STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP PRIMER 2nd Edition

Department of Command, Leadership, and Management
United States Army War College

2004

Report Documentation Page		*Form Approved* *OMB No. 0704-0188*

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

1. REPORT DATE **2004**	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED **00-00-2004 to 00-00-2004**

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **Strategic Leadership Primer. 2nd Edition**	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **U.S. Army War College,Department of Command, Leadership, and Management,Carlisle,PA,17013-5049**	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release; distribution unlimited**

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**	**Same as Report (SAR)**	**75**	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std Z39-18

Department of Command, Leadership and Management
United States Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

2nd Edition edited by Colonel Stephen A. Shambach

Director of Leader Development

This Primer is the result of several years of research by the faculty of the Department of Command, Leadership, and Management. Please forward comments to Colonel George Reed, Box 467 (phone: 717-245-3821).

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PREFACE TO 2nd EDITION

The original edition of the Strategic Leadership Primer served the Army War College well as a basic overview of Strategic Leadership. Written by Dr. Rod Magee with the assistance of several other faculty members, it was intended as an orientation reading for students arriving at the Army War College whose background was primarily in the tactical and operational field environment. The Primer was useful because there was no other adequate work that described and defined strategic leadership in terms that could be understood and applied by War College students. Largely written in 1997 and published in 1998, the Primer has been well received by internal and external audiences alike.

As we enter the 21st Century, the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001 and subsequent military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have provided the impetus for review and revision of the original edition. It is not so much that strategic leadership has changed drastically, and much of the original work is retained in this edition. Rather, this edition attempts to preserve the salient features of the original edition while updating it with contemporary literature, examples and anecdotes to sustain the Primer's relevance and usefulness for perhaps the next 10 years.

One significant change from the 1998 edition is that Annex A has been changed from a list of Strategic-Leader Competencies to a lengthy discussion of competencies based primarily on a Strategic Studies Institute monograph, "Strategic Leadership Competencies" by Wong, et al, September, 2003. This Annex reviews competencies and identifies several metacompetencies that provide a conceptual framework of competency "clusters" that is more in line with the style and purpose of this Primer.

The author acknowledges the tremendous contributions of Dr. Lenny Wong, Colonel John Troxell, Colonel Charley Higbee, Dr. Craig Bullis and Colonel George Reed whose collaboration was critical to the interdisciplinary usefulness of this Strategic Leadership Primer.

PREFACE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION

Strategic Leadership is the "coin of the realm" at the Army's highest level, and its practice is significantly different in scope, effect, and execution than leadership at lower levels of the organization. The environment at this level is characterized by the highest degrees of uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity, as well as tremendous volatility (VUCA) due to the compression of time in which the leader must act. Strategic leaders find themselves enmeshed in intricate networks of competing constituencies and cooperative endeavors that extend beyond their own organization. The strategic leader must be an expert, not only in his own domain of warfighting and leading large military organizations, but also in the bureaucratic and political environment of the nation's decision-making process. This domain includes a detailed knowledge of, as well as the interrelationship among, economics, geopolitics, military, and information. Moreover, the leader at this level must interact with a number of actors over which he has minimal influence. The successful strategic leader is the quintessential communicator, using all means of communication. As the organizational spokesman, the strategic leader is constantly required to discuss his/her organization, as well as comfortably interact with the media. The leader's ability to effectively communicate with the media is a harbinger of organizational success. Whereas leaders at lower levels of the organization remain focused on the short term, strategic leaders must have a "future focus," spending much of their time looking toward the future and positioning the organization for long-term success.

The study of strategic leadership is an enduring concern of the Army as it educates its senior officer corps to better execute the Army's role in contributing to our nation's national security. This **"Strategic Leadership Primer"** defines strategy and strategic leadership in terms of the Army's role in national security. As Figure 1 depicts, strategic leaders are the group that ascends to the top of the organization where indirect leadership is the norm, and there is increased uncertainty and complexity.

Throughout our nation's history, the Army has been a powerful strategic force in pursuing, achieving, and defending U.S. national security objectives. From the Revolutionary War through Desert Storm to current operations other than war and into the nation's future, the Army is the entity charged with prosecuting the land war. Only the Army with its physical presence, long term if necessary, can satisfy this enduring strategic imperative. This document discusses the unique aspects of leading this strategic force. This primer is intended to set the stage for a greater understanding and more in-depth study of leadership at the top of organizations -- the context, challenges, characteristics, and requirements of Strategic Leadership.

The Army Leadership Framework

Strategic Leadership
- Culture
- Values
- Purpose

- Global/Regional National/Societal Perspective
- Predominantly "Improving/Building" in nature

Organizational Leadership
- Climate
- Policies
- Direction

- Organizational/Systems and Processes Perspectives
- Predominantly "Operating/Maintaining" in nature

Direct Leadership
- Cohesion
- Procedures
- Motivation

- Individual/Small Group Task Oriented Perspective
- Predominantly "Influencing and Interpersonal" in nature

Trust, Dignity and Respect for Others

⬇ **BE**
Army Values And Ethics
- Loyalty
- Duty
- Respect
- Selfless Service
- Honor
- Personal Courage

⬇ **KNOW**
Leader Attributes:
- Mental
- Physical
- Emotional

Leader Skills:
- Conceptual
- Interpersonal
- Technical
- Tactical

⬇ **DO**
Leader Actions:
- Influencing
- Operating
- Improving

Figure 1

INTRODUCTION

It became clear to me that at the age of 58 I would have to learn new tricks that were not taught in the military manuals or on the battlefield. In this position I am a political soldier and will have to put my training in rapping-out orders and making snap decisions on the back burner, and have to learn the arts of persuasion and guile. I must become an expert in a whole new set of skills.

George C. Marshall

General Marshall is alleged to have made this observation as he reflected upon his early years as Chief of Staff of the United States Army (CSA) in the months prior to World War II. It is obvious from this comment that Marshall believed that his previous education, training, and experience had not adequately prepared him for the leadership role he had embarked upon. As the CSA, his success depended upon his ability to persuade influential people and organizations, both internal and external to the government, employ their efforts on behalf of his vision of a winning wartime strategy and mobilize the Army necessary to make that strategy a reality. General Marshall's particular insights in this matter support the belief that beyond the direct and organizational levels is a third level of leadership, the strategic level.

General Marshall seems to have intuitively understood that the development of a national strategy and acquiring the associated force structure along with integrating our industrial capabilities to accomplish that strategy requires a complex decision-making structure at national and even international levels. Since the time of Marshall, the political complexity of these national and international decision-making structures has continued to grow. To be effective in the strategic arena senior military leaders and their staffs must fully understand the nation's strategic vision and strategy formulation process, as well as appreciate the environment and the cultures in which they must operate, the competencies they must develop, and finally the tasks they must perform. The operating environment of the strategic leader is one in which an uncertain future is translated into a visionary but achievable future. The changes and initiatives necessary to get from the uncertain to the visionary future are then incorporated into a strategy that articulates the "ends, ways, and means." This must be accomplished in a world where the threats are both diffuse and uncertain, where conflict is inherently unpredictable, and where our capability to defend and promote our national interests may be restricted by political, diplomatic, informational and economic constraints. In short, it is an environment marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).

The Army War College defines the strategic art as: "The skillful formulation, coordination, and application of ends (objectives), ways (courses of action) and means (supporting resources) to promote and defend the national interests." The skills necessary

for mastering the strategic art fall under three general categories: **strategic leader, strategic theorist**, and **strategic practitioner**.

The **Strategic Leader** provides strategic vision and focus, masters command and peer leadership skills, inspires others to think and act, and coordinates ends, ways, and means.[1] The **Strategic Theorist** develops strategic concepts and theories, integrates all elements of power and components of national security, studies the history of warfare, teaches and mentors the strategic art, and formulates ends, ways, and means. The **Strategic Practitioner** develops and executes strategic plans, employs force and other dimensions of power, unifies military and nonmilitary activities through command and peer leadership skills, and applies ends, ways and means.

**THE MASTER OF THE STRATEGIC ART …
INTEGRATES AND COMBINES THREE ROLES**

Skills:
•Provides vision and focus
•Masters command and peer leadership skills
•Inspires others to think and act
•Coordinates ends, ways, and means

Skills:
•Develops strategic concepts and theories
•Integrates elements of power
•Studies history of warfare
•Teaches strategic art
•Formulates ends, ways, and means

Roles

Strategic Leader

Strategic Theorist

Strategic Practitioner

Skills:
•Develops and executes strategic plans
•Employs force and other dimensions of power
•Unifies activities through command and leadership skills
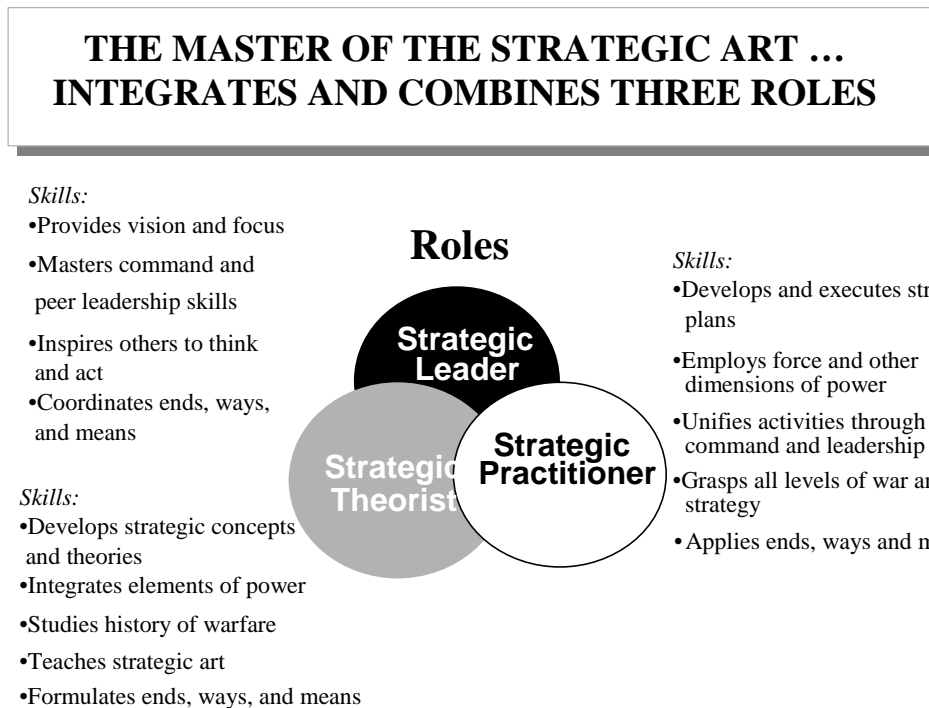•Grasps all levels of war and strategy
• Applies ends, ways and means

Figure 2.

It is rare that one person alone is the master of all these components. A few are strategic leaders by virtue of their position or responsibility, but strategic leadership does not reside exclusively in the person of the leader. Strategic leadership is a shared responsibility within the organization, including staff and others. *The reality is that only one or two percent will ever attain strategic leadership rank or position. But, anyone in a staff position working for a strategic leader should be well-trained as a strategic thinker or they cannot adequately support the leader.* Effective strategic leadership *cannot* reside merely in the person of one leader. Effective leadership is a function of the interaction of the leader, those being led or influenced (inside and outside of the organization) and the situation or circumstances facing the organization. The complexity

of these relationships and interactions determine the effectiveness of strategic leadership for the organization. Therefore, the focus of this Primer is on the concept of strategic leadership, rather than the strategic leader as a single person.

We speak of the strategic level of leadership to differentiate it from the tactical and operational level of leadership. Army Field Manual 22-100, Army Leadership, speaks to these different levels as separate and distinct entities. In practice, the lines between these levels are not sharply drawn. It is apparent that increased communications, technology, globalization and the media, as well as the contemporary operating environment within which military forces operate, are blurring these lines as never before. Some have suggested that this blurring is to the extent that even corporals at the lowest organizational level are exercising strategic leadership. While the most junior person's actions have strategic impact and implications, this is a very different thing from *exercising* strategic leadership. The point is that, more than ever, it is important that every level of the organization have an understanding and appreciation of strategic leadership, its responsibilities, functions and impacts on the organization. Building this appreciation and education in the organization are primary responsibilities of the strategic leader who is *responsible to shape the climate and culture by vision, policy, communication, education, coaching, mentoring and personal example*.

In our constitutionally divided political system where decision making authority is separated from the process of resource allocation, the development and implementation of strategy are inherently more difficult. The process of crafting and executing a coherent national security strategy and a national military strategy is as much political as it is analytical. Invariably, multiple strategic visions compete for influence and resources. Under the best of circumstances strategy formulation and implementation are heavily influenced by parochial interests, bureaucratic conflict, negotiation, and ultimately compromise. We essentially do what we can agree to do since rational decision making in a democracy is based on seeking consensus among competing visions and interests.

The strategic decision making process extends beyond the President and Secretary of Defense, to which the military is subordinate, and even Congress which provides the financial resources. Strategic leaders and the strategy formulation and execution process operate within the boundaries of what Clausewitz described as the "remarkable trinity"-- the government (executive and legislative branches), the military, and the people. Strategy, in both war and peace, that does not achieve a consensus of support from each of these three elements of a nation-state, especially in a democracy, is most vulnerable to failure.

While the need for senior officers to transition to the strategic level of leadership is clearly recognized, the leadership skills and qualities developed at the direct and organizational levels are still important. The strategic leader must still exercise direct leadership of his subordinate commanders and staff. At the same time, the strategic leader is also an executive who must manage and lead a very large and complex organization. The strategic leader represents the organization to the external environment and is responsible for shaping the external environment to help the organization accomplish its

vision and purpose. More than any other level of leadership, strategic leadership operates in good measure with other organizations, agencies and nations in a proactive manner to further the success of the organization. At the same time, the leader cannot neglect the internal environment of the organization. Though the primary focus is outward, the leader must also tend to the internal organizational environment. Excessive focus inside or outside the organization will detract from organizational success and perhaps even viability. The key to a successful transition to strategic leadership is an appreciation for the dramatic increase in scope of leadership responsibilities, an understanding of the unique nature of these increased responsibilities, and the dedication of effort necessary to understand and influence the challenging and dynamic environment in which these leadership responsibilities must be executed. It is incumbent upon strategic leaders and their staffs, not only to understand the strategic environment, but to exercise strategic leadership competencies that will foster accomplishment of their vision within that complex environment.

> *…the hierarchical position of leaders within their own system is of limited value, because some of the most critically important tasks require lateral leadership--- boundary-crossing leadership—involving groups over whom they have no control. They must exercise leader like influence beyond the system over which they preside.* ***They must do what they can to lead without authority. (bold added for emphasis)***[2]

CHAPTER 1

STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Strategy is the art and science of developing and using political, economic, psychological, and military forces as necessary during peace and war, to afford the maximum support to policies, in order to increase the probabilities and favorable consequences of victory and to lessen the chances of defeat.

DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms

Strategic leadership is the process used by a leader to affect the achievement of a desirable and clearly understood vision by influencing the organizational culture, allocating resources, directing through policy and directive, and building consensus within a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous global environment which is marked by opportunities and threats.

US Army War College definition

Executive leadership: The set of activities directed toward the development and management of the organization as a whole, including all of its subcomponents, to reflect long-range policies and purposes that have emerged from the executive leader's interactions within and interpretations of the organization's external environment.

Stephen Zaccaro

The search for national security strategy periodically opens major policy debates that push us in new, sometimes revolutionary directions. Dramatic changes in the international environment have forced us to reevaluate old strategies and look for new focal points amidst the still unsettled debris of a post-9/11 world. At issue for the Army's strategic leaders is the role of the United States Army in a new world and our capabilities to defend and promote our national interests in a new environment where threats are both diffuse and uncertain, where conflict is inherent, yet unpredictable.

The US Army War College defines strategic art as the skillful formulation, coordination, and application of ends, ways, and means to promote and defend the nation's interests. The strategy paradigm comprised of "ends, ways, and means" has almost universal applicability. It defines objectives, identifies courses of action to achieve them, and provides the resources to support each course of action. The relationships among these elements of strategy allow for planning and the debating of alternative strategic visions and calculations. This paradigm and its application to national strategy and to military strategy are taught to senior military officers at every service college.

The creative core of strategy is the calculated relationship of ends and means. But in the complex decision-making structures of a modern nation-state and the proliferation of non-state actors, who defines the ends, who provides the means, and who is responsible for the calculated relationships between the two? Strategy as a rational, calculating process is possible only when a single vision dominates or is shared at every stage of the paradigm. In a politically fragmented system in which decision-making authority is constitutionally separated from the process of resource allocation, the search for strategy is difficult. It is not a scientific enterprise wherein success depends solely on expertise and the systematic analysis of data. Instead, multiple strategic visions compete for influence and resources. Under the best of circumstances (a consensus on interests, objectives, and threats), strategy formulation is an intensely political process, heavily influenced by parochial interests, conflict, bargaining, personal leadership skills, and ultimately compromise. We do what we can agree to do; decision making in a democracy is the ability to harmonize competing strategic visions and interests. That assumption forms the major thesis of this document: *Strategic leaders must be experts in their domain and in the bureaucratic and political environment of the decision-making process in a democracy.*

In addition to domestic or internal influences on strategic decision-makers, the strategic vision that they proclaim and the strategy designed to achieve that vision must be applied in a complex and uncertain international arena. In our contemporary operating environment, increased interdependence as a result of globalization, coupled with changing alliances reacting to differing threat perceptions, makes the search for an effective strategy extremely challenging. International organizations and other non-state actors, such as global terrorist or criminal networks, further complicate the process. All of these actors are pursuing their own strategies and interests. The concurrent pursuit of competing strategies highlights the dynamic nature of the strategy formulation process. The other side gets a vote! Thus, a developed strategy must always be assessed, reevaluated, and readjusted as necessary. The on-going challenge of developing and articulating a coherent strategy for the war on terrorism is an example of the complex nature of this process.

THE SEARCH FOR GRAND STRATEGY.

The evolution of the United States as an independent nation coincided with a new era in warfare marked by the democratization and industrialization of war and its growing complexity and impact on the Clausewitzian Trinity. At the same time, the vagaries of

history and geography combined to give Americans a distinct attitude toward national security. For much of its existence, the U.S. lay sheltered behind broad oceans. The balance of power abroad ensured its insularity and reinforced the premise, basic in American foreign policy, that alliances were contrary to its national interests. With generally friendly neighbors on both borders, the nation benefited from "free security" and could early on define its security in terms of its contiguous frontiers and boundaries.

As a consequence, absolutist ideas of national security took hold. Distinctions between war and peace normally were hard and fast. There were decent intervals between wars, and the nation knew when it was at war and when it was at peace. Soldiers would conduct war; their civilian superiors make peace. To most Americans, war represented an unwelcome disturbance of normal peace and progress. The whole tradition regarding war was to hold it off as long as possible--a tradition that led first to declare, then to prepare. The meanings of the terms "victory" and "winning" were clear. Once the nation became involved in war, the disturber of peace must be thrashed like a bully, given punishment to fit the crime, and the nation returned to its normal pursuits as quickly as possible.

Historically, up to World War II most American military strategy in war had been generally self-contained--that is, military and political objectives could be meshed simply. Either there had been no real political threat (the Indian Wars), or the military and political threat coincided (Germany in World War I).

If the United States concentrated its energies on military victory and the immediate foe was decisively beaten, the assumption was the political threat would subside. But in World War II a new political factor was introduced. The more thoroughly the immediate European enemy, Germany, was beaten, the greater loomed another threat - the half-ally, the Soviet Union. The United States found itself confronted in victory with an expansive power whose conflicting national postwar aims had been cloaked by the common military enemy faced in World War II. The final result of World War II was the beginning of the Cold War.

The central strategic reality of the Cold War security environment was the geo-political competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. A second reality was the development of atomic and then thermonuclear weapons by each of the competing superpowers. The geo-political competition spawned a grand strategy for the United States and the West expressed in theory and in practice by the concept of *containment*. Containment quickly grew to encompass other nations which lined up (voluntarily or involuntarily) on one side or the other of this geo-political divide. Alliance building played a major part in implementing the grand strategy of containment, particularly in regards to NATO and the U.S.-Japanese mutual defense treaty. The vast nuclear arsenals on either side of this rivalry caused states to rely on deterrence to maintain a relatively stable international order. Nuclear deterrence was based on offensive nuclear forces and a fairly sophisticated understanding between the adversaries of each other's capabilities and motives derived from extensive intelligence and adequate communication.

The security environment went through a dramatic transformation after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. The threat of large-scale nuclear war has largely receded and the United States has become the sole remaining superpower. Coupled with this are the twin phenomenon of accelerating economic interaction and the information technology revolution, known as globalization. In the midst of sorting out the post-Cold War security environment, the shock of 9/11 has only added to the complexity and urgency of rethinking the organizing principles of the international order.

The dominant power position of the United States and the excesses of globalization attributed to U.S. policy provide more than sufficient motivation for discontents to challenge America. In addition, several of the technological advances associated with globalization have contributed to the means available to the most serious and threatening challengers. John Lewis Gaddis commented on the burgeoning dark side of globalization:

> *It was held to be a good thing that capital, commodities, ideas, and people could move freely across boundaries. There was little talk, though, of an alternative possibility: that danger might move just as freely. It was as if we had convinced ourselves that the new world of global communications had somehow transformed an old aspect of human nature, which is the tendency to harbor grievances and sometimes to act upon them.*[3]

The principle security threats to the United States today are unconventional in nature and seek to respond to America's massive conventional force superiority in asymmetric ways. The lesson of the Persian Gulf War, Kosovo, and most recently in Afghanistan and Iraq is that no nation-state can afford to oppose the United States in a symmetrical manner with heavy Army divisions or tactical fighter planes. The two asymmetric options of most concern are the use of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

Writing more than three years before the tragic events of September 11, 2001, three noted national security practitioners addressed the prospects of a successful terrorist attack using weapons of mass destruction. "Such an attack of catastrophic terrorism would be a watershed event in American history… Like Pearl Harbor, this event would divide our past and future into a before and after."[4] They subtitled the opening section of the article as *Imagining the Transforming Event*. Unfortunately, such an event no longer has to be imagined. Although operating below the threshold of WMD, the Al Qaeda terrorist network was able to cause massive destruction and loss of life. The response of the United States and the world has been dramatic and events continue to unfold that point toward a transformation of the international state system and the grand strategic logic of the sole remaining super power.

In the 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush outlined the new direction for U.S. grand strategy, "America is no longer protected by vast oceans. We are protected from attack only by vigorous action abroad, and increased vigilance at home." The September 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (NSS) highlighted the three strategic implications of this new age of terror: U.S. vulnerability,

and the need to respond with both offensive and defensive measures. Most assessments view this NSS as the most transformational grand strategy since containment and deterrence were institutionalized during the Cold War. According to John Ikenberry: "These radical strategic ideas and impulses [the Bush NSS] could transform today's world order in a way that the end of the Cold War, strangely enough, did not." John Lewis Gaddis shares that view, "President George W. Bush's national security strategy could represent the most sweeping shift in U.S. grand strategy since the beginning of the Cold War." This is the environment, and these are some of the challenges that today's strategic leaders must operate in and address.

THE ROAD AHEAD: VISIONING, CHANGE, AND CONTINUITY.

First, strategic leadership during periods of historic transformation need not require a detailed or perfect road map to the future. The post-September 11, 2001 period, for example, is too much in flux for that. Having vision can also mean acknowledging that historic changes have taken place as the result of our sudden victory in the Cold War and the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), giving voice to their impact, and galvanizing the bureaucracy, the Congress, and the nation to debate new issues and challenges. Strategic leadership is as much about asking the right questions as it is promoting preferred solutions.

Second, articulating strategic vision, however tentative the vision may be, is made difficult by the unrealistic American concept of victory. To Americans, victory connotes that both a struggle and U.S. involvement have ended, preferably in some unconditional and final form. Military victory, for example, is symbolized by Marines raising the flag on Mt. Suribachi or by governments signing the documents of unconditional surrender or pulling down the statue of a dictator in a public square. Victory in hot wars or cold ones means that we can withdraw, that our responsibilities have ended, and that our interests are secure. Certainly the situation in Iraq in 2004 is a clear example of the difficulty of determining victory. Military "victory" may not endure if the stability and support operations do not result in achieving a coalition force's goals or ends.

Good strategy does not recognize the concept of victory as a conclusion. There are no absolute victories; there are only phases in a permanent struggle to promote and defend our national interests. At each phase, threats are defeated or recede, the international system reconfigures as old powers decline and new powers rise; and at home, resources are redistributed in support of priorities and strategies. But neither the international nor the domestic political systems are static. Only the nation's interests remain relatively constant, requiring new strategies for their promotion and defense.

National security strategy requires the permanent management of the nation's interests through the planning and application of political, economic, informational and military strategies. Collectively they constitute classical **Grand Strategy**. What we now describe as national security strategy relates to the *third* concept concerning uniting the strategy and political paradigms into a coherent plan of action. The concept of victory as

an end state feeds the natural tension between domestic and foreign policy. This tension manifests itself in the debate for resource allocation. Simply stated, every dollar invested in external security is a dollar not available to meet a domestic security requirement and vice versa. This attitude is, to a large degree, the fault of strategists themselves who traditionally promoted threat-based rather than interest-based strategies.

A comprehensive interest-based strategy recognizes that grand strategy bridges the gap between foreign and domestic policies in a world in which domestic prosperity is now directly linked to global activism and status. The national security strategy recognizes the organic relationship between foreign and domestic interests and coordinates political, economic, and military power in the pursuit of those interests. The most telling symptom that strategic consensus has broken down is a debate that puts domestic and military spending on a zero-sum collision course. By contrast, strategic vision is the ability to articulate a national security strategy that coordinates the allocation of resources to all elements of power--political, economic, and military.

The Cold War marked the first time in American history that our strategic leaders were forced to deal with the essential paradox of grand strategy faced by the Roman Empire and other great powers in the intervening centuries: S*i vis pacem, para bellum*--if you want peace, prepare for war. This is a paradox that still exists for the United States in the current post-9/11period, in which a national security strategy of American internationalism is supported by a national military strategy focused on *protect, prevent and prevail* with the operational imperative of having to execute multiple contingencies as well as stability and support operations. The key to the success of these strategies still remains the creation of a reasonably instrumental relationship between national ends, ways, and means.

What constitutes "reasonable" in terms of national security in the coming years will depend, as it always has in American history, on the interworkings of the elements of the Clausewitzian Trinity--the government, the people, and the army [military]--which must integrate domestic and international politics. This means, in turn, that civilian and military strategic leadership will have to work harder in this post-9/11 period to build a consensus among the American people concerning the increasingly more complex concept of national security. Patience, perseverance, and endurance in the face of protracted conflict without prospects of clear victory is assuredly a lesson of the Cold War. The relatively short and bloodless operational successes of coalition forces in Desert Storm and Bosnia have created expectations among the people that strategic victory is quickly and easily achieved. Now, in the aftermath of Operation Iraqi Freedom, patience, perseverance and endurance are once again important in shaping strategy.

There is a growing awareness on the part of the American people that the United States faces a situation in the post-9/11 period similar to that which, in Edward Luttwak's description, confronted the Roman Empire in its later stages:

The Romans did not face a single enemy, or even a fixed group of enemies, whose ultimate defeat would ensure permanent security. Regardless of the amplitude of Roman victories, the frontiers of the empire would always remain under attack, since they were barriers in the path of secular migration flows from north to south and from east to west. Hence Roman strategy could not usefully aim at total victory at any cost, for the threat was not temporary but endless. The only rational goal was the maintenance of a minimally adequate level of security at the lowest feasible cost to society.[5]

CHAPTER 2

THE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP ENVIRONMENT

Environment: The aggregate of social and cultural conditions that influence...life....

<div style="text-align: right">

Webster's Third
International Dictionary

</div>

Owen Jacobs, in his book "Strategic Leadership: The Competitive Edge", describes the external environment as filled with Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity, hence the acronym "VUCA." Some authors describe the work of the strategic leader as understanding, interpreting and mastering this environment. Jacobs suggests that it is virtually impossible to have complete knowledge about the factors governing strategic decisions. Decisions must be made with incomplete understanding and with the associated risk that brings.

Volatility refers to the rate of change of information and the rate of change of the situation. A rapidly changing environment calls for adaptive and innovative decision-making. Power and wealth set the stage for competition over finite resources. Both the nature and the means of competition are changing rapidly, driven on the "hard" side by technology and on the "soft" side by increasingly easy communication. Some change seems short-term and explosive, but often that is because it was unanticipated. We must have a better way of anticipating the future.

Uncertainty stems from the inability to know everything about the current situation and the difficulty of predicting what the effects of a proposed change today will be on the future. It can also arise because decision-makers do not have good "intelligence" gathering operations. And, it can arise from deception; competitors seek to gain advantage by achieving surprise. With uncertainty, strategic leaders must be willing to take measured and prudent risks, be able to assess risk accurately and develop risk management strategies.

Complexity differs from *uncertainty*, though its effects may sometimes be similar. At the strategic level, there are an enormous number of factors that have causal bearing on a given situation. The web of cause and effect linkages-- second, third, and multiple-order effects have become more complex in our globalized, technologically connected world. The temptation to reach for short term solutions and pressure to address symptoms quickly are compelling. Competing demands of various constituencies with strategic influence further add to the complexity facing the leader. So, system complexity affects the ability of the strategic leader to formulate and execute effective policy. Determination of cause and effect relationships is made more difficult because of the lag time between

cause and effect in complex systems. Often, things get worse in the short term before they get better in the long run.

