

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**AN ARMY ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF INNOVATION:
A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE FOR TRANSFORMATION**

by

Lieutenant Colonel Martin T. Carpenter
United States Army

Dr. Craig Bullis
Project Adviser

This SRP is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Strategic Studies Degree. The U.S. Army War College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (215) 662-5606. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

The views expressed in this student academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE 15 MAR 2006		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Army Organizational Culture of Innovation A Strategic Imperative for Transformation				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Martin Carpenter				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, PA, 17013-5050				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT See attached.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 22	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Lieutenant Colonel Martin T. Carpenter
TITLE: An Army Organizational Culture of Innovation: A Strategic Imperative for Transformation
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project
DATE: 15 March 2006 WORD COUNT: 5454 PAGES: 22
KEY TERMS: Climate; Agility; Junior Officer; Strategic Leader
CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Determining what the Army needs to do to transform to a culture of innovation is one of the leading challenges. This SRP focuses on how to change the Army's culture to one fostering innovation. It defines a "culture of innovation" and shows how the Army should change its institutional culture to one that encourages innovation. It will also explore how culture is affected at the strategic and organizational levels of leadership.

AN ARMY ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF INNOVATION: A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE FOR TRANSFORMATION

As we prepare for the future, we must think differently and develop the kinds of forces and capabilities that can adapt quickly to new challenges and to unexpected circumstances. We must transform not only the capabilities at our disposal, but also the way we think, the way we train, the way we exercise and the way we fight. We must transform not only our military forces, but also the Department that serves them by encouraging a culture of creativity and prudent risk-taking... There will be no moment at which the Department is "transformed." Rather, we are building a culture of continual transformation.¹

- Donald H. Rumsfeld (2003)
Secretary of Defense
Transformation Planning Guidance

President Bush admonished Citadel cadets, 11 December 2001, that with rapidly changing technology and an increasingly changing enemy "our Military culture must reward new thinking, innovation, and experimentation."² There is little doubt in any U. S. Soldier's mind that the Army must transform to a more flexible fighting force capable of defeating an enemy on an asymmetric battlefield while continuing to provide support to ever increasing domestic missions.³ Today's Army is suffering from mission creep as it becomes more involved in the diplomatic aspects of stabilization and rebuilding phases of operations while including humanitarian assistance both at home and abroad.⁴ These missions seem diametrically opposed to how most of the current "20-year career" professional Soldiers were trained during the Cold War. "Generations of Army officers came of age eating, sleeping, and breathing the tactics and organization of the Soviet forces east of the Elbe. However, when we can no longer be certain of our enemy's order of battle, or even who our enemy is likely to be, the officer's task becomes correspondingly more difficult."⁵ Our current ever-changing and illusive enemy has made it much more difficult to train our leaders, who primarily relied on a battle drills and tactics' template. With ever-changing enemies comes ever-changing tactics and technology. Accordingly, our leaders have a significantly more demanding job to adapt to more complex and shifting situations. The environment is rapidly changing and innovation continually remakes the world—traditionally regarded as progress—to create a modern civilization.⁶

"It is this need for progress that is the source of the relentless destabilization and disorder experienced by individuals, institutions, governments, and societies."⁷ In Afghanistan, company commanders are negotiating with local Afghan leaders on a daily basis, which is a daunting task, given these commanders' lack of experience and training to perform these missions. The Army must train its leaders, or better yet, educate its young leaders to deal with these additional

responsibilities that are in most cases out of their comfort zone.⁸ Based on this changing nature of military operations, the Army needs to develop more mentally agile leaders while creating an institutional culture of innovation.

Determining what the Army needs to do to transform to a culture of innovation is one of the leading challenges. This SRP focuses on how to change the Army's culture to one that encourages innovation. It defines a "culture of innovation" and explains how the Army should change its institutional culture to one that fosters innovation. It also explores how culture is affected at the strategic and organizational levels of leadership.

What is Organizational Culture?

