CQ when analyzing the antagonist/enemy domain. A genuine understanding of the enemy as they see themselves – beyond our interpretation of their culture – will yield the greatest benefit in the struggle to vanquish our adversaries.

Summary

Cultural Intelligence helps you see the world through different eyes. In so doing, it also enables you with the ability to reflect on how you are seen from this perspective. When working with people from diverse cultural backgrounds it is a very important tool to utilize to help ensure that the message that you are attempting to deliver is in the end the same message that is being received. No matter what the intent, at the end of the day, it is the actual impact that is important. As such, it is vital to ensure that your message is being delivered *and* received as you intend it to be so that it may be acted on accordingly.

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Colonel Bernd Horn, OMM, MSM, CD, PhD is an experienced infantry officer who has held key command and staff appointments in the Canadian Forces, including Deputy Commander of CANSOFCOM, Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment and Officer Commanding 3 Commando. He is also an adjunct professor of history at the Royal Military College of Canada and Norwich University. He has authored, co-authored, edited or co-edited 35 books and over a hundred chapters/articles on military history, leadership and military affairs.

NOTES

1   Notably, avoid overtly taking lots of notes when observing be-
cause for some it looks as if you are gathering information that you will
later use against them. Note taking, particularly in a culture that does
not commit much to paper, can be seen as assessing others, potentially
negatively, for a report to their superiors. It tends to make individuals
wary if not suspicious of your intent/purpose. If you need to write, be
clear as to why and what you are recording.

2   Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian
Perspective* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 12. No-
tably, there is long-standing debate about the nature and definition of
culture. The 2006 American counter-insurgency manual, for examples,
contrasts cultural and social structures. It explains: "Social structure
comprises the relationships among groups, institutions, and individu-
als within a society; in contrast, culture (ideas, norms, rituals, codes of
behavior) provide meaning to individuals within the society." It defines
culture as a "'web of meaning' shared by members of a particular so-
ciety or group within a society." The manual explains this definition in
terms of people's identity, beliefs, values, attitudes, perceptions and
belief systems. It also emphasize that cultural knowledge about insur-
gents, as far as the military is concerned, should be exploited to be
used to further U.S. national objectives. *Counterinsurgency*, 3-6, 3-8.
Similarly, scholar Adam Bozeman, defines culture as "Those norms,
values, institutions and modes of thinking in a given society that sur-
vive change and remain meaningful to successive generations." Adda
Bozeman, cited in Montgomery McFate, "The Military Utility of Under-
standing Adversary Culture," *Joint Force Quarterly*, 38, 2005, 48, note 4.
Additionally, sociologist Edgar Schein defines organizational culture, a
concept that can be viewed much in the same way regional or national
culture, as, "A pattern of basic assumptions, invented, discovered, or
developed by a group as it learns to cope with its problems of external
adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be

considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems." E.H. Schein, *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999), 9. In the end, Schein asserted that the essence of an organization's culture is its basic underlying assumptions, which are taken for granted by members. After all, he notes that these underlying assumptions "provide consistency for its members, order and structure, boundaries and ground rules, membership criteria, communication patterns, conditions for reward, punishment and the use of power." E.H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 2nd Edition (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992), 5. This process is understandable since organizational culture provides members with not only a sense of identity and belonging, but also with a set of unwritten, unspoken beliefs and norms of behaviour that regulate how members will get along with one another within a stable social system. While all these definitions (as well as most of the available definitions of culture) are complementary, English's does an exceptional job of breaking culture down into its component parts and thereby making the concept of culture more understandable at a structural level. For this reason, his definition is expanded on and returned to in discussions of culture.

3   Adapted from English, *Understanding Military Culture*, 12.

CANSOFCOM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE MONOGRAPHS

1. *More Than Meets the Eye: The Invisible Hand of SOF in Afghanistan*
    Colonel Bernd Horn, 2011.

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