

FROM THE EDITOR

# WHO YOU ARE

Douglas Lindsay, Editor in Chief, JCLD, PhD

A fundamental premise in leadership development is the need to have a basic awareness of who you are. This is often referred to as how you show up. Whether you are an accomplished leader or just starting out, you must understand how you are showing up into leadership situations. How you are showing up is determined by who you are as a person. Simply stated, who you really are, is how you are going to lead. This understanding of who you are is critical because it is your developmental entry point. It is the foundation upon which leader development effort(s) will be built. As all effective leaders know, your leadership stems from who you are. If you try to lead from a place that is different than who you are, it is misaligned, inauthentic, and your followers will recognize that inconsistency. This may seem like a rather simplistic line of reasoning, and it really is. As with many things related to leadership, the approach is rather straightforward, but the challenge is in the application. That is why people often refer to the art and science of leadership. The science (or knowledge) is relatively straightforward. There are things that we know that effective leaders do. They communicate effectively. They know how to make decisions. They empower their teams. They recognize the value that all members bring to the team. The list goes on. We know what effective leaders do and what skills leaders need. So, why then, do we have so many ineffective leaders? It is in the other part that is referenced above, the art. It is actually taking that knowledge and correctly applying it in the right way, at the right time, in the right situation. That, as all leaders know, is less straightforward.

The reason that the application is difficult is that there are myriad factors that play into the leadership dynamic. Some of these are under the control of the leader and some are not. In total, there are factors at play from the leader, the followers, and the situation in which the leadership will be enacted. Each of these will have a different impact on the leader and their leadership. If we understand that the primary role of the leader is to organize and shape those influences to enable the team to effectively accomplish the task at hand, then we need to consider what they actually have influence on. With respect to the leader, they own that entirely. From the follower's perspective, while they may not have selected those on their team, they certainly have great influence on how they interact with

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and equip the members of the team. For the situation, they additionally have an impact on how they prepare their team to effectively act in the situation. From a developmental standpoint, while we can influence all three of those areas, the key leverage area is the leader themselves. Again, this is not complex reasoning. However, how we go about that development is crucial. With hundreds of billions of dollars spent annually on training and development across various industries, one would think that we have closed the gap of ineffective leadership. Unfortunately, that is not always the case.

Back to the original thought of helping the leader understand who they are and what they stand for, that gives us an entry point for development. The benefit of this approach is that it applies equally to beginning leaders as well as very senior strategic leaders. This is due to the fact that leader development is ongoing and does not stop once you reach a particular level. All effective leaders understand that it is a journey and a journey without an end point. When that is paired with an understanding of who we are, it creates a developmental trajectory that is beneficial not only for the individual leader, but the entire organization. Starting with an understanding of who we are, we know our strengths and weaknesses. With that information, then we can start to layer on developmental efforts that are aimed at improving the weaknesses and enhancing the strengths. It is a continuous cycle of assess, understand, develop, and apply.

From a developmental standpoint, that is great news. That means if we understand ourselves, then we can begin to understand how we can further enhance our growth as a leader. However, it is not enough to just understand that process, the organization needs to be set up to support such a developmental approach. Many people recognize this importance, but few organizations truly value it. It is why many developmental efforts fail.

You see many organizations with:

- A one size fits all approach where everyone does the same developmental opportunities.
- An inoculation (one time) approach versus a developmental (over time) approach.
- Annual training versus tailored development.
- Using the budget to determine what can be afforded versus what is truly needed.
- Failing to understand the role of the organization's culture toward development and growth.
- Failing to support the individual after the developmental intervention.
- Failure to use data to inform developmental efforts.
- Not tying the developmental programs to the strategic goals of the organization.
- Viewing development as the individual's responsibility versus the organization's opportunity.
- Lack of support for development by senior leaders

You will notice from the above list that in order for development to be valued and successful, it needs to be part of the organization's DNA. It needs to be part of "the way we do things around here." While many excuses can be given for why that isn't the case, the bottom line is that world class organizations find a way to make it happen.

The United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) is such an institution. It starts with the mission (the DNA) of the Academy: The mission of the of the United States Air Force Academy is to educate, train, and inspire men and women to become leaders of character, motivated to lead the Department of the Air Force in service to our nation. To that end, the Academy is dealing with new leaders who are at the beginning of their leadership development journey. While they have likely had some leadership experiences prior to attending the Academy,

much of their development as leaders will occur during the 47-months that they attend the Academy. This is not uncommon, as many organizations have individuals who “grow up” in the company, and are shaped and socialized by the organization and people around them. The key for the Academy is the understanding of the importance of developing leaders of character so that they can accomplish their mission. In order to do that, the Academy has a vast system in place to support that development. In addition to that system, programs, courses, and processes, the foundation for the Academy’s individual development of leaders is the Leader of Character Framework<sup>1</sup>. The framework focuses on the elements of *Living Honorably*, *Lifting Others* to their best possible selves, and *Elevating Performance* toward a common and noble purpose. This is done by creating intentional developmental experiences that helps junior leaders own their development, engage in purposeful experiences, and then giving them ample time to practice their leadership. Through this process, cadets learn about themselves and how they are showing up in their leadership experiences. Put another way, they know who they are, so they can learn and understand how they lead.

