Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

Personal Profile System

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Introduction to Personal Profile System

The following information was extracted from several sources: Alessandra's and O'Conner's book, The Platinum Rule; Tom Ritchey's book, I'm Stuck, You're Stuck; and the Inscape Publishing DiSC® Classic Personal Profile System 2800 Manual.

How good are you at making decisions and being in control? How well do you express yourself through social settings and communication? How methodical are you? Are you slow and steady? Do you embrace or despise change? How well do you adapt to the needs of others and the "house" rules? Have you ever thought to yourself, "Why do I react the way I do?", "Why does she behave differently at work?", or "Why am I successful at one task but experience extreme difficulty with another?"

The Personal Profile System (PPS) is an instrument to help you learn more about these types of behaviors. From this lesson, you will learn a little about the history of the PPS and learn how to read your own profile and the profile of others. You will also learn how to lead people and teams more effectively and how to create working environments that motivate subordinates. With all that in mind, let us take a brief look at the history of DiSC® and the PPS.

Brief History

The DiSC® Model used in the PPS has a long history. In the 1920s, the American psychologist William Moulton Marston was "interested in how normal people felt and behaved as they interacted with the world around them. Based on his pioneering research, Marston developed a model of behavior that identified four distinct behavioral dimensions."[1]

In his book, *Emotions of Normal People*, Marston identified these dimensions as Compliance, Dominance, Inducement and Submission. Then, in 1958, Dr. John G. Geier, Director of Behavioral Sciences, University of Minnesota developed the DiSC Personal Profile System. Dr. Geier expanded on Marston's thoughts and further explained human personality through the use of DISC, development of the PPS, and the integration of temperament, character and behavior. Since that time, the PPS has grown and evolved into an instrument that is recognized and used around the world. (*You can learn more at http://www.geierlearning.com*). Since you will complete the instrument in the SNCO Academy, let's look at that next.

Personal Profile System

The value of the PPS is learning more about how you feel and behave in unique situations. The instrument will help you accomplish the following:

- identify and understand your DiSC® Dimension of Behavior
- learn how your behavior impacts your effectiveness
- discover your behavioral strengths
- value differences in others
- explore ways to adapt your behavior to meet the needs of the situation
- enhance individual performance and the performance of a team

- develop a willingness to accept others and adapt to their needs
- reduce conflict and distress
- improve communication skills

Did you recognize "behavior" as the common bond among the items on this list? At this point in your career, you probably recognize that behavior is flexible and dynamic; it can change, be adapted, and is situation-specific.

However, our purpose in using the PPS is not to change your behavior or the behavior of your Airmen. Instead, we use the PPS to help raise your awareness about your own strengths and limitations as well as the strengths and limitations of your subordinates. Before moving on, you should know that the DiSC® is based on perception and so it makes sense that, as perceptions change, behavior may change too.

DiSC® Dimensions of Behavior Model

DiSC® describes how people behave as they respond to their environment. This is where perceptions come into play. DiSC® is about understanding, accepting, and respecting differences and managing those differences. Whenever we have a difference of opinion, use different procedures for handling the same activity, or have different solutions to the same problem, we usually experience conflict. These differences appear to be the source of most conflict because we tend to believe that one person must be wrong for the other to be right. However, this thinking is flawed; differences are just differences. DiSC® is not a personality test. It neither measures nor assesses personality, nor reveals personality "types." What the DiSC® does is reveal how people respond to their environment. DiSC® is situational. It measures thoughts, feelings, and behaviors as we respond to a particular situation. With this in mind, let's take a closer look at the Four DiSC® Dimensions of Behavior.

Four DiSC Dimensions of Behavior

To get started, the PPS determines behavior over a range of four categories, referred to as Dimensions of Behavior in your PPS instrument. These dimensions are *Dominance*, *Influence*, *Steadiness*, and *Conscientiousness*. In class, you will plot your behavioral tendencies toward each of these dimensions on graphs I, II, and III. The highest point on Graph III indicates your primary tendency and the second highest point indicates your secondary tendency. In this lesson, we focus on all four dimensions because all four dimensions work together in human behavior. Now that you know some of the general information about PPS, let's look at the dimensions and components starting with the "D" in DiSC®.

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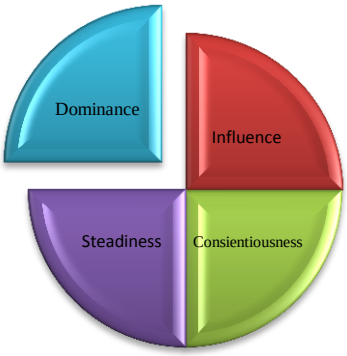
DOMINANCE



The first PPS dimension is dominance (the "D" in the DiSC®). People who operate out of this dimension focus on "shaping the environment by overcoming opposition to accomplish results."

- **This person's tendencies include:** getting immediate results, causing action, accepting challenges, making quick decisions, questioning the status quo, taking authority, managing trouble, and solving problems.
- **This person desires an environment that includes:** power and authority, prestige and challenge, opportunities for individual accomplishments, a wide scope of operations, direct questions, opportunities for advancement, freedom from controls and supervision, and many new and varied activities.
- **This person needs others who:** weigh the pros and cons, calculate risks, use caution, create a predictable environment, research facts, deliberate before deciding, and recognize the needs of others.
- **To be more effective, this person needs:** to receive difficult assignments, to understand they need people, to base techniques on practical experience, to receive an occasional shock, to identify with a group, to verbalize reasons for conclusions, to be aware of existing sanctions, to pace self and to relax more.

If they were playing an on-line video game, they would need to be the one "in charge" since they desire power and authority. They would be the one leading the charge down the field or down the dark alley. The value of people with this profile is that they naturally want to be the leader. They are an important part of the team because they bring the desire to be in charge (versus being influential, steady, or conscientious as their primary profile). If you do not consider that the person with this profile desires to be in charge, you may miss an important motivational opportunity with them. As a SNCO, it is important to understand those with this "D" profile so that you can set them up for success in whatever position you put them in (by pointing out the things that will motivate them and also the things in the job that they will need to be careful of in the job or tasking).

The information in each of the four sections of the dominance block paints a good picture of the "D" dimension. However, we are not just one dimension, but a combination of all. Someone with a high "D" on Graph III might fit everything in the dominance block. On the other hand, for someone with a low "D" most of the information in the dominance block may not apply. Because we are a combination of all four dimensions, let us continue with the *Influence* dimension.

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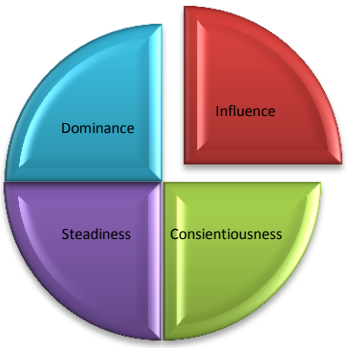
INFLUENCE



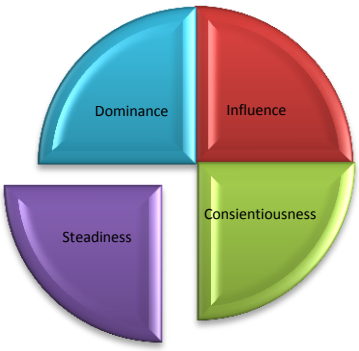
The second dimension of PPS is influence. People who operate out of this dimension focus on "shaping the environment by influencing or persuading others."

- **This person's tendencies include:** contacting people, making a favorable impression, being articulate, creating a motivating environment, generating enthusiasm, entertaining people, viewing people and situations with optimism, and participating in a group.
- **This person desires an environment that includes:** popularity and social recognition, public recognition of ability, freedom of expression, group activities outside of job, democratic relationships, freedom from control and detail, opportunities to verbalize proposals, coaching and counseling, and favorable working conditions.
- **This person needs others who:** concentrate on the task, seek facts, speak directly, respect sincerity, develop systematic approaches, prefer to deal with things instead of people, take a logical approach, and demonstrate individual follow-through.
- **To be more effective, this person needs:** to control time (if "D" or "S" is low), to make objective decisions, to use hands-on management, to be more realistic when appraising others, to make priorities and deadlines, to be more firm with others (if "D" is low).

These people like people. If they were playing an on-line video game, they would be the one "socializing" with others and be a lot of fun to be around.

If you spent time talking about the PPS instrument to your peers or you volunteered to be flight's social director, then you may be a high "I." Now that you know about the "i" in the DiSC® , let's look at the next dimension of PPS…the "S".

STEADINESS



The third dimension of PPS is steadiness. People who operate out of this dimension focus on "cooperating with others within existing circumstances to carry out the task."

- **This person's tendencies include:** performing in a consistent, predictable manner, demonstrating patience, developing specialized skills, helping others, showing loyalty, being a good listener, calming excited people, creating a stable and harmonious work environment.
- **This person desires an environment that includes:** maintenance of the status quo unless given reasons for change, predictable routines, credit for work accomplished, minimal work infringement on home life, sincere appreciation, identification with a group, standard operating procedures, and minimal conflict.

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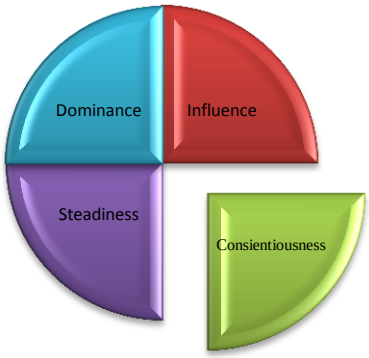
- **This person needs others who:** react quickly to unexpected change, stretch toward the challenges of accepted tasks, become involved in more than one thing, are self-promoting, apply pressure on others, work comfortably in an unpredictable environment, help to prioritize work, and are flexible in work procedures.
- **To be more effective, this person needs:** to be conditioned prior to change, to validate self-worth, to know how personal effort contributes to the group effort, to have colleagues of similar competence and sincerity, to know task guidelines, and to have creativity encouraged.

These people are very steady. They would want to play the on-line video game that has been around for a while (versus the new one) as they do not like change. They like the routine and steady approach. If this is you, you probably had a strong desire to help others finish their PPS instrument. Now that you know about the "S" in the DiSC® , let's look at the next dimension of PPS…the "C".

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

The fourth dimension of PPS is conscientiousness. People who operate out of this dimension focus on "working conscientiously within existing circumstances to ensure quality and accuracy."



- **This person's tendencies include:** adhering to key directives and standards, concentrating on key details, thinking analytically, weighing pros and cons, being diplomatic with people, using subtle or indirect approaches to conflict, checking for accuracy, analyzing performance critically, and using a systematic approach to situations or activities.
- **This person desires an environment that includes:** clearly defined performance expectations, values of quality and accuracy, a reserved and business-like atmosphere, opportunities to demonstrate expertise, control over factors that affect their performance, opportunities to ask "why" questions, recognition for specific skills and accomplishments.
- **This person needs others who:** delegate important tasks, make quick decisions, use policies only as guidelines, compromise with the opposition, state unpopular positions, initiate and facilitate discussions, encourage teamwork.
- **To be more effective, this person needs:** to have time to plan carefully, to know exact job descriptions and performance objectives, to schedule performance appraisals, to receive specific feedback on performance, to respect people's personal worth as much as their accomplishments, and to develop tolerance for conflict.

These people like to do things by the book and expect others to do the same. If they were playing an on-line video game, they would be the one who would become upset if others on their team did not follow the pre-established rules.

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If this is you, you probably use a straight edge (like your ID card or credit card) to connect the dots on your graphs. If someone in the flight room keeps all the papers on the bulletin board nice and straight, he/she is probably a high "C." Like all the other dimensions, study the behavioral tendencies of the "C" to learn what they are good at and to learn what motivates them.

Now that you know about the conscientiousness dimension and component of PPS, let's review what we've learned.

In this section, you learned about the PPS Dimensions and the PPS Components. Some people focus on shaping the environment by overcoming opposition to accomplish results which you now know is the dimension of dominance. Others focus on shaping the environment by influencing or persuading others which you know is the dimension of influence. Some people focus on cooperating with others within existing circumstances to carry out the task which is the dimension of steadiness. And yet others focus on working conscientiously within existing circumstances to ensure quality and accuracy.

You also learned about the components of each dimension, which includes the tendencies, desires, needs, and strategies. Tendencies include things like getting immediate results for the D, making a favorable impression for the i, showing loyalty for the S, and thinking analytically for the C. What do you think about the environment each of the dimensions desire (like power and authority for the D, popularity and social recognition for the i, predictable routines for the S, and values of quality and accuracy for the C)? Can you see why because of their tendencies the D would need others that weigh the pros and cons?...Why the i would need others that concentrate on the task?...Why the S would need others that react quickly to unexpected change?...or why the C would need others that make quick decisions? Also the strategies (what they need to be more effective) includes things like giving the D the difficult assignments, to make priorities and deadlines for the i, to condition the S prior to change, and to help the C develop tolerance for conflict. With this basic knowledge, you should now be able to understand what motivates yourself and others based on your behavioral tendencies. Also, you should understand why certain environments motivate some (but not others) and adapt your communication to meet the needs of your subordinate's behavioral tendencies. Applied appropriately, you can now increase your effectiveness with your subordinates.

Manage Performance

Manage (Self)

If you complete the PPS instrument while imagining yourself in your work environment, the high points on your graph would represent your typical behavior in that environment. If you place yourself in a different environment, say, for example, on a dining-in committee, your profile may come out differently. Second, it is important to realize that human behavior is situational and that an effective leader can be a "D, I, S, or C." Along these same lines, effective leaders know how to use the PPS to manage performance.

The ultimate goal of understanding your behavioral style is to become self-managing. Knowing you have different sources of motivation and different goals based on your natural behavioral style can help you create positive situations for yourself.

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Take a hard look at your current work environment. Are you happy? Is there a lot of distress associated with your work place? In order to achieve optimal performance you need to understand yourself and understand the positive and negative factors that affect your performance. Just remember, what makes you most effective in one situation may not work well in a different situation.

What make us different from each other are our combination of behavioral tendencies and the intensity of each behavior. We tend to use those behavioral tendencies with the strongest intensity more frequently. Therefore, it is critical for you to remember people have all four behavioral tendencies…NEVER make the mistake of labeling yourself or others as just a "D" or just an "I." In other words…Never, ever pigeon hole people. Doing so not only significantly reduces your effectiveness, it hinders your ability to tap into their strengths and to help them overcome their limitations.

Understanding your own Dimension of Behavior is important because it helps you learn how to best adapt your behavior to meet the needs of other people and the situation. In addition, understanding your own Dimension of Behavior will help you identify other people's behavior and better understand why they (and you) respond differently in different environments. SNCOs are most effective when they use the PPS to manage their own behavior and use it to help subordinates manger their behavior.

Manage (Others)

The DiSC® Model helps you lead others more effectively by showing how to identify the behavioral tendencies of others and then use that knowledge to develop strategies for working more effectively with those people and for creating environments that motivate people based on their behavioral tendencies.

This is where legitimate power comes into play. Legitimate power is based one's title and/or position within the organization. Since legitimate power gives you control over your area of responsibility, why not use it to create motivational environments for your subordinates? Not only should you focus on recognizing and respecting individual differences, but you should also educate your subordinates to do the same. The question is, "How do I do this?"

Short of purchasing a PPS instrument for every subordinate, your next best option is to become very good at reading people. Without an instrument, you are taking an educated guess, but the better you become at recognizing behavioral tendencies under different situations, the better you become at accurately identifying what does and does not motivate others. When you become good at People Reading, you will find you are also very effective at leading people and building teams.

