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Editor in Chief:  
Dr. Douglas Lindsay, Lt Col (Ret), USAF

CENTER FOR CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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FROM THE EDITOR

# VUCAH Leadership

Douglas R. Lindsay, Editor in Chief, JCLD

To say that things are uncertain and complex seems to be understating the obvious. To find a word that accurately describes the current environment is a bit of a fool's errand. However, what comes to mind is an acronym that is often used when looking at the environment a leader needs to navigate...VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous). While imperfect, it gets closest to what we are experiencing. Since the last issue of the *Journal of Character & Leadership Development (JCLD)* was published in February, we have seen the devastating and disruptive global impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has added new terms to our daily lexicon (e.g., social distancing), changed the way that work is conducted (e.g., distributed workforce, online meetings, etc.), and impacted how we think about health (e.g., telemedicine, masks, etc.). Simply put, we are working and living differently, and as never before in most of our lifetimes. VUCA describes our "new normal."

In addition, due to a preventable tragic event, the issue of racial discrimination has been brought to the forefront of our national consciousness. While the triggering incident (the killing of George Floyd) is recent, the underlying social injustices have been long-standing in our country. Many have experienced and deeply felt racial inequality for a very long time, while others (some of who were in a position to make positive change) have not taken action to confront this issue. These events have also contributed to the current VUCA context.

Individually, these health and discrimination crises create a need for reckoning in our nation. However, together, they create the potential for a leadership watershed. The term watershed is applicable here because with the confluence of these events, time will tell if it is either a defining moment or a breaking point. Part of the challenge is that we can't address each of these significant issues individually because, in the midst of a pandemic, there are fundamental

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social equality issues that warrant immediate, focused, and deliberate attention. They are intertwined, at this moment in history; yet both have unique issues and different consequences to consider. We must get both right. As with many leadership challenges, we don't get to choose the timing of the challenge. We do, however, get to choose how we rise to meet those challenges. How will we react? Who will act? Who will be involved in the conversation? What is the right conversation? Where will the leadership come from? How are long-term inequities eliminated? These are but a few of the questions we will, and must, wrestle with over time.

***We can't talk about operating in a VUCA world, without the humanity to do so. Hence, my proposed new acronym is VUCAH. It is imperative to recognize the humanity mandate in our leadership and to be intentional about it.***

While VUCA begins to describe the context of events that are taking place, it leaves out one critical component, the one that provides the purpose for our leadership. It is the component that explains why leaders, and specifically leaders of character are vital. That component is humanity. It is the connection between VUCA (the context) and leaders. It is what people mean when they talk about authentic leadership and being a servant leader. Leading in a VUCA environment without understanding, appreciating, and valuing humanity misses the mark. Mission, objectives, and logistics don't successfully occur without the people who are making them a reality. If we lose sight of that, we lose sight of what it means

to lead...to serve...to be human. We can't talk about operating in a VUCA world, without the humanity to do so. Hence, my proposed new acronym is VUCAH. It is imperative to recognize the humanity mandate in our leadership and to be intentional about it.

Leadership in a VUCAH world is hard work. In the Air Force, we have Core Values: Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do. At the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), we also have the Leader of Character Framework: Living Honorably, Lifting Others, and Elevating Performance. All of these are undergirded

by Respect for Human Dignity as their foundation, cornerstone and essence. This is precisely where our development will focus as we all lead in a VUCAH reality. The United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), as an institution that develops leaders of character for our Air Force and nation, contributes to that understanding.

Looking back, when we choose the theme for this issue of the JCLD, it was as if we were in a different era. The theme, focused on USAFA's strategic planning, was determined before COVID-19 and the George Floyd's killing. However, while this theme is not a direct dialogue on current events, it does have direct relevance because it speaks to our strategic plan to develop leaders of character who are faced with the current and future challenges for our Air and Space forces, nation, and world. Specifically, the theme for this issue focuses on the four strategic goals for USAFA:

- Develop Leaders of Character Committed to Service to our Nation

- Preparing for Future Conflict
- Foster a Culture That Embraces Innovation, Fueled by Airmen
- Executes Operations in an Integrated, Accountable, and Agile Manner

These are lofty goals. They are important goals. They are goals that our nation needs the institution to get right, even more urgently with the present VUCAH backdrop. With respect to the first goal of developing leaders of character, how can you develop leaders of character if you don't value what each member of the organization brings to the fight? How can you develop leaders of character if you don't understand who should be included in the team? How can you develop leaders of character if you don't understand and value humanity and the context in which your leadership will be enacted (e.g., combat)? All of this requires more than mere technical proficiency. Technical proficiency is the price of admission. Ongoing character and leader development is the key.

Preparing for future conflict also has a direct tie to what we see today. A leader must not only understand the capabilities they and their team bring to the fight, but also the implications of those actions. Who needs to be on the team? Whose voices need to be heard? What are the implications if we don't have the right opinions, ideas, and people around the table when we are thinking through the application of that technology? The same applies on the back side when we are thinking about the impact of the action. We have tactics, techniques, and procedures that drive our Rules of Engagement (ROE) of how we fight. Those are bounded by humanitarian principles.

If we want to foster a culture that embraces innovation fueled by Airmen, how can we do that if

we don't understand innovation and who we are asking to innovate? Or, if we are not willing to value and consider new ideas and take risks to examine them? What perspectives are needed? What environment does the leader need to enable that fosters ideas and new approaches, and not simply be tied to legacy processes and procedures? If the current and future environment is as VUCA as some suggest, then it will take a VUCAH leadership approach to innovatively solve those problems.

Finally, integrated, accountable, and agile operations requires a certain mindset. Cutting down institutional silos and thinking about how we approach complex problems is not only a technology challenge, it is also a people opportunity. How do we utilize and support our personnel in such a way that we are able to maximize the technology that exists? How do we lead in such a way that we enable and not hinder that approach? That is leadership. That is VUCAH leadership.

Current events will most certainly impact how we move forward and leadership is the key leverage point to those solutions. Our ability to successfully meet USAFA's strategic goals will depend on our ability to develop leaders of character who not only understand their VUCA context, but can lead successfully with the humanity that makes it all make sense. In short, we need VUCAH-ready leaders.

## In This Issue

As previously mentioned this issue of the JCLD is organized around the four strategic goals of USAFA. Several articles have been included that address each of the goals. The articles are not intended to be a complete coverage of each the goals, as that would be difficult given their broad scope. Instead, the articles

address key elements and provide insight on how each of the goals can be addressed, offer strategic thinking on relevant topics, and how capacities in each of the goals can be developed with respect to character and leadership development. While these goals may be focused toward USAFA, it is clear that each organization deals with aspects of these goals in their own domain. For example, the medical community will need to wrestle with each of these as they deal with future epidemics, develop medical staff that lead with character, figure out how to innovate in not only technology but in methods of practice, and how to interface with other government and private entities. So as you read through the articles, it is important to see how they apply to your domain, organization, and to your own leader development.

Before the issue begins to address the four goals, it starts with several conversations with Lieutenant General Jay Silveria (USAFA 1985), the Superintendent of USAFA. In the first conversation, he addresses what it is like to lead in a crisis as a result of COVID-19. In the second conversation, he addresses discrimination and valuing all members on the team. These are important conversations as they highlight what leadership looks like in challenging times (VUCA) but also how to value and lead all members on the team (VUCAH).

## Leaders of Character

The first section addresses the goal of Developing Leaders of Character Committed to Service to our Nation. That goal, lifted right from the institutional mission statement is the mandate for USAFA. It is why the institution exists. To provide qualified and capable officers who will lead and serve in the United States Air and Space Forces. Specifically, under that goal, there are the objectives of being able to:

- 1) Better develop Airmen to live honorably by consistently practicing the virtues embodied in the Core Values.
- 2) Better develop Airmen to lift others to their best possible selves.
- 3) Better develop Airmen to elevate performance toward a common and noble purpose.

The first article by Dr. Douglas Lindsay (USAFA 1992), Dr. John Abbatiello (USAFA 1987), Lieutenant Colonel David Huston (USAFA 2001), & Colonel Scott Heyler (USAFA 1994) outlines USAFA's approach for developing leaders of character. It ties together several key institutional documents and frameworks to show how all members at USAFA have a role in and are responsible for leader and character development. This is an important article in that it explains the who, what, when, why, and how of leader and character development at USAFA.

The next article is a conversation with Dr. Steven Trainor who is the Head of Faculty Development at the Google School for Leaders. He discusses his journey through his own leader development as well as some of the specific things that Google is doing to develop their leaders and their leadership capacity. In addition, he discusses the power of coaching and the impact it can have on leaders and how they develop over time. The conversation wraps up with a discussion on developing leadership capacity and how thinking about leadership as a capacity can enhance our ability to develop as leaders across a range of situations and domains.

This section ends with a piece by Dr. David Walker, from the University of Alabama, in which he talks about ethical judgement and character among British Army officers. He highlights a larger study that was conducted at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham, UK. Dr.



Walker covers some of the practical implications from the study to include training from training to a profession, balancing compassion and the mission, and developing ethical justification reasoning.

## Preparing for Future Conflict

The second section addresses the goal of preparing leaders for conflict in the future. While there are trends that may indicate what future conflict may look like, it is really about cognitively and behaviorally preparing future leaders to be more comfortable in an uncertain and complex space. In other words, what can we do today, to prepare future leaders to be able to handle the changing and uncertain demand signals that they will face in the future (VUCAH)? Specifically, the goal has the following objectives:

- 1) USAFA Airmen and graduates possess and employ the cognitive skills necessary to orient, adapt, and lead in technologically complex and dynamic contemporary and future environments.
- 2) USAFA Airmen and graduates understand the theory and application of military power, technology, and their strategic and cultural context in contemporary and future environments.
- 3) USAFA Airmen and graduates cultivate, articulate, and embody a joint-minded, culturally-aware warrior ethos and ethic committed to developing, leading, and integrating air, space, and cyber power in support of national security objectives.

We start this section with conversations with two different futurists and how they think about the future. The first conversation is with Dr. Brian David Johnson who is an applied futurist, consultant, and the

Director of the Threatcasting Laboratory at Arizona State University. In this conversation, he talks about his journey to become a futurist, his role as the Chief Futurist at the Intel Corporation and his focus on threatcasting. Dr. Johnson not only provides advice on what junior leaders need to be thinking about moving forward, he also discusses how organizations need to think about innovation. He offers practical advice for those who want to understand how to look toward the future in order help develop leaders and capacity today.

The second conversation with a futurist is with Jason Schenker. He discusses his background in economics and how that led to his role as a futurist and setting up The Futurist Institute. Schenker talks about the role of a futurist and how they can help organizations be more productive. In addition, he covers how using a futurist mindset can help identify trends from the past, combine it with data from the present, in order to make predictions about the future. He also shares a bit how to use the concept of spikes to help individual and leader development.

The final paper in this section focuses on the Institute for Future Conflict (IFC). The IFC is an Air Force Academy Foundation (AFAF) funded organization which has the vision of creating a learning culture at USAFA that produces leaders not only versed in emerging technologies (e.g., advanced computing, “big data” analytics, artificial intelligence, autonomy, robotics, directed energy, hypersonics, and biotechnology), but also to be able to think critically about their social, historical, ethical, and legal implications. The article is a conversation with Dr. Paul Kaminski (USAFA 1964), Lieutenant General (ret) Ervin Rokke (USAFA 1962), General (ret) Gregory Martin (USAFA 1970), and Mr. John Fox (USAFA 1963) moderated by Brigadier General (ret) Gary Packard Jr. (USAFA 1982). The conversation centers

around their experiences at USAFA, their work in the military and other domains (private sector) and the reasons why they are actively involved in supporting the IFC concept. They discuss why it is critical for USAFA to embrace avenues like the IFC to help develop future officers for the Air Force.

### A Culture of Innovation

The third strategic goal that is addressed in this issue is that of Fostering a Culture that Embraces Innovation, Fueled by Airmen. If we understand that the future environment will be continually changing, iterating, and advancing, we need Airmen who are able to innovate to be able to meet the future demand signals. Specifically, this goal has the objectives to:

- 1) Educate and inspire Airmen in cultural and procedural innovation to shift the institutional mindset.
- 2) Develop and maintain infrastructure and technological capabilities to enable innovation.
- 3) Expand and maintain innovation communities and partnerships to increase the flow of ideas.

The first article in this section is by Chris Weller, Lieutenant Colonel David Huston (USAFA 2001), and Lieutenant Colonel Matt Horner (USAFA 2002) and discusses the relationship between neuroscience, leadership, and innovation. Relatively new to the leadership discussion, neuroscience has much to offer our understanding of leadership and leadership development. They cover how brain science is foundational to the study of leadership, expand on social threats and rewards, discuss how to create a culture of innovation, and then wrap up the article with how what we know about neuroscience can be applied to develop leaders of character.

The second article is by Lieutenant General (ret) Christopher Miller (USAFA 1980) who introduces us to a challenging discussion of rebooting the Profession of Arms. He leads the reader through a thoughtful discussion of what we know about conflict from the past, what we see from conflict today, and how we need to think about conflict in the future. Challenging our mental models around what conflict looks like, he expands the discussion to include what a battle field will likely look like in the future. It will be one that is far different than mass on mass of military forces squaring off on some remote terrain. His discourse on conflict challenges us to broaden our perspectives, expand our thinking, and consider innovative approaches to future conflict.

### Executing Operations

The fourth goal is focused on how we need to work in the future. Specifically, that we are able to Execute Operations in an Integrated, Accountable, and Agile Manner. With future problems requiring complex adaptive solutions, we need to work together in order to bring the full totality of our forces to bear at a time and place of our choosing. To that end, this goal has the objectives of being able to:

- 1) Enhance institutional effectiveness through instilling a culture of assessment, supporting integrative solutions, and optimizing current resources.
- 2) Improve organizational accountability through extreme ownership of educating the workforce, enforcing standards, and resolving deficiencies.
- 3) Integrate team processes through cross-functional collaboration focused on a shared vision and optimization of constrained resources.

This section begins with an empirical examination by Dr. John Sosik and colleagues as to the relationship of affective experiences and charismatic leadership. Using a sample of Air Force Captains enrolled at Squadron Officer's College, they were able to show how and when a leader's affective experience produces charismatic behavior. Empirical studies are important because they help ensure that there is science and evidence behind the courses we teach, the programs we develop, and the training we execute. Their article is a great example of how we can utilize our understanding of assessment to inform what we know about leadership and character development.

In a large organization like the Air Force, there can be many organizational impediments to being integrated and agile. Large bureaucracies often suffer from stovepipes and siloed thinking. In order to combat this, the Air Force Warfighter Integration Capability (AFWIC) was established. The next article is a conversation with Major General Michael Fantini who is the former Director of AFWIC. In this discussion, Gen Fantini discusses the challenges with such an approach and the successes that they were able to have through influencing decision making capacity for senior Air Force leadership.

The final article is by Dr. Justin Stoddard who discusses the role of resiliency and how it can be integrated into leader development programs. He begins with an in-depth discussion of resiliency theory, definitions, development, and a resiliency framework. Following this review, he turns attention to how you can build resiliency and discusses several attempts by the U.S. military to develop resiliency programs listing examples from the Army, the Air Force, and USAFA. He finishes with several suggestions for leaders (self-reflection and after-action reviews) as to how they can develop resilience in themselves and others.

While these articles and conversations are not an exhaustive review of all of the topics that fall under the theme of this issue, it is hoped that it is a start toward understanding, developing, and working toward these goals. When we consider that leaders need to be well versed in leading in a VUCAH environment, this information can help support your own learning and growth in these areas.

## Book Reviews

In addition to the articles that are in the JCLD, our goal is to introduce the readers to other works related to character and leadership development. While there are a myriad of books that are published yearly on these topics, we try to highlight several works that are specifically related to the theme of the JCLD. In that light, we have reviews on two books. The first is a review by Lieutenant General (ret) Irvin Rokke (USAFA 1962) on the book titled *Without Warning: The Saga of Gettysburg, A Reluctant Union Hero, and the Men He Inspired* that is authored by Terry Pierce. The second review is by Colonel (ret) Dawn Zoldi on the book *Gender, Power, Law & Leadership* authored by Hannah Brenner and Renee Knake. One of the keys habits of successful leaders is to be a reader. We encourage you to take a look at these books as you develop your personal reading list.

## Profiles in Leadership

One way to understand and learn leadership is to examine previous leaders. Historians have understood this for a long time and their ability to pull from the past to inform the future, provides great insight into understanding leaders, why they made the decisions that they did, and how we can apply that information to our own development. With this in mind, we have added a new section to the JCLD called Profiles in

Leadership. We are fortunate to have Dr. Steven P. Randolph (USAFA 1974) join the JCLD team to be the Profiles in Leadership Editor. Dr. Randolph serves as the Rokke-Fox Chair at the Center for Character and Leadership Development (CCLD), United States Air Force Academy. His work at the CCLD culminates a nearly fifty-year career in public service, in successive roles as a fighter pilot, policy advisor, strategic planner, professor, leader, and scholar. This initial Profile was done by Dr. Randolph and focuses on General (ret) John Vogt. Dr. Randolph discusses Gen Vogt's rise in the Air Force though his time in command during the Vietnam War. He uses Gen Vogt's story to highlight several lessons that are important to all who will lead.

### Looking Ahead

This issue wraps up two years of the JCLD since I have taken over as Editor. The focus has been to put out a quality product that reflects a range of practical, evidence based information on character and leadership development that is applicable to all levels of leadership across all domains. We are fortunate to have an Editorial Board that provides vital strategic guidance and insight as we develop as a publication. We are also fortunate to have the Air Force Academy Foundation whose generous support enables the JCLD to exist and thrive.

As we look toward future issues, we have some exciting topics for you to consider. The October issue will again feature conversations with leaders and thought leaders from different domains. The JCLD uses the conversation format (instead of interviews) development occurs through learning, experience, conversations, and relationships. This format allows conversations with leaders in which they can share their personal experiences, discuss how they approach their own development, challenges and successes they

have had along the way, individuals who have impacted them, what leadership and character mean to them on a day to day basis, and other related topics. This is important because we need to have a wide range of perspectives to contribute to the conversation around character and leader development. If you have any suggestions on people who would be good to have conversations with, please let me know.

The Feb 2021 issue will continue our previous practice of aligning the theme of that issue with the National Character and Leadership Symposium (NCLS). This year's theme will be Warrior Ethos as Airmen and 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 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. 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@afacademy.af.edu](mailto:douglas.lindsay@afacademy.af.edu) or [jcld@usafa.edu](mailto:jcld@usafa.edu) with your ideas.

♦ ♦ ♦

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

# Leadership in a Crisis

Jay Silveria, Lieutenant General, USAF, United States Air Force Academy

**Interviewed By: Douglas Lindsay**

**Lindsay:** Would you mind giving a few reflections on what the last few months have been like as a commander and as a leader.

**Silveria:** One of the things that is interesting to me about the last few months is that some of it is very familiar and some of it is decidedly unfamiliar. I'll give you some examples. From my previous position as the deputy air component commander, the idea of working through and working in uncertainty was a normal course of doing business. We had intelligence, but no matter what you had, you knew it wasn't perfect. You knew that there was something missing that you didn't know. Regardless of every planning effort, something was going to go wrong, somebody was going to make a human mistake, or on an aircraft, something was going to break. Let's not forget that the weather gets a vote and the enemy gets a vote. So, that level of uncertainty was a very familiar feeling. As the COVID-19 pandemic started to develop we began to see what it was going to look like, and everyone was dealing with the uncertainty. That feeling was familiar. It was familiar enough that I knew some of the things that had to happen and I knew some of the things that I needed to do. One of those is the ability to simplify things. Others were to continue to communicate and look out for each other. These thoughts were included in the email I wrote to our Academy community several weeks ago about dealing with uncertainty, because those steps were familiar to me.

But, some things drifted in there that were so unfamiliar. The biggest one that I had not dealt with, was the idea that with this kind of "enemy", this virus, were the individuals involved who were at risk. For members of the military, it is what we sign up for. We are used to taking risks, and we are used to being asked to take risks to

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execute a mission. That is a normal thing. But, at no time have I ever been asked to risk my family. We were asking individuals to risk their families because if they were interacting with us or each other, and at work, they were introducing risk to themselves. Then, when they went home, they were introducing risk at home. That was an element that really hit me in the beginning about how decidedly different this situation is. I was used to asking people to take risks, but asking them to take risks with their families, that was very, very different right in the beginning. So, the uncertainty was familiar, but that portion regarding the families was not.

I still see the remnants of those beginnings today. Everybody is wondering, “What are we doing this summer?” “What is the schedule going to be in August?” So many people are looking for a date – a date like October 8th or January 18th – where we are through this and done with this, where everything can go back to where it was about four months ago in the middle of January. It is so pervasive where everyone is looking to flatten the curve and wonder – when is the end? The reality is that it is becoming clear that we are going to be in this for a very long time and there is no end date. That uncertainty makes everyone so uncomfortable. There is also an important point that I was reminded of in the past two months. It is important for a leader to grieve quickly and then get through that grief and be ready to lead. Bad things just happen. However, when something bad happens, a leader is allowed about a half a second to go, “That is awful.” The leader has to get through the stages of grief quickly because if they start dwelling on that grief, or dwelling on how horrible it is, the dwell in that grief is bad for an organization. I recently put out a message to our team about recognizing that the situation is bad, but let’s find the opportunity. A leader, when something bad happens, needs to grieve quickly and be ready to step out in uncertain times.

**Lindsay:** That’s an important point. If the pause is too long, then it can be seen as hesitation or a lack of confidence. It can be interpreted in many different ways by people. However, that ability to frame it as an opportunity is key. We can’t control that it happened, but we can shape what happens from there on out. What can we do out of that moment that is going to improve the final end state even if we don’t know the exact timeline?

**Silveria:** That was exactly the point that I was trying to make. It is so common to hear, in normal times, that we are so busy and there is so much to do. As it stands now, everything is cancelled. We are the ones that will be putting things back on the schedule. If we think it is too much, needs to be reformed, or needs to be changed or resourced differently, and we just place it back on the schedule...then shame on us. We need to take the opportunity to review if we are spending too much time on this or that. Maybe we are spending too much energy on something versus the return we are getting. Maybe we can combine two things and we will get more of a focus and outcome as an institution. We have such an opportunity. In the past, everyone was telling us that we have to have this, we have to have that, and this thing happens every year. Well, they didn’t happen this time and somehow we managed to survive. If they didn’t happen, then let’s take the chance to decide what we put back and how we put it back. That is the opportunity here.

I also remember, years back, in survival school. When you are in a group survival situation, one of the important things to do is hand out jobs. Get everyone involved, engaged, and looking forward. That was the point of one of my messages several weeks ago, that one of the things to do in a crisis is to start planning alternatives. That is a way of engaging. President Eisenhower said, “Plans are nothing; planning is everything.” Because the process that the organization goes through, and what the leader goes through when



you are planning, is the actual good part of it. That is where the learning and development takes place. I think that is so applicable to the place that we have found ourselves over the past couple of months. We need to have everyone engaged and thinking, planning, and looking at alternatives.

**Lindsay:** Absolutely. What we know about human development is that development generally doesn't occur when we are comfortable. This disruption that has occurred can serve as a catalyst for development and how we think about development. To your point, you are a graduate, and as a graduate myself, we are anchored in some way in our experience, and what occurred to us and what we went through. If you factor in the idea of innovation, of which you have been

opportunity. You are right, the idea that you have to do this and that on a particular day because that is what we did and those before us did it as well. I think there is an opportunity for us to take a different look.

**Lindsay:** Right, and that doesn't mean everything has to change, but we can certainly be intentional about it. I wanted to go back to something you said earlier. You talked about being in a crisis situation and it feeling a bit familiar. You have seen that at the upper levels based on your experience. However, many people in the organization haven't been witness to that. How have you, as a leader, tried to convey that familiarity and confidence that we need to plan through to the institution?

*I didn't know what to do in a COVID-19 environment where you can't bring everyone together and you can't communicate in the same way. I think that has been a challenge for a lot of people, including me, to adapt to the communication model that we have to work with.*

a champion for during your time as Superintendent, we can think about processes in a new way that we may not have been able to before. If we are able to opt things back onto the schedule, then we are able to ask some questions about how and when we do things that was not possible before.

**Silveria:** Exactly, because it was on the script and the calendar. It said on this day, this is going to happen. I think we can take an opportunity in a number of ways. We can take a resourcing view of something. We can take a timing look at something. I think it is such an

**Silveria:** I think that is a really interesting question because some of the things that have happened, I know what to do because it has happened to me before. But I didn't know what to do in a COVID-19 environment where you can't bring everyone together and you can't communicate in the same way. I think that has been a challenge for a lot of people, including me, to adapt to the communication model that we have to work with. After we are done talking today I am going to do a live broadcast online, the Superintendent's weekly live-stream update.

I have done plenty of all calls, but the idea that I am broadcasting to over 3-4 thousand people and getting comfortable with that type of communication, has been a challenge. However, I think that in a crisis situation, it is so important that a leader continues to communicate. Not just results and directions, but it is also what we are thinking and what are the challenges? So, I have tried to convey, "Here is one of the challenges we have for the summer", or "Here is one of the things we are thinking about." Not to come up with a solution, but to convey the facts of what the challenges are and what we are thinking about to the organization. To show the complexity of what we are dealing with.



There is a framework, called the Cynefin Framework<sup>1</sup>. It looks at how you make decisions based on a scale of complexity. For example, if you have more chaos, then you generally will just react and make a decision. However, when there is less chaos, and a lower level of complexity, then you can take in more information and consider more alternatives. So, you can ask, “Where are you?” on the scale as the complexity moves. I think the key in crisis leadership is that communication piece. COVID-19 has made it that much more challenging to communicate when you can’t just bring everyone together. I am comfortable talking in front of a group. But, when you are speaking to a group when all you are doing is talking into a microphone and there is no feedback from the audience - that is a challenge. Nobody is laughing...nobody is turning and talking to someone...no one is going quiet when you are trying to make a point. All of those are types of feedback. Without that feedback, you are just talking. So, that has been a challenge.

**Lindsay:** You mentioned several things there that get highlighted in a crisis situation and are really important to effective leadership, like communication and being visible. One of the things that has stood out with the current situation, is the ability to hear from and see senior leaders directly through things like your broadcasts. Often, in normal circumstances, there isn’t always that opportunity. To be able to see (via video technology) leaders of the organization talking about what you just mentioned, has been very important. It allows the organization to see leadership being available, transparent and open about what is going on, and taking the time to communicate that.

**Silveria:** For me, that is important. That is why I do the Thursday afternoon all calls. I think it is okay for

a leader to say that we are still taking in information and working through part of it. To say, here are the things that I am thinking about. I will get you an answer later and that we are considering options. One of the things that has been reaffirmed for me through this as a leader in this setting, is that you can’t assume there is just one way to communicate that is going to work. We do weekly broadcasts, emails, social media, public affairs releases, and more. Added to this, the audience we are communicating to is multi-generational and it is also multi-faceted in their domain knowledge and experience. As a result, I think it is going to be important to continue to communicate in different mediums and different ways. I knew that, but the current environment has made that even more obvious. As an example, someone will say, “There wasn’t anything new in the email that you sent or in the broadcast.” And at the same time, someone else will say, “Thanks for that. I really learned something.” So, that shows the importance of the combination of approaches to communication.

**Lindsay:** To make it even more complex, you also have multiple constituencies as well. Cadets, faculty, staff, the graduate community, the community of Colorado Springs, to name several. For example, it has been great to see the graduate community step in and support so strongly.

**Silveria:** I have truly enjoyed watching the graduate community step up and step in. To ask questions and get engaged. Watching the support they give and their support to the Class of 2020 through all of this. All of a sudden, the emails, letters and cards started pouring in. They were asking what they can do to help or just give a note of support.

I do have to remind myself constantly, that every time I speak or we speak as an institution, I might intend it for a certain audience, but it is going everywhere. It

<sup>1</sup> The Cynefin framework was developed by David Snowden in 1999 and was first published in the Harvard Business Review in 2007 (<https://hbr.org/2007/11/a-leaders-framework-for-decision-making>)

goes to the graduates, the people who work here, cadets, the cadet's parents, the Air Staff, and Congress. When we communicate, it goes absolutely everywhere.

**Lindsay:** And instantly everywhere.

**Silveria:** Yes. One of the things that has surprised me is that reach. I was contacted by the person who does the parent engagements. She came in to tell me that several of the parents got the link to our Teams broadcast and were sharing it around to a lot of other parents so they could listen in. We are aware enough that we wouldn't say anything that we didn't want anyone to hear. But, think about that for a minute. This is an invite to a meeting for members in the organization. Where else would you have someone attending a meeting and just join in because they wanted to see what was going on? That is not normal business practice where anyone who wants to show up can attend any meeting or a board meeting. If the meeting was in a conference room, people don't just show up. But, in the virtual world, it is accepted and people just show up. It is an interesting dynamic.

**Lindsay:** That is an interesting point about virtual dynamics, because I remember back to one of your broadcasts two or three weeks ago, you called out some inappropriate comments a few people made in the chat for the meeting. There is an anonymity where people feel empowered to say inappropriate things that they wouldn't say otherwise because it is a virtual situation. It is fascinating to me.

**Silveria:** You are right. It is fascinating why it is okay to be rude or obnoxious to a senior member of the organization because you are anonymous. I don't know where they were from or even if they were a part of the organization. But, I called them out because of that. You probably don't know this, but I received four responses back from people apologizing for that. They were anonymous, but they said, "That was me, and I apologize." It's a good indicator that they replied, but

why is that okay? Why, if you have an unrecognizable name, you can hide in that anonymity and make an obnoxious comment? Unfortunately, we see that in social media all the time.

**Lindsay:** As a commander, I know you have given enough speeches, where I am sure you have delivered a message that was received in a less than favorable way and the receivers of that message may have had negative thoughts. But, there is a distinct difference between thinking that negativity and actually typing it out and sending it in a public venue. I think that speaks directly to the complexity of leadership in the current environment or in crisis situations.

**Silveria:** I think it is so different when someone isn't accountable for their words. So, they feel like they are not accountable which allows them to consider an extreme position due to that lack of accountability. Whereas, if their name is there, they are accountable for their words. I think that has been really interesting. I think that gets to what we talked about before – the fear. Because there is a fear component to the COVID-19 situation that is present. I mentioned earlier about families. There is a fear component that comes with that, and that fear component is different for someone who is an active duty combatant versus an Assistant Professor in the Math Department who is a civilian. They didn't sign up for fear. They signed up for Math. I think that component adds something different to this current situation. I also think that there is a huge temptation in leadership in bad situations for the leader to come out as disingenuous or understating the severity of the situation. This situation is bad. There are people dying. Over 900 people have died in Colorado. A leader that says we will take on this challenge and work on this together, is one thing. However, for some leaders there is a temptation to say, "Well, this isn't so bad. We have only had a few cases of people who got sick. So, you have nothing to be worried about. Don't be afraid." When people are actually afraid. You have to acknowledge that fear. You have to be able to say,

“Yes, you are right. This is bad. Here is how we are going to mitigate it. Here is how we are going to work through it.” To dismiss that emotion, or dismiss that concern, it is tempting, but I think it is very dangerous. Because, if it gets worse, your credibility as a leader and your ability to assess the situation is in question. You need to be as clear and as honest as possible. It actually can help give confidence. If people in the organization see that the leader recognizes the severity of the situation, I think that helps with the leader’s credibility and helps people connect with the leader.

**Lindsay:** It does help with credibility and while it doesn’t help give any more control over the situation, it honors the moment in that you are sitting there as the commander saying, “I understand, and I am here with you.” To the point about the Assistant Professor in the Math Department, I think with everything going on, they may now feel more a part of the institution than they ever have before. In normal circumstances, I think it is easy for people in an organization to feel more compartmentalized in their smaller units and not necessarily see how things are impacted across the enterprise. However, with the current situation, it is all hands on deck, all members are affected, and we are all going through this process together. It’s all in.

**Silveria:** Yes. It was important to me from the beginning that when we started doing these weekly updates, that they were sent to cadets, permanent party, and everyone in the same way. I sent it out to everyone at the same time because this is not about training and developing cadets. It is not about curriculum. It is not about budget items. It is about something that impacts us all. So, everyone sees that we are all in this together.

**Lindsay:** With that in mind, and looking a bit forward, you spoke about being intentional about

adding things back to the calendar, how do you think this is going to affect how we think about development and preparing cadets for the Air and Space forces moving forward? What kinds of changes do you think this is going to drive for us or what questions will be able to ask that we weren’t able to before?

**Silveria:** There are a couple of things. First off, this is only the next one. There will be another one and another one. This is the COVID-19 one. We are going to come out of it, but there will be another something in the future. There are billions of people around the world. Something else will happen. I hope we take an opportunity as a Service, a Department, and as a

*We have fire departments because we know something is going to catch on fire. Now, we are going to need to have a more robust Public Health aspect because it is going to come again. I think that is one thing that I think about with future impact and future leadership.*

country to realize that we are going to do this again in some fashion. We have fire departments because we know something is going to catch on fire. Now, we are going to need to have a more robust Public Health aspect because it is going to come again. I think that is one thing that I think about with future impact and future leadership.

I also think that there is an agility that you gain from reacting. If you are used to reacting to something, and then come back, and then react to something else, and then come back, there is an agility that an organization gets from that process that is amazing. For example, if in January, before COVID-19, I decided to go about the process of transitioning our curriculum to 100%

online. What do you think the prediction would be for the amount of time it would take to do that? Six months or a year? The prediction would likely be somewhere in that range. The reality is that they did it in 9 days! I've witnessed that organizations that do things like that, they gain an agility. A sort of "Nothing is impossible approach." Now, did we break some glass doing it in 9 days? Yes. Was it optimum? No. Are there pieces that may have been missing? Likely. But, it still showed the organization's and individual's agility to react.

**Lindsay:** Exactly. It is important to mention that because it is easy to get caught in the churn of events. But, to be able to sit back and remind people of what was accomplished and the potential opportunities that could be gained from the situation is important.

**Silveria:** Everyone jokes now about the fact that we will never have another snow day. It's the fact that the agility is acknowledged that is important. Back to the above example. If in January, I said, "I'm tired of the snow days. I want you to convert the curriculum so that we don't have another snow day." That would have taken a while. Now, I'm hearing conversations that doing it this way was actually better doing it via mediums like Microsoft Teams and other processes because it was more efficient. We learned a lot and I think we are going to stumble into some of that, in a good way. The situation is forcing us to be agile and that agility can result in us having new capacities that we didn't have before.

**Lindsay:** Thank you for the conversation and time. As we wrap up, are there any parting thoughts that you would like to share?

**Silveria:** Based on some questions that you had sent me earlier, one of them stood out to me. You asked what was the thing I was most proud of as the Superintendent? Prior to COVID-19, I would have said

the idea that over the past few years we have advanced and improved things in a lot of different areas. For example, we realigned the Air Force Academy Athletic Corporation as well as the research enterprise. We have had advances in space and remotely piloted aircraft. We have made changes in basic military training, Mitchell Hall, and facilities construction, money processes, and increased the number of faculty, as some examples. The institution has advanced on many fronts. That is what I would have said that I was proud of, prior to COVID-19. I also think that a lot of those advances displayed themselves in the crisis. For example, there were many items that we worked on regarding Information Technology over the past few years. If we hadn't done that, there is no way that we could have reacted to do the online movement that we did. It would have been impossible. Instead, our Chief Information Officer (the A6 office) was able to react and say since we are all on Office 365, we can just use Microsoft Teams. That wasn't possible before. I am proud that the advances we have made over the last few years have allowed us to be able to deal with the crisis.

A closing comment is that you never want to be in the middle of a crisis. But, watching the team, the institution, people, graduates, and cadets, it is hard not to be proud of the way that everyone has supported each other and helped each other. It has been amazing to watch and be a part of. Watching what people have done to get through this, makes me very proud.

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## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

# Ownership, Reflection, and Accountability

Jay Silveria, Lieutenant General, USAF, United States Air Force Academy

**Interviewed By: Douglas Lindsay**

**Lindsay:** Thank you for the opportunity to reengage our conversation regarding current events. The last time we spoke, we were in the midst of COVID planning and response. Now, as a nation, are dealing with issues around racism, bias, and discrimination. Could you share some initial reactions to current events?

**Silveria:** The pace of things right now because of the race riots and reactions to George Floyd, has been very similar to COVID. COVID exposed things. Anytime you stress a system, it exposes things. The same thing is true with respect to the events around the George Floyd killing. The stress of that situation and subsequent reaction exposed things. I'm reminded of a metaphor in sports where they say, when you are on the field, don't be a spectator. Initially, I found myself being a spectator to a remarkable, "Wow" situation. For example, statues have become a discussion point. The stress exposed that and how they matter. As a result, statues are coming down, and it was, "Wow, that hasn't happened before." Then, NASCAR banned the confederate flag. Again, that hasn't been the case even though some have asked for that for a while. Things like that are 'Wow' moments. They were brought on by exposure.

Here's a specific example. I was talking to West Point Superintendent and Annapolis Superintendent and I realized that some of it had completely gone past me. The Superintendent at West Point, for example, has approximately 18 statues of confederate generals on his campus. His staff came to him initially and told him that he had 18 statues, and several building with names of confederate generals. Initially, he thought that was bad, but it was manageable. They could develop a process to work through those. They would talk to the Army and figure out how they would proceed. Then, they realized that there are also things like an auditorium inside a building or a room inside a building that had a confederate general's name on it and realized it was a much larger situation.

The same thing is happening at Annapolis. As I was talking to the Superintendent, he was standing in the Buchanan House, which is the home of the Superintendent. He told me it was named after the first Superintendent of the Naval Academy, Admiral Franklin Buchanan. He said Admiral Buchanan, after he was the Superintendent, was an Admiral in the Confederate Navy. He told me that, "I'm literally standing in the entranceway and there is an 8 foot portrait of Buchanan right here in the entrance."

I realized quickly that this is not just happening around us. It is the concept of, if it is happening outside of our walls, then it is happening inside our walls. Right? There are members of our organization that feel disenfranchised, and even if there aren't any direct actions taking place in our walls, it is going on in society. So, after some reflection, I realized that there has to be three concepts that we have to embrace as an institution. The first of these is ownership. We have to step up and take ownership and say, the issues outside the walls are issues inside the walls. Which means if there is racism and bigotry outside, then there is racism and bigotry inside, and we need to own that.

The second thing is that we have to be reflective. We have to be honestly reflective and review where there is bias and/or artifacts of that bias. Unless I am missing something, I don't think we have any confederate statues on USAFA. My first reaction was, we don't have that problem. But, now I'm convinced that we need to make sure we look around and think about the

Command Directed Investigation. As an independent body, I want them to help us look at all policies and any instances of systemic bias. Where does it exist? Where are there artifacts? Then, they will submit back to me their recommendations. That is the third concept that we need to embrace, accountability. This will go along with what the Chief of Staff is doing. He announced that he sent the Inspector General out to do a reflective look across the Air Force to look for where there is bias. After I got myself out of the spectator phase, I quickly got into this understanding of ownership, reflection, and accountability. When used together, they can be a powerful driver of change.

**Lindsay:** That is an important process to undertake. We have seen episodic movement in the past, due to certain events, but the current environment feels a bit different. The initial spectator situation is an interesting one because of the historical significance of events that are occurring. It is an opportunity to move forward. I was talking to my kids last night and they brought up how Band-Aid is going to start putting out products that represent different skin tones. They were wondering why that hadn't happened before. While certainly a small example, the idea of broadening what is meant by a flesh toned band aid is

one of those indicators to watch in terms of seeing if things are starting to change, at least from an awareness standpoint. That goes back to your point about needing to reflect.

**Silveria:** It does. I had another "Aha" moment this morning. I was drinking my coffee after a run and I was watching the local news. They reported that the City Council was going to have a special session to establish civilian oversight of the police department. My "Aha" moment was, "You mean we haven't had that?" We grow up in the military understanding that there is civilian control. I don't unilaterally decide

*As an independent body, I want them to help us look at all policies and any instances of systemic bias. Where does it exist? Where are there artifacts?*

names of things. Can you imagine being in the state of Mississippi right now where the confederate flag is part of their state flag? For Alabama and Florida, the red cross is from the confederate army. Those are visible artifacts. So, there may be something here regarding artifacts and we need to be diligent in looking for. That reflective part is important.

We had a Conversation Event recently and from that Event I have decided to assemble a group to include Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Way of Life Committee Alumni, cadets, and other groups to examine this. It is like in the military where we have a



something like we are going to go into Afghanistan with a few thousand people. In fact, nobody raced into Afghanistan after 9/11 UNTIL the President and Secretary of Defense told us to go to Afghanistan. That concept of civilian control is engrained in us. I send things to the Secretary of the Air Force and she tells me Yes or No. She approves those decisions as the senior civilian. At least in this area, that doesn't seem to be the case with police. So, there isn't an oversight board? Does the Commissioner just decide?

At my level, I also have the Board of Visitors. I have to answer to Congress. Now, I am no student of municipal government, and maybe it goes on in other places. However, just the idea that it didn't go on here, and the police chief doesn't have to stand in front of a board and say things like, "Here is how many people we hired and here is how many people we fired." "Here are the actions we have taken." If they don't have to do that like I do to the Board of Visitors, to Congress, or to senior civilian leaders, then they aren't accountable in the same way. General (ret) Edward Rice, the Board of Visitors Chairman, asks me about things and I have to present them the information that they request to make decisions.

**Lindsay:** Accountability is certainly important. I think that word "expose" you mentioned several times is important. When we are exposed to something, we either choose to act or do nothing. I remember back in November of 2017, there was an occurrence of racial slurs at the Air Force Academy Preparatory School. Immediately after that, you spoke publically to all cadets, faculty and staff and let them know that if they can't treat everyone with dignity and respect, without discrimination, then they needed to "Get out." When exposed of the issue, you felt the need to immediately respond in order to lead the organization through that. Now, several years later, can you reflect a little bit about why you decided to step quickly into that situation and how that resonates with what is going on today?

**Silveria:** There was a human reaction to that in that it made me mad. My uniform says "U.S. Air Force" and my ring says "Air Force Academy." The idea that a racist action or racist comments were on the Air Force and the Air Force Academy made me mad. Those comments and actions didn't represent me. It's like I said at that time, no one can write something on a dry erase board and define our values. Nobody gets to do that. Nobody gets to label us that way. So, there was kind of a visceral, human anger to the moment. My first instinct of wanting to step in was that idea of, "This is not us." Probably upon reflection of the moment maybe there was too much emotion. While there was the, "This isn't us," there is the point about ownership and we have to recognize that if it is there, then it is here in some manner.

In my own development from then to now, I recognize the need to be very specific in that moment and not equivocate. But, we must also not abrogate the responsibility. There is nobody who speaks for the institution but me. No one can say that for the organization except for the leader. I said then, racism is a small horrible idea and the only way to replace a horrible idea is with a better idea. So, moving forward to today, we need to keep working toward that better idea. For example, cadets may be confused, angry, emotional and unsure. So, we need to take the opportunity to replace that with a better idea. If I reflect back on 2017, of establishing our values and establishing a red line and not giving up that responsibility, we can take that responsibility now to move forward with replacing it with a better idea. The better idea is to have the reflective moment to look internal and see where we have biases. Where are our flesh colored band aids. We have to find those because they are here.

The Air Force Song was one of those which we started that change, by the way. When I stood with the women's volleyball team after a match, we were singing the Air Force song, and said the line about "... the brother men who fly..." That felt odd. At that

moment, I decided we were changing it. However, it turns out, and the Chief of Staff reminded me of this, that the Air Force song belongs to the Air Force, not just USAFA. So, we worked it through the Air Force channels to get it changed. By the way, when Col (ret, USAFA 1992) Jennifer Block made that pitch to the Chief of Staff, she took a band aid box and put pictures of Capt Amy Svoboda (USAFA 1989), who as a female A-10 pilot that was killed while flying. She put pictures of her on a band aid box and sent it to the Chief of Staff. It was a reminder of a flesh colored band aid. I think the real answer to your question is from defining our values to the idea that we have to take ownership and replace it with a good idea, I feel the same opportunity now that I felt a few years ago.

**Lindsay:** That is important, because people are watching what people are doing. It seems like everyone is lining up to make a statement about what is going on. To have their say. But that is really just the start. To your point, what are you going to do with that statement? Am I going to show ownership? Am I going to reflect and introspective to find where I need to be better? But really, it is about the accountability that is going to be telling. At USAFA, we are developing leaders of character. With what you just talked about, what do they need to be taking away from these experiences?

***You can't just be the critic. You have to do more. You have to have action. You also need the accountability. A leader has to get in there and mix it up.***

**Silveria:** I think there are two things that are really important. The first is the ownership piece. Understanding what they have seen. We need them to be proactive and we need to take action. I also hope that one of the things that they would learn as young leaders is the idea of being a critic. With all of the

social media avenues that exist, there is the ability to blurt out in various forms about something without taking ownership or taking any action. This happens from time to time. For example, someone might say something to me about culture. I'll respond with "Okay. What is the action?" They will repeat, "We need to change the culture." I'll repeat, "Okay. Own it. What actions do we need to take? Give me the action." The best that you can usually get someone to say in a conversation like that is, "We should tell them \_\_\_\_\_. Really? You don't think we tell them? Trust me, it doesn't always work. How many times do we tell people to not do drugs or not to assault someone? It still happens from time to time. Of course we tell them, but they make their own decisions. That idea of not just being the critic, but taking ownership, and then taking action is important. Saying, "This problem is mine." As a leader, you don't get to spectate too long.

**Lindsay:** Taking ownership and also seeing our role in that solution or action. To not just say this doesn't directly impact me because I'm not a racist and I respect everyone, so it doesn't apply to me.

