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AIR FORCE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: TRANSFORMATION'S CONSTANT

by

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Abstract

The need for competent, effective leadership is constant. Technology and globalization are rapidly changing the world, which creates an environment of increased interdependence. In order to adapt, large organizations in every segment of our society must transform. The United States' largest organization and an instrument of national power, the military, is transforming and its leaders must be prepared to face new challenges. The Air Force is in the process of codifying leadership doctrine and force development guidelines for the "professional officer corps" of the 21st century and beyond.

This paper seeks to provide an officer leadership development model for Air Force doctrine and force development planners to consider. Additionally, the paper identifies two key areas of leadership crucial to the model that are applicable to all Airmen. They are *essentials of leadership* and *levels of leadership*. The essentials of leadership are the core principles for leadership doctrine; a leader must have *character* and *competence*. These principles are universally applicable to all Airmen. While all Airmen are "leaders," there are three levels of formal leadership in the Air Force. This paper will focus on the three levels of officer leadership and defines them as; tactical, operational and strategic.

This paper asserts leadership competence in a transformational environment has five key components; the leader's role, responsibilities, depth, breadth and vision. The leadership development model identifies how these components are building blocks that incrementally broaden throughout a leader's career. The paper culminates with a three-dimensional model

illustrating leadership development that is specifically applicable to the officer corps, but it is also adaptable to most hierarchical institutions in the Department of Defense and the interagency.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Technology drives change and spawns rapid globalization that is fundamentally transforming the world in which we live. As the world stage evolves and becomes more complex, the need for leadership remains constant. Brig Gen Stuart Boyd, former commandant of the Air Force Institute of Technology writes, "Although the essential elements of military leadership never change, technology, an essential instrument of mission success, is in constant flux."[1]

The Air Force is a technology based service, therefore, its naturally transformational. Leaders of the Air Force must embrace changes and be able to adapt. Burt Nanus, a professor of management and policy sciences at the University of Southern California, notes that "Change, complexity, and uncertainty are the normal conditions facing all organizations today. But, if one thinks of the great public leaders of history—Moses, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Winston Churchill, etc. - it is immediately obvious that all of them were effective precisely in times of great change, complexity and uncertainty. In fact, the secret of managing change and complexity is none other than leadership itself."[2]

Organizations today are more interdependent. Today's leaders, and our future leaders, must be prepared to handle the challenges this brings. Leadership doctrine and force development will play a key role in ensuring our leaders are prepared. We need a structured force development

process in order to handle the complexities of training leaders in a transforming world. This process must be grounded by sound leadership doctrine and developed throughout a career by experience, training and education. From an excerpt in Air & Space Power Journal, Dr. Shannon Brown states, "If we draw a lesson from the past, it is that the Air Force would do well to formulate leadership doctrine that acknowledges uncertainty and encourages the development of innovative leadership and followership practices - themes that appear in the service's earliest doctrine and leader-development publications. The Air Force's practice of borrowing useful civilian leadership constructs remains a viable approach to the doctrine-development quandary, but such appropriation should not detract from the ultimate goal of leader development: cultivating airmen who can understand, articulate, and execute the service's overarching mission - whatever form that mission may take in the coming decades."[3]

Purpose

Current Air Force leadership doctrine and force development processes are being codified. The Air Force needs enduring guidelines in order to build a leadership foundation for the 21st century and beyond. Elliot Jaques in his book *Requisite Organization* states: "Having a comprehensive system of concepts and principles to explain and guide organizational functions, structure and processes, makes it possible to teach your leaders what is expected of them at every stage in their careers and to train them to apply this teaching effectively."[4]

The purpose of this paper is to provide a simple leadership development model based on two key principles. The principles are the *essentials of leadership* and the *levels of leadership* in the Air Force. The model is based on these principles and designed for USAF doctrine and force development leaders to consider as the basic foundation for leadership development. The paper addresses general concepts applicable to officers and enlisted members, however, there are some

obivious areas that are officer specific. Additionally, the principles and model may be useful to any large organization facing the challenge of developing leaders in the 21st century.

Methodology

Research for this paper included an extensive review of military and commercial leadership literature, previous draft versions of Air Force doctrine, studies, interviews and experiences. While the development model is unique, this paper draws heavily from research previously conducted.

Chapters two and three discuss the principles that meld to create a simple, yet practical model for transformational leader development. Each chapter begins with a background section and a synopsis of leadership studies conducted and used to develop the premise of each of the principles. Chapter four, presents the model and provides examples to emphasize each area. Since pictures are worth a thousand words, Chapter five closes the paper with a visual depiction of the model along with some useful examples and recommendations.

Assumptions

Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomenaon earth.

James MacGregor Burns[5]

Leadership is a widely debated and contentious topic. There are volumes written on the subject. A quick search of the Internet keyword "leadership" yields over 10 million web matches. Type in "leadership literature" and the search narrows to a staggering one million web matches. Indeed, a tremendous amount of information and opinions on leadership exist, some often contradictory. However, the fact remains, there is no cookbook solution for leadership.

This paper makes three assumptions regarding the subject of leadership. The following sections will address these assumptions.

What is the Definition of a Leader?

An intense review of leadership literature in an attempt to find a definition of a leader yields two common themes. First, leadership is an art more than a science. Second, leadership is getting people or organizations to do things; in other words, motivating people. Beth Zacharias, a journalist for the Austin Business Journal, makes this observation, "A good leader needs only one thing: the ability to get people to follow. That requires whatever it takes on any given day. If the people you're leading can't keep their eye on the ball, you need tunnel vision. If they're afraid, you need courage. If they're hurt, you need compassion. If they're lost, you need wisdom. If they're struggling, you need empathy. If they're bored, you need enthusiasm. If they're in the dark, you must communicate well."[6] A leader motivates people to follow. John Gardner, a noted leadership author states, "Effective leaders tap those that serve the purposes of collective action in pursuit of shared goals."[7] However, this definition is morally neutral. Adolf Hitler was a highly effective leader, however, he motivated people to follow for purposes of evil. Thus, an acceptable definition of leadership needs some way of holding the leader accountable.

In the Air Force, each member takes an oath of office or enlistment. This oath is a commitment and willingness to support and defend the Constitution and United States of America. A serviceman's job is not just employment, it is a calling to the profession of arms. In essence, uniformed service members wear the cloth of the nation.[8] The American people trust the military to carry out their duty. Gen Robert E. Lee once said, "Duty then is the sublimest word in the English language. You should do your duty in all things. You can never do more. You should never wish to do less."[9] *Air Force Vision 2020* emphasizes, "We will never forget

the trust the American people place in us. They count on us to protect their ideals, their security and their prosperity."[10] The Air Force defines a leader as "One who takes on responsibility and is able to motivate others to accomplish a mission or objective."[11] This is the working definition of leadership for purposes of this paper.

Are leaders born or made?

Are leaders *born* with innate skills or are they *made* through education, training and experience? This is another largely debated aspect of leadership. Gen Thomas C. Richards, former commander of Air University, states, "I believe some people are born leaders with inherent ability to command; others can be taught to varying degrees. Leadership is a vital part of today's Air Force; therefore, we cannot depend on born leaders - we must build them through formal training and progressive levels of responsibility."[12] A developmental study conducted at Air Command and Staff College highlighted, "Innate qualities are those more fundamental aspects of the leader's personality which are grounded in values, ethics, and personality and are well-established long before entering military service. Developmental qualities are molded and improved by the environment and organizations, in this case, military service in the Air Force."[13] John Gardner simply states, "Most of what leaders have that enables them to lead is learned."[14] He also quotes another source, "Warren Bennis echoes this sentiment in *On Becoming a Leader*. He analyzed the leadership learning basics employed by a variety of recognized, successful leaders and found four lessons applicable to the learning leader. One, you are your own best teacher. Two accept responsibility for what you do and what you learn. Blame no one else. Three, you can learn anything you want to learn, and four, true understanding comes from reflecting on your experience."[15] After pouring over volumes of research literature, it is sufficient to say that leaders are *born and made.*

Who is a Leader?

All Airmen are leaders.[16] This statement reveals that rank and status do not always confer leadership. Former Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen Ronald Fogleman stated, "good teamwork requires strong leadership…In fact, we…need leaders at every level of our organization."[17] This statement infers one does not have to be in a formal leadership position to be a leader. The 1999 draft of Air Force leadership doctrine states, "Successful leadership is not easy, but every member of the Air Force, regardless of position or rank, will be a leader. Airmen may find themselves in a leadership situation or position at any time. This may be a result of experience, seniority, promotion, or by being thrust into a leadership role as a result of a sudden, catastrophic event. In any instance, airmen will be more effective leaders if they start learning and preparing for leadership upon entry into the Air Force."[18]

This philosophy is paramount since the Air Force operates by centralized control and decentralized execution. According to the 1999 draft of Air Force leadership doctrine, "Decentralized execution means the commander delegates execution authority to responsible and capable lower-level commanders or supervisors. This willingness to entrust subordinates with mission execution is essential if commanders are to achieve an effective span of control and foster initiative, situational responsiveness, and flexibility."[19] John Gardner states, "Individuals in all segments and at all levels must be prepared to exercise leader-like initiative and responsibility, using their knowledge to solve problems at their level. Vitality at middle and lower levels of leadership can produce greater vitality in the higher levels of leadership."[20] Hence, all Airmen are leaders.

