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On the Cover

TITLE: WITH HONOR

MASTER SGT. ANTONIO LOFTON, UNITED STATES HONOR GUARD DRILL TEAM SECTION CHIEF, PERFORMS A DRILL DURING THE JOINT BASE ANDREWS 2022 AIR AND SPACE EXPO AT JOINT BASE ANDREWS, MD. 18 SEP 2022. THE MISSION OF THE HONOR GUARD IS TO REPRESENT ALL U.S. AIRMEN BY DEMONSTRATING MILITARY EXCELLENCE, PRECISION, AND DISCIPLINE WHILE INSPIRING PATRIOTISM IN AUDIENCES WORLDWIDE.
(U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. NILSA GARCIA)

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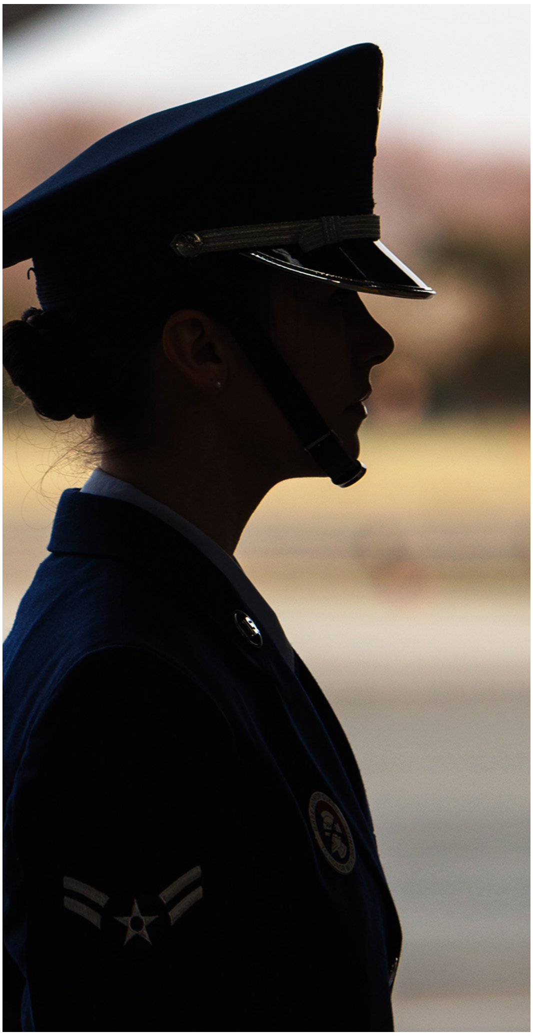

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Director's Note

Thank you for your interest in the Journal of Military Conflict Transformation (JMCT). The purpose of this publication is to foster an intellectual platform in which scholars, students, researchers, and subject matter experts can contribute original content that enhances the theory and education of conflict management, negotiation, mediation, and facilitation with an emphasis on the military environment.

The theme of this edition is trust. Trust is a foundational building block of successful negotiations and conflict management. As a career Construction Manager with over 20 years in civil service, my most successful projects and programs were built by teams that developed a high level of trust. Whether you're a chaplain negotiating as an agent of peace, a military leader attempting to de-escalate conflict with an adversary, or a professor engaging with your students, developing rapport with the other party may be the difference between success and failure.

One of my mentors, Colonel Christopher Crary, used to say that truth is the little T and trust is the big T. Some truths will never change, but in this complex world, not everything is black and white. What you may know to be true today may be different tomorrow. Circumstances change. Sometimes you learn more information. Sometimes you find out that yesterday's "truth" was just outright wrong. Conversely, trust is about who you are (integrity) and how you are perceived (credibility). Rhetoricians call it ethos. As you read the articles in this journal, I encourage you to think about your own ethos. How can it be developed? How can your ethos be used in managing conflict and negotiations?

Enjoy the latest edition of the JMCT.

Chad N. McLeod

Chad N. McLeod, P.E., PMP
Director, Air Force Negotiation Center

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Editor's Welcome

Greetings JMCT Fellow,

I am the Editor-in-Chief for the Air Force Negotiation Center's (AFNC) Journal of Military Conflict Transformation. I count myself very fortunate to have the honor of serving with our team of dedicated professionals here at the AFNC. It is our endeavor to provide an informative resource for academics, leaders, professionals, facilitators, and the like in advancing the work of conflict transformation.

We are excited to have you here with us to embark upon this exploration of content related to our publication's central theme of Trust. Some may surmise trust as being essential in securing conflict transformation while others may determine trust as being optional in the conflict transformation process. Regardless of the outlook to which you prescribe, we invite you to revisit your convergent or divergent viewpoints concerning trust as you appraise this journal.

Trust is generally defined as a firm belief, confident hope in something or someone. In this edition of the JMCT, trust is translucent in some instances and transparent in others. The contributors incorporate multi-faceted concepts to facilitate the idea of trust in this fashion. For instance, one contributor used systems and theories to assemble an understanding of the organizational environment. Another contributor provided insights as to how de-escalation fosters collaboration. Yet another contributor posited the role of trust in relationship to leader development programs. One may ponder as to how these diverse concepts relate to trust. You are hereby entrusted with this discovery.

Sandra L. Edwards

Sandra L. Edwards, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief, JMCT

Military Chaplains: As Agents of Peace

CALEB MILLER, CH (CPT), USA

Caleb Miller currently serves as a battalion chaplain in the U.S. Army, stationed at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story. He has written on ethics, suicide, and history in various publications such as The U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Journal, From the Green Notebook, and The Strategy Bridge (forthcoming). This review reflects his own views and not necessarily the official position of the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps or the Department of Defense.

Calls to incorporate religious analysis and action into U.S. military operations, humanitarian assistance efforts, and peacebuilding missions are plentiful, yet practical resources on how exactly to carry this out effectively, legally and ethically are harder to find.[1] Specific questions linger, even as the Army, Navy, and Air Force have integrated religious leader engagement into chaplain training. How can religious commonalities lead to peace when so many religious differences lead to conflict and war? What theoretical framework might inform this work without becoming biased in favor of one religion? Who exactly should engage in this work: civil affairs, diplomats, or chaplains? If it is chaplains, what about their non-combatant status while engaging in work that comes close to influencing and information gathering? What can a chaplain – who is continually balancing commitments external to the unit (key leader engagement, area analysis) with internal requirements (providing area coverage, spiritual counseling, advising a commander), and may not have studied other cultures or world religions in depth – really accomplish?

S. K. Moore's contribution from 2014, *Military Chaplains as Agents of Peace: Religious Leader Engagement in Conflict and Post-conflict Environments*, provides a guide to answering these questions in a thoughtful and informed way.[2] Moore is certainly not the first to write on the role chaplains can play in a peacebuilding process, but he may be the most comprehensive in his outline of how to

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Donnette Boyd wears the patch of a Christian cross on her uniform to identify her as a chaplain Aug. 18, 2014, at Aviano Air Base, Italy. During her upbringing, religion and church were not a part of her daily life; however, she became a strong believer after discovering how to pray on her own. Boyd is now a 31st Fighter Wing chaplain.
(U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Deana Heitzman)

engage religious leaders. He draws on a wealth of scholarly and firsthand experience in the Canadian Forces.[3]

Military Chaplains as Agents of Peace is densely packed; in a short review such as this it may be most expedient to simply lay out *how Moore answers the questions. First, how can religious differences lead to peace when so many religious differences lead to conflict and war?* Moore's answer here is not to give an apology for any one religious body or group of religions, but rather to point out that many religions incorporate a way to break the cycle of what Moore calls "mimetic" violence, where two or more groups are mimicking one another's disposition toward one another. It would not be incidental that many nonviolent protests are linked to explicit religious identity and language.

Second, what theoretical framework might inform this work without becoming biased in favor of one religion? Though Moore does not speak directly to First Amendment concerns in a U.S. context (writing as a Canadian), Moore's main dialogue partners here are Miroslav Volf and R. Scott Appelby – Volf for a Christian theological framework stressing a radical reconciliation between sworn enemies, but Appelby for a more sober, pluralistic context in which violent religious extremism must also be accounted for. His approach is reminiscent of a Just Peacemaking Theory, which has made inroads in interfaith dialogues among Christians, Jews and Muslims, but goes a step further in retaining specifically Christian convictions.[4]

Third, who exactly should engage in this work: civil affairs, diplomats, or chaplains? If chaplains, what about their non-combatant status while engaging in work that comes close to influencing and information gathering, and what can a chaplain really accomplish? Here Moore crucially stresses who and what the chaplain is rather than just his or her expertise. Habituation of a virtue rather than realization of an ideal. Being teachable rather than claiming exhaustive knowledge is more effective, especially in a chaotic and ever-evolving environment.

Military Chaplains as Agents of Peace rewards all patient and careful readers who are interested in the peacemaking role of a chaplain, though it will be most rewarding to those tasked with writing policy and doctrine related to key leader engagements. Moore's analysis and case studies cover both asymmetrical insurgency conflicts (Iraq, Afghanistan) and intrastate civil wars (Bosnia-Herzegovina), and so can be applied to more than a specific type of conflict. Moore, writing from outside the U.S. context, is sensitive to the comprehensive approach of an international coalition where multiple nations, agencies, and military branches are working at once. His insights may easily transfer to near-peer conflicts, even if religious leader engagements in near-peer scenarios will likely only take place or precedence in the stabilization phase. In any case, Moore offers clarity without oversimplification. His work has renewed and enduring relevance today in aiding chaplains and others interested in religiously-literate peacebuilding initiatives.

Endnotes

[1]Carolina Borjas has recently encouraged politicians and diplomats to take a more active role in interreligious dialogue; Navy Chaplain Wayne Macrae has argued that religious dynamics need be "integrated into existing strategic-level military education." Air Force Chaplain David Leonard has concentrated on the unique qualifications and role of the chaplain in the operational process. Carolina Borjas, "Faith-Based Diplomacy: An Opportunity to Prevent Conflict," *Strife Journal* 17 (Winter 2022), 22. Wayne A. Macrae, "Rightsizing our Understanding of Religion," *Joint Force Quarterly* 99 (4th Quarter 2020), 86. David R. Leonard, "Peacemakers: Chaplains as Vital Links in the Peace Chain," *Joint Force Quarterly* 96 (1st Quarter 2020), 64, 70.
[2]S. K. Moore, *Military Chaplains as Agents of Peace: Religious Leader Engagement in Conflict and Post-conflict Environments* (Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2014). 300 pages. ISBN: 978-0-7391-4910-2. $57.
[3]William Sean Lee, Christopher J. Burke, and Zonna M. Crayne, *Military Chaplains as Peace Builders: Embracing Indigenous Religious in Stability Operations* (Maxwell AFB: Air University Press, February 2005); Moore also draws case studies derived from his served as a chaplain for twenty-two years in the Canadian Forces with tours in Bosnia, Haiti, and Afghanistan.
[4]Susan Thistlethwaite, *Interfaith Just Peacemaking: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on the New Paradigm of Peace and War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 51-68. Cf. Lisa Sowle Cahill, "The Changing Vision of 'Just Peace' in Catholic Social Tradition," *The Journal of Moral Theology* 7.2 (2018), 102-108.

A Review of: "The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Coming" AND A CAUTIONARY TALE OF THE VALUE OF DE-ESCALATION IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

MAY 1966, DIRECTED BY: NORMAN JEWISON

REVIEWED BY MAJOR RACHEL J. STEVENSON, USAF, NC

Major Stevenson, a trauma nurse in the Air Force, has seen firsthand how reminders of humanity and humor can transform conflict at Craig Joint Theatre Hospital in 2018 as well as in local Level I trauma centers, children's wards, and in the home.

The little known 1966 movie, "The Russians are coming, The Russians are coming", provides insight into the value of de-escalating conflict in a humorous, albeit totally fictional, story. The movie looks at the shenanigans that ensue when a Russian submarine runs aground off a small island in New England during the Cold War and how the crew interacts with the local town folk to *free* the submarine. There are plenty of colorful characters, including Alan Arkin portraying a Russian naval officer, each reacting in their own way to the looming threat or thought of what the threat might be from adversaries meeting unexpectantly. Through this mayhem, the film sets out quite a few nuggets on conflict management and resolution.

Whether riding a girl's bike into town as the only means of transportation or holding up a sign in the sidecar of a motorcycle wearing just your housecoat, there are important messages to be delivered as people resort to creative means to communicate with each other when neither party understands the other. In negotiations and conflict, there needs to be an assessment of the 'why' behind what may seem to be absurd or abnormal actions. We should all remember each other's humanity and how hostility can be easily disarmed by a simple act such as a little girl's smile and innocent wave. If de-escalation is sought, consideration should focus as in the movie on the preverbal way to meet on common ground or share a meal to remind each side that we all love our children. However, care should be given that even well-meaning actions can fuel the fire such as a little boy with his pop gun 'defending' his house from the Russian submariners. Especially in tense situations, otherwise innocent actions, words, or body language can inflame or be misunderstood leading to unintended escalation.