**Silveria:** Exactly. Here is an example of that. A couple of years ago, the University of Oklahoma had a racial incident. I remember thinking it will be interesting to see what the University President will say. He essentially said, this isn't a problem because I am not a racist. Whether he was a racist or not, that is not the whole issue and he didn't see his role in the problem. So, young leaders need to see themselves in the larger issues. To not just get caught in the, "That's not me so it doesn't apply to me." As a leader, that is not enough. You can't just be the critic. You have to do more. You have to have action. You also need the accountability. A leader has to get in there and mix it up.



I had a couple of other “Aha” moments this week. I received a note from someone who represented the LGBTQ segment of our faculty and cadets. I also received a note from a group representing our Asian cadets. They shared their hope to expose discrimination against any manner of human condition. That we have respect for human dignity and that applies across all groups. The Black Lives Matter movement is important and I understand the purpose and the oppression behind the movement. To go along with that we want to make sure that as we develop leaders, we are developing leaders that understand and lead across all differences.

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## DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER COMMITTED TO SERVICE TO OUR NATION

# Developing Leaders of Character

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A typical definition of leadership has to do with some sort of influence by an individual (the leader) to get a group of people to accomplish a goal. While a seemingly straightforward definition, anyone who has spent time in a leadership position knows that effective leadership takes intentional work and investment. That is because there are a myriad of factors that will influence the leadership dynamic to include the leader, the follower, and the context (situation). However, it is not just about accomplishing the goal. It is also about the journey...how you get there. That is a critical distinction for leader development and is foundational for the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). At USAFA, the mission is, "...to educate, train, and inspire men and women to become officers of character, motivated to lead the United States Air and Space Forces in service to our nation." As you can see from that statement, it's not just about leadership or the leader. It is about serving in that capacity with character...about who the individual is and their subsequent journey.

A question that often comes up when one hears the mission statement is, "What is a leader of character?" That is a fair question, but one that is not so simply answered. The reason for this is not due to the word *leader*. Based on decades

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of empirical research, we have a good understanding of what effective leadership looks like in and across domains. Even though you will still occasionally hear the false dichotomy question of, “Are leaders born or made?”, we have progressed beyond this outdated notion of “either/or” to the much more accurate “and/both.” The reality is that effective leadership considers the characteristics of the individual combined with their actions. It also is influenced by factors such as education, training, and experiences of the individual. The fact is that yes, you can learn leadership. Even a cursory review of the literature indicates that there are very intentional things that a leader can do to increase their leadership capacity and effectiveness (e.g., Day et al., 2014; Zaccaro, Dubrow, & Kolze, 2018). Finally, and importantly, it is also shaped by the context in which the leadership is enacted.

The challenge comes in when we talk about the word *character*. It is not because people do not believe that leaders need character. Quite the contrary. The history books are replete with examples of leaders whose lack of character had dire implications for followers, organizations, and even nations. It has to do with two principle questions. The first of these is, “What is character?” That is an important question because there are just about as many definitions and conceptualizations of character as there are for leadership. So, in some respect, there is a bit of a definitional problem. Think to yourself, “How would

you define character?” It is not easy to define it in concrete terms. Is it attitude? Is it actions or behaviors? Is it a collection of traits? Personality perhaps?

The second question is, “Can you develop character?” Let’s assume we can clearly articulate the definition of character. Depending on how character is defined, we might answer that question differently. If it is seen as something that is inherent in the individual, then many would say it can’t really be developed. Just the opposite can be said if the definition revolves around behaviors.

If we take the previously listed mission of USAFA coupled with the above discussion and then combine it with the vision of USAFA to “...serve as the Air and Space Forces premier institution for developing leaders of character,” it is a fundamental belief of the institution that we can develop cadets as leaders of character. If that is the guiding principle of USAFA, then there must be a plan in place to ensure this development takes place. The good news, is that there is and it has been codified.

### What is a Leader of Character?

In 2011, based on research and through collaboration of many experts on character and leadership, USAFA’s Center for Character and Leadership Development (CCLD) designed a framework that defined a leader of character, and explained how the institution would

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approach developing cadets as leaders of character (Figure 1). The framework outlines that a leader of character is someone who lives honorably by consistently practicing the virtues embodied in the Air Force core values<sup>1</sup>, lifts others to their best possible selves, and elevates performance toward a common and noble purpose (CCLD, 2011). This definition is derived from a combination of Air Force Doctrine, character education theory, and transformational leadership theory. With this definition in hand, we can explore how USAFA aims to develop cadets as leaders of character.

<sup>1</sup> The Air Force Core Values are Service Before Self, Excellence in all We Do, and Integrity First.

## What is Development?

Development is a complex lifelong process which is experienced by an individual that results in a qualitative improvement of their behavior. This is not a uniform process and individuals are at different levels of development and have different levels of readiness or motivation to develop. What we know, is that development is most likely to occur in an environment of trust and can become the norm of a culture when individuals grasp that everyone around them is motivated to develop (CCLD, 2011). Development occurs through a variety of experiences (training,

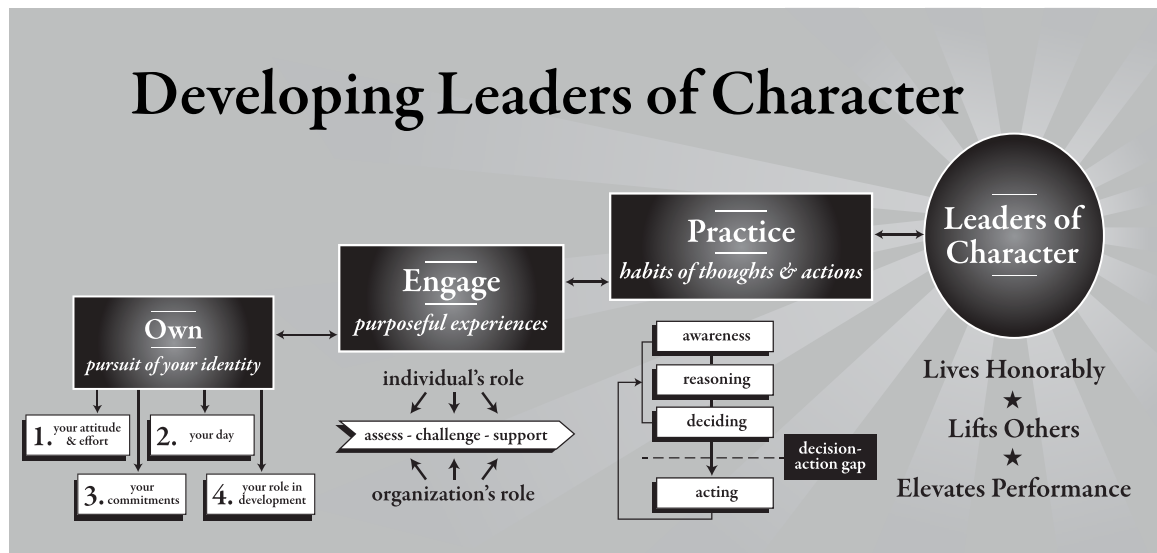


Figure 1: USAFA Leader of Character Framework

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educational, other) and does not occur just because an individual has experienced a singular program. Critically, development often occurs when a leader is stretched beyond their current capability and given the chance to expand it (CCLD, 2011; Lerner, 2002). In addition, due to development being an individual process, one program or one timeline does not work for every individual. That means a one size fits all approach, which is often appropriate when trying to train a particular skill, isn't appropriate for individual leader and character development. The developmental program must be tailorable to meet the individual at their particular level of development.

### How Does a Leader of Character Develop?

The process begins with the idea of owning and pursuing one's identity based on Albert Bandura's work surrounding self-efficacy theory. Self-efficacy is defined as an "individual's belief about his or her capacity to perform, master experiences and challenges, as well as the ability to receive constructive feedback and encouragement about one's perceived capacities." (Bandura, 1997). Context is critical here because, in the military, there is a mission to accomplish. Individual identity must be aligned and consistent with USAFA's mission. While pursuing other identities is a normal

part of adolescent maturity, for the sake of becoming a commissioned officer, this notion of identity has a specific meaning. It means owning one's attitude, effort, duty, commitments, and role in developing as a soon to be officer (Appendix, Figure 1). But this effort is not limited to the individual, rather it is also the responsibility of the organization (faculty/staff) to inspire individuals to increase their ownership and pursuit of this identity.

This leads us to the next piece of the development process. In order to shape an identity and develop capacity, the organization must purposely engage the individual in a comprehensive manner that assesses, challenges, and supports them (Appendix, Figure 2; Ting & Scisco, 2006). When we say organization, we mean the individuals that make up the organization. At times, individuals in the organization will be moving in and out of roles of being developed and being developers. This engagement is what an organization can both formally and informally control. Formally, this occurs through resource prioritization in support of the execution of curricula (both training and education), programs, and processes. Informally, this occurs via role modeling and demonstrating how habits and behaviors align with values. How an organization does this engagement determines the type and amount

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of development we can expect from individuals (Astin, 1993; Chickering & Gamson, 1991; Kuh & Schneider, 2008; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

The last piece of the development process is the culmination of the previous two in that it requires that individuals practice habits of thought and action (Appendix, Figure 3). This practice occurs in a four-step process which begins with one's awareness of self and situation and moves to an ability to morally *reason* about the situation, then to *decide* on the most effective course of action, and finally to act on that decision (Rest, 1979; 1999). This process (termed ARDA) is not merely intellectual, rather it involves both thinking about and implementing the behaviors of effective leadership. As one develops as a leader of character, one's ability to practice ARDA concomitantly improves in terms of aligning with the concepts of living honorably, lifting others, and elevating performance.

It must be noted that development does not end or become complete with the practice of habits of thought and action. Rather this practice informs one's identity which in turn begins the cycle all over again. In addition, this is a lifelong process that started before cadets arrived at USAFA and continues long after they depart. The goal of USAFA as an organization with a mission to develop officers of character, is that we can influence and accelerate this developmental trajectory through engagement of purposeful training, education, and experiences over a 47-month time frame. Additionally, we must lay the groundwork for future growth.

### How Does a Leader of Character Develop at USAFA?

To help inform this question, we think it best to offer examples at USAFA of how engagement between

someone being developed and someone developing may play out in terms of better aligning one's habits with the definition of a leader of character. These engaging purposeful experiences occur across all facets of USAFA to include academics, military, athletics, and airmanship. In all contexts, the ability to assess, challenge, and support one's development is salient. Let's begin with a simple/generic example that involves one's habit of living honorably.

#### *Living Honorably*

USAFA has an Honor Code which states "We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does". With this standard of behavior in hand, it is straightforward to say that if a cadet lies, steals, cheats, or tolerates; they would be acting in manner not aligned with living honorably. It can be instructive to work backward from this action of violating the Honor Code to better understand how to develop from it.

Prior to this situation, this aforementioned cadet experienced numerous Honor Code education lessons since all cadets get these lessons starting in Basic Cadet Training. In addition, this cadet arrived at USAFA owning some form (ranging from none to complete) of identity related to wanting to live honorably. So, if these components were in place, why did the cadet choose to violate the code? Maybe their identity wasn't in strong enough alignment to the idea of living honorably? Maybe the Honor Code education lesson was designed or executed ineffectively, they weren't aware enough of the seriousness of the situation, or maybe, the moral reasoning they decided on was not aligned with the Honor Code standard?

A question to consider is, "How do we develop these areas of "maybe"?" That's where USAFA as an organization comes in. In order to develop this cadet

to better align their habits and actions, someone (i.e., the developers) must engage with this cadet to assess, challenge, and support them. The assessment piece is pretty simple. The cadet violated a standard, and must be made aware of this deficiency. Next, through different mechanisms (e.g., conversations, reflection, probation, etc.) the developers must persuade this cadet, and inspire/motivate him or her to want to meet the challenge of adhering to the standard. Lastly, the developers must offer supporting mechanisms for nurturing this inspiration and facilitate practicing of this habit. Practicing of the habit allows the development cycle to continue in that it shapes one's identity and changes how they can engage in future purposeful experiences (Figure 2).

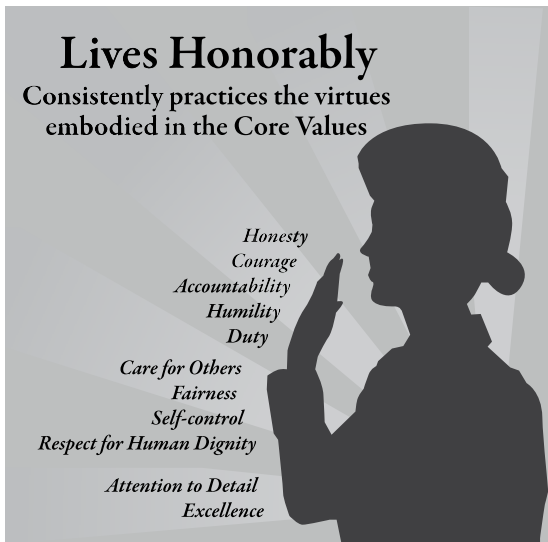


Figure 2: What it Means to Live Honorably

What we just explained may seem complex and vague. This is understandable because developing as a leader of character involves an almost infinite number of variables all at play at the same time. However, doing this work is critically important. Next, we'll offer a more concrete example in the context of lifting others.

### *Lifting Others*

Lifting others to their best possible self means taking on the responsibility of influencing those around you to optimize their performance (Figure 3). It does not mean that you do all the work, but rather that you enable and facilitate others to lift themselves. For instance, when a cadet becomes a sophomore (3-degree/third-class cadet), he or she is given their first chance to supervise a freshman cadet (4-degree/fourth-class cadet). In this supervisory role, these cadets are asked to encourage their subordinate to maximize performance. A simple way of describing this is in the context of athletic performance.

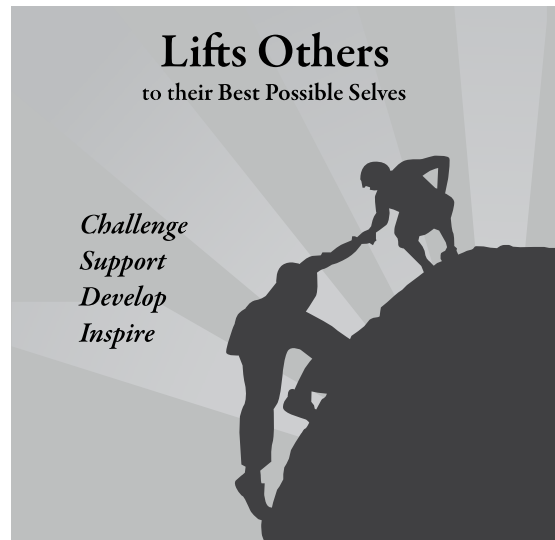


Figure 3: Lifting Others to Their Best Possible Selves

Let's say a 3-degree is supervising a 4-degree who is not meeting the physical fitness test standards. The 3-degree has a decision to make as to how they will engage with their 4-degree on this matter. The 3-degree could decide to ignore the issue, to fully engage, or to act somewhere in between. However, in order for intentional development to occur for the



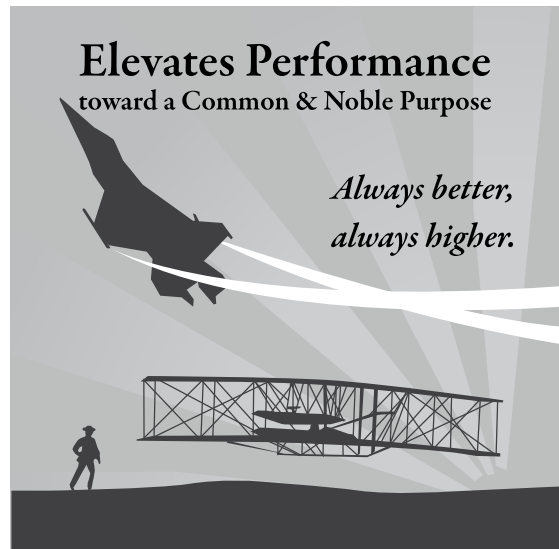
4-degree, the 3-degree must engage in a manner that effectively conveys the requirements to the 4-degree, challenges them to improve based on the standards, and then supports them in that challenge. Conveying the requirements could involve a simple conversation between the supervisor and subordinate, explaining the lack of meeting the standard and a leading to a better understanding of what led to the result to meet the standard. From that understanding, the supervisor could ask the subordinate if they desire to improve in this context in order to meet the standard. Ideally, the subordinate will say yes, at which point the supervisor can ask what they can do to help them improve in this area. Once a plan has been formulated, the supervisor helps the subordinate to execute the plan with the goal of an effective outcome and improved performance.

Obviously this scenario could play out in other less effective ways. For instance, if the conversation doesn't happen, the subordinate may not even know that they aren't meeting a standard. Or, the supervisor could simply say, "you're not doing well enough, fix it!" In order for optimal development to occur, a developer should intentionally follow the assess, challenge, and support process. This is not easy, nor intuitive, and being an effective developer requires habituation in order to hone this ability in the pursuit of excellence.

### *Elevates Performance*

Which leads us to our next example of where development can occur at USAFA. We define a leader of character as someone who elevates performance to a common and noble purpose (Figure 4). What is meant by this is that individuals do not just merely get things done, but rather they seek out more effective ways of how to get things done in terms of serving a common and noble purpose. This aspect of developing as a leader of character is what enables one to go beyond simply

being a "good" person, to being an effective leader. This is the most complex component of our leader of character definition. An example can be instructive as to how development of this component could play out at USAFA.



*Figure 4: Elevating Performance Toward a Common & Noble Purpose*

Academics account for a significant portion of a cadet's time at USAFA. In fact, more time is scheduled in this context than any other (i.e., military, physical, or airmanship). Through pursuit of a degree, and exposure to knowledge from different domains, it is hoped that cadets are motivated by the love for knowledge, a curiosity to better understand the world, and an ability to make the world better with their application of this understanding through their future service as an officer. In other words, the investment in learning and knowledge is so that they can serve at a higher capacity and contribute more effectively (toward the noble purpose). This infers an intrinsic motivation by the individual. However, this is not necessarily the case for all cadets, and some are more extrinsically motivated by looking at what can be gained individually. This



extrinsic motivation can be due to a combination of factors. While some of it is as a result of a lack of intrinsic motivation of cadets themselves, it can also be influenced by organizational policies and reward systems that focus on individual achievement instead of the larger purpose.

In order to better develop cadets' ability to elevate performance toward that noble purpose in the academic context, faculty and staff have a critical role. While certain rewards are inherent in an evaluative (e.g., grading) context, there must be a larger discussion about how the knowledge, independent of the proximal extrinsic rewards, can have distal and significant longer term organizational rewards. By specifically tying the grades to extrinsic rewards (e.g., career field selection, advanced degree positions, etc.), it can overwhelm the ability to develop the intrinsic motivation to gain knowledge for cadets. Again, it is the elevating of performance toward a common and noble purpose.

### The Officer Development System

The Leader of Character Framework is not the only guide for leader development at the USAF Academy. In fact, the Officer Development System (ODS) preceded the Leader of Character Framework by almost a decade, and is still in force. This begs the question: why are there two systems—or philosophies—of development? In short, as the following paragraphs will attempt to explain, the two systems are complementary in that the Leader of Character Framework targets the interaction of character and leadership and is applicable beyond just cadets, while the ODS is focused on the why and how of developing cadets into officers. In terms of hierarchy, the Leader of Character Framework is the overarching, strategic guidance; while the ODS is utilized at the operational level.

The cornerstone document explaining the ODS is USAF Academy Pamphlet 36-3527, *The Officer Development System: Developing Officers of Character*<sup>2</sup>. The ODS charges USAF Academy leaders, faculty, and staff with increasing cadet understanding of officer identity as a noble profession; fostering cadet commitment to developing themselves into “officers of high character”; and developing cadet competencies “essential to officers of character.” This purpose closely aligns with the “Own-Engage-Practice” model explained in the Leader of Character Framework. The remaining pages of the ODS Pamphlet explain the foundation, goals, and process—or “why,” “what,” and “how”—providing a concrete set of explanations and methods for cadets, faculty, and staff.

The ODS developed out of a need to link the overall USAF Academy mission to the developmental courses and programs making up the course of instruction (Price, 2004). In other words, there was no operational level framework to link the strategic mission with the tactical-level, day-to-day execution of development. Investigations surrounding a very public sexual assault scandal in 2003 and the resulting Agenda for Change, uncovered a need for a more concrete leader development concept at the USAF Academy. As a result, USAFA stood up a team, with members representing all USAFA mission elements, to conceptualize a system that would be developmental, adjust the potentially abusive “Fourth Class System,” and advocate a transformational leadership culture (Price, 2004). The team rolled out the new ODS to the cadets, faculty, and staff in early 2004.

The ODS pamphlet begins with an explanation of the foundation, or the “why,” of ODS. This foundation sets out to establish a desired identity for

2 The Officer Development System Pamphlet can be found at: <https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/usafa/publication/usafapam36-3527/usafapam36-3527.pdf>

USAFAs graduate and is really the target of officer development. The key components are the U.S. Constitution, which provides guidance and authority for the military officer's service; the officer's oath, a public pronouncement of the officer's moral obligation to "support and defend"; the Air Force Core Values, a set of values and virtues expected of all Airmen; and finally the concept of officership. This last component includes attributes expected of an officer: warrior spirit, professional, leader of character, and servant of the nation. An officer corps possessing these qualities is vital to our nation's defense, and the ODS clearly sets these qualities as goals for the developmental process.

The goal—or "what" of ODS is to produce officers through education, training, and experiences; and possessing all of the institutional outcomes when they walk across the stage at the end of their 47-month experience. The number and organization of the institutional outcomes has been refined since the initial implementation of ODS, but now consist of nine outcomes such as "warrior ethos as Airmen and citizens," "critical thinking," "ethics and respect for human dignity," "leadership, teamwork, and organizational management," and so forth<sup>3</sup>. Of note, a cross-mission element committee closely shepherds each of the nine outcomes, with a specific focus of aligning experiences and assessing progress of programs and individual cadet performance.

The bulk of the ODS pamphlet describes tools available to do the "how" of development. Called the "process," this section offers three models for officer development, each with a specific focus. These models are designed as systems to support molding cadets toward the desired officer identity, and ensuring they are proficient in the nine educational, training, and

athletic outcomes by the time they graduate and are commissioned. The first and most well-known model is named after an acronym—PITO (Appendix, Figure 4). Those letters stand for Personal, Interpersonal, Team, and Organizational, and they describe the levels of leadership generally aligned with each of the four years of a cadet's experience. The fourth-classmen (freshmen), focus on how to "learn and live loyalty to values, mission, chain of command, and Air Force standards." Third classmen (sophomores), work on "excel[ing] as a wingman and coach the fourth-classmen in the ways of the loyal follower." Second-classmen (juniors) are expected to "lead teams in support of the mission while enhancing subordinate development" while the first-classmen (seniors) "lead the cadet wing while developing, shaping and inspiring all cadets." Specific objectives appear under each years' focus, such as honing followership abilities for fourth-classmen and "create[ing] an environment where all members of the organization can reach their full potential" for first-classmen. An important aspect of this model is that at each stage of development cadets are reminded to continue working on the previous years' objectives.

The Leader of Character definition—live honorably, lift others, elevate performance—naturally appears in the PITO model. Fourth-classmen, for example, are charged with setting the example and to comply with policies, part of the living honorably concept. Third classmen coach and help other cadets achieve their personal goals—very much in line with lifting others. The upper two classes support unit goals and drive organizational culture and professionalism—with the intention of elevating performance of the organization.

Process-wise, both the PITO model and Leader of Character Framework are seen in action across the Cadet Wing on a daily basis. Cadet squadron, group, and wing positions align very well with the objectives stated

3 A full list of the USAFA Outcomes and an explanation of each can be found at: <https://www.usafa.edu/academics/outcomes/>

for each PITO year group. For example, in the cadet squadrons the fourth-classmen work on followership and living honorably, third classmen are assigned to be coaches in order to lift the fourth-classmen to be their best possible selves, second-classmen take on leadership roles of small teams to accomplish squadron objectives, and first-classmen serve as the cadet officers who are responsible for leading at the organizational level, and elevating performance while they do so. Both models even appear in the intramural program where cadets progress from player to individual coach and mentor; to team captain as a second-classmen; and then to serving as program administrators, schedulers, and referees as first-classmen.

The PITO model is after all a model and there are clearly exceptions to the year-by-year development. Reality just isn't that clean. A fourth-classmen who is elected as class president may have to operate at the organizational level at a very early stage. Likewise, a first-classmen with no formal staff role may have to learn about organizational leadership by observing classmates, and at the same time exercise the interpersonal level of leadership over a fourth-classmen in their squadron who might be struggling with academics.

The second tool of the ODS process is the Leadership Growth Model (LGM). This model explains the developmental relationship between supervisor and subordinate and will be familiar to anyone who has worked in a professional setting. The LGM explains that leaders should set expectations and provide inspiration to their subordinates, offer instruction on the task at hand, give feedback after the subordinate executes the task, and then provide time for the subordinate to reflect on their own performance. The entire process repeats almost continuously, leading to individual growth.

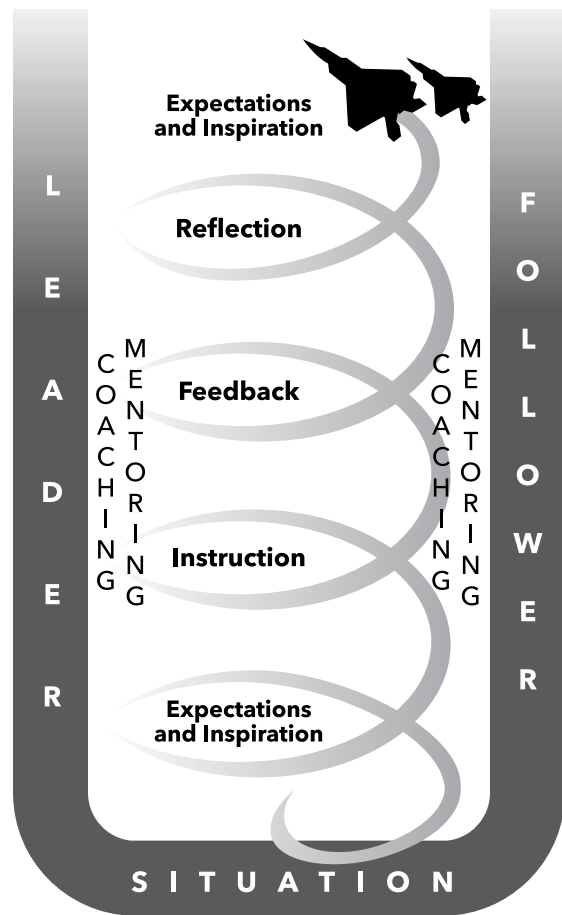


Figure 5: Leadership Growth Model

Though it provides much more detail, the Leader of Character Framework's Own-Engage-Practice model reflects the LGM in many ways. Convincing a cadet to own—or commit—to developing themselves as leaders of character is the concrete purpose of the initial expectation-setting and inspiration stage of the LGM. Instruction, feedback, and reflection all represent the engage portion of developing competence in living honorably. Finally, the iterative nature of the LGM is directly related to the practice idea of building confidence in one's own ability to make proper moral decisions.

*Figure 6: Integration of Leader of Character Framework and the Officer Development System.*

<b>USAF Core Value: Integrity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LoC Framework: <b>Lives Honorably</b></li> <li>• ODS PITO Level: <b>Personal</b></li> </ul>	<b>USAF Core Value: Service</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LoC Framework: <b>Lift Others</b></li> <li>• ODS PITO Level: <b>Interpersonal &amp; Team</b></li> </ul>	<b>USAF Core Value: Excellence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LoC Framework: <b>Elevates Performance</b></li> <li>• ODS PITO Level: <b>Organizational</b></li> </ul>
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Finally, the third and last ODS process tool is simply a set of nine Guiding Principles (GPs), largely provided to support faculty and staff who create learning experiences for cadets (Appendix, Figure 5). GPs are the rules of engagement for officer development and include directions such as “align the USAFA experience with accepted USAF practices” and “use goal-oriented and standards-based approaches to build skill-set expertise.” Again, elements of the Leader of Character Framework appear in the GPs, the latter of which were established almost 10 years before the publication of the Leader of Character Framework. GP number 2 states “emphasize cadet ownership and accountability for their own development.” Clearly this reflects the “Own” of the Own-Engage-Practice model. GP number 4 directs us to “establish a common core of experiences and multiple paths to similar outcomes,” which essentially describes the “Engage” phase from the Conceptual Framework. Finally, GP number 7 charges the staff member to appreciate that cadets develop at different speeds, meaning that some will need more “Practice” than others, as mentioned above in the development discussion.

The ODS provides the USAF Academy with a philosophical foundation, a clear target of specific

competencies and outcomes, and a set of three tools to reach those targets. It is linked closely to the Leader of Character Framework, and the two documents are synergistic. They are both about relationships and interconnectedness. They serve as guides for both individuals being developed as leaders of character as well as for those who we might consider to be leader developers. They are both strongly grounded in the Air Force Core Values. And, they both support the USAF Academy mission (Figure 6).

There are, however, several major differences between the two documents. The Leader of Character Framework is a model that can apply to any context and be successful with minimal editing. Substitute Apple or IBM core values for the Air Force core values in the “Lives Honorably” definition, and the Leader of Character Framework could work anywhere. The ODS on the other hand specifically targets developing leaders who will serve in a specific context, as USAF officers. The foundation section of the document makes this particularly clear.

Another difference is that the Leader of Character Framework is noticeably a scholarly document. Several years of focused research went into its development,

and its extensive bibliography clearly communicates this academic grounding. On the surface, the ODS pamphlet does not appear to be an academically-driven document, but it did enjoy contributions from a team of 30 USAFA senior leaders and civilian academics (Price, 2004). Finally, the ODS remains the “common education and training philosophy across the academy” (Enger et. al., 2010, p. 3). In other words, the ODS is USAFA’s official doctrine for leader development. The Leader of Character Framework—though taught in the academic and military training curriculum to cadets, and to faculty and staff in professional development workshops—is not. Perhaps it is time to make it so. One possibility is to set the Leader of Character Framework as the overarching model for leader development with all the other models and systems as ways of implementing that framework. We believe that all of these models can work in concert to ensure effective programs and experiences for cadets.

### Leader Developers

So why does USAFA think developing leaders of character is so important and how can each of us contribute? These are important questions to consider. First, we have seen the positive difference that leaders of character can make in their organizations. When leaders live honorably, the people in their organizations trust them and rely on them to do what they say they will do and to make decisions that are consistent with the needs of the organization’s stakeholders. When leaders lift others, they are able to bring out the best in their subordinates and ensure that each individual is challenged and given opportunities to thrive in their environment. When leaders elevate performance, they are able to come into an organization and immediately look for ways to make the organization better and focus organization members on how they can each contribute to increasing the organization’s success.

Overall, leaders of character make their organizations better — from a performance perspective, from a consistency perspective, and from an overall quality of work environment perspective. This is what the Air Force and Space Force need from their leaders, and it is why we put so much emphasis on it at USAFA.

In terms of how developers can help, the most important thing to do is to be a leader of character yourself and model it to cadets. Currently, USAFA, our country, and the world are in the throes of a global pandemic. As USAFA has navigated these uncharted waters, there have been examples of high character leadership at every echelon. Senior leaders have been very transparent about the fact that the “right” decision is not always clear and that they are striving to do what is right, but mistakes may be made. There have been individual academic advisors and cadets who have reached out to others who were struggling with unique circumstances, ensuring they got the help they needed to improve their situations. There have been faculty and staff members who have worked together to take the in residence-based curriculum and other cadet experiences online in an effort to continue operations at USAFA. These collaborations have helped to make the transition smoother and ensured that cadets still have the same opportunities to develop as leaders of character. It has been a great example of the important roles that leaders of character play in making the organization successful and allowing members to thrive.

Many who are reading this have probably been involved in the efforts described above and have been practicing high character leadership already. If, for some reason, you don’t think you are a critical part of the effort to develop cadets as leaders of character, let us be clear...you are! For those who are a member of the permanent party faculty or staff at USAFA then,

first and foremost, you are a developer of leaders of character. For those in other parts of USAFA working on leader development, you are as well. No matter where you work or what your duty title is, this should be the number one priority. It can happen anywhere: in the classroom, on the athletic fields, in the dining facility, or at the commissary. Day-to-day life is filled with opportunities to instill character in those around us. It is done by modeling the correct behavior, by making corrections when we see discrepancies, and by talking about the importance of character in everyday conversations. Character is about doing the right thing in every situation (living honorably), treating people with dignity and respect (lifting others), and taking responsibility for our role in the organization (elevating performance). Each one of us has a duty to do these things ourselves and also to teach them to others, in particular officer candidates (cadets).

If we are to successfully accomplish this mission of developing leaders of character, it cannot fall only to certain designated positions at USAFA. Every member of the staff at the USAFA needs to get involved and help with this mission. Cadets need to hear a unified message from everyone with whom they come in contact. Inconsistent messages can be confusing and frustrating. They make people wonder what is truly important. It is critical that every member of the USAFA team plays their role in accomplishing the mission...developing leaders of character. No matter where you work - airfield, the medical clinic, gym, etc., each one of us has the ability and the responsibility to develop character in these future leaders of our Air Force, Space Force, and our nation.

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## Appendix: Leadership Development Figures

Figure 1: *Owning Your Identity*

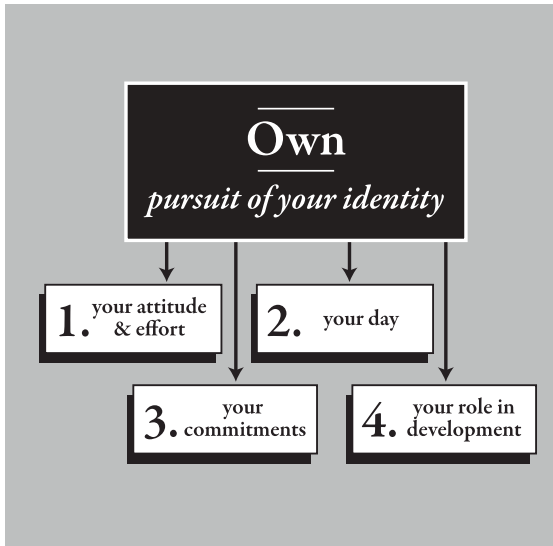


Figure 3: *Practice*

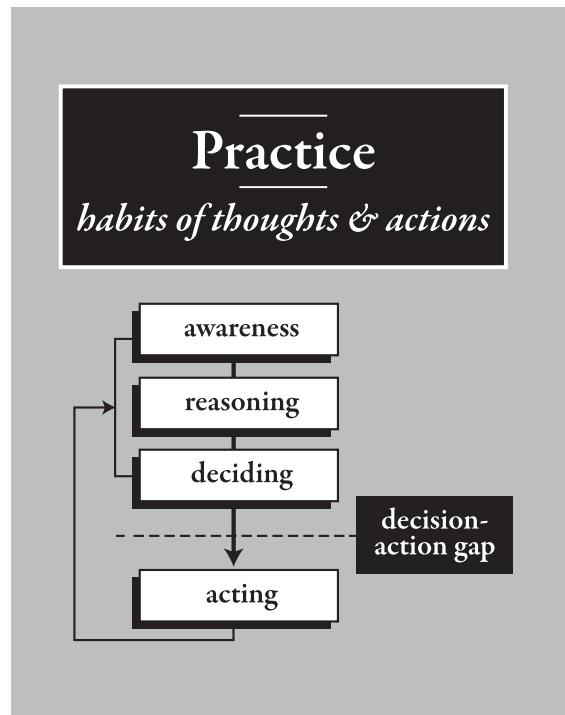
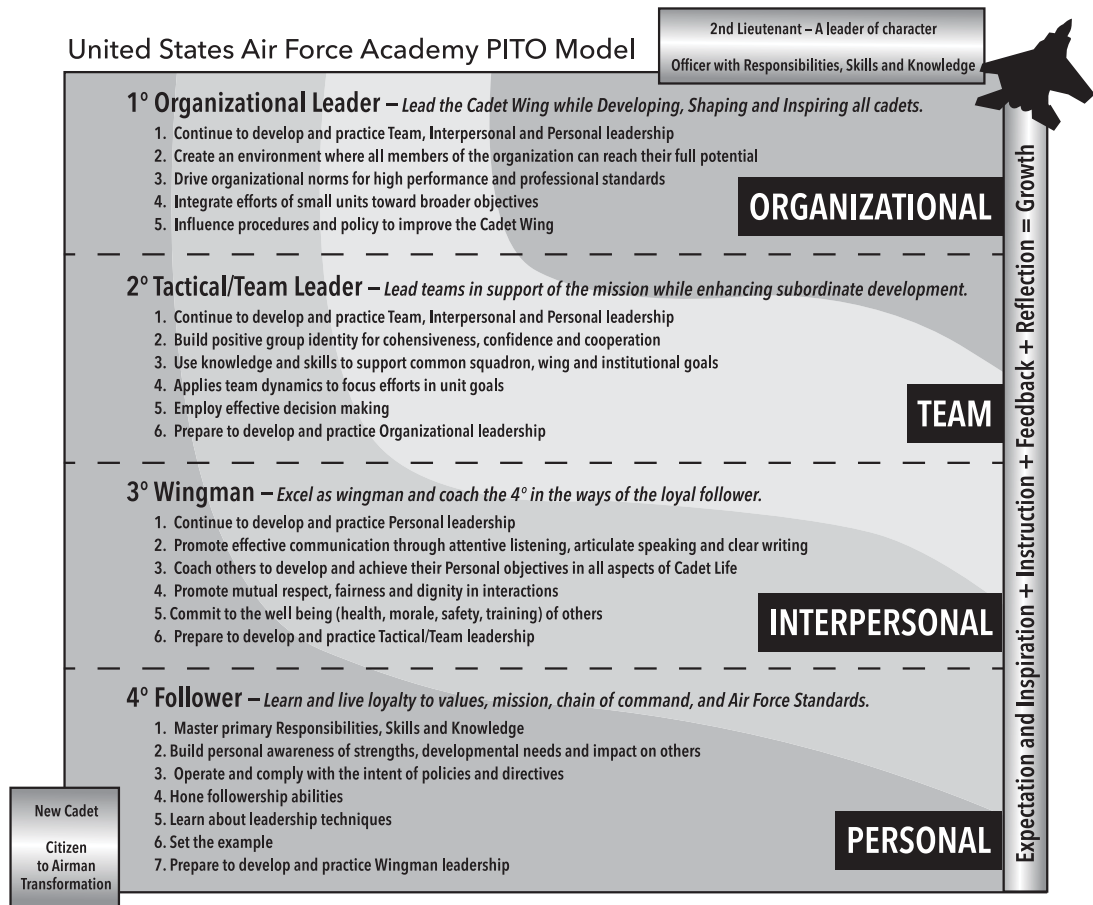


Figure 2: *Engaging in Purposeful Experiences*





Figure 4: USAFA PITO Model





*Figure 5: Guiding Principles*

- 1) Align the USAFA experience with accepted USAF practices.
- 2) Emphasize cadet ownership and accountability for their own development.
- 3) Ensure all leaders and followers gain from each developmental experience, including both successes and failures.
- 4) Establish a common core of experiences and multiple paths to similar outcomes.
- 5) Strike an appropriate balance between quality and quantity of development experiences.
- 6) Create depth of expertise sequentially and progressively based on a cadet's developmental level using the PITO model.
- 7) Couple adequate support with every challenge; tailor every challenge with an appreciation that cadets develop differently and will move through the process at different speeds.
- 8) Use goal-oriented and standards-based approaches to build skill-set expertise.
- 9) Assess the effectiveness of education, training and experiential processes in accordance with the USAFA Institutional Effectiveness Program (IEP).

## DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER COMMITTED TO SERVICE TO OUR NATION

# Leadership Development at all Levels

Steve Trainor, The Google School for Leaders

**Interviewed By: Douglas Lindsay**

**Lindsay:** Could you talk a little bit about your journey and how you got to your current position at The Google School for Leaders?

**Trainor:** One way to share the story is to talk about a turning point or transition that was a significant part of my journey. I spent 30 years in the military, but there was a critical point in my career where my focus and direction changed dramatically, which ultimately led me to my current role. My early background was as a helicopter pilot in the Navy where I had a fairly typical operational background. The turning point for me was mid-career, where for the first time I realized that I really had to think about what I was doing and what was most important for me. For most of us in the military, we don't have to think a lot about what we are doing in a larger context of our career and development because our career paths and professions have been pretty well defined. But this was one of those times where I really took some time and reflected on it.

In this case, I needed to decide between two very desirable and different futures. I was fortunate enough to be selected for operational helicopter command, and I was presented with the opportunity to change career paths and go into a leader development role as the first Permanent Professor of Leadership at the Naval Academy.

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**Steve Trainor** is responsible for building a world-class leadership faculty and scaling opportunities for leader development in The Google School for Leaders. He has over 30 years of Active Duty military service as a Navy pilot, executive human resources manager and as the U.S. Naval Academy's Director of Leadership Education and Development, and first Permanent Military Professor of Leadership. An ICF-certified executive coach with extensive leadership and organizational consulting experience, Trainor graduated from the Naval Academy and received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Maryland, College Park a Masters of Arts in International Affairs from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and a Masters of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, PA.

That was deeply personal for me because flying was something that I had done for 15 years and operational command is something I'd aspired to. However, there was something inside of me that helped me decide that my real purpose was waiting on this other pathway. A big lesson for me through that experience was not only saying what I was going to do, but deciding what I was not going to do, what path I was choosing to leave behind. The choice between two valuable things is one of the most difficult things we must do in our lives. The reflection on why something is more important than another is the core of personal leadership.

Deep down inside there was always something that was drawn to growth, learning, and development. So, I pursued the path to the Naval Academy where I worked in leader development ultimately becoming a Department Chair and Division Director for Leadership Education and Development.

Leaving behind my career in Naval Aviation, which was so much a part of me and framed my thinking about leadership in order to pursue something of an unknown path, but where I felt my purpose lay has ultimately led me to my current role. Since retiring from the military, I have worked in leader development for business executives. I do that internally at Google now as a leadership coach and a facilitator of executive development programs. However, it was that moment in time, as a mid-career officer professional, where I had to decide what was most important to me and what I needed to leave behind.

**Lindsay:** That's a great point because people often talk about a decision point, but not the point you highlight about what they are going to leave behind. That is a critical point because it is not just about pivoting to something new and doing more. What you are talking

about is a bit of a different mental model and perhaps a change in your identity and how you see yourself.

**Trainor:** That is very true. Each service has its own career management or talent professional and I remember having a conversation with them. They said, "Okay Trainor, only one good deal per career. You have to choose." The challenge was that they were both things that were of great value to me. Being a pilot and operational leadership is something that I had been striving for the first half of my career. Yet, there was this other thing inside of me, drawing me to this other path of leader development. Added to the challenge was that I didn't know what the future career potential would be because it was something pretty new in the Navy at the time. But, I do remember something that a mentor shared with me. He said there are lots of opportunities for leadership roles in the military, and you move in and out of those over time. However, one way to frame this differently is that I could have an impact on the system of leader development, thereby impacting generations of leaders instead of a moment in time or discreet place. We need both of those things, but they are different mindsets.

**Lindsay:** They are both important, but for vastly different reasons. Both involve investments in people, but the way you do that and the touchpoints are different. You can impact the system itself which can, in turn, impact the entire enterprise, but it may not have the publicity or visibility behind it that a formal leadership role would have.

**Trainor:** That is correct. For me, it was a growth opportunity because it helped me and challenged me from a learning standpoint. Challenged me to think differently about not only leadership, but how I could be in that place. Going back to graduate school as a

parent of three young kids in the middle of your life was both a learning challenge and a personal stretch opportunity for me to grow in different ways.

**Lindsay:** Based on your background, you also had some context to apply that which you were learning from your operational experiences.

**Trainor:** Yes, having that balance of the operational experience in conjunction with the developmental and theoretical mindset of the academic program is very powerful. But, you don't need to go back to get a PhD to do that. You see many military leaders, and business leaders as well, who are deep students of the profession of leadership. I have been so impressed with the leaders in the business world that I have encountered after retiring from the military who are students of

are standards to how we think about what a leader is and means.

**Trainor:** It may not be to the level of a medical profession where there is licensure, but it still has expectations and duties. It is a higher calling and there are obligations and responsibilities that we haven't called out enough or articulated enough. But, maybe it is time to.

**Lindsay:** One of the things that makes me think about is a big part of being part of a profession, like the military or the medical field, is service back to the larger community of the profession. If you think about that with respect to the field of leadership, it is interesting to think about what service back to the larger leadership community would be?

*...this gets to the notion of character, your work is always going to be in service of something. The challenge is, what is that something? Do you know it? Because, if you don't know it, you will still be in service of something.*

leadership as well as practitioners. I believe there is a profession of leadership. Leaders see themselves as having these responsibilities to the larger system of life and society.

**Lindsay:** I agree and Barbara Kellerman has spoken on that idea as well. Not just the system of leadership, but also how we need to start thinking about it. I think there is power in framing leadership beyond the position or event, but something that we aspire to, that we opt into, that we continue to learn and there

**Trainor:** I definitely agree. And this gets to the notion of character, your work is always going to be in service of something. The challenge is, what is that something? Do you know it? Because, if you don't know it, you will still be in service of something. You might not like it or you may not be aware of what you are in service to.

Unfortunately, I think that is where a lot of organizations find themselves caught in a position where leaders are in a bind of their duties. A lot of companies today are making declarations that there is a new business compact out there. It sounds good and maybe a crisis like we are facing now causes people to see the need for a higher level of responsibility that cuts across the confines of an organizational structure.

**Lindsay:** That makes sense, because we know that development doesn't always occur when you are in a

comfortable environment. Sometimes those external forcing functions can get us to a point where we think about that more. It challenges us to look at things in new ways, much like you mentioned earlier where you were forced to look at things in new ways at the midpoint of your career. Any regrets, by the way, about the choice that you made?