### In This Issue

A primary reason that we devote the annual Fall issue of the JCLD to conversations with leaders is to bring into reality what was just talked about. It is an opportunity to take a deeper dive with a leader on what has impacted them, what their journey was like, and the decisions they made about their own development—all in their own words. One of the consistent themes that you will notice across all of the conversations is the continued focus on development from all of these leaders. In this issue, you will find conversations with leaders across many different domains (military, academic, business, sports, etc.). By examining leaders from different domains, it allows readers to see what opportunities and experiences shaped each leader.

While there are certainly some differences based on context, you will also recognize many common themes such as the importance of reading for development, reframing negative experiences, and knowing your people. These conversations give us rare insight into the thought processes of very successful leaders.

The first conversation is with new USAFA Superintendent Lieutenant General Richard Clark (USAFA 1986). In this conversation with the USAFA Center for Character and Leadership Development Director, Colonel Kim Campbell (USAFA 1997), Gen Clark talks about his journey through the Air Force that culminates in his current role as the Superintendent. He discusses the importance of finding your purpose and how that impacts us as leaders. In addition, he outlines why character is important to leadership. It is an engaging conversation that sheds insight into his perspective on leadership and what he wants to accomplish at USAFA.

The second conversation is taken from a 2020 Summer Seminar that was hosted by the Institute for Future Conflict titled, “The Profession of Arms and the 4th Industrial Revolution.” In the conversation moderated by C1C Michael Greisman and C2C Conley Waters, current Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Charles Brown, former Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General David Goldfein (USAFA 1983), and former Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Chief Master Sergeant Kaleth Wright; discuss diversity, demography, and leadership of the 21st Century. These senior Air Force leaders share their own personal experiences as well as the impact of current events. They candidly share about diversity, race, and areas for growth in the Air Force. The perspectives of these Air Force senior leaders gives insight into how they are addressing complex challenges affecting the force and how we can address them moving forward.

Following the Chief’s conversation, we have a discussion with the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the

<sup>1</sup> <https://jcli.scholasticahq.com/article/13606-developing-leaders-of-character>

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (SEAC), USAF Chief Master Sergeant Ramón Colón-López. In this rare opportunity, SEAC Colón-López discusses his journey and the importance of being able to add value. He talks about his own personal development and what he does to continue developing as a leader. As the SEAC, he shares about his role and what the military can do to continue to develop leaders. As the senior enlisted representative in the Armed Forces, his insights and perspectives are valuable for all who want to develop as a leader.

The final military conversation is moderated by Senior Master Sergeant Ecatarina Garcia and is with the newest Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Chief Master Sergeant Joanne Bass. In the conversation, Chief Bass discusses the importance of culture and having an opportunity to serve. In addition, Chief Bass shares her perspective of current events and how they shape the Air Force. We also get a glimpse of her own development and how she keeps growing as a leader.

The next conversation is from the domain of higher education and is with the Professor of Character Education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Dr. Marvin Berkowitz. Dr. Berkowitz shares his perspective on the importance of character. He talks about his journey and how he has impacted and invested in character education and development. Dr. Berkowitz is a leader in the field of character education and is having an impact on schools across the country through the PRIMED Model that he helped develop. This conversation shines light on how important character education is not just for developing leaders.

Continuing with higher education, we have a conversation with current President of Charleston Southern University and Major General (Retired), Dr. Dondi Costin (USAFA 1986). Dr. Costin talks about his development as a leader and the role that faith plays in his development. He recounts some stories from his journey that shine light on how he was impacted by not only those around him, but his steadfast belief

system. Regardless of your particular beliefs, all can gain a greater understanding of leader development and how a belief in something larger than yourself can have a powerful impact.

We finish up the higher education domain with a conversation Brigadier General (Retired) Dr. Bernard Banks (USMA 1987) who is the Associate Dean for Leadership Development and Inclusion at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. Through sharing some pivotal moments throughout his career, Dr. Banks discusses how, as leaders, we often need to reframe events so that we can grow from them. These events, while seemingly negative at the time, can have a huge impact on our development as leaders. Dr. Banks also shares how he integrates leadership and inclusion across all aspects of Northwestern University. It is a great conversation around overcoming obstacles, development, and making a difference.

We can also learn a lot about leadership through the domain of sports. We were fortunate to have a conversation with former National Champion football coach of Oklahoma University and former coach of the XFL Dallas Renegades, Bob Stoops. In this enlightening conversation, Coach Stoops talks about his experience developing teams and how to create a winning culture. Through his “No Excuses” philosophy, he talks about how the leader can create culture within organizations. While we all encounter setbacks, it is how we respond to those setbacks that matters.