Keep in mind that when using the DiSC® information on yourself, you are considering your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. When using the information on other people, you can only see their behaviors…their thoughts and feeling remain hidden.

Also, keep in mind that everything is "situational." People react differently in different situations. While it can be helpful (and fun) to identify DiSC® behavior dimensions in others, do not fall into the trap of labeling people. Remember, DiSC® is dynamic, not static and it depends heavily on the situation. Never assume someone will always react the same way.

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Pigeonholing people is dangerous! It causes you to limit how you lead others…which often results in you limiting their responsibilities, which hurts their career and ultimately hurts the Air Force.

Managing the Job

You can also use DiSC® behavioral statements to describe and discuss expectations of the job. Too many times, we talk about "what" should be done in the job like defining tasks, duties, and responsibilities and ignore the equally important concepts of how and why the job needs to be done.

Understanding the DiSC® allows you to determine the characteristics of a task or position and then use that information to match a subordinate with the task or position. PPS and task or position mismatches occur more often than not because we almost never have the luxury of choosing our subordinates or team members. However, that does not mean we cannot be effective in helping our subordinates be successful in positions that do not quite match their PPS.

When we have to assign people to tasks or positions that do not match their PPS, it is vitally important to set them up for success. We do this by using a technique known as Caution, Motivate, and Support.

> **Caution:** We caution on aspects of the position that will not appeal to the person based on her primary and secondary tendencies. This information comes from the sections on page 7 labeled "This person desires an environment that includes" and "To be more effective, this person needs."
>
> **Motivate:** We motive the person by letting him know which aspects of the position appeal to his primary and secondary tendencies. This information comes from the sections on page 7 labeled, "This person's tendencies include" and "This person desires an environment that includes"
>
> **Support:** We support the person by letting her know we are always available to listen, answer questions, provide more information and guidance, secure resources, and when necessary, run interference or remove roadblocks. We also support by utilizing information from the "Action Plan" sections of page 7.

Remember, people are motivated to do what they want to do, not what you want them to do. Therefore, the most effective leaders expend effort toward creating environments where people are self-motivated. The best environments are those where one's PPS matches the requirements of the position and when that's not possible, the individual is set up for success through effective use of the Caution, Motivate and Support concept.

Today more than ever, enlisted members fulfill more than one role. Most of us fulfill leadership and management positions while also handling technical tasks. We also lead teams and are often members of teams outside our unit. Each role requires different behaviors and when we fail to address the differences, other problems may surface.

Conflict is one problem that usually surfaces. The difference between behaviors required for a specific position and a person's natural behavioral style often causes distress which can lead to conflict.

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Stop and reflect for a moment, "Is your behavior at home different than your behavior at work?" Why is that? Remember, we all behave differently in different environments and situations. The important thing is figuring out whether our behavior is most effective given the situation.

Imagine someone as a high "D" in her role at work, then going home and behaving the same way toward her family members. Might that generate some conflict?

A significant strength of the PPS and DiSC® model is they can help you identify the behavioral expectations of any role and then use that information to reduce distress and conflict.

Marston's Theory Today

"The following information came from Inscape Publishing's DiSC® Classic and from its Models of Personality Research Report (1996)."

Dr. William M. Marston developed a theory of how individuals respond to features of their environment long before personality and social psychologists agreed that individuals and their environment are related in complex ways and that behavior cannot be understood without understanding the situation in which it occurs. Marston's theory contains two principles described next.

> **Favorability:** This first principle defines the environment by its favorability. Favorable environments are supportive of people and these people feel comfortable in such environments. Unfavorable environments are antagonistic to people, and these people feel challenged by such environments. In both cases, people respond emotionally to the environment (i.e. positively or negatively).
>
> **Individual Behavioral Response:** This second principle relates to an individual's behavioral response to any given situation, which depends upon how much power the person feels in relation to the supportive or antagonistic forces in the environment. For example, if I perceive myself as more powerful, I will act on the environment to achieve my purpose. If I perceive myself as less powerful, I will accommodate to the environment. (See charts below)

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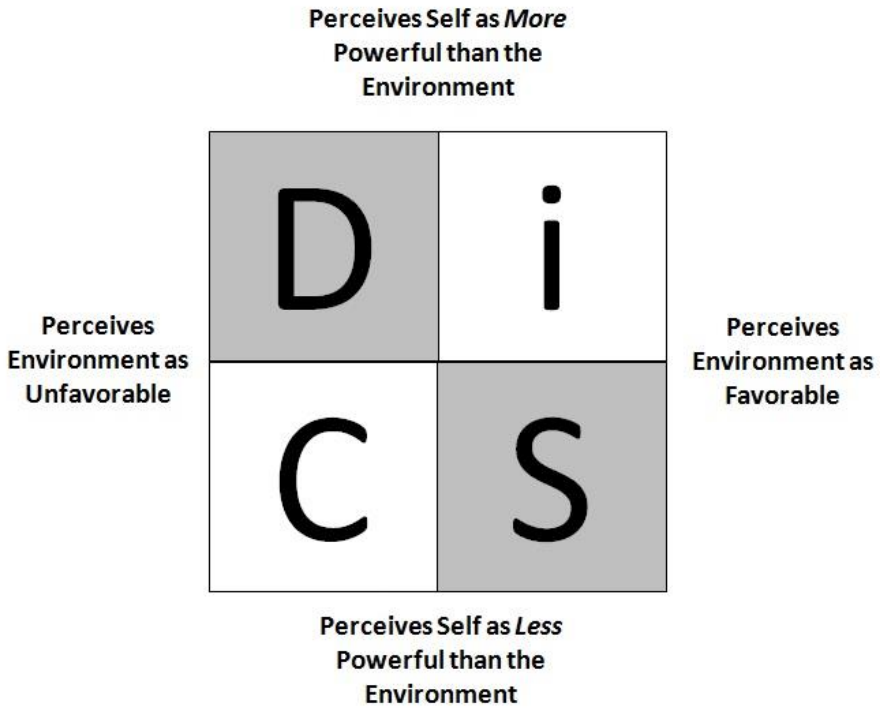

Figure 1 – DiSC Model (Environment & Power)

How is your DiSC style different from other DiSC styles? What do you have in common with other DiSC styles? The DiSC model shown above will help you understand these important questions.

The square below each DiSC style has something in common with the styles that are next to it. You can see that the C and S styles tend to perceive themselves as less powerful than their environment. That is, they may be more inclined to adapt to their surroundings because they feel they have little direct control over them.

On the other hand, the D and I styles tend to perceive themselves as more powerful than their environment. That is, they may be more assertive because they feel they have more control over their surroundings.

In addition, the D and C styles tend to perceive their environment as unfavorable (or unwelcoming and resistant), and the "i" and S styles tend to view their environment as favorable (or friendly and supportive).

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The model below elaborates on the DiSC model. It describes the four styles in a way that is observable and behavioral. You will notice that while the C and S styles are both thoughtful and moderate paced, the D and i styles are more active and fast paced. In addition, the D and C styles tend to be questioning and logic focused, but the i and S styles tend to be more accepting and people focused.

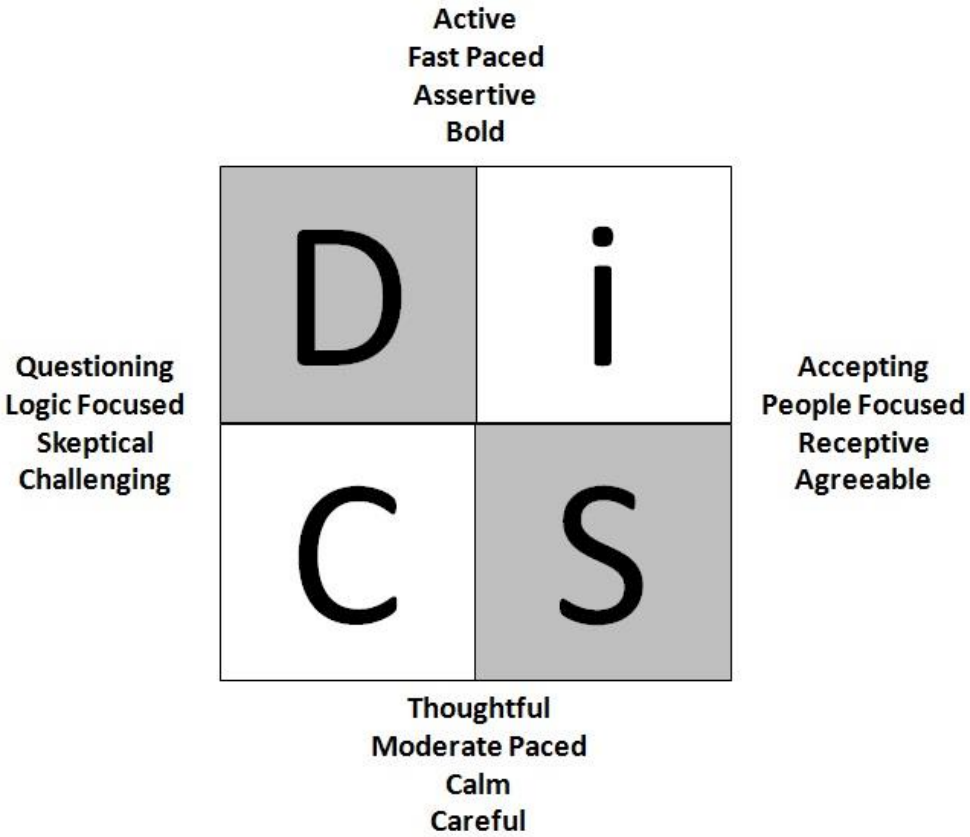

Figure 2 - DiSC Model (Observable & and Behavioral)

Here is a snapshot of how each profile views the environment.

High D ▪ Sees an unfavorable environment that they want to overcome ▪ Tries to change, fix, or control things	**High i** ▪ Sees a favorable environment in which they can influence others ▪ Tries to persuade, promote, or influence others
High C ▪ Sees an unfavorable environment that they do not want to try to change ▪ Tries to work within established rules, guidelines, and procedures to ensure accuracy and quality	**High S** ▪ Sees a favorable environment that they want to maintain ▪ Tries to be cooperative, supportive, and agreeable while keeping things stable

When a person accommodates an environment through a submissive or compliant response, we refer to it as “locus of control” which is one of the ten most studied topics in personality and social psychology. An internal locus of control is the individual's perception that he or she is more powerful than forces in the environment, and an external locus of control is the perception that environmental forces are more powerful than the person himself or herself.

Recognizing that locus of control may be different in different situations, researchers have attempted to map the variety of situations in which individuals maintain internal or external locus of control. A number of different instruments have been developed to determine how broadly “locus of control perceptions” appears to influence behavior. While this line of research has extended far beyond the principle as it is applied in Marston's model, it demonstrates that psychologists are mostly in agreement with his theories.

Another line of more contemporary research is the “belief in a just or unjust world” which has developed out of an interest in "distributive justice." Psychologists have wanted to know under what circumstances individuals perceive their situation to be equitable in comparison with (a) someone else's situation or (b) the situation they feel they deserve. Their intent is to find whether there are reliable individual differences on a measure of perceived fairness and, if so, to relate the findings to understanding human motivation.

While this trend is not directly related to Marston's notion of an antagonistic versus supportive environment, it does offer one line of research that relates positive and negative perceptions of the environment with locus of control, or Principle 1 with Principle 2 in Marston's model. What most studies demonstrate is a closer relation between these two concepts (belief in a just world and locus of control) than Marston's model suggests. Marston assumes perceptions of the environment and perceptions of personal power are entirely independent of each other.

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What the “just world” and locus of control research shows is that when an individual perceives the world as unjust, he or she tends to view the environment as more powerful than himself or herself. On the other hand, when the world is seen as just, individuals tend to regard themselves as more powerful than the environment. Therefore, “belief in a just world” explains why some people perceive themselves as more powerful or less powerful than their environment. Perceived fairness in the world is not the same as favorability, but a special case of favorability. Therefore, it raises a question, but does not disconfirm Marston's assumption that the two principles operate independently in explaining emotional responses and behavior.

Further confirmation of Marston's theory is found in research directed toward understanding interpersonal relationships, an area within personality and social psychology. Wiggins (l991) has reviewed how people describe their interpersonal relations not only in English but in other languages as well, and he reports that a two-dimensional circumplex model generally accounts for what is reported. A circumplex model is a graphic representation of the relationship among concepts which maps out individual items or words in relation to the dimensions that explain them, similar to the way a geographical map positions an object in relation to coordinates. Two important comparisons can be made between the work of Wiggins, his associates and Marston's work.

The Circumplex Model

Marston also conceived of emotional response as occurring along a continuous wheel, and he compared the image to a color wheel, where one color blends into another around the wheel. We label colors blue, red, orange, etc., but infinite combinations are possible. Likewise, we label the four dimensions of behavior in his model as Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness, but many combinations occur in human experience. Wiggins offers the wheel also as a theoretical representation of the interrelationships among personality characteristics, and he postulates that the wheel can be mapped against two bipolar dimensions.

The Content of the Model

Wiggins concludes that most measures of interpersonal behavior can be explained by two dimensions that he labels Dominance-Submission and Solidarity-Conflict or Affiliation-Hostility. Dominance-Submission is represented in just these terms on Marston's model as a bipolar dimension. These two "nodes", as he calls them, represent the tendency to act on the environment versus the tendency to accommodate to it. The dimensions in Marston's model and Wiggins's model are identical in meaning.

Wiggins's second dimension is also labeled similarly to Marston's. His Affiliation-Hostility is comparable to Marston's "alliance" and "antagonism"—terms he used to explain DiSC® theory in his early work. In research reviewed by Wiggins, White (l980) looked for whether there were concepts for describing interpersonal relations that were universal across languages. Finding there were these two, he concludes, “These dimensions represent a universal conceptual scheme produced by the interaction of innate psycholinguistic structures and fundamental conditions of human social life, for example, the potential for concord or discord in the goals and actions of multiple actors (solidarity/conflict) and for the asymmetrical influence of one actor upon another (dominance/submission).”

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In other words, human beings naturally describe their relationships with each other in ways that point out the importance of acceptance versus antagonism and different levels of power, regardless of the language used. Nearly 80 years after Marston published his theories, an array of investigations have confirmed that in the realm of interpersonal behavior, they hold true.

Summary

Thus, Marston offered a theory of how people relate to each other, rather than a theory of personalities. This is fitting for the purpose for which DiSC® Classic is applied. DiSC® Classic is not designed to provide clinical insights into people's psyches; users do not need formal training in psychology to use it in their workshops or coaching sessions. Instead, the instrument helps participants better understand their behavior and the behavior of others in relation to their environment. This in turn will help you become more effective in leading your subordinates and helping them to become more successful in an ever changing military environment.

This reading was designed to help you look at yourself and others in a different way. Its purpose was to get you to look at the possible reasons behind the little things we normally take for granted. By doing so, you should see the logic of the PPS and the DiSC® Dimensions of Behavior Model and realize how valid it can be as shown by its long history. This reading was a brief look at your profile, the factors of motivation and effectiveness, and the uses for the PPS and DiSC®. Through your classroom discussion, you will gain a better understanding of yourself and others. You will also have a tool you can use to create an environment to positively influence the motivation of your people, make you more effective in leading people and teams, and make you an even more effective communicator.