Ambiguity exists when a decision maker does not understand the significance of a given event or situation—doesn't know what is happening. It can occur when leaders have insufficient mental models and observed events "don't make sense". Ambiguity can also occur when an event can legitimately be interpreted in more than one way. Vulnerability to misinterpretation of events in complex situations is high when decisions are centralized, decision pressure is high, the decision maker is powerful and the decision maker acts alone. This appears to be a recipe for disaster. The likelihood of good strategic decisions is greater when the leader creates a climate that promotes a questioning attitude of the obvious and encourages multiple perspectives that differ from his/her own.

Large, complex organizations consist of intricate networks of staff, functional, and operating components. These components interact with each other and with external entities, which are equally as complex, to achieve organizational goals. A strategic leader is an individual, who not only has organizational leadership responsibility, but who must also represent his or her organization in the necessary interaction with that maze of other entities that constitute the organization's external environment. Strategic and organizational leaders must conceptually envision a direction for their organization and then shape the flow of internal and the influence of external events toward that future. With the VUCA environment, this is increasingly a collective rather than individual effort. Seldom does any one individual alone have sufficient knowledge to adequately develop the organizational vision.

Thus, the strategic leadership environment consists of both internal and external complexities that directly and indirectly affect the resourcing, structuring, and operational performance of the organization. The dynamics of a changing threat, the changes in international coalitions, the shifting of public attitudes, the rapid advances in technology, the election of new governments, the fluctuation of national budgets, and the evolution of new missions make the challenges of strategic leadership that much more difficult. The only constant in the strategic environment is the continuous acceleration of the rate of change, which gives rise to greater uncertainties.

The complexities of the strategic environment often make identification of the origin and cause of external influences a difficult process. The magnitude and pace of external change serves to enhance the complexity of the environment and to give rise to greater organizational uncertainty. The organization feels the effects of change; but, without effective strategic leadership, the organization is incapable of adapting to that environment to its own benefit.

It is essential that the strategic leader be aware of what is happening within the crosscurrents of the organization's external environment. The leader must also understand the dynamics of why it is happening and be consistently alert for the opportunities to influence such events as may be required in furtherance of organizational goals. The

strategic leader must develop an association and rapport with a network of knowledgeable individuals in those external agencies and entities that influence the organization. It is also essential that a strategic leader's staff develop similar networks of contacts at the working level to assure that this multiplicity of networks runs like a root system throughout the external environment. A strategic leader cannot influence external events unless the organization is in timely receipt of relevant information, appreciates the context and significance of such information, and understands the right pressure points where education and persuasion can most effectively be applied in order to influence events for the benefit of the organization.

With an understanding of the external environment and with the development of an established network therein, the strategic leader is in a position to intelligently adapt to that environment. To adapt, the strategic leader uses the access that his or her position accords and applies the communicative arts of education and persuasion. Over time, the strategic leader must build consensus with key stakeholders to make the achievement of a strategic vision and associated organizational goals a reality. In undertaking such consensus building, the strategic leader must be willing to compromise as necessary. Partial achievement of organizational objectives is clearly preferable to no achievement at all. In most instances a more complete achievement can be attained at some later time as the dynamics of the external environment shift favorably. The art of shaping the environment can be illustrated by the approach of former Joint Chief of Staff James Forrestal:

> *Forrestal's handling of the complicated and politically explosive contracting problem is a representative example of his administrative method. By patient persuasion, by pushing an idea informally, by implementing it on a trial basis, he gradually built a favorable consensus , which he then formalized. Although brusque in manner and outwardly impatient, he was in fact both patient and persistent in pursuing consultations and negotiations with those who disagreed with him. He was confident that demonstrated workability plus frequent, well-timed restatement of the facts in face-to-face discussion, as one reasonable person to another, could usually produce a decision acceptable to all parties.*[6]

The aspects and elements of the external environment that characteristically have had the greatest impact upon the Army as an institution can be categorized as follows: threats, international alliances, national cultures, public opinion, federal budget, technological factors, federal government, private organizations and internal environment. It is incumbent upon the strategic leader to develop a sophisticated understanding of each so that the requisite vision for the organization's future can be effectively developed and the external environment influenced to achieve the long-range accomplishment of that vision. We will briefly discuss each of these environmental factors and their impact on the Army below.

THREATS.

Of all the variables in the external environment, those with the most effect on our national security are armed threats to our national interests. Since 9/11, there has been a dramatic increase in regional conflicts, civil wars, insurgencies, terrorist activities, weapons proliferation, and drug trafficking. Regional instabilities that threaten our national interests or threaten the lives of our citizens living abroad will require us to unilaterally, multilaterally, or within the United Nations framework, employ military forces in a variety of hostile and non-hostile circumstances.

The employment of the military in contingency, stability and support operations, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and humanitarian assistance operations as part of a joint or combined force is an ever-present likelihood. Unfortunately, the volatile and dynamic nature of post-9/11 regional instabilities offers strategic planners an abundance of uncertainties as the only constant in this most complex of international security environments. It is at best difficult and at worst impossible to predict with any reliability which nations or groups in this world may threaten our interests or how and when such threats may emerge. Strategic leaders must ensure that their organizations remain ready to respond to worldwide challenges across the range of military operations as part of a joint and/or combined force.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES.

The requirement to operate effectively in the international environment demands an international perspective and an understanding of the various political, economic, and cultural factors that influence decision-making in other countries. Combined operations in alliance or coalition circumstances, or under the auspices of the United Nations, are commonplace. The current influence of radical religious groups, transnational threats and non-state actors further complicates the ability to form strategic alliances. As such, strategic leaders must be aware of who potential enemies may be, who may share common interests in addressing an international threat, what alliances and relationships exist among and between involved factions, and what the political and diplomatic dynamics of the situation may be both internationally and domestically. Strategic leaders must also be aware that the successful conduct of combined operations requires a particular sensitivity to the impact the deployment of United States forces may have on the laws, traditions, and customs of a host country.

NATIONAL CULTURE.

Our military is a part of our society and, as such, is affected by the influences that mold our societal values and perceptions. Strategic leaders must appreciate that the various armed forces as organizations cannot survive if they isolate and remove themselves from the society they serve. The military services can and should mirror the highest ideals of our society and set standards of conduct that require the total dedication

and commitment of those who serve in their ranks. But, in the final analysis, they must always be a part of our social fabric. An Army that reflects the beliefs and values of American society will inevitably maintain the respect and trust of that society. On the other hand, events such as the mistreatment of detainees at Abu Ghraib in 2004 and scandals at our military academies can quickly erode the confidence of Americans and the international community about America's ideals and conduct.

PUBLIC OPINION.

Strategic leaders must consistently examine their anticipated decisions and actions and the impact such decisions and actions may have on the mood of the public, on advocacy groups, on elements of society likely to be affected, to include their own organizations, and on the media. The media attempts to provide a balanced view of the military as an institution. The media in the United States and most other democratic countries believe they are doing the best for society. However, they are in the business of satisfying the public's desire for news that will attract readers and viewers. The media is going to report the news, so it is incumbent upon the strategic leader to consider how best to provide information and work with the media for mutual benefit. The media can rapidly and dramatically affect world opinion, policy, and ultimately strategy.

Strategic leaders must be skilled in information operations and strategic communications. They must proactively work to inform both foreign and domestic audiences concerning the Armed Services as organizations and the missions they perform. Credibility is the strategic leader's greatest asset in developing trust with the public and the press. Strategic leaders will be more successful when they are able to use a multitude of communicative channels to explain how the organization's operations are furthering national goals. In an era of instant communications and 24-hour news cycles, the strategic leader must be able to manage meaning, be able to "tell stories" and articulate organizational purpose and action to a world-wide audience. The greatest asset a strategic leader has is the general confidence of the public in the Armed Forces of the United States.. The American people do not expect a perfect military. What they do expect is a competent military with leadership that deals with problems, takes care of its sons and daughters and meets the needs of our nation.

FEDERAL BUDGET.

The dynamics of the federal budgeting process strongly influences decision making at the strategic level. Competition for scarce resources among the multiple claimants at the national level is intense. Interest on the national debt, entitlement programs, and the budgetary desires of each department of government combine to stress the federal budget well in excess of our nation's economic ability to resource these demands. Within the Department of Defense, there are far more requirements than financial resources to meet them. Within the context of the Department of Defense planning, programming, and budgeting process, strategic leaders are expected to be advocates for the legitimate requirements of their organizations and to provide candid assessments of the risks and

consequences of various programming and budgeting alternatives. To be effective in this national system of resource allocation, the strategic leader must understand the planning, programming, and budgeting process of the Department of Defense, the role of the Office of Management and Budget, and the Congressional Authorization and Appropriation Process.

TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS.

> *U.S. forces must leverage information technology and innovative network-centric concepts of operations to develop increasingly capable joint forces. New information and communications technologies hold promise for networking highly distributed joint and multinational forces.*
>
> Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld

Across the range of military operations, technological developments have continued to have significant effects on the capability of the Army to perform its various missions. Technology has given our strategic leaders significant advantages in networking, command and control, situational awareness, and in fielding overwhelming and decisive combat power.

The technological revolution in warfare has dramatically increased the tempo of operations, the rapidity of maneuver, the precision of firepower, the processing of critical information, and the complexities of command. Technology has also enhanced the ability of the Army to effectively function in a joint, interagency, and multi-national operational environment. Strategic leaders must possess a broad understanding of relevant military technologies and understand how advancements in each of these technologies can be incorporated into Army organizations, doctrine, and equipment to permit continued advancements in combat effectiveness and efficiency.

Technology is a two-edged sword. With increased capability also comes new and different vulnerabilities. The asymmetric nature of future warfare requires the leader to not only understand the capabilities of new technologies, but also the vulnerabilities. These vulnerabilities can and will be exploited by a determined adversary.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

Since the military is subject to civilian government control, strategic leaders must proactively involve themselves with numerous executive, legislative, and judicial organizations and agencies. The military plays a key advisory role in the development of the national security strategy, the national military strategy, and in the development of legislation affecting the administration of the Armed Forces. Within the parameters of such directive guidance and force of law, strategic leaders develop the necessary strategies, plans, and policies to support and implement President, Secretary of Defense and Congressional intent.

Strategic leaders frequently provide counsel to civilian executive authorities and are routinely called upon to testify before committees and subcommittees of both houses of Congress. Additionally, decisions made by strategic leaders can be subject to judicial review by Federal Courts. A critical task that a strategic leader must perform well is the development of an understanding and an ability to influence the interagency process. The multiplicity of external elements within the Federal Government directly and indirectly impact upon the operations and administration of the military both in the present and future.

PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS.

Many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Private and Volunteer Organizations (PVOs) have become key components of the contemporary operating environment that influence the strategy development and policy process. Strategic leaders frequently interact with representatives of these organizations and must ensure that such interactions remain within the parameters of policy guidance and ethical conduct. The manner in which the military's strategic leadership leverages these organizations can spell the difference in effectively shaping change.

THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT.

In many ways the internal environments of the Army and the national military structure are just as complex and demanding as the external environment. It would be impractical to describe all the organizations, systems, and subsystems that exist at the strategic level within and among the Services, the combatant commands, international commands, the Joint Staff, and the Department of Defense. Nor is it practical to describe the multitude of interlocking relationships, lines of communication, and operating dynamics. Suffice it to say that the strategic leader must interact within this complex internal arena to assure that his or her efforts to chart a future path for the Army can be effectively institutionalized both in policy and in culture.

SUMMARY.

It is strategic leadership that transcends the organization by orchestrating internal events, in concert with personal and organizational influence on the external environment, to achieve an organizational vision. Unfortunately, the internal and external environments are volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous arenas. Consequently, it is the strategic leader who must develop the networks necessary to know what is happening within the environment, to appreciate why such events are or will happen, and to discern how best to influence events for the benefit of the organization. Strategic leaders must continuously apply themselves to building consensus for organizational goals among key stakeholders in the environment who have the individual or collective ability to mold events essential to the achievement of the organizational vision. Those elements within the environment that have characteristically had the greatest impact on the Army include: the threat, international alliances, our national culture, public opinion, the federal

budgeting process, technology, our national system of government, private organizations, and the internal organization of our Services and the Department of Defense. To be successful, the strategic leader must remain a perpetual student of the environment and remain constantly engaged in the process of adapting to that environment.

CHAPTER 3

STRATEGIC VISION

Where there is no vision, the people perish.

The Bible, Proverbs 29:18

Strategic leaders develop and communicate a compelling, understandable strategic vision for the organization. That strategic vision is a means of focusing effort and progressing toward a desired future--what ought to be. While the vision is an image of a future state, it is also a process the organization uses to guide future development. An effective vision also requires an implementing strategy or plan to ensure its attainment--how to get there.

Creating the vision is a collaborative effort, with strategic leaders at the focal point of origin. Their competencies, coupled with the authority of their position, bestow upon strategic leaders the unique responsibility and opportunity to establish the long-term strategic intent and objectives of the organization. A strategic vision, properly articulated, can last for decades as illustrated by the following:

> *We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal;*
> *that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights;*
> *that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to*
> *secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their*
> *just powers from the consent of the governed...*

Declaration of Independence

OUR NATIONAL VISION

Visioning is truly a creative process. It brings together known information and new ideas, integrates these ideas with future technologies and organizational requirements, and blends them into an innovative product. Therefore, the word "create" is purposefully used here. In the process of visioning, leaders forecast the future pragmatically and realistically. They then develop the image of "what ought to be" for the organization to position it for success in a futuristic environment.

> *I believe this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before*
> *this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him*
> *safely to earth.*

John Fitzgerald Kennedy

Once a desired future or vision has been postulated, strategic leaders create a bridge to the future by means of a strategy and plans. They develop ends (objectives), ways (concepts), and means (resources) to achieve the vision. Obviously, overt definable objectives make vision attainment more recognizable when it occurs. Definable objectives also provide a way of measuring and evaluating movement toward vision achievement. "Strategy" is the crossover mechanism between the forecast future and the envisioned future.

Strategic leaders identify diverse sources of information both inside and outside the organizational environment and integrate this information into a strategy for change. The history, culture, and values of the organization; future trends in society and in the world; the relationship of the organization with other organizations; and the role of the organization within the environment are some of the factors which must be considered. This sounds like a clean, linear process, but in fact it occurs in a disordered, chaotic manner. As the leader encounters the competing values within the organization and between organizations, the clarity and compelling nature of the vision become paramount.

VALUE OF STRATEGIC VISION.