"Organizational culture comprises the attitudes, values, beliefs, norms and customs of an organization. Whereas organizational structure is relatively easy to draw and describe, organizational culture is considered to be less tangible and more difficult to measure."⁹ Ray Anthony defines institutional culture as the "collective personality" of the organization. An organization's culture determines how it really functions; this culture consists of deeply embedded values, beliefs, philosophies, attitudes, and operation norms. Essentially, culture accounts for "how things are done around here."¹⁰

In *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, Edgar H. Schein defines culture as: "A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems."¹¹ In *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide*, Schein elaborates on this definition of culture: "Culture is the sum total of all the shared, taken-for-granted assumptions that a group has learned throughout its history. It is the residue of success."¹² These descriptions assert that culture accounts for how people behave in a shared environment. Schein posits that "The first thing to notice is that cultural assumptions involve not only the internal workings of the organization but, more important, how the organization views itself in relation to its various environments."¹³ The Army defines organizational or institutional culture as "shared attitudes and values, goals, and practices that characterize the larger institution. It's deeply rooted in long-held beliefs, customs, and practices."¹⁴

For example, junior Army officers experience the social process and begin to learn the Army culture during their initial training prior to becoming an officer, whether it is Officer Candidate School (OCS), Reserve Officer Training Course (ROTC), the United States Military

Academy (USMA), or during their basic branch qualification course. This culture is then embedded and reinforced after they arrive at their first unit and during their tenure in that unit.¹⁵

An Internet encyclopedia assesses the viability of organizational culture in terms of its adherence to and relationship to its organizational values:

Strong culture is said to exist where staff respond to stimulus because of their alignment to organizational values. Conversely, there is Weak Culture where there is little alignment with organizational values and control must be exercised through extensive procedures and bureaucracy. Where culture is strong - people do things because they believe it is the right thing to do...bureaucratic organizations may miss opportunities for innovation, through reliance on established procedures. Innovative organizations need individuals who are prepared to challenge the status quo...and also need procedures to implement new ideas effectively.¹⁶

This article then claims that some bureaucratic organizations – not unlike the Army – may miss opportunities for innovation because of their heavy reliance on established procedures and hierarchical structure.

Similarly, in “Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations,” Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster reports on his observations of the US Army during Operations Iraqi Freedom in the months leading up to the January 2005 elections in Iraq. He observed: “A hierarchically conscious command ethos, which encouraged centralization, and conversely discouraged low level initiative or innovation even when senior commanders stressed the need for them.”¹⁷ Brigadier Aylwin-Foster thus suggests that senior commanders must embrace a culture of innovation before it can positively affect behaviors at the lower command levels. In order for Army culture to foster innovation at all levels, its senior officers must welcome, indeed lead, such cultural changes.

Why is it Important for the Army to Transform?

In his 2001 introduction to Part One of *The Future of the Army Profession*, Don Snider asserted that “History shows that many armies do not adapt well in peacetime to changing environments such as the Army now faces; some do not adapt at all and no longer exist as deployable armies, witness today in Western Europe.”¹⁸ Snider was indeed prescient. It is not until April 2003, two-and-a-half years after the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom and at the commencement of Operation Iraqi Freedom that DoD issued transformation guidance. Snider also claimed that “even for those that are able to innovate and adapt in order to remain effective militarily and relevant to the societies they defend, the process is often long and difficult. Such processes take at least a decade or longer, and often are not resolved when the next war starts, thus requiring the even more difficult process of wartime innovation and

adaptation.”¹⁹ He again anticipated current Army Issues. Only after waging the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) for over two years did senior leaders issue the call for transformation of our military. Snider accurately predicted a long and difficult transformation, not unlike what the Army is experiencing today. Further, Brigadier Aylwin-Foster claims that the Army is taking too long to adapt: “The Army took too long to adapt to the changed requirements arising from Phase 4 [stabilization] Operations [in Operation Iraqi Freedom].”²⁰ Time is a critical factor when it comes to training and encouraging innovation in young leaders. The Army is at war and no longer has the luxury of deploying Soldiers and units to combat training centers for multiple iterations of non-combat training exercises that are relatively low risk and thus allow for an environment of prudent risk-taking. Training now is taking place while we are at war. In the combat environment, the stakes are too high to begin learning prudent risk-taking. It is much more difficult to develop leaders with competency for prudent risk-taking during combat. Strategic leaders have recognized this lack of opportunities to train junior officers, yet the Army has committed to transforming its culture as indicated by current guidance.²¹

Several of our nation’s leaders have recognized the need for a transformation of the military as a whole; they have subsequently mandated that the Army develop its leaders to be more conceptually innovative.²² The DoD Vision gives more guidance on the goals of transformation:

Military transformation will enable the U.S. Armed Forces to achieve broad and sustained competitive advantages in the 21st century. It comprises those activities that anticipate and create the future by coevolving concepts, processes, organizations, and technologies to produce new sources of military power. The transformation of our armed forces will dramatically increase our strategic and operational responsiveness, speed, reach, and effectiveness, making our forces increasingly precise, lethal, tailorable, agile, survivable, and more easily sustainable.²³