**Trainor:** Never had a regret. There was uncertainty at different times, but I think that uncertainty and complexity are things that are evident in the system at times more than others. Uncertainty and complexity have always been a part of the human system and condition. I feel like that was part of changing a pathway. You have to work on that but I never regretted it. One of the things that I value most about it is the learning journey for myself. We don't spend a lot of time thinking about our career and our future and how we actively engage in it. Likewise, we don't spend a lot of time in reflection and looking back to see how we were shaped and how we were changed over time. So, we keep this mental model of being a fully formed human being adult like that is it. That is who I am. But, being able to look back and see the change that has taken place. Having a big transition that I had, made it more manifest, but all of us are experiencing these changes across our lives but we aren't necessarily seeing it for what it is worth. By not seeing that, it is harder for us to see how we might be different in the future.

**Lindsay:** We also aren't really good at giving people that opportunity and time for reflection. In addition, when we actually do take the time to reflect, it is typically because something bad happened and we are going to take a pause. But, what you are talking about is looking at reflection from the positive aspect and looking back on decisions that were made that were good and how that helped to shape where we are at.

**Trainor:** I can see that in my own experience. All of the change and growth that has happened. Some of it was a result of pain and stress. But, being able to take those experiences for what they were and look back and see what is different now, that in itself is part of human growth. We have the capacity to keep growing but unfortunately, we often get stuck for a lot of reasons. The coaching work that I do has helped me understand that in myself and in other leaders. There are many things that can hold us in place, our careers, our communities, even our identities. While those things help ground us, we also need the ability to change so we can achieve our highest potential.

**Lindsay:** That point about coaching is an important one. I don't think everyone realizes the power of coaching and what that can bring to the developmental dynamic. Thinking about that as a developmental tool, especially at the executive level, it is so important for people to have that opportunity to talk through and process those experiences in an intentional way.

**Trainor:** It is. What has been surprising to me as I work in this space, is how powerful coaching is. Even for senior leaders who have vast expertise and experiences, there are many reasons why even they aren't seeing or doing things that can help them be more effective. Some of it is structural, cultural, and individual, that prevents them from seeing what is possible or what other alternatives there are. Having someone for a leader to reflect with...to share with...to test and challenge with, like a coach, is a benefit that we are realizing more today. However, I feel strongly that we are engaging coaching way too late and too little for the system effects that we want to have. It's almost, in many cases, that coaching is seen as an intervention and applied way too late. I feel this is particularly the case in the military and there's a real need to create more of a cultural demand

for coaching early on in the career of leaders, we just don't do it. Admittedly, there are bandwidth issues and it is a huge cost, but there are ways to bring a coaching culture into an organization earlier and I think that is desperately needed.

**Lindsay:** The data supports that as well. If we look at leader failure, rates can be pretty high especially in certain domains. Others have argued, that the cost associated with doing interventions like coaching may seem programmatically like a big ticket, but if you think about the impact and cost of a mid or senior leader who fails, that isn't inconsequential either. Coaching is certainly important at the senior levels, but the data shows it is effective at mid and lower levels as well.

**Trainor:** Exactly. The work environment is such that the junior and mid-level leaders are making decisions and are faced with cases and situations that ripple throughout the organization that have strategic implications. Empowering them to be able to think about, reflect on, and get feedback in ways that are powerful, strengthens the bottom line of whatever organization it is. The case can be made that it is well worth the investment.

**Lindsay:** I agree. Thank you for sharing a bit about your journey and how you got to where you are today. Can you explain a little about what you do at The Google School for Leaders?

**Trainor:** The basic work that I do is in the facilitation of executive learning and coaching with senior leaders at Google. As Head of Faculty Development, I am responsible for the development of the larger community of facilitators who work with leaders at Google. This work is part of the learning and development center of expertise called People Development. Just as in

the military, business organizations today have global impact. The responsibility that these leaders have is not just for their company, but also for the impact of that company. That impact can be immense.

The thing that I feel is most important in executive development is growth and maturity - be it for leaders in the military or virtually any other industry. In earlier times, leader development was focused on what you would hear called horizontal development. It was building skills, capabilities and competencies to help a leader be more effective in a role or function. Usually that would support a specific role at a particular level in a company. That approach to leader development has dominated for the last few decades. While skills development will always be important for leaders, we are also focused on vertical development. What we are talking about with vertical development is not just moving up in the organization functionally. It is the developmental maturity of leaders. This is something that is needed in every organization today. Leaders need to both expand the range of competency and skills, while also increasing the capacity to handle things like complexity and leading in ambiguous and uncertain times. If you think of a leader as a container of capabilities, it is really about expanding the size of the container so that a leader has a greater depth and breadth of effectiveness. It is not merely adding new skills or behaviors. It is about being able to see more broadly. To be able to think further into the future. To be able to even look at oneself objectively and learn. Ultimately, developmental maturity offers leaders a different way of thinking and seeing. That is what many companies focus on today, increasing the capacity of leaders to hold today's more complex operating context.

One challenge leaders face is to be laser focused on certain things at the expense of other things that they

ought to be able to see and understand. There's a need or demand for more agile perspectives and mindset shifts around what a leader actually does in an organization. Which leads itself into what kind of skills and behaviors a leader needs to have. So, they are interrelated, but they are not the same thing. We are doing much more vertical development today than we have before.

**Lindsay:** That's an interesting point about capacity. What we sometimes see with emerging leaders is when they look at a more senior leader, they tend to pay attention to particular skills and behaviors. The problem is that they may not know how to develop those particular skills or may not feel like they can emulate the skills of that leader, for whatever reason. However, by focusing on increasing leader capacity, it is something that can be developed by all leaders.

**Trainor:** Exactly. Challenges are part of the growing experience. It sometimes means that you need to stop doing things the way you did them in order to hold something differently. For example, it may mean you need to stop relating to your direct reports the way you have been in order to look differently at the organization. As Ronald Heifetz talks about, it is having an adaptive mindset to the world. In doing so, you are actually freeing up mind share for yourself to focus on the highest, best use of your abilities and allowing the folks who work with, for and around you to do the things that they can uniquely do as well. That works well in any kind of structure. Whether it is a flat organization or one that is hierarchical, leaders can adapt that mindset that they need to expand their capacity to hold these bigger ideas and challenges to see across the organization. Who

would have imagined in January that we would be doing things the way we are today? Organizations and leaders are adapting, but coming out of this is the real challenge in many respects. How will this change organizations? Industries are being disrupted. Leaders who can't hold this bigger space are going to have a hard time coping with this longer term and newer environment.

**Lindsay:** One of the things that is becoming evident for many in light of current events, and leadership practitioners have known this for a while, is that it is important to understand leadership capacity at all levels because we are seeing the workforce dispersed and working in new ways. In many respects, junior leaders are being put into leadership situations and experiencing challenges that historically have been seen at the more senior levels. This is having the impact of causing

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organizations to look down into the organizations and consider what we can do developmentally at all levels.

**Trainor:** We always need capabilities and competencies to do the job, but the jobs are changing all the time. So,



we need the capacity to think about what else we could do and what else can we think about. We often save that kind of work for an offsite where we set aside time for strategic planning or visioning. Perspective taking and reflection were ancillary activities that we did outside of work. However, that thinking also needs to be inward in our daily lives. Perspective, awareness and reflection needs to occur up, down, and across the organization. General (ret) Charles Krulak (USMC) talked about this many years ago with his notion of the strategic corporal having an outsized impact on outcomes. Today, across all organizations leaders at lower levels make decisions with strategic implications and consequences. That has been made manifest across all of our organizations now. Whether you see it in tech, retail, or the military, leaders must shift how they think and how they see their role and the value they bring to the organization.

**Lindsay:** With that in mind and trying to get people to think about capacity, when you are coaching and doing your developmental work, how do you break through to a leader about that? They obviously wouldn't be in a leadership position in an organization as successful as yours without some prior success. How do you break through to them about that broad thought of capacity and the need to keep learning?

**Trainor:** Most of the leaders that I have interacted with have at least some sense that they need more from a developmental standpoint. So, I'd say that humility is a key activator of greater leadership capacity. Part of that is because there is a constant tension that exists between the normal churn of an organization and what a leader is doing. Self-aware leaders have an idea of what they want more of and maybe less of where they feel the tension. Regardless, if you talk to any leader in any organization, within a matter of a few minutes you will likely hear a sense of what tensions they are feeling.

I would argue that exists for leaders at all levels of the organization. There is this felt sense of needing to do more or do something different. It is a matter of helping them make sense of the tension that they are feeling and from that, helping them to see what that is. Then, to help them make sense of ways that they might be able to release or reorient some of that. So, it is a matter of finding those pain points for leaders. Those points of tension can be learning and development opportunities. Many people just try to power through and manage it and in some organizations, it is frowned upon to expose any of those pains or tensions. However, it takes a toll on us. I'm encouraged by all of the work that is emerging in neuroscience and showing the way that a lot of these tensions leaders experience can be understood through what is occurring within our own systems. We are learning both how that is actually having a toll on us and how that impacts our ability to be as effective as we could.

**Lindsay:** What you highlight is the need for coaching. Being able to sit someone down and walk them through that. Just because leaders aren't talking about it doesn't mean that they don't have tension or that it isn't impacting them. Leadership has a cost on the individual.

**Trainor:** It does. Particularly in the military, we spend a tremendous amount of time training which in part is what makes it so amazing. It enables us to come together in teams, to practice, challenge and test one another. At the same time, I think we need to think about the training and care of the whole person in that space. For example, it is readily apparent when someone physically breaks down on a march. We can actually see the result of that but not the other levels of us as people - the emotional, mental, and spiritual side of things. We have to consider all of these elements of person and their

development and care if we want to be at the top of our game. We do it to a certain extent in the military, but we don't do it for all of those levels. We don't consider all of those things fully. We have kind of touched the top and bottom of that with the physical and spiritual sides because they are socially and culturally there but the emotional and mental side, we haven't spent as much time. I think we are starting to understand how important they are after all we have learned over the last couple of decades of conflict for our armed forces. That holds true in the business world as well. You can only be "on" so much. I think in this remote and virtual world we are in right now is magnifying these challenges because there is no escape from the work. It can go 24/7 depending on your circumstances. Some people are busier than they ever have been and some people are less busy, but all of those things are taking a toll on people emotionally and mentally.

**Lindsay:** It seems to me that, at least in your organization, the fact that they have a school for leaders and that they are thinking about the development of their leaders, is a recognition of that and the value in developing leaders. It seems like it is valued in your organization.

**Trainor:** Yes, it is. It really is amazing. I think there are models of this focus in other organizations like General Electric with its Crotonville Leadership Institute and other companies that have a long history of focusing on leaders and leadership. What is important, I think, is to look at the focus of organizations in a time of crisis, like right now. Is the focus still on helping and supporting leaders to grow in this time of challenge? In many respects, it is a defining point for an organization and it will be a cultural marker of an organization that makes it through this time. How we survived together and what leaders did. How we all hung together and what

was the message? What did we focus on and how did we solve the problems? Those are all things that can be a narrative of leadership.

I feel like what we are doing and what other companies can be doing right now in terms of investing in leadership and helping leaders to grow in this challenge is probably one of the most important things a company can do for future growth and success. Organizations must be able to deal in the present moment and take care of the things that are most dangerous and emergent to us in the immediate moment, but we also have to think about the uncertainty of the future as well. Again, it is one of those things - those tensions that leaders need to be able to hold at the same time. I recall a research report that talked about how we don't really multitask, we cycle between tasks. This idea of holding both of those things means that you aren't doing both of those things at the same time but you have the capacity to hold both of those things. Essentially, the ability to be in the current moment and the future and the tension between both. There are all of these kinds of tensions. Leader must be able to hold them both, but that doesn't mean they are occupying the mind at the same moment in time, but a leader can do both of those things.

**Lindsay:** Any parting advice that you would be willing to share?

**Trainor:** No one imagined that we would be doing this - living in a pandemic and an economic crisis. I think for me, it just brings home the idea that leaders and those who work with leaders have to be sensitive to the surrounding environment, they should spend as much time as possible thinking about the context and how leaders are experiencing it, so we can best support their development. This important prep work will help leaders be more prepared when that moment of

challenge comes. I think it has a direct relationship to the building of character as well. If you go back to the ancient Greeks, they said that you have to practice this and work at it in whatever way possible so that when you are faced with this new challenge or unforeseen set of circumstances, you are ready for it. I think that is really the connection point for me between leadership and character. In other words, leaders are expected to step into this place of responsibility and immense challenge and be ready to act. How are you preparing yourself and the leaders around you for the choice or decision that you never expected having to make? That's where we need to be focused next.

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DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER  
COMMITTED TO SERVICE TO OUR NATION

# Character and Ethical Judgement Among Junior Army Officers

David Walker, University of Alabama

“The military virtues are not in a class apart; ‘they are virtues which are virtues in every walk of life ... none the less virtues for being jewels set in blood and iron.’ They include such qualities as courage, fortitude and loyalty. What is important about such qualities as these ...is that they acquire in the military context, in addition to their moral significance, a functional significance as well.”

(Hackett, 1986, p. 2).

## Introduction

The British armed forces, and others like them, are unique from other organizations due to their relationship to the state, incomparable roles, and for balancing institutional and professional practices (Walker, 2018). Institutional practices tend toward hierarchical conformity and environments that are closed off from external influence (e.g., initial military training and operational tours; Goffman, 1968), whereas professional practices are commonly associated with individual autonomy based on shared knowledge and competence (Nuciari, 2006). Taken together, we may understand the military as a precarious professional practice for involving ongoing interplay between both institutional and professional processes, both of which are necessary for ethical military effectiveness. The context of a precarious professional military practice is important for understanding the development of moral character because adherence to traditions, habits and group requirements (institutional) need to coexist with individual capacity for singular ethical judgements and actions (professional). Fortunately, these often do coincide, but any

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effective military force also requires individuals to stand up for an ethical good when a unit or group is functioning in morally poor ways. It seems possible that this precariousness is advantageous for military organizations and achieves the best from both worlds, so to speak. For example, institutional tendencies toward loyalty are crucial for military effectiveness, but in excess can be damaging. The inherent jeopardy of fostering high levels of military loyalty may be balanced by cultivating individual (professional) character able to stand up for an ethical good, even in opposition to local practices. Judging when the time is right for such actions and having the character to carry this out, however, requires wisdom that takes time and practice to develop.

Of course, armed forces have been expecting individuals to stand up for ethical goods for years, but this can be a hazardous career-threatening strategy needing caution if it is in opposition to the majority.

***Identifying when an ethical good is at stake in a specific military or military-related situation - either in line with the military community or in opposition to it - is easier than arriving at a full and balanced assessment incorporating both ethical and military imperatives specific to the presenting circumstance and context.***

It is not so much that individuals should stand up for an ethical good more often, although that is probably the case, but rather that there may be good reasons why individual agency ought to be suppressed in favor of traditional ways of operating that is not yet understood

by a junior leader still developing their unrefined ethical judgement. Identifying when an ethical good is at stake in a specific military or military-related situation - either in line with the military community or in opposition to it - is easier than arriving at a full and balanced assessment incorporating both ethical and military imperatives specific to the presenting circumstance and context. Only the latter amounts to practical wisdom (cf. Carr, 2018) and reaching this advanced level of professional practical wisdom requires both practiced military knowledge and skill, as well as ethical insight - a combination possibly unavailable to many novice officers. A junior officer may assess a situation naively and make a judgement that with the benefit of military (and ethical) experience they would not make. In the military context therefore, ethical judgement needs to be accompanied by practiced military knowledge and skill, and this professional practical wisdom or *phronesis* presupposes good character.

*Phronesis*, or practical wisdom, is an intellectual overarching virtue involving the cultivation of good and appropriate desires, matched by refined reasoning capable of deliberating between conflicting demands or virtues in particular situations (Kristjánsson, 2015). It requires practiced ability to interpret unfolding events and incorporates knowing oneself accurately and unflinchingly (e.g., strengths, weaknesses and tendencies) as necessary knowledge in deciding responses. Building on character, practical wisdom incorporates advanced ethical deliberation and energetic delivery of decisions. A person with *phronesis* can anticipate the impact of their actions and decisions and be clear about rightful aims. They are also capable of completing actions toward those goals. The incorporation of learning into one's character is a

key feature of phronesis involving ongoing openness to new learning.

The special circumstances of military (precarious) professional practices, together with unique and often extreme roles, places inimitable demands on the character of serving personnel in ways different from other professions that do not have close ties to the state or that do not require members to operate in isolation from ordinary civilian life for extended periods such as during operational tours. In what follows, I discuss character and ethical judgement among junior British Army officers. This is because moral character is ever more important for military personnel in the context of modern warfare, especially among leaders. The discussion is underpinned by a research study that investigated ethical judgement and character among 242 male and female junior British Army officers from 2015 to 2017. The officers were in three groups based on career stage: officer cadets at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, lieutenants and junior captains with 1-5 years' service (*junior junior officers*) and senior captains and a few junior majors with 6-10 years' service (*senior junior officers*), all attending career relevant courses. The officers belonged to a variety of roles, units, and regiments from across the British Army. Twelve different branches of Army service were represented. The research was part of a wider endeavor focused on investigating virtues in the professions at the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom (UK). The aim of the current article is to draw out and expand on key findings from this original research in ways accessible to military practitioners.<sup>1</sup>

1 For those interested in the detail and methods of the original research, they are available in a report and a forthcoming peer reviewed article in the *Journal of Military Ethics* (Arthur, Walker, & Thoma, 2018; Walker, Thoma, & Arthur, 2020 forthcoming).

As relatively youthful organizations, the armed forces need regularly to train and develop new leaders. Officer entrants, who come from a rapidly changing society, are joining military forces that themselves have undergone multiple changes in recent times involving in the UK context, changing roles, downsizing, a revolution in military affairs (Shaw, 2005), as well as increased occurrences of asymmetric warfare and terrorism. Military officers are key upholders of ethical and professional standards, and the underpinning research for this article focuses on a generation of leaders who at the time of the research were junior Army officers, some of whom may eventually become senior Army leaders. Officers in these ranks represent approximately 50% of the total British Army officer population. (Ministry of Defence UK, 2014).

### Character and Ethical Judgement

In Aristotelian virtue ethics philosophy, character is fundamental for proper moral functioning. It involves more than performing one's job. Moral character encompasses the evaluable, reason-responsive and educable sub-set of human personality, and the virtues are considered integral to that. This involves stable states of character concerned with morally admirable agency (Kristjánsson, 2013). All aspects of the person are attended such as perception, sensitivity, reasoning, and action; and so good moral character also involves acting for the right reasons. This conception of moral character aligns desired military character which though focused on values (e.g., British Army Values (Army, 2020)) is really cultivating in military personnel, character capable of excellence from dispositional states for right reasons and allied with virtue, whether that is integrity, courage, or both and more. Virtue ethical treatment of character matches aspirational moral approaches expecting individuals

to seek character excellence beyond military roles. Focusing on character for military roles alone would involve taking a functional perspective where ethical standards are valued only to the extent they align military purposes (cf. French, 2005). This is not a view progressed in this article. It is also likely that young people are selected for service as Army officers in the first place because they have good general character, which is then further cultivated for military roles, but are not reduced to those roles either in kind or scope.

Ethical judgement is a component of aspirational Army character and leadership. Moral psychologist, Lawrence Kohlberg classically afforded dominance to moral judgement and reasoning for moral agency, and neo-Kohlbergian's have since broadened this emphasis to include three more components (e.g., sensitivity, motivation and action) in the four component model (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999; Rest, Narvaez, Thoma, & Bebeau, 2000). This model has proved popular for researchers of the professions. In the research study underpinning the current article, an unlikely theoretical alliance was formed between neo-Kohlbergian expertise including ethical judgement assessment, and virtue ethics conceptions of character. This involved prioritizing virtue, or intermediate concepts in neo-Kohlbergian language, as essential to moral character of which judgement is an integral component. After extensive measure development, a moral dilemma survey was adjusted for the UK context called the Army Intermediate Concept Measure (AICM)<sup>2</sup>. Using AICM, participating officers read four military dilemmas and were asked to select from a list of options what the protagonist in each dilemma should do (action) and why (reason). AICM compares participant responses to judgements made by an expert military panel. As such, AICM is an

objective assessment of the application of virtue to realistic military scenarios. However, the measure is not designed to expect a single correct response to each dilemma because the expert panel deemed multiple option choices as either acceptable, unacceptable, or neutral. This means that, for example, two participants can score equally well by making quite different choices if those choices are labelled as acceptable in the AICM key. Dilemma 1 involves an injured local Somalian and requires a decision about responding to the injured man who is surrounded by a volatile crowd. Dilemma 2 targets torture/aggressive methods and requires a decision about how to respond to the capture of two soldiers. Dilemma 3 involves a curfew and a river in Iraq. It concerns soldiers' use of non-authorized tactics and requires a response to inquiries from the Army chain of command about this. Dilemma 4 involves fraternization and requires a response to a fellow male officer and friend who is fraternizing with a female soldier contrary to Army rules. Forty of the officers were also interviewed about character and British Army values.

### Summary and Discussion of Key Findings

Overall, participants responded well to the dilemmas, matching the expert panel 65% of the time. They tended to discern what should be done (actions) slightly better than why (justifications). As part of moral development, deciding how to act in situations is less advanced than reasoning why. This makes sense because through socialization we might learn how and what to do by following norms, and by absorbing anticipated negative and positive responses from important others; whereas the capacity to explain and justify why certain actions are needed is a higher-level capacity. In fact, Howard Curzer (2012) suggests that knowing "why" may be the defining feature of practical wisdom (phronesis). According to this view,

<sup>2</sup> This was based on a version created by Turner (2008) for the USA context – United States Military Academy at West Point in particular.



practical wisdom builds on states of character that were cultivated in a more rudimentary or habituated form. Practical wisdom, as an overarching intellectual virtue, involves advanced levels of discernment, capable of objectively attending multiple features of an ethical and military situation.

Of course, even junior Army officers probably have relatively advanced ethical agency. After all, such officers have: (a) been successful in a rigorous entry selection process, (b) undergone rigorous training and development, including ethics, and (c) occupy challenging leadership positions in a profession that emphasizes character. That the officers had close matching scores for reasoning and action may be taken as a sign of well-developed moral agency.

Unlike other professions, gender had minimal influence on the officers' ethical judgements. Female officers performed only slightly better with some minor gender differences for the kinds of choices made. For example, female officers were more likely to protect their soldiers when this was not a good choice, and male officers were more prone to distraction from doing the right thing by loyalty to a friend. However, on average and regardless of gender, officers did well to avoid unsuitable aggressive methods and uphold truth under pressure, but were more likely to struggle negotiating diversion from a non-urgent mission for a humanitarian rescue or maintaining the Army fraternization policy.

Although some poor choices were found across the sample, a few individuals performed badly across the entire measure. Poor selections signalled areas for improvement for both action and justification

choices. For action choices, this included problems of indecision, taking too much risk, emphasising the mission too much, using excessive force, insufficient regard for the truth, and failing to act. For justification choices, poor responses involved allowing rules and authority to dominate, undervaluing life, avoiding risk, prioritising utility, dehumanizing the enemy, emphasizing loyalty to soldiers, prioritising one's own career, self-preservation, following others, and concealing or de-valuing the truth.

An important result for understanding rounded military character is that officer cadets and senior junior officers scored more highly on the measure than junior junior officers. I speculated earlier that since they passed Army selection, officer entrants probably possessed relatively good moral agency and potential.

*...through socialization we might learn how and what to do by following norms, and by absorbing anticipated negative and positive responses from important others; whereas the capacity to explain and justify why certain actions are needed is a higher-level capacity.*

Moreover, the officers had passed their most influential years (childhood) for character development. Taken together, this non-military character development might partly explain why high scoring cadets could recognize the virtues at stake in the dilemmas, often selecting responses aligning with them. Another advantage for this inexperienced group was their presence at the military academy at Sandhurst at the time of taking the survey - a learning environment covering ethical learning. We know too, thanks to

Verweij, Hofhuis and Soeters (2007) that military and civilian differences may be less clear than often thought. After all, as was cited at the start of this article, the virtues are universal (Hackett, 1986), although their application can vary across cultures (Thoma et al., 2019). Similar patterns of response to ethical dilemmas, where most junior and more senior personnel achieve best results, has also been found in other professions (cf. Arthur, Kristjánsson, Cooke, & Brown, 2015).

Senior junior officers differed from the cadets for their substantial Army experience allowing for a combination of Army experience and deep knowledge of Army values (virtues). Unlike cadets, senior junior officers perhaps assessed the dilemmas based on realistic military experience which, counter-intuitively, could make the dilemmas more difficult to negotiate. The dilemmas are written so that participants fill in informational gaps from experience. However, the intermediate group - junior junior officers - appeared to be distracted by military factors. For example, they were often overly mission focused, especially if they belonged to infantry or artillery career fields. Paradoxically, therefore, military knowledge for this junior junior group seems a liability. One interpretation for these results is that senior junior officers showed military phronesis having integrated through experience, theory and practice. By contrast, at entry levels, cadets allowed theory to dominate, whereas junior junior officers often appeared dazed by military practice at the expense of ethical considerations. Perhaps, becoming a commissioned military practitioner in these early years was all-consuming for junior junior officers, especially those in the infantry and artillery.

As mentioned, infantry and artillery officers responded differently to the measure compared to

others. Among infantry and artillery officers, the cadets scored highly, junior junior groups performed poorly, and senior junior officers performed better than junior junior officers. Overall, infantry and artillery officers depressed scores for the entire sample. The nature of infantry and artillery experiences following attendance at Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst may be implicated here.<sup>3</sup>

### Relating Character to Moral Judgement

A broader understanding of character for these junior officers as related to AICM scores is possible by turning to the semi-structured interviews. Themes covered in the interviews included: (a) the officers' belief in Army values, (b) their professional and personal lives, (c) personal qualities and character strengths for an ideal officer, (d) professional challenges, (e) an outstanding challenge that they had faced, (f) pressures or barriers for doing the right moral thing, and (g) their own personal qualities/strengths. The officers were also asked about self-discipline and endless commitment as Army values that were not assessed using moral dilemmas; the other four Army values of courage, integrity, loyalty and respect for others, are incorporated into the dilemmas. By looking at these topic areas among top and bottom AICM scoring groups it was possible to make comparisons. Ten interviews from each group were included.

Portrayals of good character during the interviews stood out for the high scoring group. They responded to questions in aspirational and motivational ways. For

3 I would like to express much gratitude to Professor James Arthur, Director of the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham, UK for valuable contributions to the original research on which this article draws. I would also like to thank Dr. Stephen Thoma, Professor Emeritus at the University of Alabama for his appreciated expertise and major contributions to the original research, including the development of the Army Intermediate Concept Measure.

example, these officers mentioned character and values as reasons for joining the Army, whereas low scorers were more likely to provide mundane responses such as failing to find another job or financial gain, even expressing intention to leave the Army. In discussing “ideal” officers”, high scorers described clusters of personal qualities rather than single ones as for the low group. The aspired “ideal” officer was therefore rounded and balanced. Descriptions of Army challenges for low scorers involved personal annoyances with Army life, compared to high scorers who emphasized barriers for reaching their aims. The high group also fused moral challenges into their interview responses, together with descriptions of lessons learned. Unlike low scorers, high scorers described multiple qualities they were cultivating in themselves and others, including Army values. Crucially, the high group also discussed needing continuously to work on Army values. Although both groups agreed relevance for Army values to all aspects of their lives, high scorers provided details about how this differed by context.

Overall, a strong relationship between good ethical reasoning (high AICM scores) and expanded aspirational character was clear. Specific admirable qualities for this high scoring group are summarized below:

- Responded to questions in aspirational and motivational ways
- Mentioned morality and character when not asked about it
- Described clusters of personal qualities, rather than single ones
- Portrayed an ideal officer as rounded or balanced (low scoring officers often fixated on a specific quality)
- Framed Army challenges as barriers for reaching their work-required aims and also included

moral challenges

- Included detailed descriptions about the lessons they learned from various challenges and experiences

Responses for high scorers seem to suggest intellectual humility, involving much openness to improvement and to new knowledge. If AICM can identify good ethical judgement – and evidence so far suggests it can – then the high scoring sub-group that were interviewed stand out in multiple ways, including the expression of a forceful determination to put their ethically oriented decisions into action. Moreover, when the entirety of each interview for high scoring officers were analyzed, ten very different officers emerged, each indicating novel ways for striving in accord with Army values and moral excellence. Indeed, many of these officers said they had learned to avoid direct emulation of other officers. Instead, they described needing to develop an authentic character and style of leadership of their own. Often, this involved finding workarounds based on their own personal characteristics. For example, a small female officer who was leading physically larger male soldiers who were intolerant of the corporeal difference, described how she learned to exert her influence in novel ways. Another officer with a quiet demeanor explained how he learned not to emulate a charismatic leader, instead finding a style of his own. Evidenced in these narratives, and others like them, are accurate self-understandings coupled with ongoing efforts to learn and develop, even if this is difficult. This matches Aristotelian conceptions of good character acknowledging a true and objective appreciation of one’s own unique personality and character. In these ways, Army character for this top scoring group involved expression of the officer’s unique qualities as subject to ongoing refinement by experience. This seems inseparable from a developing phronesis.

## Practical Application

According to AICM scores and interviews, participants mostly aligned with Army Values in terms of ethical judgement and character. However, as discussed, this general pattern of excellence overlays differences. These differences represent areas for development and may also be useful for other military contexts if the identified issues also correspond to local experiences and beliefs. It may not be possible to generalise to the entire junior officer population - even less so across different countries - but findings may well resonate

*Ethical functioning involves consolidating knowing what to do and why; and knowing why or having capacity to articulate reasons for acting is a feature of moral character and developing wisdom.*

with local commanders and as such provide topics for consideration and investigation for further training. It is important to note that AICM and measures like it are not intended for individual assessment. They are designed to assess groups as compared to an expert panel with credibility in the chosen profession. AICM results identify themes and patterns for groups and subgroups. Several specific suggestions for practical applications based on research results are provided below.

### Transitioning From Training to Profession

Transitioning from training to profession is challenging for all military officers owing to unique roles and cultures. Additionally, reconciling ethical judgement with the rush to develop practical military skill in the early years as commissioned officers

seems an unavoidably uneven process as they work to integrate all features of their role. Arguably, infantry and artillery officers included in the study were involved in most fundamental Army activities. These officers probably had quite different experiences following Sandhurst than the officers from other career fields. Results suggest more support, especially for junior officers in the infantry and artillery, might be beneficial as they transition from training to profession. Of course, specific military establishments will need to decide if such a need exists and if so, how might this be addressed. Interviewed officers described transitioning from Sandhurst to the “real” Army as a “professional shock”, and so a qualifying period following initial officer training, in this case Sandhurst, where new officers might be formally mentored is a possible way forward. A period of mentoring would facilitate the development of the intellectual virtue of phronesis as relevant for military contexts. This would involve a process of guided reflection about the officers’

military experiences designed to bring together ethical and military considerations. This process could be incorporated into military education courses early in an officers’ career, although this would be more amenable to small group work rather than one-to-one mentoring.

### Developing Ethical Justification Reasoning

Although AICM results were mostly good across justification and action choices in response to dilemmas, justification reasoning did lag slightly. Ethical functioning involves consolidating knowing what to do and why; and knowing why or having capacity to articulate reasons for acting is a feature of moral character and developing wisdom. Improving ethical reasoning is therefore worthy of attention for developing junior military officers if they are to reach

highest possible standards of ethical and military excellence. Achieving this may simply involve taking more time in military cultures to explicate reasons for action where possible. In this way, interactions present opportunities for developing ethical reasoning, but obviously not if this is at the expense of brevity and decisiveness at crucial times. Additionally, a tried and tested method for developing ethical reasoning involves using ethical dilemmas for training purposes rather than for research. For example, dilemmas can be used during military education courses as the basis of small group discussions. The process of discussing various options and experiencing disagreements among the group exposes participating officers to different kinds of reasoning. With skilled facilitation, this method can enhance ethical reasoning skills, as a key feature of phronesis.

### ***Balancing Compassion and Mission, and Negotiating Personal Relationships***

Lower scores were found for dilemmas requiring participants to balance compassion and mission and to balance personal relationships with military expectations, in this case involving perils of fraternization. These are areas for potential attention and development. Given the complexity involved, this might be incorporated with the earlier suggestion for improving levels of ethical reasoning. Encouraging processes of reasoning among officers by discussing various military dilemmas could improve capacities for thinking through situations requiring ethical balance (compassion and mission for example), but recognising that there are no easy or off-the-shelf solutions. Other possibilities, for developing capacity in these areas during military education courses could involve the use of simulation (e.g. role play, war gaming etc.) whereby officers are required to make judgements under conditions that are as realistic as possible. It would

also be a good idea to explore the officers' own views in these areas, rather than only their knowledge and ability to apply military policy. This is because there were signs during interviews, of isolated disagreements with Army policy in these areas, especially for the fraternization policy.

### **Conclusion**

In the context of a precarious professional practice, aspirational moral character has been highlighted as an aim for developing junior military officers, involving ever more advanced levels of ethical judgement as a key feature of practical wisdom. Results suggest experiential variance for surveyed officers such that some may be too ethically focused (cadets) while others seem too militarily focused (junior junior officers). Recognising these possible patterns will be important for cultivating character and ethical judgement. In response, this article has suggested practical possibilities for developing character and ethical judgement among junior military officers, as relating to processes of transition from training to profession (especially for infantry and artillery officers); enhanced development of ethical reasoning; improved balancing of compassion and mission and better negotiating personal relationships.

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## PREPARING FOR FUTURE CONFLICT

# Leadership and Threatcasting

Brian David Johnson, Arizona State University

Interviewed By: Douglas Lindsay

**Lindsay:** Thank you for your time today I know you are pretty busy.

**Johnson:** As you can imagine, being a person who does threatcasting during a pandemic makes you pretty popular.

**Lindsay:** I would imagine that when things are stable and you are thinking about the future and doing threatcasting, that is one thing, but to do it real time as the event is unfolding, that is a little different.

**Johnson:** It is interesting. As you know, I have a private practice where I work with a lot of people who I have worked over the years and they really understand threatcasting. Recently, we have done a shorter version of the process where we do more of a tactical deployment. We come in and do threatcasting in a problem space in about a week or a week and a half. Normally, when I do this with a large organization like the U.S. Army, it is a three to six month process. That is because it is quite big, there is a large report, and there are hundreds of pages of raw data that must be analyzed. Here, you can do this more tactical approach where you look at the pandemic and ask, “What is the fight that is going to come after the fight we are fighting right now?” What is the next two, three, or six months

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As an applied futurist, **Brian David Johnson** works with governments, trade organizations, start-ups, and multinational corporations to not only help envision their future but specify the steps needed to get there. Johnson is currently the Futurist in Residence at Arizona State University's Center for Science and the Imagination, a professor in the School for the Future of Innovation in Society and the Director of the ASU Threatcasting Lab. Johnson holds over 40 patents and is the best-selling author of both science fiction and fact books (*WaR: Wizards and Robots*, *21st Century Robot* and *Science Fiction Prototyping*). He was appointed the first futurist ever at the Intel Corporation in 2009 where he worked for over a decade helping to design over 2 billion microprocessors. Johnson appears regularly on Bloomberg TV, PBS, FOX News, and the Discovery Channel and has been featured in *Scientific American*, *The Technology Review*, *Forbes* and *Popular Science*.



from now when there might be a second wave and start getting into that space. It is really about giving leaders in a crisis a moment to breathe and reflect. That is so incredibly important and that is a part of threatcasting. To give leaders who are often times literally putting out fires a time to pause. Over that week, since they are senior in their organizations I may only have three hours of their time. So I try to utilize that time where they can get with their colleagues and do this work together. In that way, it is fascinating because you can really be of use. It is always good in a time of crisis to be of use to somebody.

**Lindsay:** Speaking of your work, do you mind sharing a little bit about your background and how you got to where you are today?

**Johnson:** Let's start with where I am now and then a bit about how I got here. I am a futurist. I work with organizations to look 10 years into the future. I model both positive and negative futures. Then, as an applied futurist, I turn around and look backwards and ask what do we need to do tomorrow and even five years from now to move toward that positive future and move away from the negative? I have been doing this for about 25 years.

Probably the best example of where I have done this is I was the Chief Futurist at the Intel Corporation. It takes them 10 years to design, develop, and deploy a chip. That includes actually building a factory to make that chip. So, it was of vital business importance for them to know 10 years in the future what people would want to do with computers. That was my job. I am an engineer and designer by training. I would write a spec that says this is how people would want to act and interact with technology, and that would become a requirements document that would then feed into the chip itself.

I am an applied futurist. It means that I not only model the future, but I also spend time with organizations doing something about it and making it actionable. That is the work that I do, futurecasting, on the positive side. About 10 years ago, I actually started at the United States Air Force Academy doing threatcasting, which is as it sounds. Looking at possible and potential threats 10 years in the future and then turning around and looking at how we can disrupt, mitigate, and recover from those threats at a very tactical level.

I am also a writer - a science fiction and non-fiction author. My background has always been quite interdisciplinary. I do a lot of work with social scientists, economists, people who are researchers, as well as engineers and business leaders. Who I generally work with are people who are leaders of organizations. So, if I am working with a bank, I tell them that I am not an expert in banking. If I work with the military, they know I am not an expert in conflict. What I am good at is the future and that is where my expertise is at. Specifically, my expertise is in working with people to model those futures, and then to give people very actionable steps that they can take.

To go a little farther back, in the 90's, I did set top boxes. In the early days of the internet, you could plug a phone line into the back of a cable box and it made it interactive. I was able to design that because I knew hardware and software. I knew entertainment and regulatory issues and I understood the business issues behind it. It took us four to five years to design and deploy those. Then, in the early 2000's the Intel Corporation came to me and asked, "Can you do that 10 years in the future?" I said, "Yes." I reported to the Chief Technology Officer and subsequently, they appointed me their first and Chief Futurist.

Along with that, I have always been writing and teaching. I started college when I was 10 years old learning how to program. Both my parents are engineers and I wanted to learn Fortran (a computer language). So, my mom told me I needed to start taking classes. As I was at college taking classes, I got a job in the computer lab. This was in the early days of the personal computer (PC) revolution back in the early 80's and I spoke computer. I taught economics students how to use these things called personal computers. To me, I thought that was normal. I thought all 10 year olds did that. Turns out that is not true. Even back then, I kind of balanced teaching and communicating along with engineering. In 2016, I stepped down as the Chief Futurist at Intel because I wanted to start a threatcasting lab. I saw some areas of threat and the need to bring together government, military, private industry, trade associations, and academia to work on the hard problems that we were seeing coming in the next five to 10 years. So, I have a private practice where I still work with corporations, but I am now the Futurist in Residence at Arizona State University. I am also a Professor as well as the Director of their Threatcasting Lab.

**Lindsay:** What was it about the futurist space that shifted you away from engineering and what you were doing? When did you realize that was something that you wanted to do?

**Johnson:** I think I was born into it. My dad was an electrical engineer with the Army, and then with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a radar tracking technician. My mom was an information technology (IT) specialist. I grew up around technology. Back in the 1970's I thought everyone had a large screen TV in the wall of their basement that they built with their dad on the weekends. That is

just what we did. I grew up with a soldering iron in my hand. My dad would explain the electrical engineering to me as we built the television. Also, my dad could fix microwaves which basically made him a super hero. Back in the 1970's, microwaves were scary things. They were like nuclear reactors and my dad could fix them. So, I always thought my dad was amazing.

I grew up in that world and for me, there was no difference between engineering and imagination. I think this is important and especially as we starting to talk about innovation and the role that imagination and innovation play. For me there were no bounds of being able to explain how the schematic worked on the television that we built. Or, how to explain how a personal computer worked. That was the language I grew up with. So, I was always a nontraditional engineer. It was always what I did. One of my first jobs when I was out of college was doing work for the U.S. military as a contractor where we were setting up computer networks on personal computers. It was very new at the time. I was trouble shooting and I was a system architect. That was my training. I was troubleshooting them and we were trying to figure out hard problems. One of the things that we work on was trying to figure out why computers couldn't keep time. We would synch multiple computers for say 10:00 am and then you come back the next morning and they were drifting where one might say 10:00 but another would be 10:05 and another 9:35. As we know, in the military, keeping time is incredibly important. So, we had to troubleshoot that. Why couldn't the computers keep time? It was really where I got to see that I could use my imagination to figure out problems from a systems architecture standpoint, to see what was going on. Where was the failure point? Then, to be able to apply the engineering. Once I did that, and I was fortunate that was my first job, I got to see

that imagination and technical proficiency went hand in hand.

**Lindsay:** As I hear you talk about that, it's apparent that you enjoy what you do.

**Johnson:** I do. I enjoy what I do to the point that it is who I am. I have always done this, and I continue to do it. My wife likes to joke that I live my life 10 years in the future and I commute home on the weekends. It is that type of thing. It is work that I enjoy, but think it is important work. Not only working with the military, government and organizations doing this, but also my work as a professor and getting other people to imagine, design, and build their future. Whether it is in their personal or professional life. It is something

**Lindsay:** I agree and that ties back to something you said earlier. You mentioned that when you go to work with a bank, that you are not an expert on banking. It seems to me that a lot of what you do is to help leaders shift their mental models as to how they think about the future. Leaders often think what we refer to as strategically, but it seems like what you are suggesting is something different and it refers to how we think about how we think about the future.

**Johnson:** That is exactly right. Having that presence of mind to be thinking about how to think about the future. As a leader, it allows you to look at your bias and other people's bias. To look at who is not in the room that should be in the room. What information do you not have that you should have? It is that

*It is my job to enable people to think in this way. To give them the tools. To give them the training so that they can go out and think this way. But also begin to find the pieces of information that they need so they can begin to interrogate themselves. To have them ask, "Who am I not talking to that I should be talking to?"*

constant interrogation of yourself and your own thinking and the process of thinking. Really, it is thinking about thinking and that is incredibly important. I know how to work with people to model the future. Let's be clear. These are effects based models. What is the effect you want to have and then you reverse engineer how to get there. That is why I did so much work with USAFA and the Air Force, and now all service academies. It all ties very much into the military way of thinking and getting things done. It is my job to enable people to think in this way.

To give them the tools. To give them the training so that they can go out and think this way. But also begin to find the pieces of information that they need so they can begin to interrogate themselves. To have them ask, "Who am I not talking to that I should be talking to?" That is often what I am doing with people. The modelling of the future itself, is not easy, but the harder part is to get your brain to think in that way. Then, you need to get really specific about it.

that I have been doing really specifically for the last 10 to 15 years in training people to do this. I have futurists that I have trained that are now out in the world and they are doing great. One is a Futurist at a large bank and others are Futurists at companies in Silicon Valley. I think that is critically important because this way of thinking, and I am biased, but this way of thinking is really important when we think about leadership.

**Lindsay:** You are dealing with the top levels of leaders in organizations. Do you find it hard to convince them to understand the importance of that or do they kind of get it, but they don't know how? What are the challenges you see?

**Johnson:** I'll tell you something that won't surprise you or any of your readers. When it comes to a person who is at a high level, you can't convince them of anything. It doesn't work that way. All kidding aside, you really can't convince anyone of anything. It is what I tell my students all the time. You just can't and you shouldn't. That generally isn't your job. What you can do is present them the facts and how you got to a certain decision. You can give them the background and you can make it actionable. You can make it 100% transparent so you can say here is what I think, why I think it, and what I expect.

Oftentimes, when I walk in the room, people don't want me there. Generally, I am brought in when things are going poorly. Especially when I am doing threatcasting. Number 1, I am there to help. Number 2, I am trying to make it very actionable. For example, I was working with an Army General (now retired), who is now a big supporter of this work. We had done some work related to some possible threats five to 10 years out. We talked about some external indicators that they could watch to see if things were coming. It was very actionable information that they could start watching for right away. One of those indicators happened about three to four months after we had done this threatcasting together. He called me, and said, "We had talked about this thing, and it happened." I said, "Yes sir. That's our job to show external indicators that the threat is coming." He was, "But, it happened! And, I know what to do." I told him that is my job and that's when he really got it. That, typically, is what happens.

People come with skepticism. Which I embrace. I'm an engineer. I don't want you to just agree with me. I tell my students that we can all get together and agree and that is a great dinner party, but you don't get anything done. The conflict is very important. It is skepticism and challenging with respect. A ruthless interrogation of what is going on. I don't mind that. If you can show your work, be actionable, and you can explain it to people, generally the work itself will start to bring people around. If you have a shared goal, you are all trying to get to the same point. If you can help someone get there faster, then typically they will come around.

**Lindsay:** I like that phrase you used about a ruthless examination. That is important because some people think that leader development is a passive activity and you just kind of learn it as you go. What you are suggesting is to aggressively challenge and be invested in an intentional way how you are thinking and what you are bringing to the situation.

**Johnson:** And also what you are not bringing. Understanding where you are deficient. To understand that deficiencies are a part of being human and that they are a fact. You can't be proficient in everything. Everybody has bias and everyone has deficiencies. When I am doing this, I don't walk in thinking that I am the smartest person in the room. That is not my job. I walk in and say, here is what I know and here is what I don't know. Often, when I am teaching this to students, I tell them that their job is not to be right. They aren't supposed to be the one who says this is going to happen or this is what you need to do and then when it is over, they say, I was right. For me as a futurist, when we are one, three, five, or 10 years in the future and we have worked on a certain problem so that when the organization gets there, they have what they need, that means we have gotten it right. So, in that way, it is

not about you. There is a humility. That is one of the things that when you do the type of work that I do, and what I teach my students early on, is that the first step of doing work as a futurist is that you have to step forward with humility. You have to understand that you need to be humble. That you are not always going to be right. That is okay. I tell the people that I am training, that if you can be wrong and know that you are wrong first, you win. Because if you can get it wrong before anyone else gets it wrong, you'll be getting it right while others are getting it wrong. The key is to embrace that type of thinking. Understand what you bring but also what you don't bring. Then, actively find people to help with that. That will also attract people to you and I think that is a true quality of a leader. Being able to go in and show that vulnerability. Certainly you need to show strength, authority, and proficiency, but being able to be inclusive in that way is important. It is tough and a lot of young leaders find it really hard to do.