> *Our terrorist enemies have a vision that guides and explains all their varied acts of murder. They seek to impose Taliban-like rule country by country across the greater Middle East…Our actions too are guided by a vision. We believe that freedom can advance and change lives…These two visions—one of tyranny and murder, the other of liberty and life—clashed in Afghanistan…These two visions have now met in Iraq and are contending for the future of the country. The failure of freedom would only mark the beginning of peril and violence…We will persevere and defeat the enemy and hold this hard-won ground for the realm of liberty.*

<div align="right">President George W. Bush in an address
at the U.S. Army War College, May, 2004</div>

Vision provides a sense of ultimate purpose, direction, and motivation for all members and activities within the organization. It provides an overarching concept, which serves to initiate and focus more specific organizational goals, plans, and programs. It provides a means of analyzing and understanding the pressures and contingencies of the external environment. The vision helps the organization identify what in the environment is important, what requires action, and what that action should be. It also reinforces or establishes the basic values of the organization or effort and the leader.

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As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of a democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy.

Abraham Lincoln

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

A vision is the first step in the development of strategies and plans for change, without which there is no clear direction or end. Once the desired vision has been articulated, then the ways and means to achieve it are identified.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A VISION.

The concept of vision has become a popular term within academic, government, defense, and corporate circles. This has spawned many different definitions of vision. As the various definitions are examined, however, some common characteristics and trends begin to emerge.

The term "vision" suggests that a core element is a *visual image*--a mental picture of what the future organization, military effort, or environment will look like. The concept also implies a later time horizon. This time horizon tends to be middle to long-term in nature.

The concept includes an *ideal end state*. This desired end state describes the organization or military effort, as it ought to be, given the expected future environment. Consequently, the vision includes appropriate values for the desired future.

The desired end state serves as a goal for the organization or military effort and its participants. It is a goal to strive for and not necessarily expected to be achieved in its entirety. Thus, the vision provides direction, purpose, and identity. When members perceive it as worth the effort, the vision creates energy, commitment, and belonging. When shared by all participants, the vision can move members of the organization or military effort to significant achievements.

Vision exists at all organizational levels. In very small organizations, it may be an informal, verbally expressed understanding among members and the leader--for example, "best squad in the company." In somewhat larger organizations, it often resides in the leader's philosophy of command, written policy or statements of the

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leader's intent for the organization or military effort. At the highest strategic levels it is often expressed as a formalized vision statement. Visions at various levels of an organization support and influence the visions of both higher and lower levels of the organization. The top-down alignment of visions for greatest organizational effectiveness is a primary task of leaders.

It is important not to confuse organizational strategic vision with strategic vision used by the President, Secretary of Defense and Combatant Commanders in deliberate strategic planning. While interrelated, the concepts differ in content. Using the concept of ends (objectives), ways (concepts), and means (resources), vision relates to the ends, while planning focuses on the ways and means to get to the end state. Mid- to long-range planning is more likely to be a direct extrapolation from the current situation. In the context of government, defense, and military vision, "strategic" implies both long-range and high-level.

Simply put, strategic vision is that which is derived from, supports, and influences national security strategy and national military strategy. Of the three components of strategy--ends, ways, and means--vision relates to the ends of strategy. A strategic vision influences and helps define national-level strategy.

CREATING THE VISION.

Vision is the product of a dynamic, logical, and collective organizational process. Vision is often attributed only to leaders because of their critical role in developing and articulating it and their position as the representative of the organization; however, vision is rarely the result of an entirely internal, intuitive process of leaders creating vision in isolation. Vision does not reside only in leaders; rather, vision is often developed as a collaborative effort, with leaders performing the critical role of integrating and guiding the process.

Though far from simple, the visioning process consists primarily of examining the organizational environment, projecting likely future states of the organization, and developing a desired end state. In this task, leaders are assisted by the collaborative efforts of key members of the organization: deputies, staff chiefs, subordinate leaders, and senior noncommissioned officer advisors. Visioning may frequently be an informal process; however, at very high levels of organization, temporary or permanent specialized staffs--so-called "think tanks" or "futures groups"--often assist leaders in this complex task.

The visioning process begins with an assessment of the organizational environment, history, mission, values, and trends to determine which are most likely dominant in determining the future of the organization. From the examination of the past and present environment, organizations and leaders project into the future and develop likely alternative future states. They must assess the future environment and state of the organization as objectively and realistically as possible. However, visualizing the future

is a significantly less precise process than examining the present environment because of the unlimited number of potential future world environments. While no one can accurately predict the future, it is possible to develop a range of possible future states and their likelihood of occurrence. From these plausible states of the future, organizations and leaders derive a desirable end state. However, this entails more than simply selecting one of the likely future states. Forming the vision is a creative process in which intuition and experience play critical roles.

Creation of a vision involves the active use of intuition--perceiving without the conscious use of reasoning. This is not mystical or magical; intuition is the result of human experience. Past experience in analyzing, integrating, and synthesizing information equips leaders with "frames of reference"--the ability to perceive new information, relationships, and possibilities. Drawing from knowledge and values stored in the mind during years of experience, leaders create and synthesize a unique vision. Although the collaboration of other members of the organization is important, it is leaders whose experience, values, frames of reference, and position contribute most to the creation of the vision.

Integrating values with known information, innovative ideas, likely futures, and organizational requirements, the vision of the future becomes what "ought to be"--a plausible and desirable organizational end state. This desirable end state is a developed vision when it has been articulated and evaluated. Articulating the vision--converting it into a cogent vision statement--enables the leader to communicate the vision in a compelling, understandable manner.

US ARMY VISION STATEMENT

Our Army is serving a Nation at war. This war requires that all elements of our national power be applied in a broad, unyielding, and relentless campaign. This campaign will not be short; it will require deep and enduring commitment. Our Army is a proud member of the Joint Force expertly serving our nation and its citizens as we continuously strive toward new goals and improve performance. Our individual and organizational approach to our duties and tasks must reflect the seriousness and sense of urgency characteristic of an Army at war. Our Soldiers and our nation deserve nothing less. This is not business as usual... The Army's Way Ahead...explores how we will obtain a more relevant and ready campaign-quality Army with a Joint and Expeditionary Mindset. My intent is to communicate the Army senior leadership's view of how the Army will fulfill its mission to provide necessary forces and capabilities to the Combatant Commanders in support of the National Security and Defense Strategies... Become familiar with the ideas presented here so that you can contribute to improving our Army. Are you *wearing your dog tags?*

General Peter J. Schoomaker, U.S. Army Chief of Staff

Complex visions captured in a few words, a sentence, or a paragraph can inspire and guide large organizations; for example:

> *An Army at War: Relevant and Ready: A Campaign Quality Army with a Joint and Expeditionary Mindset.*

<div align="center">U.S. Army Vision Statement</div>

The vision statement is flexible enough to accommodate a range of plausible futures and contains values that make it worthy of the effort required to achieve it; for example:

> *Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist.*

<div align="center">George Catlett Marshall, Secretary of State</div>

A very brief vision statement can convey a conceptual image broad and powerful enough to give authority and validity to more detailed, but less easily remembered, descriptions of the vision. For example, consider this title from a Navy/Marine Corps strategy statement:

> *Power and Access...From the Sea.*

Before the vision is implemented, the leader evaluates it for accuracy, consistency, and utility. When the vision statement accurately depicts organizational goals and values, is consistent with requirements, and communicates the leader's intent, the vision is ready for implementation.

U.S. NAVY VISION STATEMENT

> *A Networked, Jointly Integrated, Sea-Based Power Projection Force, Assuring Coalition and Joint Force Access and Protecting America's Interests Anywhere in the World*

> *Emerging operational concepts, technologies, processes, and organizations will transform the capability of America's naval services of the 21st century to conduct multi-dimensional joint, allied, and coalition warfare. The transforming U.S. Navy-Marine Corps Team will be fully integrated into the Joint Team across the full expanse of a unified battlespace. Naval forces will provide unique and complementary warfighting capabilities from the sea to joint force commanders to support their ability to enhance deterrence; secure swift, decisive military victory; and strengthen the peace that follows in support of the critical operational goals*

STRATEGY FOR CHANGE.

> *Vision without action is merely a dream.*
> *Action without vision just passes the time.*
> *Vision with action can change the world.*

Joel A. Barker

Vision is a critical element in three essential organizational processes: development of culture, management of change, and interaction with the environment. The *purposes* for which leaders implement the vision are to:

(1) Shape the organizational culture: Create, revise, or reaffirm organizational purpose, direction, energy, identity, and values.
(2) Create change: Move the organization toward a more effective future state.
(3) Positively influence: Shape the environment of the organization.

This list implies three concurrent vision-related tasks for the leader, two internal to the organization and one external.

Within the organization, leaders work to gain member acceptance of the vision, appeal to shared values to make the vision personally relevant to members, and demonstrate actions that are consistent with the vision. But, members of the organization need time to analyze and understand fully the implications of a new vision. Therefore, leaders seek to convince key players within the organization that the vision is correct and viable. Leaders communicate the vision to all members in a clear, concise, and believable manner.

To *implement* a vision, Sashkin and Sashkin describe a four step vision process. First, e**xpressing the vision.** The leader must be able to express their vision in action, to think through what specific actions they must take and to carry them out. Expressing a vision requires that the leaders understand and perform the sequence of cause and effect actions required to make the vision real. Second, **explaining a vision.** The leader who can express the vision still may not succeed in implementing it. Unless the leader can explain the vision to others, constant uncertainty will arise as to steps and handling of problems and issues. Explaining is more than restating the vision end state or aim and must result in understanding how individual actions link together to attain the goal. Third, **extending a vision.** Applying the sequence of activities to a variety of situations so that the vision can be implemented in several ways and places. Finally, **expanding the vision.** Applying it not just in one limited way and not even in a variety of similar ways, but in many different ways in a wide range of circumstances.[7]

Achieving commitment of the members of the organization is easiest when they have contributed to development of the vision. However, many worthwhile visions require radical change and are initially unacceptable to members of the organization. Leaders anticipate resistance to change and work to overcome it. As an example, George C. Marshall approached the establishment of an autonomous Army Air Corps with caution. He successfully avoided resistance to his vision by taking an incremental approach that focused on preparing the organization for change.

MARSHALL'S VISION FOR THE ARMY AIR CORPS

As Deputy Chief of Staff, he had observed that air officers had almost no representation on the General Staff and that most General Staff officers had little interest in air-related matters. In fact, there was a strong anti-air bias...Marshall found this situation deplorable, but decided to move cautiously. In his view, the Air Corps formed a particularly critical part of the combined-arms team to be forged. Ground and air officers had to grow to understand and respect each others' roles if anything approaching the necessary teamwork between them could be realized. This mutual understanding and respect could not be dictated; it had to be nurtured so it could flourish of its own accord. This was Marshall's approach. He intended to increase incrementally the autonomy of the Air Corps within the Army, in the process developing its leaders so they could perform respectably as senior commanders and staff officers. In fact, Marshall aimed to give the Air Corps all the autonomy it could handle. However, he kept this intention fairly close-hold, making it really a semi-hidden aspect of his strategic vision. To have articulated this openly would have ignited a fire storm of attention, under-mining his efforts to effect subtly, almost imperceptible attitudinal and organizational changes. Marshall thus envisioned an autonomous Air Corps, working harmoniously with ground forces to form the 'perfect combined-arms team,' in addition to performing strategic bombing missions apart from the ground forces.[8]

 If successful, the vision is integrated into the permanent culture of the organization; members internalize the vision and behave in ways which are consistent with it. To the extent that subordinate organizations and leaders embrace the top-down vision, their visions align with the vision of senior leaders.

To create permanent change in the organization, leaders plan the ways and means necessary to achieve the end state of the vision; otherwise, the change will not survive the tenure of the leader. Institutionalizing the vision in structural change ensures that it will endure. An excellent example of this is the restructuring of the Army under Chief of Staff General Abrams.

ABRAMS ON THE RESERVE COMPONENTS

> *One of the most fateful decisions of the war in Vietnam had been Lyndon Johnson's refusal to call up the reserves. All the Joint Chiefs, but especially Harold K. Johnson, the Army Chief of Staff, had found this a very traumatic thing; Johnson even coming close to resigning in protest--and at the end of his life describing his failure to do so as his greatest regret. Abrams as Vice Chief of Staff during the buildup for Vietnam had to cope with the disabilities induced by the lack of mobilization. Now, as Chief of Staff, he appeared determined to ensure that never again would a President be able to send the Army to war without the reserves maintained for such a contingency. The vehicle for doing this was a revised force structure that integrated reserve and active force elements so closely as to make the reserves virtually inextricable from the whole.[9]*

External to the organization, leaders build consensus for the validity of their organizational vision. An accepting environment enhances the success of the organization; influential visions attract resources and interest. At the highest levels of military organization, the vision relates to the national military strategy and the national security strategy. Such visions compete for influence and resources in the democratic institutions.

At the strategic level, leaders need to acquire resources and build consensus in a variety of constituencies that include other Services, national political leaders, Congress, the press, and the public at large. The resources essential to pursuing the vision are influenced by these members of the organizational external environment. There, leaders obtain approval and resources by demonstrating that the vision is a correct, necessary, and viable element of the national military strategy.

SUMMARY.

Vision is the leader-focused, organizational process that gives the organization its sense of purpose, direction, energy, and identity. This process exists at every level and in every type of organization; its content is the desired end state of the organization. For that reason, vision adds value by providing the means for the organization to anticipate and move toward the future.

Visions generally increase in complexity and extend in time frame at successively higher levels of organizations. Strategic vision competes for influence and resources in the development of national strategy.

Leaders at every level of organizations are the custodians, developers, and articulators of vision. From the small section leader to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff, leaders guide the organizational definition of the desired end-state. Only leaders possess the decision authority, perspective, position, and experience to derive a vision from the environment, values, and potential of the organization.

Leaders also cause continual evaluation and refinement of the vision in response to changes both internal and external to the organization. The measure of merit of the vision is both objective and subjective--the degree to which the organization accomplishes its mission, at present and in the future.

CHAPTER 4

STRATEGIC CULTURE

Organizational Culture is a pattern of shared basic assumptions, values, beliefs, and norms that the organization has learned over time and that unite the members of an organization.

Edgar Schein

The nature of strategic leadership is that the impact of leaders is often not directly on individuals, but on systems and processes used by the organization to achieve desired results. One of these "indirect" methods of leading is through organizational culture. Culture is defined in many ways, with the simplest being "the way we do things around here." Culture is a powerful concept. People who have "bought into" a culture see the current way of doing things as "correct" and "right." This can facilitate smooth and effective functioning of the organization *if* the current way *is*, in fact, *right*. However, culture can be an obstacle to change when the way things are done *now* cease to be effective for the *future*. Additionally, there are components of an organizational culture that have significant symbolic meaning. Leaders who fully understand culture also understand the meaning that people place either on events (changes of command, for example) or on "things" (the unit guidon). Managing culture also implies management of the meaning people place on these important events and things.