Remember, the more you understand about yourself, the more you will realize why certain work situations are more motivating to you than others are. This also applies to your Airmen and their situations. From that information, you can understand how to create a more motivating environment that can increase your effectiveness and general work satisfaction, as well as that of your subordinates or team members. Moreover, to accumulate more “wealth” from this initial investment, you can apply the PPS results to a broad range of other human interaction such as mentoring, communication skill development, conflict resolution, customer service, problem solving, training programs, team building and performance counseling. Not to mention, there are significant benefits to understanding the PPS and DiSC® Model that can positively influence your home and off-duty interactions.

Once you have taken the PPS instrument and determined your DiSC® Dimensions of Behavior based on your work environment, you have four options: Do nothing; take action within your preferred style of behavior; adapt and act a different way; engage in a dialogue to find solutions. You will be better able to understand your own style and the styles of others. In addition, you may be better able to identify the needs of your environment, as well as adapt your behavior to the environment and the needs of others.

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HUMOR OR TRUTH?

What follows are the four dimensions in various situations. These situations are for individuals with high D, i, S, or C behavioral dimension.

Facing Food:	
High D • Sometimes known to eat over the sink • Likes to try new, exotic, different foods • Loves to microwave everything, even water • Never follows recipes, has to add and substitute • Eats out a great deal	High i • Entertains a great deal • Likes gourmet foods • Has latest kitchen gadgets, but doesn't use them • Attracted to fancy packaging
High C • Reads all labels • Knows all the percentages of protein, fat, and carbohydrates in foods • Shops for good prices and utilizes coupons • Buys kitchen gadgets if they are economical and well-constructed	High S • Values mealtime and considers it important family time • Considers the kitchen the most important room in the house • Eats from the four basic food groups each day • Likes to exchange recipes
Playing Golf:	
Watch out for the "Ds" driving the golf carts. They frequently play through groups of golfers	The "I" spends more time in the clubhouse talking than on the course
The "Cs" keeps score and play strictly by the rules. They clean their clubs a lot, too	The "S" golfs the same day, the same time, the same place, using the same clubs
Ask for something on their desk:	
The "D" has a messy desk. The "D" says, "There it is—you look for it."	The "I" says, "I'm busy right now. Give me a few minutes and I'll get back with you." The "I" does not know where it is, but will not admit it.
The "C" says, "It's the third thing down in that pile." The desk may be messy, but the "C" knows where everything is.	The "S" has everything filed in alphabetical order by color code. It never changes.
You know …	

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your “D” is too high when you start reminiscing about the good old days when it was legal to duel with guns to settle an argument.	your “I” is too high when you feel like reading a book and invite five friends to come over and read it with you.
your “C” is too high when you run out of gas on purpose to find out exactly how far your car goes on a gallon of gas.	your “S” is too high when you listen for 30 minutes to a telephone sales person selling snow removal equipment—and you live in Florida.

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Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

Team Dynamics

Inside this Study Guide:

Introduction to Team Dynamics

- Terms

Team Dimensions Patterns

- Team Dimensions Approaches

Team Roles

- Creators
- Advancers
- Refiners
- Executors
- Flexers
- Impact of Teams with Only Certain Roles Represented
- Examples of Team Role Tendencies

The Team Innovation Process

- The P.E.P. Cycle
- The "Z" Process

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Introduction to Team Dynamics

Teams are everywhere! You will find them on school playgrounds, in musical bands, in organizations (like process improvement teams), professional sports teams, military peacekeeping and humanitarian effort coalitions, inspection teams, etc. There is also the team you're a part of, the leader of, your work center team. As a senior noncommissioned officer, you are charged by AFI 36-2618, *The Enlisted Force Structure*, to lead teams. You may not have selected your team and its members-you were either assigned to it or it was assigned to you. Regardless, as a SNCO, you are required to make your team and the teams within your area of responsibility succeed.

Terms

It's important to understand the difference between two terms, group and team, that are commonly and mistakenly used interchangeably.

Group

> *Group* is an assemblage of persons or objects located or gathered together.

Think of *group* as a subway station full of people; some are getting on the trains, some are getting off the trains, and some are employees of the subway doing their jobs. All of them have something in common—travel, but they're still an assemblage located or gathered together.

Consider another example, Basic Military Training. There's a group of basic trainees; people getting off the busses, people in various days of training status, and people graduating. All of them have something in common—trainees, and once again, they're still an assemblage located or gathered together. Enough about people; a group can also describe objects. When you go into a department store there are numerous items that are grouped together—women's clothes, housewares, electronics, automotive, outdoors, or jewelry.

Knowing the definition and examples of a group will help you as the material next focuses on teams.

Team

> A *Team* is comprised of two or more people, or groups of people, organized to work together, using cooperative and collaborative efforts, to successfully achieve a common goal.

As you read the working definition of a team, several key attributes should catch your eye. The first attribute is *two or more people or groups of people*. This is self-explanatory. The second attribute is, *organized to work together*. This means for a group to start becoming a team there must be some form of leadership and some form of followership, in addition to some form of

acceptable coexistence with other people. The next attribute is, *using cooperative and collaborative efforts*. Each individual of the group must put into action a belief of "one for all and all for one" in everything he or she does when interacting with each of the other individuals of the group. Each person evaluates how his or her actions, behaviors, and words will enhance the overall working climate, as well as, how they all collectively must positively contribute to the overall working climate. And the final attribute is, *successfully achieve a common goal*. There must be some type of plan or standard by which each individual of the group knows, understands, and accepts what's expected and the measurements being used to determine completion and success. When all of these attributes are part of a group's daily existence, it's considered a team.

AFI 36-2618, *The Enlisted Force Structure*, states that SNCOs must, "Lead and develop subordinates and exercise effective followership in mission accomplishment." It goes on to say that SNCOs must "Lead and manage teams while maintaining the highest level of readiness to ensure mission success." The challenge we face as enlisted leaders is convincing our team leaders and their members that they are not just members of a group, but members of an important team; a team whose members are committed to each other and to their organization's mission, their wing's priorities, and their nation's security.

Team Dimensions Patterns

Observations by Fahden and Namakkal, authors of the Team Dimensions Profile®, supported by research from Inscape Publishing®, have revealed four distinct approaches to thinking and behavior among people involved in a team process. When working with others on an innovative team, people combine their natural thinking and behavioral preferences into an approach. By understanding the four approaches or patterns, the individual roles of team members can be defined or identified, or, the team can be led through the four stages, and the team process enhanced, resulting in a more effective approach to mission accomplishment. The four Team Dimensions Approaches that you'll cover next are *Conceptual, Spontaneous, Normative*, and *Methodical*. The material is presented as if we're talking about you; however, you can also think about others in your life that have exhibited or may currently exhibit some or all of the characteristics for each Approach.

Team Dimensions Approaches

Let's get started with the Conceptual Approach.

Conceptual

If you prefer the Conceptual Approach, you come up with new ideas. When presented with a problem or an opportunity, you're good at exploring and recognizing alternatives, discussing concepts, and visualizing the master plan or strategic plan while focusing on the future state.

For example, you're probably very helpful in a brainstorming session that requires coming up with a lot of ideas and understanding how those ideas fit into the master plan. You're the innovative, big idea generator and you're needed on a team to ensure that the approach to the problem is fresh and new.

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However, having several of these types like you on your team can be problematic if the other types aren't present or allowed to contribute. While you and the others can come up with multiple approaches when presented with a problem, you don't always think things through completely.

The second Approach to cover is Spontaneous.

Spontaneous

If you prefer a Spontaneous Approach, you want freedom from constraint and enjoy "thinking outside of the box". You find yourself moving from one subject to another, focusing on many things at once, and sometimes showing impatience. You like to have respect and influence, don't want to feel obligated to follow tradition, and allow your feelings to guide your decision-making.

For example, when you're involved with a team dealing with a change, you probably liked to move quickly and may have been recognized as a leader, especially when the team needed to act or move forward. You prefer to come up with wildly creative projects.

If there's a lack of the other types, or if the other types aren't allowed to contribute, then the team with you and others like you will essentially operate without any rules. Members who prefer the Spontaneous Approach may begin to skip meetings which mean that the majority of the time spent at the next meeting will be updating people who missed the previous meeting.

The third Approach is Normative.

Normative

If you prefer a Normative Approach, you put ideas into a familiar context, relying on past experiences with similar situations to guide you. You prefer to use accepted norms and expectations to steer you, but you also want to address the consequences before acting. You're more inclined to allow others to take the lead and you try to fit in with the other people.

For example, when leading a team or a member of a team, you're likely to move forward in a careful manner, making sure you have all the necessary experience to guide you to success. You and others like you have a tendency to question all proposed plans and find holes in them before a reviewer does because you possess stronger critical thinking skills.

The problem with too many of "you" on the team is that proposed approaches can be over analyzed and one may never be selected, because it's not perfect yet. This is why the team needs you and people with the other approaches contributing.

The fourth Approach is Methodical.

Methodical

If you prefer a Methodical Approach, you like order and rationality. When presented with a problem or opportunity, you tend to follow a step-by-step process, examining the details, and thinking things over carefully before acting. Focusing on what you can prove is true, you're good at putting things in order and like to see things fit together.

For example, when in a team setting you're likely to move in a very orderly fashion, making sure all the details have been addressed and covered. A team needs to have your perspective

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represented not only to get the project completed, but also to keep everyone on task to complete the project and help ensure the changes are carried out.

The challenge can be that the other members (those preferring the other approaches) may view you and others like you as the people who want to slow the process down.

Even though you learned about the four individual Approaches, it's important to know that you and others will use a combination of two or more of these Approaches when dealing with solving problems and focusing on task accomplishment as members of an innovation team. As you went over the four Approaches, two or more should've caught your attention as most natural fits for you. Of course, by going over the characteristics of each, you can begin to notice how the differences could impact the Team Dynamics environment. Then add the diversity of different Air Force Specialty Codes, sister service cultures, coalition partners beliefs and values, and civilian populace circumstances into the team setting. Whew, there are a myriad of indicators for you to pay attention to as you strive to maintain a synergistic team focused on the implementation of some established goal.

By integrating these four Approaches we can next define roles of team members and provide a structure that you can follow to help your team achieve its goals by effectively identifying Team Dynamics situations.

Team Roles

Working on a team can be uncomfortable. Being a member of a team that's responsible for creating and implementing change in an organization can be particularly distressful. No matter how focused members may be on the team's ultimate goal, as humans, we're fortunate to be made up of a combination of personality temperaments, traits, strengths, experiences, attitudes, work styles, and skill sets that can also be distractors for the team, keeping it from working toward and eventually accomplishing that goal.

As individuals, we each have a combination of personality temperaments, traits, strengths, and skill sets. These characteristics may lead to one's selection for a particular job, responsibility, or role on a team. According to Allen N. Fahden and Srinivasan Namakkal, developers of the Team Dimensions Concept and the Team Dimensions Profile, there are four roles that are typically found on teams and together they spell out CARE:

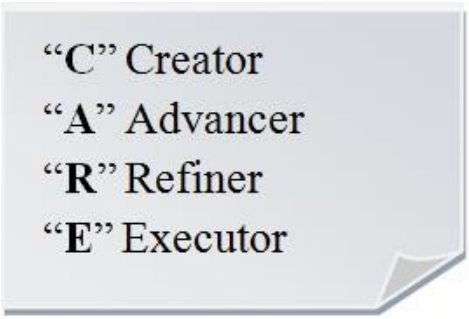

Figure 1 CARE

These are roles that people find most comfortable fulfilling based on their most natural thought processes and behavioral tendencies. These responsibilities represent the key roles that people perform on successful teams to accomplish a shared mission to reach a desired result. Please understand, no one is "locked in" to any one role. In fact, when part of a team, we may often find ourselves performing roles and responsibilities that are not natural for us. As you read about these roles, see if you recognize your most comfortable role. The first of these basic roles is the Creator.

Creators

The Creator role is a combination of the Conceptual and Spontaneous Approaches. If you're a Creator, you:

- Often generate fresh, original concepts and new ideas in ways that defy generally accepted structures or rules.
- Focus on and prefer to live in a world of possibilities; a self-contained think tank.
- Look for activities that are unstructured or abstract, and thrive on innovation and unique solutions.
- Are good at reframing a problem and looking for and achieving breakthrough solutions that may be unusual, unique, and/or outside the boundaries of traditional thought; moving in a new direction; and examining possibilities without necessarily perceiving risk as "risky".
- Aren't limited by fear of reprisal or failure, or by existing rules, regulations, or boundaries; want freedom from constraint; and when a rule exists, may bend or break it.
- "See" problems or situations from a globalist perspective and perceive the "big picture" so you're often able to recognize alternatives that others miss.
- May act impulsively, letting your feelings guide actions, decisions, or behaviors.
- Derive satisfaction from the process of creating, discussing concepts and ideas, and overcoming problems.
- Are imaginative, abstract-thinking, unstructured, artistic, and unconventional.

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Advancers

The Advancer role is a combination of the Spontaneous and Normative Approaches. If you're an Advancer, you:

- Recognize ideas and new directions in their early stages and develop ways to promote, communicate, or advance them.
- Use insightful planning based on past experiences and proven successful methods to advance ideas toward implementation.
- Manage the human component of any solution, enjoy whipping up enthusiasm for a project, and get people excited about new solutions.
- Prefer familiar ideas but aren't inclined to let rules and boundaries be discouraging.
- Recognize new opportunities and carry new ideas forward.
- May initially respond to ideas with skepticism, but will let accepted norms and your feelings guide thoughts, behaviors, actions, and decisions.
- Derive satisfaction from instilling a sense of purpose in the team and promoting that purpose with single-mindedness and determination.
- Direct actions toward achieving objectives by the most direct, efficient means.
- Are able to focus on many things at once and may move from one subject to another.
- Enjoy respect and influence and focus on the interaction amongst team members.
- Are typically comfortable identifying interesting ideas or possibilities and moving swiftly to see them implemented.
- Are people-focused, extroverted, talkative, outgoing, and expressive.

Refiners

The Refiner role is a combination of the Conceptual and Methodical Approaches. If you're a Refiner, you:

- Challenge and analyze all concepts, ideas, or plans under discussion, often playing the "devil's advocate" to test the soundness of an idea or theory for merit and try to improve it.
- Will detect flaws, identify potential problems, and suggest alternative solutions.
- Focus on the analysis and are comfortable being methodical.
- Use a methodical process to analyze things in an orderly manner to detect possible flaws, catch errors, and identify potential problems (2nd and 3rd order effects) under discussion that others may have missed or don't want to address.
- Are good at reviewing ideas and implementing plans, modifying those ideas or coming up with new ideas, and rationally reviewing them to ensure successful implementation.

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- Use logic and a systematic approach to redesign a solution, and make sure that ideas are sound before moving them to the next level (the idea or plan is passed back and forth among the Advancer, Creator, and you until you're satisfied that the idea or plan is ready for implementation).
- Believe that consequences matter.
- Want to plan how new endeavors are implemented and try to foresee and prepare for surprises, complications, and the unknown.
- Prefer and like to create order from chaos by improving the process by which ideas are implemented.
- Derive satisfaction from the mental exercise of the debate and may lead others to examine the merits of an idea, using a systematic process in generating and exploring ideas.
- Are analytical, objective, logical, skeptical, and reflective.