Notes

[1] Brig Gen Stuart R. Boyd, "Leadership and High Technology" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air University Press, 2001), 227.

[2] Burt Nanus, "Doing the Right Thing" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, reprinted from The Bureaucrat, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air University Press, 2001), 337-338.

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[10] Department of the Air Force. *America's Air Force Vision 2020*. 2003, n.p. On-line. Internet, No Date. Available from http://www.af.mil/vision/vision.pdf

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[12] General Thomas C. Richards, "Practical Leadership" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, reprinted from The Bureaucrat, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD, (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air University Press, 2001), 223.

[13] Major James D. Dotson, et al. "Leadership Development in the Objective Squadron" (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air Command and Staff College, April 1996), 26.

[14] Gardner, xix.

[15] Ursula, G. Lohmann, "Learning Leadership" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, reprinted from The Bureaucrat, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD, (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air University Press, 2001), 139.

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[17] Lt Col David J. Bertholf, "What Is and Where Is the United States Air Force Leadership Doctrine" (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air War College, April 1995), 10.

[18] Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1-3. *Air Force Leadership Doctrine DRAFT*, (December 1999), 9.

[19] Ibid, 3.

[20] Gardner xvii.

Chapter 2

The Leadership Essentials

Background

Early leadership researchers were confident that traits essential for leadership effectiveness could be identified by empirical research. However, after analyzing hundreds of trait studies, the evidence was inconclusive. It became clear that possession of some traits and skills increases the likelihood a leader will be effective, however, they do not guarantee effectiveness. A leader with certain traits could be effective in one situation but ineffective in a different situation. Furthermore, two leaders with a different pattern of traits could be successful in the same situation.[1] Therefore, we can conclude there are no universal leadership traits. Necessary leadership traits vary based on the situation.

Situational approach studies emphasize the importance of contextual factors that influence leadership processes. Major situational variables include the characteristics of followers, the nature of the work performed by the leader's unit, the type of organization, and the nature of the external environment. The assumption is distinct leadership traits will be effective in different situations and the same traits are not optimal in all situations.[2] John Gardner in his book *On Leadership*, states "Acts of leadership take place in an unimaginable variety of settings, and the setting does much to determine the kinds of leaders that emerge and how they play their roles."[3]

Therefore, leadership style is situational; it is the collection of characteristics used to influence others in order to accomplish organizational goals.[4]

Defining the Leadership Essentials

If leadership is situational; many traits, behaviors, and qualities that define leader-like actions exist for a given situation. But, there are two overarching and enduring attributes essential to leadership. According to a recent proposed draft outline for Air Force leadership doctrine, they are character and competence.[5] These fundamental core attributes envelop a wide range of traits and situations. These terms are simple and timeless because of their broad nature. The following sections will examine each term in greater detail.

Character

Character defines who you are. Nearly every author, leader and scholar has a different definition or uses the term in a different context. However, most agree character is of utmost importance. Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Sheila E. Widnall related the following adage to cadets at the United States Air Force Academy;

> *Watch your thoughts; they become words.*
> *Watch your words; they become actions.*
> *Watch your actions; they become habits.*
> *Watch your habits; they become character.*
> *Watch your character; it becomes your destiny.*[6]

Edgar Puryear captured more than one hundred flag officer's opinions on leadership in his book *American Generalship*. Here are several quotes from his book regarding character:

Eisenhower told me: “Character in many ways is everything in leadership.”

To General Bradley, character meant “Dependability, integrity, the characteristic of never knowingly doing anything wrong, that you would never cheat anyone, that you would give everybody a fair deal. Character is sort of an all-inclusive thing. If a man has character, everyone has confidence in him. Soldiers must have confidence in their leader.”

General Mark Clark, commander in Italy in World War II, remarked about the qualities necessary for successful leadership: “I would put character at the top of the list. It is the man of good character that I am going to seek out."

“Character,” said Lucian K. Truscott, a corps and army commander in World War II, “as we used to say when I was in elementary school, is what you are. Reputation is what others think you are. I think character is the foundation of successful leadership.”

General J. Lawton Collins, chief of staff of the army during the Korean War, stated, “I would place character as the absolutely number one requirement in leadership. By character, I mean primarily integrity.

“I get accused all the time,” said Gen Jacob Devers, an army group commander in World War II, “of using the word integrity when I mean character and character when I mean integrity. I think character is everything in leadership."

“Character plays a tremendous role in leadership,” said Gen. Anthony McAuliffe. “It’s a combination of many things—personality, clean living, presence. I just don’t know; it’s a very difficult word to describe because, as everyone knows, leaders come in all shapes and sizes and all sorts of personalities."

It is obvious that character is essential to leadership, but defining the exact qualities or traits is a daunting task. The Air Force has devoted considerable time and effort to developing its core values of *Integrity First, Service Before Self* and *Excellence in All We Do*. Former Secretary of the Air Force Sheila Widnall iterates, "Core values make the military what it is; without them, *we cannot succeed*. They are the values that instill confidence, earn lasting respect, and create willing followers. They are the values that anchor resolve in the most difficult situations. They are the values that buttress mental and physical courage when we enter combat. In essence, they are the three pillars of professionalism that provide the foundation for military leadership at every level."[7] The Air Force core values embody the key ingredients of character.

Competence

The Random House College dictionary defines *competent* as "having suitable or sufficient skill, knowledge and experience."[8] Edwin Locke, chairman of the department of management and organizations at the University of Maryland's College of Business and Management and noted author of more than 140 books and articles on leadership, stresses, "The importance of a leader's knowledge, skills and ability for his or her effectiveness is both intuitively and empirically clear. It is through these personal competencies that leaders are able to develop and implement their vision"[9] Locke's concise list fits well with the dictionary's definition of competence.

Competence is an essential trait in a good leader. Air Vice-Marshal J. R. Walker of the British Royal Air Force surmises, "Above all, a leader must be professionally competent."[10] However, what makes a leader competent depends on the situation. As previously mentioned, we are in a time of transformation with all aspects of society becoming more interdependent. John Gardner emphasizes, "The day of the hard-shelled military leader who never bothered to understand civilians is over, as is the day of the hard-nosed business executive who never bothered to understand government, and the day of the leader who never bothered to think internationally."[11] Therefore, the transformational leader must be competent in a growing numbers of areas to be successful and this competence is developed throughout a leader's career.

Components of Competence

This paper will identify and examine five key components of competence required of the transformational leader in the 21st century. The five components are a leader's role, responsibilities, depth, breath and vision. These components were derived from two sources.

The first is a team leader study conducted by Ford & Randolph in 1992, that suggests the following skills are relevant:

> Administrative Skills: The leader needs the ability to plan and organize the project activities, select qualified members of the team, and handle budgeting and financial responsibilities.
>
> Technical Expertise: The leader needs the ability to communicate about technical matters with team members from diverse functional backgrounds.
>
> Interpersonal Skills: The leader must be able to understand the needs and values of team members to influence them, resolve conflicts, and build cohesiveness.
>
> Political Skills: The leader must be able to develop coalitions and gain resources, assistance, and approvals from top management and other relevant parties.
>
> Cognitive Skills: The leader must be able to understand the team's complex internal and external relationships and how the different functions are relevant to the success of the project.[12]

Secondly, Burt Nanus in his book *Visionary Leadership*, notes the following:

> "To be an effective leader in today's rapidly changing world requires a delicate, four-fold balancing act:
>
> First, you must be able to relate skillfully to the managers and workers inside your organization who look to you for guidance, encouragement, and motivation.
>
> Second, you must be able to take full advantage of the external environment and relate skillfully to people outside your organization who are in a position to influence its success (such people may be investors, customers, or members of the board of directors). You must ensure that your organization is well positioned for the market conditions, legal constraints, and other circumstances that affect it.
>
> Third, you must be able to shape and influence all aspects of the present operations of your organization including the development of products and services, production processes, quality control systems, organizational structures, and information systems.
>
> Finally, you must be highly skilled in anticipating the future; that is, in assessing and preparing for developments, such as changes in customer tastes, technologies, or the global economy, that are likely to have critical implications for your organization in the coming decade."[13]

Ford's and Nanus' works illustrate the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for a competent leader. Table 1 depicts a comparison of these sources to the components defined for use in this paper and includes a brief definition of each component.