An organization that has a well-established history also has a mature, well-developed organizational culture. In large complex organizations like the Army there will be many different subordinate organizations that have developed their own organizational subcultures. For example, the cultures of the Army's heavy and light forces, special operating forces, civilians, and reserve components all differ somewhat, but they embody the same basic values and beliefs of the "holistic" Army culture. Subcultures developed within these formal or informal groups, like those in the various components, branches, and functional areas, must express and share the core of the Army's strategic culture, our values. A major challenge of strategic leadership, therefore, is to ensure that all these subcultures are compatible with the desired core culture. The purpose of this chapter is to describe organizational culture, discuss its importance, and provide insights on how strategic leaders manage it.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE.

Organizational culture is the set of institutional, stated, and operating values, beliefs, and assumptions that people have about their organization that are validated by experiences over time. It evolves in consonance with the values, beliefs, and assumptions of the society in which the organization exists. The importance of understanding the culture is that, because of its informal power within the organization, it is often taught to new people, deliberately or by influence, as the "correct" way to think and act in response to both internal and external problems.

Values are statements of what is important to an organization. Organizational culture is built on values that are derived from and deemed essential by the strategic leadership of the organization. Our nation's culture derives from a unique set of values expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. These values influence every facet of society, its laws, domestic programs, and foreign relations. The Army's core cultural values are expressed in FM 3-1 and FM 22-100.

Throughout the Army's history, successive strategic leaders have identified and defined institutional values. These values are presented, described, and promulgated in doctrinal literature. The core and institutional values serve as the foundation on which strategic leaders develop stated values. In turn, these stated values form the basis for the development of policies, programs, and procedures within the organization. These policies, programs, and procedures reflect the operating values of the institution. Operating values are communicated in a variety of ways, both verbally and in writing, and many eventually evolve into revised institutional values.

Strategic leaders must be sensitive to the fact that statements of values alone have little impact on organizational culture unless the members internalize them through a process that includes experience-based validation. Only then will stated values result in the desired effect on members' attitudes and behavior.

Individual perceptions of what is important form members' operating values that in turn effect the shaping of the Army's organizational culture. These individual perceptions are effected by the members' interpretation of the cause and effect relationship between the institutional and stated values and what is actually happening within the organization. This is the experience-based validation process.

Institutional values, stated values, and operating values should be consistent so that they reflect the same underlying beliefs and assumptions. The greater the difference between what is espoused and what leaders do, the greater the degree of distrust and loss of confidence between the leadership and the followers. This, in turn, results in a decrease of organizational effectiveness. Carried to extreme, the differences could negatively affect the public's trust and confidence in the organization. Therefore, building and sustaining a culture based on trust and confidence, vertically and horizontally, are key responsibilities of strategic leadership. The strategic leader's personal example in conduct and actions is extremely important to demonstrate the consistency between espoused values and enacted values. Actions truly do speak louder than words when values and culture are at stake. Strategic leaders must ensure institutional and stated values are consistent with the values of both the larger society and the needs of the organization. They must also ensure through policy, doctrine, regulations, and implementing procedures that they produce the desired results.

Over time, the culture becomes so embedded within the organization that much of it is second nature and often taken for granted. Culture establishes a basic sense of what the organization stands for and how it functions. It enables members of the organization to

understand and cope with the internal and external environment while accomplishing organizational goals. It also influences how members perceive, think, and act in relation to each other as well as to internal and external challenges and opportunities.

Cultural values define the boundaries of acceptable thought and behavior from such simple acts as the wearing of the uniform to more complex actions such as conducting combat operations. Culture influences how individuals talk to each other, approach problems, anticipate and judge situations, develop expectations, determine right from wrong, establish priorities, and react to many other aspects of organizational and interpersonal behavior. Finally, in a VUCA environment described in Chapter 2, culture influences the behavior of subordinates when they are faced with a unique situation that lacks "standard" operating procedures.

The following vignette from an action report of a conversation with a ground force commander demonstrates the culture of embedded Army values (e.g., selfless service, personal courage, and loyalty) and quiet professionalism that resides in the U.S. Army and, in this instance, in the U.S. Army Special Forces.

After years of operational experience in ". . . the jungle-like world of multiple dangers, hidden traps, unpleasant surprises, and moral ambiguities . . ." a culture has developed within Special Forces that recognizes the strategic implications of allowing any American, alive or dead, to fall into the hands of the enemy. So, on 3 October 1993, while on a mission in Mogadishu, Somalia, two Special Forces Noncommissioned Officers, MSG Gary Gordon and SFC Randall Shughart, had a very brief conversation with their commanding officer. Having seen another helicopter shot down, they circled above it in the helicopter they were in, and directed fire on the enemy who was rapidly maneuvering toward the crash site. They recognized the extreme hazard to the Americans on the ground and to anybody attempting to intervene on their behalf. Nevertheless, in quiet, professional conversation, they requested authority to insert themselves at the crash site. Initially, their commander refused their request in anticipation of a larger force maneuvering to within striking distance of the site. MSG Gordon and SFC Shughart, recognizing the needs at the site, repeated their request. Their commander accepted their appraisal and authorized their insertion. Unfortunately, the complexities of urban maneuver prevented the larger force from arriving in time to support MSG Gordon and SFC Shughart before they were overwhelmed by the advancing Somali militiamen. For their selfless service and quiet professionalism in defense of their countrymen, MSG Gordon and SFC Shughart were awarded the Medal of Honor. They saw their duty and, in a disciplined response, they did it.

Because of the culture shared between these non commissioned officers and their commander, the entire conversation was conducted in three brief radio calls and a handful of words.

Customs and traditions of the Service, doctrine promulgated through field manuals,

policies established in regulations, standard operating procedures, and the stated philosophy that guides the organization are some important ways that culture is made visible. Culture is also conveyed through professional journals, historical and biographical publications, audiovisual media, ceremonies, and the folklore of the organization. All these things carry some aspect of the Army's organizational culture.

CULTURE vs CLIMATE.

We should not confuse climate with culture, although the two are mutually reinforcing. Climate is a short-term phenomenon created by the current leadership. Consequently, dramatically different climates may exist simultaneously among the various elements of the organization. The most important determinant of climate is the behavior of leaders. Their behavior directly reflects their perception of people; leadership and management style; skills, knowledge, and attitudes and priorities. Every member of the organization knows that leaders, by their action and inaction, signal what they will or will not tolerate. The leader's behavior creates a climate that influences everyone in the organization.

On the other hand, culture is a long-term, complex phenomenon that generally endures through multiple leaders. Individual leaders cannot easily create or change culture. It is part of the organization. It influences the characteristics of the climate by its effect on the behavior and the thought processes of the leader.

While strategic leaders focus their attention on organizational culture, they are also responsible for the climate of the organization over which they exert the most direct influence. The leader contributes to creating a positive climate when his or her behavior reflects competence and the underlying values, beliefs, and assumptions of the organization. Unit members, committed to the organization's culture, will not accept a climate imposed upon them by a leader if it contradicts cultural values, beliefs, and assumptions. Erratic swings in the organization's climate, or a persistently negative climate, erode the trust and confidence of the members and adversely affect the organization's readiness and effectiveness.

CULTURES AND SUBCULTURES.

It is generally clear to anyone who has moved between units, posts, or services that "the way we do things here" can vary dramatically at different locations. Each organization, and each military service, responds to their requirements by establishing policies that are most effective for that time and place. One should not expect the culture in the Army to be exactly the same as that in the Air Force or Navy.

The same arguments can be made internally within the Army. Heavy and light divisions have different "ways of doing things". Cavalry regiments and special operating forces are different still. Effective strategic leaders understand and appreciate those

differences within the military, as well as the cultural differences other stakeholders bring to the military's external environment.

A means to effectively operate when faced with multiple subcultures is to focus not on what separates the different organizations, but instead on what unites them. The integrating "glue" of the different subcultures, most often, is the organizations' values. Processes and procedures may differ among organizations for very good reasons. In the end, many organizations, especially in the military domain, are interested in the same value-laden end state: peace, stability and individual rights. When appropriate, strategic leaders must understand and reinforce that value congruency between organizations and appreciate the potentially different perspective that both military and non-military organizations bring.

CULTURAL CHANGE.

There is a significant interdependence between the current culture and the "desired" culture that might be necessary for future unit effectiveness. The engine for this cultural change is the vision of the strategic leader. The ability of strategic leaders to shape organizational culture and values to support the vision while retaining the trust and confidence of all concerned is a major challenge for strategic leaders. There is an interactive dynamic between the development of a vision and cultural change. The process of formulating a vision is greatly influenced by culture and values; conversely, the pursuit and achievement of vision influences culture and values. External influences also initiate cultural change. Laws passed by Congress, executive decisions, changes to national military strategy, and technology advancements are some of the more significant ways to influence cultural change. Culture cannot be managed in the traditional sense. It is deeply embedded within the psyche of the people and the structure and functions of the organization. However, the actions and behaviors of strategic leaders can influence, direct, and sustain the culture over time.

Culture is influenced by what is paid attention to, measured, and controlled. The established priorities, along with the policies and systems to deal with them, send clear signals about what is important and what the leader expects of the members of the organization. Clearly, "the unit does well those things that the boss checks." For example, strategic leaders can convey to the organization that leader development is an important part of the Army's culture by establishing a system and process to control and measure how effectively it is being accomplished. By contrast, when leader development processes are never "checked" by leaders, then subordinates will most likely put less energy into developmental activities and concentrate on those activities perceived to be more important.

The allocation of resources can change or influence culture. Resourcing patterns clearly determine what the organization deems as important. The full spectrum of activities associated with the routine of running the Army is continually evaluated for its relative importance, as indicated by how well they are resourced. People are more

attentive to those programs or policies that they perceive to be higher in priority by virtue of those programs or policies receiving a greater share of resources.

The structure of the organization also changes or sustains the culture. How the organization is structured has a significant effect on its culture and its capability to express the vision. For example, multi-layered organizations tend toward more bureaucracy, less flexibility and innovation, and more cumbersome communications than those with fewer layers. Decision-making authority tends to be retained at higher levels, and empowerment downward becomes more difficult. If more empowerment and greater freedom of action are necessary in achieving the organization's vision, then the strategic leader should design structures and processes to reflect this. The strategies designed to achieve the vision need complementing, supportive organizational structure, and processes to support them.

Criteria for rewards and sanctions emphasize culturally desirable behavior. Members learn about their organization's culture through its personnel selection, promotion, development, and separation systems. Rewards and sanctions associated with different skills, knowledge, attitude, and behavior from entry level onward clearly demonstrate the cultural values and priorities of both the chain of command and the organization.

Leaders are always role models. Members of the organization, and society in general, closely scrutinize the behavior of strategic leaders. How strategic leaders conduct themselves during routine periods and especially in times of crisis demonstrates their personal values, beliefs, and assumptions. Therefore, their behavior affects certain aspects of the organization's culture as subordinates react to strategic leaders' behavior.

Changing organizational culture is difficult but not impossible. In fact cultural change is imperative if an organization is to grow, develop, and adapt to the changing environment within which it exists. However, it takes time to change an organization's culture, usually between five and ten years, so the strategic leadership of an organization must have patience to see change through. Some examples of significant cultural changes that have occurred in the Army since World War II are listed below:

- Integration of black soldiers into all skills, branches, and units of the Army.
- Development of recruiting, training, sustainment, and separation systems to support an all-volunteer force.
- Abolition of the Women's Army Corps and integration of women into all skills, branches, and units other than those involved in direct combat.
- Adopting the beret as standard headgear for the Army.
- Transformation from heavy vehicles to Stryker Brigades.
- Modularity and changing the Army's structure from Division-based to smaller, more expeditionary sized units.

The cultural changes connected with each of these developments evolve over long periods, several years in most cases. In the case of the last three, the changes are still evolving. External forces triggered some of them, while other changes occurred because of a perceived need for change within the Army. Whatever the reason behind them, far-reaching actions by a succession of strategic leaders helped, or will help, bring about the desired cultural change.

SUMMARY.

The Army's culture is defined by institutional, stated, and operating values, and the beliefs and assumptions of its members. Culture influences norms of thought and behavior and establishes a basic understanding of what the Army stands for and how it functions. Strategic leaders cannot easily manipulate culture. However, the essence of strategic leadership is the ability to understand the existing culture and then to shape that organization's culture and values to support a vision while retaining the trust and confidence of subordinates and members of the greater society.

The Army reflects the vision of our forefathers and their culture, which was validated through experience and articulated in the Constitution and its amendments. Its culture of selfless service is reflected in the following observation by General Dick Cavazos.

> *War is always and will ever be obscene, but faced with a greater obscenity, slavery, I would fight. While war is obscene, those who charge the machine guns, who bleed, who go down to the aid stations and who are put in body bags are not obscene; their sacrifices have no measure— theirs has a purity where mankind shines and is beyond corruption. I am not blasphemous when I say that in the brutality and evil of war, soldiers who have offered themselves up, so that their buddies may live, have in them the likeness and image of God. And damn those who debunk courage, valor, fidelity, love of country, and love of home, family, hopes and dreams for a better tomorrow. Our soldiers give up much that others may live—not only in freedom but even in luxury. They deserve our great, great gratitude and affection because they are willing to serve. They are some of God's noblest people.*

General Dick Cavazos

CHAPTER 5

STRATEGIC LEADER COMPETENCIES

Competencies are the knowledge, skills, attributes, and capacities that enable a leader to perform his required tasks. A competency may be based on natural ability or may be derived from education, training, or experience.

In general, strategic leader competencies are built on the foundation of leadership requirements at lower levels. In some cases, they are simply the same skills applied at higher levels. For example, the best leaders at all levels have a remarkable capacity to care for subordinates and to respect their dignity as individuals. But some strategic leader competencies are qualitatively different and new. As an example, leaders at direct and organizational levels do not generally need the capacity to envision long-range future requirements in order to set in motion very long development programs. Further, they do not need the level of integrative thinking skills required of strategic leaders.

The major categories of leadership competencies can be grouped as conceptual, technical, and interpersonal. Strategic conceptual competencies include the thinking skills needed to understand and deal with the complex and ambiguous strategic world. Technical competencies include knowledge of external political, economic, and cultural systems that impact the organization. Interpersonal competencies include consensus building, both internal and external to the organization, and the capacity to communicate effectively. For a more detailed examination of competencies see Appendix A.

CONCEPTUAL COMPETENCIES.

Strategic leaders require the capacity to deal with extraordinary complexity. Theirs is an environment of tough, competing issues, few of which have clear solutions and all of which pose risks. Many issues have more than one feasible solution, but no one solution may be totally acceptable while all incur costs. It is important to understand such issues fundamentally and accurately to determine the underlying threads that may connect apparently unrelated issues and to chart actions that will have the best long-term outcomes. In so doing, an understanding of second- and third-order effects is necessary to resist actions that may appear reasonable in the short run but are detrimental in the long term. Strategic conceptual competencies include frame of reference development, problem management, and envisioning the future.