*Talking to people about failure is tough. It is something that I don't couch it in that language but it is something that has come up multiple times in work that I have done in Silicon Valley and the military. Failure is such a hard word for people. Especially for those becoming leaders in the military where your job is to win.*

**Lindsay:** Especially in the area of innovation, because for younger leaders there is often a strong orientation toward performance and results. With innovation, you are going to have things that don't work out and some

failures. Do you find that to be a challenge with leaders to understand that in order to be innovative, head off threats, to adapt to the environment that they have to accept some level of failure within their processes? Or, do they kind of get that?

**Johnson:** No, they don't get that. Talking to people about failure is tough. It is something that I don't couch it in that language but it is something that has come up multiple times in work that I have done in Silicon Valley and the military. Failure is such a hard word for people. Especially for those becoming leaders in the military where your job is to win. Your job is to be right. That is why you are there. So, the idea of getting it wrong, that language is really hard for people. I have tried many different ways with many different organizations to come up with ways of framing that.

A while back I found another way of couching it. Now, go with me here. This is kind of a thought experiment I do with people. I tell people that imagination is the number one most underutilized tool in business and leadership. Nothing great was ever created by humans that wasn't imagined first. So imagination and innovation are very important. We need to understand that our imagination really drives everything that we do. You have to see it first. Let's say I am working with a senior level leadership team (a C-Suite). Everyone is listening to me and I say, "Imagination is really underutilized. So, let me ask you this. Are you an organization that

values imagination and innovation?" They generally say, "Yes. Of course." Then, I ask, "Do you value really good ideas and when people bring really good ideas to you?" Again, they say, "Oh yes, of course we do." Now,

that is silly because that is like asking someone if they value puppies and kittens? No one is going to say they hate puppies and kittens. So, of course they are going to say they value innovation. Here is the test though. I say, “You say you value good ideas. But, do you value stupid ideas? Do you value really dumb ideas?” And then they look at me like I am crazy. I then ask, if they are an organization that says, “Hey Tim, that was a really dumb idea. Let me go by you a coffee.” And they still look at me like I am crazy. So I say, “Because really, a dumb idea is only dumb until someone figures out it is genius.” Being able to create a culture, and this is something for leadership to understand, creating culture is both simple and hard. The simple part of it is that you need to identify what you value and then you have to reward it in the group you are trying to create the culture in. It is easy to say and hard to do. But by going to people and letting them create it allows them to come up with dumb ideas or be wrong. Every now and again, you will be right. Oftentimes, that approach creates the right kind of culture.

When I was at the Intel Corporation, I was a manager of a very large team. We actually rewarded people with gift cards when they came up with dumb ideas. It was the dumb idea fund. It’s fun that way because then it isn’t a bad thing. You don’t always have to be a genius. You don’t always have to be right. Creating that kind of culture allows for what some people would call failure, but it isn’t couched that way. Often what will happen is someone will have an idea and it really is kind of crazy. Then, someone else hears it and says that is kind of crazy, but you know what, if we just did this, then that would actually be something. It is in that space where you really start to get some interesting coordination and collaboration between team members.

**Lindsay:** The effective leader in that situation sees the value in that process and wants to bring that culture of

innovation in there. To create that sandbox, if you will, where things can be manipulated in different ways. The process worked and was a win for the team in that they were able to think about it in a new way, right?

**Johnson:** Thinking of something in a new way but it also puts it out there so that somebody else can take that novel idea which might be crazy, but can take that idea and then they can modify it. Then, maybe, it isn’t crazy anymore and can become something that is actionable. So, that barrier to entry and to collaboration has been pulled down a little bit. It becomes safe. You are just talking.

I come from engineering and engineers like to interrupt each other. It is really a compliment because it is a yes...and. I understand what you are saying, and now this. So, I like to say that if you want me to know that you are engaged, then interrupt me and ask me a question. Or, if you really want me to like you and know you like me, tell me I’m wrong. Because, then I want to know why. It is ultimately about getting it right and not about being right. That whole idea of, “I think you are wrong.” And to respond with, “Oh, why?” This really bothers people. So, when I am leading teams, the worst thing you can tell a high performing team member is that they are right. Especially in conflict. I like to tell people that I lead that I have really strong opinions and they are very loosely held. It really unnerves people. For example, I will be arguing with someone, and it may be a big point or a small point, and I will pause and say, “Nope, you know what, you are right.” Then, they will keep trying to convince me. I keep telling them, there are only so many times I can tell you that you are right. I’m in, let’s go. But a lot of people aren’t used to that and expect a fight. That is another way of always being open to a lot of those ideas.



**Lindsay:** That's good advice for what a leader can do. To continue that discussion, and based on your experience, can you talk a little bit more about other things that good leaders do?

*...as a leader, the success of your team is your job. That's it. Being able to have a vision for the future, be able to communicate it, and then enable them to do it. Because you are not going to do it by yourself. You can't. That is the thing about leadership. You are the least important person because the people that are going to get it done, are the people that are on your team.*

**Johnson:** Part of this is my bias of being a futurist, but based on my experience, I think leaders need to have a vision for the future. It sounds quite simple, but they need to be able to see it. They don't have to be 100% right, but they have to be able to see where they want to go. This is where we are going and this is why we are going. Having that vision, and then being able to communicate it. This is one of those things that I see a lot of people not excelling at. I tell those that I work with as well as my students, that you can have a great vision, but if you can't communicate it to people, it is useless. To be able to communicate it all the way from the C-Suite to the mail room. From the Generals to the cadets. You have to realize who your audience is and connect with them. That is hard and the way you learn to do that by doing it.

I spend a fair amount of time travelling and a fair amount of time on stage. I'm the same on the phone

here as I am on stage. I laugh and tell jokes. People say, "Oh, you are so comfortable," because I can stand up and just start talking. They ask me how I get comfortable in front of a room of 500 people? I tell them "That is easy. Speak in front of 5000 people." 500 seems like a

bunch of friends compared to that. The way you get good at public speaking is speaking publically a lot. It's the only way to do it. It's the way it is with a lot of things when it comes to leadership. You hear people talking about here are the traits of a leader or here are some of the things you can do. Much like when I talked about creating a culture around imagination and innovation. The only way to do it is to just do it. And in doing it, you are going to fail sometimes but you are going to get it right more often times than not, and you will keep going.

So, having that vision and being able to communicate it and getting good at it is really important. That is what draws people to you. When I do work with organizations on leadership, I tell them that having a vision of the future, regardless of what it is, has mass. It has a density. It starts to draw people to it. It has gravity. People like visions of the future. People like people who have vision. It is key for a leader. People need something to believe in and to see. It doesn't have to be lofty. It could be that you are going to build that bridge or that you are going to get over that wall. But having that vision and being able to communicate it is critical.

Then, as a leader, the success of your team is your job. That's it. Being able to have a vision for the future, be able to communicate it, and then enable them to do it. Because you are not going to do it by yourself. You can't. That is the thing about leadership. You are the least



important person because the people that are going to get it done, are the people that are on your team. I live that in my academic life. If you come and take one of my classes at Arizona State University or if I lecture at USAFA or West Point, I come in as a futurist. I've been doing this for 25 years and have some grey in my beard. I say, "Look, you need to understand. I know for a fact that intelligence, creativity, and aptitude knows no age...knows no gender...knows no socioeconomic background...knows no race. I realize that standing in front of this group of students, that the majority of you are smarter than I am. You are. That is just the math. There is only one thing that I have over you... experience. I've done this before and I can help you. The other thing that I have over you is that I know people. You can ask me a question or need some help and I may not know the answer, but I know who to call and connect you with." That's it. If you can do those things as a leader, you will be hugely successful. By the way, everybody will like you because everyone will be successful.

**Lindsay:** What you talked about there is what I think trips up a lot of people. Leaders generally start out in roles because of their technical competence, proficiency and what they can do. They may be the most technically competent. Especially as junior leaders in organizations. They may have even been selected for leadership based on that proficiency. What you are talking about is that when they move up in the organization, there is a shift away from themselves to what they can enable, communicate, and support. Some people struggle with that shift.

**Johnson:** It's good for you to call that out. We have talked about it a little bit, but I want to be very clear on that. Technical proficiency, or any type of proficiency is incredibly important. For example, my background

is engineering and you have to be able to do the math. There is no way around that. By the way, I was terrible at math. It was hard, but I did it and got to the other side. Proficiency is incredibly important. But, there is a toggle point where proficiency is the table stakes. Proficiency is the cost of the ticket to get through the door. Now, once you are through the door, you need to continue to have that. The next step is stepping into the role of a leader and understanding that not only are you not the most important or smartest person in the room, but that you don't want to be. To have a really strong and high performing team means you want people who are better than you. You have the experience and proficiency, but you want people who are better engineers than you. I've worked with a lot of them and they can engineer circles around me. But I have experience. That is what leaders bring. That goes back to our discussion about who is not in the room, the ruthless interrogation of yourself and understanding what you don't know. That is what propels you as a leader. You are not just thinking about end strength. You are not just thinking about the thing that you came from that got you in the room. Now, you need to think very differently.

**Lindsay:** I think there is something else that goes along with that which is really important. To have some accountability structures in place to help leaders stay true to that. To make sure that they don't drift back to trying to be the smartest person in the room. Something in place to hold the leader accountable to that.

**Johnson:** Yes, and we even build those in. Something that I build in with my teams is that you want to find people who don't agree with you. That goes back to that point about finding someone who will tell you that you are wrong and to listen to them because maybe you

are. There is a chance you may be. Since the goal is not to be the smartest or to be right, it is to succeed. Have the team succeed. Being able to have that presence of mind. There are even ways to operationalize that. When I am doing a report around the future. It could be threatcasting or a future product, but I always write a minority report. In the minority report, it says, here is the thing that we as a team agree on and that we will all move toward. The value of the minority report is that it also tells you all the ways that you are destined to fail. Typically what I do is find the person that is the biggest supporter, who says that this is the way we should go and this is what we should do, and then have them write it. It forces them to interrogate it and look at it from all different perspectives. But you also have to support that process. It is critical to have that naysayer. And not a naysayer who just says this isn't going to work, but to be constructive in that process. To be able to take that into the culture of the team to be successful.

**Lindsay:** Then, as the leader, have enough humility to accept that feedback when it comes back to you.

**Johnson:** And you have encouraged it. That is one of the things that other team members see is that you embody that culture. Other team members see that the person who is leads us really does believe that. It has a really large effect and there is a level of respect there. If you have built it into the culture and the way that you are leading, it isn't a bad thing. As an example, let's say you are doing a project and somebody goes, "Ma'am or Sir, I think that is wrong because of this," everyone doesn't freeze and go, this is terrible. You are used to it. You ask why and find out what they are thinking. That is a way to prepare for when you are in stressful situations, if you have that culture around it, it won't be so stressful.

**Lindsay:** It creates a supportive environment since everyone is headed in the same direction to follow the vision that you set.

**Johnson:** Yes, and anyone who has been to the service academies or is in the military knows, that you train your body to do things, you train your instincts to react a certain way. You go through training. You also think about the training that you go through, and then you do it multiple times. You are training your body and mind. It is a similar thing in that you are training the team that having a minority report or having an orthogonal idea is okay and that is normal. You are training to be a leader.

**Lindsay:** Along that idea of training, and thinking about your futurist perspective, what advice to you have for people in that leader development space as they are preparing leaders for the future?

**Johnson:** I think it is important to have a culture and organization that are identifying things early on and talking about them. Bringing in different perspectives. I'll give you an example from my private practice. CEOs come to me all the time and ask me, "How do I prepare for the future?" I tell them, "That that is easy. Get yourself a 13 year old mentor." I think we often lose sight of mentoring up. The people who are training leaders have experience and know people, but they need to remember the value of mentoring up. If you are mentoring and shaping someone to be a leader, you could bring someone who has a different perspective. For example, one of the things that is a very big deal with a lot of corporations is that we know that in the next five to 10 years that 75% of the global workforce is either going to be Millennials or Gen Z. This is really significant because the majority of C-Suites do not have any Millennials or Gen Z's. The majority of management in industry does not have

them. What I tell them is that they shouldn't be talking about them, they should be talking to them. They need to be sitting at the table. That is one of the things that I have done with several Boards of Directors, where I tell them that they need to have the next generation sitting at the Board. They aren't going to be making decisions about the organization or policies, but it gives them a voice and a way to contribute. Having that perspective of the ones that are coming up is so important. Doing it in a way that they are equal. In the landscape of ideas, everyone is equal. Now, when you are in execution or education, it is not. But, in that mindspace around ideas where you are trying to come up with innovation, everyone is an equal and needs to be treated like an equal. It is not going to them and saying, "Okay Millennial or Gen Z, you are the next generation, tell us what you think." It's not that. They need to be involved in the conversation. That is also something that is hard for people to do because it means you have to navigate some different waters, language, and generational gaps that some people are uncomfortable with.

**Lindsay:** So, to flip the question a bit. If you were to provide advice to new leaders who were just starting their leadership journey, what advice would you have for them? You have already provided some great advice, but anything specific for them?

**Johnson:** First, you have to start with humility. The reason why you are a leader doesn't make you the top person. Your success is judged by the people you are leading - that is your job. Next you have to always be curious. I think this is something that is incredibly important to always be curious. Not just when it comes to studying or learning, but to always be curious even

about the things that upset you. Here's an example. You might meet somebody that you just don't like. You don't get along with them. That happens. Not everyone gets along. You learn that as a leader that you are there to be a leader and not be friends with everyone. There could just be people that rub you the wrong way and you don't get along with. What I encourage people to do is say, "Okay, why?" Actually dig into that a little bit. To say, "That's fascinating, I don't get along with you. Let's talk." To be curious and always push yourself because you will discover things, you will discover collaborators, and you will discover new pieces of knowledge.

*The final bit is to always be conscious of who is not in the room. Always be conscious of who is not being included. As a leader, you are leading human beings. People are complicated, weird, funny, amazing, and tricky, but they are human and humans are the most valuable things that we have. Everything we do is about humans. It begins with people and it ends with people.*

The final bit is to always be conscious of who is not in the room. Always be conscious of who is not being included. As a leader, you are leading human beings. People are complicated, weird, funny, amazing, and tricky, but they are human and humans are the most valuable things that we have. Everything we do is about humans. It begins with people and it ends with people. There might be a lot of processes, procedures and technology but everything that we do is about people. Having that inherent value of people and humanity is

incredibly important.

**Lindsay:** While we haven't really gotten into current events and what is going on, what you have talked about is incredibly important to what we are seeing right now. So, while we didn't address them specifically, they are all throughout your comments.

**Johnson:** The interesting thing is that with this way of thinking, what I think is a futurist way of thinking, it doesn't matter what is going on. You can apply it now, you could apply it 10 years ago. That mindset is the way to be successful.

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## PREPARING FOR FUTURE CONFLICT

# How I Think About the Future: Trends and Spikes

Jason Schenker, The Futurist Institute

Interviewed By: Douglas Lindsay

**Lindsay:** Would you mind talking a little bit about how you got to where you are today?

**Schenker:** I do a couple of different things. I run a financial market research shop called Prestige Economics that I founded back in 2009. That organization is focused on looking at financial market risks and helping corporations. We are looking at financial markets, but we don't advise people. We advise the Fed, airlines, pipelines, oil & gas, auto manufactures, and supply chain companies about interest rate, currency, macroeconomic, and commodity price risk. Before that, I worked at McKinsey as a risk specialist and before that I was the Chief Energy and Commodity Economist at Wachovia, the third largest bank in the U.S. Prior to that, I had done a lot of education.

About three and a half years ago, in October of 2016, I started The Futurist Institute. In that organization, we take a longer perspective on future events that are going to happen. The reason I started that organization was that my clients were coming to me and saying, "It's great that you are helping us understand the 3-year view, but help us understand a 5, 10, 15 or 20- year view." So, I got smart on what it means to be a futurist and future technology. That included reading many books and taking many courses. I then synthesized that into several books that I have written.

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**Jason Schenker** is the President of Prestige Economics and Chairman of The Futurist Institute. He has been ranked one of the most accurate financial forecasters and futurists in the world. Bloomberg News has ranked Mr. Schenker a top forecaster in 43 categories, including #1 in the world for his accuracy in 25 categories. His work has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. He has appeared on CNBC, CNN, ABC, NBC, MSNBC, Fox, Fox Business, BNN, Bloomberg Germany, and the BBC. He advises executives, industry groups, institutional investors, and central banks as the President of Prestige Economics. He also founded The Futurist Institute in October 2016. Mr. Schenker holds a Master's in Applied Economics from UNC Greensboro, a Master's in Negotiation, Conflict Resolution, and Peacebuilding from CSU Dominguez Hills, a Master's in Germanic Languages and Literature from UNC Chapel Hill, and a Bachelor's in History and German from The University of Virginia.

To date, I have written 21 books and three almanacs on related topics. I think some of where I have come to as being a leader is on the thought leader side. I have spent a lot of time in formal education and now have three master's degrees. That education has been very helpful to what I do professionally. I also have several certificates and a bunch of professional designations. I mention this to underscore that in order to be in this space, you have to be willing to make big financial and time investments in your formal education, professional development, and continuing education.

I don't run a huge team in my organization, and the leadership I have is really in the thought leadership space. The leadership piece for me is to absorb content, learn a lot of things, digest it, synthesize it, and then help others understand the implications in the short

what a lot of effective leaders have mentioned with respect to the grind. Doing the work and doing what is necessary to learn about the work.

**Schenker:** I think that is true and there are a lot of ways that people learn. There is formal education, online courses, certification programs, and other channels. Some are better for some career paths – and better for some people – than others. It really depends on the preferred learning modes and professional goals of each individual. For example, if you are expected to be innovative or know new and different things to help find new solutions, then you have to be out there learning and hearing from a lot of different people because you generally don't learn new and innovative things just sitting around with your own thoughts. That's not where you get new and innovative ideas from.

Oftentimes, it requires examining ideas that others have had and then iterating on them.

**Lindsay:** You mentioned being a futurist. Could you share a little bit more about what that is?

*Mark Twain said that, "History doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes." So, there are often patterns that occur again, and again, and again.*

term and the long term. So, to answer your question, the way I got here was a lot of schooling and working a lot of hours. I don't think I have ever had a job that was less than 60-70 hours a week. Trust me, that part isn't fun. And it's not a point of pride or anything – it's just a numbers thing. If you put in more hours on the job, that means you are learning and absorbing more. That is how I got here.

**Lindsay:** That's a similar approach to what Warren Buffet talks about. He reads hundreds of pages a day so that he can close the learning cycle and learn as much as he can about related topics to bring that information and learning to bear. What you also talked about is

**Schenker:** People describe being a futurist in different ways. For me, I look at it from a scientific approach. In essence, you are looking at the data of the present through the lens of the past in order to make a projection – or series of projections – about the future. Mark Twain said that, "History doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes." So, there are often patterns that occur again, and again, and again.

That is what I am looking for.

As an example, every kind of media that has come along has been disruptive. That is important to

understand. In addition, if we think about national security, some of the same things are always at play like visibility, agility, communication, and lethality. The areas of development are the same, but the means of technology are different. So, when we look at how something will play out, those patterns and themes that show up again and again are what we're looking for.

Some folks would define a futurist as someone who inherently thinks the future is better. I'm not one of those folks. I think that depends on the choices we make. So, people will define a futurist in different ways. For me, it means doing long-term forecasting with somewhat limited data points. That means you have to find trends. Economists often talk about the trend line versus the headline. The trend line is something like, what has unemployment done in the past two or five years? The corresponding headline is, what is today's unemployment rate? We are interested in that trend line.

When you are looking at the future you aren't just looking at the past two years or five years, you are looking at what has ever happen in human history potentially related to certain kinds of development in technology or society. For example, with COVID-19 right now, we don't know exactly how it is going to turn out. However, there is the Spanish Flu case. Then there is the SARS and MERS. People are trying to figure out where this will go. While there are some trends, you are still operating in a world of limited data and you are working with certain probabilities of how things will turn out.

If we take a futurist perspective and look longer term, Futurist questions related to this would be: What does COVID-19 mean for medicine? What are we likely to

see after this experience? How will we apply technology to this problem to address it in the future?

**Lindsay:** As a scientist myself, I appreciate the scientific approach by using data to help inform what the future may look like. You also alluded a bit to understanding what the horizon is that you are interested in.

**Schenker:** That is important. If you look at the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – and this is where I get to mix my economics hat with my futurist hat – the long-term forecast going into the COVID-19 pandemic already on the books was that the hottest jobs going into the next decade would be in the health care field. Already, going into this crisis, there is a shortage of nurses, doctors, home health aides, and care assistants. Now, this situation really exposes that there aren't enough workers. People sometimes ask, "What about automation, will robots take jobs?" The truth is that you really need people to do a lot of the health care jobs. Robots can do some things but they can't actually provide physical care. It will be a long time before we are near something like that. I think if the Bureau of Labor Statistics did another forecast today, I think they would probably be forecasting even greater job creation in the health care arena for the decade ahead.

**Lindsay:** You have been talking about trends and potential trends of the future. As you think about some of those bigger trends moving forward, what are some of them that we need to start thinking about and that leaders need to start grappling with?

**Schenker:** I think COVID-19 has shown that for education and work, there are greater potentials for remote learning and remote working than ever before. If you looked at what was going on when COVID-19 broke out, the companies I work with and look at the



financial markets, it feels eerily similar to the time after September 11, 2001 where people were afraid to go out and they didn't know what was going to happen. They felt like the other shoe was going to drop any second. The difference is back in 2001, the President came out and said that it was essentially Americans' patriotic duty to go out shopping and live life. In the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, we were essentially hearing that it is your patriotic duty to social distance and stay home. These are very different things. But 70% plus of the U.S. economy is people buying stuff.

And that makes supporting the economy much harder to do if you stay home. Of course, it was virtually impossible to shop at home in 2001. But today, ecommerce is a much bigger part of the economy.

Back in 2001, telecommuting really wasn't a possibility for most people either. But today it is much more common. This appears to be the point in time where the trends of ecommerce and telecommuting might be at this threshold moment, where we see these things take a huge leap forward.

20 to 30 years from now, I expect to sit down and talk to kids and they will ask what it was like when I was younger. What was working like? I'll likely say something like, you got in a car and drove an hour to a building and then you went in and you worked. Then, you got back in your car and drove an hour home. They might ask, "What was in the building?" I'll say, "A desk, a computer, a bathroom." Well, they'll ask, "What was in your house?" I'll repeat, "A desk, a computer, a bathroom." And those kids are going to laugh and say, "I don't believe you. That sounds dumb." And it kind of does.

I look at these trends and try to find the human nature in it. The human nature is that people like

things that are convenient, which is why ecommerce isn't going away. People don't like sitting in traffic, and that will never change.

Now, there are going to be different impacts on the economy and different impacts if we think about real GDP per capita. If we look out 30 years or so, we will find that the real per capita GDP (Gross Domestic Product or the annual income of the entire country) in the U.S., and you divide it by the number of people, there is a dollar amount tied to that. Essentially, the dollar of growth per person.

In about 30 years in China, that dollar per person GDP number, will be roughly equal to what it is in the United States today, and there are a lot more people there. If we think about what trends matter, you will have a lot more people with a lot more money, so what does that mean for demand for fiscal goods? What does it mean for commodities? We still live in a Rousseauian world. What I mean is that there is a limited amount of stuff and all the people want all the stuff. But, not all the people can have all of the stuff because there is a limited amount of stuff.

These kinds of challenges don't go away.

I am always looking for the underlying theme that doesn't change.

The thing to remember is that even though people tend to gloss over what the future might be, the fundamental reality is that there will still be more people than stuff. We have covered a few themes here.

People like convenience.

There is still going to be a limited amount of stuff.

Everybody is going to get richer.

The population is going to up a lot. Right now, we are at about 7.2 billion people and there will be about another 2 billion people on the planet in 30 years.

People also want to live in a safe environment.

Those are the building blocks.

Does technology get stronger? Absolutely. Does it remove everyone's desire for more stuff? No. Does it remove the potential for a higher population? Probably not.

Birthrates are falling everywhere but there is net population growth in many countries. You are also seeing that people are living longer.

These are the types of themes that I am looking for. As another example, from a national security perspective, we can think about what comes next.

If we look at technology, what can we say? Generally, most technology gets cheaper over time. So, now what you are finding is that now there are going to be potential risks like weaponized drones and the ability to create havoc with very inexpensive means.

They already kind of exist now, we will likely see a greater influence of technology in that risk. I think we are also going to see further supply chain conflicts. Going back to those main economic thoughts like more people and limited stuff, we could also see resource concerns and resource wars.

**Lindsay:** As we think about those trends and what we may see in the future, it will certainly affect leaders

and their ability to lead. Along those lines, you wrote a book called *Spikes: Growth Hacking Leadership* where you talk about identifying and building extreme competence. Could you talk a little bit about what a junior leader needs to be thinking about?

**Schenker:** I think a lot of it is figuring out what you are good at and doing a lot more of it. In consulting, they often talk about spikes. And a spike is an area where you are really good at something. There are a few fundamental building blocks of spikes. One of them is meta-cognition which is the ability to think about how you learn. It is the process of learning how to learn – and not focusing just on the content. This is original notion behind having a major in college. It isn't so much what you major in (as that is a personal choice), it matters that by going through the lens of that subject, you learn how to learn.

Most of the things you learn in college often aren't going to translate directly into what you are going to

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do in your job. However, it's about being able to know how you learn and get up to speed rapidly. Trying to continually learn new things is really important.

The second thing is to share what you know with others.

There are different ways that people learn and one of the best ways that people learn is by teaching others.

So, if you are forced to teach someone something, you really get that down. If I am a junior leader, I would say to find out what you are good at.

Don't try to force the proverbial square peg in the round hole. Realize what you are good at, share that, build on that and then find other things that you would like to learn about. Having a passion for things is important. Then, try to get deep into that. Continually try to build on what you know because each time you learn something new and each time you try something new, you get a little bit better at it. There is a process to everything.

The first time you do something, it is often a challenge. But it gets less challenging as you do it more often. Put in the time and the effort to get good at something you have a natural proclivity for. If you think you are good at something, keep pushing on it. People often wonder where they are going to be a leader or a thought leader? I ask, "What are you good at? What do you like to do? What do you want to do more of? What do you want to do crazy amounts of stuff on?"

If I were to tell people what building spikes means, it is those things. It is also learning from the mistakes of others. You don't have to learn everything from scratch. Other people have been through a lot of what you have been through. Try to leverage other people's experience. Try to find mentors. Then, try to solidify what you know by sharing what you've learned and synthesizing what you have seen. That will not only make you a better contributor to the people around you, but will also solidify your own position more.

You can grow even by helping those around you and by pulling people along. It doesn't just make you a leader, it also makes you better at whatever thing you are

helping your team do because now you have to translate it into more understandable terms for people who may have different capabilities or styles of learning. So, whether you are teaching a class or training colleagues, or working new theories or equipment, showing someone else and explaining it to different people just makes it even more crystalized in your own mind.

**Lindsay:** With that in mind, how does what you just talked about have implications for how our educational systems are set up today?

**Schenker:** I think I take two perspectives on that. In my parents' generation, if you graduated High School, that was pretty much enough. In my generation (I'm 43), if you graduated college, that was kind of enough... maybe. Now, you are probably going to need a graduate degree or other advanced learning.

Of course, there are some that would say, "You really don't need that, and you can just do other informal training." For some, depending on what you need, that will be enough. But, data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics does show 2 things related to education. First, the more formal education you have, it is positively correlated with your income, your annual earnings. Second, the amount of formal education you have is inversely correlated with unemployment. In other words, the more education you have, the lower the unemployment rate for your category of worker is likely to be.

People are also always wondering what they can invest in – like which stock or other investment vehicle. The number one thing you can invest in is yourself. That could be your education or possibly even starting a business. And the number two thing to invest in is your children's education. Those are your big ROIs

(return on investments). The sooner you start, the better. If you want to talk about things to invest in that have financial returns, those are the two big ones.

The future of education will involve a lot more online education. That is not necessarily a bad thing. I earned two in-residence Master's Degrees and one online. I learned a couple important things. First, when you do a class in person, you sometimes have a little more wiggle room regarding deadlines or work and you have personal relationships, etc.

But when you do a degree online, you either do the work or you don't do the work. The accountability of that was something that I liked. It forced me to be more of a hunter than a gatherer.

The agricultural model of learning is where you just sit there and watch the information grow. There is also the hunter/gatherer model where you have to go out and learn what you need to learn.

I think the formal piece of it is really in making sure that there is follow through and that there is a certain intensity to the learning. The future probably requires a deeper intensity of learning and more frequent leaning. You learn how to learn, you get good at it, and you get spikes in a few areas.

Your undergraduate degree might be a spike.

Skills you learn on your first or second job can become spikes.

Then, you take those spikes and combine them with other spikes.

But you may also need to be getting other skills along the way because the technology is changing so rapidly

that you are going to need to learn more and more. So, if we took a long term perspective on education, or a futurist view of looking at long term trends, what I would tell you that in order to be successful, in the past the dividing line between success and failure has always been education. That is a trend.

I really think that the more you learn, the more frames of reference you have. That perpetual learning is the way ahead. It has always been a bit optional, but at different levels as I mentioned before. Looking ahead, it could still be seen as optional, but if you want professional success, you need to always be learning new things and not just in one functional area.

Continually learning new things, moving around, doing different jobs, gaining new skills is something that the Department of Defense (DoD) does a lot of. We also see it in a lot of the larger organizations and I think we are going to see that be more common in corporate America. That will be a dividing line. How quickly can you learn things and how willing are you to learn new things will impact future outcomes. And as technology changes, you are going to have to learn new things. Does that make sense?

**Lindsay:** It does. I think in many respects, employees rely upon their organization to provide them with the skills, training, and development that they need to be successful in that domain. It's a bit of a passive approach. If I need to learn something, my organization will train me or send me to a class. What you are suggesting is not the approach of relying on the organization, but putting the onus back on the individual to determine what I want to learn and what do I need to learn. Being proactive in the process.

**Schenker:** That's right. Let me give you an example. Sometimes you have to invest in yourself. Let's say for

example, the DoD won't pay for your education or your company won't pay for education, but you really want it – or need it – to get to the next level. If that's the case, then you need to invest in that additional education yourself.

You shouldn't take the stance that my company won't pay for that, so I won't either.

Because in the end you'll end up losing out.

That just isn't very helpful. Because if there is still a value in it for you, but you skip it, then the only person losing out in that scenario is you.

The key is that the investment happens. When I worked in consulting – and this is going back a decade now – the average annual education investment per consultant, was rumored to be about \$25,000. That's how much the company invested every year in everyone's education. These are full-time workers and that is what some consulting firms were paying per worker for education, training, and development every year.

When I started my own company, I knew I had to allocate money for that. It is an important part of how you grow and get better at what you do. That is part of the process. Having structure to it is about accountability. Can you do all of your courses online without an instructor...sure. Are you going to have more thorough learning when you have structure and work tied into that? Sure you will, because you are processing it and interacting with it.

I'd also say that experiences bring value to you professionally and are things you may also need to invest in.

As another example, when I worked in investment banking, I pretty quickly became the Chief Energy and Commodity Economist at the bank. There were some forecasts that I made and they came to fruition. So, that resulted in me having a new role. One of the things that came up that was really important were OPEC meetings.

The first time I went, my company paid. They thought it was worthwhile for me to go and see what happens, see who makes decisions, and who attends these meetings. After the first time I went, my company didn't really see a value in me going back.

I said okay, but I thought it was really good for my own career because there was a lot of value in it. I could interact with real decision makers and other leaders. I met other people who I professionally connected with. So, I continued to go to these meetings – and I paid for it out of pocket. I've now gone to OPEC meetings for about 15 years, and it's really helped my career. I still go to the meetings to this day because they provide me with some unique insights into what happens in the energy market.

As a different perspective, I had a guy that I worked with who was also an oil guy. I remember that he laughed at me about it because I used my own time and money to go to those meetings. The irony was he was doing an MBA at a mid-level school. By the time he was done, he was going to be close to a quarter of a million dollars expense for that degree.

My investment in my own learning (albeit different) was way less than his and he thought I was being stupid. But the reality was that I was meeting, interacting with, and building relationships with more people in our field that were of very high value than he was going to get sitting in a classroom with other students.

Still, despite the big investment in his formal education, he wasn't willing to spend a little bit of his own money to go to OPEC and hang with the big dogs. It's not that I am suggesting the MBA was bad, it's that investment can come in different ways and have different value propositions.

The bottom line is that if you believe something is worth it for you, do it.

It doesn't matter what anyone else says. If you believe there is an ROI of taking a class, going to a conference, or being at an event where you will meet the right people to help you get to where you want to go in your career, it is worth it.

Most people think of investing as buying stock in a company where they don't know anyone at the company. They likely haven't read any of the financial reports. They see some letters and a stock price somewhere and they decide that is good to invest in. They never think about, "Hey, maybe I can invest some in myself." They think about investing in the "I'm going to put money in the Stock Market" kind of way, instead of thinking that I am the most valuable asset kind of way.

I attend many different conferences where I don't get paid to be there. I consider those as investment days. Every year, I try to do 10 or 12 investment days where I am meeting with people, learning something, or at a conference where I am not speaking but simply absorbing and learning. There is a cost to me being there, but there is also a value to it and it is making me better at what I do.

**Lindsay:** By thinking that way, it puts the accountability back on me as the leader. That fits nicely

into the next question that I had. What would be your advice to new leaders?

**Schenker:** I think there are several things. The first ties back to what I was talking about regarding investing. When people think of investing, it is about things like their retirement account or their stock account. Stock prices can drop, sometimes significantly. The value of the courses you take, the conferences you attend, or the connections you make don't drop. That doesn't happen. If we think about long term investing, you should include yourself in that.

Another thing is if you have weaknesses, really try to tackle those head on.

I was somewhat less lucky in that I didn't really know what I wanted to do after college. It was 1999 and I was not an economist as my undergraduate degrees

*The bottom line is that if you believe something is worth it for you, do it.*

were in History and German. Since I didn't know what I wanted to do and I had full funding to go to a graduate degree, I decided to do that. The program was in Germanic Languages and Literature. Since I wasn't an economist, I thought that in 2001 the job market would surely be better than in 1999. So, I reasoned: the worst case scenario would be that I get my Master's Degree and go out into the world and get a great job. My thinking was that the job market was so good in 1999 that it would have to be even better in 2001.

Big surprise, it was not better in 2001 and it ended up being a tougher job market. Everyone I met said, "Oh, you must want to be a professional student." I said, "No, I just didn't know what I wanted to do so I

thought I would learn some more stuff.” In a structured way, I attacked that weakness and developed expertise there. And I created a spike.

As another example, a couple of things that I wasn’t good at in my professional career were sales and negotiating. I tried sales courses, but I realized that I was probably not ever going to be a great sales guy. But I definitely got better at it through investing in it.

For the negotiation piece, I did a week-long course at Harvard Law School. When that wasn’t enough for me, I did a Master’s Degree in Negotiation and that is what it took. I wanted to attack it as deeply as I could because it was a serious issue and potential risk to my business and career. Now, I’m a much better negotiator.

Everyone has a weakness and you have to be able to acknowledge where you might not be good at something. You can’t just ignore it. Try to find the most advanced way to attack that weakness and manage it.

As another example, I wasn’t great at quantitative stuff, so I did a Master’s Degree in Applied Economics, which is some of the hardest core quantitative stuff out there.

Finally, don’t do it alone.

You need to be looking for senior people with lots of experience in an area that you might be struggling with – or you think is going to be important for your career. You don’t shy away from it or ignore it. It is not going to go away. You really need to tap into something or someone that can help you work through that.

You only get one life. So, you can either try to learn everything from your own mistakes or you can leverage

the mistakes of others. It is a lot better to leverage their mistakes than to have to make them on your own. Find a really good teacher or cohort of teachers that have really attacked a problem, they can help you get there too.

**Lindsay:** Thanks for that advice. As you look toward the future, what are you excited about? What is on the horizon for you?

**Schenker:** That’s a great question. It reminds me of Milo of Croton. The story goes that this guy lifted a baby calf every day until it became a cow. Then, one day he walked in front of the town square with a cow on his shoulders. Everyone was amazed, but the reality is that he built up to the cow every day.

It all started with a baby calf, but every day he lifted it.

Along those lines, there are a couple of things that I am focused on. First, every day and every year, I try to do a little more a little better. I know people like to set very specific goals. They want to do X amount of things by X day. For me, instead of being overly specific on every action item, I just try to do a little more and do it a little better every day, every month, and every year.

If you do that, over time, you don’t even realize how much more stuff you are doing.

For me, that is a right kind of goal...a persistent strategy like I want to learn more and learn better. That is part of perpetual learning. It is a mindset. Ten years ago, I didn’t know I would be doing what I am doing now, how much I’m doing, or what kind of things I would be doing.



Even five years ago before I founded the Futurist Institute, I didn't know how deeply I'd be involved in extrapolating long-term trends. I didn't know I'd be doing work with the DoD or other exciting things. I'm very excited to see what will happen 10 years from now, and how big my career cow will get. For me, that is the exciting part.

The surprise of life.

Some of it is putting the time in and grinding forward trying to get there. The reality is that often, you don't just get there, you get somewhere beyond where you thought you could even go just by having that persistent mindset of a little further...a little more...a little better.

Finally, be hungry.

If you aren't hungry, then you don't eat. You need to have a hunger and want to do things. The motivation has to come from the inside. That hunger is so important about whatever it is that you are doing. Take on those challenges.

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## PREPARING FOR FUTURE CONFLICT

# Origins of the Institute for Future Conflict – A Conversation with the Founding Thinkers

Paul Kaminsky

Ervin Rokke

Gregory Martin

John Fox

**Interviewed By: Gary A. Packard, Jr.**

Conversations about a United States Air Force Academy (USAF) center or institute focused on preparing cadets to be ready for the rapidly changing nature of future war began in earnest after a short white paper written by Dr. Paul Kaminski (USAF, Class of 1964) began circulating amongst distinguished USAF graduates and senior USAF leaders. Kaminski's original paper, dated September 2016, was simply titled "The Big Idea". The paper opened with a statement attributed to Hall of Fame hockey player Wayne Gretzky. When asked what made him great, Gretzky replied, "I don't skate to where the puck is, I skate to where the puck is going to be." Kaminski went on to praise Air Force General Hap Arnold with possessing that same spirit by engaging with Dr. Theodore Von Karman to map out future Air Force technology and the creation of the RAND Corporation to map out a policy

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**Dr. Paul G. Kaminski** (USAF 1964) served a 20-year Air Force career where he was a foundational thinker of stealth, precision-guided munitions, space, aircraft, and missile system technology. After retiring, he has served as Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, in multiple advisory and board positions, and as a CEO. He is committed to giving back to his nation by serving and chairing several large public and private company boards, and several government advisory boards. He continues his passion for game-changing technology by consulting with the senior leadership at two large defense and commercial technology firms.

framework. Many graduates of the Academy will recall a similar sentiment from a quote they memorized from Italian Air Marshall Giulio Douhet in *The Command of the Air* (1921), “Victory smiles upon those who anticipate the changes in the character of war, not upon those who wait to adapt themselves after the changes occur.”

Kaminski’s paper challenged USAFA to create a culture where cadets and faculty would embrace the spirit of Gutzky, Arnold, Von Karman, and Douhet and project their thinking years into the future. His warning was simple, “I believe it’s time for the Air Force and the Air Force Academy to chart a course to where ‘the puck’ is going to be.” Dr. Kaminski’s proposal mapped out possible activities USAFA could undertake to expose cadets to new technologies, policies, laws, and ways of thinking that would prepare them for their future. He envisioned an integrated culture at USAFA with mutual benefit to cadets, faculty, and staff that would embrace a mindset of anticipating, rather than reacting to the dizzying pace of change impacting the character of war in the 21st Century.

Kaminski’s vision gained momentum from 2017 through 2019 as it was embraced by other distinguished USAFA alums such as Gen (ret) Greg “Speedy” Martin (USAFA, Class of 1970), Lt Gen (ret) Erv Rokke (USAFA, Class of 1962), and Mr. John Fox (USAFA, Class of 1962). It also grabbed the attention of the

Dean of the Faculty, Brig Gen (ret) Andy Armacost (Northwestern, Class of 1985), and the Vice Dean, Brig Gen (ret) Gary Packard (USAFA, Class of 1982). This team developed a series of dinner meetings over the next two years with senior USAFA academic leaders and Permanent Professors, to include the current Dean, Brig Gen Linell Letendre (USAFA, Class of 1996). Through these meetings, the Big Idea of “skating to where the puck is going to be” took root, leading to the Superintendent establishing the Institute for Future Conflict (IFC) in November of 2019 to “connect cadets, faculty, and staff with cutting-edge research and innovation through exposure to the individuals and organizations shaping the future fight.”

The IFC will primarily focus on the emerging technologies highlighted in the Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy (advanced computing, “big data” analytics, artificial intelligence, autonomy, robotics, directed energy, hypersonics, and biotechnology). The IFC’s vision is to create a learning culture at USAFA that produces leaders not only versed in these technologies but also to be able to think critically about their social, historical, ethical and legal implications. The Superintendent’s direction makes clear the IFC’s “one overarching objective: support the mission of the Air Force Academy.” To achieve that, the IFC will integrate and enable the academic, military, and athletic mission elements to produce leaders of character who demonstrate the mastery of

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**Lieutenant General (ret) Ervin Rokke** (USAFA 1962). After graduating from USAFA, Lt Gen Rokke completed a graduate degree in international relations from Harvard University before becoming an Intelligence Officer. After tours in Japan and Hawaii, he returned to USAFA as a Political Sciences Instructor. He eventually became the first USAFA graduate selected as a Permanent Professor. He was selected as the Dean then returned to the intelligence career field. He retired from the Air Force as President of the National Defense University. After retirement, he became the President of Moravian College and Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, PA. He then served as a senior advisor to the USAFA Superintendent and continues to positively influence USAFA today.

technological and military competencies necessary to win in a complex world.

The IFC concept is built to leverage a unique partnership between USAFA and the Air Force Academy Foundation (AFAF). This partnership will enable the AFAF to raise funds and build networks committed to supporting USAFA that leverage the thinking and resources from the graduate community and civil sector in order to bring future-oriented commercial and operational thinking to cadets, faculty, and staff. The USAFA IFC, in partnership with the AFAF, will bring the best and brightest thinkers, operators, and researchers from civilian universities, corporate America, and the military ranks to USAFA to expose cadets, faculty, and staff to diverse thinking about the technological advancements changing the character of war. The IFC's endowment campaign is seeking to raise \$100M to create a sustainable, transformational experience at USAFA in pursuit of the next military offsets. These funds will be used to endow world-class visiting professors who will shape the culture of how the Air Force conceptualizes future defense in air, space, and cyberspace. The funds will also endow game-changing undergraduate research and develop scholarships related to anticipating rather than reacting to threats to our way of life well into the future. The IFC is a transformational idea that will create a return on investment in the security of our nation that far exceeds the financial support.

The Superintendent, in his memo announcing the IFC, stated, "Where some see a daunting challenge, we see an opportunity to redouble our efforts to produce agile and relevant officers, ready to lead the fight, regardless of location or adversary. The Institute for Future Conflict allows us to align our energy and ideas, focus on enhancing and integrating ongoing efforts, and bolster our position as a world-class academic institution." The unique value proposition of the IFC is not its focus on a singular problem or technology. Instead, the IFC is designed to influence culture across USAFA to prepare the new Second Lieutenants who graduate each year for their roles as the future leaders of our nation, in an uncertain environment where the nation's preeminence is not guaranteed.

In the conversation that follows, Brigadier General (ret) Gary Packard interviews four founding thinkers whose passion, commitment, and wisdom are most responsible for the establishment of the IFC conversation. Without these voices, the IFC would have been just a good idea. But their passion and persistence ensured the idea would not wane. Not surprisingly, all four are recipients of the USAF Academy's Distinguished Graduate Award that recognizes exceptional graduates who have set themselves apart by making extraordinarily significant contributions to our nation and/or their communities.

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**General (ret) Gregory S. "Speedy" Martin** (USAFA 1970). The son of a WWII bomber pilot, Gen Martin was infatuated with flying from a young age. After graduating from the Academy as the national collegiate parachuting champion, he excelled at pilot training and flew the F-4 in Vietnam. Gen Martin would go on to command at all levels of the Air Force and finished his career as Commander of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Allied Air Forces Northern Europe. In retirement, he has remained active as a mentor with the Joint Forces Command's Capstone, Keystone and Pinnacle courses. He also serves as a consultant and board member for multiple aerospace and defense corporations as well as supporting the development of future leaders as a mentor and advisor with several universities.

**Brigadier General (ret) Gary Packard:**

Gentlemen, thank you for your investment in the establishment of the Institute for Future Conflict (IFC) at the Air Force Academy. Also, thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts about the IFC, the Academy, and the development of our future Air Force leaders. What motivates you to be a part of this initiative at this time in the Academy's history? Dr. Kaminski, as the author of the "Big Idea" white paper, let's start with you.

**Dr. Paul G. Kaminski (USAFA '64):** I have been in my fourth career since 1997, and I began a fifth career when I joined the Board of the Air Force Academy Foundation (AFAF). This 5th career is about philanthropy – donating my time and money to issues and institutions that I believe to be important, with a focus on those where I can have an impact and make a difference. The combination of importance and the ability to make a difference are the two elements that drive me to engage. The Air Force Academy is an institution that I believe is especially important,

and the AFAF provides opportunities for me to make a difference.

**Lieutenant General (ret) Ervin Rokke**

**(USAFA '62):** Our Academy prepared me very well for a professional career of nearly 60 years, most of which has been associated with the United States Air Force. For this I am deeply indebted to the Academy and anxious to see that cadet development programs continue to prepare graduates for the increasingly complex challenges they will face in the 21st Century, particularly as they relate to the Profession of Arms. We are at an inflection point in the evolution of the military profession. Our graduates must be prepared to make decisions and take actions that maintain our status as the finest Air Force in the world. The Institute for Future Conflict initiative focuses directly on this objective and I am honored to participate in its creation and implementation.