Executors

The Executor role is a combination of the Methodical and Normative Approaches. If you're an Executor, you:

- Lay the groundwork for implementation, manage the details, and ensure that the process moves forward in an orderly and organized manner to achieve high-quality results and process completion.
- Follow up on team objectives and implement ideas and solutions.
- Deliver concrete, quality results and seek successful implementations.
- Focus on ensuring the implementation process proceeds in an orderly manner, based on a well-thought-out plan.
- Prefer to let others take the lead on creating and refining ideas because you enjoy the task and responsibility of final implementation.
- Pride yourself on your ability to meet objectives professionally and efficiently.
- Prefer proven, familiar ideas over novel and untried ones.
- Are comfortable being methodical and pay attention to specifics and the details.
- Tend to be cautious in trying out a new approach and prefer to think things over carefully before acting.
- Perform extensive follow-through to finish what you start and do things right.
- May have little interest in group discussion until specific objectives and plans are identified.
- Are realistic, detail-oriented, structured, organized, and traditional.

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Flexers

The Flexer role is a combination of three or more of the Approaches (Conceptual/Spontaneous/Normative/Methodical). If you're a Flexer, you:

- Monitor the contributions of all team members, identify what's missing, and step in to fill gaps in the team during the various stages of the process to allow for uninterrupted progress.
- Can focus on everything.
- Can often adapt your approach and role to fit the needs of the team, and you probably view issues from different perspectives.
- Are very good at monitoring the team process and the contributions of all team members and when necessary, are able to step in to fill gaps in order to keep the development or implementation process moving in the right direction.
- Are able to connect and negotiate with all types of people.
- Are tolerant and understand different members of the team.
- Are willing to offer suggestions to improve the process.
- Understand, demonstrate an equal preference for, and empathize with, at least three of the four individual team roles.
- Are able to move with ease into a variety of roles and take on the tasks associated with each role.

Impact of Teams with Only Certain Roles Represented

Only Creators and Executors: Without Advancers to promote the ideas and Refiners to think through the implementation process, the team will likely rush into implementing a new but unfeasible idea or plan.

Only Refiners and Executors: Without a Creator to propose fresh concepts and an Advancer to promote the concepts, the team winds up idling indefinitely because they review problems and revisit old solutions over and over.

Only Creators and Refiners: Without an Advancer to promote ideas and think of ways to implement them or an Executor to "execute the plan, the team discussion results in an endless debate between the Creator and the Refiner. By continuously revaluating and challenging their own ideas, Creators and Refiners struggle to "advance" and/or "execute."

Only Advancers and Creators: These teams would likely move forward with the Creator's new ideas even though they have not been scrutinized. Though skeptical, the Advancer would promote the idea with the hope of eventually discovering how an idea could be successfully implemented.

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Examples of Team Role Tendencies

Communication

People have different priorities and preferences that affect how they communicate. By understanding these differences, teams can drastically reduce misunderstandings and miscommunications. As you can see below, each of the four roles tends to have a different style of communicating. Flexers often have an ability to understand all of these perspectives, but may lean toward one or two.

Creators: Creators may get most passionate and engaged in imaginative and abstract discussions. They often prefer to live in the world of concepts and may express ideas in a way that others find vague or ambiguous. Others may consider their conversational style scattered or quirky. Creators may be easily bored with discussions that are too concrete and detailed.

Advancers: Advancers often pick up on the subtle feelings expressed in a conversation. At their best, they look beyond the facts and see the real feelings behind what someone is saying. Advancers may get frustrated with those who are not as attentive to emotional needs. They may feel that their concerns are ignored or unvalued. Others, however, may feel that Advancers are too sensitive or base their decisions on intuition rather than logic.

Refiners: Refiners are most attentive to the facts and ideas in a conversation, with less attention to the feelings expressed. They may be wary of how emotions cloud reason and may be skeptical of someone who is too enthusiastic about something. Others may feel threatened by their skepticism. They may feel that Refiners are judging their ideas.

Executors: Executors tend to have a communication style that is practical and concrete. They are likely to discuss topics that are relevant to their personal experience and may get bored with theoretical discussions. Executors may be frustrated with those who do not express their concerns in a way that is clear and direct. Others may feel that Executors are too literal and concrete.

Meetings

Group meetings can be a source of frustration if people do not value the perspective of their team members. Understanding how others approach meetings can help to reduce this tension. As you can see below, each of the four roles has natural tendencies within a meeting. Flexers often have an ability to understand all of these perspectives, but may lean toward one or two.

Creators: Creators tend to approach meetings in an unstructured way. They are usually open to exploring all new ideas and not closing off their options. They are comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty. Others may feel that they do not set clear goals and that their style lacks direction. Creators, in turn, often feel their creativity is attacked or dismissed.

Advancers: Advancers pay particular attention to the social interaction within a meeting. They value cooperation and harmony. They may get frustrated when others make decisions without considering feelings. Others, in turn, may feel that Advancers focus too much on relationships and not enough on the task.

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Refiners: Refiners assure that the meeting leads to decisions that are logical and well thought out. They encourage the group to think through all of the implications of a plan or idea. Others may feel that Refiners are criticizing their ideas. Refiners, in turn, may be frustrated with those who seem to make decisions based on their emotions or "gut."

Executors: Executors tend to be very task oriented in meetings. They like to have clear goals and direction. They prefer to get "down to business." They may feel that long theoretical discussions are impractical or unproductive. Others may feel that Executors are not open to new ideas and do not take time to consider the "big picture."

Time Management

People use time differently because they perceive time management differently. Understanding the perspective of other team members is the first step toward addressing concerns and frustrations. As you can see below, each of the four roles tends to have different priorities in time management. Flexers often have an ability to understand all of these perspectives, but may lean toward one or two.

Creators: Creators often prefer to leave their time unscheduled and unstructured. They tend to avoid planning and are open to meeting demands as they come up. They often get their energy when rushing to meet a deadline. Others may get frustrated that Creators wait until the "last minute" to get things done. Others may want plans from Creators that are more organized.

Advancers: Advancers are willing to find time to build relationships. At their best, they recognize the value of spending time to strengthen communication channels and coordinate team efforts. They understand that good teams are interdependent and freely share information and concerns. Others, however, may feel that Advancers spend too much time socializing or discussing personal issues.

Refiners: Refiners are often efficient time managers. At their best, they are good at prioritizing and developing long-term plans. They are not bound to their schedules, but they frequently like having timetables. They are often inclined to work in isolation and may find unnecessary interruptions or meetings to be a nuisance. Others may feel that Refiners "work in a cave" and do not spend the time to communicate their progress.

Executors: Executors tend to be dutiful planners. They usually do not mind doing work that is routine and highly scheduled. They dislike situations where they need to rush to meet a deadline. They may be particularly frustrated when other people put them in this situation. Others may feel that Executors are too rigid and inflexible in their use of time.

Stress at Work

We all know that the people we work with can drive us crazy at times, but we also experience stress when our job duties include activities that don't come naturally to us. Even if someone is quite good at a certain activity, they might find it draining. For instance, some people love to mingle at a company event, others dread it. Some people find satisfaction in balancing a spreadsheet, and others find it dull and tedious.

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As you will see below, many of your likes and dislikes can be explained by your preferences. Lay the largest shaded areas from your Profile Grid over the Stress at Work circle below to discover your comfort zone: activities that are probably natural and comfortable for you. As you move further away from your comfort zone, you discover activities that may be less natural for you.

Although you may be very good at these activities, but you probably find them draining if you do them for any length of time. Most people recognize that from time to time they will need to stretch beyond their comfort zone to meet the needs of the situation. Few of us are rigidly bound to a narrow set of roles, but rather we adapt depending on the environment and the people around us. As we begin to act in ways that are further outside of our natural and learned tendencies, these activities are likely to become more difficult and emotionally taxing.

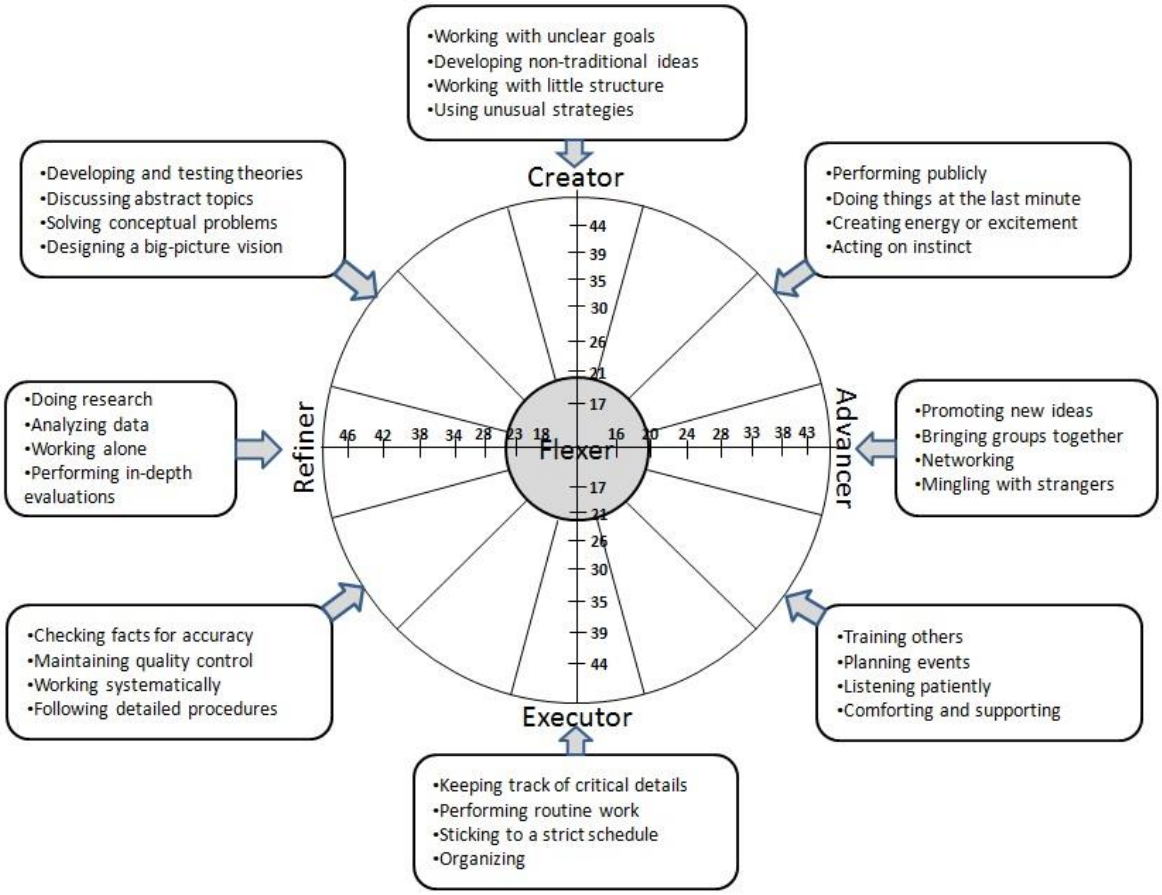

Figure 4 Stress at Work Circle

Here is a brief summary:

- Without Creators, there are no new concepts
- Without Advancers, ideas stall or do not come to light
- Without Refiners, new directions are not thought through; details are overlooked
- Without Executors, there is no implementation
- Flexers are able to move with ease into a variety of roles and take on the tasks associated with each role

Never assume Creators are natural team leaders simply because they feel comfortable thinking up original ideas or that Executors make good team leaders because of their assertiveness. The situation, team dynamics, and team roles present on the team are what influence how team roles play out.

With a better understanding of Team Roles under your belt and how they relate to Team Dynamics, you'll next focus on the Team Innovation Process.

The Team Innovation Process

It's noon on a Thursday just before a three-day weekend. The Chief calls you and the five other sections' superintendents into his office and says, "The colonel isn't too happy about our progress in being ready for the inspection in two weeks. She doesn't want to waste three days. My project, which is now your project, is to individually come up with ideas, plans, and solutions to continue our preparation over the long weekend and to not damage morale; then we'll get together, come up with the best plan, and brief the commander. I'll give you two hours so that there's time for you to brief your people before they go home. When you and the others met with the Chief, he started the meeting by wanting to present his idea first. He said, "I thought about how to address this issue and I think I came up with a pretty good plan that will meet the commander's expectations." After he finished presenting, he asked you and the other superintendents to present other options; encouraged an open discussion about each; then asked the team to rank order the solutions.

Could this happen in your area of operational responsibility? Sure it could. Would you be having some types of reactions during this time? Sure you would. Knowing when and how to get through and helping team members get through distressful and happy times during the innovation process will enhance your effectiveness, your subordinates' and team members' effectiveness, ultimately enhancing the mission's effectiveness.

In this section, we're going to cover the P.E.P. (Panic, Elation, Panic) Cycle, explain and illustrate a team innovation model called the "Z" Process. Team Dynamics are inherent throughout the material related to the Team Innovation Process; let's begin with the P.E.P. Cycle.

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The P.E.P. Cycle

If you've been in a similar situation like the one opening this main point, then you probably had some type of reaction. You might have had an emotional reaction, or a physiological reaction, or both. Some possible emotional reactions could've been anxiety, tension, fear, frustration, or annoyance. Some possible physiological reactions could've been increased heart rate, damp palms, or even a tension headache. On the other hand you might have experienced excitement by the opportunity to come up with ways to address the commander's concern; but then felt disappointment that the Chief's idea may be the only idea before you got your opportunity to share. Either way, you experienced a reaction.

All of these reactions reflect a state of Panic according to the Team Dimensions experts. And everyone experiences some type of reaction during a team's innovation process. The important thing to remember is that reactions are temporary; especially Panic. As a team leader, you must be aware of these reactions to ensure individuals and teammates, as well as you, can assist anyone experiencing Panic.

Panic is the first stage of the P.E.P. Cycle and it's extremely common in any innovation process. In the Change Management lesson, you covered some material related to Janssen's Model of Change; Panic is closely related to the Confusion Room when dealing with change.

Looking back at our scenario with the Chief and the long weekend schedule, depending on your preferred role and the preferred roles of the others, all or some of you may have been excited or panicked at first. For some, the Panic stage didn't last very long at all. As all of you were working independently, all or some of you came up with at least one solution and there was some type of reaction to working independently; the difference was some got an idea sooner than others.

The reactions to getting the ideas also are emotional and physiological. The emotional responses include feelings of excitement, relief, self-confidence, and calm. The physiological responses include steadier, less erratic heartbeat, slower rhythmic breathing, and palms no longer sweat. Basically, this is what the Team Dimensions experts call Elation.

Back to the scenario… now all of those people on your team that came with solutions were probably feeling Elated and going into the meeting were probably feeling really good. Then the Chief opened the meeting with his idea; how many of you might have thought his was good enough and the meeting would end? How many weren't too happy because they didn't get to present their ideas when the Chief tasked you for solutions? Then when the Chief stated that he wanted each of you superintendents to present your solutions, what might the reactions have been? A state of Panic?

Some of the superintendents might have thought to themselves, "How will the others react to my idea? Maybe they'll think I'm stupid!" and these kinds of thoughts lead to Panic and fear all over again.

As you can probably tell from the material so far, each person will react differently from another during the P.E.P. Cycle based on his or her Team Dimensions preference. Let's now look at how Creators, Advancers, Refiners, Executors, and Flexers typically think and react internally during the innovation process when they first experience Panic, Elation, and then Panic again.