The next two conversations come from the domain of business. The first is with the Vice President of Global Leadership and Development for Walmart, Mr. James Cameron. Mr. Cameron discusses his journey from British military officer to Walmart Vice President by sharing some of his leadership experiences along the way. Through the conversation, he talks about how he set up leadership programs at Walmart at all levels and how the company approaches leader development. As

a global giant in the retail space, he talks about some of the challenges that they face and how they address them through the development of their leaders.

The second business conversation is with Jay Caiafa (USAFA 1999) who is the Chief Operating Officer of The Americas at InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG). Mr. Caiafa discusses how his organization is adapting to the current challenges and how they have used it to highlight and support their people in the organization. As one of the industries hit hardest as a result of COVID, Mr. Caiafa talks about their approach and how they took care of and valued their people in the mist of the crisis. He also discusses the impact that USAFA had on him and how he is has grown as a leader over the years.

Our final conversation is with the President and CEO of the Air Force Academy Foundation (AFAF) and the Association of Graduates (AOG), Lieutenant General (Retired), Mike Gould (USAFA 1976). In this engaging conversation, Gen Gould reflects on his time at the Academy, his career, and his time with the AFAF/AOG. He describes several pivotal points along his career and shares how he developed as a leader. Gen Gould talks about why it is important for graduates to stay connected and the value that the AFAF and AOG have to USAFA. This conversation is a great read for leaders to understand the importance of character and philanthropy. It is through the generous support of the AFAF that the JCLD is possible.

## Book Reviews

All successful leaders mention the role that reading plays in their own development. In fact, the common saying is that “Leaders are readers.” In every issue of the JCLD, we want to expose readers to several books that could assist you in your own developmental journey. For this issue, we have reviews of three books for you to consider. The first is a review by Dr. Douglas Kennedy on the book *Master of the Air: William Tunner and*

*the Success of Military Airlift* by Robert Slayton. The second review is by Dr. Mark Grotelueschen on the book *Hunter Liggett: A Soldier’s General* by Michael Shay. The final review is by Capt Tony Huang (USAF) on *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* by Travis Bradbury and Jean Greaves. Each of these books are worthy of putting into your reading rotation.

## Profile in Leadership

One effective way to understand leadership is to read about and study current and previous leaders. Through this examination, we are able to pull from their experiences to help inform our own development. To support that approach, we have a Profile in Leadership section where we are able to take a bit of a deep dive into a leader. For this issue, Dr. Stephen Randolph (Center for Character and Leadership Development Rokke-Fox Chair; USAFA 1974) and Dr. John Abbatiello (Center for Character and Leadership Development, Chief, Research & Scholarship Division; USAFA 1987) explore the career of U.S. Army Lieutenant General Lewis H. Brereton. Their Profile in Leadership is titled “When to Listen to Your Subordinates and When Not to Listen,” focuses on several examples from Gen Brereton’s career when he had the opportunity to take the advice of his subordinates. The implications in the examples are discussed with respect to leadership. The eloquent review does a great job of highlighting some key moments in this Brereton’s career through WW I and WW II.

## Looking Ahead

The February 2021 issue of the JCLD will align with the theme from the National Character and Leadership Symposium<sup>2</sup>. This year’s theme will be Warrior Ethos as Airmen & Citizens. What we mean by Warrior ethos is “...the embodiment of the warrior spirit: tough mindedness, tireless motivation, an unceasing vigilance, a willingness to sacrifice one’s life for the country, if necessary, and a commitment to be the world’s

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.usafa.edu/character/national-character-leadership-symposium-ncls>

premier air, space and cyberspace force.” Warrior ethos is also one of the four attributes of officership as defined by the USAFA Officer Development System (ODS). The warrior ethos proficiencies that follow comprise a structure that is based on the intellectual development inherent to the Profession of Arms, and the values development prescribed by the Air Force Core Values<sup>3</sup>. Specifically, USAFA wants graduates that can, 1) Analyze and Value the Profession of Arms; 2) Demonstrate Integrity as Related to Moral Courage; 3) Demonstrate Service before Self as Related to Physical Courage; and 4) Demonstrate Excellence in All We Do as Related to Discipline. While this theme is focused toward USAFA and future military leaders (Airmen), the components that make up Warrior Ethos are informed and developed by many different disciplines and domains. Therefore, submission for articles are encouraged from all domains. This breadth of knowledge helps inform all of us about the topic of Warrior Ethos.

If you have an interest in submitting work on the above topics or know of someone who would be interesting to have a conversation with, please contact me at douglas.lindsay@usafa.edu or jclld@usafa.edu with your ideas.

<sup>3</sup> To learn more about Warrior Ethos, please go to: <https://www.usafa.edu/academics/outcomes/>