**General (ret) Gregory S. "Speedy" Martin**

**(USAFA '70):** There are two considerations that influence my involvement. First, I have observed for

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**John M. Fox** (USAFA 1963) joined the Academy after a year at the University of Washington. After graduation, he attended pilot training at Williams AFB and was assigned as a T-38 Instructor Pilot at Laughlin AFB upon graduation. After leaving the Air Force, he obtained his MBA from the University of Denver then started two public natural resource companies with colleagues – Western Gas Processors and later Markwest Energy Partners. He retired as Chairman of Markwest in 2010, and is now focused on USAFA and other philanthropic and business pursuits.

**Brigadier General (ret) Gary Packard, Jr.** is Program Manager for the Institute for Future Conflict (IFC) at the AF Academy. He advises the Academy on IFC implementation planning and assists the Air Force Academy Foundation with fund raising and communications. He served at the Academy as Vice Dean and as the Permanent Professor and Department Head of the Behavioral Sciences and Leadership Department. He commanded the 32nd Flying Training Squadron at Vance AFB, OK, was lead Air Force writer on the Secretary of Defense's study of the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and deployed as Director of Staff, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, Southwest Asia. He has a BS in Behavioral Sciences from the Air Force Academy, master's degrees from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University and Michigan State University, and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is a command pilot with 3,900 flying hours.

some time, that while we have been engaged in the Global War on Terrorism, and to a lesser degree dealing with transnational criminal threats, our focus and resource allocation process have been heavily invested in the current challenges with much less focus on the future threats presented by the re-emergence of a Great Power Competition. But for me, Dr. Kaminski's articulation of The Big Idea and the existential need to arrest our deterioration in the competitive advantages we have enjoyed since WW II was a defining moment. Although those capabilities were heavily based on the most advanced scientific and technological innovations, they brought with them the need to also lead the world in diplomatic, legal, environmental, and social initiatives.

*Timing is important because we are losing our lead as a nation in key technology areas that affect our economic security as well as our national security. These are areas that will be particularly important to our nation's security during our cadets' military career, and to their subsequent careers.*

Second, and equally important, I have observed for decades the continuing media and congressionally based questions regarding the need and efficacy for Service Academies. In my view, the nation is best served when its Service Academies offer its cadets a curriculum and menu of learning, teamwork and leadership opportunities that will develop leaders of character who have both the educational and practical experiences to serve in the Profession of Arms. Service

Academies are not universities or colleges, they are institutions that should prepare young men and women who understand the exigencies of national security. I believe the Institute for Future Conflict will help converge each of the many offerings available to each cadet toward their service in our armed forces.

**John M. Fox (USAFA '63):** I believe the Academy is the right place to develop our future leaders to think about the threats that have been described by my colleagues. However, it seems to me that the Academy has fallen behind the curve on helping cadets understand the threat environment they will be facing as young officers. What motivates me is perhaps I can provide both money and leadership experience in trying to make USAFA a truly effective training ground for Big Air Force.

**Packard:** Dr. Kaminski, you mentioned in your answer that you believe the Air Force Academy is "very important" to the Nation's future defense at this time. You speak with a sense of urgency that we must work on this now. Why is this important at this time?

**Kaminski:** Timing is important because we are losing our lead as a nation in key technology areas that affect our economic security as well as our national security. These are areas that will be particularly important to our nation's security during our cadets' military career, and to their subsequent careers. The areas were explicitly addressed in our National Defense Strategy. An excerpt from that strategy, "The security environment is also affected by *rapid technological advancements and the changing character of war*. The drive to develop new technologies is relentless, expanding to more actors with lower

barriers of entry, and moving at accelerating speed.”<sup>1</sup> We are losing our lead because our near peers are relentless in developing these new technologies, and these new technologies are not sufficiently represented in the current Academy curriculum. This is an area that is personally important to me, and it is an area where I can make an impact. I recommended this initiative in a paper that I called “The Big Idea”, and time is of the essence for us to become relentless in the development and application of these technologies to our mission needs. Speed will continue to be important because these technologies will change, and new technologies will be developed. So, our academic program must be structured to respond to rapid changes.

**Packard:** Let us discuss why this is this important to each of you and to the Academy. The IFC Objective, simply stated, is to “provide cadets, USAFA Permanent Party and Partners with the insights and tools to better anticipate and prepare to drive the changes in the character of conflict needed to sustain and advance our national security in the 21st Century.” Lt Gen Rokke, you spent a good portion of your career, in and out of uniform, in intelligence and other national security initiatives. Can I start with you on this question? Why is this way of thinking important to you and to our Academy?

**Rokke:** As a Lieutenant in graduate school, I was fortunate to have a nationally recognized professor as my academic advisor and international relations instructor. He asserted that new answers to three simple questions could “turn the profession of arms upside down.” The questions were: 1. Who are the actors?; 2. What can they do to one another?; and 3. What do they wish to do to one another? I didn’t understand the importance of his assertion then, but

as I reflect on the last decade, it is clear that we have new actors on the international scene, new weapons systems as a result of the revolution in technology, and horrible new intentions on the part of nation-state and non-nation state actors in the international arena. Traditional notions about our profession which emerged in the mid-1950’s from distinguished scholars like Henry Kissinger, Sam Huntington, and Tom Schelling served us well during the Cold War, but are not sufficient to accommodate new security domains such as cyber and space; new technologies such as quanta, artificial intelligence, and hypersonics; and a host of ethical and moral issues associated with non-kinetic weapons. The fundamental thrust of the IFC is to influence cadet development programs in all Academy mission elements with thinking in traditional as well as emerging dimensions of the Profession of Arms. As we are reminded in current National Security and National Defense Strategy documents, we can neither deter nor prevail in future military conflicts if we remain hostage to defense thinking characteristic of the 20th Century.

**Kaminski:** This is important to me because it will have a significant impact on our National Security, and on our Economic Security. It is important to the Academy because we need to expose cadets to these technologies. We are not expecting all cadets to become experts in these fields. Some cadets will become experts via post-graduate education and field experience, but all cadets must gain some familiarity with the impact these technologies will have on future missions when employed by us against potential adversaries, and when they employ it against us. We also want the faculty at the Academy to be exposed to these technologies, so they can adapt courses they are teaching in the social sciences and humanities to address the impacts that may be expected on society, and also the impact

<sup>1</sup> <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>



of society on the application of the technology, and on the character of warfare. We also need to leverage the facilities that we have already provided with our philanthropy. The Center for Character and Leadership Development (CCLD) will be well equipped to address ethical issues that will arise with applications of these new technologies. Our future Cyber facilities will also provide the ability to assess the robustness of new technologies in a hostile cyber environment. The National Defense Strategy provides a representative list of these important enabling technologies: “New technologies include advanced computing, “big data” analytics, artificial intelligence, autonomy, robotics, directed energy, hypersonics, and biotechnology—the

among many cadets. In other words, the Academy was preparing cadets to graduate with the best education and experiences available, but not necessarily relating how those subjects and experiences would apply when they were commissioned. Thankfully, though, I did observe that many of the cadets I knew who weren’t happy about some of the Academy requirements and demands which seemed to get in the way of their “college” experience, flipped once commissioned and became some of the most courageous and competent officers I served with. The IFC is all about making the cadet experience an integral part of each cadet’s professional education and training process which is exactly the way they will be treated once commissioned.

*The IFC is all about making the cadet experience an integral part of each cadet’s professional education and training process which is exactly the way they will be treated once commissioned.*

very technologies that ensure we will be able to fight and win the wars of the future.”

**Fox:** It is important to me because U.S. national security is of utmost concern to me. We have threats from both state actors and unconventional forces around the world who are increasingly becoming more sophisticated in causing harm to our country. Big Air Force needs equal or preferably greater sophistication from its USAFA graduates, and I just do not think USAFA is performing up to its potential. The IFC concept is a game changer if our leadership at USAFA and Big Air Force can grasp its potential.

**Martin:** Over the years, including my time at the Academy, I sensed kind of a “we vs. they” environment

**Packard:** Based on your comments so far, it appears your time as a cadet continues to influence you today. Could you talk a little more about your Academy experience? How did it help you prepare for your future and what could have been better? Mr. Fox, would you start us off on this one?

**Fox:** My experience at USAFA was totally outside my world of experience. I came from a small town in eastern Washington, and no one in my family had any experience in the military. I was selected after one year at the University of Washington and could have gone to the Naval Academy or USAFA. I originally thought it would be Annapolis (which I thought I wanted to do as a young boy) but the lure of skiing in Colorado made USAFA a better choice. Basic Cadet Training (BCT) was an eye opener when my roommate had a nervous breakdown and I spent the rest of BCT by myself. Even though it was uncomfortable, that experience alone gave me the confidence that I could survive in tough conditions. Then and later, I experienced many different leadership styles which has

helped me immensely in my short career in the AF, and more particularly, in my civilian career. What could have been better was some sort of mentoring effort on helping me sort out was what the AF wanted in its officers, what career fields were available, and how I fit into the big picture. I had virtually zero contact with my Air Officer Commanding (AOC), and in only a few instances in academics, did I ever really get to know an Air Force officer. My main source of information about my future came from other cadets as we speculated about how it would be after graduation. Most of them, of course, were as clueless as me about what the Air Force really wanted from us.

**Rokke:** My Academy experience was challenging regarding mind, body, and spirit. I had been a good student in a small high school, but the curriculum was limited. The Academy exposed me to a wider variety of academic disciplines and to a much higher level of academic sophistication. I worked extremely hard to match my high school grades, but soon realized that my classmates were doing the same and earning “A” grades was difficult. Similarly, I found the Academy physical education experience to be challenging. I was not a prize athlete and had real difficulties with boxing in particular. I was more comfortable with the spiritual dimension of cadet life. Mandatory chapel was a positive experience for me as was life under the Cadet Honor System. I enjoyed the pride and comradery that emerged in my class as we worked together in meeting the Academy’s development program demands. I was selected for a graduate degree program at an Ivy League university immediately following graduation and realized quickly that the disciplined life I had led as a cadet was helpful in meeting the challenges at graduate school. Arriving at the library at 0730 hours each morning gave me an advantage over my classmates, many of whom came in much later in the morning and found themselves studying well into the nighttime

hours. For them, so-called “all nighters” were common before exams and research paper deadlines. For me, the graduate-level challenge turned out to be less severe than my cadet academic experience and I am convinced it was a result of my time management skills acquired as a cadet.

I have also profited from maintaining a physical fitness program throughout my adult life, something I would not have done without my Academy experience. Finally, I have come to realize the importance of the spiritual dimension of our lives. In its broadest sense, this has involved my approaches to professional challenges as well as friends, family, and colleagues. When I left my position as a college president many years after graduation from USAFA, I was presented with a beautiful piece of glass sculpture on which was written “Body, Mind and Spirit.” These three words, which came to life for me during my cadet years, have served as touchstones for me throughout my professional assignments in the Air Force as well as civilian contexts. I should also add that they continue to facilitate close friendships with cadet classmates whose Academy experiences some 60 years ago were like mine.

**Martin:** My cadet experience was greatly enhanced by an early desire, based on some upperclassmen’s mentoring, to become a member of the Wings of Blue parachuting team. As a result, I became a member of a team that not only developed professional parachuting skills but also allowed us to become instructors, competitors and achieve leadership positions within the team. So, on top of academics, intramurals, and cadet leadership opportunities, we were performing an “operational-like” mission which was immensely rewarding. When I graduated and went to pilot training, then F-4 training, and then to my first operational unit in Southeast Asia, it was a certification

path with which I had already become intimately familiar. But the downside of that track, for me, was that I did not apply myself academically as well as I should have, and I will always regret that shortfall.

**Kaminski:** My Academy experience was extremely helpful in all four of my careers. My first career spanned 20 years on active duty in the Air Force. While on active duty I benefited from Air Force funding and a scholarship to attend a university on the East Coast (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), and later one on the West coast (Stanford University). The combination gave me a network with Academy graduates, another with East coast research & development experts, and another on the West coast. These networks were critical in initiating and managing the three pillars of what became our Offset 2 Strategy to bring a close to the cold war. The Offset 2 Strategy involved precision guided munitions (PGM's); Intelligence, Reconnaissance & Surveillance (ISR); and Stealth. The ISR enabled us to find and track targets, the PGMs to use one weapon for most targets, and Stealth to deliver the PGMs and perform ISR in the face of advanced air defenses with limited casualties. I was privileged to have responsible positions working in each of these areas during my Air Force career.

The Academy helped me in my Air Force career to create a bridge between technologists and operators. It also gave me the foundation to recognize and apply the four P's of People, Partnerships, Probity, and Persistence. These four P's were extremely helpful in my 10-year second career involving investment banking and strategic technology consulting for both large and small businesses. I was privileged to join Bill Perry (a former Tech company CEO, Under Secretary of Defense, and Secretary of Defense who was my boss in three careers) as a partner in a small firm

named Technology Strategy & Alliances. I eventually succeeded him in the firm when he left to become Deputy Secretary of Defense (SECDEF). I later agreed to join him as Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition & Technology (at that time #3 civilian in the DOD) when he became SECDEF (my third career).

In this third career, the networks I had formed in my first two careers along with the four P's allowed me again to bridge the gap between technologists and operators to develop and field many new systems that made a difference (e.g., C-17, Predator, Global Hawk, F-35, JDAM, and VA class sub). I was able to obtain a good understanding of the mission for a new system by flying, riding, sailing, or submerging in the old system. This, and my experience in technology, industry, and large program management, was a great help in making key acquisition decisions about the new systems that would replace the old one. Finally, my fourth career has involved serving and chairing several large public and private company boards, serving on, and chairing several government advisory boards, and consulting with the senior leadership at two large defense and commercial technology firms. The networks, the four P's, and relationships that began at the Academy have continued to serve me well.

The shortfall in my Academy experience was the absence of mentoring and sense of the engineering and technology work performed in the Air Force. The Academy provided a reasonable sense of what a flying career would be like. But not so for the career that I had chosen. I later tried to address this deficiency with a donation to the Associate Of Graduates (before the Endowment was formed) that would bring graduates and non-graduate officers who had significant career accomplishments in research & development positions back to the Academy to conduct seminars describing

their work and doing some mentoring. But I found that the funds were not being used effectively and redirected them to the IFC last year.

**Packard:** Dr. Kaminski, could you tell us more about your “four P’s”? How did they influence your leadership across your four careers?

**Kaminski:** I found these four P’s to be the keys to success. The first P is for People. People are the foundation for all major programs. We need the best and brightest, supported by education and training programs. Just like pilot training, we need classroom time, and we need the analog of a flight instructor who allows the student to get in trouble, allows the student to realize they are in trouble, and gives the student the opportunity to recover before they and the instructor are both in trouble. I applied this approach to create a constructive learning environment along with the fundamental principles of leadership I learned at the Academy. The second P stands for Partnerships. A major program needs a team working together – a team that can elevate the common objective of team above their individual objectives. I certainly learned about that at the Academy. I still remember “cooperate and graduate”. The third P stands for Probity – the quality of having strong moral principles, honesty, and integrity. I learned about probity from the Honor Code. Without probity there will be no trust, and with no trust, there will be no real partnerships. The fourth P stands for Persistence. I learned about that beginning with BCT. I was amazed about how much more I could do if I really put my mind to it.

**Packard:** Each of you has been successful in both your military and civilian careers. I imagine this is not the first time you have been concerned with “skating to where the puck will be.” How did anticipating rather than reacting to change help you as a leader?

**Martin:** Because I did not apply myself as strongly as should have in the academic environment, and because I recognized that shortfall, I have tried to make up for that deficit ever since. Shortly after graduating, I developed a professional reading program to stretch my knowledge and understanding of everything from current events to the latest technological innovations so that I could be in the business of anticipating likely events and not being surprised by things I had never considered. Just as important, I have tried to think at my boss’s, boss’s level and higher. That means I have tried to understand the environment in which my boss is operating and then offer proposed courses of action that consider the concerns and challenges they wrestle with each day.

**Fox:** Looking back at my experience at USAFA what I now realize is that my 19 to 23-year-old brain was very immature and as opposed to some of my more advanced classmates. I really drifted through the institution. Since I was good at academics, I did not really feel challenged and a career in the AF was really a hazy mirage. Being an instructor pilot in T-38s was really the first time I grasped how anticipating change was crucial to doing a good job. Again, in my civilian career and after a lot of self-education (a trait I picked up at USAFA), I found one has to think two or three steps ahead to stay ahead of the problem sets you are facing.

**Rokke:** As a career military intelligence officer, it is not surprising to note that I spent much of my time in operational assignments attempting to anticipate changes among our military opponents regarding the threats they presented to our national security. At the tactical and operational levels, I focused on numbers, quality, and locations of ships, planes, tanks, and missiles. My guidance was to “stick with facts”

and get them to warfighters as rapidly as possible. This was essentially a linear challenge, and with the sophisticated intelligence collection platforms we had, it was possible to develop quite accurate assessments of opponent capabilities, both current and projected. Over time, I found myself faced with the requirement for projections at more strategic levels. What are the Soviet intentions regarding the Crimea and Ukraine? What role does China seek in the Asian geographic area? Does the United States face a serious threat from terrorists? These were much more difficult questions with non-linear dimensions. Our answers were less crisp and, quite frankly, sometimes wrong. The incredible advance of technology, with resultant weapon systems involving quantum physics, cyber, hypersonics, artificial (augmented) intelligence, etc. has introduced non-linearity to the tactical and operational levels of conflict as well. In sum, while the importance of prediction in virtually all professions continues, the challenge of “getting it right” is far more difficult in our increasingly complex, nonlinear world. Our Academy must produce graduates who can thrive in a world of “black swans.”<sup>2</sup>

**Kaminski:** I was always skating to where the puck was going to be because I was fortunate to have a series of visionary bosses who assigned me to the newest technology enabled programs. In my first Air Force field assignment at the Air Force Missile Development Center in New Mexico, I started with testing guidance systems for Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), but was quickly assigned to start the first Air Force program to use a TV camera to guide an air-launched missile. This led to our first Precision

Guided Munition (PGM), the Maverick. In my next assignment at the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), I worked on highly classified (now declassified) space sensors to define, demonstrate, and develop our first operational synthetic aperture radar in space.

My next assignment was as Special Assistant to Under Secretary of Defense for Research & Engineering, William Perry. Because of my previous experience on radar systems, I worked on the Offset 2 Strategy and several advanced technology programs to provide an assessment of whether we could really make stealth work operationally. This work was especially important to me because I saw the loss and suffering of so many of my classmates and friends at the Academy in Vietnam. It was clear to me that stealth technology could have a major impact on saving American lives if we could make it work. I carefully studied the many known unknowns about what we could really achieve in stealth operationally. I saw significant risks, but huge rewards. That work led to my next assignment as the Director of the entire stealth program. This was clearly skating to where the puck was going to be in 1981.

**Packard:** As I hear your stories, I hear a mix of both early recognition of the importance of where the puck will be as well as a couple of stories of learning this lesson later in life. However, I also hear you saying current cadets cannot wait to learn these lessons later in life. General Martin, you once shared a quote with me from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS, see inset) about challenging the status quo. Given the pace of change in the CJCS’s warning about the status quo, is it more important that we steep this in today’s cadets early in their careers?

**Martin:** Believe it or not, their career in the United States Air Force will move amazingly fast. Rather than thinking of their cadet experience as a truncated

<sup>2</sup> A black swan is an unpredictable event that is beyond what is normally expected of a situation and has potentially severe consequences. Black swan events are characterized by their extreme rarity, their severe impact, and the widespread insistence they were obvious in hindsight. (<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/blackswan.asp>)

If you believe that:

- We are in a great power competition
- We are losing our competitive advantage
- The character of war has changed
- The capacity of our forces is less than needed for future conflict
- The resources allocated to the DoD are likely to decrease in the years ahead...

**Then how can you believe that the status quo is an acceptable approach to ensuring our national security?**

- CJCS, June 4, 2019

educational experience which prepares them to serve in the Profession of Arms, I would hope the IFC could help establish a seamless evolution from being a civilian student to an apprenticeship at the Academy to a commissioned officer in the Profession of Arms. In other words, their career starts when they enter the Academy, not when they graduate.

**Rokke:** Our graduates do not have time to “catch up” on understanding the nature of the challenges they will face beginning with their initial assignments. Virtually every Air Force career field is experiencing dramatic increases in complexity which require corresponding increases in the capacity of our graduates to think critically and to make quick decisions about issues for which total information is lacking. They will be operating in an environment that features automated (augmented) intelligence and demands their understanding of complicated equipment as well as foreign cultures. Perhaps the best illustration of this phenomenon is the difference in skills required to fly F-16’s and F-15’s relative to F-22’s and F-35’s. Today’s

F-35’s have as much intelligence collection capability as the airborne intelligence platforms that existed during my operational career from 1962 to 1997. Twenty-first century fighter pilots must know how to fly as well as how to manage enormous quantities of information. Learning is a life-long process; the earlier it starts, the better.

**Kaminski:** Our Air Force was founded by leveraging superior technology, superior people, and superior training to enable a smaller force that could overmatch our adversaries. Gen Arnold gave Theodore von Karman a huge assignment to leverage technology developed by Germany after WW II, and initiated a company named RAND to help set a course (it then stood for R & D). I chaired the RAND board in my fourth career, and observed the important role they played in leveraging our technology. Young officers in our Air and Space Forces need to be leaders in leveraging advanced technology, and our cadets need to be trained to be smart buyers and smart users of advanced technology if they aspire to become future leaders.

**Fox:** The reason Air Force officers need this ability is the incredible pace of change in the threat environment the U.S. faces. This will not be easy. Based on my experience as a young cadet and watching my children and grandchildren as a father and grandfather, the 18 to 22-year-old brain is not fully developed and is often focused on things other than preparing for the future. This is why integrated programming with the Center for Character and Leadership Development, Athletics, Military Training, Academics, and Airmanship is important to our success. Equally important is establishing better mentoring and decision-making tools for cadets as they think about their majors and their future careers.



**Packard:** Along those lines, how can the IFC influence how cadets think about their future in a way that will transform their time at the Academy to better prepare them to skate to where the puck will be?

**Fox:** If the IFC initiative is fully adopted, we will have a platform that informs everything we do at USAFA. To me it would be the glue that would bind the mission elements into a single-minded focus on cadet education and preparation. Currently, we have ships passing in the night as we go about the process. Given the rapid rotation of personnel at the Academy, to include the Superintendent's relatively short tenure, bringing high-level experts to the Academy in advisory and visiting faculty roles is important for the culture change the

the 21st century Profession of Arms. The definition of "Arms" will expand far beyond kinetic things that explode, and include expertise in domains exploiting directed energy, Big Data, machine learning, cyber offensive and defensive tools, multi-domain command and control, and the list goes on. They will need more time learning about these technologies and their impact on society as well as more agility and efficiency in the learning time they have.

**Rokke:** If properly applied, IFC thinking will result in cadets having to work harder at the same time as they come to appreciate more fully the expanding opportunities available to them in the Profession of Arms. Preparing for excellence in the 21st century military will require graduates capable of leadership across an increasingly broad spectrum of military domains in both kinetic and non-kinetic arenas. Each of these domains requires levels of professional expertise above anything required in the past. Indeed, it may also involve the Academy rethinking the academic curriculum in particular to ensure that its traditional balance between the basic and engineering sciences on the one hand and social science and humanities on the other accommodates the revolutionary changes technology is bringing to our profession. In

addition to broadening the span of core courses, we also may be forced to provide greater depth in emerging arenas such as augmented intelligence, quanta, etc. The good news is that cadets now entering the Academy are coming with backgrounds and skills superior to their predecessors. Like their predecessors, however, they are seeking a quality experience and are willing to work hard if the challenges are realistic and fascinating. The 21st century Profession of Arms, if properly portrayed to cadets, will meet both these challenges. In so

*Preparing for excellence in the 21st century military will require graduates capable of leadership across an increasingly broad spectrum of military domains in both kinetic and non-kinetic arenas. Each of these domains requires levels of professional expertise above anything required in the past.*

IFC seeks to establish. This is the value the Academy/Academy Foundation partnership, as it will bring the right resources to the table to forge a long-term leadership role for the IFC at the Academy.

**Kaminski:** The long-term role of the IFC is critical to the culture of future thinking our cadets must have while at the Academy. Their time at the Academy will require gaining a continuing increase in breadth to encompass the multiple domains that will compose



doing, it will transform the cadet experience in such a manner that cadets will find their time at USAFA more interesting and will leave the Academy with a sound grasp of their chosen career fields and an increased enthusiasm about serving as Air Force officers.

**Martin:** There can be no substitute for a rigorous, current, and demanding academic curriculum to provide each cadet with the foundational knowledge, intellectual underpinnings and personal discipline to prepare them not only to understand and face the challenges of “world as it is.” But equally important is developing the insights, tools and skills necessary to envision and anticipate “what the world could be.” That statement really defines the primary objective of the IFC.

**Packard:** IFC thinking is about changing a culture of how we think about national security in the 21st century. In a culture shaped by IFC thinking, how would you describe the character of a graduating cadet?

**Kaminski:** The character of a graduating cadet needs to be founded on the base of the four P’s. They will need to learn how to create an environment to foster and exploit each of those P’s. The first P will need to include people with a great diversity of knowledge and expertise to exploit the technology available, and the other P’s to advance, integrate and combine the arms to address the growing number of important domains that will compose the 21st century Profession of Arms. The technologies that I was privileged to work on in the Offset 2 strategy in the 1970’s and early 1980’s changed the character of warfare, and the new technologies discussed above will enable other major changes. The critical issue is who will be the first to get to the puck. Remember Giulio Douhet, “Victory smiles upon those who anticipate changes in the character of

warfare, not upon those who wait to adapt themselves after the changes occur.” The IFC is our tool to shape our culture.

**Fox:** Quite simply it would make all the difference for “Big Air Force” and the security of our country. We would have a chance of graduating highly motivated Air Force officers who are knowledgeable about critical issues facing the Air Force and are ready day one to assume great responsibility. In addition, they would be slotted into Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSCs) that play to their strengths and interests. Finally, USAFA could truly respond to the National Defense Initiative in a competent way rather a mixed and uncoordinated effort.

**Rokke:** In a culture shaped by IFC thinking, cadets will graduate with a better understanding and a higher level of enthusiasm for the Profession of Arms. This is particularly true, I believe, for those cadets who do not pursue rated careers. As I recall, all members of my class (1962) were pilot-qualified when we arrived and very few chose non-rated career fields. I was among those directed to attend graduate school a month or so before graduation even though I had orders for pilot training. I remember pleading with my academic advisor to allow me to pursue the flying option. His response was that I could always go to pilot training but could not always go to Harvard. He was wrong; my eyes went below flying standards during my first year at graduate school. When the military personnel system asked what my alternative would be, I did not have a clue what other options existed. I chose intelligence because a couple of my favorite graduate school professors talked positively about their intelligence experience during WWII. I told my relatively new wife that our Air Force life would probably be short.

The Academy, as well as the Air Force, have come to recognize that highly qualified Air Force officers are needed for non-rated positions. A bias toward flying continues to exist, but cadets are now free to choose from a wide spectrum of non-rated functional areas, and about one-half of them do. An Academy culture shaped by IFC will continue to acquaint our cadets with the option of pilot training so long as airpower remains vital to our national security. It has done that for over half a century and does it very well. However, an IFC culture at the Academy will also acquaint cadets with the myriad of challenging new career fields brought to us by the technological revolution and by dramatic changes in the international system. In short, cadets will graduate from the Academy with a higher probability of both understanding and appreciating the full spectrum of career fields offered by the Air Force.

What does this mean for the character of our graduates? For starters, it means that they will enter their junior officer training programs with improved attitudes toward, and a positive, if not enthusiastic, outlook on their careers. It means that our graduates will have more confidence in and respect for the Academy experience because it will have adapted to the “real world” of 21st century warfare. Most of all, it will mean that our graduates will be better prepared to pursue excellence in a broader spectrum of Air Force career fields. These fundamentals are the foundation for the character of outstanding officers. They also are important “antibodies” for cynicism in both cadets and officers.

**Martin:** It has been my impression that based on the technical sophistication of Air Force systems, their costs and our important concern for safety that we can breed a culture of superb operators who can execute operational activities with the skill and effectiveness,

second to none. But those actions are usually taken in compliance with well-developed Technical Orders, Tactics Manuals, Air Tasking Orders, and/or other directives. We are doing better in teaching critical thinking skills, but in the end, we really do not inspire our Airmen to deviate from prescribed procedures. I think one of the cultural changes we will be looking for and which could become inherent in the term character, is developing people who will be proactive.

**Packard:** Gentlemen, thank you for your candid and insightful answers. Your investment in the future of our Academy will be forever captured in the archives of Academy history as a critical contribution that shaped how we think about national security.

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FOSTER A CULTURE THAT EMBRACES  
INNOVATION, FUELED BY AIRMEN

# How the Neuroscience of Leadership Enables a Culture of Innovation

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## Conventional Wisdom versus Research

If you ask 1,000 people what good leadership looks like, you'll likely get 1,000 different answers. Some might say it's about commanding authority and demonstrating power. Others might say it's actually about guiding with a quiet hand.

We hold these disparate beliefs because the concept of leadership forms early on in our minds, as children (Hawley, 1999). Moving through the world, we unconsciously begin sorting people as “leaders” and “followers,” deducing who makes and enforces the rules, and who merely abides by them (Sy, 2010). Over time, our lived experience builds on this initial foundation, until our own style of leadership becomes a mosaic of personality, intuition, conventional wisdom, mentorship, and incentive.

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Over the past two decades, however, the NeuroLeadership Institute (NLI) has detailed a fundamental and comprehensive understanding of leadership that can be ascertained through the discoveries from the field of neuroscience. Rather than default to what conventional wisdom says we ought to be doing, the field of neuroleadership compels us to make decisions based on the insights drawn from empirical research. What we've found over the years is that if you can understand how the brain works, you'll necessarily be in a better position to understand how to inspire people, spark creativity, share and listen to new ideas, and have challenging conversations that remain productive. In other words, you'll understand how to lead (Mumford et al., 2007).

In this article, we give an overview of the value neuroscience brings to leadership, explain how a science-based approach can foster a culture of innovation, and explore how all this pertains to developing future leaders, specifically cadets at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA).

## Brain Science as the Foundation for Leadership

Many findings from human cognitive and social neuroscience offer valuable contributions to our understanding of leadership. Decades of research have shown that certain stimuli will produce repeated neural signatures in the brain. For instance, the expectation of reward has long been shown to trigger the release of the neurotransmitter dopamine, which compels us to seek further rewards (see Wise & Rompre, 1989).

This kind of empiricism does not traditionally dominate the larger conversation around building effective leaders, but it is a natural fit. The suite of complex cognitive skills that make for effective leaders can largely be described in terms of stimulus and response. In other words, if leaders have an idea of what is going on inside their own minds and the minds of their teams, they'll be better armed to make the right decisions in the moment (Bratton et al., 2011).

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With empiricism acting as our guide, we can revisit how leadership is generally described in academic settings. In the literature, leadership is described as a social influence process (Forsyth, 2015). Hence, individuals and groups must recognize and respect that “leadership” is an idea in the minds of followers (Emrich, 1999), and that the leader’s actions, decisions, and behaviors regulate the degree of influence they can have on others.

What that means is leadership is not always synonymous with a person’s position on the organizational chart. People at the very top of the organization can demonstrate a lack of leadership, while those at the bottom can show a great deal. Indeed, as far as the literature is concerned, hierarchy matters less than influence. For instance, a wide body of research shows that people unconsciously adopt the behaviors and emotions of one another (McDonald, 2015), in particular the highest-status member of their group (Maccoby, 2004). If this person begins to panic, the team is more likely to panic as well. If this person remains calm, the team remains calm. In the workplace, typically this highly influential person is also the highest-ranking, which helps explain why we show greater deference to people of increasing authority. But it is true that leadership, and therefore influence, can exist at all levels within a hierarchy. From this starting point, we can ask an important question: Out of all the effects a leader can have on their team, what effect does science suggest leads to the best outcomes?

### Social Threat and Reward

The brain is an incredibly complex organ, and it performs a variety of fundamental functions to keep us alive—for instance, threat detection. At every waking moment, the brain is assessing whether what we experience poses a danger to our survival. Thousands

of years ago, this mechanism served us well for keeping our bellies full and protecting us from predators looking for their next meal.

Over time, as humans evolved out of the food chain, our system for threat-detection evolved along with us. Even if we don’t face any risk of getting thrown into the lion’s den, many of the threat-detection mechanisms are still hard-wired in our brain. We still feel a palpable sense of threat and reward in purely social situations, such as when the boss criticizes our idea in front of the entire team, or when he or she publicly celebrates a job well done. Importantly, these social threats and rewards yield similar effects in the brain as physical threats and rewards (Eisenberger & Cole, 2012). If we perceive a threat, the performance of the prefrontal cortex gets temporarily impaired, dampening the parts of our brain used for reason and critical thinking (Ossewaarde et al., 2011). If we perceive a reward, we feel a burst of cognitive control, which may manifest as excitement and motivation (Botvinick & Braver, 2015).

Threat and reward don’t compete in the same cognitive weight class, however. Threat is much stronger because threat has much more dire consequences for our survival than reward does (Baumeister et al., 2001). For example, missing nice, ripe berries in the forest is a letdown, but mistaking a stick for a snake can kill. It’s no wonder, then, that we forget about the compliment someone paid us five minutes ago, but we stew over the nasty remark someone made last week. Such is the power of social threat.

In general, leaders have a responsibility to minimize the sense of threat felt by their teams, and to maximize the sense of social reward, from the most casual of one-on-one chats, all the way up to company-wide policies that permeate an organization’s culture.

## The Importance of Common Language

Already we're starting to see a benefit of brain science in leadership from research on common languages within high-performing organizations. When we use the same terms to describe phenomena, such as a person's apparent burst of excitement after receiving praise from a manager, we can feel more confident that everyone involved is indeed talking about the same thing. In the most extreme cases, this is how organizations come to embody the stereotype of "corporateese," in which members adopt the same jargon-filled vocabulary and unite around key buzzwords. People can also unite around shared understandings of scientific language and concepts.

Without this common language, teams risk having discussions in which individuals all think they're being clearly understood, and yet each person interprets the discussion differently (Cabre, 1999). The benefit here isn't just stronger interpersonal connections, but stronger neurological ones. Studies have shown that two people having a conversation show increased alignment in brain activity, especially when they can predict what the other person is about to say (Dicker, 2014). It's not just a metaphor, in other words, to say we want to "get on the same wavelength."

## Creating a Culture of Innovation

So, how can leaders apply social threat and reward, and extract the value of a common language, to develop a culture of innovation? Let's start, once again, by defining our terms.

Many leaders tend to conflate culture with the values and priorities they set for their organization—what they aspire to be. However, there is a fundamental gap

between knowing and doing (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000). This discrepancy is known, fittingly, as the "knowing-doing gap," and it states that just because we aspire to do something doesn't mean we will do it. When our intentions or goals are ambiguous and unspecific, it is very cognitively taxing for us to be able to act toward reaching that goal. We simply do not know what action to take or behavior to exhibit to shorten the distance between what we want and how to get there.

NLI's definition of culture aligns more closely with the actual behaviors that get carried out by a large number of people on a regular basis—their shared everyday habits. For instance, teams that show up early and stay late have developed a culture of determination, or over-work, depending on your perspective. Teams whose members regularly check in with one another and ask how they can help may be said to have a culture of cooperation and support. The same logic applies to innovation. An innovative organization is composed of people performing the behaviors that foster innovation. Some of these behaviors are directly related to the transformational leadership concept of intellectual stimulation which prescribes "questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways." (Bass et al., 2003, p. 208). In this manner, threats such as ridicule are minimized and rewards such as praise and encouragement are maximized as solutions to problems are sought from all members of the team and not just those not in positions of authority.

While full-fledged innovation requires the persistent re-evaluation of ideas and resources, based on our research at NLI, we have identified at least two active ingredients that make innovation more likely in a given team: diversity and growth mindset.

## Creating New Behaviors

Research shows that organizations with greater diversity of race and gender are more likely to be more effective, more creative, and generate more financial returns than more homogenous organizations (Hunt, 2015). Why? Because diversity causes friction, and in that friction, is where team members can cut through the assumptions and biases that lead to barriers like groupthink. Diverse teams—and specifically those that work hard to act inclusively—tend to solve problems from more angles, with greater scrutiny, and with fresher perspectives than more homogenous teams (Hunt, 2015). In the short-term, this can have the downside of making diversity a somewhat challenging experience. Diverse teams disagree with one another more. Meetings don't become feel-good echo chambers. But if teams are willing to exert that effort, and navigate that discomfort, the long-term benefits are clear. On the other side of disagreement is a clearer understanding of one another's positions and more effective decision-making in general (Price, Cappella & Nir, 2002).

At the same time, innovation, in many ways, depends on whether people can approach the process with a growth mindset. This is the belief that skills and abilities can be improved, and that developing our skills and abilities is the purpose of the work we do (Derler et al., 2018). Opposite a fixed mindset, which is the notion that people's skills are fixed from birth, a growth mindset thinking compels us to continuously develop our own, and other people's skills and abilities, as well as to experiment, take risks, and view failure not as an end point, but as a necessary component of success. Leaders can actively encourage their organization's collective mindsets by demonstrating certain behaviors that express a growth mindset: highlighting progress

over perfection, publicly exploring new ideas and learnings from others, or talking openly about what has been learned from past failures. Organizations such as Microsoft, HP, Cigna, and Telenor have all been using the concept of growth mindset as a cultural imperative for years, as they strive at being more adaptive, innovative, and most importantly, to enable their employees to be life-long learners who won't shy away from difficulties and change (Derler et al., 2019).

Taken together, teams that actively seek diverse perspectives and work to instill a growth mindset in their members—and reinforce these terms as vital and alive—can gradually begin to start creating a culture of innovation through their daily habits. They will gather new ideas from disparate sources within the organization and they will keep an open mind about what kinds of solutions are appropriate for a given problem.

Not to mention, they should expect to reap benefits of deploying this common set of frameworks organization-wide, as we saw with social threat and reward. Over time, people begin attending to wholly new aspects of their work. They encounter familiar problems with a newfound sense of opportunity, not resignation. They hear ideas once viewed as odd or far-fetched now as novel and creative. And on an ongoing basis, their own continued use can start encouraging others to do the same, multiplying a lone behavior into a company-wide culture.

## Applying the Research to Developing USAFA Cadets

So why does this matter to those who serve at USAFA? To examine this question, we must first look to USAFA's mission statement: "To educate, train and inspire men and women to become officers of character motivated



to lead the United States Air and Space Forces in service to our Nation” (USAFA, 2020). Implied in this mission statement is the requirement for these men and women to strive for the United States Air Force (USAF) third core value of “Excellence in All We Do... to meet or exceed standards objectively based on mission needs and continuously search for new and innovative ways to successfully accomplish the mission” (USAF, 2015, p. 17). Clearly, the USAF believes that the ability to innovate is of value to future officers.

Having addressed that question, the next question, then, is how do we develop the ability to innovate among cadets, specifically an ability to value and leverage a growth mindset and diversity? If we believe the science concerning how people react to threats and rewards, and we desire the continuing development of an innovative ability of USAFA’s cadets, then it follows that USAFA should act in a manner that limits threats to developing this ability and maximizes rewards of it. In essence, those who serve at USAFA should develop and exhibit habits of behavior that facilitate a culture which values fostering innovation. How we do this will occur at multiple levels of leadership, to include how we act as individuals and lead ourselves, how we serve as members of teams, and how we craft policy at the organizational level.

Let’s first delve into examples of these actions by starting with the highest ranking member of the USAF, current Chief of Staff (CSAF), General David Goldfein. At the Air Force Association Air Warfare Symposium in February 2020, and as reported by the Air Force Magazine, Elon Musk stated, “The fighter jet era has passed.” Now those of us acquainted with the past or current USAF culture may view Musk’s statement as brash. However, despite what some may claim as the views of a heretic, General Goldfein “leaned in to hear what followed” (Cohen, 2020, p.

20), when instead he could have acted by cutting off Mr. Musk and setting this perceived wrong “right”. While this example occurred at the individual level of leadership, it spoke volumes in terms of how the highest ranking Airman in the USAF listens to new ideas.

This subtle example can be easily translated to the USAFA context. However, it is worth noting that due to its hierarchical design, the nature of USAFA and the USAF at large with its “chain of command” creates an authoritative culture that is resistant to disorder. This can be both effective and ineffective depending on each individual unit’s mission and subsequent situations. For instance, an authoritative culture reinforces our expectations of Airmen during the immediate employment of weapons—innovation is not desired, rather they are trained to run checklists and follow certain procedures. On the other hand, if Airmen are tasked with solving problems with unknown solutions, then how would one follow a checklist?

Returning once again to the CSAF example, General Goldfein leveraged both diversity and a growth mindset. He invited the diverse perspective of an “outsider” and listened to a new way of viewing the era in which the USAF operates. At USAFA, we can take a cue from the CSAF’s example. At the individual level, we all can better value the power of diverse thought and be more accepting of new ways of accomplishing the mission. This is especially salient when accomplishing the mission means coming up with unknown solutions.

For instance, let’s say a cadet is struggling to select an academic major and he or she comes to you for advice. For this cadet, this is an individual leadership problem with an unknown solution. In order for you to help the cadet solve it, you could simply say, “Pick the major that you think will get you the highest grade point average,” knowing that this performance metric

carries significant weight in determining options available for this cadet. On the other hand, to leverage those behaviors that foster innovation, you could say, “It depends on which major you think will best develop you for your officer career, and I think you should also consider talking to others about this before you make a decision.” While this approach would be more innovative, it could increase threats and decrease rewards in terms of potentially lower grades.

While this example speaks to behaving innovatively at the individual level, it raises the question of why this potential threat of lower grades would be present from an organizational perspective. If USAFA aspires to develop cadets to be the most effective and innovative officers, would we not also want them to select a major that would give them the tools to achieve this goal? Put another way, if there are existing organizational rewards that reinforce a fixed mindset, should we be surprised if we don’t always achieve our desired outcomes? Without rewards embedded within organizational policy, it is likely that threats to the kinds of innovative behaviors we seek will endure. In order to make this happen, policy changes may be necessary.

Here is another example. If the institution seeks to supply the USAF with pilots, we have a pretty good idea from over 60 years of experience what kind of recruit has the highest propensity to choose this career field. However, strictly recruiting toward this target could adversely impact diversity, potentially rendering USAFA ill-prepared to meet new requirements or engage in the kind of innovative thinking needed to anticipate and solve emerging problems. While a solution to this challenge is outside the scope of this paper, it serves as an example of how policy can threaten or reward a desired outcome, as well as how a growth mindset itself can be the mechanism that could help derive the answer.

Let’s end with a final hypothetical example that involves fostering innovative behaviors at the individual, team, and organizational levels of leadership. USAFA’s Honor Code states, “We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does.” For the sake of this example, let’s assume that at some point in their tenure, a cadet violates the code, but the violation goes unreported. Not only is the toleration clause undermined, but there is also a lost opportunity to develop that cadet. In order to improve the program that engages cadets in a manner that challenges their habits and supports their development, the Superintendent has assembled a task force to examine the issue. The Superintendent wants to reduce these infractions, but is also open to exploring other more innovative solutions.

Given this charge, the task force begins by interviewing a sample of cadets. Throughout the interviews, cadets explain that they are afraid to report their violations due to the threat of being kicked out. In addition, they say that cadets cover for each other because they value loyalty. In terms of a solution, the cadets think the threat of being kicked out shouldn’t be a standard for self-reports or admitting to a violation when confronted, but only for those who denied the accusation and were later found in violation. Finally, most cadets think it would be valuable if they could access mentors to discuss honor violations without fear of reprisal. However, other cadets think that no matter the circumstances, the presumptive sanction for any honor violation should be disenrollment.

Hearing this, the task force next interviews a sample of faculty and staff. This group corroborates the assumption that many violations go unreported. Some agree with the current policy and some do not; however, most feel that they would be open to discussing violations with cadets as well as how to learn from

them. Last, the task force interviews a group of USAFA alumni. Some in this group agree to the assumption and some do not. Some agree that being kicked out has always been the standard and the circumstances of the violation should not matter, while others see room for changing the standard. In terms of solving the problem, ideas range from increasing the fear of disenrollment to minimizing the fear by eliminating the policy all together.

With this information in hand, the task force presents to the Superintendent several potential solutions to the problem. He thanks the task force for questioning assumptions, reframing the problem, and looking at new ways of approaching old problems. The following week, the Superintendent rolls out a new honor policy which is radically different than before. This innovative solution was enabled through a culture shift at how individuals, teams, and organizations viewed the problem. At the individual level, when the task force interviewed cadets, USAFA members, and alumni, they listened to the various perspectives rather than discounting one over another. When the task force worked as a team to provide potential solutions, they left no option off the table and included the full range of sanctions as presented by the interviews. Leveraging this diverse perspective and a growth mindset, the Superintendent was able to create an innovative policy at the organizational level of leadership to reward behavior more aligned with being a leader of character. Clearly, this is offered as an illustrative example of an innovative approach and not as a suggestion that improvement is necessarily needed regarding the Honor Code.

## Conclusion

NLI's brain science research indicates that the more we pay attention to how people's minds function, the

better equipped we will be as leaders. Thus, when the mission at USAFA is to "educate, train, and inspire" men and women to become officers of character, insights from neuroscience can inform how we develop courses, programs, and experiences, as well as the policies that govern them.