Frame of Reference Development. Every leader builds a complex knowledge structure over time from schooling, experience, and self-study. For the strategic leader, this knowledge structure is a "map" of the strategic world; it is a dynamic representation of the significant factors in the strategic environment with cause-and-

effect interrelationships. A frame of reference acts as a basis of observation and judgment.

Three attributes are essential for building a good frame of reference. First, the leader must be open to new experiences and to input from others including subordinates. Second, the leader must be reflective, not afraid to rethink past experiences and learn from them. Third, he must be comfortable with abstracts and concepts common in the strategic environment.

A frame of reference cannot be taught by conventional classroom methods. It is developed by the individual over time as he reflects and makes sense of new knowledge and experience. Frames of reference form as leaders progress from the direct through the organizational to the strategic leadership levels. Individual initiative is important in developing a broad frame of reference. Consequently, part of becoming a strategic leader is approaching this mental activity as intrinsically interesting and rewarding. In the following vignette General Lynch explains the value of the fighting level frame of reference that characterized then Colin Powell's service as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

> *One of your greatest challenges in the Pentagon is trying to explain to other people the problems down at the fighting level. So many of those guys started out as vice presidents and worked their way up. They never had an appreciation of what goes on down there at the lowest level. Powell had the advantage of going up through those levels. For the younger leaders in Vietnam, there was a tremendous moral and ethical challenge that was never faced by the commanders in World War II. When a guy is steeped in the moral and ethical issues down at the fighting level he's more inclined to back off from gross solutions and try to equate what they are saying to how difficult it would be to implement it down where he remembers it. Powell was the first Chairman who had that experience and was able to carry it up through the ranks.*[10]

General Mike Lynch, U.S. Army (Ret.)

Much like the intelligence analyst, the strategic leader, equipped with a well-developed frame of reference, templates events that may have no discernable pattern to his subordinates. He is more able to understand the true situation and, most importantly, know where these events are likely to lead if no intervention occurs. Such leaders are uniquely equipped to deal with events having complex causes and to envision creative solutions. This enables timely and proactive decision-making.

A well-developed frame of reference also gives the strategic leader a thorough understanding of organizational subsystems. This understanding enables visualizing the interactive dynamics of the total system. Appreciation for these interdependencies helps to ensure that decisions taken in one area will not have an unanticipated adverse

impact in others. Without this capacity, changes in policy, regulation, or action may indirectly produce other changes that are neither anticipated nor desired.

Problem Management. Management of strategic problems deals with issues that are competing, that have manifold implications which are often difficult to understand completely, and that have potentially catastrophic outcomes if not resolved carefully. There are no "right" answers. Many issues are not so much a choice between "right and wrong" as a choice between "right and right". Strategic leaders must be able to think families of issues through as systems so that decisions move the problem as a whole toward resolution. This involves applying past experiences, identifying and creating patterns, discarding nonuseable data, understanding second- and third-order effects, maintaining flexibility, and knowing what is an acceptable outcome for the system as a whole. It also involves working and thinking interactively and not solving problems piecemeal.

Problem management and decision making are two distinct activities. The first involves managing the problems towards the desired outcome--making adjustments, modifying the initial approach, and discarding alternatives that inhibit progress. Many of the most significant problems at the strategic level require this approach because simple and direct alternative courses of action do not exist. The second involves developing alternative courses of action, assessing probability of success, and pursuing the selected course of action. *This differentiation between problem management and decision-making is a major element in the transition from direct to more indirect leadership*. Most past training and work experiences at the direct level are based on developing short-term solutions and deciding on relatively well structured problems by choosing among alternative courses of action. Long-term, ill-defined problems for which it is difficult to envision desired outcomes are not frequently encountered at lower levels. These are the problems, however, that strategic leaders frequently encounter.

Strategic leadership requires a refined ability to recognize and avoid irrelevant and marginal issues. An important ability in working strategic issues is to see beyond the immediately obvious in information received and to know what information is missing. This includes recognizing multiple paths to the same goal, understanding the opportunity costs for each path, and foreseeing the indirect effects of each.

Additionally, acceptance of some degree of risk is essential. Strategic issues are generally ill-defined, and most information available is ambiguous and incomplete. Most possible courses of action have such complex second- and third-order effects that completely accurate prediction of their outcomes is not possible. This necessitates committing to decisions and operating effectively under conditions of uncertainty. In the face of risk, the ability to recognize and seize opportunities is evident most clearly in the effectiveness with which the strategic leader identifies relevant information, understands the significance of projects or activities of others to his strategic direction, and discards distracters.

Envisioning the Future. The capability to formulate and articulate strategic aims and key concepts is perhaps the strategic leader's most significant capacity, the application of which was discussed in Chapter 3, Strategic Vision. He must lead the organization in the development of strategic plans to address mid- and long-term programs designed to achieve the strategic aims. This demands an understanding of the interaction of ends, ways, and means as they work to form a strategy. A staff of strategists may develop and refine the strategy, but the strategic leader provides the direction, the concept, and the focus.

This involves not only the ability to envision the future but also to work proactively to shape the future environment to enhance goal attainment. At the strategic level, goals may be far-reaching and should be formulated to accommodate contingencies that reflect the organization's relationship to a changing environment. This requires the thinking and processing of information creatively outside the established boundaries. It is an ability to see the organization and environment not as it is but rather as it should be.

TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES.

Strategic leader technical competencies differ significantly from those skills required at the direct or organizational level. While the technical skills used at lower levels are important elements of the strategic leader's frame of reference, they usually are not directly relevant to the specific tasks at the higher level. At the strategic level, technical competencies include an understanding of organizational systems, an appreciation of functional relationships outside the organization, and knowledge of the broader political and social systems within which the organization operates.[11] Success at the strategic level is a matter of continuous learning as exemplified by George Washington.

> *The crucial military difference (apart from levels of innate ability) between Washington and the commanders who opposed him was that they were sure they knew all the answers, while Washington tried every day and every hour to learn.*
>
> James Thomas Flexner

Systems Understanding. At the organizational level, leaders understand how their organizations operate and how to foster conditions that enable them to be more effective. At the strategic level there is decreased concentration on internal process and system integration and increased concentration on how the organization fits within the total Department of Defense (DOD) framework and into the broader international arena. Organizational systems at these levels have complex inter-relationships, and strategic leaders may have numerous reporting and coordinating relationships. Thus the leader must understand the separate roles he plays, the boundaries of these roles, their demands and constraints, and the expectations of other departments and agencies.

Joint, Interagency, Multi-national and Intra-agency (JIMI) Relationships.
National force projection necessitates an understanding of joint and combined operations. Different nations have different operating practices and principles which impact

operations of a combined force. Similarly, each Service has developed a different culture, vocabulary, and expectation for its members. Strategic leaders must know how to operate in a multicultural environment to gain the full understanding and commitment of their subordinates.

Political and Social Competence. The ability to participate effectively in the interdepartmental process inherent in national security policy formulation and execution is fundamental. Just as important is the capacity for interacting with the legislative branch. It is necessary to have this political and social competence to advise in developing the policy, preparing the strategy, and working to secure adequate resources to implement the strategy. Leaders at the strategic level function as members of the policy formulation team, helping to determine national interest and objectives. They present a balanced argument of national security requirements, benefits, costs, and risks.

> *Thus General Powell became Chairman determined to reshape national military strategy and the Armed Forces to meet the new environment. He had found when he was National Security Adviser that what the military produced often did not meet policymaker's needs, and he resolved that this would not happen during his tenure as Chairman. He believed that, as a result of the Goldwater-Nichols reform, it was his responsibility as Chairman to initiate a change in strategy, and he did not wish to be accused of not responding to world events.*
>
> Lorna S. Jaffe

INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCIES.

Strategic leader interpersonal competencies include the ability to build consensus within the organization, the ability to negotiate with external agencies or organizations in an attempt to shape or influence the external environment, and the ability to communicate internally and externally.

Consensus Building. In contrast with organizational-level leaders, strategic leaders devote far more of their time dealing with outside organizations and with leaders of other Services or nations. Consensus on an issue is necessary if coordinated and effective action is to be taken. Consensus building is a complicated process based on effective reasoning and logic, which may take place over an extended period. Consensus is not unanimous agreement. It is more about what all parties can live with than what any one party would prefer. It is arriving at a decision that results in the absence of sabotage or interference in an activity and allowing some amount of time for the issue to resolve itself. It requires involving all stakeholders, encouraging input, making problems visible and resolving them, and making decisions collaboratively. Even when consensus is achieved, the leader and organization must continuously work to ensure that "apparent" consensus bears out in the actions of the consensus stakeholders. Strategic leaders must be persuasive yet willing to compromise when necessary. Consensus building is different from directing or commanding. While strategic leaders, like organizational leaders, may

issue direct orders, such orders have less force in the complex strategic world. In working with peers, it is imperative to reach consensus. Peers will not respond to orders. In essence, the process of consensus building ensures that effective reasoning has taken place and that contentious issues have been resolved. This gains commitment to long-term goals that likely extend well into the future.

> *The hindsight of the historian can only reinforce Washington's conviction that the crucial battles of the war were in the arenas of public opinion. There can be no doubt that the British were totally outclassed in the warfare for the minds of men. It was in those mental arenas that the civilian-soldier George Washington shone the brightest. He kept forever in mind, as more radical statesmen of either the right or the left could not do, that the fundamental objective was not to foster division but to increase unity.[12]*

<div align="center">James Thomas Flexner</div>

Negotiation. As stated earlier, many relationships at the strategic level are lateral and without clear subordination. In many of these relationships strategic leaders must rely heavily on negotiating skills. Successful negotiation requires a range of interpersonal skills. Perhaps the most important is the ability to stand firm on nonnegotiable points while simultaneously communicating respect for other participants. Personal attributes underlying this ability are skill in listening, skill in diagnosing unspoken agendas, and the capacity to detach oneself personally from the negotiation process. The essence of successful negotiating is communicating a clear position on an issue while still conveying willingness to compromise.

Communication. Internal to the organization, strategic leaders communicate through a variety of direct and indirect means. Their actions and statements are always carefully analyzed. Observers are keenly sensitive to nuances of meaning. Effective communication within the organization is important to changing, or even maintaining, direction or policy. If change is desired, large organizations can be steered on a new course only very deliberately because of their inertia. When leaders attempt change through policy, regulation, or vision, their communications are interpreted at every level. Thus, care in choice of words is essential to ensuring the desired message is received.

External to the organization, strategic leaders communicate with Congress, government agencies, national political leaders, and their constituents. This is accomplished through a variety of means. Through writing, meetings, interviews for news media, or through public speaking engagements, strategic leaders communicate for the organization. This requires clarity of thought, direction, and process. Possessing these communicative attributes, coupled with a high degree of persuasiveness, provides the leader with the necessary tools to build support, build consensus, and negotiate successfully. Communicating in a brief, clear, and persuasive manner--a considerable

challenge when dealing in a vague, uncertain environment--is a competency strategic leaders must master.

> *Of more immediate concern to General Powell, however, was mounting press and congressional pressure for a 'peace dividend.' The Chairman wished to counter criticism that the Department's planning ignored changes in the world. Determined to convince the American people and the Congress of the need for continued U.S. engagement worldwide, General Powell had already begun publicly to articulate his strategic vision.*[13]

<div align="right">Lorna S. Jaffe</div>

SUMMARY.

Strategic leader competencies fall under the three rubrics of conceptual, technical, and interpersonal. These competencies are supported by a broad and rich frame of reference developed throughout the leader's life, and this enables the leader to deal with tremendously complex issues and events.

CHAPTER 6

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TASKS

The volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous nature of the environment tends to focus strategic leaders' attention on tasks associated with the present. However, if strategic leaders become enmeshed in short-term requirements, they cannot focus on the mid- and long-term tasks that only they have the authority to perform. Strategic leaders must concentrate their efforts on long-term tasks while simultaneously addressing short-term requirements in the context of the organization's long-term direction.

The Army's strategic leaders operate in at least two domains: The first is in the organization they command or lead. The second is the Army as an institution where they act similar to a board of directors.

General Frederick Franks, Former Commander, TRADOC

No single leader performs all the tasks associated with strategic-level leadership. Key strategic leadership tasks include the following major areas of responsibility:

- Provide vision.

- Shape culture.

- Build and shape joint, interagency, multi-national and intra-agency relationships.

- Build and shape national-level relationships.

- Represent the organization.

- Lead and manage change.

PROVIDE VISION.

A primary task of strategic leaders is to create a vision for their organizations. The vision, which sets the tone for the future of the organization, is the first step in the development of plans and strategies for change. For a military organization, creation of the vision should include future required operating capability by considering developing concepts of future battle, emerging threat capabilities and intentions, and technology advances.

The strategic leader's vision sets the long-term direction for an organization. The solutions to short-term requirements should be consistent with the articulated vision. A

strategic leader will institutionalize a strategy to implement the vision, including the selection and mentoring of subordinate leaders to carry on the strategic vision. The other key strategic leadership tasks should be related to communicating, developing, and implementing the strategic leader's vision.

SHAPE CULTURE.

The strategic leader must take steps to shape the organization's culture in a manner that supports and helps to communicate the vision. Tasks within this area include:

- Ensuring that organizational culture is built on values deemed essential by the members of the organization.

- Ensuring that stated values, as related to the strategic vision, are communicated throughout the organization and are internalized by its members.

- Building consensus within the organization to gain support for goals and objectives that support and implement the vision.

- Initiating structural changes and programs with distant completion dates that must be institutionalized.

- Ensuring an organizational commitment to train other leaders by picking the right people for the right jobs.

- Ensuring the reward structure reinforces desired values and behaviors.

BUILD AND SHAPE JOINT, INTERAGENCY, MULTI-NATIONAL AND INTRA-AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS.

Strategic leaders develop and manage joint and combined lateral relationships with strategic leaders of other Services, other countries, and government agencies in both peace and war. Major tasks include:

- Creating understanding and acceptance of organizational goals and national objectives and, in turn, understanding goals and objectives of other national forces.

- Creating consensus required to enable joint and combined action to be undertaken in pursuit of shared goals and objectives.

- Maintaining the knowledge and resource base that the organization requires to envision future desired outcomes and negotiating to make them happen.

Strategic leaders must actively participate in the development and sustainment of coalitions and alliances that are central to national strategy. Operating effectively in a multinational environment requires an international perspective. This task requires the strategic leader to understand the political, economic, and social factors of other countries.

Managing the organization to achieve joint obligations is also a major task. Fulfillment of this task requires the strategic leader's commitment to joint doctrine and joint operations. The strategic leader must view the organization from a joint perspective and design internal policy and organizational structure to meet joint requirements.