The White paper “Objective Force in 2015” goes slightly further in outlining a vision of, rather than the means for, producing leaders who will provide a command climate that supports initiative, innovation, and risk-taking in a transformed Army.²⁴ General Peter J. Schoomaker, current Army Chief of Staff, offers a clear mandate for transforming the Army culture to defeat terrorism. He refers to the article “Adapt or Die” by Brigadier General Fastabend, in which Fastabend articulates why and how the Army needs to change its culture.²⁵ General Schoomaker writes:

To win this war and to be prepared for any task our Nation may assign us, we must have a campaign quality Army with joint and expeditionary mindset. A fundamental underpinning of this mindset is a culture of innovation. “Adapt or Die” contains important ideas that clearly describe some significant challenges to

innovation in our institutional culture, as well as the behaviors we seek to overcome them. Equally important, the authors question the status quo. We must be prepared to question everything. As this article states, "Development of a culture of innovation will not be advanced by panels, studies, or this paper. Cultural changes begin with behavior and the leaders who shape it." We have the talent to establish the mindset and culture that will sustain the Army as ready and relevant, now and into the future."²⁶

General Schoomaker thus urges "a culture of innovation," but he does not specify how to accomplish this goal. In fact, the guidance begs for more explanation rather than a "road map" to accomplishment. General Schoomaker has recognized that a change in the Army's institutional culture to one fostering innovation is the responsibility of its leaders. He also recognizes that change begins by changing behavior learned and enforced in the Army's current culture.²⁷ A document produced by the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA) finds that an integral component of successful transformation is the necessity to change the Army's culture and that culture cannot be viewed separately from transformation.²⁸

What is Meant by a "Culture of Innovation"?

"Innovation is defined as the implementation of a new or significantly improved idea, good, service, process or practice which is intended to be useful. Most scholars who have studied innovation generally differentiate among four main types of innovation: product innovation, process innovation, organizational innovation, and marketing innovation."²⁹ The Army must focus on organizational innovation (also referred to as social innovation) which involves the creation of new organizations, business practices (doctrine, training, and winning the nation's wars) and ways of running organizations or new organizational behavior.³⁰ An imperative to obtaining this vision is the development of more innovative leaders at all levels and their "buy-in" to change the organizational climate in order to ultimately change the culture. "The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are imbedded, those cultures will manage them. Cultural understanding is desirable for all of us, but it is essential to leaders if they are to lead."³¹

In "Adapt or Die," Brigadier General Fastabend addresses the need to change the Army culture. Fastabend defines culture as a "set of subconscious assumptions, an organization's collective state of mind."³² He concedes that Army culture is frustratingly difficult to describe: "We have noted that as a set of unconscious assumptions, the Army's culture is difficult to articulate. The impediments to a [change in] culture... may be equally subtle, but we must recognize those, if organizational behaviors, and ultimately the culture itself, are to change."³³

Why is Army Culture so Difficult to Change?

Brigadier Nigel-Aylwin implies that the Army has difficulty changing its culture to one fostering innovation due to a hierarchically oriented command ethos, which encourages centralization and conversely discourages low-level initiative or innovation even when senior commanders have stressed the need for them.³⁴ The IDA report seems to support Brigadier Nigel-Aylwin's observations. It cites three obstacles to change:

1. The overall perception in the Army is that transformation is not important for future organizational effectiveness.
2. The Army's bureaucratic and hierarchal constraints and complexities are not well understood at the organizational level.
3. Enablers are lacking for changing behaviors that support innovation and risk-taking.³⁵

The editors of *Harvard Business Review* agree that one of the greatest challenges a strategic leader faces is how to get his people to challenge the status quo while keeping operational processes in place. Innovation requires anything but business as usual. It is difficult to evaluate and even more difficult to replicate.³⁶ The authors of "The Failure-Tolerant Leader" point out that those strategic leaders "know that failure is an integral part of innovation. But how do they [strategic leaders] encourage the right kinds of mistakes?"³⁷