Attempts at communication should be carefully weighed as any action can be interpreted incorrectly as showcased in this movie. Alice, the short-fused telephone operator, will just pull the plug on your phone call if she gets angry with you. This is an example when the issue is a hot topic with passionately held thoughts, shutting down or stopping conversation can be a harmful coping mechanism. An old man remains blissfully unaware of his wife being tied up in his kitchen as he drinks his morning coffee. What important information can be missed that is right in front of us? The transmission of information can become incredibly convoluted as fears, assumptions and imaginations dilute the actual events. The townspeople have various responses to bogus info about "Russian paratroopers!" Initial assumptions can be wrong – the young submariner doesn't want to hurt the babysitter but merely to make contact and ask for help. Common language needs to be employed in de-escalation or the message will literally be lost in translation. Lastly, communication can be misleading as the hilarious scene depicts the potential reaction of town folks to the Russian captain's attempts to teach his fellow shipmates how to say

> Emergency, everybody to get from street!

The old way is sometimes not the best way. Fendall, the crusty old Colonel from "the war" wields his sword around to give himself authority although he does not hold any actual position of power. The townsfolk eagerly listen to his yells and follow his unwise courses of action. When the actual police chief arrives, played by Brian Keith, there must be discussion and mediation between the misguided town hero and what actually needs to occur to ensure the safety of all as events escalate. It can be a delicate situation to help illuminate why some ideas may not be the best while still giving deference to someone with past accomplishments.

Finding common ground is important. The conflict was transformed as everyone stops mid-fight to save a little boy falling from the church belfry. After finally coming to friendly terms, the town elects to help the Russians free their submarine. This task though is not as easy as it sounds as US military authorities have been contacted. Everyone learns that the Air Force is enroute to subdue the vessel and possibly lay the groundwork for an even greater escalation of the situation. Realizing the stakes, the town folk rally around their newfound détente with the rival nation and thwart the pending air strike by surrounding the Russian submarine with their civilian boats and safely escorting the Russians away from the island.

The conflict which could've sparked World War III ends with smiles and handshakes just as the town drunk finally arrives on his mule to loudly announce "The Russians are coming!" This film is sure to bring smiles to faces and certainly contains memorable clips and discussions that could ensue regarding Conflict Transformation.

Shifting Gears in Leadership: From Defensive Driving to Strategic Leadership

DR. NOVADEAN WATSON-WILLIAMS

Abstract

The paper addresses the elements of strategic leadership via the practice of defensive driving. It highlights those key defensive techniques coined by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation to include visibility, space, and communication The paper further expands on three points. First, exercising visibility in strategic leadership to see beyond the horizon and determine the vision of an organization. Second, exercising space as a leader by managing space and agility to act and succinctly respond to changes. Third, exercising communication as a leader to promote decision-making and control and influence and motivate people for organizational effectiveness.The paper concludes by reminding the reader to shift gears and strategically lead like a defensive driver.

Keywords

Leadership, Leader, Follower, Defensive Driving, Strategic Leadership

The Paper

Leading a team or an organization to deliver excellence takes exemplary leadership. Leaders steer the direction of an organization or a team to model effectiveness, efficiency, and organizational success. But what is leadership? The Air Force Pamphlet 35-49 defines leadership as, "…the art and science of influencing and directing people to accomplish the assigned." As cited in Forbes Magazine, Bill Gates defines leadership by contending, "As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others;" and, John Maxwell, an American author and speaker, who wrote many books on leadership such as T*he 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership and The 21 Indispensable*

Qualities of a Leader, declares, "Leadership is influence - nothing more, nothing less." Additionally, former CEO of MasterCard, Ajay Banga defines, "A leader is someone who can think strategically, simplify the strategy so everyone in the organization can understand it and communicate that strategy simply, enthusiastically, and in a caring way." Marissa Mayer, Former CEO of Yahoo!, explains, "Leadership is helping believe in a better tomorrow or a better outcome than you have today." Tom Wilson, CEO of Allstate, contends, "Leadership is getting people to willingly go someplace they wouldn't go themselves." Clearly, there are many definitions of leadership, but they all center around the driver and the passenger—the leader and the follower.

Many adults capable of driving do so with ease—it is second nature to them. They maneuver the road with comfort, exercising safety techniques and skills and effectively communicating with others while making their way to their destination. As they continue to drive, they become more proficient and competent. They mature to appreciate the art of practicing defensive driving. According to Shell Corporation, "Defensive driving techniques reduce the likelihood of a collision or incident and can even save costs related to vehicle maintenance and fuel consumption, by driving smoothly and steadily. A defensive driver does not just concentrate on his or her own actions [but] anticipates the likely actions of other road users."[1] In essence, driving is not just a science; it is an art that requires leading, awareness, critical thinking, agility, listening, communicating, following, influencing, collaborating, negotiating, compromising, and empathy. Ironically, the elements of defensive driving resonate with strategic leadership. This theory indirectly suggests that if most driving adults apply their defensive driving techniques to strategically lead the people who follow them, they would realize more rewarding results by just shifting gears.

Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership mirrors the art and science of driving successful, agile processes used to make productive changes and implement lasting solutions. It was strategic leadership that resulted in Lynsi Lavelle Snyder-Ellingson, the CEO of In-N-Out Burger, receiving an approval rating of 96% from her employees and ranking as Glassdoor's top restaurant chief, according to Resturantbusinessonline.com.[2] Peter Romeo, director of digital content of the foodservice group of Winsight Media, reported, "Snyder finished 20th on the placement service's 2021 list, or higher than any other restaurant president or CEO."[3] Moreover, it was strategic leadership that propelled Jeff Bezos, the former CEO of Amazon, into a widely recognized transformational leader. Google's founders, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, popularized the "20% time" rule as a strategic leadership approach when Google went public in 2004. They contended,

> We encourage our employees, in addition to their regular projects, to spend 20% of their time working on what they think will most benefit Google. This empowers them to be more creative and innovative. Many of our significant advances have happened in this manner.[4]

More profoundly, strategic leadership is the cornerstone of our military. General Robert W. Cone, U.S. Army, Retired, Colonel Richard D. Creed Jr., U.S. Army, Retired, and Lt. Colonel Adrian T. Bogart III, U.S. Army, Retired, surmised, "All Army leaders must succeed at two practical tasks. The first is to make explicit that which is implicit. This means they must understand vision or intent and put it into definable, measurable, positive action. The second is to do what the boss needs them to do, whatever that is and whether or not they understand or agree with it. Both tasks address how we support our civil and military leaders, equip them to make the right decisions, and assist them with their strategic responsibilities."[5]

They further shared 12 principles of strategic leadership based on their personal experience, which included: (1) vision—take the time to get it right, (2) make mission command reality, (3) see yourself accurately, (4) remember we are all on the same side, (5) develop decision points ahead of policy, (6) use all the tools available, (7) "Humility is critical to…success as a strategic leader. It keeps you grounded in the mission… It helps prevent toxicity,"[6] (8) take care of people, (9) never put your leaders in a bad situation, (10) think completely outside your lane, (11) challenge convention, and (12) build personal relationships.[7]

Essentially, effective strategic leadership helps illuminate a leader's direction and vision and streamline the goals and plans used to determine tactical and operational activities. Additionally, strategic leadership aligns handsomely with three elements of defensive driving techniques coined by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation: **visibility, space, and communication**. These three elements help everyday drivers practice some of the core tenets of strategic leadership during their day-to-day driving and living. Leaders may apply some of the same defensive driving techniques to their strategic leadership. Yogi Berra said, "If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up someplace else." If one can drive with a destination in mind, one can adopt these techniques into the essence of leading—it is just that simple.

Exercising Visibility as a Leader

According to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, "Visibility is about seeing and being seen. [The driver] should always be aware of traffic in front, behind, and beside [him]. Keep [his] eyes constantly moving, scanning the road ahead and to the side and checking [his] mirrors every five seconds or so. The farther ahead [he looks], the less likely [he] will be surprised, and [he] will have time to avoid any hazards. Make sure other drivers can see [him] by using…signal lights as required."[8] Exercising visibility in strategic leadership is a must. It requires the leader to examine the needs of the organization from a distance, and determine what's ahead and what's the next move to keep the organization relevant and current. Organizations that do not do well often fail to maintain a consistent form of scanning the horizon and checking for shifting in the industry—they tend to risk the possibility of crashing and failing, much like driving when visibility is not clear.

Many companies and organizations have demonstrated using visibility to realize incredible success. Two renowned companies still very influential today as cutting-edge models and market benchmarks are Chick-fil-A and Apple Inc. In 2022, two of Chick-fil-A's major values were noted as, "We are purpose-driven. We model our Purpose every day, connecting our work and daily activities to our business strategy, supporting each other's efforts to be good stewards who create positive impact on all who come in contact with Chick-fil-A. We pursue what's next. We find energy in adapting and re-inventing how we do things, from the way we work to how we care for others."[9] Also, Tim Cook, CEO of Apple Computer, stated, "We believe in saying no to thousands of projects, so that we can really focus on the few that are truly important and meaningful to us. We believe in deep collaboration and cross-pollination of our groups, which allow us to innovate in a way that others cannot. And frankly, we don't settle for anything less than excellence in every group in the company, and we have the self-honesty to admit when we're wrong and the courage to change. And I think regardless of who is in what job those values are so embedded in this company that Apple will do extremely well."[10] Chick-fil-A and Apple Inc. are two classic examples of leaders exercising visibility to avoid surprises and industry-related hazards that would, otherwise, undermine their ability to shift gears and realize strategic success. Interestingly, the visibility for these respected companies is anchored in their values and beliefs.

David Cottrell, President and CEO of CornerStone Leadership Institute wrote,

> The Principle of Vision – Results improve when leaders establish a crystal-clear vision with a convincing reason to embrace the vision.[11]

Thomas Bateman and Robert Konopaske further explained, "A vision is a mental image of a possible and desirable future state of the organization. The best visions are both ideal and unique. Ideal communicates a standard of excellence and a clear choice of positive values. A unique vision communicates and inspires pride in being different from other organizations. Visions can be small or large and exist throughout all organizational levels, as well as at the very top: 1. A vision is necessary for effective leadership. 2. A manager or team can develop a vision for any job, work unit, or organization. 3. Many people, including managers who do not develop into strong leaders, do not develop a clear vision—instead they focus on performing or surviving on a day-to-day basis."[12] MasterClass recommends practicing these four qualities of a visionary leader, which will further advance exercising visibility as a leader: forward-thinking used to examine the future for what is right for tomorrow's success, plan-oriented used to schedule the next strategic step towards the vision, being optimistic to maintain a motivating attitude in spite of the challenges along the way, and creativity to uncover what is hidden and shine light on the unimagined.[13] For example, the use of autonomous drones and vehicles, fifth generation (5G) mobile technologies, and augmented and virtual reality are just some of the activities requiring the military to rely on strategic leadership visibility in and out of cyberspace. Overall, strategic leaders will enhance their ability to shift gears with sharp visibility couched in the vision they set. David Cottrell reminds, "For you to be the very best, you cannot allow yourself to become complacent in your comfort zone. You need to be reaching for improvement."[14]

Exercising Space as a Leader

According to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, "Managing the space around [the driver's] vehicle lets [the driver] see and be seen and gives [the driver] time and space to avoid a collision. Leave a cushion of space ahead, behind, and to both sides. Because the greatest risk of a collision is in front of [the driver], stay well back."[15] Just as driving defensively requires motorists to space their driving needs for adequate reactions, strategic leadership requires having the space and agility to act and respond to changes. To live is to change, but change is constant and at a moment's notice. John Kotter, a thought leader and author and founder of Kotter International, a management consulting firm, argues, "The rate of change in the…

world is not going to slow down anytime soon. If anything, competition in most industries will probably speed up over the next few decades. Enterprises everywhere will be presented with even more terrible hazards and wonderful opportunities, driven by globalization of the economy along with related technological and social trends."[16] Unfortunately, most people do not enjoy the experiences of change. In some instances, it is not fun. However, it is always necessary at some point. External and internal forces drive change, such as stakeholders; environment; marketplace requirements for success; business, organizational, and cultural imperatives; and leaders' and employees' behavior and mindset.[17] Utilizing space strategically will allow leaders to shift gears while affording the organization and people impacted resiliency, and good spirit, as in the case of Netflix, Domino's Pizza, and Coca-Cola.[18] In 2007, Netflix changed access to movies by simply allowing subscribers to stream and ingest content digitally; this change triggered a change management exercise, which resulted in a decline in subscriptions initially that later increased exponentially. Netflix successfully implemented change management to meet the needs of the consumers when its long-term sustainability was dependent on how it managed the change to a digital future. Netflix subscribers grew from 23 million in 2011 to more than 221.6 million subscribers in 2022.[19] Jason Wise, the author of *Netflix Statistics 2022: How Many Subscribers Does Netflix Have?*, reinforced,