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Creator	**P**	Panic for a Creator is a short-lived stage because he or she likes to generate ideas and brainstorm.
	E	Elation occurs when he or she gets an idea.
	P	Panic sets back in when one begins to think, "What if they don't like my idea?"
Advancer	**P**	Panic for an Advancer occurs because he or she doesn't have any ideas right away or in a timely manner.
	E	Elation sets in when he or she is thinking, "I hear an idea that I like. I had a positive experience with a similar idea."
	P	Panic returns as he or she listens to people poke holes in the ideas and raise objections to them because the Advancer liked an idea and was ready to move it forward as a viable option towards resolving the issue at hand.
Refiner	**P**	Panic for a Refiner occurs because he or she doesn't have any ideas right away or in a timely manner. The Refiner has to wait on the Advancer to bring the ideas forward.
	E	Elation occurs when he or she has opportunities to clarify objections, poke new holes in ideas, and make ideas better.
	P	Panic again sets in when he or she begins to think, "What if they can't handle the new requirements ?"
Executor	**P**	Panic for an Executor occurs when he or she thinks, "Oh, there's going to be a change?"
	E	Elation comes about when he or she thinks, "I have the information I need and can implement the plan/idea."
	P	Panic for an Executor occurs again when he or she starts believing that the plan/idea is flawed or won't work or encounters problems during implementation .
Flexer	**P**	Panic begins when the Flexer thinks to himself or herself, "We have nothing."
	E	Elation happens when he or she gets to play the role of dealmaker by filling the gaps on the team and providing team balance.
	P	Panic sets back in when he or she begins to think, "What if they don't buy in to the plan/idea ?"

The P.E.P. Cycle is obviously a very simple way of describing the extremely complex process of people's emotions and feelings when generating ideas. In most cases, it's challenging for you and others to be innovative on your own, without the support of others. The positive side is that you have many opportunities to work with others on various teams. And when you work on a team consisting of Creators, Advancers, Refiners, and Executors, you as well as all the other

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members, experience the Panic-Elation-Panic of the P.E.P. Cycle as each performs in the individual and different role in the process.

By realizing how common the P.E.P. Cycle is, you're able to understand why some members may be thinking and behaving the way they do on the team. When you're leading a team or as a senior member of a team, you need to value and help others to value Panic and Elation as natural responses when people are asked to perform roles in the innovation process.

You're probably thinking right now, "I have these people who approach thinking differently, assume roles when dealing with innovation, and feel Panic and Elation at different times; how do I create synergy to get the most out of everyone?" Well, I'm glad you thought this to yourself.

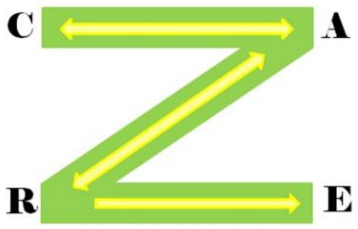
All of the elements you just covered related to the P.E.P. Cycle affect Team Dynamics and will be used in what the Team Dimension experts call the "Z" Process. Let's look at this process next.

The "Z" Process

Before we actually get into the "Z" Process, let's get into the right mindset by using a track and field illustration. Most track events include two 400-meter races: the dash and the relay. Which event do you think would have the fastest time?

Did you think the 400-meter relay?

If so, then you're correct. As of 2015, the world's record for the 400-meter dash is 43.18 seconds, while the world's record for the 400-meter relay is only 36.84 seconds—same distance but nearly 7 seconds faster! Working as members of a team, rather than as individuals, is what created the faster time —that, and the ability of each team member to hand-off the baton smoothly and at the appropriate time. The quality of the hand-offs is critical.



The "Z" Process is considered the ideal team innovation process because it integrates a natural democratic process of checks and balances using hand-offs. The key to the "Z" Process is knowing when to, and how to, turn to fellow team members and hand-off an idea or task to them. The most effective hand-offs occur when you're able to capitalize on the natural strengths and tendencies of the rest of the team. To be most effective, you as a team leader, must create the environment, and be able to assist others, to let the hand-off occur so that others could run with the idea or task to help ensure the goal is reached through successful mission accomplishment.

For this to happen, an open flow of communication between team members is just as critical as the hand-off process.

One major difference between the relay illustration of handing off the baton and moving forward and the "Z" Process" is that the "Z" process contains some back-and-forth collaboration. It's time to discuss this process and we'll also integrate elements of the P.E.P. Cycle along the way.

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The Creator in the "Z" Process

Creators experience Elation when brainstorming and generating new ideas. A successful innovation team works in an open environment where you, if you're a Creator, along with other Creators, are encouraged to express your ideas and made to feel new concepts are both welcome and valuable. This helps reduce the amount of time you'll (Creator) feel Panic about generating and then disclosing your ideas and speeds up the cycle back to Elation. Now that you've (Creator) presented your ideas, you may go back into Panic wondering, "Will anyone like any of the ideas I presented?" This is where the Advancer comes into the picture.

The Advancer in the "Z" Process

When the Creators are coming up with ideas, the Advancers are most likely in Panic because they're waiting and it takes a little longer for them to come up with ideas. But as soon as Creators present their ideas and Advancers can see the ideas in a familiar context, the Advancers see the possibilities of these ideas, Elation sets in, and they begin their process. So if you're an Advancer, along with other Advancers, you'll immediately move the innovation process forward by serving as champions and key promoters of the ideas. In your Elation, you'll (Advancer) do what you can to ensure that the ideas are feasible and acceptable to the organization. If the idea becomes confusing or needs further clarification, your (Advancer) Elation may turn to Panic very quickly; especially as the Refiners start asking their questions.

What would you (Advancer) need to do when ideas are confusing or need clarifying?

Since you already learned about the characteristics of each of the roles in addition to the hand-off process, should you (Advancer) hand-off the idea back to the Creators? Or should you (Advancer) hand-off the idea to the Refiners?

You (Advancer) may need to refer the idea back to the Creator or pass the idea on to the Refiner depending on what needs to be clarified; so both are correct responses.

The Executor in the "Z" Process

Once again, while the Creators, Advancers, and Refiners are doing their things to get the idea moving along, the Executor sits in Panic thinking about how thing's keep being modified or changing. Finally, the Refiner tells the Executor the basic implementation plan. If you're an Executor, along with other Executors, after a typical initial sense of Panic, you take command of pulling everything together and getting the work done, feeling Elation along the way. Once the idea is implemented, Panic may enter as you (Executor) wonder if everything will go smoothly; will everything work as planned; will most or all of the people affected by the idea get back to the Comfort Room (Janssen's Model of Change) in a relatively short period of time.

The Flexer in the "Z" Process

The Flexer's role throughout this process is to ensure that all functions are working in an orderly fashion and to step in as needed to fill gaps on the team. As the dynamics of the team playout in thoughts, behaviors, and actions, the Flexer starts to Panic as everything is like "jello" and nothing is "hardening like cement" in relation to the task at hand. As the Flexer feels more comfortable and begins to help lead his or her team mates to perform their roles or takes the responsibility to perform the role that's missing, Elation sets in as the balance becomes evident.

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As the Flexer presses on, Panic may set in as he or she starts to lose self-confidence about whether the plan or idea will be accepted by his or her team mates or others that'll be affected by the change.

One note of caution: A "dangerous" practice is when leaders and team members try to ignore, cut-out, or exclude components of the "Z" Process for various reasons, to include, saving time, money, or effort.

Summary

We all have natural strengths that enable us to perform certain roles comfortably on a team. Our individual tendencies toward change make us less effective on our own than as members of a team. We need to balance our strengths as team members so innovative ideas are not only conceived, but successfully advanced, refined, and implemented. The Team Dimensions material you learned about in Team Dynamics will help you identify your most natural approach and the most comfortable role you perform in the team process. Whether you're a Creator, an Advancer, a Refiner, an Executor, or a Flexer, each has inherent strengths and challenges that will impact the Team Dynamics environment. The key is to understand how the Team Dimensions material is useful in interacting successfully with team members with different patterns. Paying particular attention to the P.E.P. (Panic, Elation, Panic) Cycle can definitely help you lead team members through interpersonal and Team Dynamics difficulties more effectively.

The "Z" Process is another way to identify role interactions and Team Dynamics that demonstrate how each team member's strengths can be used more effectively. This process is most effective when you and the other team members understand, respect, appreciate, and value the contributions of each other.

In addition, Team Dynamics concepts help team members' work together with fewer conflicts. As a leader, you must help others recognize their own strengths and how to respect the strengths of others. By educating others, you'll help them be better able to accept their personal roles and responsibilities. Through this awareness, team members will begin to find others' behaviors less threatening, and since there's less negative emotion, there's less conflict.

The bottom line is that the success of a team depends on the participation and contribution of each member in the team process.

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Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

Full Range Leadership

Inside this Study Guide:

Introduction to FRL

Evolution of Leadership Theories

Full Range Leadership Behaviors

- Fundamentals of FRL Behaviors
- Transactional Behavior Components
- Transformational Behavior Components

Common Misunderstandings and Misperceptions of FRL

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Introduction to FRL

Why do we continue to study leadership? When it's all said and done…some people just make better leaders than others, right? As USAF Airmen, we know influence plays a big part in successful leadership. If you're good at influencing others to accomplish something they might not have attained on their own, does that make you a good leader? If so, do you think it has more to do with what you say…or what you don't say?

Since the first caveman or cavewoman got someone else to help them move their rocks around the cave, people have influenced others; but what about when they worked in a coordinated effort to hunt for food, or establish a sense of community? Someone had to envision a plan, communicate that vison, and establish the credibility to be trusted or followed by the others, either through respect or fear. Since prehistoric people exhibited some forms of leadership without ever studying a book, does that mean it's purely instinctual…or did they gain insight from their experiences by watching others?

For centuries, scholars have studied leadership and come up with theories on why certain leadership behaviors are more effective under certain circumstances. We continue to study leadership because successful leaders remain dedicated to the continuous development of themselves and their subordinates.

Leadership theories predominantly focus on characteristics, preferences, and behaviors. Early development of these theories was accomplished by studying the attributes of successful leaders, and identifying which of their characteristics and behaviors were significant to their successes. These leaders were not only from military or government professions, but from other fields such as commerce, transportation, and manufacturing. As the development of leadership studies evolved, theorists began looking at the workers/followers and their required tasks, not just the leaders. This awareness gave rise to the concept of situational leadership, which provided a more modern approach to the increasingly complex relationship between leaders and followers, yet some theorists were still unsatisfied with the limitations presented by this concept. When J. M. Burns conceptualized leadership as either transactional or transformational in 1978, it provided a new paradigm in leadership theory. His studies then paved the way for Avolio & Bass to develop the Full Range of Leadership (FRL) model, which captures many of the valuable concepts found in earlier leadership theories, and provides more clarity on their usage. Since utilizing the FRL model is more comparable to having a toolbox, rather than an operator's manual, in order to benefit from this toolbox a leader must first comprehend how the tools are properly used.

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You may recall learning about FRL (or FRLD) at the NCOA level of PME…if so, you will already be familiar with many of the principles…but for this level of PME you are expected to comprehend them to a greater extent. You need to understand how a SNCO can apply these principles in a role commensurate with his or her rank and scope of responsibility. Comprehension of the material, not just memorization, is essential to your success as a full range leader. Identifying the visual differences between a carpenter's hammer, a ball peen hammer, and a sledge hammer only requires memorization. Understanding how each of them works and recognizing when they're not working correctly requires comprehension. When you're studying FRL, or any other lesson in this course, don't just memorize the facts…strive to understand how the concept works and recognize when adjustment is necessary.

This study of FRL begins with a refresher on the evolution of theories that attempted to capture the essence of leadership and establish ways to approach leadership situations. Next, you will explore the fundamentals of FRL, and see how possessing a range of leadership behaviors can be beneficial to a leader…followed by a brief synopsis of some misunderstandings and misperceptions that people have about FRL.…so let's start off by getting refreshed on leadership!

Evolution of Leadership Theories

Trait-based Leadership: The first studies of leadership focused on fixed personal characteristics and innate qualities one possessed, known as traits. Back then…a person's leadership effectiveness was said to be influenced by their intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability. Trait-based leadership poses a few problems: how does one develop a trait? Apparently, trait-based leadership theories favor the notion that leaders are born and not made. Also, leaders who share the same traits oftentimes act differently. For instance, throughout history there have been self-confident and intelligent leaders who consistently displayed righteousness, while other leaders possessing the same traits led followers down paths of murder and destruction. FDR and Hitler were both charismatic, confident, and intelligent leaders with great public appeal, but the common traits between them were not accurate predictors of their behaviors. Although it's true that leaders who have certain desirable traits tend to excel, there's evidence to support that education and training can improve leadership effectiveness, which supports the notion that leaders can be made.

NOTE:
The importance of this refresher on leadership theory is to help you understand how these concepts ultimately led to the development of FRL…not how the theories were applied individually. So keep in mind while you're reading, it's not necessary to comprehend these theories on their own, but recognizing their principles will definitely increase your comprehension of Full Range Leadership.

Psychodynamic Theory: Leaders can have a key role in influencing how their followers think, feel, and act. Psychodynamic theory assumes that the world can be a hostile, unpredictable, and unforgiving environment, and that followers look for leaders who can make sense of such turbulent conditions and crisis situations. This explanation supports the notion that leaders and followers are drawn to their roles by virtue of personality type. We have all seen certain personality types excel in unique leadership roles, in which other types might not have fared so well. Were these leaders successful because they operated within their comfort zones, or because they understood their limitations/preferences, overcome challenges, and shared lessons learned with their followers? Either way…having the "right" personality for a particular role is quite beneficial, but is not always practical.

Skills Theory: Skills theory focuses on leaders who can control their emotions and successfully solve problems. Since people tend to think and act with emotion, this theory advocates that skill and knowledge are involved when dealing with emotions and trying to manage them properly. For example, let's say one of your subordinates just unleashed some critical, but inaccurate comments at you. How would you respond? Would you retaliate right there, defending your pride, or could you compose yourself to de-escalate the situation and rationally discuss the problem? Problem solving, the second element of skills theory, proposes that leaders are effective if they can assist followers in solving personal, organizational, and career-related problems. In these situations, a leader's cognitive and social skills, coupled with their own life experiences, influence their leadership effectiveness.

Style Theory: Style theory focuses on two types of leadership, task-oriented and people-oriented. Task-oriented leadership concentrates on initiating structures and paths for followers to perform effectively. People-oriented leadership considers fostering good relationships between the leader and followers. Both of these leadership styles influence followers' performance and satisfaction, the actual difference is in order of priorities. Leaders who lack (or avoid) either one of these styles are usually less effective than those who can fittingly apply both styles. Therefore, having such a limited range would indicate why Style theory does not provide much flexibility or latitude for a leader.

Over time, the shift in theoretical focus from traits/skills to behaviors/styles improved the outlook on developing leadership, since an individual's behaviors are more easily changed than traits.

Situational Leadership: Situational Leadership theory concentrates on two leader behaviors: directive and supportive. The four possible combinations of high/low directive behaviors and high/low supportive behaviors were used to establish four leadership styles: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. Each style is a different approach to leadership, defined by the situation/task and the follower's maturity/development. The leader chooses his or her appropriate behavior after determining a subordinate's levels of competence and commitment. Since this method is also task specific, leaders must readjust their behavior for each task, even if it's for the same subordinate. Although this theory quickly gained popularity in leadership studies, and still remains popular, it does not provide the flexibility many leaders require on a day-to-day basis.