An integral component of Army culture is its promotion system; this system rewards short-term success—so it is not very tolerant of failure. But the system is fair. It does exactly what it is designed to do; promote those with the best potential for continued service.³⁸ However, it is not a system designed to that promote the most mentally agile leaders who are most likely to foster a culture of innovation. In the current Officer Evaluation System (OES), a subordinate leader has approximately one year to impress his senior with his performance. The senior leader has the same amount of time to coach and mentor the subordinate. After this year, the senior evaluates the subordinate's performance based on Army cultural values, the foundation of institutional culture. The senior leader, in most cases, is fully vested in these values. This situation is complicated by generational differences in values. The senior and subordinate may have different perspectives and expectations based on their experiences in the Army culture. Consistent with Army doctrine, the senior is required to explain his expectations to the subordinate during his initial counseling of the subordinate.³⁹ The subordinate may believe that since all the senior leaders are "preaching" about change in the Army's culture to foster innovation that his performance will be evaluated on his innovation. On the other hand, the senior may base his evaluation of the subordinate's performance on the Army culture that nurtured the senior's career development. Then the senior may evaluate the subordinate based

on the senior's twenty-year culture, rather than a new changing culture. Yet it is the strategic leader's responsibility to form the new culture, educate the force, and lead by example in order to develop a new culture that develops mentally agile and innovative leaders. "Strategic leaders bear the burden, as well as enjoying the privilege and honor, of maintaining the professional identity of the organization—they are the stewards of the profession. Effectively imbuing these [younger] leaders with passion not only for accomplishing short-term organizational objectives but also for nurturing and developing the profession itself is critical for progress in [their] service to [assure] America's security."⁴⁰ The first step in correcting this disconnect is developing an evaluation system that identifies, highlights, and rewards an officer for innovation.

The most recent change in the Army Officer Evaluation System takes a step in the right direction for developing innovative leaders. A recent adjustment to the evaluation system eliminated the "blocking" or numerical comparison of rated officers to other officers of the same rank for captains and below. This new system is designed to eliminate a perceived culture of "zero defects" and to nurture a culture which allows subordinate leaders to try new approaches for carrying out missions without fear of ending their careers or causing their non-selection for future promotions. The "can-do" attitude is still rewarded, but the new system allows the officer to think about original approaches to a new situation. Even so, the system still focuses on accomplishing short-term goals.⁴¹ This change in the evaluation system can be successful only if the evaluators buy in to the change. For it to be successful, organizational leaders must support the change in culture and gain subordinates' trust. It is imperative that strategic leaders reinforce this change in culture.

How Do We Change Culture?

The primary responsibility to accept the need to change the organizational culture and the rationale for this change reside at the strategic leader level. As FM 22-100 states: "Culture is a longer lasting, more complex set of shared expectations than climate. While climate is how people feel about their organization right now, culture consists of the shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize the larger institution. It's deeply rooted in long-held beliefs, customs, and practices."⁴² Further, senior leaders bear primary responsibility for improving their organizations, and improvement comes through realizing constructive change. "Strategic leaders, more than organizational leaders, draw on their conceptual skills to comprehend national, national security, and theater strategies, operate in the strategic theater contexts, and improve their vast, complex organizations. The variety and scope of concerns demand the application of more sophisticated concepts."⁴³ Junior officers learn from their own

experience. Most twenty-year Army professional leaders and Soldiers have been nurtured in a culture that rewards short-term successes rather than long-term vision.

“Every organization has a unique culture that drives the form, degree, and speed of innovation. ...One of the initial steps in sculpting an innovative culture for creativity and boldness is to discuss and assess your present organization’s culture.”⁴⁴ Indeed change should be encouraged and prepared for throughout the organization—at all levels. Everyone in the organization will be affected by a new culture, so everyone should “feel it coming.” However, change will not take hold unless senior leaders advocate it and believe in its value for the organization, especially in traditionally hierarchical organizations like the Army. “At the strategic level, tasks are not easily defined, isolated, or standardized, nor can they be easily measured by anything but subjective, qualitative evaluation. While we recognize that leaders at all levels have responsibility for effective direct and organizational level leadership, the challenges of leadership at the strategic level differ significantly from those at lower organizational levels. At the strategic level, leaders should have a long-term perspective, generally positioning the organization for success 10, 20, or more years into the future.”⁴⁵

According to a study by Stan Pace of Bain & Company’s Global Change Management Practice, “The best transformers are companies that first focus on developing a clear strategy. They establish non-negotiable goals to support that strategy and incentives to reinforce those goals.”⁴⁶ Pace’s research cites the example of Greg Brenneman’s new presidency of Continental Airlines in 1994 as leadership of a successful transformation. Brenneman asserts that “The key to getting results...is not to tell people what to do. Instead...find ways to keep them focused on the right things, and for the most part, let them figure out how to achieve the goals.”⁴⁷ According to Pace, “In addition to focusing on results...the best transforming companies...implement change quickly and all at once, rather than easing change into the organization.”⁴⁸ The most successful transformers cited in this study complete their transformation in two years or less.⁴⁹ So the Army’s strategic leaders should consider quickly changing to a culture that fosters innovation, based on a clear strategic plan. Not only should goals be clearly defined, but strategic leaders must also set the conditions and institutional environment for leaders to be successful in changing the culture to one fostering innovation.