There are incremental steps we can take to continue to steer USAFA's orientation toward innovation, whether at the individual, team, or organizational level. However, USAFA leadership will need to take into account many legacy policies that influence recruiting, admissions, curriculum, and accessions, which could impact diversity and a growth mindset. Knowing that these attributes are ingredients in a culture of innovation is not enough. Threats to diversity need to be examined and rewards expanded. Creating new policies that allow for a wider range of graduate attributes, as well as encouraging alternative paths to graduation could have a positive impact on diversity recruiting, experimental curriculum, experiential learning, and other less-traditional programming. With some subtle shifts in policy and risk acceptance, USAFA faculty, staff, and cadets may begin to see opportunities to alter individual behaviors as well as interactions with others. In doing so, they could cultivate newfound innovative abilities. Having a growth mindset and diversity of thought can continue to expand such as to become the norm. Ideally, it will become commonplace to encourage each other towards innovative pursuits that push comfort zones and expand capabilities. Doing so will help transform innovation from being merely an idea, into an organization-wide habit.

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FOSTER A CULTURE THAT EMBRACES  
INNOVATION, FUELED BY AIRMEN

# Yesterday at War with Tomorrow: Rebooting the Profession of Arms

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Today's American military largely identifies as a "Profession of Arms," reflecting its long evolution as the expert custodian of societally sanctioned violence and its members' adherence to recognized values of courage, skill, and sacrifice in service of the nation's security. From the founding of the American republic to the counterinsurgent campaigns of the last two decades, the force of arms has been the ultimate means by which national interests have been both defended and advanced. Members of the American military have repeatedly been called upon to conduct humanitarian operations, counterinsurgency, deterrence across the spectrum of armed conflict, and fight regional then global wars. Centuries of battles fought by American men and women under arms—sometimes horrendously destructive, sometimes barely known except by those involved—have helped create and advance peaceful conditions both foreign and domestic. This is a noble heritage, one justifiably and jealously guarded by military and civilians alike.

Yet the traditional face of human strife, both in its episodic violence and the relative clarity and geographic foundation of its means and outcomes, is changing. September 11th, 2001 marked one visible inflection point in that evolution. Since that searing event, America has seen a tide of commissions, studies, public laws, and

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public servants calling for or attempting to achieve greater “whole of government” approaches to national security. Despite these efforts, we have made mostly incremental progress in that regard, while potentially lethal competitions below the level of full-fledged war, and continue to grow exponentially in number and complexity. As we have tinkered around the edges of meaningful policy and organizational change, our language, the ways we describe and analyze challenges to our collective well-being, and our implicit understanding and interaction with all things military is becoming subtly but dangerously outdated.

In other words, war is very often not what it used to be. Ensuring future national security requires overcoming *instinct* and *inertia*: the instinct to think of war as primarily physical, discontinuous, and military; and the inertia of having very successfully waged it for the last century using people, weapons and organizations whose ethos dates back to the days before Thucydides. In the American psyche, there is also a powerful “over there” legacy that springs from two oceans and centuries of insulation from external attack, shaping unspoken assumptions that military service mostly means duty in distant places, and involving risk of life and potential taking of life with weapons, however sophisticated or basic. Because war has been intimately linked with life and death, and loss in war with disaster for the losing party, we also unfailingly connect martial valor with national security value.

This is understandable: the most powerfully motivating aspects of human conflict, at both

individual and societal levels, still involve primordial physical acts to hurt and kill one another. As political scientist Harold Lasswell observed and Samuel Huntington amplified, the Profession of Arms has historically been about the “management of violence.” From its rank insignia to unit flags to uniforms to standards of discipline, the American profession of arms reflects these traditions and values in its structure and ways of interacting. For the most part, it also justifiably reflects the realities of physical combat in preparing and employing lethal force on behalf of the society it serves. Yet as threats have diversified, the modern military is increasingly stretched well beyond a core competence centered on violence. Emerging tools, skills, considerations, and arenas for non-physical, indirectly deadly conflict have not replaced lethality,

***Emerging tools, skills, considerations, and arenas for non-physical, indirectly deadly conflict have not replaced lethality, tragedy, and heroism in the annals of history; they have simply added another complex layer. The actions of combatants and all of the battlefields on which they might fight were once entirely within the common human experience. That time has passed and it will not return.***

tragedy, and heroism in the annals of history; they have simply added another complex layer. The actions of combatants and all of the battlefields on which they might fight were once entirely within the common human experience. That time has passed and it will not return.



Globalized geopolitical and economic interconnections are closely coupled with the parallel relentless march of technology. Together, these factors are fundamentally altering the character of conflict and its most obvious manifestation, war. In a world where conflict is less often about attack or defense of territory, the presence or absence of physical valor may not scale to affect the fate of nations as it has throughout history. Global interconnection means a front line is no longer simply a line on a map, but *anywhere* in today's near-infinite web of terrestrial, extra-terrestrial, and virtual interactions where one party can damage the interests of another. Studying an adversary's vulnerabilities is nothing new, but the international consensus on use of that knowledge is uneven at best, and the number of ways to inflict meaningful damage—to infrastructure, individuals, or to societal trust—have multiplied. Attacks affecting an entire society are no longer strictly the purview of powerful states either, since individuals and groups can conceivably leverage physical and virtual interconnections for purposes both good and ill, creating damage to people and nations that used to require what we would recognize as organized, large scale military action.

Thus, conflict today *must also* be understood to include things rarely called war. These are the real harms that can be invited by, inflicted through, or suffered by, the complex physical and virtual connections between societies. Yet we are actually living in the sum of ancient and modern worlds, where attacks can be as horrific as a beheading, as instantly destructive as a thermonuclear blast, or as subtle as insertion of lines of malignant code in essential warfighting or national infrastructure systems. The former attacks demand, and would be likely to receive, immediate response. For the latter, the members and organizations who compose the Profession of Arms may lack the mission, tools or awareness to repel them until after substantial

damage is inevitable in the fabric of the society they are charged to defend. Thus for 21st century militaries, the range of actions required to succeed in managing those future conflicts is an “and,” not an “or” conundrum. Massed physical forces are not going away but they are no longer the clear harbinger of very real lethal intent; enemies can harm each other from half a planet away, using remotely operated vehicles or electronic attacks that combine great physical separation with unprecedented intimacy and immediacy. A thought experiment considering a century's worth of military operations may help to underscore the complexity of future national security problems.

In the 1940s, tens of thousands of Allied aircraft attacked Axis targets in order to destroy transportation and other infrastructure. Over a period of years, tens of thousands of airmen perished, along with greater numbers of combatants and non-combatants in the places that were targeted. The success of the effort was uneven and the cost, in lives and suffering, immense. No nation wished to repeat such horrors or to suffer air attack of any kind. Thus, in the 1950s and 1960s, when a nuclear-armed Soviet Union threatened North America with long-range bombers, the United States and Canada allied to create NORAD (North American Aerospace Defense), a bi-national military structure to provide long-range detection of attacking aircraft and air defense of their territory. NORAD built a vast radar network, deployed more than a thousand air defense fighters and hundreds of surface-to-air missiles, and later developed the ability to detect ballistic missiles as they came into the Soviet arsenal. While imperfect even when fielded, this classical military response to a tangible challenge sufficed to defend territory and population for its time. In short, a physical threat emerged, a military response ensued, and a national security objective was achieved.



If we now consider the 2040s and assume industry will then be successfully fielding a North American network of autonomous, mostly electrically powered vehicles, the dynamics of ensuring that transportation network remains capable of carrying the commerce required to sustain life and enable prosperity are entirely different. Intellectual property rights and commercial incentives will largely determine the design of the autonomous vehicles and supporting systems of the future. It is unclear who has either responsibility or authority to ensure their resiliency against cyber-attacks on electrical power or the software and sensors of the vehicles themselves. Economic disincentives will make it less likely they will be designed with backup means of operation, and future generations will not naturally develop the skills to navigate or control vehicles. It's even less clear who will organize the collective understanding, national will or mechanisms to design this intricate future transportation infrastructure for resilience against adversary attack—or to decide if its potential costs outweigh its advantages. It is, however, crystal clear that we cannot again solve the problem with an after-the-fact, uniformed military defense based on lines on a map. Defending something as critical as the North American transportation network fifty years ago was nearly exclusively a military function; defending it fifty years hence may be barely a military function.

Contemporary journalism provides an example of the gaps in public understanding of the modern conflict environment and the fabric of technological society—a dramatic firefight on the other side of the globe that makes national news should actually be far less concerning to the average American than a silent attack in orbit affecting Global Positioning Systems (GPS) or communications capabilities. We increasingly rely on sophisticated space infrastructure to underpin electrical power, fuel transmission

through pipelines, banking systems, “just in time” delivery systems, airlines, trains, government and corporate information systems, individual ability to communicate and access information, and countless other commonplace services. Certainly, today's military and civilian satellite operators are focused on robustness and resiliency; they have successfully provided a growing panoply of useful services for decades. Yet without bullets or bombs, potential adversaries continue to demonstrate the desire and willingness to jam, disrupt or destroy the information channels and content of modern life. China's 2007 destructive anti-satellite test, the recurring, large-scale hacking and exfiltration of sensitive personal data and intellectual property, and the United Kingdom's defense secretary Gavin Williams' statement a year ago that Russia had been “researching” Britain's critical infrastructure, “trying to spot vulnerabilities,” are some examples of non-traditional battlefields and effects that should concern us. Analogous examples involving other nations, groups, and actors abound. Many will seek the ability to threaten and destroy parts of our complex, networked societal infrastructure. Against these challenges, the oceans that protected America for centuries have been shrinking rapidly, and they are finally mostly irrelevant. At a national level, we need to finally accept that uncomfortable truth, understand its implication when juxtaposed with centuries of military and civil tradition, law, and policy and work to master the new reality. Absent intense, sustained, thoughtful and collaborative effort that truly involves the almost-mythical whole-of-society, we are unlikely to continue to succeed in competitions that matter. The drumbeat of increasingly complex conflict in intangible realms is real.

Because the ancient lexicon of discord—words like *war, arms, force, military, violence, death, battlefield*, and many others—has retained all of its resonance

while losing some of its relevance, it is becoming dangerously incomplete and perhaps misleading in describing modern military professionals or the kinds of battles we need them to fight. Today's battlefield can be a hilltop in Syria, the phone in a citizen's hand, or the airless vacuum of a geosynchronous orbit 22,236 miles above Earth's equator. Citizens of George Washington's era would recognize the uniformed combatants who bear arms in Syria, and would call it a battlefield; they would likely strain to understand how those who provide weather, position, timing, and intelligence from space are either military or could be involved in consequential conflict. Words matter.

*The Profession of Arms, if it is to remain a profession, will need to take interpersonal and intra-community respect and inclusion to new levels, leveraging past progress in integrating race, gender, and ethnicity to realize teamwork that respects and values principled, constructive contributions regardless of how closely they mirror traditional warrior externalities.*

Equally, our natural respect for the strong men and women who have gone into harm's way on our behalf now threatens to stand between us and a clear understanding of what we *need* them to do. We have associated their courage with willingness to risk life, and we always will; but we also increasingly need them to have the *moral* courage to foresee immensely complex technical, political, and social challenges, work in and across diverse teams to prepare the human and material capability to meet those challenges; and to have the

indomitable will to win, when conflict comes, that propels them to out-think and out-maneuver adversaries in domains far from common understanding. Different kinds of future warriors may well look different, prepare differently, think differently, and form bonds of shared experience very differently—yet their value to the nation will *depend* on their ability to work *together*. The Profession of Arms, if it is to remain a profession, will need to take interpersonal and intra-community respect and inclusion to new levels, leveraging past progress in integrating race, gender, and ethnicity to realize teamwork that respects and values principled, constructive contributions regardless of how closely they mirror traditional warrior externalities.

Thus, even as we grapple with the nature of future conflict, we must rethink the essence of the American Profession of Arms, the ways we relate to those who defend us, and perhaps America's very organization to maintain its national security. The timeless values its members profess—honor, courage, loyalty, commitment, integrity, service, duty, excellence—have not and must not change. Yet because military functions have already stretched to include vital roles that do not involve arms in any

real sense of the word, the way many of them show up in practice must change if we wish to prevail against modern adversaries and attacks. In parallel, so must our society's understanding of who stands between us and those who would harm us. Potential adversaries see today's lines of professional political oversight, resourcing, professional jurisdiction, organizational ethos, and legal authority for military and non-military national security organizations not as traditional markers of organizational power or control, but as

seams in our national security architecture they can exploit.

Americans today face a defining challenge in reimagining the future American military profession and broader conception for national security, in large part because military and non-military organizations increasingly share responsibilities that blur the clarity of traditional American constructs for protection of American territory, society, and economic infrastructure. As the tangibility and immediacy of conflicts, and the magnitude of their impacts on national security bear increasingly less clear relation to one another, so our organization and lexicon have adapted less rapidly than reality. War is changing: What we do not describe accurately, we cannot fight competently.

We still and will always need professionals to manage violence expertly, using force ethically to kill in combat when called upon. In recent decades, we have demanded our military professionals take on less obvious, but still potentially lethal, competition on land, sea, air, in space, and in the cyber domain. Yet it will not be enough to merely continue adding brushstrokes of better weapons and tactics to the ancient and aging canvas of military conflict. Rather, we must summon the will to think beyond war, boots, and bombs to understand and respond to the fundamentals of future consequential contests—small or large, visible or invisible—that will find us, whether or not we choose to find them.

Perhaps it's time to define and move our warriors—and our views of their purpose—beyond the “management of violence” to the “mastery of lethal competition.” The difference matters.

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EXECUTES OPERATIONS IN AN INTEGRATED,  
ACCOUNTABLE, AND AGILE MANNER

# Maniac or Master? Examining How Leader Self-Control of Affective Experiences Shapes Charismatic Leadership

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## ABSTRACT

Although researchers have identified affective experiences (e.g., emotions, moods) as integral to charismatic leadership processes and outcomes, it remains unclear when the experience of positive and negative affect by leaders is particularly or less effective with respect to the display of charismatic leadership. Based upon an integration of the self-control framework of the cognitive-affective processing system, dual-tuning perspective, and the charismatic leadership literature, we described how leader self-control interacts with high arousal positive and negative affective experiences to increase displays of charismatic leadership. Using multisource data from 218 U.S. Air Force officers and their subordinates, we hypothesized and found a three-way interaction by which officers' high arousal positive affective

experience had the strongest positive relationship with charismatic leadership when their high arousal negative affective experience and self-control were both high. Theoretical and practical implications for charismatic leadership and character development are discussed.

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When one thinks of charismatic leaders who mesmerize followers with spellbinding rhetoric and passionate enactments of their values and beliefs, images of both maniacs engulfed by their emotions (e.g., Adolph Hitler) and masters of controlled emotions (e.g., George C. Marshall) come to mind. Yet charisma is not limited to such (in) famous leaders, but can be displayed by any leader to a certain degree (Conger, 1989) because affective experience is central to everyday human existence (Plutchik, 2001) and charisma involves the experience and display of various types of affect in communicating an evocative vision and role-modeling the important values and beliefs that support it (Sy et al., 2018). Given that charismatic leaders' affective experiences influence their thoughts, behaviors, and subsequent attempts to arouse the emotions of followers (Walter & Bruch, 2009), identifying how leaders can best respond to affective experiences and what mechanisms can control their behavioral manifestation via charismatic leadership have become critical issues for the development of character in academic and practitioner fields (Erez et al., 2008; Kets de Vries et al, 2013).

Affective experience refers to an individual's moods or emotions felt or displayed in response to features of the environment, and can be broadly categorized as tendencies toward positive affective experiences (PAE) or negative affective experiences (NAE) (Seo et al., 2004; Van Katwyk et al., 2000). Such (un)pleasant affective valences vary in terms of level of arousal/intensity/activation defined as a "sense of mobilization or energy and summarizes one's physiological state" (Seo et al., 2004, p. 426). High arousal PAE (e.g., enthusiasm, excitement) are associated with attributions and behaviors of charismatic leadership that support vision formulation and

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articulation (Johnson, 2008), making of meaning for followers (Shamir et al., 1993), and role-modeling of organizational or societal values (Erez et al., 2008). High arousal NAE (e.g., anger, disgust) provide charismatic leaders with information to initiate environmental scanning for opportunities and threats (Conger & Kanungo, 1998), foster careful information processing (George, 2000), and signal the need for change (Schwartz & Clore, 2003). Research on the dual-tuning perspective of positive and negative moods (George & Zhou, 2007) suggests that PAE and NAE may provide charismatic leaders with a wide range of cognitive resources useful for influencing followers. Such complementary affective experiences may also support visioning processes by providing emotionally charged psychological resources for inspirational rhetoric and enacting idealized role-modeling behaviors (Sy et al., 2018).

There are, however, reasons to believe that a leader's affective experiences may fluctuate displays of charismatic leadership unless they are properly self-regulated. Theoretically, researchers have long highlighted the centrality of self-control of emotion to charismatic leadership effectiveness. Kets de Vries et al. (2013) championed this malleable trait-like character strength (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) by

arguing that there is "nothing more central to who a person is than the way he or she regulates and expresses emotion" (p. 68). Zaleznik (1977) suggested the need for a charismatic leader to "gain control over himself or herself as a precondition for controlling others" (p. 70). Klein and House (1995) described charisma as a "fire" created by the union of (a) the emotional leader who provides "the spark," (b) followers open or susceptible to charisma who represent "flammable material," and (c) an environment conducive to charisma which represents "oxygen." Turbulent environments (e.g., military settings) fan the flames of charisma because they create uncertainty and anxiety often associated with high arousal NAE that if not self-regulated, promote stress, burnout, or imprudent behavior (Daly et al., 2014). Charismatic leaders' high levels of emotional expressiveness suggest that they *run hot*, (i.e., experience high arousal affect) but also raise the question of what leader character strengths regulate the level of heat in the spark?

Empirically, studies grounded in theories of self-control (Baumeister et al., 2007; Mischel & Ayduk, 2004) have shown that the behavioral manifestation of high arousal affective experiences can be cooled down (i.e., regulated) with one's self-control. High arousal affective experiences create a state of disequilibrium

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(e.g., stress, burnout) that activates attempts of self-control to restore the body and mind to a steady state (e.g., Chi et al., 2015; Daly et al., 2014). Thus, theories of self-control and dual-tuning provide a useful framework to clarify how a charismatic leader's self-regulatory capacity interacts with his or her affective experiences to produce masterful (i.e., effective) or maniacal (i.e., ineffective) displays of charismatic leadership. Clarification of this issue can better guide military and business organizations interested in leveraging their leaders' affective experiences and charisma for more effective execution of operations.

In this study, we use theories of self-control and dual-tuning functions of positive and negative moods to propose that what leaders intensely feel as a result of their job experiences and how they control their feelings can be understood by considering the interactive effects of high arousal PAE, NAE, and self-control. We present theoretical background suggesting that high arousal PAE and NAE serve dual-tuning functions that should not be considered in isolation from each other and have the potential to influence charismatic leadership in augmentative ways. We then hypothesize and test how leader self-control and high arousal PAE and NAE interact to influence charismatic leadership using multi-source data collected from U.S. Air Force

(USAF) officers and their subordinates because such military settings provide an extreme context that evokes high arousal affective experiences (USAF, 2015).

The present study makes the following contributions. First, by applying the Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS) (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004) to explain the self-regulation of the behavioral manifestation of leader affective experiences, we provide a theoretical account of how events trigger cognitive and affective leader reactions and subsequent behavior. Specifically, we consider how leaders' high arousal PAE and NAE in response to their job/situation relate to their charismatic leadership behavior. Prior research has identified this topic as under-developed because it has generally focused on PAE while generally ignoring the influence of NAE on charismatic leadership, despite calls for considering both types of affective experience and their interaction (Antonakis, 2003; Sy et al., 2018; Walter & Bruch, 2009). We included leader self-control to represent the regulatory mechanism because it allows for a cooling down of the behavioral manifestation of what Mischel and Ayduk (2004) called hot thoughts and affect (e.g., unregulated high arousal PAE and NAE) that may prompt impulses to act imprudently and/or damage one's well-being. Prior work has examined the role of emotion regulation skills

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in charismatic leadership processes (e.g., Humphrey et al., 2008; Walter & Bruch, 2009), yet no study to our knowledge has examined how leader self-control can also provide this function. Antonakis (2003) argued that charisma needs leader appraisals of and reflections upon events that identify deficiencies in the status quo to forge emotional interactions with subordinates, and self-control offers these cognitive functions (Baumeister et al., 2007).

Second, by examining how leader self-control interacts with PAE and NAE, we answer calls by Ashkanasy et al. (2017) to explore how character strengths shape the way people respond to affective events, by Goory et al. (2010) to demarcate “what leaders feel and what they display” (p. 989), and by Sy et al. (2018) to examine leader-centric dynamics of emotional restraint and control in charismatic leadership processes. Answering such calls is important because vision articulation, one of the distinctive aspects of charismatic leaders, is often a product of their experienced emotions (George, 2000; Kets de Vries et al., 2013), specifically, the emotion-generative processes, whereby “emotions begin with an evaluation of emotion cues” from one’s environment that are modulated through cognitive-affective processing resources, such as self-control (Gross & John, 2003, p. 348). Such regulation of behavioral manifestations of emotion is an important but relatively unexplored aspect of charismatic leadership (Sy et al., 2018).

### Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

We employ Mischel and Ayduk’s (2004) CAPS model of self-control as the theoretical framework for this study. This framework proposes that personal appraisals of situations influence an individual’s cognitive-affective processing system which influences his or her behavior (e.g., charismatic leadership).

Stimulus events in the environment bring about an inferred cognition that provides meaning to the events through a mental representation. Consistent with evolutionary theories of emotion (Plutchik, 2001) and recent work on situation-trait approaches to leadership (Gottfredson & Reina, 2020), these cognitions prompt physiological arousal and feeling states (e.g., PAE and NAE) that give rise to impulses to action and overt behavior. Cognitions and feeling states are represented within CAPS as cognitive-affective units (CAUs) that provide an understanding of how to interpret and respond to one’s environment. Also included as CAUs are “evaluative self-standards, which are activated in specific situations” (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004, p. 102) such as self-control that regulate the feeling states and their associated impulses to action.

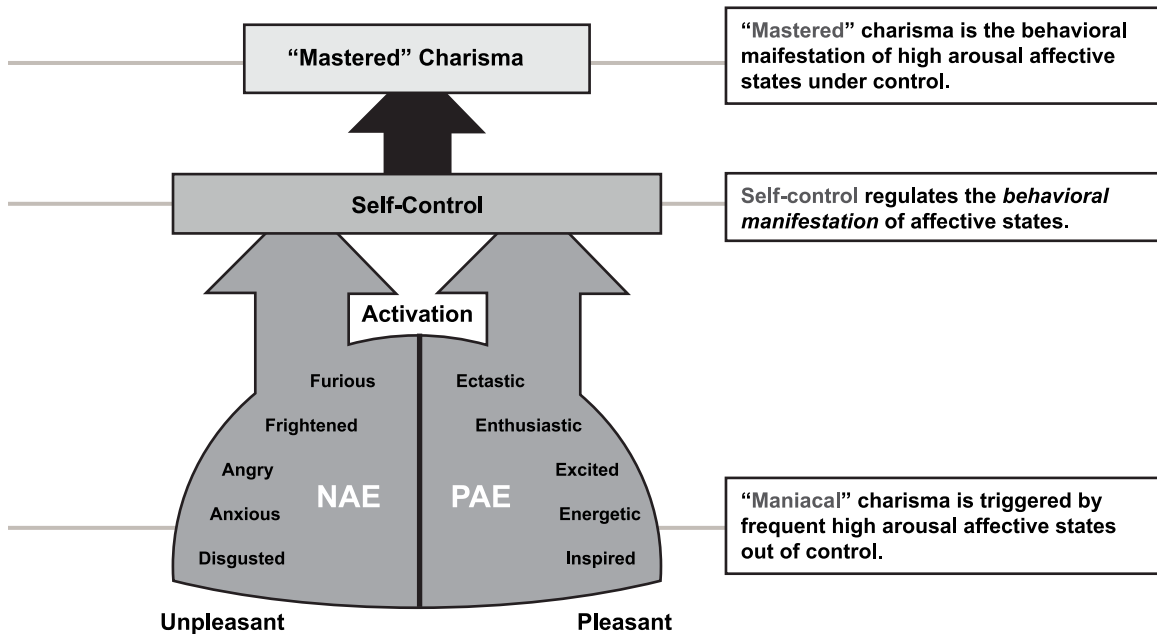
We selected leader high arousal PAE and NAE to represent CAUs for this study based on prior work on CAPS identifying them as CAUs reflecting hot thoughts or affect produced by interpretation of events from the work environment (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004, p. 102). Walter and Bruch’s (2009) affective events model of charismatic leadership proposes that contextual characteristics produce workplace events that influence leader positive affect which has direct and indirect (via leader work attitudes) effects on charismatic leadership behavior. Their model also identified leader personality characteristics and emotional intelligence as moderating influences on leader positive affect’s effect on charismatic leadership behavior. We choose leader self-control as a moderator variable based on CAPS theory. Prior research suggests that it is a malleable trait-like character strength that offers a self-regulation mechanism for emotion, cognition, and behavior; thereby allowing for a cooling down of behavioral manifestations of hot thoughts and affect (Chi et al., 2015; Mischel & Ayduk, 2004). Self control offers emotion regulation functions similar

to those described in Walter and Bruch's (2009) consideration of emotional intelligence.

CAPS theory positions affect-driven behavior as an outcome of affective experiences. Because charismatic leadership is largely affect-driven, we positioned it as an outcome variable resulting from self-control's moderation of the interaction of PAE with NAE, which Walter and Bruch (2009) failed to examine but identified as an opportunity for future research. Figure 1 summarizes our view of how self-control supports the manifestation of high arousal PAE and NAE in charismatic leadership behavior.

### Charismatic Leadership

Charisma displayed by leaders is derived from their traits, behaviors, cognitions, and affect; all of which are recognized and attributed to them by followers who are receptive to the charisma, particularly in times of stress or crisis (Klein & House, 1995). Traits associated with charismatic leaders include being self-confident, visionary, unconventional, narcissistic, and skilled in impression management (Shamir et al., 1993). Charismatic leaders are sensitive to events, trends, resources, opportunities, constraints, and threats in the environment (Conger & Kanungo, 1988), and display



*Note.* NAE = High arousal negative affective experience; PAE = High arousal positive affective experience. Adapted from Seo et al. (2004) and Van Katwyk et al. (2000).

Figure 1. Self-control of the behavioral manifestations of high arousal affective experiences of charismatic leaders.

both positive and negative emotions as they react to favorable or unfavorable events (Johnson, 2008). Thus, their cognition and affect play an important information processing role for their leadership.

How charismatic leaders interpret this information determines how they frame and subsequently encode affective events for their communications with followers (Gottfredson & Reina, 2020). In formulating and articulating an evocative vision of change, charismatic leaders use value- and emotion-laden words to speak eloquently (Sy et al., 2018). Their speeches and role-modeling of what they consider to be most valued morals, ethics or norms provide meaning to followers regarding what is expected of them in working toward the vision (Strange & Mumford, 2002). These behaviors act to heighten followers' self-esteem, self-worth, self-efficacy, collective efficacy, and identification with the leader as a symbol of success, thus elevating their performance (Shamir et al., 1993). Thus, we define charisma here as the formulation and articulation of a compelling vision and role-modeling of important values and beliefs implied by the vision that create leader-follower relations based on emotional interactions and identification with the leader (Strange & Mumford, 2002).

The emotional connection and identification followers have with charismatic leaders result from the leaders' vision and values-based behavior, symbolic expressions using metaphors and emotional language, and emotion-laden affective displays (Sy et al., 2018). In responding to environmental stimuli when formulating and articulating a vision or role-modeling of values and beliefs that support the vision (Strange & Mumford, 2002), charismatic leaders use emotions that are other-praising (e.g., awe) and other-suffering (e.g., compassion) to reflect their PAE, and self-

conscious (e.g., shame) and other-condemning (e.g., disgust) to reflect their NAE (Sy et al., 2018). Thus, charismatic leader behavior may be elicited within the leaders' emotion-generative processes triggered by their affective experiences.

### Affective Experiences

Consistent with CAPS and evolutionary theory of emotion, Plutchik (2001) defined emotion as "a complex chain of loosely connected events that begins with a stimulus and includes feelings, psychological changes, impulses to action and specific, goal-directed behavior...feelings do not happen in isolation. They are responses to significant situations in an individual's life, and often they motivate actions" (pp. 345-6). While encountering some dangerous events or contexts, individuals can experience both positive and negative emotions simultaneously, such as a firefight prompting an Airman to experience excitement accompanied with fear (Plutchik, 2001).

Affective experience changes as one's emotions respond to environmental stimuli, and as moods change over time (Van Katwyk et al., 2000). Moods last longer than emotions, reflect positive or negative affect comprised of multiple specific emotions, and are cognitive in nature (George & Zhou, 2007). An individual's cognitive processes give meaning to environmental stimuli and produce affective experiences (Gottfredson & Reina, 2020). The meaningful information generated assists individuals with decision-making and displaying appropriate behavior (Schwartz & Clore, 2003). Positive affect signals self-esteem and extraversion (Erez et al., 2008), the absence of problematic or threatening conditions in one's context (Schwartz & Clore, 2003), and contentment with the status quo (Baumeister et al., 2001). In contrast, negative affect signals problematic conditions that require effortful application of

cognitive resources and information processing (Bohner & Weinerth, 2001), triggers externally focused questioning of assumptions and alteration of ideas (Mitchell et al., 2014), and motivates effort to solve critical issues (George, 2000). Because negative events present individuals with problems to be solved or threats to be minimized whereas positive events do not, negative events have stronger psychological effects on individuals, thus prompting them to pay closer attention to negative events (Schwartz & Clore, 2003). This conclusion is supported by research on the positive-negative asymmetry effect found in the field of impression formation (Peeters & Czapinski, 1990) where individuals respond more strongly to bad rather than good events in order to adapt to their environment. Charismatic leaders are skilled at managing impressions (Sosik, Avolio et al., 2002), so controlling high arousal PAE and NAE is likely to be important to them.

High arousal PAE and NAE, however, are associated with psychological and performance costs. If uncontrolled, they may prompt fast cognitive processing (e.g., mind racing because of anxiety) and physiological symptoms (e.g., high blood pressure, quickened pulse; Daly et al., 2014). PAE may lead to complacency, overconfidence, and unrealistic perceptions of events (Schwartz & Clore, 2003), whereas NAE may result in depression, self-doubt, counter-productive work behavior, and impairment of task performance (Chi et al., 2015). Detrimental effects of negative affect occur on account of positive-negative asymmetry (Peeters & Czapinski, 1990), impairment of the regulation of goal-oriented behavior (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004), introduction of irrational thoughts, and lowering of self-esteem (Baumeister et al., 2001). PAE and NAE are also cognitively challenging and require self-control to regulate those (Chi et al., 2015).

Prior research has shown individual differences in (a) selection of situations that avoid potential NAE, (b) proactive modification of situations, (c) deployment of selective attention, (d) changing the way one thinks about a situation, and (e) modulation of one's responses to situations (Gross & John, 2003). The first four processes involve reappraisals of situations that result in changes in emotional response tendencies, whereas the response modulations described in the fifth process involve suppression of emotions to produce more favorable affective experiences. Self-control supports the reappraisal and suppression functions inherent to self-regulation processes (Baumeister et al., 2007; Mischel & Ayduk, 2004).

### Self-Control

How individuals self-regulate their unwanted impulses to exercise “willpower” over them is described by theories of self-control. These theories consider self-control as a character strength (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) that exerts itself in the domains of controlling thoughts, emotions, impulses, and performance (Tangney et al., 2004) and operates within larger cognitive and emotional processing systems (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004). Prominent theories of self-control describe its operation through the discounting model of impulsiveness (Ainslie, 1975), self-regulatory strength model of self-control (Baumeister et al., 2007), or hot/cool system approaches to self-regulation (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004).<sup>1</sup> A common theme of these theories of self-control is the self's capacity to alter dominant responses to regulate thoughts, emotion, and behavior.

<sup>1</sup> According to the discounting model of impulsiveness, self-control is exercised when a delayed choice of a more valuable long-term outcome is made over a more immediate choice of a less valuable short-term outcome. In the strength model of self-regulation, self-control is considered to be a limited resource that is depleted by use and stress, and augmented with psychological resources, rest, and glucose supplementation (for a review of the validity of the notion of self-control as a limited resource, see Friese et al., 2019).

Daly et al. (2014) showed that high self-control allows for a cooling down of behavioral manifestations of hot thoughts and affect (e.g., high arousal PAE and NAE) described in CAPS theory. This cooling effect occurs because self-control introduces a favored set-point of experienced affect that is monitored. Individuals with high self-control experience less self-control failure and therefore less affective surges and their associated detrimental effects (Tangney et al., 2004). In contrast, individuals with low self-control experience surges of positive affect because their hot thoughts and affect are motivated by the principle of “do it if it feels good” (de Ridder et al., 2012, p. 78). Their hot thoughts and affect are further stoked by impulsivity, immediate gratification of their needs, or ego-driven motives that boost positive feelings temporarily but eventually lead to guilt, regret, and interpersonal conflicts (Daly et al., 2014).

High self-control provides individuals with a “moral muscle” to avoid socially inappropriate behavior, and display moral emotions and values associated with socialized charismatic leadership (Baumeister et al., 2007; Sosik, 2005). Charismatic leaders regulate information about how they present themselves to manage their impressions on others via strategic displays of affect in delivering motivational speeches and role modeling (Erez et al., 2008). As such, self-control may have an important moderating influence on the interaction of leader high arousal PAE and NAE and its manifestation in charismatic behavior.

### **Dual-Tuning of Charismatic Leadership with Affective Experiences and Self-Control**

Theories of mood-as-information (Schwarz & Clore, 2003) and dual-tuning (George & Zhou, 2007) assume that for individuals to adapt to their environment

and function effectively, their cognition and behavior need to be tuned (i.e., regulated or tailored) to the information provided by their affective experiences. As such, we propose that under high levels of self-control, high arousal PAE and NAE interact to support charismatic leadership behavior. Specifically, in articulating a vision, charismatic leaders use rhetoric laden with positive affect (e.g., optimism) and display verbal and non-verbal role-modeling behavior infused with positive affect (Johnson, 2008). In their inspirational motivation of followers, they express confidence that goals will be achieved (Shamir et al., 1993). Such behaviors imply that charismatic leaders may draw upon their high arousal PAE to promote followers’ collective efficacy, internalization of social and organizational values, and personal identification with the leader. PAE also supports idea generation and broadens thought-action repertoires (George & Zhou, 2007) necessary for visioning processes of charismatic leaders (Strange & Mumford, 2002).

Charismatic leaders are also likely to tap into their high arousal NAE in their visioning and motivation of followers. Charismatic leaders are not satisfied with the status quo and consider it to be problematic (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). A problematic state of affairs that must be addressed through effortful application of cognitive resources prompts negative affect (Schwarz & Clore, 2003) and an external focus to alter existing strategies (Mitchell et al., 2014). Such an application of cognitive resources occurs through the charismatic leaders’ environmental scanning processes that identify threats and problems with the status quo that require a change. This identification triggers the formulation and articulation of visions of change to be executed through the collective effort of followers (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). NAE of charismatic leaders may also prompt the display of negative emotions aimed at shaming or embarrassing followers for not living up to norms,

or condemning others for unfairness, immorality, or injustice (Sy et al., 2018). Consistent with situation-trait explanations of leadership (Gottfredson & Reina, 2020), Table 1 illustrates the process of how events trigger cognitive and emotional leader reactions and subsequent behavior. It also provides examples of how both PAE and NAE may translate into charismatic actions and outcomes that normalize the relationship

between the triggering event and the charismatic leader's affective state.

As a preliminary test of some aspects of the process shown in Table 1, we hypothesize interactive effects of PAE and NAE with self-control rather than main effects because charismatic leadership behavior depends on both types of affective experience, and the existence

**Table 1**

Stimulus Event →	Cognition →	Feeling State →	Impulse Behaviour →	Self-Controlled Charismatic Behavior →	Outcome
Gain of global acclaim	"Fame"	Ecstatic	Fantasize about unlimited success	Talk optimistically but cautiously about a future better state	Positive and realistic expectations set
Gain of media spotlight	"Enjoy"	Enthusiastic	Reduce work effort	Talk enthusiastically about required tasks for the vision	Positive and realistic expectations set
New target opportunity	"Examine"	Excited	Fixate over proximate goals	Articulate compelling vision met by attaining distal goals	Gain meaning and purpose
Positive feedback from superior	"Invigorate"	Energetic	Overwork	Share authority for attainment of vision with Airmen	Paced workflow
Exemplification of excellence	"Perfection"	Inspired	Expect perfection	Talk about values, beliefs, and sensible expectations	Realistic quest for excellence
Enemy kills valued Airman	"Victim"	Furious	Lash out on others as perceived victim	Consider ethical consequences implied by the vision	Gain moral ground
Enemy takes away strategic foothold	"Revenge"	Angry	Attack prematurely	Consider ethics and needs of squad before deciding to act	Regain foothold/overtake enemy
Enemy poses serious threat	"Danger"	Frightened	Retreat based on proximal goals	Reiterate strong sense of purpose by considering distal goals	Regain sense of safety
Loss of beloved and valued Airman	"Abandonment"	Anxious	Worry about impact on self-image	Reassure that loss will be overcome by the collective	Rebuild collective confidence
Major ethical breach by Airman	"Moral corruption"	Disgusted	Expel from group	Re-educate with moral principles implied by the vision	Rehabilitation of Airman

*Examples of Personal Appraisals of Situations/Events, Cognitions and Felt Emotions Related to Charismatic Leadership Behavior*

*Note.* Cognitions, feeling states (i.e., affect), and self-control mechanisms are cognitive affective units within the CAPS that influence subsequent behavior and outcomes (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004).



of one boosts the effectiveness of the other in triggering the display of charismatic leadership behavior. Leaders with emotions drawn from both positive and negative experiences are better able to manage impressions and/or empathize with the emotions experienced by followers (Ashkanasy et al., 2017).

The interaction is also consistent with cases of some charismatic leaders (e.g., Winston Churchill, Adolph Hitler, Vince Lombardi) who suffered from manic-depressive or bipolar disorder (Bullock, 1964; Maraniss, 1999; Roberts, 2018). These cases suggest that leaders may require a high level of self-control to temper the detrimental effects of high arousal PAE and NAE and their dual effect on charismatic behavior. When charismatic leaders experience high arousal PAE, self-control may help them to temper their impulses to be complacent, over-confident or unrealistic. It may help them to be more critical rather than accepting of the status quo, curb their enthusiasm to avoid being over-confident, and articulate a more realistic vision of change. When charismatic leaders experience high arousal NAE, self-control may help them to overcome depression and or self-doubt associated with the persistent and difficult challenges they may be facing by re-framing their negative experience in a more positive light. It may also help them to mask their negative affect with emotional labor strategies designed to “put on a brave face” or feign positive emotions to support their impression management goals (Walter & Bruch, 2009).

This line of reasoning suggests a three-way interaction (rather than two-way interactions or main effects) because high-arousal PAE and NAE are essential as both provide information that charismatic leaders can use to provide meaning to followers through their visioning and role modeling, and high self-control is also required to regulate the affective

experience to which they are tuned. This information helps charismatic leaders experiencing positive affect to resist impulses toward complacency, overconfidence, and Pollyannaism, and those experiencing negative affect to reappraise its meaning, reframe it in a more positive light, or better cope with its ill effects. With both types of affective experience, high self-control is also required to regulate this information, better communicate leaders’ affective experiences, and maximize their display of charismatic behavior (Daly et al., 2014; Erez et al., 2008). High self-control and PAE alone might not support high levels of charismatic leadership behavior as leaders might not recognize problems with the status quo and become complacent, and thus may not champion the vision or role model espoused values and beliefs (Strange & Mumford, 2002); high self-control and NAE alone might result in a relative lack of optimism and enthusiasm for the vision and less energetic role modeling behavior. Thus,

*Hypothesis:* There is a three-way interaction effect between leaders’ PAE, NAE, and self-control on their display of charismatic leadership. Specifically, leaders’ PAE has the strongest positive relationship with charismatic leadership when their NAE and self-control are both high.

## Method

### Sample and Procedure

As part of a larger study, the data for this study were obtained using an online-based survey method. The focal leaders in our study were USAF Captains enrolled in a five-week leadership course offered by the Squadron Officer College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. At the beginning of the course, we explained to the officers the research purposes and the procedure for data collection. Upon their agreement to participate in this study, we asked the officers to provide us with



a list of names, titles, and email addresses of their subordinates who might also be willing to participate as well as their own names and email addresses. We requested the names of both officers and their subordinates to ensure leader-subordinate matched reports. With the contact information of potential respondents, we sent 1570 officers and 1269 of their subordinates' emails that briefly explained the purpose and voluntary nature of the study, the time required for survey completion, links to an online surveying platform, and the consent form. The emails emphasized that (a) the survey has nothing to do with the leadership course in the Squadron Officer College but only for academic research, (b) ratings in the survey are directly conveyed to researchers, (c) none of the officers and their subordinates have access to the ratings of their counterparts, and (d) only the aggregated results would be published.

A total of 1205 completed surveys were returned from officers and subordinates for a response rate of 42.4%. Of this total, 743 officers responded about their own levels of PAE, NAE, and self-control and 462 subordinates responded about officers' charismatic leadership. From the 743 responding officers, we extracted a total of 218 unique matched sets of leader and subordinate ratings that were used for hypothesis testing. Of the 218 leader-subordinate matched sets, 75.7% of the leaders had only one subordinate's rating and 24.3% of the officers had multiple subordinates' reports. For those multiple subordinates' ratings of charismatic leadership, the ratings of a leader were averaged to represent his or her leadership within the unit ( $\eta^2 = .52$ ,  $ICC1 = .26$ ,  $F = 1.97$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Of the final 218 matched reports, 159 officers (72.9%) were male. The average age of the leaders was 31.23 ( $SD = 4.83$ ) ranging from 25 to 52 in years. Of these officers, 44.5% had a bachelor's degree while

55.5% had a master's degree; and 79.8% were white, 5% were black, 6% were Asian, 4.6 % were Hispanic, and 4.6% were others. Forty percent of officers worked in operations, 17% in logistics and support, 9% in acquisitions, 22% in medical and professional services, 2% in special investigations, and 10% in other areas.

## Measures

We adopted different rating sources for independent and dependent variables to alleviate the concern for common source bias (Podsakoff et al., 2012) while tapping the actor-observer perspective of leadership. Specifically, leaders' own PAE, NAE and their level of self-control were self-reported, whereas the leaders' charismatic leadership displayed was assessed with subordinates' ratings.

**Affective Experience.** We adopted both positive and negative emotion subscales from a 20-item short version of the Job-related Affective Well-being Scale (JAWS; Van Katwyk et al., 2000) to measure leaders' emotional reactions to their job. The JAWS is comprised of four discrete subscales classified by valence (pleasantness) and arousal (intensity). We used 10 high arousal emotions that include 5 positive affective reactions (energetic, excited, ecstatic, enthusiastic, and inspired) and 5 negative emotions (angry, anxious, disgusted, frightened, and furious). Low arousal items of both positive and negative emotions (e.g., relaxed and bored, respectively) were not used because of their irrelevance to charismatic leadership typified by its intensive affective reaction to events as well as its emotion-laden words and deeds (Sy et al., 2018). The officers were asked how often they had experienced each at work over the prior 30 days. The items were measured on a 5-point response scale ranging from 1 (*Never*) to 5 (*Extremely often or always*). Sample items include "My job made me feel excited" (PAE;  $\alpha = .95$ ) and "My job made me feel anxious" (NAE;  $\alpha = .87$ ).

**Self-Control.** We used the 13-item Brief Self-Control measure (Tangney et al., 2004) to assess leaders' general ability of overriding or changing their inner responses (both thoughts and emotions), restraining undesirable impulses, and refraining from acting on them. As the focal leaders in our study, officers were asked the extent to which the items describe them; for example, "I am good at resisting temptation," and "I wish I had more self-discipline" (reversed item). All items were measured on a 5-point response scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*Very much*) ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

**Charismatic Leadership.** Following prior research (e.g., Menges et al., 2015; Sosik, 2005), we used subordinates' ratings of their officers' charismatic leadership along the two facets of transformational leadership that tap charisma, namely idealized influence (positive role modeling) and inspirational motivation (vision articulation and championing), which were measured by eight items from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X; Bass & Avolio, 1997). Four items measuring attributed idealized influence were removed because they have been criticized for representing a leadership outcome rather than an influence process (Yukl, 1999). A sample item reads "The officer talks optimistically about the future." Respondents indicated how frequently the officer displays the focal behavior on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (*Not at all*) to 4 (*Frequently, if not always*) ( $\alpha = .91$ ).

**Control Variables.** Prior research indicates that appraisees' demographic factors such as age (Lawrence, 1988), gender (Lyness & Heilman, 2006), and education (Ng & Feldman, 2010) may distort outcome ratings. Leader age (years), gender, and education were included as controls to partial out their effects on subordinates' ratings of charismatic leadership. We

also controlled for the effect of subordinates' socially desirable responding by using Reynolds' (1982) 13-item short form of the Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale with responses rated as either 1 (*True*) or 2 (*False*). A sample item reads "I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings" ( $\alpha = .64$ ).

## Results

### Preliminary Analyses

**Measurement Model.** In the survey development and data collection phase of this study, we took preventative steps to minimize potential method artifacts by emphasizing the voluntary nature of study and its confidentiality, changing the item order of independent and dependent variables in the survey, using different raters for independent and dependent variables, and improving response scale (Podsakoff et al., 2012). We also conducted a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) to further address the issues of common method variance and discriminant validity of study measures. We first examined the fit indices of the four-factor model (PAE, NAE, self-control, and charismatic leadership). As shown in Table 2, the fit indices of the four-factor model appear adequate ( $\chi^2 (df) = 745.52(428)$ , CFI = .92, RMSEA = .06). All factor loadings of the four-factor model were significant, ranging from .79 to .95 for PAE, .71 to .83 for NAE, .57 to .75 for self-control, and .65 to .83 for charismatic leadership. A series of chi-square difference tests also revealed that the four-factor model fit the data significantly better than all other alternative models. These results support the discriminant validity of study measures and attenuate concern for common source variance.