> So trusting their plan worked, as the business knew DVDs were on their way out and they needed to shift gears.[20]

In 2008, Domino's Pizza was struggling but recovered in 2012, with the use of change management focused on digital efforts such as text messages, Alexa, Google Home, Twitter, Facebook, Smart TVs - methods used by consumers to order a pizza; tested drone; robot delivery; and self-driving vehicles.[21]
"Perhaps no [organization] has been through change management challenges quite like the Coca-Cola Company. One example is from the 1980s when bitter rivals Pepsi started to aggressively target Coca-Cola."[22] David Cottrell reinforced, "The Principle of Change Management – Results improve

to the extent the leader embraces change and makes change positive."[23] According to John Kotter, "To date, major change efforts have helped some organizations adapt significantly to shifting conditions, have improved the competitive standing of others, and have positioned a few for a far better future."[24] Netflix, Domino's Pizza, and Coca-Cola are just a few of the companies that illustrated the need to manage the space around their organizations to more efficiently leave adequate room for recovery, thereby avoiding the prospect of failure but never forgetting the greatest risk of a collision is still possible. Bateman and Konopaske expanded a more ideal way to manage rapid changes in an organization namely to set aside resources to assess and control changes annually and then to use projections and creativity to stay abreast of the changes. In addition, organizations must constantly keep talent relevant and allow the people working in the organizations to practice professional development.[25]

Exercising Communication as a Leader

According to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, motorists should "Communicate with other road users to make sure they see…and know what [they] are doing. Make eye contact with pedestrians, cyclists and drivers at intersections and signal whenever [they] want to slow down, stop, turn or change lanes. If [they] need to get another person's attention, [they should] use [their] horn."[26] Driving requires constant observation and communication with surroundings and with other motorists. This communication may come in several forms, such as verbal, nonverbal, and digital. Most accidents are prevented when communication is used effectively, and communication pitfalls are averted. Accordingly, most organizations realize immense success when strategic leadership is complemented with communication that promotes decision-making and control and that influences and motivates people for organizational effectiveness.[27] Most individuals spend a great deal of time communicating, which is fine when done successfully. However, when communication is lackluster, the repercussions can be very costly.

Boris Groysberg and Michael Slind call

poor to no communication a silent killer in an organization.[28] Nokia and Enron are just two examples of companies that failed due to a lack of strategic communication. Nokia fell from being the world's largest mobile-phone manufacturer by losing control on the highway of success after it failed to practice the strategic leadership needed to capitalize on communication. Strategic use of communication would have shifted Nokia from mobile phones to smartphones when the lanes in the mobility market changed.[29] The other example is Enron. Groysberg and Slind explained,

> …A scholarly investigation into the problems that led to Enron's collapse pinpointed several 'communication-based leader responsibilities' that senior managers failed to meet — responsibilities such as 'communicating appropriate values' and 'maintaining openness to signs of problems.'[30]

Undoubtedly, communication is mandatory for the success of most entities, processes, individuals, and organizations.

There are many barriers to communication such as physical noise, sender or source of communication, miscommunication due to varying levels in an organization, diminishing face-to-face communication as a result of virtual environments, lack of common knowledge and cultural differences increased due to greater global interactions, perception in receiving and interpreting information, lack of concentration and growing distractions, semantics, communication style and preference.[31] Consequently, the need to blow the horn and awaken productive communication requires continuous commitment as part of strategic leadership. All leaders and followers, much like all motorists within a driving distance, must become aware of the value of strategic communication and that it is a necessary process with lasting implications.

Summary

Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner's Leadership Model emphasizes Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership to include Modeling the Way, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Challenging the Process, Enabling Others to Act, and Encouraging the Heart.[32] These practices align with the knowledge, skills,

The Air Force-sponsored No. 43 Legacy Motor Club car driven by Erik Jones battles for a lead spot during a NASCAR race, April 23, 2023, at Talladega Superspeedway, Ala. During the event, the U.S. Air Force Reserve celebrated 75 years of history and heritage. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Corban Lundborg)

and attitude of leaders leading strategically. Leaders must pay careful attention to visibility as would a motorist driving defensively. Leaders must allow adequate spacing between goals, projects, tactics and operations to afford sufficient reaction and recovery time as drivers do between vehicles. Leaders must communicate frequently with key stakeholders, much like most skilled drivers do with nearby drivers.

Since many people drive on a daily basis, they should find it easier to migrate their defensive driving skills into strategic leadership practices. Nonetheless, note, strategic leadership is meaningless if there is no vision, no space or allowance for change management, and no productive communication channels. John Maxwell reiterates, “Leadership is action, not position.” In the 2015 movie, *Superfast!*, Dale Pavinski who is known as Vin Serento contends, “It’s not the car you drive. It’s the driver who’s driving the car that’s doing the driving.” To those who are leading, shift gears and strategically lead like a defensive driver regardless of the position, organization or company. Capitalize on any driving skills used daily.

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Biography

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Understanding the Environment and the Boundary of the Organization: Through Open Systems Theory and Contingency Theory

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Abstract

Whether focused on negotiation, facilitation or mediation, success comes from understanding not only one's position and interest, but that of the opposing parties. In the pre-negotiation stage, attention should include understanding the environment both parties are operating in as means of achieving this advantage. Open systems and contingency theories provide such an avenue to expeditiously reviewing not only one's current environment, but that of the opposing parties. This article dives into the mechanics of both theories with the end goal of providing a quick and easy tool for utilizing these theories.

Key Words

Open Systems Theory, Contingency Theory, Negotiation, Facilitation and Mediation

Opening

One gains an advantage in a negotiation by planning for the negotiation. If a negotiation process is divided into three distinct phases – pre-negotiation, negotiation, and outcome – then it stands to reason that the pre-negotiation phase would benefit with the understanding of the environment the negotiation is occurring in. This is where Open Systems Theory and Contingency

Theory plays a decisive factor in increasing the odds for a successful negotiation.[1]

Adaptation is essential for understanding an organization and how it interacts to its environment. Open systems theory provides a means of defining this adaptation. The origins of open systems theory are rooted in the use of biological principles of organisms as a metaphor for an organization. Von Bertalanffy[2,3] identified this lineage to an organic system as an entity contained within a boundary. Boulding[4] further applied von Bertalanffy's principles to organizations. Open systems theory therefore describes how an organization interacts with its environment[5]. Examples of these interfaces are summarized in detail by Emery[6] and categorized as either task or general environments.[7] Task environments consist of industry, raw materials, market, economic, and physical environments; these kinds of environments have a direct impact on a business. General environment issues consist of human resources, financial, technology, legal-regulatory, political, cultural, and socio-demographic; these issues have an indirect impact on a business.[8] Burns and Stalker[9] put forth ideas about merging the task environment to the general environment. McCabe and Dutton[10] created a model that can be used to assess the environment in which an organization is operating. Furthering this research, Lawrence and Lorsch[11] compared the organization's environment to how it is managed; thereby establishing an organization as a unique entity defined by boundaries which interacts with its environment.[12] This work, however, does not address the success in understanding the organization and the environment in which the organization operates.

Contingency Theory

Contingency theory provides such a framework for determining the success of an organization's structure and the demands of the environment in which it operates. Burrell and Morgan[13] define contingency theory as follows:

> Contingency theory postulates that the successfulness of the organization in coping with the demands of its environment is contingent upon the elements of the various subsystems which comprise

> the organization being designed in accordance with the demands of the environment with which they interact as presented.[14]

Applying contingency theory entails breaking down an organization into subsystems and examining whether these subsystems are aligned properly or congruent with the environment they operate in (Figure1). Miles and Snow[15,16] postulate these subsystems as administrative, engineering, and entrepreneurial approaches and how these subsystems apply to an organization's ability to address change. The administrative subsystem correlates to an organization's ability to predict future innovation and rationalize its current structure and processes. The entrepreneurial subsystem concentrates on an organization's market and product domains. Lastly, the engineering subsystem focuses on the organization's choice of technology for production and distribution. Though behaviorists have a variety of different perspectives on these subsystems, the foundation of contingency theory is based on proper alignment within these subsystems to each other.

Burrell and Morgan[17] expand on this understanding of contingency theory by viewing subsystems as a means of understanding how the organization adapts to its environment. They identify three subsystems: operational, human, and managerial. The operational (sometimes referred to as technological or structural) subsystem is defined by the limits of mechanistic/bureaucratic at one end and organic at the other. Drawing on the work of Maslow,[18] the human subsystem identifies physiology/safety needs at one end of the spectrum and esteem/self-actualization at the other. Lastly, the managerial subsystem communicates an organization's style, specifically addressing whether an organization is authoritarian or democratic. Furthering this research, Morgan[19] establishes the following subsystems: environmental, strategic, technological, human/cultural, structural, and managerial. Regardless of their background and emphasis, these authors advocate the basic notion that a congruent organization should be aligned properly in all its subsystems, whereas an in-congruent organization would be misaligned to or mixed with the environment in which it is operating.

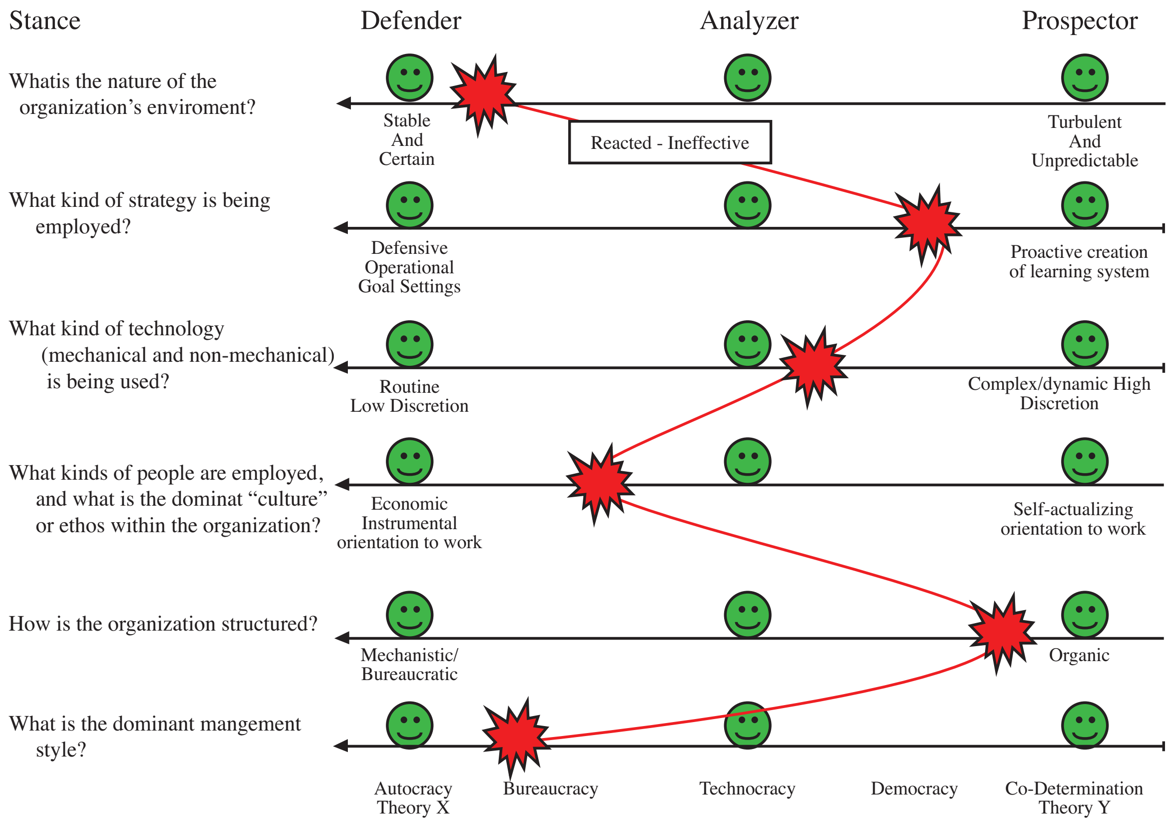


Figure 1. Organizational success defined using contingency theory that profiles organizational subsystems and congruency identifications of defender, analyzer, prospector, and reactor stances. **Note.** Adapted from *Images of Organization* (2nd ed.; p. 58), by G. Morgan, 1997, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Copyright 1997 by Sage.

Environment.