Therefore, the Army’s new culture must be articulated at the strategic level down through the hierarchal levels of the Army’s organization to the lowest levels. But for the culture to be ultimately changed, the organizational leaders must buy in to the new culture. Since the organizational leaders have more direct influence than strategic leaders, they can promote cultural change by first changing the climate of the organization.

FM 22-100 charges Army leadership at the strategic and organizational levels to develop a comprehensive framework for creating a culture of innovation. It further describes the level at which changes must take place to change the culture. FM 22-100 assigns primary responsibility for Army culture to strategic leaders, whereas leaders at lower levels are responsible for the organizational climate of their units or organizations:

Climate and culture describe the environment in which you lead your people. Culture refers to the environment of the Army as an institution and of major elements or communities within it. Strategic leaders maintain the Army's institutional culture. Climate refers to the environment of units and organizations. All organizational and direct leaders establish their organization's climate, whether purposefully or unwittingly.⁵⁰

Of course, cultural change cannot be accomplished instantly. Indeed, before the culture can be changed, the climate must change. Strategic leaders can initiate cultural change, but the initial change comes at the organizational level. To change the organizational culture, new behavior must be embedded and rewarded by organizational leaders. Hence, it is the responsibility of organizational leaders to embed and reward the new behavior and instill values of a new institutional culture.

The Army must "provide leaders with the skills and tools to lead change and reward innovation."⁵¹ In order for junior officers to feel comfortable with the new culture, they must feel like they are supported by their superiors. Junior officers must also feel that the mentoring from their superiors will establish an environment that allows them to take prudent risks while their superiors provide "top-cover" and useful feedback about mistakes as well as successes. Organizational leaders must create an environment that nurtures junior officers' professional development and that fosters a culture of innovation.⁵² In effect, organizational leaders are thus creating a climate for change.

Culture and Climate

It is important to understand the difference between climate and culture – as the Army explains it – to better understand how they are mutually supportive in changing the organizational culture. Before discussing the means for changing culture and developing a culture of innovation, some terms should be defined as common ground to help explain the ideas for this organizational change. Culture and climate describe the environment in which people are led.⁵³ The Army's institutional culture is maintained at the strategic leader level, while climate is established within the institutional culture at the organizational level.⁵⁴ To change the Army's culture, it appears that the climate will need to change to support the cultural

change at the organizational level to infuse a culture of innovation. According to the Army Field Manual 22-100, *Army Leadership Be, Know, Do*, climate is described as:

An organization's climate is the way its members feel about their organization. Climate comes from people's shared perceptions and attitudes, what they believe about day-to-day functioning of their outfit. These things have great impact on their motivation and the trust they feel for their team and their leaders. Climate is generally short-term: it depends on a network of the personalities in a small organization. As people come and go, the climate changes.⁵⁵

FM 22-100 then asserts that "Army Leaders who do the right things for the right reasons...create a healthy organizational climate. In fact, it's the leader's behavior that has the greatest effect on the organizational climate. That behavior signals to every member of the organization what the leader will and will not tolerate."⁵⁶ General Schoemaker addresses this in his guidance for transforming Army culture: "Development of a culture of innovation will not be advanced by panels, studies, or this paper. Cultural changes begin with behavior and the *leaders* who shape it."⁵⁷

Culture certainly includes climate, but culture is a more enduring concept than climate. Army Field Manual 22-100 describes culture as a longer lasting, more complex set of shared expectations than climate. On the other hand, climate determines how people feel about their organization right now.⁵⁸

The challenges of changing culture do not lie with the junior officers who are just beginning to assimilate the institutional culture. The challenge lies with changing the mindset, or the group-think, of the mid- to senior-grade levels in the Army.⁵⁹ In most cases, these more senior leaders are fully entrenched in an Army culture that does not reward innovation, but one that values a mentality focused on tasks, conditions, and standards. Mastery of basic skills and a bureaucratic focus on attaining short-term goals are valued more than innovation in the current Army culture.⁶⁰ The challenge for cultural change lies with strategic leaders who recognize the need for this change in institutional culture, who then articulate what the new institutional culture should be, and who finally mentor organizational leaders--all while setting the example through their individual actions.

Figure 1 depicts the relationship between climate and culture. Individual leaders of organizations throughout the Army can make short-term changes in the climate of their organizations during their tenure in that organization. For the Army to change its culture, individual organizations throughout the Army must assimilate and share the values associated with a long-term cultural change to foster innovation.