Table 1. Leadership Components of Competence

Ford's Skills	Nanus' Balancing Act	Components of Competence	Definitions
Administrative	First	Role	• Follower, manager and leader
Interpersonal	First	Responsibilities	• Execution, planning and concepts • Personal to organizational needs
Technical	Third	Depth	• Specialist to integrator • Understanding and engaging within the organization
Political	Second	Breadth	• Understanding and engaging the environment outside the organization
Cognitive	Fourth	Vision	• Ability to conceptualize/articulate goals and mission

Chapter four will incorporate these components into a leadership development model and examine the specifics of each component.

Notes

[1] Gary A. Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations, 5th Edition* (Upper Saddle River, NJ.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 2002), 177.

[2] Ibid, 13.

[3] Gardner, 6.

[4] A. Dale Timpe, *Leadership* (New York: Facts on File Publications, 1987), 117.

[5] Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1-3. *Air Force Leadership Doctrine DRAFT OUTLINE*, (February 2003), 1.

[6] Dr Shiela Widnall, Secretary, Air Force, Address. United States Air Force Academy, n.p. on-line, Internet, Available from http://www.usafa.af.mil/core-value/cv-mastr.html.

[7] Dr Shiela Widnall, Secretary, Air Force, n.p. on-line, Internet, Available from http://www.usafa.af.mil/core-value/cv-mastr.html.

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[9] Edwin A. Locke, *The Essence of Leadership* (New York.: Lexington Books, 1991), n.p.

[10] Air Vice-Marshal J.R. Walker, "Leadership" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 2001), 222.

[11] Gardner, 14.

[12] Yukl, 311-312.

[13] Burt Nanus, *Visionary Leadership* (San Francisco, CA,: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992), 11-12.

Chapter 3

The Levels of Leadership

Background

All large organizations have some form of command and control hierarchy. Researchers have developed various models to describe the authoritative organizational hierarchies. Most prevalent is a tiered model that distinguishes three organizational levels; workers, managers/supervisors and executives.[1] This concept can be adapted to levels of leadership. There are worker-level leaders, manager-level leaders and executive-level leaders. Figure 1 illustrates a simply wire diagram of a typical hierarchial organization.

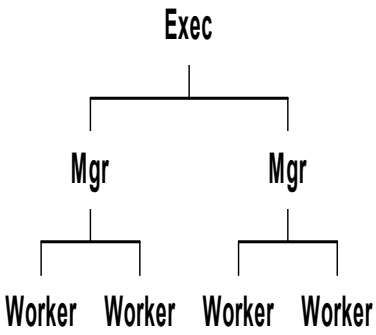

Figure 1. Hierarchical Wire Diagram Model

Colonel George B. Forsythe, behavioral scientist and Vice Dean for Education at WestPoint, defined an "organizational strata" using a three-tier model. He aptly called the tiers *tactical*, *operational* and *strategic*. He pointed out there are different "functions" carried out at each level

and asserted that cognitive requirements increase in complexity as one moves from tactical level to the strategic level.[2] These functions are synonymous with the components of competence used in this paper. Colonel Forsythe's model highlighted the increasing levels of complexity leaders face as a result of advancing through higher strata, generally associated with rank and level of responsibility within the organization.[3] Figure 2 is a simple triangular overlay of Col Forsythe's model on top of the organizational wire diagram presented in Figure 1.

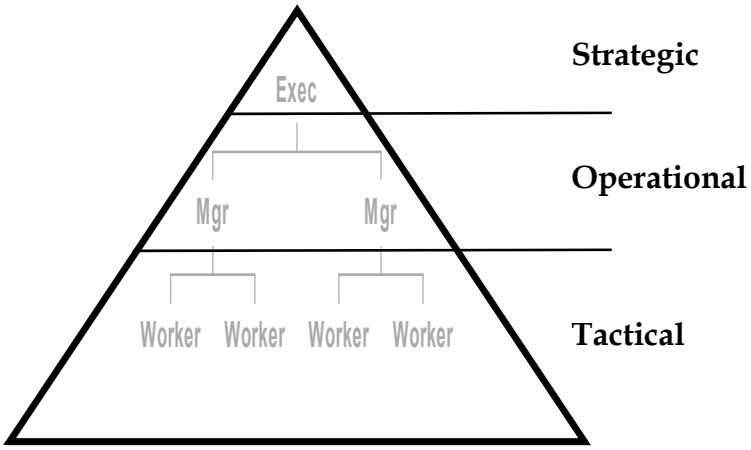

Figure 2. Hierarchical Triangle Diagram Model

Air Force Levels of Leadership Model

This paper uses an adaptation of Col Forsythe's model to distinguish the various formal levels of officer leadership in the Air Force. Similarly the levels of leadership are labeled tactical, operational and strategic. Size of the unit and span of control distinguishes one level from the next.

Tactical Level

All Airmen are tactical leaders. Tactical leadership is direct supervision. Any team leader within a unit is a tactical leader, such as a flight commander, flight crew commander, or a section chief.

Operational Level

Operational level leadership covers a broader range of positions and seniority, from junior field grade squadron commanders to three-star flag officers, such as numbered Air Force commanders. Operational leaders have a greater span of control and more indirect supervision responsibilities. The threshold for operational leadership is squadron command. However, operational leadership is not relegated to command positions alone. Senior staff positions and directorate level positions fall into this category as well.

Strategic Level

Strategic leaders are responsible for the overall organization. They are senior four star generals at the major command levels and above.

Figure 3 illustrates the Air Force officer hierarchy model and the positions that correspond to each level. The Air Force symbol represents the beginning of a leader's career. The three levels of leadership is the backbone for the leadership development model discussed in the next chapter.

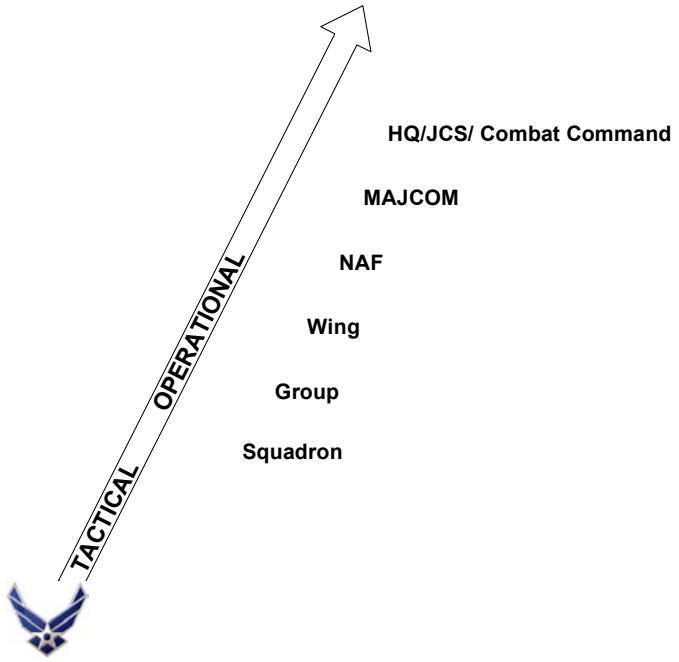

Figure 3. The Air Force Levels of Leadership

Notes

[1] Major Lista M. Benson, "Leadership Behaviors at Air War College" (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air Command and Staff College, April 1998), 12.

[2] Douglas V. Johnson II, ed, "Future Leadership, Old Issues, New Methods" (Carlislie, PA.: U.S. Army War College, June 2000), 12.

[3] Ibid, 13.

Chapter 4

Leadership Development

Background

Eliot Cohen, director of the Strategic Studies Program, states, "Good military organizations obsess about the importance of developing junior leaders."[1] As an organization, we can not forget the leaders of the future are the lieutenants of today. Thus, leadership development is an Air Force imperative.

Mr. Cohen articulates, "The really great leaders are geniuses in their own line of work."[2] He does not mean that they have incredible IQs, but they have a tremendous talent or skill in doing their job and motivating others. Some of this capability is innate, but much is developed by the institution or organizational culture. This is of particular significance to the military because it illustrates the importance of the "professional officer corps" philosophy adopted by the services.[3] A leader must be passionate about their “calling” to the profession of arms. Military leaders must be cultivated and groomed so they develop the competence to lead the organization. Unlike political appointees and CEOs hired from outside their organization, service senior leaders rise up through a career in the professional officer corps.

Education, Training and Experience

Education, training and experience are the vehicles for leadership development. Each reinforce and build on the foundation of the leadership essentials. Mr. Cohen emphasizes, "Leadership is a practical, not theoretical art. Therefore, there are limits to how much of it can be imparted in a classroom. Military organizations are probably unique in the opportunities they provide for modest doses of theory reinforced by massive quantities of carefully contrived practice and coaching."[4]

There are three key types of leadership training. They are formal, informal and self-study.[5] The Air Force provides its officers with world class formal training. This includes specialized programs, such as pilot training, air battle manager training and maintenance officer training as well as professional military education, such as squadron officer school and the Air Force basic course. Formal training courses provide standardized curriculums and rate officers on their performance. This provides a means of official documentation which measures developmental progression. Air Force officers also garner informal training throughout their career.