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Authentic Leadership: Authentic Leadership theory suggests that effective leaders are true to themselves and others, have positive psychological states, and adhere to strong morals and values. It sounds refreshing and idealistic, but the concept of authentic leadership is not new… Think about leaders who were known for great leadership, but exhibited behaviors that indicated questionable morals or compromised their people. Were they authentic leaders? Why are there great leaders (historical and current) who do not meet the criteria for authentic leadership? From a global perspective, we know some leaders rose from cultures/environments lacking in morals or standards of ethical behavior, but what about those who had foundations rooted in ethics and morals, yet still strayed from those values? What sort of moral compass did they use to stay on course?

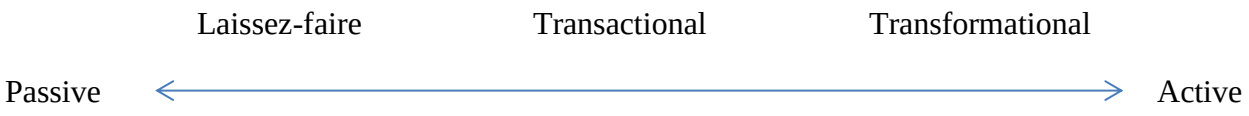
You can see that many of the leadership dilemmas we face each day are not recent developments. People that came before us examined different angles and approaches to leadership, and tried to explain why some things worked and some didn't. In addition, practical application of some theories can be difficult, and often requires a degree of latitude not addressed within the theory. Fortunately, we now have a "toolbox" of behaviors to engage leadership situations, and the flexibility to adapt them accounting for variations in personalities, relationships, time constraints, and other dynamics, in the form of Full Range Leadership.

FRL is unique because it requires us to view leadership as a system, based on the leader, the follower, and the situation as its core elements. Factors acting upon these elements such as personalities, skills, styles, opportunities, challenges, rewards, and consequences create an ever changing environment; with all components bounded by constraints (resources) and susceptible to change over time. The concept of FRL provides leaders with ways to navigate this environment by choosing different leadership behaviors, based on their assessment of the situation, the follower, and themselves. The spectrum of FRL behavior is broken down into three categories: Laissez-faire, Transactional, and Transformational. In the next main point, you will explore these fundamental behaviors of FRL and see how they apply to you, as a SNCO in the USAF.

With those earlier leadership theories fresh in your mind, think about what the scholars were trying to accomplish…to establish some sort of guide or pattern to follow when faced with the changing dynamics in leadership situations. Being familiar with various dynamics that impact leadership situations is essential to comprehending how FRL works. Now let's shift our focus towards the fundamentals of FRL, where we establish the relationship between three basic FRL behaviors.

Full Range Leadership Behaviors

Delving into the "toolbox", we see that FRL behaviors are aligned on a spectrum from passive (least effective) to active (most effective). This spectrum helps us visualize their relative effectiveness, and keeps things in perspective while learning about their characteristics.



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Fundamentals of FRL Behaviors

Laissez-faire

At the passive end of the spectrum is Laissez-faire; a French term which describes an attitude of letting things take their own course, without interference from others. Theorists believe there are certain leadership situations when this behavior is appropriate. For example, when a worker or team is highly skilled, dependable and reliable, and the leader has to focus on more pressing issues, the logic behind laissez-faire is to let them do their job without any interference. Now this may sound like a desirable situation; worker/team does the job well, supervisor doesn't have to spend much time with them…everybody's happy…right? Well...maybe this isn't such a desirable situation. The downside is that the leader might not be engaged enough to know when the follower(s) will need intervention; whether subtle guidance, straight-forward discipline, or anywhere in between.

As leaders, we look out for the well-being of our people; considering not only their duty performance, but their health, their families, and their careers. That's not to say we should interfere with their work in order to look out for them, but adopting a laissez-faire attitude towards an individual/team because they are most competent, will lead to neglect. In reality, we know laissez-faire behavior does happen; usually as a result of conflicting priorities. It's important to recognize when you exhibit this behavior, because if it happens often…you can become (or be perceived as) a laissez-faire leader who avoids or ignores responsibilities, causing detriment and neglect to followers.

Transactional

In the middle of the spectrum, you will find Transactional behavior. This type of leadership behavior is based on connecting a transaction (or social exchange) to motivation; in other words, providing compensation in exchange for desired follower behavior, or a consequence for undesired behavior. The transaction can involve actual rewards or penalties, or be more interpersonal, like providing praise or criticism. This approach to leadership is often compared to the old "carrot and stick" cartoon, where the carrot represented a reward and the stick represented a consequence, yet they were both motivators.

Granted, motivation is important in leadership and the practice of using rewards and consequences is foundational to good order and discipline. For example, some of the General NCO/SNCO Responsibilities found in *AFI 36-2618; The Enlisted Force Structure,* reflect transactional leadership, so it is required behavior. But if a leader solely relies upon these transactions to motivate followers, he or she is not taking an interest in the follower's personal development. Unfortunately, it's easy to fall into this routine and leaders don't realize their negative impact until after the damage is done. As you can see, transactional leadership is more effective than laissez-faire because it provides forms of motivation, but it lacks opportunities for personal development and true empowerment. So, if over-utilized as a leadership tool…it can be demoralizing for followers.

As USAF Airmen, we don't just lead others, we empower them! As a SNCO, it's your responsibility to mentor subordinates and prepare them for greater responsibilities; ultimately replacing you…as you move on. This is very different from the corporate world where managers often worry about being replaced by subordinates who demonstrate greater leadership skills. In

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the Profession of Arms, we encourage and motivate our subordinates to achieve greater roles and responsibilities, and we feel a sense of pride and accomplishment when they are successful! Empowerment is vital to leadership growth, and transformational leadership behavior found at the active end of the FRL spectrum is the most effective way to develop and empower your subordinates.

Transformational

Empowering followers through transformational leadership requires much dedication and effort from a leader, but is most rewarding. The leader motivates followers by genuinely caring about their concerns and appropriately addressing those concerns through open channels of communication; inspires followers by establishing goals, and challenging them to reach and exceed those goals; stimulates creativity and original thinking by respecting and valuing their opinions and perspectives; and positively influences them by setting the example of high moral character and displaying a strong commitment to organizational values. Some of the General NCO/SNCO Responsibilities found in *AFI 36-2618; The Enlisted Force Structure,* reflect transformational leadership as well.

General NCO Responsibilities:

- 4.1.6. Know and understand the Wingman concept: Airmen take care of other fellow Airmen. Being a good wingman means you share a bond with other Airmen. You can be counted on to support each other, in all situations, both on-and off-duty.
- 4.1.13. Take an active leadership and supervisory role by staying involved with subordinates on a daily basis. Use their own experiences and knowledge to mentor others. Guide and instruct subordinates to ensure they are prepared to accept increased levels of authority and responsibility. Assist subordinates in reaching their full potential.
- 4.1.14. Provide career counseling to subordinates on benefits, entitlements, and opportunities available during an Air Force career. Ensure subordinates understand what is expected to be competitive for promotion and what types of career opportunities exist. At a minimum, counseling occurs in conjunction with performance feedback counseling or during a quality review under the selective reenlistment program. Review and provide a copy of the Air Force Benefits Fact Sheet.

General SNCO Responsibilities:

- 5.1.6. Be an active, visible leader. Deliberately develop junior enlisted Airmen, NCOs, and fellow SNCOs into better followers, leaders, and supervisors.
- 5.1.7. Secure and promote PME and professional enhancement courses for themselves and subordinates to develop and cultivate leadership skills and military professionalism. SNCOs should complete their CCAF degree, if not already earned, and continue development for self and subordinates through available on- and off-duty education, leadership lectures and seminars, and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force reading program.
- 5.1.9. Clearly meet, and strive to exceed, the standards and expectations levied upon all junior enlisted Airmen and NCOs. Epitomize excellence, professionalism, pride, and competence, serving as a role model for all Airmen to emulate.

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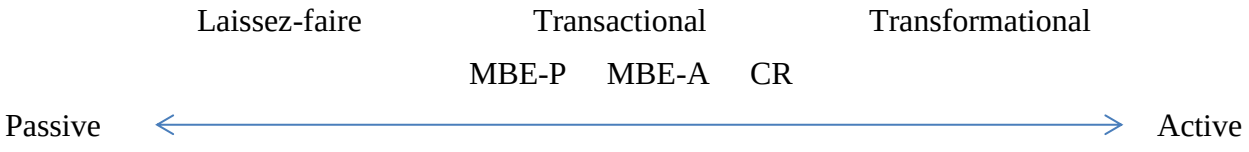
- 5.1.10. Attain and maintain excellent physical conditioning, always meet Air Force fitness standards, and set a positive example for subordinates. Lead the way by promoting, supporting, and participating in unit physical training activities and the Air Force fitness program. Incorporate physical training into their teams' duty schedules as the mission allows.

Looking at the general responsibilities listed above, we begin to see parallels between the essential elements of transformational leadership behavior and what the USAF expects of its SNCOs. Notice the common terms or themes that appear…challenge, coach, develop, innovate, inspire, mentor, and support…all familiar terms which are embedded in our culture. As you read about the components of transformational behavior, further into this chapter, you will see even more parallels between transformational behavior and air force culture.

Now that you understand the fundamental relationship between the three basic FRL behaviors, we will break down Transactional and Transformational behaviors by their components.

Transactional Behavior Components

The effectiveness of transactional leadership behavior depends upon the consistency of reinforcing desired follower behavior through rewards or consequences; inconsistency or inactivity equates to ineffective leadership. An example of transactional behavior is the use of attention. Just as a child seeks his or her parents' attention, followers often seek the leader's attention and approval. Showing the proper attention (like praise) to a subordinate can reward or reinforce desired behavior, while criticism directed towards a subordinate should convey disapproval of undesired behavior. On the contrary, not showing the appropriate attention (praise or criticism) will fail to reinforce desired behavior or deter undesired behavior. SNCOs have various means to acknowledge desired behavior, such as permitting comp time, submitting for unit recognition, and fulfilling specific follower requests (within reason). As an alternate method of reward, when applicable SNCOs can remove certain conditions that are unpleasant to the follower, such as altering work environment by placing the individual on a different shift/team, or discarding an LOC. Transactional consequences can be the opposite of reward actions mentioned above, like denying comp time or administering an LOC, but could also be accomplished via increased oversight and scrutiny of work. The consistency of a leader's presence and involvement indicates how active or passive they are within the scope of transactional behavior, and is directly related to its effectiveness. This relationship is categorized into three behavioral components: Management-by-Exception-Passive (MBE-P), Management-by-Exception-Active (MBE-A), and Contingent Reward (CR).



Management-by-Exception-Passive

Looking at the diagram above, MBE-P appears as the most passive of the transactional behavior components. It's more active (and slightly more effective) than laissez-faire behavior, because the leader holds subordinates accountable if they fail to meet standards of performance or disregard policies and procedures. The leader does not put much effort into preventing these events from happening, but may occasionally acknowledge or extend a compliment when things are done correctly. Potentially, the late/missing intervention could be justified due to legitimate reasons, but more likely a result of leader negligence. Either way, if it happens too often, subordinates will be conditioned to focus their efforts on what provokes the leader, and most likely neglect areas in which the leader shows little interest. People tend to distrust leaders who frequently take a passive approach to leadership, and often convey little commitment towards them…passive leadership behavior yields passive follower compliance. Likewise, if a leader is inconsistent when addressing unacceptable situations or specific individuals, the followers will eventually become resentful. Consider this…even if followers do not become disgruntled by the leader's behavior, the non-verbal message communicated is…the passive way of doing things is acceptable, or perhaps even expected.

Leaders who exhibit MBE-P too often…usually get labelled as passive leaders, finger pointers, or seagull managers; with the latter known as someone who continually critiques the team's efforts without participating, supporting, or offering solutions. The label comes from a seagull's tendency to drop in, make a lot of noise, leave a mess, then leave. Have you ever seen someone behave this way? Have you been guilty of this behavior? As military members, we expect leaders to be more actively involved with their subordinates, providing guidance and focus before things get out of hand. Moving along the spectrum, we see the next component of transactional behavior is Management-by-Exception-Active.

Management-by-Exception-Active

MBE-A with its more active nature places it to the right of MBE-P on the spectrum. This leadership behavior is an effort to prevent problems from occurring by keeping people and processes in control; the leader monitors subordinates' activities by ensuring compliance with rules, regulations, and performance standards.

Effective use of MBE-A reduces uncertainties, avoids unnecessary risks, and ensures important goals are being met. It can also reduce the temptation for employees to shirk their duties or act improperly, while providing additional clarity on performance expectations. MBE-A is commonly used in environments where critical (life-threatening) situations are expected as the norm, but can be used anywhere that compliance is a priority. When used appropriately, followers appreciate this leadership behavior as it reduces uncertainties regarding their mission or purpose. Consequently, if used inappropriately (or overused), subordinates become regulated by unnecessary control measures, in some ways similar to micromanagement. MBE-A can be a double edged sword within the Profession of Arms; there are many situations where compliance is a priority, however, micromanagement can have devastating effects on morale. Finding the right balance between subordinate control and freedom is essential to your effectiveness as a leader.

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Leadership responsibilities involve more than just control…what about follower motivation. Up until this point, we have only addressed transactional leader behaviors that predominantly motivate by consequence. Contingent Reward is intended to motivate followers by rewarding them for meeting expectations and demonstrating desired behaviors.

Contingent Reward

As the third transactional component, CR depicts the most active transactional leadership behavior and is situated to the right of MBE-A. CR transactions are more like agreements where the leader establishes goals, identifies ways to reach these goals, and supports the follower in meeting these goals. The goals are usually task-oriented and followers are required to perform the assigned tasks to a specified performance level. After a subordinate fulfills the leader's expectations, a reward is provided to reinforce the positive behavior. However, if expectations are not met, the reward needs to be withheld; otherwise it will reinforce substandard behavior. When properly administered, CR is more effective than MBE-A, because the leader is setting the follower up for success.

Contingent rewards may appear in various forms: affirmations such as personal compliments, praise in front of peers, public recognition from higher levels; granting agreed upon terms like participation in special events, attending specialized schools or programs, permitting greater autonomy; or even removing unpleasant conditions like changing the duty environment to a different shift, location, or team. Whatever the reward, it needs to be an incentive for the follower; otherwise it will not achieve the desired outcome. To be most effective, leaders should seek out what motivates each subordinate, and establish his or her contingent rewards accordingly. By demonstrating more concern for the follower, over concern for the tasks, the leader is providing encouragement and not just motivation; exercising leadership through CR can be a building block towards strengthening the leader-follower relationship.

Based on the follower, situation, and factors surrounding the situation, we see that any of the transactional behaviors could be an appropriate leader response. Although the components depict more concepts of management than leadership…remember…leaders still have to manage. Transactional behavior can be effective when a goal is task-oriented, bounded by some constraint preventing a more actively involved leadership approach, or as part of the direction, discipline, and recognition (DDR) aspects of Progressive Professionalism. But just as frequent laissez-faire behavior can neglect the needs of followers, if you rely solely upon transactions as your normal mode of operation (only managing and not leading), you will fail to develop your subordinates' leadership capabilities. Think about the source of motivation…if a follower's environment is limited to conditioning by external motivators (rewards and penalties), how can she or he become self-motivated? This is where transformational leadership behavior comes into the picture. Transformational leadership not only provides opportunities for subordinate development, it promotes internal motivation among 21st Century Airmen.