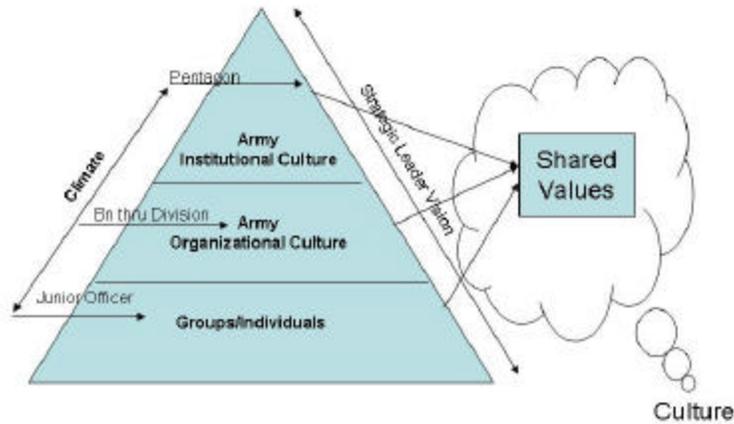


FIGURE 1 CULTURE VERSUS CLIMATE

In summary, strategic leaders must "sell" organizational leaders on a culture of innovation before a change can be effected. Junior leaders can be educated through the Army's education system (Officer Professional Develop System),⁶¹ but if organizational leaders are not setting the example for junior officers--the same example strategic leaders are setting for the organizational leaders--then the change in culture will not take place. Junior officers will very quickly learn how to survive in a culture that does not value innovation, but they could just as well learn to survive in a genuinely changing culture.

Changing to a "Culture of Innovation"

Soldiers learn from their own experiences. A change in culture has long-term effects. But how do we change the organizational behavior short-term in order to support the long term change? Organizational leaders must buy in to the culture of innovation at their level. The organizational level is where the foundation for changing culture is built. The foundation is laid on a climate change. Organizational leaders set the climate for the organization, whether by design or inadvertently, by what they focus on and what they regard as important. FM 22-100 describes climate as coming "from people's shared perceptions and attitudes, what they believe about the day-to-day functioning of their outfit. These things have a great impact on their motivation and the trust they feel for their team and their leaders. Climate is generally short-term: it depends on a network of the personalities in a small organization. As people come and go the climate changes."⁶² So organizational leaders are responsible for embedding this new culture into daily operations of their organizations to support the strategic leaders'

assumptions and vision to support long-term change. The same initiatives for changing culture can help leaders change climate.

Schein describes some culture-embedding mechanisms. He finds that “one of the most powerful mechanisms that leaders have available for communicating what they believe in or care about is what they systematically pay attention to.”⁶³ If young officers are mostly concerned about their evaluations, they are less likely to step beyond the norms of their organizational culture. If the culture allows honest mistakes and rewards prudent risk-taking, then the officers are more likely to be innovative and more agile in their decision-making. Organizational leaders set the tone for the organization in changing climate and culture. Organizational commanders must pay more attention to the development of junior officer leaders, placing more emphasis on after-action reviews that enhance learning from experiences and in some cases, from mistakes. Organizational leaders must stress these values of learning to the junior officers in order to help change the culture. “For junior officers to become good officers, they must acquire the necessary virtues. Junior officers can learn from seeing how virtues are embodied by those who are effective at moral officership.”⁶⁴ Once the culture is set, organizational leaders then support and enforce the new culture through their actions and their organization’s climate.

Therefore, the organizational level is the most important level for influencing change. At the organizational level, leaders teach the values and junior officers learn the culture.⁶⁵ At this level, the most important influence leaders have on subordinates is the example they set.⁶⁶ Organizational leaders can persuade and inspire their subordinates through both positive and negative reinforcement of values and standards. Organizational leaders have a great opportunity to use “deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching”⁶⁷ to embed those values into their subordinates. Again, for change to be successful, organizational leaders must also buy in to it and change the climate and eventually the culture of the organization.