Strategic leaders must also articulate the roles and missions of the organization as they apply to the joint arena. This task requires an appreciation for the roles and missions of other Services and an understanding of their goals and objectives. The organization must be designed, equipped, trained, and maintained at a state of readiness that allows it to participate fully in joint and combined operations. This means that strategic leaders must understand and be sensitive to the cultures within which their fellow strategic leaders operate to effectively accomplish these tasks in the unified, joint, combined, and interagency arena.

Because the future portends increased emphasis on joint and combined operations in peace and war, the strategic leader's vision should identify and develop the organization's role in those arenas. Developing and sustaining coalitions, managing the organization to achieve joint obligations, and appreciating the roles and missions of other organizations in the joint arena are tasks that assist in implementing and achieving the strategic vision.

BUILD AND SHAPE NATIONAL-LEVEL RELATIONSHIPS.

The Congress shall have Power To ... provide for the common Defense...of the United States; ...To raise and support Armies,...To provide and maintain a Navy; To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces.

U.S. Const, Article I, Section 8

The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States.

U.S. Const., Article II, Section

Managing relationships between the organization as a component of the nation's total defense force and the overarching national policy apparatus is a major responsibility of strategic leaders. They use their national and international frames of reference to influence opinion and build consensus for organizational roles, missions, and objectives. They garner the support of diverse players to allow the vision to be achieved.

Requirements in this area include:

- Providing advice and counsel in national policy formulation.

- Interpreting national policy guidelines and directions.

- Planning for the maintenance of the military capability required to implement national policy in the joint, combined, and interagency arenas.

- Presenting the organization's requirements for resources and capabilities.

- Developing competitive strategies.

- Bridging the gap between political decisions made as part of the national security decision process and individuals that ultimately carry out those decisions.

Strategic leaders are responsible to ensure that the leadership of the organization understands national security policy. To accomplish this task, they formulate organizational programs and policy directives that accurately interpret and reflect national security objectives. These programs and directives prepare the organization to respond to all security requirements in either peace or war.

REPRESENT THE ORGANIZATION.

The strategic leader represents the organization in its relationships with the larger society. These responsibilities include:

- Regularly communicating with elements of the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches.

- Acting as a spokesperson for the organization with other Federal agencies, the media, influential people at the national level, and the public at large.

- Building and maintaining a network of information sources that can be used to understand and influence the environment.

To accomplish these tasks, strategic leaders' frames of reference must include a thorough understanding of our national culture, values, and interests and the political, economic, and military elements of national power. Strategic leaders must also be expert in the processes and procedures for developing national security objectives, national military strategy, and the development, deployment, and use of the nation's military forces.

An understanding of current and projected national and international situations is necessary for credibility in testimony to Congress and for interactions with executives of other Federal and state agencies and leaders, the media, and others who influence national attitudes toward the military. An awareness of the outlook, values, and priorities of political leaders and those who influence public opinion requires an understanding of American society. This perspective is necessary not only for public representation, but also for shaping the culture and values of the organization as an integral part of the total society.

> *In the arena in which the senior leader of the United States military exists, you've got to be persuasive with a variety of audiences. You've got to be persuasive to the internal audience of military people whom you serve. You've got to be persuasive with both major and minor bureaucrats in the Department of Defense and the Secretariat of your own service.... You've got to be persuasive in-house. Then you've got to be persuasive with the Congress and with the general public.*
>
> General Maxwell Thurman
> Former SOUTHCOM Commander

No organization operates in a vacuum. To achieve the organizational short-term objectives and to implement the long-term vision, strategic leaders must understand how the organization fits into the national security framework. They must also build consensus within that framework, and with the nation, on the role of the organization, fitting the role to their strategic vision.

The best method to achieve consensus in a multifaceted, pluralistic system is through *networking*. Informal contacts with knowledgeable, influential people holding key positions in other organizations and agencies assist in gathering the diverse support that allows the organization's vision to be achieved. Integrity and the power of personality are keys to accomplishing this consensus-building task. Strategic leaders who have the ability to persuade others, who know how and when to compromise without abandoning principles, and who gain and maintain the trust of other influential decision-makers will go a long way toward achieving the organization's objectives.

MANAGE CHANGE.

Strategic leaders proactively manage change through the processes associated with embedding their vision within the organization and shaping organizational culture to support the vision. Achieving the vision requires change to bridge the gap between the present and the future. External environmental factors, such as the changing nature of military threats, adjustments to national military strategy, legislation affecting DOD, changes in international alliances, and budget considerations, generate the need for change within the organization. Internally, improvements in warfighting doctrine, equipment modernization, resource adjustments resulting from technology advancements, and other factors also drive organizational change. These factors and changes may be so extensive that they periodically require that the strategic vision be revised.

> *I have conceived of many plans, but I was never free to execute one of them. For all that I held the rudder, and with a strong hand, the waves were always a good deal stronger.*
>
> Napoleon Bonaparte

> *If you don't like change, you will like irrelevance even less.*
>
> General Eric Shinseki
> Former Army Chief of Staff

DOD, Joint Staff, and Service-unique strategic-level planning systems provide strategic leaders the processes to manage change in the environment of strategic leadership. Decisions made within the Joint Strategic Planning System (JSPS); the Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES); the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution Process (PPBE); and the Services' systems integration processes provide purpose and direction to lower levels of the organization. Management of change at the strategic level includes the following:

- Identifying the necessary force capabilities to accomplish the national military strategy.

- Identifying and assigning strategic and operational roles and missions, including priorities for allocating resources.

- Preparing strategies and plans for the use of military forces across the operational continuum in the unified, joint, combined, and interagency arenas.

- Creating, resourcing, and sustaining organizational structures, systems, and processes, including essential C4I systems, force modernization programs, and requisite personnel and equipment.

- Developing and improving operating doctrine and the associated training methodologies to support the doctrine.

- Understanding and planning for second- and third-order effects of actions to implement change.

- Maintaining effective leader development programs and other human resources programs.

Decision-making at the strategic level almost always requires major resource commitments that cannot easily be reversed. Continual analysis of requirements, capabilities, and risks associated with capability shortfalls is essential to the decision-making process. Strategic leaders rely on timely, accurate feedback to prevent making decisions based on incomplete or inadequate information. Systems must be designed to be top-driven and bottom-fed. Purpose, direction, and motivation are provided from the top, while information and recommendations flow upward from within the organization.

The management of change demands that strategic leaders focus primarily on future mid- and long-range issues while dealing with current short-term requirements. This means that strategic leaders must empower subordinate echelons to implement the strategies and policies within the established framework. Effective, systematic feedback is essential to provide strategic leaders information on which to judge the progress and ultimate results of desired changes within the organization.

Empowering subordinate leaders in this fashion helps to perpetuate and implement the strategic vision. Because short-term solutions should be consistent with the long-term vision, subordinates must understand and internalize the vision to implement strategies and policies. Because the tenure of any individual strategic leader is limited, subordinate leaders must be selected, mentored, and trained to carry on the vision. The history of the United States Army has been built on great leaders who produced great subordinates.

> *Great leaders produce great subordinates who, in turn, become great leaders in their own time. Our Army has built its reputation on this process. Winfield Scott developed a generation of superb officers: Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, William T. Sherman, and Thomas J. Jackson, to name just a few. George C. Marshall learned leadership from John J. Pershing, and Marshall's followers became great captains themselves: Dwight D. Eisenhower, Omar N. Bradley, George S. Patton, Jr., and Matthew B. Ridgway among them. Scott, Pershing, and Marshall each taught their subordinates their profession; and, more importantly, they gave them room to grow.*
>
> General Gordon R. Sullivan

SUMMARY.

Strategic leaders have the challenge and responsibility to lead large, complex organizations which change very slowly, with great expenditure of energy. The tasks required to meet this challenge begin with the strategic leader providing a vision to the organization. With this vision and well-articulated organizational values, strategic leaders then influence and shape their organization's culture. They also lead the organization on a daily basis, ensuring it meets all requirements in the unified, joint, combined, and interagency arenas. This task requires strategic leaders to deal with short-term challenges, including operational contingencies, consistent with mid- and long-term objectives. They also manage the organization's relationships with all national-level agencies and organizations, representing the organization before Congress, the media, and other influential opinion groups. The objective is to gain consensus among these various groups and organizations in support of the roles and missions, goals, and objectives of the organization. Such consensus is essential to achieving the organization's vision in the strategic environment. Finally, by facilitating the management of change, strategic leaders guide the organization today while molding it to meet tomorrow's challenges.

CHAPTER 7

THE STRATEGIC LEADER AND
THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF COMBAT

The trained American possesses qualities that are almost unique. Because of his initiative and resourcefulness, his adaptability to change and his readiness to resort to the expedient, he becomes, when he has attained a proficiency in all the normal techniques of battle, a formidable soldier. Yet even he has his limits; the preservation of his individual and collective strength is one of the greatest responsibilities of leadership.[14]

General Dwight D. Eisenhower

No matter how involved strategic leaders may become in working to further their vision for the Army, they must always be mindful that they are leaders of an organization whose fundamental purpose is to serve the national interest which can involve committing its personnel to the violence of battle. The phenomenon of human combat is like no other activity in which mankind engages. Within the crucible of armed conflict, those who participate are dramatically affected by the fear of death or maiming, the trauma of participating in and witnessing violent death and destruction, the grief from the loss of comrades, and the deprivation of even the simplest of life's needs.

The psychological impact of battle and the prospect of battle have a tremendous influence upon the performance of individuals and of the units of which they are members.   Individuals and units that are properly conditioned, supported, and trained can minimize the adverse effects of facing and participating in sustained combat. Unfortunately, the costs of creating and sustaining the institutional processes necessary to conserve the psychological capacity of our Army to function effectively in battle often have little perceived value in the day-to-day administration and training of the force in peacetime. Thus, it is essential that strategic leaders have an appreciation for the human dimension of combat, so that they will stop external and internal influences from constricting those policies and associated resources dedicated to enhancing the psychological staying power of our Army in battle. Too often and with the best of intentions, this psychological staying power is undermined in the quest for administrative efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and peacetime mission focus.

While technology has helped the Army become more lethal and effective, individual soldiers still do the fighting…technology has to enhance the human dimension…Warfare fundamentally is a human endeavor. It's a test of wills. It's a test of things deep within us.

General Peter J. Schoomaker,
Army Chief of Staff

A fundamental understanding of this human dimension can only be achieved through personal study and contemplation. Although such appreciation and understanding can result from personal combat experience, there is no level of personal experience that cannot be significantly reinforced with an analysis of the experiences of others.

Strategic leaders such as Generals Eisenhower and Arnold possessed no personal experience in the human dimension of combat before they assumed significant strategic leader responsibilities at the outset of World War II. Yet both of these distinguished strategic leaders had by that time achieved an understanding of this dimension of warfare through years of reading and reflecting upon the commentaries of those who wrote of such experiences. Every decision of each of these two strategic leaders was made only after consideration of the consequences of the decision on the soldiers and airmen who bore the brunt of battle. Each of these leaders understood the human dynamics of combat and its relationship to the psychological staying power of the forces they led.

Achieving an understanding of the human dimension of combat is a continuing professional commitment of any Army leader, but most especially the leader at the strategic level. It is a subject area that is as rich and as complex as any quest for an understanding of human nature. As such, it encompasses such diverse topics as: the value system of a society and its military; how individual values are influenced or changed; the psychological and physical manifestations of combat stress; the influences of training and conditioning to prevent or ameliorate the stress of combat; the dynamics of unit performance and cohesion; and numerous other related topics.

In the best of all worlds, leaders will achieve the strategic level without personal experience in the human dimension of combat, because our nation is blessed with a long period of peaceful engagement. But even in the best of worlds, strategic leaders must possess a fundamental appreciation for this dimension of warfare for the very reason that our Army must always be prepared to commit its forces to combat to protect our national interests. Every decision that Army strategic leaders make, now or in the future, must be made with consideration of the impact of that decision on the psychological staying power of our soldiers and units in battle. To permit our Army to lose the proper focus on psychological readiness for sustained combat is to break faith with those soldiers who will commit themselves in current and future conflicts.

APPENDIX A

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

On December 21, 2001, the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) tasked the U.S. Army War College (USAWC) to identify the strategic leader skill sets for officers required in the post-September 11th environment . A research group of four students and a faculty advisor completed the following report after extensive research and analysis. Research visits conducted by the team included the Center for Army Leadership, the Objective Force Task Force office, the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, U.S. Army Cadet Command, the U.S. Military Academy, Training and Doctrine Command headquarters and schools, and the leader development offices in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 and G-3. Additionally, the group consulted with leader development experts in organizations such as the Center for Creative Leadership, Bristol-Myers Squibb, and Strategic Leadership Solutions.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP.

The search for strategic leader competencies (knowledge, skills, attributes, and abilities) is a natural progression of the research in the field of leadership. In the late 1980s, some social science researchers began to question whether leadership actually made a difference in organizations while others suggested that perhaps the study of leadership had reached its nadir. Rather than disappearing, however, the study of leadership took on new energy with an emphasis on leadership of organizations, rather than the traditional leadership approaches that focused on face-to-face interaction at lower levels. Studies of transformational leadership, organizational culture, visionary leadership, organizational change, and charismatic leaders re-invigorated the field of leadership. Thus, the notion of *strategic* leadership was introduced. While lists of leadership competencies were very popular in the 1980s, the most recent literature distills strategic leadership to a few key skills and competencies, or a process.

In 1991, the U.S. Army War College hosted a conference on the fledgling field of strategic leadership. At that conference, strategic leadership aspects were based on Jaques's Stratified Systems Theory (SST). SST essentially argues that there are critical tasks that must be performed by leaders in effective organizations. At each higher level in an organization, these tasks become increasingly complex and qualitatively different. Consequently, leaders at the strategic level must have higher levels of cognitive complexity– the ability to deal with abstract, longer timeframe concepts. The influence of SST on the War College (and Army) is evident with the emphasis on *cognitive complexity* that permeates much of the strategic leadership instruction.

In its *Strategic Leadership Primer,* 1998 Edition, the War College provided a list of strategic leader competencies using the Be, Know, Do typology. The list is comprehensive and appears to capture every possible aspect of leadership.