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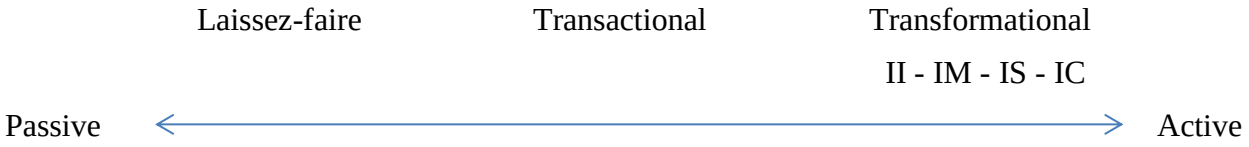
Transformational Behavior Components

At this point you may still be asking yourself, "What does transformational really mean?" or "How can I tell if my typical leadership behavior is more transactional or transformational?" A key difference that sets transformational behavior apart from transactional behavior is that the leader is genuinely engaged in the follower's personal development, and positively influences the follower's self-worth. Subsequently, the follower becomes genuinely committed to the cooperative effort and demonstrates that commitment to the leader. Moreover, the leader-follower relationship is further enriched by moving beyond a "carrot and stick" environment, and evolving into an environment of mutual trust and respect. Ultimately, the follower can exceed prior expectations, experience higher levels of job satisfaction, and gain increased commitment to the mission. In addition to benefitting the follower's personal development, the leader's personal development benefits as well…thus, both are transformed.

Since transformational leadership behaviors are reflected in *AFI 36-2618; The Enlisted Force Structure*, you should already have experience demonstrating them. SNCOs are the most experienced supervisors and are expected to personify these behaviors…so how can you improve your skills with transformational leadership? Start with comparing your daily behaviors to the transformational components below, then honestly ask yourself, "Is this what I'm already doing?" If you're lacking in any of the component areas, prioritize a list for self-improvement opportunities, then focus on developing one area at a time until you feel more natural demonstrating the particular leadership behavior. If there's a behavior that seems too challenging or unnatural for you, try taking very small steps instead of attempting to conquer it overnight. There's an old saying, "How do you eat an elephant? ...one bite at a time." To see what constitutes transformational leadership behavior, let's look at the four components: Idealized Influence (II), Inspirational Motivation (IM), Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and Individualized Consideration (IC).



Note: Looking at the diagram above, you will notice the four transformational components are not aligned in an active/passive relationship with each other. Any individual component of transformational behavior is not considered more active than another.

Idealized Influence

Influence is a key aspect to leadership, and Idealized Influence (II) means ensuring we are communicating the right kind of influence, just as Authentic Leadership theory advocates. As USAF Airmen, we exhibit II when we consistently represent the virtues which define our core value of Integrity First:

- Honesty is the hallmark of integrity…It drives us to advance our skills and credentials through our own effort. The service member's word must be unquestionable.
- Courage is not the absence of fear, but doing the right thing despite the fear. Courage empowers us to take necessary personal or professional risks, make decisions that may be unpopular, and admit to our mistakes; having the courage to take these actions is crucial for the mission, the Air Force, and the Nation.
- Accountable individuals maintain transparency, seek honest and constructive feedback, and take ownership of the outcomes of their actions and decisions. They are responsible to themselves and others and refrain from actions which discredit themselves or our service.

Think about some of the other qualities attributed to SNCOs: maintaining high personal standards, holding others accountable for maintaining AF standards, supporting organizational decisions in words and actions, championing trust in each other, and sacrificing personal gain for the mission and subordinates. All of these attributes, as well as others, contribute to the strong character of leaders who earn the respect, trust, and admiration of their followers. In turn, followers want to emulate these credible leaders because they personify the qualities that some only speak about. So when you are communicating with a subordinate, your character and credibility as a SNCO have a direct impact on your ability to influence effectively.

"Another point to consider is self-awareness…Do you know how others perceive you?"

You may have the best of intentions, but certain speaking habits, postures, or character flaws can detract from your influence. Many leaders "walk the talk" and live their lives ensuring all the required boxes are checked, yet they're unaware of how they 'really' come across to peers and subordinates. These leaders can benefit from asking their peers and subordinates for honest feedback on how they're perceived. By valuing the feedback and making necessary adjustments…the effort will be noticed and can be a boost to one's influence.

Idealized Influence is the component of transformational behavior that portrays the leader as a role model. If you model the core values and set the example as an ideal SNCO, you will exhibit II to your followers; if you depict a less than ideal example, your II will suffer accordingly. While idealized influence is where you set the example…inspirational motivation is where you raise the bar!

Inspirational Motivation

Leaders who use Inspirational Motivation (IM) behavior motivate and inspire their followers via the spoken word, although loud and positive words are not enough. The status quo is unacceptable to transformational leaders who present their vision as the "must achieve future." These visions elevate performance expectations and inspire followers to put forth extra effort in achieving the leader's vision. Followers receive a strong sense of purpose from IM, and it's this purpose that provides energy to drive a person, team, or organization forward.

Recall someone in your life that inspired you to take action? What did they do or say that evoked an emotional response, giving you the initiative to get started, or the perseverance to follow through until completion? That person, as an external motivator, inspired you to generate

your own internal motivation. Now recall the difference in motivation between transactional and transformational leadership behaviors…transactional is external, while transformational encourages internal motivation. Inspirational Motivation can be the fuse to ignite a follower's internal motivation.

An important aspect of IM is articulating a clear and compelling vision of the future. So…what constitutes a compelling vision? Start by providing an exciting image of what is important to followers, and consider values and ideals that are common within AF culture. Next, the vision needs to be realizable, where you stretch followers out of their comfort zones, but keep goals attainable. Finally, the language describing the vision "must use superior imagery that touches follower's emotions" and be delivered with sincerity and passion.

Another aspect of IM is expressing confidence that goals will be achieved. Whether it concerns the goals of your vision, or other goals within the organization, continue to speak optimistically about the future outcome. When times get difficult, followers may have doubt even if they don't vocalize it…they need to hear words of optimism from a trusted leader, so they can refocus and face the challenges ahead. Being optimistic about the outcome only addresses part of the equation; you should also speak enthusiastically about the tasks to be accomplished in the short term.

Speaking with enthusiasm doesn't always have to be gentle…as Airmen we're all familiar with stern motivation. Often times we get bogged down by tasks or deadlines, and feel overwhelmed almost to the point of defeat. If a leader allows that to surface when speaking to subordinates, he or she will send a counterproductive message negatively affecting the subordinate's motivation. In order to maximize your IM, remember to remain confident when facing adversity and be that rock of stability for your subordinates.

> In 1970, Gene Kranz, flight director of the Apollo 13 mission, was faced with the near impossible task of getting the spacecraft back to Earth safely, after it was damaged by an onboard explosion. He led a team in a desperate struggle, finding alternate methods and innovative resources to power the navigation system before crew life support systems were depleted. Despite the odds, he remained steadfast while directing, focusing, and motivating them towards a solution. If you've seen the movie, you will remember the line, "Failure is not an option!"

Articulating a compelling vision for the future, and motivating followers to achieve that vision, is remarkable. If you are a leader who inspires others to "raise the bar" and invigorates them to meet and exceed those challenges, then you exhibit inspirational motivation. Changing our focus slightly, let's look at how leaders foster innovation through intellectual stimulation.

Intellectual Stimulation

The need for brainstorming ideas and finding creative solutions to problems has been essential in our enlisted culture for decades; Intellectual Stimulation (IS) is the part of transformational leadership that encourages followers to be innovative.

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Whenever current processes need to be reviewed for efficiency/effectiveness, situations arise that require a new approach, or existing paradigms are no longer valid, these instances should be opportunities to challenge followers and stimulate their minds. Encourage them to brainstorm solutions and exercise their resourcefulness. Provide them support as needed, but let them work through problems and gain confidence in their abilities to resolve issues at higher levels than they're already familiar with. For instance, present subordinates with a decision that you would normally make…it needs to be a challenge. Provide them with the same factors or information that you would have available. After they work through it, discuss the potential solutions or outcomes, and provide feedback as necessary.

An additional aspect of IS to consider…is properly valuing the follower's ideas. Just because you encouraged subordinates to work through a problem doesn't mean you valued their solution, so don't let them feel their work was in vain. Carrying it forward by presenting the solution as a group or individual effort is important to the leader-follower relationship. If you stand by their solution it not only shows loyalty, but that you value their intellect and judgment, and are willing to take risks based on their input; additionally, internal motivation has been elevated because they're trusted and empowered to make improvements and gained increased ownership of processes.

Creating intellectual stimulation for followers by encouraging innovation is a great way to transition their development into more expanded leadership roles; it provides bridging opportunities and is most effective in a group or team environment. Next…to complete our components of transformational behavior, we'll look at the most personalized behavior, individualized consideration.

Individualized Consideration

Getting to know subordinates and their ambitions, as well as their concerns and troubles, is inherent to our AF culture. SNCOs are expected to serve as mentors, which require supporting each person as an individual and providing guidance that is specific to their needs. We care about our people and want them to succeed…but how do they know we care? Individualized Consideration (IC) supports this aim when leaders treat others as individuals with different needs, abilities, and aspirations and not just as part of a group.

With the current ops tempo and constant pressure on mission focus, maintaining proper consideration for subordinates can become difficult. One of the ways we initiate IC is by taking time to visit with our people in their work environment, or taking them to lunch when appropriate and opening a dialogue, allowing them to speak freely. In this setting, you must be 'present' in the conversation and listen effectively; remember to be mindful of any non-verbal's that might convey impatience or disinterest. If you're genuinely interested in your subordinate, then be genuinely interested in the conversation, otherwise you will be doing more harm than good.

Forthcoming interactions with your subordinates should be more personal. For instance, being able to discuss and recall names of their family members, certain off-duty activities they enjoy,

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or the degree program in which they're enrolled are examples of showing individualized consideration. Acceptance of different or unique preferences to social interaction is also a critical dynamic; some people openly share a lot of personal information, while some prefer to hold back on providing details…so you should adjust your dialogue accordingly.

During these informal conversations, you become more in tune with your subordinate's needs, which leads to increased development and mentoring opportunities. IC involves showing empathy and compassion; as a result of such attention, followers become more willing to improve. Helping someone to develop their leadership capabilities is not a 'cookie cutter' approach. Since each person has different strengths and weaknesses, each will have different areas needing improvement. By spending individual time with your subordinates, you attain a greater awareness of their preferences, which helps you to personalize their mentoring and development.

Remember, transformational behavior reflects genuine concern for the follower's personal development and positively influences their self-worth. As a role model, you set the example for them with your appearance, your character, and your leadership…therefore your example should be idealized influence. Through inspirational motivation, you inspire them to generate internal motivation and achieve greater accomplishments by raising the bar! By challenging them to be innovative and resourceful, and valuing their efforts, you provide intellectual stimulation. And by taking the time to learn from your followers, (their needs and preferences), personalizing conversations with them, and genuinely showing that you care…you provide individualized consideration. If you reflect on your current leadership behaviors and see areas for improvement, start working to improve your capability for transformational leadership.

Up until this point, we have covered all of the FRL behaviors and behavioral components. Now that you understand how each one is properly utilized, in order to fully benefit from Full Range Leadership, let's clear up some common misunderstandings and misperceptions.

Common Misunderstandings and Misperceptions of FRL

Some people have unrealistic expectations about Transformational Leadership…thinking "To be a Transformational leader, I must use transformational behavior all of the time". For the development of your subordinates, you should exercise transformational leadership when you can, but understand there are many situations when transactional behavior is appropriate or necessary. Some think that using a less active leadership behavior is a failure on their part; based on the passive versus active relationship within the FRL spectrum. To clarify…if you become lazy as a leader, and inappropriately exhibit more passive leadership behaviors, then yes, it is a failure to lead effectively. But if you are fully engaged and properly assessing situations, using a more 'passive' FRL behavior might be what you need to motivate your subordinate.

Another misunderstanding is that these behaviors are exclusive, where you can only utilize them one at a time. If you did, you would be restricting the potential of your leadership. The beauty of FRL is that you can combine behaviors to suit the dynamics of a situation. As Airmen, we know that just because you're mentoring someone does not mean that you can't discipline the person if they're out of line. If a subordinate responds better to transactional feedback rather than individualized consideration, then use the transactions, but that does not mean you have to forgo the other aspects of transformational leadership. Remember, the intent of FRL is to have a

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full range of leadership behaviors, which can be adapted to your respective leader-follower situation and the factors impacting the situation.

For further clarification, let's address using the terms Laissez-faire leader versus Laissez-faire behavior, and the same comparison for Transactional and Transformational. Laissez-faire leader does not mean the same as Laissez-faire behavior. Laissez-faire leaders frequently appear disengaged from their followers and do not normally make an effort to provide guidance or support. They might demonstrate transactional or even transformational behavior at times, but are known for exhibiting/overusing laissez-faire behavior a majority of the time, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Transactional leaders are known for their predominant use of transactional behavior, although they may demonstrate other behaviors at times. Lastly, transformational leaders are recognized by their use of transformational behavior, yet they will demonstrate other FRL behaviors as necessary.

This final point addresses those individuals who feel transformational leadership will not apply in their duty environment. The misperception of transformational behavior being a softer approach to leadership turns some people away from employing it, which is unfortunate because transformational behavior does not have to be soft…to be effective. "Transformational leadership gets followers to move out of their comfort zones to develop to their full potential." Even though the culture within a career field may require more use of transactional leadership to maintain control measures, a resourceful SNCO can still figure out ways to incorporate transformational leadership within that subculture.

We cannot cover every misunderstanding within the scope of this chapter…let's face it…everyone will have their own perceptions. Reading about each behavior and behavioral component can lead to a compartmental view of FRL, which is restrictive. The takeaway for you to understand…is realizing the latitude and flexibility afforded by FRL, which is greater than any previous leadership theory could provide. As we near the end of this study, let's look at how proper use of FRL can impact subordinate and SNCO effectiveness.

Summary

Full Range Leadership is a beneficial resource, like a toolbox of leadership behaviors to utilize at your discretion. For maximum affect…you need to know how and when to use each tool properly. Likewise, these tools can be used separately or in conjunction with each other as driven by circumstances.

FRL behaviors are not new to a USAF SNCO; these should already be familiar to you. FRL organizes these behaviors in a way that provides more clarity to their intent and purpose. It's up to you, the leader, to decide how you will motivate, inspire, and lead your followers. Remember…FRL requires leaders to consider all components of the leadership system when determining appropriate leadership behavior. Not just the core elements (leader, follower, and situation)…but take the factors (personalities, skills, styles, opportunities, challenges, rewards, and consequences)…and the constraints (resources and time) into consideration as well. This involves getting to know your peers and subordinates, staying current on changing dynamics within the organization and duty environments, along with identifying areas of improvement for yourself and your subordinates.

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Recapping this chapter…we began with a refresher on certain theories that attempted to capture the essence of leadership and ways to approach leadership situations. Next, you learned that FRL, which grew from the earlier theories, aligns leadership behaviors into a spectrum with three fundamental categories: Laissez-faire, Transactional, and Transformational. Laissez-faire is the most passive leadership behavior, which is basically an absence of leadership. Transactional behavior, comprised of MBE-P, MBE-A, and CR, uses external motivation in the form of rewards/consequences to influence follower behavior. Transformational behavior, comprised of II, IM, IS, and IC, is intended to cultivate a follower's personal development, and stimulate his or her internal motivation. This was followed by a brief synopsis of some misunderstandings and misperceptions that people have about FRL.