The environment an organization operates in and interacts with, creates a baseline of operational benefits and challenges. To determine how the environment is likely to impact an organization's functioning, some form of environmental scanning is utilized, focuses on the identification of emerging issues, situations, and potential pitfalls that may affect an organization's future. The information gathered, including the events, trends, and relationships that are external to an organization,

> is provided to key managers within the organization and is used to guide management in future plans.[20]

Morgan[21] defines this functioning to include economic, technological, market, labor relations, and sociopolitical dimensions as factors that comprise an organization's environment. Burrell and Morgan[22] add clarification to environmental scanning by creating a continuum of environmental predictability, with stable and certain on one end, and turbulent and unpredictable at the other. Once the environment has been thoroughly scanned and analyzed, the organization is able to formulate a competitive strategy that is congruent with current environmental conditions.[23]

Strategy.

An organization that has scanned its environment carefully will then be capable to make key decisions based on its findings. Paramount to the organization is the decisions made with regards to the: (a) goals and direction of the organization, (b) internal mechanisms to achieve the goals, and (c) monitoring of those mechanisms.[24] Miles and Snow[25,26] have specified four unique stances to gauge the alignment of the strategy with the environment: prospector, analyzer, defender, and reactor. These stances encompass a range of action for each of Morgan's[27] subsystems: environmental, strategic, technological, human/cultural, structural, and managerial.

Prospector stance.

Organizations adopt a prospector stance and employ the most successful organizational structure possible when the environment is turbulent and unpredictable. Miles and Snow[28,29] contend,

> Organizations that almost continually search for market opportunities, and they regularly experiment with potential responses to emerging environmental trends. Thus, these organizations often are the creators of change and uncertainty to which their competitors must respond. However, because of their strong concern for product and market innovation, these organizations usually are not completely efficient.[30]

In other words, an organization employing a prospector stance successfully is proactive and willing to create learning systems. Individuals have a high level of discretion in their roles, as their roles are complex in nature. Members seeking an environment that is self-actualizing will be most successful, meaning that the organization will embrace an organic structure and democratic managerial style.[31]

Defender stance.

Contrasting to the prospector stance, an organization will adopt a defender stance when its environment is stable and certain. Miles and Snow[32] contend,

> Organizations that have narrow product-market domains. Top managers in this stance of organization are highly expert in their organization's limited area of operation but do not tend to search outside of their domains for new opportunities. As a result of this narrow focus, these organizations seldom need to make major adjustments in their technology, structure, or methods of operation. Instead, they devote primary attention to improving the efficiency of their existing operations.[33]

Therefore, and to be maximally successful, an organization working in a stable and certain environment would most successful if it adopts a strategy that protects its market niche. This organization thereby focuses on efficiency by providing a quality product or service in a cost-competent manner. It would utilize mass-production methodologies, be structured, or organized mechanistically, and have satisfied employees working in narrowly defined roles.[34]

Analyzer stance.

To optimize success in the analyzer stance, an organization determines that it finds itself in an environment that is somewhere between stable and turbulent.

> Organizations that operate in two stances of product-market domains, one relatively stable, the other changing. In their stable areas, these organizations operate routinely and efficiently through use of formalized structures and processes. In their more turbulent areas, top managers watch their competitors closely for

> new ideas, and then they rapidly adopt those that appear to be the most promising.[35]

When considering adopting this stance, an organization must find itself in an environment where technological advancements are occurring at regular intervals, forcing transition in the marketplace. This indicates that the organization needs to maintain efficiency but be willing to update products or services as emergent trends dictate. The organization does not have to be on the cutting edge of innovation, rather the organization must find ways to be competitive by offering better products or services in a more cost-efficient way.

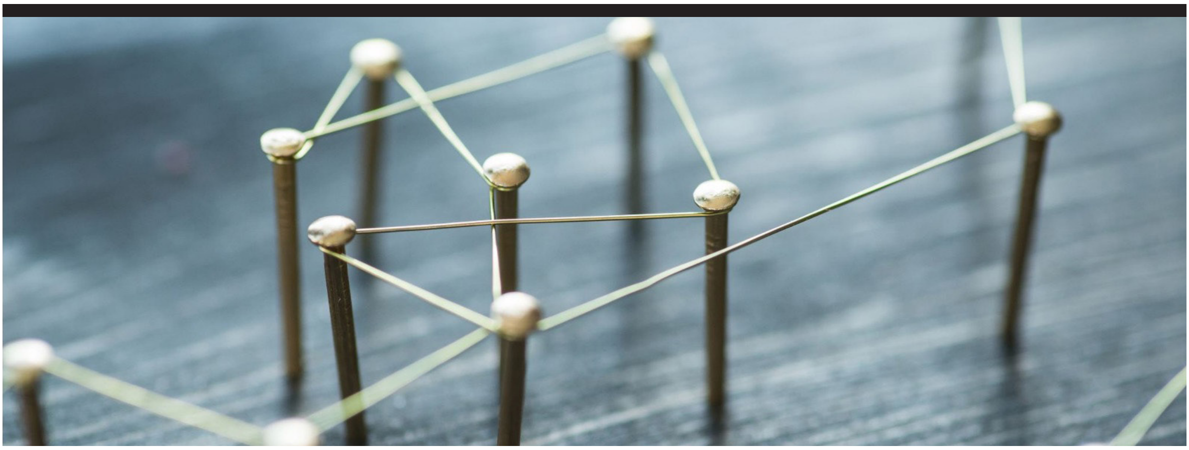
Reactor stance.

Contrary to prospector, analyzer and defender stances, the reactor stance is adopted when an organization fail to articulate or adhere to a strategy; failure may also occur if the articulated strategy is incompatible with the environment. When reactor stance is utilized by an organization, this invariably represents a misalignment between the environment and other stances. The reactor stance is thus labeled as in-congruency. If an organization has adopted a reactor stance, one or more subsystems are not aligned with any specific region of the environment. This stance indicates that the organization is unbalanced or unstable and does not have the same potential of a congruent alignment. The organization is not performing optimally, and the possibility of failure is much higher than in a congruent organization.[36]

> “Organizations in which top managers frequently perceive change and uncertainty occurring in their organizational environments but are unable to respond successfully. Because this stance of organization lacks a consistent strategy-structure relationship, it seldom makes adjustment of any sort until forced to do so by environmental pressures.[37]

Operational, human, and managerial relationships to environment and strategy.

A historical reference point for Burrell and Morgan,[38] Miles and Snow,[39,40] and Morgan[41] is the work conducted by Lawrence and Lorsch.[42] They emphasized



the importance of contingency theory as the alignment between environment and strategy of an organization. If congruent, then all sub-categories must align. Instead of investigating why organizations are unsuccessful, they approached the problem of why organizations are successful. Only when in-congruency was present were the operational, human, and managerial sub-categories relevant. Additionally, much of the initial work performed by both Burrell and Morgan[43] and Miles and Snow[44] was performed concurrently and separately, so the terminology, though similar, does have some differences. Of particular importance is how each sub-category relates to Miles and Snow's [45,46] three stances – prospector, analyzer, and defender – and their relationship to the extremes as defined by Burrell and Morgan.

The operational sub-category.

The operational sub-category signifies an emphasis on internal processes or influence, comprising the organization's focus on accomplishing goals and objectives.[47] For industrial organizations, this activity encompasses the transformation of inputs such as labor, raw materials, and capital into outputs in the form of material goods. Many times, the term *technology* is used to describe this process. Care should be taken when using this term as the intended meaning of technology is a reference to behaviorism. This transformation process reflects the *operational imperative* characteristic of goal-orientated organizations.[48] In later works and independent of Burrell, Morgan[49] subtly shifts away from operational to technology.

Miles and Snow[50] embrace the term *engineering* when referring to behaviors that belong in the operational or technological sub-category and define the engineering sub-category as:

> The engineering problem involves the creation of a system which puts into actual operation management's solution to the entrepreneurial problem. The creation of such a system requires management to select an appropriate technology (input-transformation-output process) for producing and distributing the chosen products or services and to form new information, communication, and control linkages (or modify existing linkages) to ensure proper operation of the technology.[51]

Another perspective on the operational sub-category is seen through conflict resolution within the organization. Kilmann and Thomas[52] describe the topic from two viewpoints; the first is process versus structure analysis.

> Process models of behavior place the parties in a temporal sequence of events. Behavior is assumed to be directly influenced by preceding events and anticipation of subsequent events. Structural models focus upon conditions, relationships between those conditions, and their influence upon behavior. At a given moment, those conditions are viewed as exerting forces upon behavior. Whereas a process model places parties in a sequence of events, a structural model places them in a web of forces.[53]

The second viewpoint advances the situation as internal versus external sources of influence.

Internal models emphasize events and conditions within a party that influence behavior. Parties are seen as decision-making entities confronted with alternatives and choice points. Variation in behavior is assumed to be an outcome of differences in the processes and structures of this decision-making. By contrast, *external* models focus upon events and conditions outside the party that shape behavior. The implicit assumption is that parties are fairly interchangeable in their reactions to processes and conditions in their environment - that these processes and conditions are sufficient to explain behavior.[54]

Again, the importance of the operational sub-category is how the extremes align for congruency. Burrell and Morgan[55] identify one extreme as complex high-discretion roles, which align with the prospector stance. This type of role is appropriate for an environment that is turbulent and unpredictable. The other extreme encompasses routine, low-discretion roles that align with the defender stance. This role is appropriate for stable environments. Between the two roles lay a region that aligns with the analyzer stance and corresponds with the appropriate environment.

The human sub-category.
The human sub-category mirrors an organization's core values and cultural beliefs, encompassing the kind of people and the dominant ethos within the organization. The organization's core values and the beliefs that shape the organizational culture form the key components of this sub-category.[56] Burrell and Morgan[57] describe the special status human beings have within the organization. They believe that organizations need to acknowledge that individuals have certain needs that must be satisfied for them to stay with the organization and sufficiently apply themselves to their duties. Miles and Snow[58,59] regard this sub-category as the entrepreneurial problem. In their eyes the organization must first center on a specific domain it wishes to dominate: a specific product or service and a target market or market segment. This acceptance becomes evident when management decides to commit resources to achieve objectives related to the domain. For many organizations this translates to the internal and external commitment the organization is willing to make in the development and projection of its image and its orientation towards that image.

Krackhardt and Hanson[60] provide additional awareness into the human sub-category with their understanding of the formal and informal networks within a company. They outline their reasoning in the following

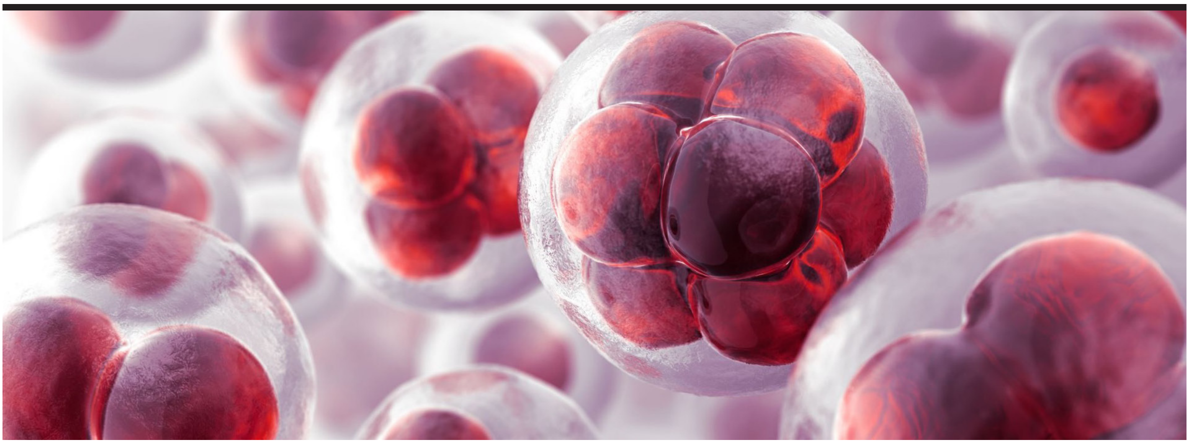
way: Many executives invest considerable resources in restructuring their companies, drawing and redrawing organizational charts only to be disappointed by the results. That's because much of the real work of companies happens despite the formal organization. Often what needs attention is the informal organization, the networks of relationships that employees form across functions and divisions to accomplish tasks fast. These informal networks can cut through formal reporting procedures to jump start stalled initiatives and meet extraordinary deadlines. But informal networks can just as easily sabotage companies' best laid plans by blocking communication and fomenting opposition to change unless managers know how to identify and direct them…If the formal organization is the skeleton of a company, the informal is the central nervous system driving the collective thought processes, actions, and reactions of its business units. Designed to facilitate standard modes of production, the formal organization is set up to handle easily anticipated problems. But when unexpected problems arise, the informal organization kicks in. Its complex webs of social ties form every time colleagues communicate and solidify over time into surprisingly stable networks. Highly adaptive, informal networks move diagonally and elliptically, skipping entire functions to get work done.[61]

Burrell and Morgan[62] simplify the human sub-category even more by narrowing the definition of the extremes. They identify one end "economic / instrumental orientation to work,"[63] which represents an alignment to the defender stance and a stable environment. They label the other end "self-actualizing / work a central life interest,"[64] represents an alignment to the prospector stance and a turbulent environment. Again, the region between the two aspects of the human sub-category would include the analyzer stance and corresponding environment.