In some cases, the organizational leaders are also learning the new culture of innovation as they are teaching it through their actions. Organizational leaders have experienced Army culture before rising to leadership positions. That experience includes sharing values and culture. It is easier to change the behaviors of inexperienced junior officers in order to embed the values of a different culture, because they are not as influenced by the old culture as their organizational leaders were. So organizational leaders can reinforce the need for a culture of innovation in their less acculturated subordinates. The challenge is for organizational leaders to change their behaviors in order to set an example of the behaviors consistent with the new culture. This challenge can be met through self-development, which is a joint effort between the

junior officer and the organizational leader. Through self-development, organizational leaders can best influence a change in climate and ultimately change the culture. Organizational leaders can thus support efforts of junior officers through reinforcing their efforts.⁶⁸

Conclusions

The President of United States and the Secretary of Defense have challenged the Army to transform its culture to one that fosters innovation. Changing the Army's culture starts with a strategic vision that supports the cultural change at all levels. Organizational leaders must stress the values in this vision to junior officers in order to influence change. To change the organizational culture, new behavior articulated in the vision must be embedded and rewarded by both strategic and organizational leaders. Strategic leaders maintain the Army's institutional culture. But before the institutional culture can be changed, the culture must change at the organizational level. For change to be successful, organizational leaders must support the change in culture. Organizational leaders set the tone for their organization by changing the short-term climate in order to support the long-term change in culture. It is important to influence the behavior of junior leaders through mentorship from organizational leaders. This is the most important method for promoting change. At this level, leaders teach organizational values through example, through enhancing junior officers' understanding of the culture while embedding appropriate values in the organization, ultimately through integrating the culture into everything the organization does. By helping junior leaders with their self-development, organizational leaders can best effect change in organizational climate and ultimately change in institutional culture.

Army leadership must avoid sending inconsistent signals in its effort to change the culture. Inappropriate embedded and reinforcing mechanisms and inconsistent signals could have unwanted effects. For example, in developing a culture of innovation, senior leaders who reward subordinates for "zero defects" performance but do not reward subordinates who experiment and take risks in training may subvert the vision of change. So the Army must change the culture at the organizational level by rewarding the right behavior, before it can change its institutional culture and transform into an effective 21st century organization.

Endnotes

¹ Donald H. Rumsfeld, *Transformation Planning Guidance* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, April 2003), 1.

² George W. Bush, Speech to The Citadel, Charleston, South Carolina, 11 December 2001; available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/12/20011211-6.html>; Internet; accessed 28 January 2006.

³ Kip P. Nygren, "Emerging Technologies and Exponential Change: Implications for Army Transformation," *Parameters* (Summer 2002): 86.

⁴ Don M. Snider, "The Multiple Identities of the Professional Army Officer," in *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2nd ed., ed. Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Mathews (Boston: McGraw Hill Custom Publishing), 151.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Nygren, 86.

⁷ Michael M. Crow and Daniel Sarewitz, "Nanotechnology and Societal Transformation," <http://www.aaa5.org/spp/dspp/rd/ch6.pdf>; Internet; accessed 9 April 2002; quoted in Kip P. Nygren, "Emerging Technologies and Exponential Change: Implications for Army Transformation," *Parameters* (Summer 2002): 86.

⁸ Paraphrased comments made by a senior military commander in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom V.

⁹ *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*, available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War>; Internet; accessed 28 January 2006.

¹⁰ Ray Anthony, "Organizational Culture and Innovation," *Innovative Leader*, Volume 8 (January 1999): 1.

¹¹ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 2d. ed. (San Francisco, CA.: Jossey Bass, 1992), 15; quoted in Charles B. Breslin, *Organizational Culture and The Military*, Strategic Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 10 April 2000), 5.

¹² Edgar H. Schein, *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide*, (San Francisco, CA.: Josey-Bass Inc., 1999), 29.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leadership Be, Know, Do*, Field Manual 22-100 (Washington, D.C. Department of the Army, 31 August 1999), 3-14.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, *United States Army Officer Candidate School*, Army Regulation 350-51 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 11 July 2001).

¹⁶ *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*, available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War>; Internet; accessed 28 January 2006.

¹⁷ Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster, British Army, "Changing the [US] Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review* (November-December 2005), 7.

¹⁸ Don M. Snider, "The U.S. Army as Profession," in *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2nd ed., ed. Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Mathews (Boston: McGraw Hill Custom Publishing), 9.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Aylwin-Foster, 7.

²¹ Rumsfeld, 1.

²² BG David A. Fastabend and Robert H. Simpson, *Adapt or Die: The Imperative for a Culture of Innovation in the United States Army*, (n.p., n.d.): 1.

²³ Richard Meinhart, "Strategic Vision", briefing slides lesson #SL02, AY06, Carlisle Barracks, U.S. Army War College, 6 October 2005.

²⁴ Department of the Army, "Objective Force 2015, Final Draft," Office of the Objective Force Task Force, (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 8 December 2002), 8; quoted in Stephen M. Jones, *Improving Accountability For Effective Command Climate: A Strategic Imperative*, Strategic Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, September 2003), 1.