BE (Disposition - values, attributes):

- The Values Champion- the standard bearer; beyond reproach
- Master of the Strategic Art- ends, ways, means
- Quintessential Student of History
- Comfortable with Complexity
- High Personal Stamina- physical, mental, stress management
- Skilled Diplomat
- Possesses Intellectual Sophistication- alternative frames of reference, pattern recognition, and able to see 2d, 3rd, and 4th-order effects

KNOW (Disposition - skills):

Conceptual
- Envisioning- anticipating the future, proactive thinking - practices critical, creative, reflective thinking
- Frame of Reference Development- including systems understanding, scanning, pattern recognition
- Problem Management- competing issues, no right answers, ability to recognize and ignore irrelevant issues
- Critical Self-Examination
- Critical, Reflective Thought
- Effective within Environment of Complexity
- Skillful Formulation of Ends, Ways, Means

Interpersonal
- Communication- to a much broader audience; negotiations, consensus-building across a variety of stakeholders; systems knowledge; sophisticated persuasion skills
- Inspires Others to Act
- Organizational Representation- to internal and external audiences/ stakeholders
- Skillful Coordination of Ends, Ways, Means
- Master of Command and Peer Leadership

Technical
- Systems Understanding- political, economic, cultural, logistical, force management, and joint/combined interrelationships, etc.
- Recognizes and Understands Interdependencies - systems, decisions, organizations, etc.
- Information-age Technological Awareness - next generation awareness, sophisticated time/space selection
- Skillful Application of Ends, Ways, Means

DO (Action - influencing, operating, and improving)

- Provide for the Future- visioning (long-term focus, time span, perspective)
- Initiate of Policy and Directive
- Shape the Culture- Values-based organization, leverage diversity, understanding and accepting differences, multiple perspectives
- Teach and Mentor the Strategic Art
- Manage Joint/Combined and Interagency Relationships
- Manage National-Level Relationships
- Represent the Organization
- Leverage Technology
- Lead and Manage Change- creating and building "learning organizations"
- Build Teams and Consensus at Strategic Level (can't dictate action at this level)- co-opting, coalition building, negotiating, etc.
- Practice the Strategic Art- allocates resources; develops and executes strategic plans derived from the inter-agency process

Similarly, in FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*, the Army's doctrinal leadership manual, the skills and actions required of strategic leaders are a cumulative list of forty-one competencies addressing the direct, organizational, and strategic levels. Twenty-one competencies are provided for the strategic level alone:

FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*
  Strategic Level Skills and Actions
- Communicating
- Using dialogue
- Negotiating
- Achieving consensus
- Building staffs
- Envisioning
- Developing frames of reference
- Strategic art
- Motivating
- Leveraging technology
- Executing
- Communicating a vision
- Decision making
- Leading change
- Strategic planning
- Learning
- Strategic assessing
- Translating political goals into military objectives
- Building
- Dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity

In one sense, the War College and FM 22-100 lists of strategic leader competencies are *too* comprehensive. At the individual level, it is difficult to assess one's leadership ability when the lists suggest that a strategic leader must be, know, and do just about everything. At the institutional level, the lack of parsimony makes it difficult to focus an institution's attention and resources on leader development when such a broad array of competencies is advocated. Hence, the task of identifying the competencies of future strategic leaders becomes one of reducing the lists to a few *metacompetencies* that will prove useful in: a) directing leader development efforts in the process of producing leaders with strategic leader capability, and b) facilitating self-assessment by officers of their strategic leader capability.

Looking across the existing literature on strategic leadership, the current lists of Army strategic leader competencies, and the environment of the future force, six metacompetencies were derived: *identity, mental agility, cross-cultural savvy, interpersonal maturity, world-class warrior*, and *professional astuteness*. Before addressing each metacompetency, it should be noted that concentrating on just six metacompetencies does provide focus, but there are some associated disadvantages. First, some skills and abilities are not explicitly described by a metacompetency label. For example, strategic leaders need to be politically savvy – knowing when to compromise, understanding that many strategic decisions are not black and white, and knowing what is best in the long run for the Nation and the Army. This ability is captured in the *professional astuteness* metacompetency description, but is not obvious in the words *professional astuteness*. Understanding the meaning and intent behind each metacompetency is much more important than creating a catchy mnemonic containing the first letter of each of the six labels. Similarly, the metacompetency labels may be misinterpreted if separated from their descriptions. For example, *cross-cultural savvy* includes the ability to work across organizational boundaries, but the metacompetency can be narrowly misinterpreted to refer to working only across national boundaries. In other words, the six metacompetency labels were not developed as a stand-alone list. The concepts behind the labels, not the labels themselves, are the focal points for leader development and assessment.

The following section describes each of the six metacompetencies. This report is not intended to be an exhaustive explanation of strategic leadership – the civilian literature does that adequately. It is also not intended as a blueprint to overhaul the Army's entire leader development system. Instead, this report contrasts the future environment with the current status of strategic leader development and suggests some aiming points for leader development efforts.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP METACOMPETENCIES

Identity. This metacompetency is derived from the work of Douglas Hall who heavily influenced the conclusions of the Army Training and Leader Development Panel-Officer (ATLD Panel). According to Hall, identity is "the ability to gather self- feedback, to form accurate self-perceptions, and to change one's self-concept as appropriate."[15]

The ATLD describes *self-awareness*, and describes it as the ability to understand how to assess abilities, know strengths and weaknesses in the operational environment, and learn how to correct those weaknesses. The metacompetency of *identity* moves beyond simply knowing one's strengths and weaknesses as connoted by self-awareness. It includes the understanding of one's self-concept as an officer in the Army. Identity also includes an understanding of one's values and how they match up to the values of the Army. Identity implies maturation beyond self-awareness as officers come to an understanding of who they are, not just how well they do things.

Identity, as opposed to self-awareness, also brings in aspects of development over a career. As senior leaders gain responsibility, they focus less on their own contributions and more on the accomplishments of others. The metacompetency of identity acknowledges that as an officer develops strategic leadership capability, his role extends beyond personal contributions and shifts to serving as a catalyst for success for subordinates.

Mental agility. In addition to self-awareness, the ATLD report recommends that the Army focus on developing the enduring competency of *adaptability* that includes the predisposition and readiness to scan and recognize changes in the environment; to determine what is new and what must be learned to be effective; and the willingness to modify to a given situation. *Mental agility* builds on the ability to scan and adjust learning based on the environment, and brings aspects of cognitive complexity, improvisation, and lightness found in the strategic leadership literature. Strategic leaders operate in an environment of ambiguity and uncertainty. Typical strategic situations lack structure, are open to varying interpretations, and potentially pertinent information is often far flung, elusive, cryptic, or even contradictory. Mentally agile strategic leaders possess the requisite cognitive skills to navigate in this milieu and be adaptable enough to alter their actions and those of their organizations to function in this complex environment.

From a cognitive perspective, strategic leaders must learn how to scan the environment, understand their world from a systems perspective, and eventually envision different futures and directions for their organization. Scanning involves a constant search for information that affects current assumptions, along with the future of the organization. Officers with mentally agility search for more information and spend more time interpreting it. They also analyze large amounts of sometimes conflicting information and try to understand why things happen and identify possible courses of action to affect events. Mentally agile leaders know which factors really matter in the big picture; they identify root causes quickly, display a keen sense of priority, relevance and significance, and integrate information from a variety of sources while detecting trends, associations, and cause-effect relationships. Just as important, mentally agile leaders translate complex situations into simple, meaningful explanations that others can grasp.

Mentally agile leaders efficiently gather and process relevant information in order to process it from a systems perspective and then envision feasible futures within increasingly longer time horizons. From a systems perspective, they challenge

assumptions, facilitate constructive dissent, and analyze second- and third-order consequences of their decisions. Mentally agile leaders are comfortable making important decisions with only part of the information available. More importantly, they know when to act and when to experiment to validate beliefs or assumptions. Once mentally agile strategic leaders have scanned the environment, processed information from a systems perspective, and envisioned the future effect of that information on the organization, they then adapt and implement learning mechanisms to alter the processes, structure, and behaviors of their organization to accommodate their envisioned future.

Cross-cultural savvy. With the increasing frequency of coalition warfare and an emphasis on theater security cooperation, the necessity for *cross-cultural savvy* is obvious. The Army's future leaders clearly need to be well versed in interacting with cultures outside the U.S. borders. Cross-cultural savvy, however, refers to more than just the ability to work with non-U.S. militaries. The metacompetency, cross-cultural savvy, includes the ability to understand cultures beyond one's organizational, economic, religious, societal, geographical, and political boundaries. A strategic leader with cross-cultural savvy is comfortable interacting with and leading joint, international, interagency, or inter-organizational entities. Future strategic leaders must be able to work with a diverse group of people and organizations ranging from 24-year-old congressional staffers, to Northern Alliance warlords, to representatives from non-governmental organizations.

While cross-cultural skills have been desirable in the past, they will be even more critical for future strategic leaders due to several factors. First, globalization has vastly increased interaction with other nations. Second, the global war on terrorism is illustrating that the Army must coordinate closely with other services, agencies, and organizations in the new national security environment. Third, the Army has traditionally been accused of being somewhat inept in its dealings with Congress and the media. As societal exposure to the military decreases, it becomes increasingly important for Army officers to tell the Army story to those outside the Army culture. Finally, although the U.S. remains the world's only superpower, unilateral military action is becoming less common. Coalitions will continue to be vital to the security strategy.

Cross-cultural savvy implies that an officer can see perspectives outside his or her own boundaries. It does not imply, however, that the officer abandons the Army or U.S. culture in pursuit of a relativistic worldview. Instead, the future strategic leader is grounded in National and Army values, but is also able to anticipate and understand the values, assumptions, and norms of other groups, organizations, and nations.

Interpersonal maturity. Many of the interpersonal skills required of strategic leaders are basically the same attributes used at the organizational level applied at a higher level. For example, much like a junior leader, strategic leaders are expected to display compassion when dealing with subordinates on sensitive issues. However, there are several interpersonal skills that, although based on direct and organizational leadership characteristics, are qualitatively different at the strategic level. Strategic

leaders must possess an *interpersonal maturity* that goes beyond face-to-face leadership. Strategic leaders devote far more of their time dealing with outside organizations and leaders of other services, agencies, and nations. The power relationship between the strategic leader and individuals from these entities is markedly different than the power relationship typically experienced at the direct and organizational level.

Several interpersonal skills become very important at this level. Most important among these is empowerment. Strategic leaders need to share power with their subordinates, peers, and constituents. They must have the willingness and ability to involve others and elicit their participation based on the subordinate's knowledge and skills because tasks will be too complex and information too widely distributed for leaders to solve problems on their own. An interpersonally mature strategic leader needs to be persuasive and rely less on fiat, *asking* others to join in rather than telling them. Empowerment implies that the leader is a good listener; leadership at the strategic level is as much collaboration as it is authoritative leadership. Interpersonal maturity implies that strategic leaders do not feel compelled to do all the talking and resist imposing a solution on others. Because of the unique power relationships, the skills of consensus building and negotiation rise to the top of a strategic leader's interpersonal maturity. Consensus building is a complicated process based on effective reasoning and logic that may take place over an extended period. Peers, outside agencies, foreign governments, and other services will not necessarily respond to orders. In essence, the process of consensus building is insurance that effective reasoning has taken place and that contentious issues have been resolved. As part of this process, or even separate, strategic leaders will find that they need to understand the art of negotiation. Again, because many relationships at the strategic level are lateral and without clear subordination, leaders will find themselves in difficult situations where success rests in their ability to negotiate an agreeable solution.

Interpersonal maturity also includes the ability of officers to analyze, challenge, and change an organization's culture to align it with the ever changing outside environment. Strategic leaders must therefore have skills in analyzing cultural assumptions, identifying functional and dysfunctional assumptions, and evolving processes that enlarge the culture by building on its strengths and functional elements. Strategic leaders then need to proactively manage change through the processes associated with embedding their vision within the organization and shaping organizational culture to support the vision. Noel Tichy posits, "As long as a culture fits the external environment, it succeeds, but when the external realities change, the culture has to change as well…at certain critical stages, radical cultural shifts are needed, and without leadership, they just don't happen."[16]

Lastly, strategic leaders must have the interpersonal maturity to take responsibility for the development of the Army's future strategic leaders. Therefore, strategic leaders need to teach, coach, and mentor, while creating an environment where other leaders may do the same. Interpersonal maturity includes the ability to ensure leader development does not get neglected in the pursuit of everyday mission accomplishment.

World-class warrior. This is the simplest and most understandable of the six strategic leadership metacompetencies. As a *world-class warrior*, strategic leaders move beyond tactical and operational competence in the employment of the future force. They understand the entire spectrum of operations at the strategic level to include theater strategy; campaign strategy; joint, interagency, and multinational operations; and the use of all the elements of national power and technology in the execution of national security strategy.

Professional astuteness. In their comprehensive study of the Army profession, Don Snider and Gayle Watkins arrive at an important conclusion concerning the current officer corps:

> *The Army's bureaucratic nature outweighs and compromises its professional nature. This is true in practice, but, of greater importance, it is regarded as true in the minds of the officer corps. Officers do not share a common understanding of the Army profession, and many of them accept the pervasiveness of bureaucratic norms and behaviors as natural and appropriate.*[17]

Strategic leaders who are *professionally astute* understand that they are no longer merely members of a profession, but leaders in the profession as the Army serves the Nation. They see the need to develop the future leaders of the profession, work with stakeholders, and communicate this responsibility to future leaders of the profession. In his recent book, *Good to Great*, Jim Collins talks about Level 5 leaders – leaders who can transform a company. He writes, "Level 5 leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great company. It's not that Level 5 leaders have no ego or self- interest. Indeed, they are incredibly ambitious - but their ambition is first and foremost for the institution, not themselves."[18] In contrast, Level 4 leaders are often effective and charismatic, yet the company falls apart after they leave since Level 4 leaders put their personal success and egos ahead of institutional success.

The future force will need strategic leaders who are Level 5 leaders – leaders who take responsibility for the Army as a profession. Leaders with professional astuteness get the mission accomplished, but they also have the insight to do what is best for the profession and Nation. This may include having political savvy, knowing when to compromise, or understanding the many constituents that the Army serves. Additionally, strategic leaders with professional astuteness seek to ensure the officer corps maintains its expertise in national defense as well as adhering to a professional ethic. Professional astuteness is a strategic leadership competency that insures that the Army deliberately takes the steps to insure the Army remains a profession, not merely a job, organization, bureaucracy, or occupation.

CONCLUSIONS.

In both the civilian and military literature, there is a plethora of material discussing strategic leadership and strategic leader competencies. Part of the difficulty encountered

by anyone desiring to adjust leader development or education efforts is the broad array of competencies presented in the literature. This section combines what is known about strategic leadership competencies and integrates it with the characteristics of the officer corps and the future force environment. The result is a list of six metacompetencies for strategic leadership.

ENDNOTES

1 Richard Chilcoat, "*Strategic Art: The New Discipline for 21st Century Leaders,* p. ii.

2 John Gardner, *On Leadership,* p. 98.

3 John Lewis Gaddis, "And Now This: Lessons from the Old Era for the New One, in Strobe Talbott and Nayan Chanda, eds., *The Age of Terror: America and the World After September 11,* p. 17.

4 Ashton Carter, John Deutch, and Philip Zelikow, "Catastrophic Terrorism: Tackling the New Danger," *Foreign Affairs*, p. 81.

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