The managerial sub-category.
The managerial sub-category mirrors how the organization deals with conflict and reducing uncertainty, encompassing the internal integration and control of the organization. This sub-category is described via two types of structure: (a) autonomy structure, as reflected in organization charts, job descriptions, and financial control systems; and (b) managerial styles, as expressed by individual managers in day-to-day interpersonal relationships. Through these expressions of structure, the organization can satisfy the demands of its members and reconcile conflicts between them.[65]

Miles and Snow[66,67] recognize this sub-category as the administrative problem, arguing that organizations must focus on reducing uncertainty within the organizational system. From their perspective, the organization must be capable of engaging in rationalizing and stabilizing activities that have successfully solved problems faced by the organization. This process involves more than just rationalizing the system already developed (uncertainty reduction); the organization must also formulate and implement processes that will allow the organization to continue to evolve (innovation).

Adler[68] splits the issue into two types of dilemmas: technical and social. Adler argues that in organizations where routine is the primary goal, efficiency requires high levels of bureaucracy, but to deliver improved efficiency requires innovation. In an innovation environment that requires creative people, the organization must forgo or limit bureaucratization. This presents a challenge. Burrell and Morgan[69] offer the following alignment guidelines. For a stable environment and a defender stance, bureaucracy, and authority (Theory X) will prevail. For a turbulent environment and a prospector stance, organic social structure,



and democracy (Theory Y) will prevail. For an analyzer stance in the corresponding environment, some mix will provide the successful formula for the organization.

Determination of success or failure.
The issues covered so far have focused on identifying the environment and how the organization is aligned to that environment. What has not been covered at length is the issue of the organization's success. Central to contingency theory is the notion of congruency and in-congruency, congruency referring to a state of proper alignment with the environment, and in-congruency referring to a state of misalignment or lack of alignment with the environment. These concepts are vital components that lead to an organization's success or failure, which is ultimately judged by performance. Research has shown that organizations that adopt contingency theory and hence the notion of proper alignment through congruency perform better than organizations that are incongruent.

Contingency theory suggests that a match among business-level strategy, organizational structure, and the competitive environment is necessary for high performance…This study found that the judgment policies used by CEOs of manufacturing firms in making strategy-structure-environment alignment decisions are strongly related to the realized strategy-structure-environment fit of the firm. This result indicates that top managers' judgments do influence organization design outcomes, supporting the strategic choice perspective of organizational adaptation…This study also found that CEOs whose judgments are more consistent with contingency theory prescriptions are associated with higher performing firms, providing support for the efficacy of normative contingency theory. Non-contingent preferences for particular strategies, structures or environments were found to be marginally negatively related to performance, while bivariate contingent preferences, individually, exhibited no reliable relationships with performance. The triple interaction in the CEOs' judgment models exhibited the strongest and most consistent relationships with performance, strategy making processes, and realized fit. Thus, the degree to which a CEO considers simultaneous relationships among multiple variables appears to be important to realized fit and performance outcomes.[70]

Major issues and or dilemmas bearing on defining uncertainty in a rapidly evolving world.

It is extremely important for an organization to build an accurate understanding of the environment in which it operates. In a world where technology is evolving rapidly, the perception exists that all contemporary organizations are located in an uncertain and turbulent environment. This means that all strategic, operational, human, and managerial tactics fall under the prospector stance. However, this is not really the case as thoughtful and introspective examination of the results of any environmental scanning method must be made to ensure proper identification of environmental conditions.[71]

Closing

Acknowledging that an organization correlates to a living organism that interacts with its environment as well as appreciating that this entity will thrive in the right set of conditions forms the supposition of open systems and contingency theories. This article postulates that an advantage in a negotiation can be achieved by embracing an analysis of these two theories in the pre-negotiation phase of a negotiation.

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Biography

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Strength Through Vulnerability: *The Role of Trust Formation in Leader Development Programs*

ROBERT HINCK & JOHN HINCK

Abstract

This study examines the role of trust in facilitating leader development. Researchers conducted a qualitative thematic analysis of 889 end of course evaluations from students enrolled in 15 different iterations of the Leader Development Course for Squadron Command (LDC) during AY21-22. Results showed trust formation within the classroom arising from shared authority practices and storytelling with instructor modeling of vulnerability behaviors leading to greater student participation, deeper cognitive learning, vulnerability mirroring, and leadership growth; including evidence of attitudinal change and behavioral practices by which students intended to enact leading through trust and vulnerability in their military organizations and at home.

Key Words

Trust, vulnerability, conflict, leader development, leadership

Introduction

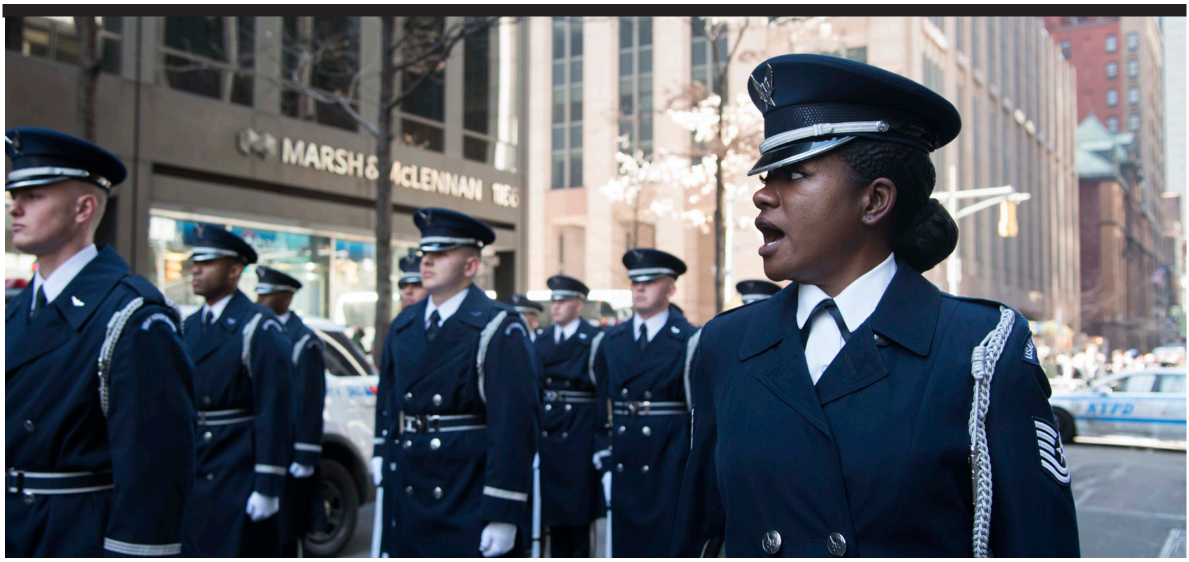
Conflict is natural, inevitable, and a normal part of organizational life.[1] When managed well, conflict generates positive opportunities for renewal and change for both organizations and individuals.[2] If mismanaged or left to fester, it can decrease organizational productivity, damage interpersonal relationships, and create feelings of estrangement and hurt leading to members exiting the organization.[3] Within this context, leadership plays a crucial role. Like research on conflict more broadly, studies show that leaders' inability to manage conflict can undermine organizational effectiveness in addition to the credibility of their leadership.[4] In contrast, leaders capable of fostering a climate of cooperation can foster teamwork among followers, engendering feelings of respect, being heard, and commitment towards a common purpose.[5]

Unfortunately, leading through conflict remains an infrequent quality examined in leadership development.[6] Whereas a variety of factors may impact one's ability to manage conflict, including situational constraints, organizational dynamics, and personality preferences, leading through *trust* has been shown to be one underlining factor contributing towards the creation of cooperative environments and effective conflict management.[7] Thus, in today's Air Force, leaders need to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to foster trust within their units. Not only is "trust vital for an effective leader"[8] but represents the "bond that unifies leaders with their followers and commanders with their units."[9] As debates over shifting cultural values and social norms continue to unfold, Air Force leaders must be provided with opportunities to practice and grow the human domain skills necessary for trust formation while demonstrating a willingness to show strength through vulnerability.

While difficult, this study establishes how such behaviors and attitudes can emerge within leader/leadership development programs. By examining students' qualitative comments from end of course surveys from the Leader Development Course for Squadron Command (LDC), we demonstrate what teaching and learning methods are conducive to trust development and provide evidence into how students develop positive behavioral, cognitive, and attitudinal leadership skills that foster trust individually, relationally, and organizationally.

Literature Review

Despite the importance of effective conflict management in organizations, leaders' conflict management abilities receive little recognition. As Howard Guttman explains, organizational leadership research assumes that acquisition of leadership skills will naturally lead to effective conflict management outcomes while leaders themselves tend to approach conflict with a fatalistic attitude, believing that conflict is often unresolvable with their organizations best served by placing their attention on other organizational concerns more easily addressable.[10] And yet, a growing body of literature suggests that



Tech. Sgt. Chloe Rainey, U.S. Air Force Honor Guard ceremonial guardsman, commands her flight during the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade, March 17, 2018. The Honor Guard participated in St. Patrick's Day parades in New York City and Boston, as part of the team's U.S. northeastern outreach tour to recruit, retain and inspire Airmen. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Valentina Viglianco)

leaders must prioritize and learn effective conflict management skills,[11] including those suggesting that conflict management capacities mark duplicate areas leaders would benefit most from practicing, suggesting their inclusion in leadership development programs.[12]

Whereas academics have created multiple models and definitions of conflict and conflict management, what conflict is and how interactants perceive it can vary greatly and depends on the situation.[13] Like its definitions, the sources and types of conflict are manifold and include perceived incompatibilities over relational, task, or process dimensions; disputes over resources, goals, authority, and roles; and misalignment between values and interests. Whatever the type of conflict, leaders need to be able to assess the situation and respond with appropriate action[14] while fostering leader-follower relationships capable of weathering disputes arising from within and outside of the organization.

Unfortunately, the complexity of organizational and interpersonal conflict makes its development as a leadership skill difficult. Nonetheless, one underlining factor for effective conflict management is building *trust*. Not only does research show trust development playing crucial mediating factors when managing conflict[15] but also demonstrates its contribution towards building genuine, authentic leader-follower relationships resulting in organizational effectiveness and wellbeing.[16] Defined as the "willingness to accept vulnerability or risk based on expectations regarding another person's behavior,"[17] trust is essential for cooperative interactions and forms the basis upon which we identify our friends and foes. Learning how to build trust and enact behaviors conducive to its flourishing, however, requires deliberate development and modeling.

Fostering Trust: The Role of Leadership Development

Leader development programs play important roles promoting behavioral change and can facilitate the transfer of leadership skills throughout organizational members.[18] According to David Day, leader development and leadership development are unique fields of scholarly inquiry distinct from broader studies of leadership.[19] Defined as the collective capacity of organizational members to engage in leadership roles and processes, leader development extends beyond training individuals' behaviors to align with specific theories on leadership to encompass broader considerations into the development of leadership attitudes, skills, and behaviors.[20]

Importantly, leader development emphasizes the enactment of leadership as built upon a foundation of mutual trust and respect.[21] Trust emerges from authentic leader-follower relationships. Authentic leaders build trust by positively modeling the values and behaviors they desire from followers with leaders expected to consider multiple perspectives and demonstrate gratitude and appreciation towards others while also possessing the necessary self-awareness and emotional intelligence to communicate trust through action.[22] While building trust is a necessary component of military leadership, Airmen report a lack of trust within the USAF.[23] While at times included in Air Force training programs and PME, the development of trust as a leadership skill often falls short due to a lack of impactful educational experiences for

Airmen to practice, learn, and develop trust in meaningful ways.

Fostering Trust in LDC

Following multiple reports identifying the need for Air Force leaders to improve human domain skills when taking command, the Secretary of the Air Force and USAF Chief of Staff directed the creation of what would become Air University's LDC in 2018.[24] Taught by highly successful graduated Squadron Commanders and civilian academics, LDC provides students with an intensive eight-day course covering topics including clarity of purpose, culture, values, communication, human performance, personality, storytelling, coaching, and justice and discipline, among others. Through a combination of large-group experiences and seminar-style breakout groups, LDC offers an educational experience spanning the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of leadership development.[25]
In doing so, the program has witnessed considerable success, becoming known as AU's top-rated course. While previous research demonstrates that LDC addresses key squadron vitality attributes and sets conditions for success when in command,[26] how the course creates an environment of trust and whether such skills are meaningfully absorbed by students has not been studied.