**Hypothesis Tests.** Table 3 presents means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations of the study variables. A review of the correlations

Table 2

*Results of Measurement Model Comparisons*

Models	$\chi^2$ (df)	CFI	RMSEA	$\Delta\chi^2$ ( $\Delta df$ ) <sup>a</sup>
4-factor [PAE] [NAE] [SC] [CH]	745.52 (428)	.92	.06	–
3-factor [PAE, NAE] [SC] [CH] [PAE] [NAE] [SC, CH]	1165.65 (431) 1653.46 (431)	.80 .67	.09 .11	420.13 (3)** 907.94 (3)**
2-factor [PAE, NAE], [SC, CH] [PAE, NAE, SC] [CH]	2072.85 (433) 2307.03 (433)	.56 .49	.13 .14	1327.33 (5)** 1561.51 (5)**
1-factor [PAE, NAE, SC, CH]	3209.52 (434)	.25	.17	2464.00 (6)**

*Note.* <sup>a</sup> The chi-square difference for each model reflects its deviation from the 4-factor model. PAE = positive affective experience; NAE = negative affective experience; SC = self-control; CH = charismatic leadership.

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

Table 3

*Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations, and Alphas of Variables*

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age	31.23	4.83								
2. Gender	.27	.45	.13†							
3. Education	3.56	.50	.11	.15*						
4. Subordinate SDR	9.21	2.40	-.02	.04	-.05	(.64)				
5. Positive affective experience	3.24	.89	-.02	.03	-.01	.21**	(.94)			
6. Negative affective experience	2.18	.68	-.09	-.03	-.02	-.16*	-.33**	(.87)		
7. Self-control	3.58	.59	-.09	-.12†	-.06	-.03	-.12†	-.07	(.89)	
8. Charismatic leadership	3.17	.64	.06	.05	.12†	.15*	.10	-.09	-.04	(.91)

*Note.*  $N = 218$ . Values in parentheses along the diagonal are Cronbach's alphas. Gender was coded as 0 = male and 1 = female. Education was coded as 1 = high school, 2 = partial college at least 1 year, 3 = 4-year college, and 4 = graduate. SDR = socially desirable responding.

†  $p < .10$ , \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

**Table 4***Hierarchical Regression Results of Three-way Interaction Effects*

<b>Outcome: Charismatic Leadership</b>					
<b>Predictors</b>	<b><math>\beta</math></b>	<b><math>t</math></b>	<b>95% CI</b>	<b><math>\Delta F</math></b>	<b><math>\Delta R^2</math></b>
Step 1					
Age	.05	.75	[-.01, .03]		
Gender	.02	.33	[-.16, .23]		
Education	.12	1.69†	[-.03, .32]		
Subordinate SDR	.15	2.23*	[.01, .08]	2.20†	.04
Step 2					
Positive affective experience (PAE)	.06	.76	[-.06, .14]		
Negative affective experience (NAE)	-.05	-.63	[-.18, .09]		
Self-control	-.02	-.31	[-.17, .13]	.52	.01
Step 3					
PAE × NAE	.09	1.24	[-.05, .20]		
PAE × Self-control	.03	.43	[-.14, .22]		
NAE × Self-control	.13	1.62	[-.03, .31]	1.41	.02
Step 4					
PAE × NAE × Self-control	.19	2.44*	[.05, .43]	5.97*	.03
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.04				
F (11, 206)	1.90*				
<b>Conditional Effect of PAE on Charismatic Leadership</b>					
<b>NAE</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>Effects</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>95% CI</b>	
Low	Low	.06	.11	[-.15, .27]	
Low	High	-.12	.10	[-.31, .07]	
High	Low	-.04	.10	[-.23, .15]	
High	High	.16*	.08	[.01, .31]	

*Note.*  $N = 218$ . 95% CI = 95% confidence intervals with lower and upper limits. SDR = socially desirable responding; PAE = positive affective experience; and NAE = negative affective experience; SC = self-control.

†  $p < .10$ , \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

indicates that affective experiences and self-control alone were not related to charismatic leadership. Given that subordinates' socially desirable responding was significantly associated with charismatic leadership ( $r = .15, p < .05$ ), we controlled for the effect of subordinates' socially desirable responding on their ratings of charismatic leadership in the subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 4 presents the results of hypothesis tests. Our hypothesis, predicting a three-way interaction between affective experiences and self-control, states that leaders'

PAE has the strongest positive relationship with their display of charismatic leadership when their NAE and self-control are both high. When the interaction effect was estimated in a moderated multiple regression, we mean-centered the variables used as a factor of the interaction term to make results more interpretable. As presented in Table 4, the interaction effect between PAE, NAE and self-control on charismatic leadership was positive and significant ( $\beta = .19, t = 2.44, p < .05$ , 95% CI [.05, .43]) and explained significant additional variance in charismatic leadership ( $\Delta R^2 = .03, \Delta F(1, 206) = 5.97, p < .05$ ), while none of the main effects

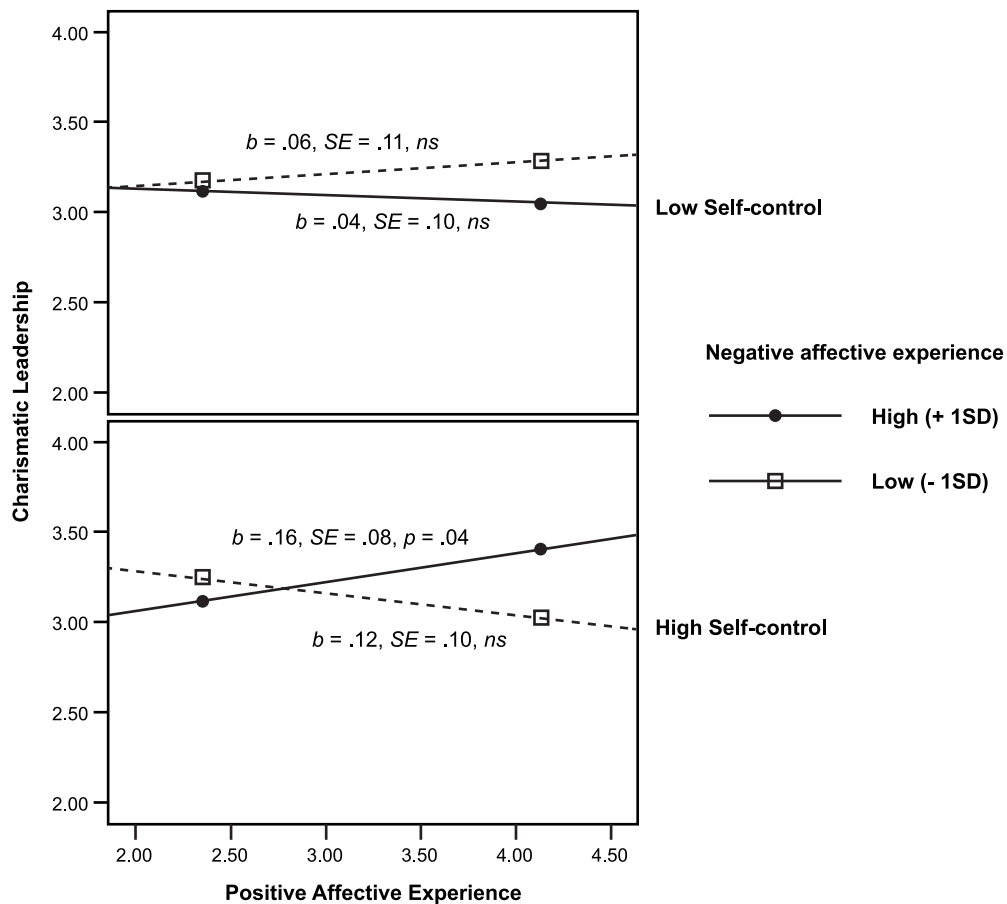


Figure 2. Interaction effect of leaders' positive affective experience, negative affective experience, and self-control on their display of charismatic leadership.

of PAE, NAE, or self-control on charismatic leadership were significant.

To probe the three-way interaction, we plotted four simple slopes at one standard deviation above and below the mean values of NAE and self-control, while all covariates were set to their sample mean values (Aiken & West, 1991). These simple slopes demonstrate differences in the relationship between PAE and charismatic leadership at different levels of NAE and self-control. As shown at the bottom of Table 4 and in Figure 2, only when NAE and self-control were both high, the relationship between leaders' PAE and their display of charismatic leadership was positive and significant ( $b = .16$ ,  $SE = .08$ ,  $p < .05$ , 95% CI [.01, .31]). These results indicate that the positive relationship between PAE and charismatic leadership is strongest when both NAE and self-control are high, supporting our hypothesis.

## Discussion

What leaders feel as a result of their experiences and how they control their feelings are important to charismatic leadership processes, but prior work has typically focused on examining leader PAE, while ignoring the fact that it is the combination of leader PAE, NAE, and self-control that influences charismatic leadership. The present study provides preliminary support for this notion, extends prior work on charismatic leadership and self-regulation, and offers several theoretical and practical implications.

## Theoretical Contributions

The first theoretical contribution is that this study advances work on charismatic leadership that situates emotion as a primary explanatory variable by filling several gaps in the literature. Walter and Bruch's

(2009) affective events model of charismatic leadership behavior emergence did not consider the role of leaders' NAE and its interaction with PAE as the present study did. Most prior research has ignored this range of affective experience and how it is regulated with character strengths such as self-control that serve similar self-regulatory functions as emotional intelligence or other emotional regulation skills. Other theoretical work on this topic has mainly focused on the types of behavior that reflect leaders' emotions and includes such emotions as a mediator of the relationship between charisma and its effects. Sy et al.'s (2018) Elicit-Channel (EC) model of charismatic leadership frames charismatic relationship as a five-step feedback loop in which leader emotions signal information to followers, thereby eliciting emotions of followers that motivate them to collective action. The EC model identifies emotion elicitation as the first stage in understanding how a leader uses such signaling to elicit emotions from followers. However, this theoretical work does not address responses to situations that trigger leaders' cognitive and affective determinants of emotion elicitation. What a leader first feels and how he or she responds to affective events before engaging in emotion elicitation must be considered (Gooty et al., 2010). Building on CAPS theory (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004), we included leaders' high-arousal PAE and NAE as variables measuring context-specific affect (Van Katwyk et al., 2000). Accordingly, our study contributes to charismatic leadership theories by presenting a stage prior to the leader emotion elicitation stage in the EC model because such elicitation may first be triggered by affective reactions to environmental conditions (Godfredson & Reina, 2020; Plutchik, 2001).

Second, although prior studies have primarily examined the influence of positive emotion on charismatic leadership behavior (e.g., Johnson, 2008)

or simply called for the examination of the interplay between positive and negative affect in leadership processes (Ashkanasy et al., 2017; George, 2000; Walter & Bruch, 2009), no studies have attempted to examine how leader high-arousal PAE and NAE interact with character strengths (i.e., self-control) to influence charismatic leadership behavior. Our results identify leader self-control as a malleable trait-like character strength that serves as an important boundary condition for the influence of high arousal PAE and NAE on charismatic leadership behavior, thus considering personal and situational response aspects of leadership, both deemed important to leadership research (Antonakis, 2003). As expected, we found that focal leaders' high arousal PAE had the strongest positive relationship with charismatic leadership behavior when their high-arousal NAE and self-control were both high. This finding suggests that by signaling a need for external focus and careful evaluation of events, negative affect tempered with high self-control may overcome positive affect's tendency toward complacency and result in greater displays of charisma.

Third, drawing upon the CAPS model (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004) and the work of George and Zhou (2007), we demonstrated how both high arousal PAE and NAE contribute to the display of charismatic behavior in complementary ways for leaders with high self-control. An examination of Table 4 indicates that neither leader high arousal PAE nor NAE had a significant main effect on charismatic leadership. Nor did the interaction of high arousal PAE and NAE produce what George and Zhou (2007) called a "dual-tuning effect" on charismatic leadership for the focal leaders in our study. This pattern of results contradicts a relatively broad body of research (see Sy et al., 2018 and Walter & Bruch, 2009 for reviews) that has demonstrated main effects of positive affect

on charismatic leadership, but these studies did not consider the dual and interaction effects of positive and negative affect on charismatic leadership as the present study did. However, these results are consistent with results reported by Chi et al. (2015) suggesting that high self-control provides psychological resources to undo complacency, direct cognitive attention toward issues requiring attention; and counteract the potential for negative affect to overtake positive affect, deplete psychological resources, and produce suboptimal interpersonal outcomes. Future research can examine the mechanisms that self-control employs to engage specific self-regulatory tactics in the CAPS. These include cognitive reappraisals of negative events (Gross & John, 2003) that may cool hot thoughts and affect and increase charismatic leadership behavior.

Results of post-hoc analyses suggest such a cooling effect of leader PAE to a favored set-point with high self-control.<sup>2</sup> This pattern of results in the current data set suggests that the nature of self-control's cooling effect on officers' frequency of affective experience may occur primarily via their PAE. Excessive high-arousal PAE is evidenced by manic behavior such as too much joking, laughter, or overly exuberant speech that is viewed as inauthentic at best, or as abnormal at worst (Gruber et al., 2008). Such mania may impede the managing of impressions leaders attempt to create for followers,

2 In the overall sample, officers reported high arousal PAE ( $m = 3.24, SD = .89$ ) more frequently than high arousal NAE ( $m = 2.18, SD = .68; t(217) = 12.17, p < .01$ ), which is typical of individuals (Van Katwyk et al., 2000), and expected for Airmen (USAF, 2015). However, for officers with high self-control (determined via a median-split), the difference in frequency of high arousal PAE ( $m = 3.13, SD = .95$ ) and high arousal NAE ( $m = 2.15, SD = .62$ ) was .98 and significant ( $t(104) = 7.83, p < .01$ ), whereas for officers with low self-control, the difference in frequency of between high arousal PAE ( $m = 3.34, SD = .83$ ) and high arousal NAE ( $m = 2.20, SD = .73$ ) was 1.14 and significant ( $t(112) = 9.35, p < .01$ ). Frequency of high arousal PAE was marginally greater for officers with low than high self-control ( $t(216) = 1.77, p < .08$ ), whereas high arousal NAE was similar for officers with low and high self-control ( $t(216) = .60, p > .55$ ).



thereby attenuating attributions of charisma. These results are consistent with Daly et al.'s (2014) finding that high self-control reduces variability in emotional states, which is required for leaders' realistic assessment of situations and authentic self-presentation (Erez et al., 2008). To test this speculation, future research using within-subjects longitudinal or experimental designs is needed to compare pre- and post-measures of high arousal affective experience and charismatic leadership under high and low conditions of leader self-control.

### Limitations and Future Research

Some limitations which offer future research directions should be noted. From a methods perspective, the cross-sectional nature of the data collected precludes any claims of causality from being made, although a large body of research supports the temporal ordering of this study's variables. It also suggests the possibility of reverse causality where charismatic leadership behavior may produce leader affective experiences because followers' responses to charisma (e.g., personal identification with the leader) may provide ego-enhancing reactions for leaders (Kets de Vries et al., 2013), although this notion lacks strong theoretical and empirical support. Future experimental studies that manipulate PAE and NAE or longitudinal studies can be conducted to test the interactive effects of these variables with self-control on charismatic leadership behavior and its outcomes. Given that affective experience and self-control fluctuate with time, future studies can collect data at multiple points in time within a work day with event studies or experience sampling procedures (Daly et al., 2014). Another limitation regards the ratings of charismatic leadership being limited to a single subordinate for each leader in many cases. Such ratings may have produced results particular to a specific leader-follower dyad, especially if leaders had provided us with a list of subordinates that would rate them most favorably. However, this concern may be allayed given

the significant moderation results, while subordinates' socially desirable responding was controlled for, that could not have been produced if there was a serious range restriction in the ratings.

A third methodological limitation concerns our sample which consisted of primarily white male officers and their subordinates serving in the USAF. While this military context is appropriate given its emotionally charged, crisis-ridden, and values-based nature (USAF, 2015), it may limit the external validity of our results. Yet, because we collected the data via measures of affective experience, self-control, charismatic leadership commonly used in business and educational contexts, we believe that our results can be generalized to other industries. The cross-cultural generalizability of study results may be another limitation, although participants represented a wide range of ethnicities. Future studies can be designed to collect data across a range of organizations, industries, and countries. While study results provided preliminary evidence of a significant interaction effect of PAE, NAE, and self-control on charismatic leadership, a review of Table 4 indicates that the strength of this effect was not overwhelmingly powerful. Replications in future studies are required before we can be more confident about the stability of the obtained findings across different contexts.

From the theoretical perspective of CAPS (Mischel & Ayduk, 2004), this study focused on leader self-control as a measure of self-regulation capacity and willpower resources that serve to cool down behavioral manifestations of hot thoughts and affect. While self-control is an explicit measure of self-regulation and willpower resources (Daly et al., 2014), future research can examine specific aspects of the CAPS that serve such self-control functions (e.g., specific cooling strategies) or those that trigger hot thoughts and affect

within the CAPS (e.g., expectations and encodings of rejection or disloyalty). They can also use other measures of self-regulation, such as self-monitoring, emotional labor, or those tapping the emotion management facet of emotional intelligence (Humphrey et al., 2008), to compare their efficacy against the self-control measure used in this study (Tangney et al., 2004). Researchers may also explore how leaders' charismatic behavior influences their subsequent experience of affect and cognitive social learning required for their emotion elicitation and other processes in emotion-based models of charismatic leadership (e.g., Sy et al., 2018).

### Practical Implications

Despite these limitations, study findings provide practical implications for leader training and character development. Consistent with notions of charismatic leadership, organizations such as the USAF are not only making work more intrinsically rewarding and meaningful but also more competitive and stressful. In this context, leaders can expect to have more positive and negative emotional reactions to their work that ultimately may affect their psychological wellbeing. Positive and negative affective responses as measured by the JAWS tap the affective facet of an individual's wellbeing (Van Katwyk et al., 2000). Prolonged high-arousal PAE and NAE are associated with stress, burnout, and other harmful physical and psychological conditions (Chi et al., 2015). Air Force policies recently have been affected by increased suicides, resiliency focus, and the idea of creating organizational climates and cultures that foster psychologically safe work environments and value Airmen wellbeing. Study results indicate that extreme surges in high-arousal PAE and NAE without a high level of self-control does not allow for the maximization of charismatic leadership behavior. In the USAF, screening future Airmen for wide swings in PAE, NAE, and self-control may provide additional data points to identify charismatic

leaders and foster their wellbeing. Assessments used in this study are tools to collect such data.

We recommend that leaders be trained to recognize the types and intensities of their PAE and NAE (as shown in Figure 1) that reflect their tendencies toward displaying charismatic leadership. Being mindful of such affective experiences may help leaders exert more self-control over behavioral manifestations of their emotions to display charismatic behaviors that subordinates recognize and admire. Training modules, like those delivered at Penn State University, Korea University, and Air University, can be designed that explain the full range of PAE and NAE, how they manifest physiologically, behaviorally, and verbally; and how each contributes to the display of charismatic leadership behaviors of visioning and role-modeling of organizational norms, ethics, and values (Sosik & Jung, 2018). Organizations should also consider selecting candidates for training programs who have tendencies toward experiencing both positive and negative emotional states and possess high levels of self-control; they may be well suited for displaying charismatic leadership behavior.

Several virtues underlying USAF Core Values are consistent with self-control. Demonstrating Integrity first requires Airmen to be accountable to those they serve. *Putting Service Before Self* requires Airmen to fulfill their duty to perform tasks in support of the mission. *Achieving Excellence in All We Do* requires Airmen to be disciplined in mind, body, emotion, and spirit (USAF, 2015). Given that self-control is a character strength that fosters accountability, duty fulfillment, and discipline (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), Airmen should view it as a psychological resource to support the execution of operations in an integrated (i.e., balanced), accountable, and agile manner. Developing leaders of character should therefore

involve training Airmen how to build self-control by setting goals, forming good personal habits, identifying and avoiding temptations, maintaining proper posture with core muscle strength, maintaining a healthy diet, and glucose supplementation (Baumeister et al., 2007). Such training is consistent with USAF doctrine that espouses self-awareness and self-regulation in leadership roles and sustenance of all facets of wellbeing (USAF, 2015). Including assessments of PAE, NAE, and self-control used in the present study for Air Force accession programs like the Air Force Academy, Officer Training School, or ROTC training may help inculcate the importance of recognizing the triggers of one's affective experiences.

## Conclusion

This study's findings suggest an answer as to how and when leaders' affective experiences produce charismatic leadership behavior. Specifically, leaders' high arousal PAE is most strongly related to their charismatic behavior when their self-control and high-arousal NAE are both high. For Airmen or other leaders who find themselves in the heat of high intensity affective experiences, self-control may be a mechanism to yield charismatic attributions by becoming a master of one's emotions instead of a maniac enslaved by them.

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## EXECUTES OPERATIONS IN AN INTEGRATED, ACCOUNTABLE, AND AGILE MANNER

# How We Integrate

Michael Fantini, Maj General (USAF), Director AFWIC

Interviewed By: Douglas Lindsay

**Lindsay:** Do you mind sharing a little bit about your leadership experiences as the Director of the Air Force Warfighter Integration Capability (AFWIC)?

**Fantini:** In order to be able to integrate, you have to have an organization that is comfortable working like that. So, many people, just by their personality, are not comfortable in that space. Due to the mission of AFWIC, I lived that every day. Generally, folks like to get their tasks, accomplish their tasks, and then move on. We have not really incentivized our system to engender the fact that it is a good thing that other people know what you are doing so that they can leverage it to create more synergy.

AFWIC is the result of the frustration of the leadership of our Air Force, in that they were not able to influence the direction of the Air Force until only the last minute. For example, where you put your money is where you put your emphasis. You fund what you have as a priority. So, if you are the leadership of the Air Force and you don't have the ability to shift and move funds, then you are going to be frustrated. That is a result of the static nature that we have found ourselves in where we were comfortable with our core functions, and with a bottom up approach and the leadership wasn't able to do that in an optimized manner. The reality is that we should be doing more engagement

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**Maj. Gen. Michael A. Fantini** is the Acting Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategy, Integration and Requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Virginia. General Fantini graduated from Catholic University of America and was commissioned through the ROTC program at Howard University. Following graduation, he served in a variety of operational assignments as an F-16 pilot, instructor pilot and weapons officer. He has commanded a fighter squadron, the 332nd Expeditionary Operations Group in Balad, Iraq, the 82nd Training Wing, Sheppard AFB, Texas, and the 451st Air Expeditionary Wing, Kandahar, Afghanistan. In his previous assignment, General Fantini was the Director, Air Force Warfighting Integration Capability, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategy, Integration, and Requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Arlington, Virginia. As AFWIC Director, he identified and prioritized ways and means to guide resourcing priorities, thus improving Air Force lethality and enhancing the Joint and Coalition fight. General Fantini is a command pilot with more than 3,200 hours in the MQ-9, F-16, T-37 and T-38.



across various portfolios and that we should recognize that some portfolios might be more important than others. It all comes down to being effective in combat.

The challenges I saw as the director of AFWIC started with survival of AFWIC itself. AFWIC started as an experiment. I picked it up at AFWIC 1.0, which was really Initial Operating Capability (IOC) Plus, and I have been able to take it to AFWIC 2.0. It will now be further instantiated by General Hinote into AFWIC 2.1. We created an organization that needed to demonstrate its value. In the beginning, we weren't demonstrating value as an organization because people were questioning why we existed. They would ask, "What was wrong with the old way of doing business?" What we had to do was identify and demonstrate our value. A lot of that value is tied to the ability to create decision level engagement for senior leaders. People may ask, "How do you tie platforms together? What is the answer there?" The reality is that stuff is interesting and important, but unless the senior leaders of the Air Force are buying into how we are trying to take on enterprise problems and they are buying into changing the direction of this massive bureaucracy, then a 2-star general is not going to be able to do that. It's about things like teeing up decisions, influencing the acquisition community, and influencing the resourcing and programming community. We are doing that by having a known threat, a strategic document that we are applying toward that threat (the National Defense Strategy and the Air Force Strategy in support of that), developing concepts of operations that then establish requirements that we then go out and acquire. That is a tall order. It is not going to happen with a home run. Rather, we are making a bunch of base hits.

My leadership challenges were to be able to enable my people to unleash their talents with the authority given to me as the director of AFWIC. I'm not the

smartest guy in the room or have the best ideas, but we absolutely have that in the organization. It goes to one of the things you may have heard before in my pitch. I firmly believe Captains and Staff Sergeants have the answers. Younger folks that are more connected to the mission at the tactical level, they know what needs to be done. They generally know how to do it, and they have the ideas to change to do it better. We have to create an environment where we enable them to do just that. That was, and is, my leadership philosophy coming into AFWIC and at the time, we were just 27% manned. We are now manned at just shy of 80%. That is like a normal staff, so there are no excuses now. But the beautiful thing about that was it allowed us to be able to reach out and get some of the people we wanted and move them around to take advantage of their talents. That is how I attacked my leadership philosophy by enabling others to help do the hard work. We got comments from the Chief of Staff like, I have been coming to CORONAs for years, and this has been the best discussion at a CORONA.<sup>1</sup> That is a great testament to what we are doing. So, we are trying to take the process of just doing the work and we are trying to help them (our Air Force leadership) to make more thoughtful decisions and establishing what that will look like in the future. Does that answer your question?

**Lindsay:** It does. It has to be an interesting proposition because you are not only trying to demonstrate value, you are also trying to build up and establish the organization through personnel and processes. How did you approach that?

**Fantini:** I sat back and thought, "What are we really trying to get done?" It really boiled down to four things. The first was design. What does the future Air

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<sup>1</sup> CORONA is an annual conference for senior Air Force leadership to get together to discuss strategy and policy.



Force look like? The next was to integrate - to be able to integrate across the proverbial stovepipes. It is also the ability to develop -to execute capability development for relevant capabilities. Finally, there is impact. The Chief of Staff was not satisfied that AFWIC was not impacting the programming decisions of the Program Objective Memorandum (POM)<sup>2</sup>. Nominally, you could say that AFWIC doesn't have the authority to do that. It lies elsewhere. But, the Chief gave us that implied task. Our ability to realize a future concept is directly related to our ability to impact the resourcing of that potential concept. If you can't do that, it goes into what we had previously been suffering with as an Air Force. A lack of a coherent strategy because we ended up reacting to paying bills, and not focusing on what bills we should pay from a priority perspective that enables our game plan to get at the National Defense Strategy and the Air Force Strategy, to execute our game plan. That is very much what I felt as an organization we had to demonstrate - that we were value added and that we could produce product. Ultimately, that product is defined in helping align the money in order to resource the vision of the leadership. That is the gift that keeps on giving. There is no end. It is constant. As an example, I am not the A8<sup>3</sup>. I am a 2-star and the A8 is a 3-star. But we have a lot of good teaming with the A8. They know they don't have all the answers and wanted to be aligned with future concepts. We support that by having a good relationship there. It is all about

2 A Program Objective Memorandum (POM) is a recommendation from the Services and Defense Agencies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) concerning how they plan to allocate resources (funding) for a program(s) to meet the Service Program Guidance (SPG) and Defense Planning Guidance (DPG; <http://acqnotes.com/acqnote/acquisitions/program-objective-memorandum-pom>).

3 The A staff in the Air Force that is a designated headquarters staff structure. The A8 is responsible for Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment.

the relationships across organizations that make us successful.

**Lindsay:** That is a key component to leadership, in general, is the ability to have those critical relationships. That is a key to developing synergy. In your 2020 National Character and Leadership Symposium (NCLS) presentation, you talked about incentivizing this type of approach<sup>4</sup>. You mentioned that we are very good at rewarding for tactical performance. If we want to incentivize the idea of cutting across stovepipes, how can we do that? What were you able to do as the director of AFWIC?

*Our ability to realize a future concept is directly related to our ability to impact the resourcing of that potential concept. If you can't do that, it goes into what we had previously been suffering with as an Air Force.*

**Fantini:** It is leadership from the get go. Leadership sets the expectation that I want you, and I expect you, to know your peers or other entities that are working various problems and issues. We shouldn't do it from an insular perspective, but do it from a transparent perspective. If you are in the Air Force, you need to know your counterparts in the other services. You need to know your counterparts in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). You need to know your counterparts in the Joint Staff. All of these folks are stakeholders in some form or fashion.

4 NCLS is the National Character and Leadership Symposium that takes place every February at the United States Air Force Academy. The Symposium is the flagship event on character and leadership: <https://www.usafa.edu/character/national-character-leadership-symposium-ncls/>

Understanding how that system works is immensely important. If you look at my personal career, you will notice that I have a lot of time in the Pentagon. Many people say, “I don’t ever want to go to the Pentagon.” But, the reality is, this is where the decisions are made. Wing Commands, Numbered Air Forces, and Major Commands; all of that information comes up to the Pentagon, and decisions are made here. Understanding those external and internal stakeholders and decisions makers who influence how things get done, is extremely important. General Goldfein has really engendered in his time as the Chief of Staff, the fact that it is a Joint fight. You need to know your Joint counterparts. You need to engage them and you need to gain advocacy because we are stronger together than we are apart. It is a similar mindset when you are working things on the different staffs. It is that element of transparency and communication which are some of the traits that will keep AFWIC successful. General Hinote has been confirmed for his next star to be the A5<sup>5</sup>. That is a very specific and reasoned decision to spread that AFWIC experiment across a larger swath with more rank. I think that is going to be an interesting thing to watch as we go to AFWIC 2.1.

**Lindsay:** So, the perspective of AFWIC gets pushed out and up even more with that move. That perspective is important. So, you have talked about relationships and knowing your counterparts. That is great advice for junior leaders. Any other advice for young leaders as to how to think about the future and think about how they can prepare themselves?

**Fantini:** That’s a great question. The best advice I can give is that whatever job you are doing, do the best that you can at it. Too many times, I see people who are more worried about what comes next as opposed to accomplishing the task. You need to trust your

leadership that they are going to make those decisions on what comes next. You want to be the person that gets turned to in the organization. Whether it is a squadron or a group, you want your leaders to go, “Hey \_\_\_\_\_, I need you to do this.” That you become the person that the leadership turns to. That is the measure of merit. Cream will rise to the top. Now, I’m not saying you should just arbitrarily live in the moment of the task. You should also have a broader perspective of where you want to go, in general. But, in terms of new leaders, just be the best that you can at doing your job. Then, you are going to get more piled on you because you have demonstrated that you can handle it and you will have the trust of your leadership. There is no magic recipe. Do the best that you can. Ultimately, you will be the person in the driver’s seat because you will progress really well.

On a different note, I have 25 and 26 year Colonels who are lamenting that they are getting out as a Colonel. I think that is the wrong perspective. You should celebrate that. If you are a 20 or 22 year Lieutenant Colonel, you should be proud of that. In fact, we as an institution, should engender that. If you are a Colonel in the Marine Corps, you are expected to serve until 30. We should do the same thing. We should set an expectation in the Air Force, from a cultural perspective, that service is a good thing. There is this element of fulfillment. I am fulfilled as an Air Force officer because I enjoy coming to work every day and I feel worthy. There is worthy work to be done for the institution. Notice, I didn’t say because I am a 2-star. That goes under the interesting but immaterial category. Creating a culture and a mindset like that where you truly don’t care who gets the credit, you really just care that you are advancing the institution. That, in my mind, is some of how the culture of the Air Force has changed at least in my 33 plus years. That is different than the old model of the fear and

<sup>5</sup> The A5 is responsible for Strategic Plans and Policy.

intimidation will continue until the morale improves. The leadership model has significantly changed to one of support and setting the bar high for expectations and then, helping and enabling folks to achieve it. That is a significant change in leadership over my time in the service.

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EXECUTES OPERATIONS IN AN INTEGRATED,  
ACCOUNTABLE, AND AGILE MANNER

# How Resiliency Prepares Leaders to Prevail on Battlefields of the Future

Justin Stoddard, United States Air Force Academy

I'll never forget stepping out of the C-17 aircraft that carried our light infantry company to Kandahar, Afghanistan in the summer of 2003. As we shuffled out the back and down the ramp, the first thing I felt was the thick heat and the strong smell of jet exhaust from the engines as they were slowing down. I kept waiting for the heat to dissipate as I walked further from the aircraft, but even in the darkness of our "o-dark-thirty" arrival the heat wasn't going anywhere. Reception handed us warm bottles of water to drink as we got our in-brief and my crash course in battlefield resiliency began. It continued in the following days as we confirmed our weapons-zero on ranges in 120+ degree heat, did physical training (PT) at night, and got chased around by camel spiders. But the real test came when my light infantry platoon was given several armored Humvee troop carriers and gun trucks and told we had three days to develop our new battle drills and standard operating procedures (SOPs) and start patrolling. Back in Fort Drum, New York we had trained on foot and had never fought from vehicles. But here we were and we had to figure out and learn to fight and win in vehicles on a battlefield we had never experienced. And so we did. Upon redeployment in the spring of 2004, every member of my platoon walked off the plane and back to their friends and families with greater wisdom, experience, and a toughness only close combat can provide.

- Author Reflection

The ability to withstand, adapt, recover, and grow when faced with overwhelming challenges is the essence of resilience and represents a critical asset of leaders in the military as they encounter stressors and changing demands (U.S. Department of the Air Force, 2014). As the characteristics and nature of the global battlefield changes and the complexities of dynamic adversaries increase, the necessity for leaders to develop resiliency is more critical than ever. Leaders who understand the construct of resiliency theory, the process of building resiliency, and the importance of assessing their own personal successes and failures will be better prepared to develop the resiliency necessary to prepare themselves and their units to fight and win on the battlefields of the future. The shifting

nature of future conflict demands we prepare now to confront, engage, and triumph over adversaries and challenges that currently may not exist. Resiliency-building efforts are essential to future success since the habits and problem-solving skills can be applied to any situation regardless of military specialty including future, currently unknown challenges. This paper will review the origins, development, and framework of resiliency theory, discuss resiliency-building models, and highlight the importance of conducting self-evaluations and after-action reviews (AARs) to improve individual and unit performance. This will demonstrate why understanding resiliency (and how to build resiliency), is so critical to achieving individual success and emerging triumphant on the complex battlefields of the future.

### Resiliency Theory Origins and Development

Research on individual resilience began in the early 1970's with the work of Dr. Norman Garmezy and his investigation into children at risk for severe psychopathology (Garmezy, 1974). His later work with Dr. Ann Masten focused on children raised in severely adverse circumstances and why some of them grew up with serious behavioral challenges while others in the same households seemed unaffected or even strengthened by their experiences. They recognized that some children demonstrated a kind

of stress competence and stress-resistance which they later termed "resilience" (Garmezy & Masten, 1986). As resiliency research progressed and definitions for resiliency developed, researchers moved through several "waves" of theory moving from identifying resiliency in terms of individual traits and qualities, to recognizing protective factors designed to help cope with stressors, and then later combining the two into an internal motivational drive toward self-actualization (Allan et al., 2014; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Masten et al., 2008). Continuing research led to describing resiliency as a dynamic process of reacting to and engaging adversity in order to regain a homeostatic state that may be better, worse, or the same as when the adversity began (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008; Luthar et al., 2000; Richardson, 2002). This new understanding of resiliency theory, and the movement from a static trait-based theory to a process-based theory led researchers to explore factors that might lead individuals to develop resiliency, how resiliency influenced performance, how to measure resiliency, and determine if it was possible to build and develop resiliency in different populations.

Two contemporary researchers, Dr. Paul Bartone and Dr. Angela Duckworth, have extensively explored resiliency, hardiness, and grit, and found ways to accurately measure these qualities. Bartone has written extensively about concepts surrounding the human ability to overcome adversity, particularly in the

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military (Bartone, 2006; Bartone et al., 2009; Bartone et al., 2013; Bartone et al., 2008). His extensive research has demonstrated the value of resiliency both in leaders and in those they lead. Bartone has dedicated a great deal of research to the study of resiliency and hardiness by creating and assessing surveys, such as the 15-item Dispositional Resilience Scale, which has proven a reliable and valid measurement tool to evaluate the *hardiness* and *resilience* of a variety of individuals, especially soldiers and military leaders (Bartone, 1995, 2007). His research identifies and underscores the importance of resiliency in dealing with the stresses of deployments, rigors of military life, and the risk factors associated with combat. It is notable that the terms hardiness and resilience are often used interchangeably, showing the close and, in most cases, synonymous use of these terms.

Duckworth has researched grit extensively with adults, Ivy League undergraduates, West Point Academy cadets, and participants in the National Spelling Bee (Duckworth et al., 2007). Duckworth determined that grit is a combination of two key subcomponents: consistency of interest referred to as

the National Spelling Bee (Duckworth et al., 2007). Her research at West Point discovered the significant connection between grit, passion, resiliency, and individual performance in an academic and military training environment replete with the challenges and stresses inherent to both. This again underscores the close relationship between resiliency and successful leadership performance.

### Definitions of Resiliency

As previously mentioned, definitions of resiliency have changed over time as researchers attempt to quantify, predict, standardize, and understand resiliency. Many of these definitions include the concept of bouncing back from adversity (Dyer & McGuinness, 1996; Ledesma, 2014; VanBreda, 2001), returning to a former shape after being bent or pulled (Resilience, 2018), or rising every time you fall (Duckworth, 2016). While the various definitions capture different aspects of resilience, all of them follow a common thematic cycle wherein an individual possesses and demonstrates the ability to face an adversity, to process and react to that adversity, and to emerge with a new homeostatic state after regaining stability or normalization.

***Resiliency represents the determination to keep trying, keep pushing forward, and never give up despite the many obstacles or adversities that may stand in the way.***

passion, and perseverance of effort simply referred to as perseverance (Duckworth, 2016), which is synonymous with resiliency (Perkins-Gough, 2013). She created a survey tool called the Grit Survey containing two subscales to measure the elements of passion and resiliency. This survey tool was used to predict student success, including that of West Point cadets attending basic training and students participating in

As explained by one West Point cadet who completed initial cadet basic training, “Within two weeks I was tired, lonely, frustrated, and ready to quit—as were all of my classmates” (Duckworth, 2016, p. 25). However, that cadet,

and many others simply would not quit despite the challenges placed in front of them. As Dr. Duckworth explains, while some quit, others did not, and the key difference seemed to be, “... a ‘never give up’ attitude” (Duckworth, 2016, p. 26). Resiliency represents the determination to keep trying, keep pushing forward, and never give up despite the many obstacles or adversities that may stand in the way.

The definition of resiliency developed by the Defense Centers of Excellence of Psychological and Traumatic Brain Injury and adopted by the United States Air Force, describes resiliency as “The ability to withstand, recover and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands” (U.S. Department of the Air Force, 2014, p. 14). This definition uses the verbs “withstand, recover, and grow” indicating resiliency is a dynamic action instead of a static trait or characteristic. This action-based definition of resiliency captures the desire and intent of the military services to develop individuals capable of facing overwhelming challenges, and to survive and thrive despite the nature of future uncertainties. Moving forward with this definition for resiliency lays the groundwork for a discussion of resiliency theory itself.

### Resiliency Framework

Resiliency theory is a strengths-based theory that instead of focusing on deficits, focuses on individual strengths that lead to healthy development and positive outcomes regardless of the level of risk exposure. This theory involves the elements of adversity, promotive factors that include internal assets and external resources, protective factors, and vulnerability factors which together, influences resiliency in various ways. Resiliency theory posits that individuals experience risks or adversities in life and possess promotive factors of varying types and degrees that may support the individual’s ability to overcome the adversities (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Zimmerman, 2013).

Promotive factors consist of the internal assets and external resources an individual has the ability to draw from when attempting to overcome adversity. Internal assets include traits inherent to the individuals such as positive identity, competence, hope, self-esteem, self-efficacy, coping skills, mindset, and mindfulness

(Duckworth, 2016; Dweck, 2006; Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). These internal assets focus on the inherent positive strengths that promote successful resilience when disrupted by risk and adversity. While there are many types of internal assets, a short explanation of a few different examples is instructive.

Self-efficacy is “the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy believe they can master their environment and effectively solve problems as they arise, a critical element of individual resiliency (Reivich & Shatté, 2003). This is essential for leaders as the ability to overcome obstacles starts with the internal belief that a person can make decisions, take action, and bring about effects resulting in overcoming obstacles and challenges in a way that brings positive growth and success.

Mindset refers to the tendency of individuals to have either a fixed viewpoint, wherein intelligence, personality, and character are considered static traits with value placed on the individual achievement of tasks, or a *growth* viewpoint, wherein intelligence, personality, and character is malleable, and experience is gained through both success and failure in completing tasks, with value placed on individual effort and the learning process (Dweck, 2006; Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015).

Mindfulness is described as “a process of regulating attention in order to bring a quality of non-elaborative awareness to current experience and a quality of relating to one’s experience within an orientation of curiosity, experiential openness, and acceptance” (Bishop et al., 2004, p. 234) and an “awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment,



and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment” (Kabat-Zinn, 2003, p. 145). This ability to focus attention on each moment with openness and acceptance can empower individuals to experience hardship in a way that enables them to identify, acknowledge, and accept their own abilities to resolve challenges providing a path to obtaining new skills to handle the challenges ahead. Mindfulness programs like Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) strategies have been proposed to build resiliency among military service members (Grossman et al., 2004; Thomas & Taylor, 2015), and research shows that mindfulness training programs can help individuals learn to mitigate the negative effects of stress (Johnson et al., 2014). Together, these and many other types of internal assets serve to gird up the mental toughness and agility leaders require to engage new challenges and adversities regardless of prior experience.

External assets are the resources available to the individual to which they can turn to for assistance when needed and include parental support, youth and community programs, and adult mentors (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Kiswarday, 2012; Zimmerman et al., 2013). They are those elements external to the individual that they can reach out to for support if they decide to. These external assets could include talking with friends, family, and fellow colleagues in the military, but also include working out, reading a book, going for a hike, running, and participation in other types of activities and connections external to the individual. These serve as powerful assets as individuals faced with continuous hardships can turn to activities which bring a respite from the demanding operational tempo of warfighting, and socially connect with others in similar situations. These relationships can potentially strengthen individuals and organizations as

the unit members learn to rely upon each other as they endure similar challenges together. As a key element of the resiliency framework, these aforementioned elements and many other types of promotive factors may significantly influence the development of resiliency. As individuals identify new resources to draw upon and reach out to when experiencing adversity, they can improve the ways they value growth and may increase their belief that they can, in fact, bounce back from setbacks.

Protective and vulnerability factors are elements that may influence the effects of adversity depending on the individual and their background (Braverman, 2001; Fleming & Ledogar, 2008; Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Luthar et al., 2000). Protective factors are sometimes closely related to promotive factors, but they extend past the individual level to include supportive family networks, socioeconomic status, school experiences, supportive communities, and cultural resources. These factors serve to counteract or ameliorate the effects of adversity and thus, guard the individual from the adversity itself (Braverman, 2001). Vulnerability factors represent the negative qualities, experiences, or lack of protective factors that make individuals more susceptible to adversity and intensify the risk effects. Both factors may be present as a result of the presence or absence of family support and strong community identity, and access to or the lack of assistive resources (Braverman, 2001; Fleming & Ledogar, 2008; Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000). Thus, based on their unique life experiences, everyone will have unique combinations of protective factors and vulnerability factors, and will likewise handle adversity very differently.

Understanding the process by which we experience adversity and exhibit resiliency is instructive as a precursor to discussing how to build resiliency. The

process begins with each of us in a state of stable homeostasis with our experiences and the promotive, vulnerability, and protective factors at the ready. Adversity disrupts our lives and pushes us out of our stable condition and into a period of time when we wrestle with the adversity, bringing to bear the resiliency factors and working through the challenges the best we can. This is where our resiliency is tested as we attempt to overcome the adversity and reintegrate back into a new state of stable homeostasis. This process results in us attaining a new stable state that may range from an increased level of resiliency or resilient reintegration, to the same level of resiliency, to a decreased level or even dysfunctional level of resiliency if the adversity is more than we can bear (Richardson, 2002). How we emerge from this process depends on our ability to effectively draw upon and utilize the factors and resources available to us. For leaders operating in complex environments, the ability to effectively work through this process and adapt, grow, and learn from adversity is critical to achieving success both personally and professionally. Building this ability then becomes of critical importance and focused attention on building resiliency is invaluable.

### Building Resiliency

Using the above resiliency framework, leaders can begin building resiliency by examining the promotive factors and strengths they most commonly draw from to work through adversity. Reflecting on these factors and bringing them to the forefront of their minds makes them more available when adversity presents itself. Additional promotive factors based on individual needs can also be developed to help get through new challenges if the current list is insufficient. Reflecting on specific vulnerability factors and weaknesses, and developing strategies to compensate or overcome these factors can also build resiliency.

Based on prior work, researchers have proposed several resiliency-building models designed to *inoculate* the individual with experiences and strategies they can draw from when working through new challenges. Three of the models designed to aid in evaluating the nature of individual resiliency and to help develop resiliency include the compensatory model, the immunity vs. vulnerability or protective model, and the challenge model (Garmezy et al., 1984). These models have guided researchers as they applied the principles of resiliency theory to curricular strategies and operational practices to develop and enhance individual resiliency (Fleming & Ledogar, 2008; Ledesma, 2014; Richardson, 2002). All three of these models pursue a systematic approach to evaluating and building resiliency to stress regardless of individual background or experiences and “suggest themselves for the impact of describing stress and personal attributes on quality of adaptation” (Garmezy et al., 1984, p. 102). Resilient adaptation is the goal, and the intent is to discover how promotive, protective, and vulnerability factors influence an individual’s ability to adapt to adversity.

The compensatory and protective models focus on dealing with the negative effects individuals may experience because of adversity. The compensatory model seeks to compensate for the negative effects by putting resources in place to help individuals cope with the aftereffects of the adversities they experience. The protective model seeks to put measures in place to protect individuals from experiencing adversity altogether. While these models can be effective in different environments with different age groups, the challenge model may be the most effective at assisting military leaders with developing resiliency since adversity is inherent to the military environment focused on defending our nations against all enemies foreign and domestic.