"A wise man learns from his experience; a wiser man learns from the experiences of others."[6] Learning from others is informal training. A wealth of knowledge and experience is available to officers who listen and learn. Informal training can occur any time or any place; at the office, a social gathering or at the officer's club. An endless supply of stories relating a veritable plethora of lessons learned is at hand if one is willing to listen.

Resourceful self study is another means of leadership training and includes reading about the organization's heritage, past and present leader insights and staying abreast of current events. Great leaders constantly learn through education, training and experience. Throughout this chapter, this paper will refer to several specific education and experience examples pertinent to leadership development.

Developing Leadership Competence

A leader's maturity develops incrementally throughout his or her career. Lessons learned at the tactical level carry forward and so on. Accumulation of knowledge, skills and abilities acquired at each level are building blocks for leadership competence. The five components of competence have different attributes at each level of leadership. Roles and responsibilities are postional where depth, breath and vision are more personal attributes aquired through experience, training and education. Table 2 depicts these attributes and each will be covered in the following sections.

Table 2. Leadership Development Model

Components of Competence	Levels of Leadership		
	Tactical	**Operational**	**Strategic**
Role	Follower	Manager	Icon
Responsibilities	Execution	Planning	Conceptualization
Depth	Specialist	Coordinator	Integrator
Breadth	Joint	Interagency	National
Vision	Action	Goals	Philosophy

It is important to note that these attributes may be exhibited at any level depending on a leader's position. Remember the previously mentioned premise, leadership is situational and there are no cookbook solutions or formulas for success. However, this matrix is useful for purposes of this paper's discussion and it's the outline for the following sections.

Leadership Role

Edgar H. Schein in his book, *Organizational Psychology,* wrote, "Leadership is best thought of as a function within an organization. Good leadership and good membership blend into each other in an effective organization. It is just as much the task of a member to help the group reach

its goal as it is the task of the formal leader."[7] Adams and Fenwick note, "Leadership is an interactive process that relies upon the leaders, managers, and followers to come together in common pursuit of the organization's goals. Leaders must understand to be successful they must assume and be comfortable in each of these roles at any given time. It is for this reason that they must know what role to be in, when they should be in it, and the characteristics of each role."[8] An anonymous quote reads, "Good leaders were first great followers."[9]

Followership

Col Phillip Meilinger states in his article, *The Ten Rules of Good Followership*, "The entire subject of leadership principles always strikes me as a bit grandiose, because the authors are indeed great men or women who have performed great deeds. Although they provide useful advice for those very few who will someday command thousands of troops in battle or direct the operations of great organizations, what about the rest of us? How does one become a good follower? This is a responsibility no less important than that of leadership—in fact it enables good leadership—yet it is often ignored. Moreover, it is likely that all of us will be followers more often than we will be leaders."[10] Appendix A lists Col Meilinger's Ten Rules of Good Followership.

Most leaders receive orders from higher authorities. Therefore, leaders must "follow" direction. Typically, tactical leaders are given specific tasks to accomplish. Once the direction is given, it is the tactical leader's responsibility to execute the task and articulate the orders to subordinates as though it were his or her own decision. This is a demonstration of loyalty. The tactical leader charged with carrying out the task must convey the message without cynicism, sarcasm or apathy.

Followership is the foundation of leadership and loyalty. Leaders may be followers at any level. There is a an old saying, "everyone has a boss" and its true. Followership may diminish, but does not fade away "at the top." Even at the highest levels, senior leaders work for someone. For example, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force works for the Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), the CJCS works for the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), SECDEF works for President of the United States and, ultimately, the President works for the American people.

The Manager

Many leadership scholars go through considerable pains to distinguish between leaders and managers. However, in practice, the distinction between a manager and a leader is often blurred. This is not because the distinction is invalid, but because the roles of leader and manager have no clear line of demarcation.[11] According to John Gardner, "Workers singled out to be supervisors discover that they are set apart from their old comrades in subtle ways. They try to keep the old camaraderie but things have changed. They are now symbols of management."[12]

Operational leaders run "units," comprehensive and often complex organizations within the larger system. To effectively run a "unit," the operational leader must perform some managerial tasks. John Gardner spells it out, "The word *manager* usually indicates that the individual so labeled holds a directive post in an organization, presiding over the processes by which the organization functions, allocating resources prudently and making the best use of people."[13] The point stands clear that all great leaders have good management skills.

The Icon - Serving as a Symbol

Leaders serve as symbols. General George Patton Jr. remarked, "You are always on parade."[14] Leaders must be role models who embody the organization's core values and set the example. Strategic leaders are elevated to the position of "icon" for the organization. Gardner

remarks, "The top leader of a community or nation symbolizes the group's collective identity and continuity. They serve as models; they symbolize the group's unity and identity; they retell the stories that carry shared meanings. Their exemplary impact is great."[15] This is important, because it sets expectations for leadership development.

Not all leaders can aspire to be the top leader in an organization. Great leadership alone is not enough to rise to the top. If leading a warfighting organization, the senior leader must have a warfighting background to be credible. Credibility inside as well as outside the instituion is based on a fundamental background in the institution's core function. Thus, this premise limits those who can aspire to be the top leader of an institution. Not only do strategic leaders serve as symbols, but they are entrusted with creating the organization's vision. Strategic leaders mold the future and preserve the organization's culture and must have credibility.

Leadership Responsibilities

Researchers have made the following observation: job responsibilities differ somewhat at different levels in the authority hierarchy of the organization.[16] Leadership responsibilities at different levels are closely aligned with the mission of the organization and are analogous to *why*, *what* and *how* the organization functions. The strategic leader determines *why* the mission needs to be done. The operational leader determines *what* needs to be done and the tactical leader is *how* the job gets done. Wrapping leadership responsibilities around the mission forms three distinct categories. They are *execution* at the tactical level, *planning* at the operational level and *conceptualization* at the strategic level. As a leader moves up, tasks become more involved, less defined and have longer time spans for completion. The following sections will examine each level's responsibilities.

Execution

"Tactical leaders are primarily concerned with structuring, coordinating, and facilitating work activities. Objectives are more specific, issues are less complex and more focused, and leaders typically have a shorter time perspective (a few weeks to 2 years)."[17] The tactical leader deals with relatively small groups and direct supervision. People make the mission happen and the tactical leader works directly with those doing the job. Army leadership doctrine states, "Direct leadership is face-to-face, first-line leadership. It takes place in those organizations where subordinates are used to seeing their leaders all the time: teams and squads, sections and platoons, companies, batteries, and troops—even squadrons and battalions. The direct leader's span of influence, those whose lives he can reach out and touch, may range from a handful to several hundred people. For direct leaders there is more certainty and less complexity than for organizational and strategic leaders. Direct leaders are close enough to see—very quickly—how things work, how things don't work, and how to address any problems."[18]

Planning

"Operational leaders are primarily concerned with interpreting and implementing policies and programs, and they usually have a moderately long time perspective (2 to 5 years)."[19] The operational leader deals with larger units and has more indirect supervision. As the size of the group increases, so does the administrative workload. Gary Yukl, in his book *Leadership in Organizations*, states, "Managers spend more time doing things like planning, coordinating, staffing, and budgeting."[20] Col Donald Waddell, professor at the Air War College, highlights, "As the leader rises above the tactical level, the number of people for whom the leader is responsible increases. Consequently, the interaction with the "troops" becomes less and less direct."[21]

According to FM 22-100, the Army's leadership doctrine, the operational leader is in a organizational leadership position. "Organizational leaders influence several hundred to several thousand people. They do this indirectly, generally through more levels of subordinates than do direct leaders. The additional levels of subordinates can make it more difficult for them to see results. Organizational leaders have staffs to help them lead their people and manage their organizations' resources. They establish policies and the organizational climate that support their subordinate leaders. Organizational leadership skills differ from direct leadership skills in degree, but not in kind. That is, the skill domains are the same, but organizational leaders must deal with more complexity, more people, greater uncertainty, and a greater number of unintended consequences. They find themselves influencing people more through policymaking and systems integration than through face-to-face contact."[22]

Conceptualization

"Strategic leaders are more concerned with exercise of broad authority in making long-range plans, formulating policy, modifying the organization structure, and initiating new ways of doing things. Decisions at this level usually have a long time perspective, because it is appropriate for senior leaders to be thinking about what will happen 10 to 20 years in the future."[23] According to the Army's leadership doctrine, "Strategic leaders, like direct and organizational leaders, process information quickly, assess alternatives based on incomplete data, make decisions, and generate support. However, strategic leaders' decisions affect more people, commit more resources and have wider-ranging consequences in both space and time than do decisions of organizational and direct leaders."[24]

Responsibility to the People and the Organization

All leaders have a responsibility to their people and to the mission. "Mission accomplishment and taking care of people are the two keys to successful leadership," according to Lt Gen Bill Lennox, Superintendent of United States Military Academy.[25] Leaders must balance the needs of people and organization commensurate with the leader's span of control. Admiral Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations, uses a "spectrum of needs" to illustrate this point.[26] Figure 4 depicts the CNO's spectrum of needs.