LDC Teaching and Learning Practices

LDC's unique approach to leadership development follows the BART (Boundary, Authority, Role, and Task) analysis of organizations[27] and in group relations.[28] Here the boundaries of who is teacher and who is student are less formalized than other PME courses. Accordingly, LDC takes a shared authority approach towards leadership development, emphasizing the dual role of teacher and learner in the task of becoming a better leader. In line with leadership development research finding that skill development unfolds in a dynamic context through which people interact with each other and their learning environment,[29] LDC adopts group relations theorists who view all thoughts and behaviors as products of the system, collective, and context that produced them.[30] Taken together, the system of teaching and learning in LDC focuses on the capacity of each participant—both instructors and students, experienced leaders and developing leaders—as functioning as *both* teacher and learner, as well as a power with vs. power over relationships.[31]

Central to this process is developing trust as a part of leader development,[32] as well as a form of leader development and as a mode of classroom teaching and learning. LDC places connection before content with an emphasis on storytelling as a means by which graduated squadron commanders share their experiences while in command.[33] These stories provide multiple vantages by which students can perceive what leadership entails, including how they might approach difficult conversations about diversity, values, and inclusion and challenging issues like justice and discipline decisions, performance evaluations, and organizational culture. Most importantly, rather than "instructing" students on how to be leaders, LDC instructors invite discussion, encourage sharing of different perspectives, and telling of personal stories from students. These practices, when combined with self-reflection. journaling, whiteboard prompts, course content in the form of broad leadership tools, and expressions of gratitude towards others is designed to theoretically create an environment of shared authority conducive to greater learning and trust development. Whether and how these teaching and learning practices prove effective in fostering trust is unknown, and represents the purpose of this study, encapsulated by the following research questions:

RQ1: How do students perceive trust as being enacted in LDC?

RQ2: What impact do students perceive LDC as having in fostering their attitudes, skills, or behaviors in leading through trust?

Method

To answer these questions, this study examines student perceptions of learning and growth evident by their end of course evaluations. Data were collected from 15 iterations of the LDC course occurring throughout AY21 (n=889) with researchers examining students' qualitative comments from three survey questions related to the student learning experience:

1) Please provide any comments about whether you agree or disagree that the course better prepared you to thrive in command; 2) Please provide a comment

on the two or three most valuable areas of instruction; 3) Please tell us how you plan on applying what you learned in this course.

Researches analyzed data by conducting a qualitative thematic analysis. Researchers took a grounded theory approach using a cyclical process of cumulative coding cycles focusing on discussions of trust.[34] This process began with 1) familiarization of the data by reading through the entirety of the data set; 2) initial pre-code generation; and 3) cumulative coding processes moving from descriptive, In vivo coding to axial, focused coding whereby emergent patterns were identified before conducting thematic coding placing the data into their major themes.

Findings

Students perceived trust as a major component of what made LDC an impactful course for leader development. When asked whether the course prepared them to thrive in command, students overwhelming answered in the affirmative with comments stating how the course

> Taught me to lead through trust" and "highlighted foundations for leadership development: trust, empowerment, vulnerability.

In doing so, students' comments on trust emphasized how 1) the learning environment fostered trust through vulnerability; 2) enabled greater personal and relational leader development; and 3) inspired students to enact vulnerability and trust in their personal and organizational contexts.

Building Vulnerability

Vulnerability played a crucial role in trust development. As one student explained "being vulnerable requires foundation of trust." In developing that trust, students perceived instructors as modeling vulnerability behaviors through storytelling which led to an environment of shared trust as students became comfortable sharing their own stories and in turn exercising vulnerability. Students described this process as beginning with the large group experiences whereby graduated squadron commanders shared stories from their time in command: "Sq/CC perspectives hit the nail on the head. I believe that set the tone for students to open up and be vulnerable within their breakout groups and seminars." As another student explained: "The Sq/CC perspectives were extremely valuable. They showed us that it's ok to be vulnerable, open, honest, and not perfect."

As students began mirroring vulnerability behaviors in their seminars, after seeing it modeled by instructors, a more impactful learning experience emerged. Here feelings of shared vulnerability contributed to cognitive growth and development: 1) "The willingness of our seminar to be open and vulnerable contributed to the value of the lessons, from day one it seemed like a no judgement zone and that improved our experience exponentially." and 2) "This course allowed for thought, introspection, discussion, opinions, vulnerability, and acceptance. The more the students open up the more they are likely to learn from the course content."

The process of trust development through vulnerability widened the learning environment beyond just instructors as sources of learning to include the students in their seminars. Students expressed the importance of hearing alternative views from their classmates while noting the impact of such stories emerging from their peers as augmenting their own personal development and perspective taking skills: 1) "Just hearing all of the perspectives and stories opened my eyes to possibilities and gave me insight into what tools are necessary for command that I hadn't previously considered." 2) "Being in the room, listening to and sharing experiences, understanding how I communicate with everyone around me, this insight is priceless. Better than any college or development course I've taken in this context."

Such conversations included difficult and emotionally laden topics. Students noted how they were placed in the "hot seat" through various scenarios with classmates offering feedback. By fostering a sense of trust prior to these scenarios, students felt comfortable and embraced these challenges: "We had several scenarios where we got to put the material to practice, and I felt challenged but also in a safe learning environment where I knew the other students and instructors would provide useful feedback on how I could improve." As another student noted, "I did not realize how emotionally taxing this course was going to be with heavy/deep discussions, but it was good to experience this as reflection helps with being more prepared for when things come up in the future."

Learning activities like storytelling, scenarios, and class discussions thus engaged students across the cognitive, behavioral, and affective domains of learning, leading students to learn how to "be mindful and open to diverse voices" with others planning on using "diversity lessons right away with my team to better learn my Airmen and ensure we are treating everyone appropriately...really to make sure nothing is being overlooked." As others stated: "There is always room to grow. Going beyond knowing your self and…connect with people not like you was an important lesson I needed to hear." Perhaps most importantly, these discussions conveyed a sense of belonging and acceptance of vulnerability, with students more willing to ask for help when needed: "I appreciated the experientials (hot seat) squadron in crisis, accountability and discipline the most because…hearing [others] perspectives or being placed in those situations taught me the most important thing I am not alone and can ask for help." As another student explained:

Over the past two weeks in LDC a highlight for me was being acknowledged. Whether or not I had the most insight on a subject, I was able to voice my experiences and suggestions in an open format. This to me highlighted the ability of every classmate to be an excellent leader. From the newest Airman to the oldest/crusty member in the squadron, a voice should have the opportunity to be heard. This will continue to shape our force in the right direction and focus on diversity of thought.

Taken together, LDC's emphasis on shared authority between instructors and students, when combined with trustful learning environments marked the primary distinguishing factor between it and other courses: "This course is the best course in the Air Force for many reasons but mostly because of the vulnerability of the instructors and the seminar team building."

Trust as Fostering Personal and Relational Leadership Development

Effective leadership and conflict management requires awareness of multiple perspectives, including introspection into one's own biases and limitations. Students reported developing both these skills, including evidence of greater attitudinal belief of their importance when leading squadrons and building climates of trust.

The learning environment in LDC, emphasizing shared authority and grounded in creating trust through vulnerability, enabled personal development in unique ways when compared to other courses. As one student explained, "I have been exposed to the voices, personality tests, and leadership labs before, but the real expression of vulnerability empowered me to unlock that in the future. Very very useful." This personal development was perceived as contributing not only to greater self-awareness but also useful tools for leading when in command: "This course challenged me and helped me to be vulnerable and introspective so I can help lead my squadron better than I could two weeks ago. Having the new tools in my toolbelt will undoubtedly improve the climate and allow me to be a better asset to my teammates." While the instructors played an important role in creating this learning environment, LDC's emphasis on shared learning authority provided multiple perspectives to emerge enabling deeper personal growth: "Leaning on the vast experience in the room and the trust built in a short amount of time allowed us to really ask hard questions of ourselves—some of which we might otherwise ignore or overlook when faced with tough situations or decisions."

Importantly, fostering trust enabled more than just personal growth and development and became a means for students to better relate and connect with others. By sharing personal stories, engaging in difficult conversations, and offering gratitude towards those sharing their viewpoints, students noted how the course: "Really taught me how to be vulnerable and relate" and helped them with "Perspective, how other[s] see me…Connecting and being vulnerable." Students thus came to perceive learning about themselves as a vital component to understanding others:

1) “The areas having to do with learning about myself were the most valuable. We have to know ourselves, how we think, what we value, etc. to be able to lead and, even more so, know those around us to know how to best lead them.” 2) “knowing self, transitioning what you know about yourself to identifying traits in others, using the info you learned to connect with others to buil[d] trust/inclusion.”

From all of this, students became more confident in their leadership abilities and came to believe in the importance of vulnerability as a leadership tool. One student explained:

> I can’t say I am 100% [ready] to face the challenges of command. However, by forcing us to be vulnerable, listen to situations, think through situations, and act in certain situations, I feel better prepared to navigate the natural uncertainties that will come from leading our guardians.

As others noted: 1) “This program opened my eyes to subtle differences in building a culture and how to get to the heart of vulnerability so you can lead with compassion.” 2) “Taking the armor off and connecting as a human gets more results than an antiquated approach with rank. Without trust in the human domain you will struggle within Command.” Perhaps most importantly, the experience students had from the course revitalized their hope and trust in the Air Force as an institution:

> This course should be renamed the ‘How to be a good human being’ course and gives me HOPE for our Air Force in terms of being able to tackle the challenge of growing the leaders we need. I LOVED that the class was mixed officer/enlisted/civilian—this helped us to effectively work on our own blind spots while learning from one another, strengthened by each other’s differences and points of view.

Building Trust Beyond the Classroom

Leadership development does not start nor end in the classroom. Its aim is to create sustained behavioral change for greater organizational growth and effectiveness. Whereas the discussion so far has focused on the role of trust as experienced by students within LDC, this final section summarizes the ways in which students reported how they will employ the skills, beliefs, and behaviors from the course into the future.

The predominate theme revolved around students stating that they would practice vulnerability as a tool to build connection and relate with others. This included utilizing communication, coaching, and listening skills, with students stating how: "I intend to listen more to my people. Engage more interpersonally with them. Also intend to be a little more vulnerable myself." As well as intentions for "Communicating better with my team and applying coaching skills. Being vulnerable with my people to connect with them." Others focused on the role of trust and vulnerability as way to foster innovation, empower others, and create positive organizational cultures: 1) "I plan on applying literally all of it, but will start with the culture piece. I plan on starting with showing strength through vulnerability." 2) "Being vulnerable, listening more, and letting my people action their ideas to foster innovation." 3) "I'm going to get to know my people even better. I'm going to encourage empowerment/innovation all the way down to my bottom level. I'm SO excited to be better."

Beyond behavioral changes, evidence of attitudinal shifts from students as more willing to embrace vulnerability to foster trust emerged. Students expressed their plans for "Working early to build a relationship with leadership team and other commanders…Choose courage over comfort and really be vulnerable with the squadron" as well as statements like: "I plan to focus on clarity of purpose, candor, and striving to allow myself to be vulnerable even though I don't want to." As another student explained in greater depth:

I plan to be more vulnerable in public in my command. Before, I would have opened up but only in closed door sessions, as required. However, this program shows that everyone has 'stuff' and when you display vulnerability in public, you send the message that it is OK for others to speak up, when they would have been unlikely to do so otherwise.

Supporting this, students came to see the importance of seeking out others' views, leading to genuine concern for others. Not only did students explain that "I learned a lot from the course…I particularly liked that every person has a story...find out what it is. Be vulnerable" but also embraced vulnerability as a leadership tool: "I want to show my vulnerable side to open up another dimension of leadership." Returning to the concept of trust, students planned to enact what they learned both in their organizations and family life: 1) "One of the biggest things that I plan on applying is cultivating relationships with the command team. Seeing the importance of being able to lean on and trust each other will make or break a squadron." 2) All areas of instruction are valuable, and I will be able to apply what I learned at the flight, squadron, and group level. I believe the objectives covered will assist me with developing those that I lead, foster a healthy environment, build trust and connections among Airmen." 3) "Already using it in my home, sharing it with my wife, using it with my kids."

Taken together, these comments demonstrate how students not only positively perceived themselves as learning and capable of enacting and building trust, but inspired and excited to do so, with their experience in class proving life changing:

I am leaving feeling inspired, enlightened, empowered in ways I never have before and in so many different areas. It changed how I feel about myself, things I can change immediately in my own behavior that will have an immediate impact on others in my environment (home/work) and the culture in my organization.