The challenge model is different from the compensatory or protective models in that instead of seeking to minimize contact with adversity, counteract its effects, or avoid negative outcomes altogether, individuals are intentionally exposed to moderate amounts of adversity in controlled environments to build a level of immunity to the risk (Garmezy et al., 1984). In this model, individuals can face adversity and wrestle with it under the supervision of others who are ready to help, provide guidance, reinforcement, and aid if necessary, in overcoming the adversity. This type of model serves as an inoculation against adversity that prepares the individual for the next adversity (Ledesma, 2014; Zimmerman, 2013). Researchers note that exposure to levels of adversity too high for the individual to adapt to, are counterproductive, while exposure to levels of risk too low do not pose a sufficient amount of stress, resulting in little to no positive effect (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Fleming & Ledogar,

when restarts are not a possibility and the consequences are real (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005).

Applications of this model are especially common in the context of athletics or completing physically demanding tasks like football practice, military drills, dress rehearsals, or learning to talk through a fight or argument wherein the stress of similar adversities are present with the expectation of performing a task (Zimmerman, 2013). In this practice environment, individuals can engage in a process whereby they struggle with adversity, experience both success and failure, make mistakes, discuss other strategies, evaluate viable solutions, and are then able to restart and face the adversities again. For some coaches, this model is commonly referred to as “doing reps” and is as simple as running individuals repetitively through difficult drills in practice to prepare them for the challenging demands of a real situation. For service members in the

military, conducting drills and exercises under stressful conditions has the same effect of preparing them for the adversities they will face while deployed, where the demands are extreme, and the outcomes can be lethal.

### Military Efforts to Build Resiliency

Particularly in the military, personal hardiness and resiliency can reduce the effects of stressors commonly found in contemporary military operations, and

*Particularly in the military, personal hardiness and resiliency can reduce the effects of stressors commonly found in contemporary military operations, and leaders who improve their own hardiness are better able to influence subordinates in developing their own personal hardiness (Bartone, 2006).*

2008). After building experience through guided practice and development, individuals may enhance their abilities to process adversity as they develop an understanding of what to do, how to perform, and how to process the adversity. This inoculation or steeling process familiarizes the individual with the adversities and prepares them for facing those adversities in real life

leaders who improve their own hardiness are better able to influence subordinates in developing their own personal hardiness (Bartone, 2006). Researchers have determined that in comparison to factors including, in part, college entrance scores, personal values, social judgement, and emotional stability; personal hardiness is a strong and consistent predictor of military leadership

performance for both men and women across different contexts (Bartone, 2006; Bartone et al., 2009; Bartone et al., 2013) and an important indicator of mental health (Eid et al., 2008; Ramanaiah et al., 1999). Leadership in the military is critical for mission success and is the element of combat power that unifies all other elements of combat power (U.S. Department of the Army, 2012). In an attempt to identify styles of leadership most effective in the military, studies have found that some leadership styles foster resilience in subordinates (Eid et al., 2008; Gaddy et al., 2017). However, despite this understanding, the ever-changing nature of global conflict continues to present new challenges to military service members. For example, no one was ready for the changes brought about by the events that occurred on the morning of September 11, 2001.

Not long after the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and the ensuing war on terror in the Middle East, military leadership increased their attention on the overall psychological resilience of soldiers returning from combat tours. Some soldiers returned from combat with severe physical injuries, others with severe psychological injuries, but all returned permanently changed as a result of the ravages of war. Military leaders took increasing notice and began prioritizing ways to build resilience in soldiers to strengthen them against the adversities of combat. In 2003, Reivich and Shattree (2003) published *The Resilience Factor: 7 Keys to Finding Your Inner Strengths and Overcoming Life's Hurdles*, which detailed different ways to overcome adversity. Military leaders took notice of the research and began working to develop a program to help soldiers and their families.

Understanding the need to engage in the research and development of resilient leaders, the United States Army and the United States Air Force have initiated research and developed programs to better understand

and develop resiliency within their ranks. The Army stressed the need for every soldier to be resilient and to respond positively after facing adversity, and argued that leaders should train their units to be resilient now and in preparation for future adversity (U.S. Department of the Army, 2012, 2014). The Army defined resilience as “The mental, physical, emotional, and behavioral ability to face and cope with adversity, adapt to change, recover, learn, and grow from setbacks” (U.S. Department of the Army, 2014, para 1-5a). This highlights the elements of facing adversity and being able to withstand, recover, learn, and grow from it.

In 2008, the Army established Army Regulation 350-53: The Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program in order to build resiliency and address the sharply increasing number of soldiers returning from war with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), alcoholism, drug abuse, and suicidal tendencies (U.S. Department of the Army, 2014). The program was updated in 2014 and was renamed the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2) Program, adding the element of family resiliency to the program along with opportunities for families and family members to receive training that would help build family resiliency as they dealt with the difficulties of multiple deployments, soldiers who came home with injuries, soldiers who came home somehow mentally different from when they left, or soldiers who didn't come back at all. As stated in the current regulation, the purpose of the CSF2 program is “to increase the resilience and enhance the performance of Soldiers, Families, and DACs,” referring to Department of the Army Civilians (U.S. Department of the Army, 2014, para 1-5a).

The CSF2 program identifies five dimensions of strength which serve as the primary conceptual pillars of physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and family resiliency to build the overall resiliency of soldiers

(U.S. Department of the Army, 2014). The regulation briefly discusses these five dimensions of strength as the primary factors contributing to individual resiliency. When combined and effectively embodied in a soldier, the Army believes these dimensions comprise the primary elements of individual resilience resulting in an “individual [who] is better able to leverage intellectual and emotional skills and behaviors that promote enhanced performance and optimize their long-term health” (U.S. Department of the Army, 2014, para 1-5a). This resilience enables leaders at all levels to provide better leadership to their units and strengthen both individual units and the Army as a whole.

To measure and assess the resiliency techniques and skills of its members and conduct training to improve and sustain the overall force, the CSF2 program contains three assessment components consisting of an online assessment and self-development programs, specific training for both trainers and individuals in each unit, and a system of metrics and evaluation used to track and report the results of online assessments and training conducted (Reivich & Shatté, 2003). The Global Assessment Tool (GAT) is the online training and self-assessment tool used to test the individual's ability in each resiliency dimension and it contains a series of modules individuals can go through to learn more about each dimension and how they can improve their capacity to embody that dimension. As of 2016, the GAT had been taken over 5.2 million times by soldiers, families, and DACs and has proved to be a measuring tool with high reliability (Vie et al., 2016). Research focused on the GAT has produced mixed results with some lauding the program's overall effectiveness at decreasing negative behaviors (Lester et al., 2011), while others express concerns about the overall effectiveness of the program to actually build individual resilience (Brown, 2015; Timmons, 2013). Despite these results, ongoing efforts continue building

and assessing individual, unit, and family resiliency to identify and develop additional techniques and methods to address the challenges soldiers face as a result of participating in combat operations. With a clear focus on continual improvement the CSF2 program and GAT remain in use, and research continues to evaluate their overall effectiveness and value to service members and their families in building both individual and family resiliency.

In 2011, the United States Air Force began developing its own program to improve individual resilience in a “Total Force Fitness” approach that included eight pillars of fitness and was infused with the concepts of resilience and how to increase individual resilience (Meadows et al., 2016). In 2014, the Air Force established the Comprehensive Airman Fitness (CAF) program designed to “enhance the resilience of individuals, families, and communities” (U.S. Department of the Air Force, 2014, p. 1) using four domains consisting of mental, physical, social, and spiritual fitness. This is similar to the Army CSF2 program and allows for future assessments to be completed on an as-needed basis depending on the needs of the unit (U.S. Department of the Air Force, 2014, para 4.1). Like the Army CSF2 program, the Air Force CAF program continually seeks to build resiliency by committing resources and dedicating research to understand and address the specific challenges individuals and families face as a result of serving their country. In both services, ongoing efforts demonstrate the commitment of our military to support and develop service members as they strive to adapt, learn, and grow despite the ever-changing nature of adversity inherent to military life. New theories will be developed, and programs tested as the military itself continues to embrace a “never give up, never quit” attitude toward helping its service members progress.

To prepare young leaders to lead Air and Space Force personnel, the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) focuses on developing cadets as leaders of character who embody the core values of *Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do*. USAFA itself is a challenging environment for cadets for several reasons. First, it is the intent of USAFA leadership to create and foster an environment that challenges cadets, and thereby build leaders of character. One of the eight key components integral to the essence of USAFA entitled “Developing Character and Leadership” asserts:

The Academy’s unique opportunities allow cadets to practice leadership theory and learn from their experiences. Daily leadership challenges and opportunities abound to learn, apply, and refine leadership principles. The intentional and integrative nature of this officer development catalyzed by the Center for Character and Leadership Development, but implemented throughout, is pervasive at USAFA and not available anywhere else. The Honor Code guides this leadership development to set cadets on a path of living honorably. (The United States Air Force Academy, 2017)

This demonstrates the Academy’s commitment to setting high standards and firm expectations on a routine basis to develop the qualities, behaviors, and traits expected from future Air Force officers. This daily “inoculation” of leadership challenges and high standards reminds one of the repetitively habitual actions of excellence described by Aristotle as a key to developing good moral character and habits of excellence.

Another challenge inherent to the environment at USAFA is the nature of the cadets themselves. The highly selective admissions process results in a group of individuals considered top performers in the country and from around the world. This creates a student body of high-caliber cadets who have demonstrated academic and athletic accomplishment, provided volunteer service, exhibited strong personal character, and are therefore already highly resilient individuals. While this results in a group of highly capable cadets, it also creates a highly competitive environment where top students compete for top marks to improve their chances at obtaining an Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) or career field of their choice. Cadets are ranked using order of merit lists according to their performance in academics, military officership, and physical fitness and placement, and which have a considerable influence on which AFSC cadets receive thus deciding their initial careers in the Air Force. This highly competitive environment, in addition to the stresses of a military academy and an institution of higher education, combines a variety of stressors and adverse conditions that cadets struggle to manage.

In an attempt to focus the development of cadets, USAFA has developed the nine outcomes of the Officer Development System (ODS) to develop cadets as part of the Air Force’s force development process (The United States Air Force Academy, 2014). The purpose of the ODS is to provide the framework by which the nine institutional outcomes are accomplished in order to “1) develop each cadet’s appreciation that being an officer is a noble way of life, 2) foster a commitment to character-based officership, and 3) develop competencies essential to this identity as a character-based officer/leader” (The United States Air Force Academy, 2014, p. 4). USAFA’s nine institutional outcomes focus on cadet development in:



1. Critical Thinking
2. Application of Engineering Methods
3. Scientific Reasoning and the Principles of Science
4. The Human Condition, Cultures, and Societies
5. Leadership, Teamwork, and Organizational Management
6. Clear Communication
7. Ethics and Respect for Human Dignity
8. National Security of the American Republic
9. Warrior Ethos as Airmen and Citizens

Additionally, each of the outcomes has a list of proficiencies designed to achieve the intent of each outcome, and the proficiencies relate directly to the courses and programs cadets participate in. Outcome number nine, Warrior Ethos as Airmen and Citizens, has eight proficiencies including “Proficiency 5: Exhibit grit: a hardiness of spirit and resistance to accept failure despite physical and mental hardships” (The United States Air Force Academy, 2016, p. 1). This proficiency acknowledges the need for cadets to develop grit and is designed to identify, develop, and evaluate programs and activities established to achieve that goal. In support of this goal, USAFA has developed and implemented courses, programs, and training opportunities to build cadet character and leadership, challenge decision-making ability, and increase mental and physical toughness. This curriculum is designed to span all four years of the cadet experience with each class of cadets experiencing unique and specific programs. It is important to note that USAFA continually endeavors to capitalize on the latest research and information regarding character and leadership development. It therefore comes as no surprise that USAFA continues to review and update its programs to apply the most current research theories and maintain relevant and effective programs to develop the best officers possible.

## Self-Reflection and After-Action Reviews

In his discussion of Aristotle’s Ethics, author Will Durant discusses the concept of habituation by quoting the ancient philosopher’s claim that excellence is a habit:

Excellence is an art won by training and habituation: we do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have these because we have acted rightly; “these virtues are formed in man by his doing the actions”; *we are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit*: “the good of man is a working of the soul in the way of excellence in a complete life . . . for as it is not one swallow or one fine day that makes a spring, so it is not one day or a short time that makes a man blessed and happy.” (Durant, 1961, pp. 61, emphasis added)

In this sense, habituation or the active and repetitive practice of a particular skill or value over time is believed to enable the individual to embody that skill or value. More recently, retired Navy Seal Eric Greitens explains that “We become what we do if we do it often enough” (Greitens, 2015, p. 29) reinforcing the commonly held notion that “practice makes perfect”. And yet it is not just repetition itself that brings excellence. The reality of post-disruption growth is made possible through intentional, mindful, and focused practice, coupled with careful reflection and intent to take action. Indeed, with enough practice, anyone and everyone can develop resiliency by reflecting upon the disruptive adversities that knock them out of homeostasis and then engage in opportunities that support reintegrative growth. Thus, the key to success using any of the resiliency-building models is engaging in the developmental process of



intentional repetition, reflection, and re-evaluation until cultivating excellence and resilience truly becomes a habit. This process of repetitive effort followed by introspective re-evaluation can create a steeling effect on the individual who can become better able to process any adversity regardless of previous experience. But aside from understanding the conceptual framework and resiliency-building models, what can we do today to build our resiliency?

Self-reflection involves taking the time and space to look inwardly at the thoughts, feelings, decisions, and behaviors that have led to various actions. Keeping the resiliency framework in mind, a good place to start is to reflect upon one's own vulnerabilities and promotive factors. Reflecting upon vulnerabilities brings to mind all of the past experiences, relationships, interactions, and events that have influenced the preferences, biases, and behavioral patterns that guide all of us. The uncomfortable and sometimes painful nature of our vulnerabilities often cause us to ignore them all together. But taking the time to recognize, identify, and even giving a name to our vulnerabilities, can help us move forward. An analogy is often made noting we must clearly identify our destination before we can map the path to get there. But until we truly know our location, despite the discomfort of admitting our own shortcomings and failures, we can never be confident in the direction of our first step.

Just as important as reflecting upon our vulnerabilities is reflecting upon our promotive factors, both the internal and external assets. Internal assets such as developing a positive identity, competence, having hope, self-esteem, a sense of self-efficacy, coping skills, a growth mindset, and mindfulness deserve careful and deliberate consideration to identify which assets we have and are skilled in using, and which ones

we don't have and need to develop. Many training programs exist to build and strengthen various internal assets and reflecting upon which assets we are ready to use and which assets we need to develop gives us a first step to adding arrows to our quiver when adversity disrupts our lives.

Another critical topic of reflection involves reviewing our own patterns of behavior when faced with adversity and how we move through the resiliency process. It is important to remember that since everyone experiences disruptive adversity, everyone goes through this cycle whether we realize it or not. The question is not do we go through this cycle, but how do we go through this process and how do we emerge? There are many questions we can ask ourselves while reviewing our own resiliency. What happens when we get disrupted? How do we act? What are our behaviors both inwardly with ourselves and outwardly to others? What elements do we bring to bear while attempting to regain a sense of stability? Do we tend to reintegrate at a dysfunctional level, a resilient level, or somewhere else along the spectrum? These types of questions invite us to reflect upon our own process of working through the resiliency framework when disrupted by adversity with the intent to build a more mindful awareness of our thoughts, how they may affect our behaviors, and their effect on the thoughts and behaviors of others whom we lead and serve with.

Improving our ability to understand our own resiliency and the processes we undergo while overcoming obstacles enables us to see and understand the resiliency of individuals around us and the organizations we belong to. This increased perception aids in the process of conducting effective after-action reviews where deliberate and thoughtful discussions can lead to improving how we execute our various tasks

and missions. After-action reviews have been a key element of military operations for centuries and have enabled individuals, units, and organizations to review the purpose of the task or mission, what was supposed to happen, what actually happened, and then discuss what actions to sustain, what actions to improve, and then develop plans to make those adjustments a reality. Just as with individuals, units and organizations cannot effectively evaluate their progress and move forward without a clear understanding of where they are. This may often get overlooked because no one wants to be labeled the “whistleblower” who identifies problems, and yet doing exactly this can enable organizations to clearly understand where they are as a precursor to developing plans to improve and move forward. Leaders with a clear understanding of how they process the challenges they are faced with model the example to other individuals within the organization. This can help the organization to become more resilient to disruptive challenges faced by the group as a whole.

Whether we are developing leaders of character, or operating as leaders of character ourselves, developing resiliency and clearly understanding the processes and skills we can develop to overcome future adversities helps to prepare us for the challenges that lie ahead. This critical ability to adapt, learn, and grow from obstacles and challenges can help leaders prepare to effectively resolve dynamic and complex challenges that may not currently exist, involving organizations and adversaries yet to emerge. Reflecting upon our own promotive factors, vulnerabilities, resiliency, and by conducting deliberate and thoughtful after-action reviews, we can serve as precursors to help develop the skills and abilities needed to overcome unimaginable challenges. We need resilient leaders ready to face the future battlefield armed with confidence not only in their technical skills, but in their ability to engage and triumph over adversity regardless of what it may be.

We need leaders who will never give up, never quit, and who will lead their units to continue pushing forward to find a way to accomplish the mission.

♦ ♦ ♦

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## BOOK REVIEW

# A Review of "Without Warning: The Saga of Gettysburg, A Reluctant Union Hero, and the Men He Inspired"

Terry Pierce, Stanwood, WA: Heart Ally Books (2020)

Review By: Erv Rokke, PhD, Lt Gen, USAF (Ret)

In *Without Warning: The Saga of Gettysburg, A Reluctant Union Hero, and the Men He Inspired*, Dr. Terry Pierce portrays in incredible detail the events leading to Maj Gen George Gordon Meade's assumption of command of the Union Army of the Potomac and its challenge of prevailing in the Battle of Gettysburg, which followed some three days later. It's a story that documents the unusual process by which Meade replaces his predecessor, Maj Gen Joseph Hooker, and the horrific battlefield action that begins some three days later at Gettysburg. That is the context brilliantly and thoroughly portrayed by Terry Pierce. *Without Warning* is an exciting literary adventure that will bring both tears and joy to the reader.

This historically-based novel begins with President Lincoln moving to replace the commander of the Army of the Potomac, whose performance in the recent battle at Chancellorsville had been poor. It is the third such action the president has taken in the past year. Meade is also the third officer with whom the president discussed assuming the command position; the first two had declined. Meade is not given that option. No one seems surprised at Hooker's demise. Most everyone, including Meade, seems surprised by his selection as the new commander.

Meade finds himself commanding an army with a shaken morale, having recently been defeated in a major battle at Chancellorsville and having been led by a commander who has lost touch with his people, if not with his mission. The Army of the Potomac has neither a strategy nor an operational plan for dealing with the Confederate army, commanded by a beloved hero, Lt Gen Robert E. Lee. The Potomac army's situation is further complicated by several inept senior leaders, including a political appointee, Maj Gen Daniel Sickles, former Congressman championed by President Lincoln and now Commander of the Potomac army's Third Corps.

With only three days before an anticipated battle with the Confederate forces, Meade quickly begins the process of setting forth a strategy, stationing his forces appropriately, and “cleaning house” of inept senior leadership. His strategy is simple: gain high ground for his warriors, and present Lee with only two options—attack the Union forces from a disadvantaged position, or retreat back to Virginia. With only one or two exceptions (including Sickles), he replaces or reconfirms his six corps commanders and makes his expectations for each of them very clear. His leadership throughout this process is clearly portrayed by Pierce. Indeed, it is a textbook on preparation for combat, which should be studied by military professionals even today.

The battle begins, and Meade must come to grips with the greatest unknown in warfare: the moral and mental character of his people. Once again, the author presents a thorough and fascinating description of a horrific three-day fight and, in so doing, sets forth a narrative of combat leadership challenges. In rapid succession, his most skilled corps commander, Maj Gen

John Reynolds, is killed, and his least effective corps commander, Sickles, deliberately violates his orders and moves his 11,000 men a half mile in front of the Union defensive line in the hopes of achieving his personal objective of emerging from the battle as its hero.

Sickles’ unauthorized movement of his Third Corps soldiers not only fails to bring him personal fame, but also leaves a gap in the Union force defensive line, which substantially affects the outcome of the Gettysburg battle. Meade’s leadership, in conjunction with an incredible series of heroic actions by his men, brings about the first Union victory over Lee.

In the end, *Without Warning* is a brilliantly crafted story about the Battle of Gettysburg that features a positive narrative for moral and heroic leadership. For six days, against all odds, Meade “outgeneraled” the charismatic and iconic Lee.

♦ ♦ ♦

## BOOK REVIEW

# A Review of "Gender, Power, Law & Leadership"

Hannah Brenner & Renee Knake, St Paul, MN: West Academic Publishing (2020)

Review By: Dawn Zoldi, Colonel, USAF (Ret)

*"The first step to getting power is to become visible to others."*

- Former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor (pg. x)

Does diversity in leadership matter? The Supreme Court of the United States seems to think so. In *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*, 136 S.Ct. 2198 (2016), Justice Kennedy, writing for the majority, acknowledged that universities create leaders, and stated, "A university is in large part defined by those intangible 'qualities which are incapable of objective measurement but which make for greatness'... those intangible characteristics, like student body diversity...are central to its identity and educational mission." (pg. 9)

This excerpt from *Fisher* is but one of many legal cases, scholarly articles, targeted discussion questions, biographies, photographs and narrative stories about trail-blazing female leaders that comprise Hannah Brenner and Renee Knake's powerful book *Gender, Power, Law & Leadership*. Intended as a textbook for students and faculty across undergraduate, advanced degree and law school programs, nothing can be more on-point to the U.S. Air Force Academy, a military service academy that serves as a beacon of character and leadership development for the nation.

As colleagues and friends, Brenner, currently the Vice Dean for Academic and Student Affairs and Associate Professor of Law at California Western School of Law, San Diego and Knake, a Professor of Law and the Joanne and Larry Doherty Chair in Legal Ethics, University of Houston Law Center, have been battling gender inequality in the legal profession, together, for more than a decade. After years of curating relevant content for seminars, conferences and their own classrooms, they decided to co-author this text. Their goal: to fill the "stark void" of offerings that address the "glaring omission of women from positions of power or leadership." (pg. x) This is not a leadership "how-to" book, but more of a leadership "why" book, identifying the structural, societal, and psychosocial barriers that exist in the leadership arena for women, while also highlighting stories about barrier breaking female leaders to ultimately inspire change.

Given their legal backgrounds, not surprisingly, the authors emphasize the gender power gap in the legal profession as they survey multiple other professions including politics, corporate, and academe. The primary



question they explore is why women attend law school in equal or greater numbers than their male colleagues, and yet hold the least amount of top tier positions in the nation's law firms. The answer is rooted in historical leadership models, gender and intersectional stereotypes, roles and expectations, as well as structural barriers that perpetuate the status quo.

The authors explore all of these issues by taking the reader through a journey back in time, from the Suffrage Movement in the 1800s to the present day #MeToo Movement, concluding with thought-leadership articles outlining potential solutions for future reform.

The first two chapters provide a history lesson and an introduction to diversity scholarship, delving into everything from the stereotypical leader to the women-led responses to these ingrained traditions: the 1848 Declaration of Sentiments, the 19th Amendment, the Equal Rights Amendment, and the first woman's international lawyer's organization, the Equity Club.

Chapter 3 digs a little deeper into gender inequality, discrimination, and bias, expanding into intersectionality, the cross-section of gender and other identity-based factors such as class, ethnicity, geography, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. These chapters delve into the double-whammy (my words, not theirs) confronted by women of color in leadership roles, particularly in the judiciary. The legal profession is considered the "gatekeeper of equality," yet white males retain power and control. Brenner & Knake examine how having women of color on the bench matters to society, not just for symbolic representational justice, but because their presence improves decision-making by providing an "other" perspective. Studies included in the text show that female jurists influence outcomes for those harmed, in particular in employment and race discrimination cases at all levels - trial, appellate and even at the Supreme Court. Yet subtle biases still remain.

Chapter 4 reviews post-feminism era concerns including the "second-shift" (working all day and performing family care duties at night and on weekends), the "glass cliff" (women more frequently hired on as CEOs in failing companies), "short-listing" (being in the top tier but non-selected), and "gender side-lining" (where a woman's achievements are marginalized in comparison to a lesser accomplishment of a man).

The next four chapters provide concrete examples of these concepts in action by exploring how they are played out across many sectors: legal, political, corporate, athletics, higher education, medicine, and science. They discuss how even the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land, is not immune from toxic gender dynamics. An eye-opening study published in the 2017 *Virginia Law Review*:

"...clearly established that women on the Supreme Court are interrupted at a markedly higher rate during oral arguments than men. Additionally, both male Justices and male advocates interrupt women more frequently than they interrupt men." (pgs. 253-254)

While seniority and ideology also contributed to the frequency of interruptions, the variables were compounded in such a way that junior female liberal justices were far more likely to be interrupted by senior male conservative justices than not. This matters for society, not only as an exemplar of behavior, but because oral arguments influence thoughts. Not being able to get a word in edge-wise, even at the pinnacle of one's profession, necessarily impacts case outcomes. The book illustrates, how micro-aggressions (a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group), double-standards and societal or self-imposed roadblocks negatively impact women in politics, corporations and other fields with hard-hitting facts, studies, and vignettes.

Is there a solution to open up what the authors refer to as the “pipeline to power” to women? If there is, the authors do not provide one. Rather, in the final chapter, they provide fodder for reflection. As a female attorney, and now the Acting Director of the Academy’s Center for Character and Leadership Development (CCLD), the idea that law schools should create “both a course on leadership and integrate leadership issues throughout the curricula” resonated with me on many levels (pg. 384). Lawyers play a pivotal role in societal change as do the future military leaders we train and educate here at the USAFA. “Leaders need the capacity to learn from their experience – both their own and others.” (p. 383). This is exactly our goal in the CCLD and what this book offers.

While a slow read at times, given the heaviness of the material, the authors’ approach was spot on – a reverse boiling frog analogy, if you will. They lit the fuse, built up the pressure, and started the slow boil, so much so that I want to jump into this pot - not out of it - even at the expense of getting burned. This book fired me up, inspiring me to elevate the conversation about women and leadership. My lens will necessarily be different from a male cadet, officer, CEO, or judge who might read this book, as I’ve walked in the shoes that Brenner and Knake describe across 433 pages. Exploring this book is a worthy endeavor - one I highly recommend for our future leaders of character and anyone else who simply wants to be better as a leader and person.

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## PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP

# General John Vogt and Nixon's Vietnam War

Stephen Randolph, PhD

General John Vogt (USAF) was one of a kind—unique in his pathway to high command, in his methods of leadership, and in his strengths and weaknesses in conducting operations. President Richard Nixon selected Vogt as commander of Seventh Air Force in April 1972, as North Vietnam's Easter Offensive broke across South Vietnam, threatening the collapse of South Vietnam and with it, the entire edifice of Nixon's foreign policy.

### Vogt's Path to High Command

Vogt reached the pinnacle of command through a unique pathway. Raised in New Jersey, he joined the Army Air Corps in mid-1941, convinced that war was imminent and wanting to be part of it. He deployed to England in early 1943, flying P-47 Thunderbolts under the command of the legendary Hubert "Hub" Zemke (Colonel, USAF). Vogt became an ace, with eight kills, and was selected as squadron commander in February 1944. But in the autumn of 1944 his squadron was committed to the defense of the Arnhem bridgehead, the storied "bridge too far," and his squadron was decimated by German anti-aircraft fire. Vogt broke down under the stress, suffering from what then was known as "combat fatigue." He was relieved from command, along with his operations officer, and invalidated back to the United States in October 1944. His wife later recalled, "the Johnny that came back was not the boy I sent to war."

In mid-1945 Vogt was reactivated and sent to command a transfer airfield in Brazil, part of the air bridge bringing the Army Air Force units stationed in Europe back home to prepare for the expected invasion of Japan. Vogt spent three months in command of the airfield and then returned home, resigning his commission in November, expecting to join the Foreign Service. But having married in April 1946, and needing immediate income, Vogt rejoined the Air Force and completed his bachelor's degree at Yale—the first of three Ivy League schools that he would attend. After a brief stint as an intelligence officer, he returned to academics, earning a degree from Columbia University in 1955.

From there Vogt began a remarkable climb through the ranks. Given his medical history, he was ineligible for operational commands, and he never served in an operational unit between 1945 and 1972. Nor did he ever command a unit or return to flying status throughout that time, as he ascended from major to lieutenant general. Instead he advanced through a sequence of increasingly responsible staff positions—on the National Security Council staff in

the early 1950s, in the Pentagon as director of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's Policy Planning Staff, and as Pacific Air Forces director of operations during the three years of Operation Rolling Thunder. In June 1968 he returned to the Pentagon—first with a tour on the Air Staff, and then in August 1969 moving to the Joint Staff as the director of operations. Finally in July 1970 he was appointed as director of the Joint Staff.

In these positions on the Joint Staff, Vogt served through every crisis of the Nixon presidency and through the grinding routine of the Joint Staff at war. He worked closely with Nixon's National Security Advisor, Dr. Henry Kissinger, and with Admiral Tom Moorer, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. By early 1972 he was slated to move to Belgium as the NATO Chief of Staff, a four-star position that would lead to a comfortable but obscure retirement.

At that point fate intervened forcefully, in the form of a massive, "go for broke" offensive by North Vietnam, seeking to crush the South Vietnamese military and end the war. The long-awaited offensive broke March 30, 1972, as the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) launched a three-front offensive across South Vietnam. For Nixon, this offensive threatened every aspect of his presidency, with the upcoming presidential election looming in November, and the complicated triangular diplomacy with the Soviet Union and Communist China resting on America's ability to achieve an honorable end to the war in Vietnam. By this point in the war, Nixon had completely lost confidence in the Air Force and in General Creighton Abrams, the commander of U.S. forces in southeast Asia. He and Kissinger equally mistrusted Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, fearing that he would never permit the sort of aggressive response to the North Vietnamese offensive that Nixon considered imperative. Already on the first day of the offensive, Kissinger commented, "It's my instinct...there's some blight on that operation...I think Laird has drilled into their heads to do nothing."

In that tension-wracked setting, Vogt arrived at the White House on April 5 to provide Nixon and Kissinger an update on operations. While there, he commented to Kissinger that he was "terribly distressed with the way the military and especially the Air Force were handling the Vietnam situation... and an even worse failure to come up with any ideas on their own on how things ought to be handled." Seeing a solution to the command problem in Southeast Asia, Kissinger recommended Vogt to the president, and within minutes, Vogt was assigned command of Seventh Air Force.

The next day, Nixon set aside time to talk with Vogt and make sure that the general understood the president's expectations. The president considered Abrams "tired, unimaginative," and emphasized that "What's going to decide this is not what Abrams decides, because he's not going to take any risks at this point, but what you decide." In Nixon's words, Vogt was going out to Southeast Asia on "a rescue mission." Vogt would be Nixon's man in theater—a status that would surely complicate his relations with Abrams.

### Vogt's War: A Summary

Vogt arrived in Saigon on April 10, 1972 and commanded Seventh Air Force through the end of America's war in early 1973. Throughout that time, he had two major operational challenges. Within South Vietnam, U.S. air power would serve as the primary instrument in crushing the NVA offensive. That would demand effective tasking and employment of the hundreds of fighter aircraft—Air Force, Navy, and Marine—committed to the campaign. Simultaneously, Vogt and his staff would orchestrate air offensives against North Vietnam, into the teeth of the most intense air defense environment on earth—first with Operation Freedom Train, a limited offensive against southern North Vietnam, and then starting on May 10, the massive escalation of Operation Linebacker and the mining of North Vietnam's ports.

Air power stagnated the NVA offensive by late June, forcing North Vietnam's leaders to engage in serious negotiations toward a peace settlement. Kissinger's negotiations with North Vietnamese envoy Le Duc Tho stagnated in early December 1972, forcing Nixon to direct a massive offensive against North Vietnam's heartland, Operation Linebacker II. Remembered today as the "Christmas bombing," Linebacker II was probably the most intense air campaign in history. More significantly, it led to a peace settlement, enabling the U.S. to recover its prisoners of war and exit the war on acceptable terms.

### **Vogt in Command: A Study in Leadership**

Vogt's style and performance in command stemmed from his basic character. His dominant characteristics were his rigid sense of duty, his resilience, and his self-confidence. He felt bound always to reach for higher responsibility and to never turn away from work or risk. What might be seen as naked ambition, as with his request to take command of Seventh Air Force, could more accurately be attributed to his sense that a bad situation existed in Southeast Asia and that it was his duty to do something about it.

As would be expected given his unusual career path, Vogt had some distinctive strengths and weaknesses in command. On the positive side, he maintained effective working relations with the president, the national security advisor, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—a result of his years of experience in multi-service and high-level environments. However, he had spent much of his career in joint assignments, and his means of seeking and gaining command of Seventh Air Force did nothing to strengthen his ties with the Air Force leadership. He had never had any interest in service politics; he had no reservoir of good will among other Air Force leaders and no cadre of trusted subordinates to bring into his command. His relations within the formal chains of command

would have been complicated in any case—he worked for General Abrams in conducting the war in South Vietnam, for Pacific Air Forces commander General Lucius Clay for operations against North Vietnam, and for Air Force Chief of Staff General John Ryan for all kinds of support—all the while knowing that his real bosses were in the White House. His working relationship with the senior Air Force leaders he dealt with were marked by friction at all points.

Vogt was an effective speaker and advocate, a skill honed throughout his career and especially valuable given Abrams's estrangement from both the media and the White House. Moorer asked Vogt to report daily on the state of air operations, and to make himself available to reporters. Vogt was assiduous about both tasks, spending most afternoons in conversations with newsmen. For Moorer, Vogt's ability to articulate the accomplishments of the air war was especially important in maintaining Nixon's patience with military operations.

Vogt was aggressive and optimistic in integrating new technology into operations, eager to take advantage of the cascade of new capabilities developed over the course of the war. The months of the Linebacker air campaign can be viewed as the dawn of contemporary warfare, with the advent of precision weapons, satellite-based imagery and communications, night vision equipment, digital fire control systems, intelligence fusion centers, and computer-based mission planning all coming together in this theater-wide battlespace. Vogt was uniformly optimistic about these new capabilities and inventive in employing them. But he often overestimated their capabilities and the ease with which they could be integrated into the battle. As an example, Vogt built his attacks on North Vietnam around laser-guided weapons, but in some ways these weapons were more sensitive to weather than the unguided bombs used earlier during Rolling Thunder. Moreover, their employment demanded the construction of

attack packages from bases all across Southeast Asia, an inherently complex strategy rendered even more difficult by the inadequate radios of the attack fighters.

At the time when he was appointed to high command, Vogt had devoted his career for a quarter of a century to staff work, and had no experience in the detailed, complex processes involved in commanding a major air campaign. He exacerbated that problem on his first day of command in Saigon by eliminating the planning processes that had been employed since the first days of the air war. It is a mark of Vogt's self-confidence that he took this step, undeterred by the fact that he had never directed so complex an operation.

The inevitable result of Vogt's abolition of existing management processes was disarray in the air war against North Vietnam, manifested by an unfavorable kill ratio against the North Vietnamese fighters and an apparent inability to solve recurring problems in the attack missions. It eventually required direct intervention by the Chief of Staff, General Ryan, to get the Linebacker air campaign on its feet. Disturbed by the lack of improvement in Linebacker operations, Ryan flew out to Saigon in early July 1972 to get a first-hand view of the operation. Unable to take action against Vogt, given Vogt's standing in the White House, Ryan instead fired Seventh Air Force's chief of operations, instituted the practice of theater-wide debriefs after every Linebacker mission, and set in motion the establishment of an intelligence fusion center, codenamed Teaball, to provide warning for Air Force pilots operating over North Vietnam. These measures, combined with the inexorable attrition of North Vietnamese pilots, eventually swung the exchange ratio in favor of the Air Force.

Finally, like any general operating at his level, Vogt operated within an environment established by political leaders on both sides. He was fortunate in commanding under Nixon, who brought a sense of absolute urgency

to the 1972 campaigns that had been so grievously missing under Lyndon Johnson. Conversely, in North Vietnam Vogt faced an extraordinarily resilient, resourceful, and committed adversary, fully mobilized and backed by superpowers in Beijing and Moscow. The North Vietnamese managed to turn the Linebacker campaign into a battle of attrition, a far cry from the overwhelming, cataclysmic defeat that Nixon intended to inflict on them.

General Vogt is little remembered in today's Air Force, a remarkable situation given his role in the momentous climax to the war in Vietnam. He deserves better, though he had his flaws—for the resilience he displayed throughout his career, for his leadership in the dramatic end game of the Vietnam War, and for his role in advancing the technological frontier of air warfare.

### Questions for Reflection:

While there are certainly many different leaders that can be reviewed from a historical perspective, the point with these Profiles in Leadership is to not only review what the leader did, but to also see how that can inform our own personal leader development. In order to facilitate some of that reflection, the following questions are offered:

- General Vogt recovered from a devastating psychological wound in WWII to reach the pinnacle of his profession. How did he achieve this remarkable feat of resilience?
- Vogt's ability to advocate a position was critical to his advancement as a leader. In his case, this was a product of long practice and confidence. How would you assess your capability in this area?
- What would you identify as the lessons that could be learned from Vogt's reliance on advanced technology?

For those who are interested in finding out more about Gen Vogt and his leadership, the following titles are recommended for further reading:

Michel, Marshall L. *The Eleven Days of Christmas: America's Last Vietnam Battle*. San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002.

Randolph, Stephen P. *Powerful and Brutal Weapons: Nixon, Kissinger, and the Easter Offensive*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

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# JCLD Submission Guidelines

The Journal of Character and Leadership Development (JCLD) examines the scholarly and applied understanding of character and leadership development. Its purpose is to illuminate these two critical fields – character development and leadership development – as interdependent areas of study, whose integrated understanding and coherent application is highly relevant to preparation for leadership in today's complex world. Consequently, the JCLD applies high standards to guide the publication of scholarly work, through an intensive review process by recognized experts across the character and leadership development spectrum, while also welcoming thoughtful and well-articulated practical perspectives relevant to that same discussion. To accomplish this, we focus on three primary areas:

- **Integration:** Knowledge for application. How does what we know/learn impact how we develop leaders of character across different domains? How do we use this knowledge to impact our education, training and development programs?
- **Scholarship:** Theoretical and/or empirical examination of a relevant construct, program, approach, etc., related to character and/or leadership development.
- **Assessment:** How do we know what we are doing with respect to character and leadership development is working? What evidence can we gather to assess the efficacy of the efforts?

Ideal submissions will include discussions of both character and leadership development. Since the purpose of the journal is on examining the development (short and long term) of leaders of character, we are keenly interested at the intersection of these two domains. While we will consider manuscripts for publication that address each of these in isolation, clear linkages between the domains of interest will have more relevance to the JCLD.

## Categories for Submission:

- **Conversations:** This category is designed for transcribed conversations with senior leaders/practitioners/ academics/etc. focused on a topic that is related to the purpose of the JCLD. If you are interested in conducting a conversation for submission to the JCLD, please contact the Editor in Chief to make sure that it fits the scope of the Journal.
- **Integration:** This submission category focuses on how topics related to character and leadership are integrated within an organization, team, or other functional unit. The key factor for this category is that we are looking for how both character and leadership can be integrated and not simply studied in isolation.
- **Scholarship:** These submissions will focus on the theoretical and/or empirical analysis of a construct, program, approach, etc. related to leadership and/or character.
- **Assessment:** These submissions will focus on an assessment technique or assessment strategy related to character and/or leadership development.

- **Reflections from the Field:** This submission category will be for leaders who have a relevant perspective to share based on their experience in leadership positions. It is not intended to be used to simply advocate a certain approach (i.e., do what I did, 10 things to do to be a better leader, etc.), but designed to be a forum for meaningful reflections of leadership situations and a thoughtful analysis of what worked/ didn't work. It can also be used to identify trends that a leader sees regarding different domains (e.g., what do future leaders need to be aware of in different domains like the profession of arms?).

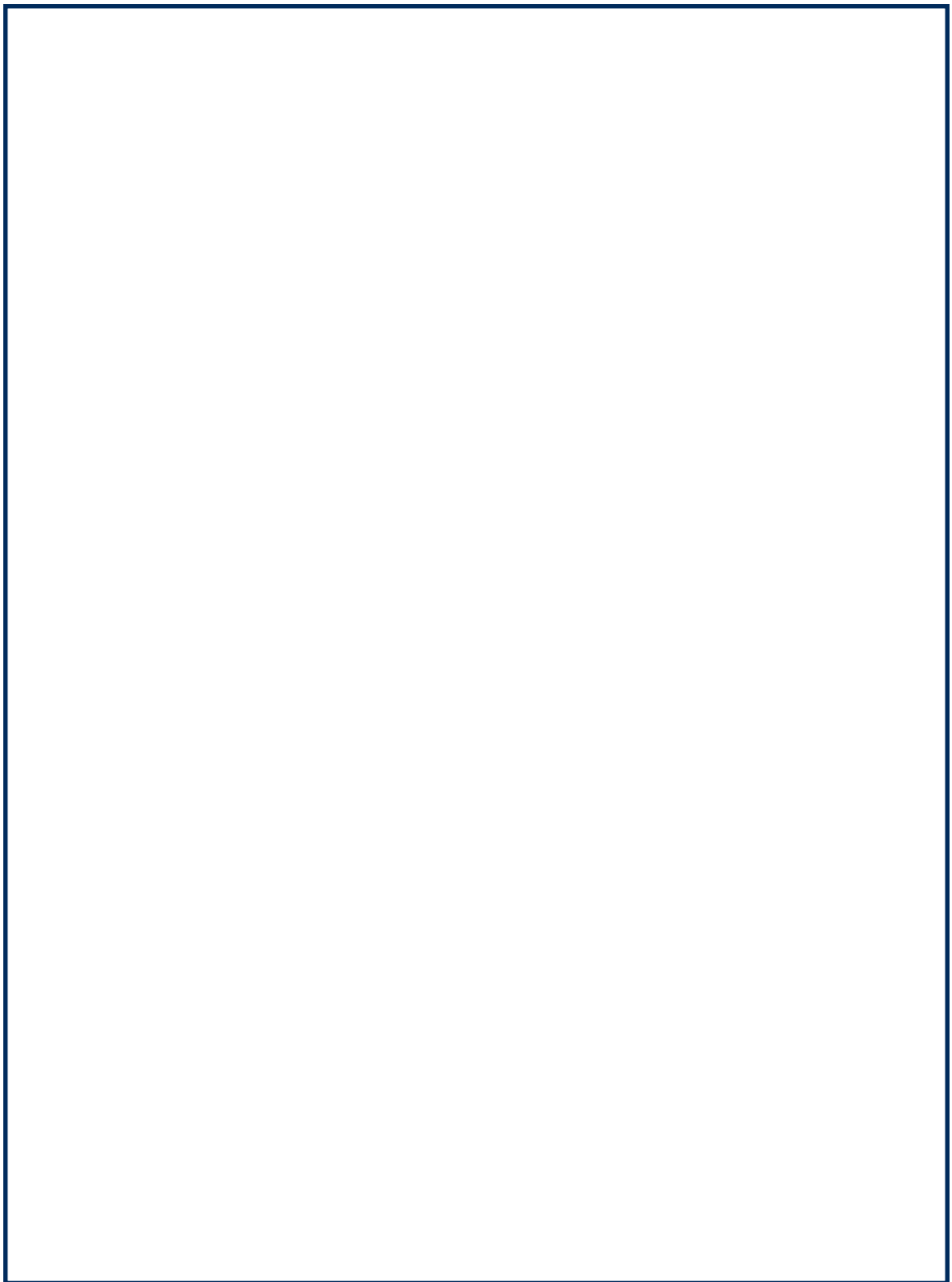
**Integration, Scholarship, and Assessment** submissions should be submitted in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Manuscripts should be electronically submitted in standard American Psychological Association (APA, 7th Edition) to include proper headings, subtitles, and citations in 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with page numbers and running headers.
- Manuscripts should not exceed 25 pages in length to include attachments, charts, and other supporting material.
- Author(s) guarantee that manuscripts submitted to the JCLD for consideration are exclusive to the submission and is not currently under review for another publication.
- Authors guarantee that they have followed their appropriate institutional guidelines (e.g., Institutional Review Boards, policies, data collection, etc.) and have appropriate clearance (if organizationally required) to submit their work to the JCLD for consideration. USAFA authors will need to get their publications cleared before submission to the JCLD.
- All submissions should include an abstract of no more than 200 words.

**Interview and Reflections** submissions should be submitted in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Manuscripts should be electronically submitted in standard American Psychological Association (APA, 7th Edition) to include proper headings, subtitles, and citations in 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with page numbers and running headers.
- Manuscripts should not exceed 15 pages in length.
- Author(s) guarantee that manuscripts submitted to the JCLD for consideration are exclusive to the submission and is not currently under review for another publication.
- Authors guarantee that they have followed their appropriate institutional guidelines and have appropriate clearance (if organizationally required) to submit their work to the JCLD for consideration. USAFA authors will need to get their publications cleared before submission to the JCLD.

## REFLECTIONS





## JOURNAL OF CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Journal of Character and Leadership Development (JCLD) is dedicated to bringing together the expert views of scholars and leaders who care about both character and leadership, and to the integration of these vitally-important concepts.

JCLD is produced at the U.S. Air Force Academy. It is motivated by, but not exclusively concerned with, preparation of cadets to lead as officers of character in service to our Nation.

Combining quality, peer-reviewed scholarship and the experiential perspectives of leaders at all levels, JCLD aims to enhance intellectual understanding and empower real-world development of the effective, character-based leadership that both individuals and organizations need to succeed in a complex and demanding world.

## CENTER FOR CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



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