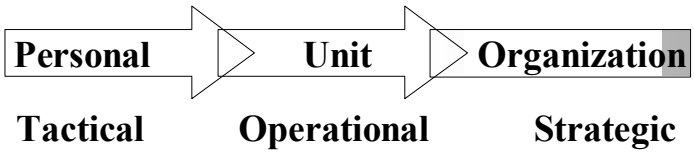

Figure 4. Spectrum of Needs

At the tactical level of the spectrum, personal needs are prominent. John Gardner mentions, "Leaders must understand the needs of the people they work with - their needs at the most basic level for income, jobs, housing and health care; their need for a measure of security; their need for confidence in the stability of the system of which they are a part, including the capacity of the system to solve the problems that threaten it (crime, inflation, social disintegration, economic collapse and the like); their need for a sense of community, of identity and belonging, of mutual trust, of loyalty to one another - their need for recognition, for the respect of others, for reassurance that they as individuals are needed; their need for new challenges and a conviction that their competences are being well used. Research suggests that workers are more effective if they can take pride in the product, or the quality of the services rendered, or the known integrity of their organization."[27]

At the other end of the spectrum is the needs of the organization. Leaders must ensure that the mission is accomplished. Using the building block approach, senior leaders must look to the future in order to take care of organization as well as take care of the people.

Depth, Breadth and Vision Overview

These components of a leader's competence are indispensable in a transforming world. In a highly complex and changing environment, a leader must be well rounded to be prepared to face the challenges of the 21st century. These aspects focus on personal development to ensure that a leader is able to take care of people, the mission, the institution and, ultimately, national security. A sports analogy ties depth, breath and vision together. Assume a leader is a coach. Depth is knowing the team (internal), breadth is knowing the playing field (external) and vision is developing a playbook for success. The following section will examine each component in greater detail.

Depth

> *Top-level leaders cannot hope to have competence in more than a few matters under their jurisdiction, but they must have knowledge of the whole system over which they preside, its mission, and the environment in which it functions.*[28]
>
> John Gardner

Depth is a leader's understanding and interaction <u>within</u> the organization. Issues include technical knowledge and expertise as well as lateral associations inside the organization. A leader's depth begins with technical expertise as a specialist at the tactical level. At the operational level a leader must coordinate with various coequal and subordinate units to build lateral alliances and relationships outside his or her specialty. Strategic leaders are integrators that possess the unique capacity to harmonize the diverse capabilities of the entire Air Force.

Specialist

> *Leaders have always been generalists. Tomorrow's leaders will, very likely, have begun life as trained specialists, but to mature as leaders they must sooner or later climb out of the trenches of specialization and rise above the boundaries that separate the various segments of society. Young potential leaders must be able to see how whole systems function.*[29]
>
> John Gardner

The Air Force tends to be highly specialized due to its use of technology. Thus, Air Force leaders constantly struggle to maintain the competitive edge. Leaders at the tactical level are rightfully focused on developing technical skills. However, this narrow "specialist" perspective must broaden as a leader moves up to the operational level and beyond. However, Major Hugh Vest warns, "At the microlevel, technical specialization is leading to isolation within organizations, even for functions that should overlap. Soldiers within a given service, base, wing, platoon, or squadron find few common threads. According to one flying officer, "They don't even know what we do—even the maintenance officer who gets the airplane ready to go. The complexity of jobs has gotten to the point we can't even understand what the other guy is doing.""[30] Thus it is imperative that our junior leaders gain exposure to the "bigger picture." Examples are discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

Coordinator

Operational leaders have a responsibility to their unit. Their unit may have a single weapons system or core competence, as is the case of most squadron commanders. In contrast, a unit may encompass several weapons systems or disciplines. For example, a wing commander may have four or five diverse groups (operations, maintenance, support, medical, etc) under his or her command. In addition, the operational leader must coordinate with other coequal units. An

example of this coordination is squadron commanders of various weapons systems interacting during a composite operation or exercise.

The extent to which a leader's unit is dependent on other units in the same organization is *lateral interdependence*. As interdependence increases with other units, coordination with them becomes more important and a greater need for mutual adjustments in plans, schedules, and activities arises. Operational leaders learn the value of working together with other units in the organization. Building lateral relations is a necessity. A researcher notes, "The leader's role in lateral relations includes functions such as gathering information from other units, obtaining assistance and cooperation from them, negotiating agreements, reaching joint decisions to coordinate unit activities, defending the unit's interests, promoting a favorable image for the unit, and serving as a spokesperson for subordinates. The extent to which a leader emphasizes each of these activities depends on the nature of the lateral relationship."[31]

Just as the leader tries to reconcile demands from above and below, it is also necessary to make compromises to reach agreements with other units. Subordinates expect the leader to represent their interests, but it will not be possible to maintain an effective working relationship with other units unless the leader is also responsive to their needs.[32]

Parochialism versus Pride. According to Dr. Frank Hunsicker, chairman of the department of management and marketing at West Georgia College, highly specialized organizations tend to be parochial and may cause dysfunctional conflict. "Members of squadron A tend to think the whole organization operates to support them regardless of the needs of squadron B. Maintenance and supply argue over who is responsible for an aircraft being out of commission. Each specialized area tends to emphasize its interest and forget the objectives of the larger

organization."[33] A leader must instill unit pride, yet temper it so as to not detract from the higher organizational goals or mission.

Integrator

Higher levels of leadership require the specialist to become a generalist, less concerned about operations at the tactical level and more concerned about the broader application of military power at the strategic levels. In essence, a generalist is an integrator, having the capacity to understand the capabilities of the entire organization and how to best employ them. Leadership above the unit level must become less hands-on, less technical. The leader must remain firmly in touch with mission performance, but he or she must leave the day-to-day operations in the hands of the technical experts.[34]

What we learn during our development preconditions us. This can be good and bad. If we are prisoners of our experiences and highly specialized, we may not see every aspect of a problem or solution that impacts the entire unit or organization. In some ways, it may limit conceptual or cognitive abilities in dealing with complex situations facing a senior leader. William Turcotte, a professor at the Naval War College, warns, "Directing the affairs of large, complex organizations requires a balanced and integrated point of view. One must resist the natural tendency to focus most on those areas one knows best from past experiences. This is a common fault of many senior executives. Acting on predisposition built from past successes, they sometimes conceive strategies ill suited to the organizational needs of the present."[35]

Depth Examples

The USAF Weapons School, the premier tactical instructor course in the Air Force, expanded in the early '90s. Formerly called the Fighter Weapons School, it was where the Air Force's top fighter pilot instructors earned a PhD in tactics. It became the USAF Weapons

School as other weapons systems were added to the curriculum. This school still houses the "best of the best," but now the instructors come from a much larger variety of backgrounds and experiences. Weapons School students are now exposed to a greater assortment of tactical combat power and support assets. This expansion has greatly increased the technical expert's depth of knowledge and perspective across the Air Force.

A 1998 Air Command and Staff College research project cogently articulated other officer mentoring opportunities designed to increase depth. Some prominent examples are listed here:

> **Relevant self-study.** Encourage reading on military history, biographies, leadership, counseling, psychology and related topics. For officers beginning master's degree programs, encourage study in fields which are relevant to the Air Force and leadership. Guide discussions of ideas and their practical application to the squadron.
>
> **Shadow programs**. Rated officers can learn about maintenance processes by shadowing key maintenance personnel for a day or two. Shadowing includes following them, doing what they do, taking notes, and providing temporary assistance as required.
>
> **Senior level meetings**. Group and wing level staff meetings provide insight into issues at and above the squadron command level.
>
> **Counseling sessions**. A universal problem area for new commanders was Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and personnel issues. Permitting junior rated officers to observe UCMJ and other types of counseling sessions (within legal constraints) would expose them to real-world problems and the proper means to deal with them. On the positive side, include junior officers in good situations such as awards presentation, career counseling, and stripes for Exceptional Performers promotions.
>
> **Acting commander and other temporary jobs**. When the squadron commander or operations officer are on leave or TDY, designate an alternate and empower him to do the whole job while the senior leadership is absent. Avoid holding onto the leash by calling in or working issues from long distance, but designate a Watchdog to insure the acting officer is not overwhelmed. Give the acting commander the keys to the office and all of the responsibilities that go with them. Hold a debriefing upon resumption of command.
>
> **Commander's calls**. Involve junior officers in the planning and presentation of appropriate topics to the assembled squadron and to field questions.[36]
>
> **Special Assignments.** Special assignments encompass teams which are formed for specific tasks or short duration functions, after which the team usually dissolves. Such teams are usually informal in that the team leader does not have official supervisory responsibilities over the members of the team, and participation on the team may be voluntary. Special assignments work best as leadership development opportunities when

the officer leads a team or participates in a task which includes non-rated officers and enlisted personnel. Special taskings that were cited by former commanders as beneficial to their leadership development included:

Project officer for squadron deployments or special missions

Detachment commander for a deployed element of aircraft

Court martial duty

Project officer for squadron-wide functions such as Christmas parties, sports days, squadron picnics, and ski trips

Change of command ceremonies at squadron, group, and wing level

Group and wing level process action team leaders

Red carpet day (spouse day)

Squadron and base open houses[37]

Breadth

Before leaving this discussion of organizations and their environment, one concept should be reemphasized: an organization is dependent upon its environment, and as the environment changes, so must the organization if it expects to remain fully functional. The singular most important change in recent years affecting organizations is the growing interdependence of organizations and their environments. In the old Wild West movies, Fort Apache could lock its gates to the world around it. The military organizations of today have many more responsibilities to the external environment. The nature of our complex world suggests that no organization can be an island.[38]

Dr. Frank Hunsicker

Breadth is the leader's understanding and interaction outside the organization. Issues include the sister services, the Department of Defense, interagencies and national interests and how they interact and/or affect the organization. Alliances, politics, networking, and "seeing the non-parochial picture" are important aspects of breadth. Gary Yukl notes, "High-level managers are usually more dependent on people outside the organization, and research on managerial activities and networking shows that they spend more time interacting with outsiders."[39] Breadth builds

the savvy to know what to say and do when in “mixed” company. Knowing the playing field pays dividends. It helps the leader articulate the needs of the organization.

Jointness

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act became law in 1986. It mandated more efficient use of defense resources, increased effectiveness of military operations and improvement of the management and administration of the Department of Defense. It was also designed to improve joint officer management policies.[40] It's initial success may be questioned, but, today our military forces exhibit a high degree of interoperability and work well in the joint environment more often than not. The Air Force recognizes the importance of joint and coalition alliances. *Air Force Vision 2020* states, "We are partners in our nation’s security. We dominate the aerospace domain to facilitate the effectiveness of the Joint Team. Our commitment is firm—to work effectively with soldiers, sailors, marines and coastguardsmen anywhere our nation’s interests and its people are at risk. And as members of the Joint Team, our commitment is equally firm to live up to the trust of our multinational partners." Air Force leaders continue to be cross-functionally adept and understand how the other services operate.

According to a recent draft proposal for *Operational Warfare Leadership Development*, "Unique U.S. Air Force contributions to joint operations involves asymmetric maneuvers in the third dimension of air and space. The Air Force provides the preponderance of combat capability and experience to create military effects in five major operating areas. They include air combat operations, air mobility operations, special operations, space operations, and information warfare operations."[41] Leaders must have depth of experience outside their primary Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) to fully understand how to employ the combined effects of these five operating areas.

Cross-functional theories and research show there are relevant skills and behaviors that a leader needs. John Gardner writes, "In an isolated, monolithic system the authority stemming from the leader's hierarchical position is a potent weapon, always there, even if the leader chooses to use it with a light hand. But in a tumultuous, swiftly changing environment, in a world of multiple, colliding systems, the hierarchical position of leaders within their own system is of limited value, because some of the most critically important tasks require lateral leadership. This is called boundary-crossing 1eadership, involving groups over whom they have no control. They must exercise leader-like influence beyond the system over which they preside. They must do what they can to lead without authority."[42]

Interagencies

Cross boundary leadership extends beyond the services into the interagencies and other civilian authorities. According to Gardner, "Virtually all leaders at every level must carry on dealings with systems external to the one in which they themselves are involved, they are the tasks of representing and negotiating, of defending institutional integrity, and of public relations. As one moves higher in the ranks of leadership, such challenges increase. It goes without saying that people who have spent their careers in the world of the specialist or within the boundaries of a narrow community (their firm, their profession) are often ill-equipped for such leadership tasks. The young potential leader must learn early to cross boundaries and to know many worlds. The attributes that enable leaders to teach and lead their own constituencies may be wholly ineffective in external dealings. Military leaders who are revered by their troops may be clumsy with civilians."[43] Leaders unwilling to seek mutually workable arrangements with systems external to their own are not serving the long-term interests of their constituents.[44]

Leaders must build outside networks of allies in the many other segments of society whose cooperation is required for a significant result.[45]

National - Politics and the Military

Major Vest points out, "Tomorrow's soldiers will also need heightened political consciousness and awareness. Modern conflicts have become increasingly more political. The projection of military force and US interests internationally must deal with a myriad of national political controls and limited objectives, along with additional challenges brought on by joint and multinational operations. During Vietnam, strict and highly unpredictable political regulation played a part in target selection and the use of force. The Gulf War of 1991 saw the development of multinational coalitions, the drawing of a "line in the sand," and the imposition of limited political objectives."[46] Senior leaders must be able to articulate their service's competencies, needs and budget concerns to various outside agencies. They vie for their service's piece of the defense budget pie. Defending the organization's position within the Department of Defense and on Capitol Hill takes political skill. This is stressed in Army doctrine, "Strategic leaders concern themselves with the total environment in which the Army functions; their decisions take into account such things as congressional hearings, Army budgetary constraints, new systems acquisition, civilian programs, research, development, and interservice cooperation—just to name a few."[47] This same understanding permeates throughout all the services. Building relationships on Capitol Hill is important as military experience decreases amongst members in Congress.

Breadth Examples

A fundamental example to gain breadth stems from formal Professional Military Education programs. Intermediate and Senior Service School exchange programs are an excellent chance

to observe and be a part of a "different culture" for one year. The education gives the leader an understanding of other services thought processes, culture, concerns and how they fit into the bigger picture. Our own Air Force programs host officers from different services, domestic and foreign, who provide greater breadth as well.

Another example is staff positions. Key Air Staff and Joint staff positions build breadth and a greater understanding of the entire Department of Defense. Legislative affairs staff positions build an appreciation for how Congress affects the services.

John Gardner recommends that organizations "devise assignments that send their most promising young executives out into the world; for example, for a year' internship in government or an assignment in a foreign country"[48] Putting this in practical terms for the military, outside interagency exposure through schools, exchanges and fellowships are invaluable learning experiences that help foster more breadth during a leader's development.

Vision

> *A visionary is good with words. But a visionary leader is good with actions as well as words, and so can bring his/her vision into being in the world, thus transforming it in some way. More than words are needed for a vision to take form in today's world. It requires leadership and heartfelt commitment.*[49]
>
> Corinne McLaughlin

Vision ties depth and breadth together, "It is the conceptual and intellectual ability of a leader to see/know what needs to be done to make the organization better."[50] According to Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, "To choose a direction, a leader must first have developed a mental image of a possible and desirable future state of the organization. This image, which we call vision, may be as vague as a dream or as precise as a goal or a mission statement. The critical point is that a vision articulates a view of a realistic, credible, alternative future for the

organization, a condition that is better in some ways than what now exists. A vision is a target that beckons."[51] This passage explains how "vision" covers a wide range, from a dream of the future to exacting goals. Nanus, in his book *Visionary Leadership*, contends there are three levels of vision. First is strategic vision, which is the organization's overriding philosophy; tactical, which is that philosophy in action; and personal, which is that philosophy made manifest in the behavior of each employee.[52] Slightly modified, these three forms of vision are the basis of the three levels of the vision used in this paper. They are *philosophy* at the strategic level, *goals* at the operational level and *action* at the tactical level. The following section will review *vision* from the strategic to tacital.

Strategic Philosophy

Nanus' strategic vision is the most prominently recognized form of vision. Strategic vision is the leader's cognitive maturity in dealing with complicated tasks, condensing a complex set of issues into a concrete objective or goal. Visionary leaders think in broad and systemic terms, see the big picture, the whole system, and "the pattern that connects."[53] It is imperative for the strategic leader to look to the future, conceptualize and articulate a clear vision for the organization.

Operational Goals

Operational vision is manifested in mission statements that articulate the unit's goals. Donald Phillips, in his book *The Founding Fathers on Leadership*, writes, "Effective visions provide context, give purpose and establish meaning. They inspire people to mobilize and move in the same general direction. And once an accepted vision is implemented, a consensus builds that often results in enhanced understanding of the organization's overall mission."[54] He goes on to emphasize that an effective vision is clear, challenging and about excellence. It should be

simple enough to stand the test of time, it should be stable yet flexible.[55] Steve Covey, author of *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* states, "Mission statements are vital to successful organizations."[56] A mission statement must be simple, understood everywhere in the organization and aligned throughout the levels of leadership.