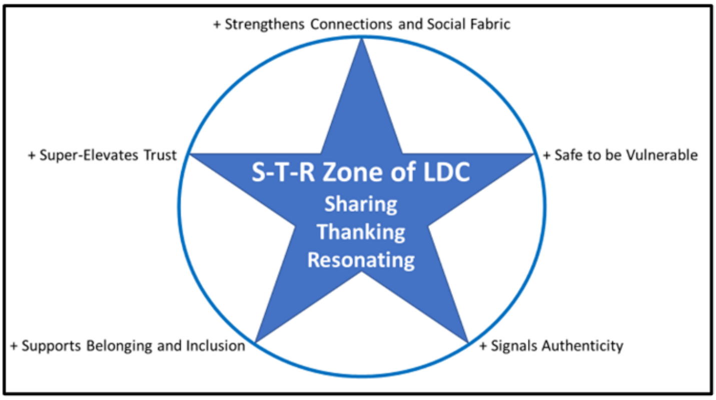
Discussion

Students and instructors in LDC described feeling a "closer connection to each other" than they have experienced in other PME/PCE courses. In LDC, participants uniquely share stories and perspectives from their leadership and command experiences, generally followed by gratitude or thanking of individuals for sharing. As the sharing and thanking continue, people express a resonance or connection with each other. The strong, repetitive resonating opens pathways for deeper learning and development through vulnerability and shared learning authority. Taken together, this process encourages genuine care for others' viewpoints, development of productive vulnerability-building behaviors, attitudes, and skills in and outside of the classroom, and can help manage conflict by promoting organizationally and relational trust.

The teaching and learning methods employed by LDC demonstrate the importance and possibility of trust formation in leadership development programs, and can and should be adopted in other courses and organizational practices. To support this, and based upon the results of this study, LDC has created the S-T-R Zone of leadership learning and development. As depicted in Figure 7, this zone of sharing, thanking, and resonating (or S-T-R Zone) brings people together to create an environment of deep affection and care for self and others that goes beyond traditional forms of education and training. Importantly, the practices embodied in S-T-R can be applied beyond a classroom to form everyday practices of organizational relations.

Whereas some lambast human domain content as "snowflake stuff" or rebuff attempts at creating "safe spaces," our study suggests that leaders best develop when classrooms and organizations intentionally create environments of mutual concern, trust, and vulnerability. Thus, organizations should promote shared perspective taking and personal storytelling to signal authenticity and care, support belonging and inclusion, and elevate trusting environments by leading through vulnerability. Such actions can strengthen the social fabric of organizations, improve organizational members' relationships, and promote greater cognitive growth and understanding, enabling greater management of conflict.

Figure 1. The S-T-R Zone



Conclusion

Trust is the foundation for human relations. This includes trust formation interpersonally, organizationally, and institutionally. With an all-volunteer force, fostering trust and sense of purpose is vital for recruitment and retention as well as organizational effectiveness and growth. While the armed services remain politically neutral, the external social and political environment inevitably impact internal feelings of belonging, value, and purpose. Today's leaders must therefore not only possess the technical skills and competencies to win the high-end fight, but also the strength to lead through vulnerability and model it to ensure we remain mission first, but people always.

Leadership development courses and PME provide one source to arm our Airmen with these skills, but require deliberate and intentional teaching and learning methods to do so. Teaching through trust, much like leading through it, offers the opportunity for Airmen to better lead, learn, and act towards others, promoting unit cohesion and organizational effectiveness.

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Biographies

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Negotiate Change or Lose: The Case for Integrating Negotiation Training into Professional Military Education

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Abstract

Negotiation is an unavoidable and integral part of our personal and professional lives. Despite the increasing importance of negotiation and the benefits deliberate training can bring about for the military, formal negotiation training for our soldiers remains lacking. To better prepare our servicemen and women for the challenges presented by the modern work environment and ensure that the military remains poised to tackle future challenges, negotiation training needs to be integrated into their professional development roadmap. By starting small, starting fast and starting with what we have, we can optimize the benefits, overcome organization inertia while minimizing potential costs.

Key Words

Negotiation, Military, Professional Military Education, Curriculum Design

This Paper is a Negotiation.

In his popular Master Class, Christopher Voss remarked that "everything in life is negotiation. Life is a negotiation."[1] Indeed, negotiation is an unavoidable and integral part of our lives. Despite that, our understanding of this activity is often found lacking and negotiation is frequently viewed as a lowbrow activity that has come to be associated with the bargaining behaviors found at car dealerships or tourist weekend markets like Chatuchak.[2] The perceived difficulty coupled with the lack of understanding makes negotiation a dreaded activity though it is something

U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. CQ Brown, Jr. shakes hands with Latvian Chief of Defense Lt. Gen. Leonīds Kalniņš, Dec. 20, 2022, at the Latvian National Armed Forces Joint Headquarters in Riga, Latvia. Brown met with military counterparts during a visit to the region focused on strengthening bilateral defense relationships and further exploring opportunities to enhance interoperability, training and deterrence with NATO Allies and partners. During the same visit to the European Command theater of operations, Brown met with U.S. Airmen serving in Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom. (Courtesy photo)

that many people engage in on a daily basis.[3] Negotiation is a critical skillset for the military professional as well. If utilized effectively, this skillset will yield benefits at multiple levels, from better interpersonal relationships at the tactical level, increased efficiency at the operational level, and enhanced partnerships at the strategic levels.

The importance of negotiation has been highlighted by numerous experts in the field, who have emphasized that "the consequences of our negotiations are life-long." and "your ability to negotiate successfully is essential to your success in all your interactions with other people."[4] The ability to carry out effective negotiations though, does not come by chance, and requires deliberate and purposeful training. To better prepare our servicemen and women for the challenges presented by the modern work environment and ensure that the military remains poised to tackle future challenges, negotiation training needs to be deliberately infused into their professional development roadmap. The case of negotiation training will be tackled from three levels – (1) the concept of what negotiation is (and conversely, what is not negotiation) will be explored; (2) negotiation will be contextualized for the military domain; and (3) principles will be laid out to guide the creation and implementation of negotiation training.

In reading this paper, two things should be noted. Firstly, though the argument is mainly premised on the officer corps, the same arguments and principles can also be applied to the enlisted. Likewise, though the paper primarily utilizes the US military as examples, the arguments and principles can be largely read across to the nations as well.

What is Negotiation?

Given how often we all engage in negotiation, there is no shortage of sources that attempt to define what it entails. The Oxford Dictionary defines negotiation as a "discussion between people who are trying to reach an agreement."[5] Similar elements are found in William Ury's definition of negotiation as "back-and-forth communication designed to reach an agreement when you and the other side have some interests that are shared and other that are opposed."[6] In his book "The Complete Negotiator", Gerard I. Nierenberg took a broader approach, stating that "whenever people exchange ideas with the intention of changing relationships, whenever they confer for agreement, they are negotiating."[7] Though there are many ways of describing it, at its core, negotiation is communication that is targeted at problem solving. If utilized effectively, negotiation can be a means of transforming conflict and fostering long-term trust.

Equally important as understanding what negotiation is, there is a need to dispel some myths about it. While most people have some level of understanding and experience of negotiation, there are many misconceptions due to their partial understanding of it. For one, negotiation is not "merely bargaining". To be clear, bargaining is a form of negotiation, but negotiation is much bigger than just that. This is echoed by Psychologist Jeanne Brett, who clarified that "although every negotiation is in part a distribution of resources, distribution is only one aspect of negotiation."[8] Also, negotiation does not just result in "win-lose" results. Instead, the objective of negotiation should be to "achieve agreement, not total victory."[9]

Finally, despite the apprehension associated with negotiation, it is a highly learnable skillset.[10] On the flipside, negotiation is also rarely naturally acquired, though a little training can go a long way.[11]

Negotiating in a Military Environment

Negotiation is an integral part of the military, with service members engaging in discussions with diverse group of people ranging from their peers and sister services to industry partners, and even counterparts in other nations. Though negotiation is performed in all fields of work, the military environment is a unique one. The key differences lay in the (1) high stakes; (2) diversity of actors; (3) infinite time frame; and (4) comparatively rigid organizational structure. Though these factors are not in themselves unique to the military, the confluence of all of these is. The unique combination of factors is also noted by negotiation experts. “Particular traits and features … whilst not being unique in themselves, appear to exist in unusually high degrees in (tactical-level military) negotiations.”[12] Tensions are formed within each of these characteristics of the military environment, and effective negotiation training is key to mitigation. Accordingly, the United States Air Force recognizes the importance of this skillset, identifying negotiation skills as a “critical core leadership competency.”[13] Each of the unique features of the military environment will be explored below.

High Stakes. As an instrument of national power with its members charged with the management of violence on behalf of the state, the stakes are high in the military environment, both at the strategic and operational/tactical level.

Strategic. Though the military has been given varying levels of emphasis by each administration, one constant thread can be seen, that of its importance to the nation’s continued prosperity and survival. From the Clinton administration which stated, “U.S. military capabilities not only protect the United States and its citizens from direct threats, they also help maintain peace and stability in regions critical to U.S. interests and underwrite U.S. defense commitments around the world” to the current Secretary of Defense under the Biden administration declaring that

> a strong, principled, and adaptive U.S. military is a central pillar for U.S. leadership…

the critical strategic importance of the military is clear. Such narratives are not limited to the US; Singapore takes a similar stance on the importance of its military forces as well - "an operational ready (military) gives us the confidence to stand firm in the face of new security challenges and affords us stability amidst the uncertainties."[14]

Operational/Tactical. The thread of high stakes continues at the operational and tactical levels, where the service members are charged with executing the full spectrum of operations ranging from peacekeeping to utilizing kinetic force, potentially within a time compressed and high-pressure environment. Despite the circumstances, negotiation remains key to the proceedings, with Deborah Goodwill, a SME on Military Negotiation describing that

> …whilst the soldier is fully capable of using overwhelming force as a solution, he is unlikely to move towards that option unless provoked or physically threatened. In other words, if there is no escalation in violence, the usual operating procedures for the tactical soldier will demand a negotiated response, however long that takes, or even a back-down if negotiation fails.[15]

She further notes that "the potential for armed response … can make for a dangerous and provocative negotiating situation."[16]

Diversity of Actors. It is hard to overstate the sheer diversity of people that service members encounter in their course of work. This diversity comes in the form of intercultural, inter-generational and civilian-military interactions.

Intercultural Diversity. The US military has a presence in over 750 bases in 80 countries. These are divided across six geographical combatant combats that operate all across the globe. That is about 40% of the world's nations, and more than the five times the next nation – United Kingdom.[17] Such vast reach mean that service members will be interacting with military and civilian members across a wide range of cultures and differing values.

Intergenerational Diversity. The diversity continues within the military. Given that service members can enlist as early at 17 and the retirement age currently stands at 64, a military workplace can see four generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials and Generation Z) working in close proximity to each other.[18] Their vastly different experiences have had a profound impact on their worldview and values, and this in-turn affects their motivations and the way they communicate.

Civilian-Military Interactions. Compounding to the complexity, service members also need to interface with the political leaders at the state and federal agencies, and the civilian contractors in the private sector. The former refers to the military's subordination to civilian authority as part of civilian-military relations while the latter arises as part of the military-industrial complex due to the military's operational need to leverage on and utilize civilian expertise to enhance military capabilities.[19] With only about 1% of the population having served in uniformed services though, the difference in processes and structures carry the potential for tensions and conflicts.[20]

Operating Time Frame. The military is also expected to exist in perpetuity, with operations expected to persist indefinitely. In his popular theory, the "infinite game", Simon Sinek highlighted that one of the key dangers faced by organizations was playing the wrong game, i.e. adopting finite game rules to infinite games.[21] In infinite organizations such as the military, the overarching objective is to remain "in the game" rather than to win the opponent. This means that relationships need to be viewed on long-term basis, and trust needs to be continually nurtured. The Army Chief of Stuaff Gen. James McConville highlighted just that in his 2021 white paper, where he emphasized the need to adopt a long-term view of "deterring conflict, upholding U.S. interests and forging and strengthening relationships with allies and partners" and the importance of consistently maintaining a good reputation.[22]

Organizational Structure. At the risk of stating the obvious, the chain of command is central to a military organization. This is a confluence of the service members' rank and appointment. Though similar to the civilian concept of organizational structure and seniority, the chain of command has vastly increased impact due to reinforcing legal clauses such as article 15.

As such, the military's chain of military influences all facets of the TIPO (Trust, Information, Power and Options) analysis framework.[23]

Why Negotiate?