²⁵ Fastabend, 1.

²⁶ Donald E. Vandergriff, "Imperative for Change – What?," 2005; available from d-n-i.net/vandergriff/rotc/part11.ppt; Internet; accessed 28 January 2006.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Edgar M. Johnson, *Workshop Introducing Innovation and Risk: Implications of Transforming the Culture of DoD*, (Alexandria, Virginia: Institute for Defense Analysis, March 2004), ES-1.

²⁹ *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*, available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War>; Internet; accessed 22 November 2005.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 2d. ed. (San Francisco, CA.: Jossey Bass, 1992), 15; quoted in Charles B. Breslin, *Organizational Culture and The Military*, Strategic Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 10 April 2000), 1

³² BG David A. Fastabend and Robert H. Simpson, *Adapt or Die: The Imperative for a Culture of Innovation in the United States Army*, (n.p., n.d.): 3.

³³ Fastabend, 3.

³⁴ Aylwin-Foster, 7.

³⁵ Johnson, ES-2.

³⁶ "The Innovative Enterprise," *Harvard Business Review*, (August 2002): 6.

³⁷ Richard Farson and Ralph Keyes, "The Failure-Tolerant Leader," *Harvard Business Review*, (August 2002): 64.

³⁸ Senior Official, USA, Deputy for Colonels Management, Senior Leader Development Office, interviewed by author, 14 December 2005, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

³⁹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Officer Evaluation Reporting System*, Army Regulation 623-105 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 17 January 2005), 1.

⁴⁰ George Reed et al., "Leadership Development Beyond Traits and Competencies," in *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2nd ed., ed. Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Mathews (Boston: McGraw Hill Custom Publishing), 597.

⁴¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Officer Evaluation Reporting System*, Army Regulation 623-105 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 17 January 2005), 1-6.

⁴² U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leadership Be, Know, Do*, Field Manual 22-100 (Washington, D.C. Department of the Army, 31 August 1999), 3-14.

⁴³ George Reed et al., "Leadership Development Beyond Traits and Competencies," in *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2nd ed., ed. Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Mathews (Boston: McGraw Hill Custom Publishing), 585.

⁴⁴ Ray Anthony, "Organizational Culture and Innovation," *Innovative Leader*, Volume 8 (January 1999): 1.

⁴⁵ Reed, 588.

⁴⁶ Stan Pace, "Rip the Band-aid off Quickly," (Boston, MA, Bain & Company Inc.), 2.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 3.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 8.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 6.

⁵⁰ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leadership Be, Know, Do*, Field Manual 22-100 (Washington, D.C. Department of the Army, 31 August 1999), 3-12.

⁵¹ Johnson, ES-3.

⁵² "The Innovative Enterprise," *Harvard Business Review*, (August 2002): 6.

⁵³ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leadership Be, Know, Do*, Field Manual 22-100 (Washington, D.C. Department of the Army, 31 August 1999), 3-12.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*.

⁵⁷ Donald E. Vandergriff, "Imperative for Change – What?," 2005; available from d-n-i.net/vandergriff/rotc/part11.ppt; Internet; accessed 28 January 2006.

⁵⁸ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leadership Be, Know, Do*, Field Manual 22-100 (Washington, D.C. Department of the Army, 31 August 1999), 3-14.

⁵⁹ *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*, available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War>; Internet; accessed 22 November 2005.

⁶⁰ Discourse based on dialogue and opinions expressed by members of Seminar 8, United States Army War College, 1 February 2006, in regards to an article written by Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster, British Army, "Changing the [US] Army for Counterinsurgency Operations," *Military Review* (November-December 2005).

⁶¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*, Army Pamphlet 600-3 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 28 December 2005).

⁶² U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leadership Be, Know, Do*, FM 22-100 (Washington, D.C. Department of the Army, 31 August 1999), 3-12.

⁶³ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, (San Francisco, CA, John Wiley & Sons, 1992), 81.

⁶⁴ Don M. Snider, "The Multiple Identities of the Professional Army Officer," in *The Future of the Army Profession*, 2nd ed., ed. Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Mathews (Boston: McGraw Hill Custom Publishing), 152.

⁶⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Leadership Be, Know, Do*, Field Manual 22-100 (Washington, D.C. Department of the Army, 31 August 1999), 3-14.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 5-1.

⁶⁷ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, (San Francisco, CA, John Wiley & Sons, 1992), 81.

⁶⁸ U.S. Department of the Army, *Officer Evaluation Reporting System*, Army Regulation 623-105 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 17 January 2005), 1-6.