Lower level leaders mistakenly waste time crafting elaborate and grandiose vision statements. This is not necessary because lower level leader's vision is mission specific and goal/action oriented. Crafting a mission statement is relatively straightforward. What is the vision and mission of the next level leader above you and what is your mission? When answered, these two questions are the foundation for formulating a unit's or team's mission statement. For example, in the 18th Wing at Kadena Air Base, Japan, the mission statement is three unmistakable lines, "Defend the base, accept follow-on forces and deploy combat airpower." In the 67th Fighter Squadron, a subordinate combat F-15 unit, the mission statement is even more unadorned, "Air superiority, anywhere, anytime." The subordinate unit mission statement is simple, concise, complementary and understood at all levels within an organization.

Alignment. Paramount to effective implementation of an organization's vision is alignment. The visions of lower level and midlevel executives must support, or at least not conflict with, a higher level vision.[57] For example, the National Security Strategy formulates the overarching guidelines that shape the National Military Strategy, which shapes Joint Vision, etc. To ensure alignment, senior leaders need to know their subordinate leaders' vision and mission statements. This does not mean the senior leader should micromanage or dictate lower level leaders' vision. In other words, the senior leader must *empower* his subordinates to craft their own vision statements, but *verify* the two are aligned. To "empower and verify" is illustrated in the following quote from Burt Nanus, "In a small organization, the leader will likely be the one to set

the goals and objectives, perhaps with input from staff or line personnel. In larger organizations, it is the leader's job to see that the goals and objectives are established by others, perhaps reserving approval authority to verify their consistency with the vision. In some of the best-managed companies, the responsibility for setting goals and objectives is widely dispersed, sometimes reaching right down to the workers on the production line."[58]

Tactical Action

Tactical level vision is personal. The model has come full circle. Tactical action embodies the essentials of leadership; a leader's endeavor to maintain the highest degree of character and competence. Burt Nanus summarizes, "In the end, therefore, human behavior in organizations is very much shaped by a shared vision of a better tomorrow. Developing and promulgation of such a vision is the highest calling and truest purpose of leadership, for people instinctively "follow the fellow who follows the dream."[59]

Notes

[1] Eliot Cohen, "Education For Leadership" 2002, n.p. On-line. Internet, February 2003. Available from http://www.sais-jhu.edu/pubs/saisphere/winter02/cohen.html.

[2] Ibid, http://www.sais-jhu.edu/pubs/saisphere/winter02/cohen.html.

[3] Maj. Gen. Peter U. Sutton, AF/DPL, interviewed by author, 21 February 2003.

[4] Cohen, http://www.sais-jhu.edu/pubs/saisphere/winter02/cohen.html.

[5] Lt Col David Timm, Chief of Combat Operations Development, Air Force, interviewed by author, 20 March 2003.

[6] Lt Col Charles M. Westenhoff, *Military Air Power: The Cadre Digest of Air Power Opinions and Thoughts* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL.: Air University Press, October 1990), 11.

[7] Gardner, 149.

[8] Lt Col Jim Lauria, "Learning About Leadership" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, reprinted from The Bureaucrat, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD, (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air University Press, 2001), 237.

[9] Notes. Department of State Senior Seminar, Fall 2002.

[10] Col Phillip S. Meilinger, "The Ten Rules of Good Followership" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 2001), 99-101.

[11] Locke, 4.

[12] Gardner, 18.

Notes

[13] Ibid, 3.

[14] Lt Col Gary T. McCoy, "Developing Officership: It Starts At The Top" (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air War College, April 1996), 30.

[15] Gardner, 29.

[16] Yukl, 34-35.

[17] Ibid, 34-35.

[18] FM22-100, 1-11.

[19] Yukl, 34-35.

[20] Ibid, 36.

[21] Colonel Donald E. Waddell III, "A Situational Leadership Model for Military Leaders" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 2001), 282.

[22] FM 22-100, 1-11.

[23] Yukl, 36.

[24] FM 22-100, 1.12.

[25] Lt Gen Lennox addressed the State Department's Senior Seminar on 17 March 2003.

[26] ADM Clark addressed the State Department's Senior Seminar on 4 December 2002.

[27] Gardner, 185.

[28] Gardner, 50.

[29] Gardner, 159.

[30] Vest, 17.

[31] Yukl, 37.

[32] Yukl, 37-38.

[33] Frank R. Hunsicker, "Organization Theory for Leaders" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 2001), 153-155.

[34] Waddell, 283.

[35] William E. Turcotte, "Executive Strategy Issues for Very Large Organizations" in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, reprinted from The Bureaucrat, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD, (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air University Press, 2001), 163.

[36] Dodson, 65.

[37] Dodson, 69-70.

[38] Hunsicker, 155.

[39] Yukl, 35.

[40] Major Kevin G. Boggs, Major, et al. "The Goldwater- Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986: An Analysis of Air Force Implementation of Title IV and Its Impact On the Air Force Officer Corps" (Maxwell AFB, AL.: Air Command and Staff College, May 1995), 3.

[41] Lt Col David Timm, Chief of Combat Operations Development, Air Force, interviewed by author, 20 March 2003.

[42] Gardner, 98.

[43] Gardner, 20.

[44] Gardner, 99.

[45] Gardner, 103.

Notes

[46] Vest, n.p.

[47] FM22-100, 1-12.

[48] Gardner, 104.

[49] Corrine McLaughlin, "Visionary Leadership" 2003, n.p. On-line. Internet, Feb 2003. Available from http://www.visionarylead.org/visionary_leadership_article.htm.

[50] McLaughlin, n.p.

[51] Waddell, 283.

[52] Nanus, 186.

[53] McLaughlin, n.p.

[54] Donald T. Phillips, *Lincoln on Leadership*. (New York: Warner Books, 1993), 31.

[55] Phillips, 32.

[56] Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 139.

[57] Nanus, 155.

[58] Nanus, 143.

[59] Nanus, 19.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

Putting it all Together

To get someone to see what you're saying, draw a picture

Anonymous

Transformational leadership development is an important growth process. It must begin as an officer enters the Air Force and continue throughout his or her career. The preceding chapters have detailed the components of competence at each level of leadership. These components constitute the basic framework for developing a competent leader. Each component is a tool to effective leadership and as a leader masters them, he or she adds these tools to their own leadership tool container. As a leader ascends the levels of leadership, roles change and responsibilities increase. Commensurate with increased responsibility is demand for greater depth, breadth and vision. These are the premises used to develop a three dimensional illustration of the personal officer leadership development model in Figure 5.

The backbone of the model is taken from Figure 3, the illustration used to depict the levels of leadership. The Air Force symbol represents the beginning of a leader's career. Along the axis of the levels of leadership are the roles and responsibilities portraying the incremental growth process. Depth, breadth and vision form three sides making the leadership development model a three-dimensional inverted pyramid shape.

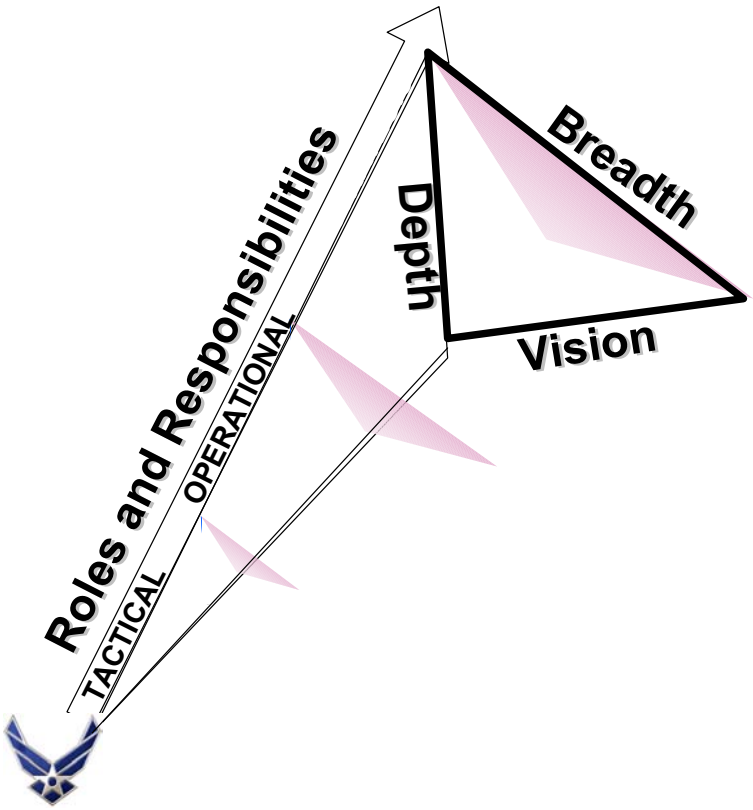

Figure 5. Three Dimensional Leadership Development Model

A well-rounded transformational leader fills the pyramid evenly through education, training and experience as he or she ascends the levels of leadership. This gives a leader the necessary competence at each level and is the precursor to moving up to the next level. If a leader stagnates, does not continue to fill the pyramid, the leader may not progress to the next level of leadership.