Tensions can arise from any of the factors laid out above due to differing expectations, interests, experiences and levels of authority. Conflict can also occur due to a misalignment of culture and values. In all cases, negotiation training can mitigate the effects of such differences by improving the service members' ability to prepare for the negotiation, laying out potential pathways for a negotiated outcome, creating awareness of communication huddles such as cultural biases, providing strategies for maximizing the utility of one's decisions, and fostering an environment that is conducive for problem solving. It also creates a conducive environment for relationships and trust to be fostered by teasing out common interests; This in-turn serves as a pathway for follow-on negotiations should they be required. Critically, in the case of negotiation by service members in a tactical environment, experts note that negotiation training enables service members to "remain creative in (life and death) setting(s), and to make the correct decision under pressure."[24] Finally, effective negotiation allows for a better "afterglow" by reducing the chances of buyers' remorse.

Beyond its direct applications and potential for conflict transformation and resolution, negotiation training has the potential to provide two notable benefits. Firstly, at the strategic level, negotiation education has the potential to be a source of future cooperation across nations. Given that negotiation is a critical aspect of militaries, the exporting of negotiation models and systems as education packages can be tapped on as a source of collaboration. Utilized effectively, such partnerships can serve as a source of "soft power". Taking the Harvard Program on Negotiation as an example, their model of "principled negotiation" has come to be taught around the world in business schools (my alma mater included) and is often held up as one of gold standards of negotiation. Given its nature, such partnerships might also be seen as less contentious and easier for nations to accept. In addition, adopting a common "negotiation language" can foster interoperability in subsequent multi/bi-lateral discussions, and the feedback collected from these exported course packages can also be incorporated back into the course to further refine its cultural component.

At the other end of the spectrum, given the prevalence of negotiating, even basic understanding and practice in negotiation has the ability to positively impact our daily lives. We briefly touched on bargaining at the start of this article. Though it is not as "highbrowed" as integrative negotiation, it is important nevertheless given how often it is practiced. Training on the various parts of negotiation such as preparation, communication models and negotiation strategic will enable them to gain an increased sense of control and self-confidence, achieve better results from their day-to-day negotiations, and ultimately improve their personal and professional lives.[25]

The Hill We Climb

Despite the importance of negotiation and the benefits deliberate training can bring about for the military, formal negotiation training remains severely lacking as part of Professional Military Education (PME). To study the current state of negotiation training, two aspects will be looked – supply and demand.

Supply refers to the resources available for negotiation training and negotiation expertise currently held by our service members that are resultant from training. While there are openly available resources such as training materials and online courses in dedicated facilities such as the Air Force Negotiation Center, negotiation training has not been integrated as a required subject within all levels of PME. With PME's emphasis on operational and strategic warfighting coupled with a scarcity of resources to meet various competing requirements, "softer" skills such as negotiation and communication are often not prioritized. The lack of emphasis on such skills are not a new phenomenon; Even as far back as 2005, there were already calls for enhanced negotiation training, with the argument being that there was an "urgent requirement for any soldier to be able to negotiate responsibly and effectively."[26]

Demand refers to the military's projected needs for negotiation expertise. This will be looked at the strategic and operational/ tactical levels.

At the strategic level, the demand for negotiation expertise looks set to surge even higher due the increased need to cooperate and collaborate with the private sector, and international defense partners and allies. Given rapidly evolving technology and the 4th Industrial Revolution, there has been an increasing adaptation of commercially sourced and civilian based technology for military application. In particular, six areas of interest have been highlighted by the DoD - artificial intelligence/machine learning, autonomy, cyber, energy, human systems and space.[27] The DoD noted that

> an order of magnitude increase (is required) in its adoption of commercial technologies.[28]

With the increasing importance of the space and cyber domains, the level of interaction within the military-industrial complex will only increase in prevalence.

A similar trend is expected for bi- and multi-lateral negotiations, with the increased role of partners and allies being clearly reflected in the Biden administration's policy goal of "reinvigorat(ing) America's unmatched network of alliances and partnerships."[29] A cursory search of the current National Security Strategy reveals that "partners" and "allies" appear over 200 times within the 48-page document, a strong testament of its importance. To this end, it is important to note that the demands for effective negotiation skills are not confined to rivals and enemies; It is also critical during discussions that are performed between like-minded nations whose "objectives, tasks, and interests are identical" due to the need to "(adjust for) differences in approach, method, division of labor, and burden - or cost-sharing."[30]

The importance of being able to tease out common interests is especially relevant in the Indo-Pacific region, one of the most strategically important areas in the world and to the US' national interest. In the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Economist looked into the seemingly puzzling responses from the region and concluded that it was interests rather than values that were driving decision making and responses.[31]

On the military front, USAF has focused on Agile Combat Employment (ACE) as a cornerstone concept to cope with the contested operating environment.[32] The effective employment of ACE, however, relies on tighter coordination and cooperation with global and regional defense partners, and with, the increased necessity for negotiation.

Increases in demand for negotiation expertise is not limited to the strategic level - two notable trends on the operational and tactical fronts will likewise require the same amongst service members. In his "Accelerate Change or Lose" directive issued in 2020, the incumbent CSAF Gen Brown called for a revamp of service culture, overhaul of training, empowerment of Airmen and a purposeful steering of future force design, to meet the demands for the future fight.[33] Accomplishing any and all of these will require effective communication and negotiation as change management and fostering innovation require service members at all levels to be able to resolve conflicts, transform problems and find common ground. The contested battlegrounds of the future also call for increased delegation of the mission and empowerment to the lower levels – mission command. Mission command both reduces the degradation that disruptions to the chain of command can bring and speeds up decision-making.[34] This concept, however, increases the responsibility shouldered by the ground commanders; Requiring them to coordinate responses beyond their usual scope of operations. Once again, effective negotiation skills will be required.

Taken together, the demand for negotiation expertise has clearly outstripped the supply, with negotiation training still found lacking despite its increasing relevance and importance. There is an urgent need to deepen and widen (for training across all ranks) negotiation training through integrating it into PME.

Negotiating the Future

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote that

> A goal without a plan is just a wish.[35]

Despite the obvious benefits that learning about negotiation can yield for the military, these proclaimed benefits can only be realized when the rubber actually meets the road. Though the eventual proposal will entail detailed study, three principles are recommended to guide the creation, evaluation and implementation of the courses of action (COA) – (1) scalable minimal viable product, (2) capstone application exercise and (3) tailored to service members' requirements.

Scalable Minimal Viable Product. Taking a leaf from GEN George Patton's famous remark that

> A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week,

the negotiation program should be anchored on the key innovation concept of a Minimum Viable Product[36] - aiming to start fast, start small, adjust along the way through feedback and be scalable. This can be done through the integration of negotiation training into the existing PME, such as the Officer Training Schools, Squadron Officer School, Command and Staff College and War College (or equivalent); And leveraging on existing resources such as the Air Force Negotiation Center. A short course of 1 – 3 days (starting small) and rapid execution (starting fast) that is integrated into the existing PME framework will minimize the potential wastage of resources and disruption to their curriculum while enabling the biggest number of people to benefit. Starting small also enables the team to rapidly collect and act on feedback to enhance subsequent course runs.[37] Finally, given the number of service members, scalability will be key to the program's implementation and sustainability. From experience, both in Singapore and in executing the DoD's Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) training where a large group of people needed to be trained within a compressed duration of time, standardized packages that leverage on a mixture of instructional videos, easily accessible training materials and hands-on practice to rapidly train the trainers is critical.

Capstone Application Exercise. As negotiation is a hands-on skill that is best learnt through practice, each training course should culminate with a negotiation exercise which will bring together the concepts learned. The benefits of this are multi-fold for the attendees – (1) allows for the practice of their newly learned skills in a safe environment; (2) contextualizes lessons learnt in a practical setting to enable them to understand what works and what does not, without the pressure of time nor potential danger; (3) provides an avenue for feedback from both the instructors and fellow attendees to give them a better understanding of their strengths, weaknesses and tendencies; and finally (4) enable them to overcome mental barriers to negotiating by doing a "dry-run" to face the anxieties associated with it.

Tailor to Requirements. In trying to maximize the benefits of the training while keeping the resource footprint and implementation huddles to a minimal, negotiation training should be done by tiers of ascending complexity that are tailored to the likely negotiating environment that the service members will be facing at the respective stages of their careers. For example, junior service members' exposure to negotiation will likely be centered around one-to-one scenarios while the senior members are expected to lead multi-party and even international negotiations. While this does not preclude the possibility of the junior member leading organizational level negotiations and vice versa, a "center-of-mass" approach will offer the best return on resource investment. Though future study will need to be performed to tie down its exact shape and form, a potential framework of training could involve three tiers (Tier I, Tier II, Tier III) of ascending complexity. These tiers are built onto each other, with the assumption of knowledge and practice of the preceding tier. The usage of numbered tiers instead of titles based on proficiency levels is deliberate, as they are not suggestive of the attendees' proficiency levels at negotiation.

Tier I. This tier will introduce the basics of negotiation. The target audience are the service members who are junior in appointment and limited in experience, and will likely be facing one-to-one negotiations at the interpersonal level. There is an assumption of no prior negotiating knowledge. This tier aims to impart foundation knowledge of the terminology and concepts used in negotiation, including resistance, target and aspiration points, bargaining and settlement ranges, zone of potential agreement, best alternative to negotiated agreement and worst alternative to negotiated agreement. It will provide an overview of the various types of negotiation, touch on the negotiation process, as well as provide strategies for preparing for negotiations. Finally, it will also highlight cognitive biases and best practices for communication. Tier 1's practical exercise will be based on one-on-one negotiation scenarios whereby two parties with differing constraints and restrictions are given the task of reaching an agreement on an area such as the deployment of resource.

Tier II. Building on the concepts taught in Tier I, Tier II is aimed at the middle-management like the senior Company Grade Officers (CGOs) or junior Field Grade Officers (FGOs). At this level, they will be working across the units that they are deployed to, and experience multi-party negotiations. The complexity of such negotiations is ramped up due to the (1) number of parties; (2) informational and computational complexity; (3) social complexity; (4) procedural complexity; and (5) strategic complexity.[38] Given these, service members at this level should be trained on dealing with aggressive and uncooperative parties, and strategies for dealing with the associated complexity of such negotiations, finding common ground and building relationships. Tier II's practical exercise will be based on multi-party negotiations, where teams of people with differing objectives, interests and constraints are required to reach an agreement in a complex environment.

Tier III. Likewise building on the preceding tiers, Tier III is aimed at the upper management like the senior FGOs. At this level, the service members will be leading the organization and be involved in negotiations at the interagency and bilateral/multilateral level. As such, this tier deepens the service members' exposure to multiparty negotiations with the addition of intercultural differences and biases, and interagency tensions. Attendees will better understand how culture can affect the negotiation process, and processes and strategies for multiparty decision making can be modified to take these into account. Additional factors that affect social motivations and choice of negotiation strategies such as individualism vs collectivism, hierarchy vs egalitarianism, beliefs, norms, low vs high context cultural norms, knowledge structures, cultural assumptions, strategies for each type will also be introduced.[39] Tier III's practical exercise will continue to be based off multi-part negotiations; However, additional complexity will be introduced by having the parties adopt different negotiating styles (simulating different cultures) and a wider set of interests (simulating different agencies).

In all, embedding these three principles into COA creation and selection will enable potential programs to be faster to implement, easier to scale, while reducing cost of failure and disruption to existing curriculum, and enabling the biggest group of people to benefit from it.

If this paper is to be summed up in a single line, it will be simply – negotiation is important, it is going to get more important, there is not enough of it, and it is not difficult to start training for it. As an organization carrying such high stakes, it is imperative that our service members be equipped with whatever they need to accomplish the mission, not just today, but in the future. The need for our service members to be equipped with negotiation skills has never been more apparent. By starting small, starting fast and starting with what we have, we can optimize the benefits, and overcome organization inertia while minimizing potential costs.

The late President John F. Kennedy once said "that while we should never negotiate out of fear, we should never fear to negotiate." Through robust and focused training in the negotiation domain, we can aim to go further than that – to not just reach a point of never fearing negotiating, but **never failing at negotiating**.

Notes

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Biography

Col Jerry 'Giant' Chua is an instructor in the Department of Leader and Research Development at the Air Command and Staff College (ACSC). An Air Warfare Officer from the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) deployed under the Military Personnel Exchange Program, Lt Col Chua is a qualified instructor on multiple ground-based air defense systems and sensor platforms. He completed the ACSC In-Residence program in May 2022 as a Distinguished Graduate. Prior to ACSC, Lt Col Chua held operational and staff positions at various echelons from squadron to HQ RSAF, including chief trainer and capability development officer. Most recently, he served as a career planner in the Air Manpower Department. Lt Col Chua holds a BBA (Banking and Finance) from Nanyang Technological University and a Master of Military Operational Art and Science from Air University.

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