Figures 6 compares the personal leadership development model to the hierarchical model. In the illustration, a well-balanced leader's personal development inverted pyramid is filled to a level commensurate with his or her hierarchical position (tactical, operational or strategic).

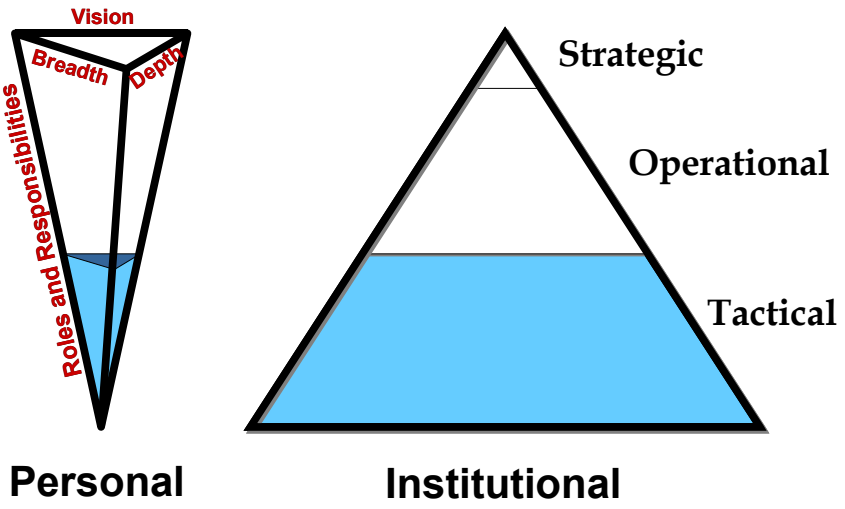

Figure 6. Personal Leadership Development Versus Institutional Model

Figure 7, below, shows that a top-level strategic leader's personal development is filled completely; the meniscus is at the top of the *personal* inverted pyramid. This illustrates the requirement for a strategic leader to be well rounded, balanced and visionary.

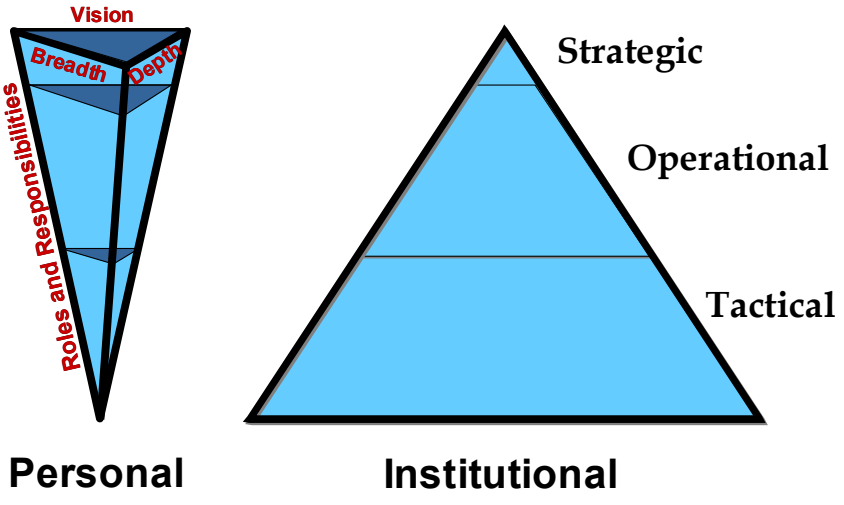

Figure 7. Strategic Leader Development Versus Institutional Model

Conversely, a leader who is Air Force centric and has little experience outside the organization may have a skewed leadership progression. This may be the case if an officer fails to experience career-broadening assignments outside his or her primary Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC). Applying this to the 3-D model, the pyramid would lean towards depth alone and away from breadth and vision. Thus, the leader would not fill the pyramid evenly and he or she would not achieve the well-rounded leadership tools necessary for continued development. This evolution is depicted in Figure 8.

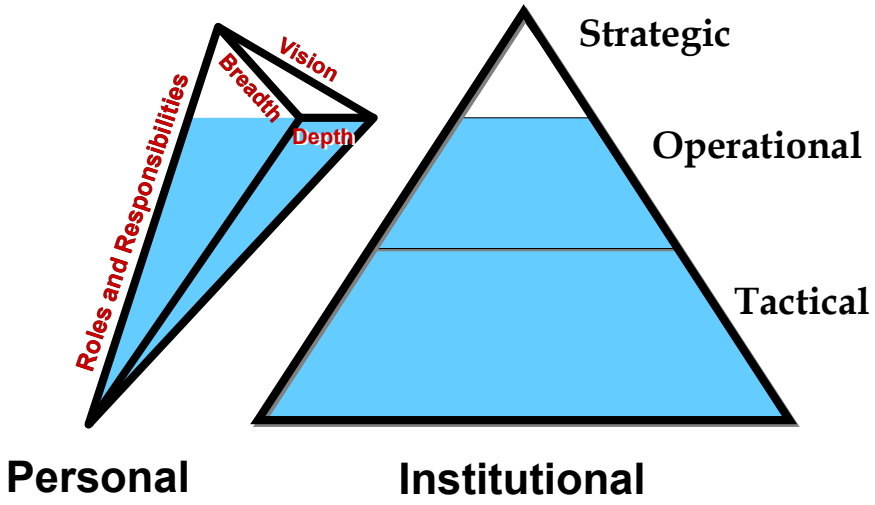

Figure 8. Skewed Personal Leadership Development Versus Institutional Model

A perceived stigma exists within the Air Force officer corps attached to assignments outside an individual's primary Air Force Specialty Code. Force development education should inculcate the value of the components of competence in our junior leaders. Highlighted by Maj Vest, "In today's military, career management takes on entirely new forms. One attains elite status by pursuing a broad career through existing institutions. The experience demanded of modern elites requires skill in personal relations, management, decision-making, and political negotiations. Officers develop these traits and a concern with broader military issues through a

slightly unconventional career that maximizes the "breadth of contacts and sympathies with outside agencies.""[1]

Technology and globalization require our future leaders to confront the daunting task of integrating and operating in an increasingly interdependent environment within the Department of Defense and the interagencies. This paper presents a simplified pictorial of personal development relative to the institutional hierarchy. It is a worthy tool because it demonstrates the importance of well rounded and balanced experience, training and education needed to function in a transforming atmosphere. As we transform, our need for competent leaders remains constant.

Recommendations

- Leadership doctrine should stress that character and competence are the essentials of leadership.
- Three levels of leadership should be incorporated into leadership doctrine and formal professional education.
- The leadership development model should be incorporated as a fundamental baseline in leadership doctrine and force development documents.

Notes

[1] Vest, 19.

Appendix A

The Ten Rules of Good Followership

1. Don't blame your boss for an unpopular decision or policy; your job is to support, not undermine.
2. Fight with your boss if necessary; but do it in private, avoid embarrassing situations, and never reveal to others what was discussed.
3. Make the decision, then run it past the boss; use your initiative.
4. Accept responsibility whenever it is offered.
5. Tell the truth and don't quibble; your boss will be giving advice up the chain of command based on what you said.
6. Do your homework; give your boss all the information needed to make a decision; anticipate possible questions.
7. When making a recommendation, remember who will probably have to implement it. This means you must know your own limitations and weaknesses as well as your strengths.
8. Keep your boss informed of what's going on in the unit; people will be reluctant to tell him or her their problems and successes. You should do it for them, and assume someone else will tell the boss about yours
9. If you see a problem, fix it. Don't worry about who would have gotten the blame or who now gets the praise.
10. Put in more than an honest day's work, but don't ever forget the needs of your family. If they are unhappy, you will be too, and your job performance will suffer accordingly.

So these are my Ten Rules of Good Followership. All of us are subordinate to someone, and learning how to serve our boss well is an important responsibility. If we can master this task, and master it well, then we will, in turn, be better leaders when that challenge confronts us. We'll be ready. After all, even the greatest of military leaders must start at the bottom. We must learn to

follow before we can lead. I hope you find these thoughts useful in your own journey to the stars."[1]

Notes

[1] Col Phillip S. Meilinger, "The Ten Rules of Good Followership," in AU-24, *Concepts for Air Force Leadership*, eds. Richard I. Lester, PhD, and A. Glenn Morton, PhD (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 2001), 99-101.

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