You already have experience as a leader…FRL provides you with ways to concentrate your leadership behaviors where they will be most effective…make them count!

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Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

Kirton's Adaption-Innovation Theory

Inside this Study Guide:

Adaption-Innovation Theory Deconstructed

- AI Basic Principles
- Problem A and Problems B
- Proper Terms
- Perceptions
- Tendencies of the More Adaptive and More Innovative

Cognitive Gap, Bridgers, and Coping Behavior

- Cognitive Gap
- Bridgers
- Coping Behavior

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Adaption-Innovation Theory Deconstructed

As a member of the American Profession of Arms and senior leader in your organization, you might be put into situations where you'll have to manage large teams. Your ability to understand cognitive diversity via Adaption-Innovation (AI) Theory can have an impact on whether or not your mission succeeds or fails. This 'ability' is nurtured in understanding AI theory.

In this section, you'll deconstruct the AI theory by breaking it down into three parts. First, you'll look at AI Basic Principles. Afterwards you'll see the Proper Terms and Proper Perceptions using AI Theory. Finally, you'll look at the Tendencies of the More Adaptive and the Tendencies of the More Innovative. Now that you know what will be covered, let's get started by focusing on the first part of understanding AI theory…AI Basic Principles.

AI Basic Principles

The purpose of this section is to provide a basic understanding of the theory in order to help you better understand yourself and those you lead…as they say, leadership begins with self-awareness. AI theory has some basic assumptions. According to, *The Catalytic Nature of Science: Implications for Scientific Problem Solving in the 21st Century*, Kathryn W. Jablokow says, "AI theory is based on the assumption that all people solve problems and are creative. However, as individuals, our problem solving {style} does differ." The AI theory sharply distinguishes between "level" and "style" of problem solving; therefore the theory is only concerned with the "style." Let's look at some definitions of level and style.

According to *The Substance of Our Styles* by Kathryn Jablokow, "Problem solving level (also called cognitive level) refers to a person's mental resources for solving problems; it's a measure of a person's cognitive capacity, or how much a person knows about different things. It is important to understand and remember that both styles (adaption and innovation) are found at every level— from the highest to the lowest. According to *Reducing Conflict and Increasing Productivity Within International Extension and Agricultural Teams Using Kirton's Adaption-Innovation (KAI) Theory*, Cheri Winton Brodeur, says that "Cognitive style is defined as an individual's preferred method of problem solving to bring about change." These style differences which lie on a normally distributed continuum, range from strongly adaptive on one end to strongly innovative on the other end and can be measured by the Kirton Adaption-Innovation inventory (or KAI). The KAI gives you a precise score on the continuum; however, you probably know people with more adaptive and more innovative tendencies (discussed later in this section).

Here's an example of the difference of level and style: Level is often times measured by different kinds of tests like an IQ test…Style is measured by the KAI and only looks at the preferred method of problem solving. It is important to remember that the AI theory is only concerned with the style. You may know of people that you work with that solve problems with a different perspective than you (say they may like more of the details)…they may have a different style than you. Do you prefer to solve problems methodically? Would you rather solve problems without the constraints of structure? You might like to have the details to solve the problem methodically, but others may not…that's your style!

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Problem A and Problem B

SNCOs interact with people to solve a myriad of problems every day and to be truly successful at solving different kinds of problems. Two different kinds of problems in AI theory can be labeled problem A and problem B. According to Substance of our styles by Jablokow "Problem A is the original problem that a group has come together to solve…Problem B is the automatically inherited problem of managing differences among team members. Leaders must be able to effectively manage the diversity that stems from people whose AI score ranges from highly adaptive to the highly innovative and every point in between on the AI continuum.

Here's an example of problem A and problem B: You have been given the task to create a new EPR checklist for your unit. You form a team of the NCOs in your unit. They begin to propose different designs to use to build the new checklist. There are strains developing within the team. They seem to bicker a lot and lose track of the objective. It appears they will never develop the new checklist. What problems do you see? You could label them problem A: creating a new EPR checklist; and problem B: managing the differences among team members as they work toward creating a new EPR checklist.

Why should you be concerned with both problem A and problem B? SNCOs typically work in teams on the job. Teams typically solve problems better than individuals solve and therefore, are seen as superior in handling complex problems involving intertwining competencies and expertise. Teams are superior only if they can solve the problems for which they were created. Teams are superior only if they can stay focused on problem A. Teams that are consumed with problem B will never solve problem A. Can SNCOs manage teams better with an understanding of AI theory? The short answer is "yes" if you understand problem A and problem B situations!

Leaders must learn to solve difficult problems that are complex and hard to define. Because change is constant, problem solving has to change and flex with the situations as they develop. A vibrant solution in one situation would be a disaster in another. Problem solving teams rely on blending different talents in different combinations in order to reach viable solutions at the strategic levels of the Air Force. The AI theory helps you understand attributes that enhance the team. The AI Basic Principles provides a good foundation to the theory; however, Proper Terms and Perceptions are also important. With this in mind, let's take a look at the Proper Terms and Perceptions for the AI theory.

Proper Terms

Although people tend to use the terms adaptors and innovators when discussing AI theory, according Curtis Friedel and Rick D. Rudd in their article, Relationships between Students' Engagement and the Dissimilar Cognitive Styles of their Undergraduate Instructors, "It is important to note that the terms adaptors and innovators are only to distinguish two differing cognitive styles, when in actuality, cognitive styles refer to ***being more adaptive*** or ***more innovative*** in the context of a situation." These are better because they keep us from labeling others as only adaptive or only innovative. The fact is, although your position on the continuum remains stable over time, how you are perceived is relative and changes depending on who (individuals/groups) you are interacting with. To help you understand this better, let's look at the perceptions of being more adaptive or more innovative.

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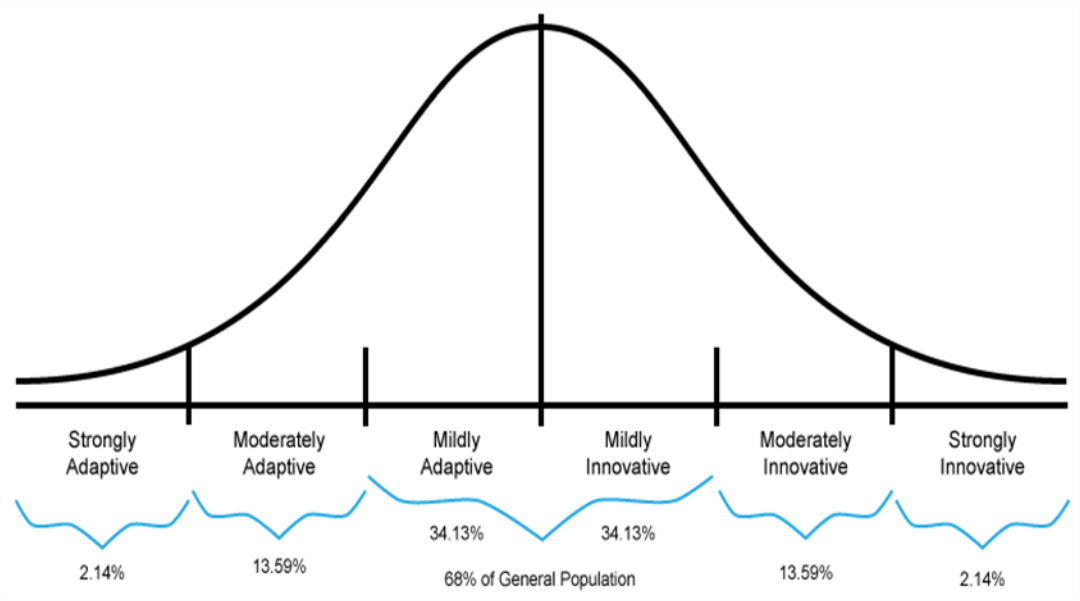
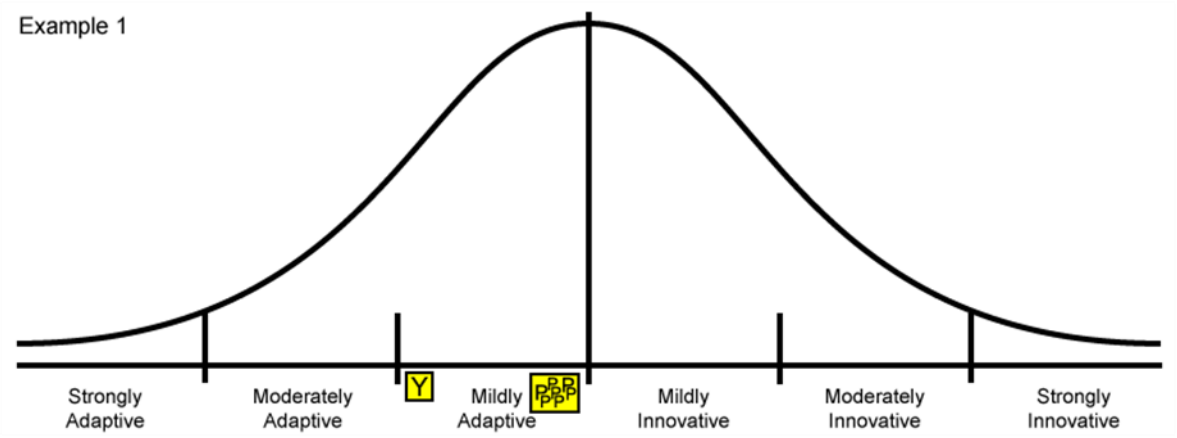
Perceptions

Let's explore this notion of perception using the examples below. The figure below shows the distribution of style preferences along the AI continuum. All numbers refer to the general population relative to a normal distribution of the responses (bell curve):

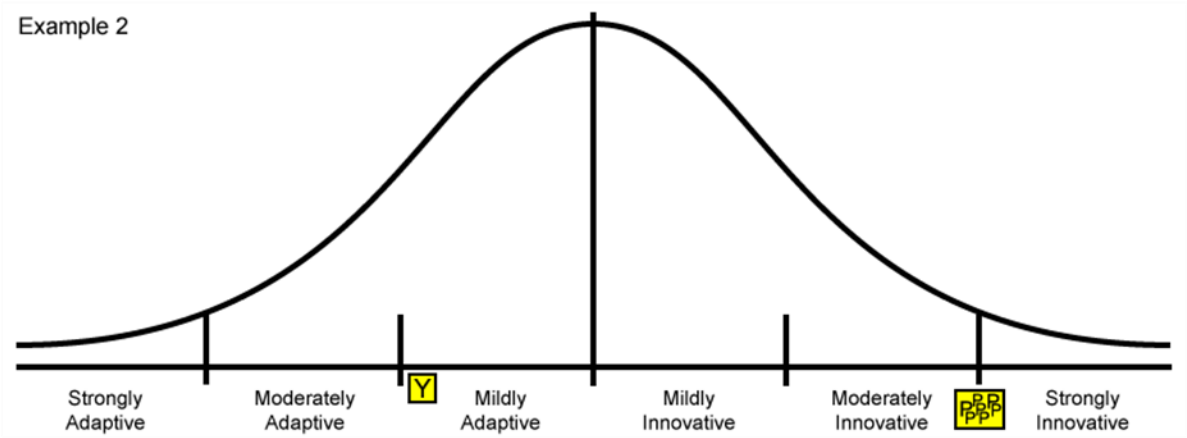
- 68% fall between mildly adaptive and mildly innovative (34% on each side of mean)
- 26% are moderately adaptive or moderately innovative (13.59% each)
- 5% are strongly adaptive or strongly innovative (2.14% each)



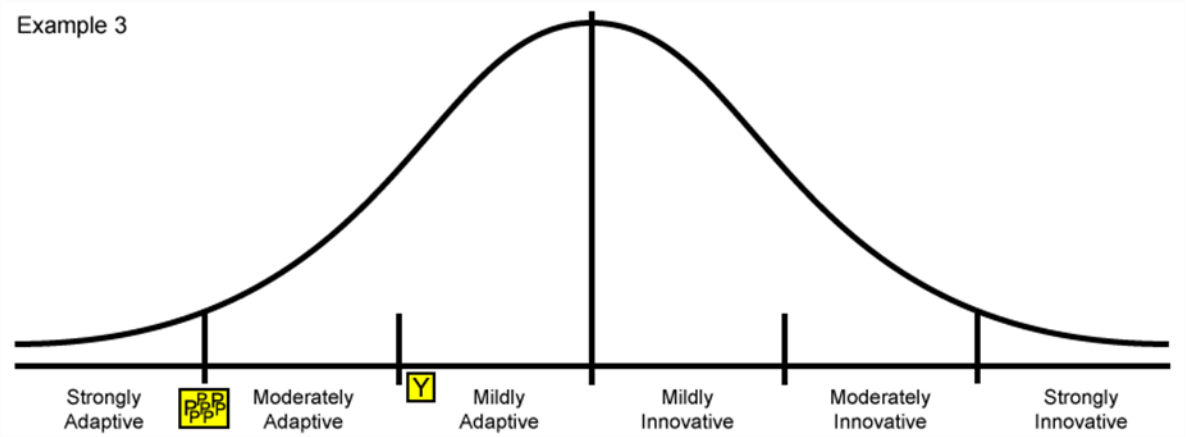


Example 1: In example 1, hypothetically, let's say you (Y) are in the Mildly Adaptive area of the continuum and the people (P) you work with are very close to your position on the continuum. These people perceive you (and you perceive them) as being very similar, e.g. all of

you take a very similar approach to problem solving. You may also notice that it is easy to communicate with the members in this group.



Example 2: In example 2 above, although your position (Y) on the continuum has not changed, the people you interact with (P) fall in the Moderately and Strongly Innovative areas of the continuum. According to Reducing Conflict and Increasing Productivity Within International Extension and Agricultural Teams Using Kirton's Adaption-Innovation (KAI) Theory, Cheri Winton Brodeur, says innovators frequently see adaptors as being inflexible and intolerant of ambiguity and adaptors often perceive innovators as being risky and abrasive. You may also notice some challenges in communicating (getting your thoughts across) to this group. For example, you may want to communicate a lot of details and structure but because others in the group are more innovative, they may not want or need the details and structure.



Example 3: Once again in example 3 above, your position (Y) has not changed, but this time, the people you must interact with (P) fall below you in the Strongly Adaptive area of the continuum. This means they will more than likely perceive you as risky and abrasive just as you perceived the people in example 2. Again, you may also notice some challenges in communicating (getting your thoughts across) to this group. For example, you may want to communicate few details and structure but because others in the group are more adaptive, they may need the details and structure to solve the problem.

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So what are the "take-aways" or the "value" of these examples?

- First, you should surmise your place on the continuum using the tendencies listed below.
- Second, it is equally important that you understand how others perceive you, and why they perceive you that way. Remember it is relative to where you and others fall on the continuum.
- Third, although large gaps between styles means greater chances of conflict (i.e. problem B), it also offers greater potential/ability to solve problems (problem A) because of cognitive diversity. Regardless of where we fall on the continuum, we can all be equally creative, which also means we can all be equally good or equally bad at handling change.

Before moving on, let's be clear about problem A and problem B:

Problem A is the original problem that a group has come together to solve.

Problem B is the automatically inherited problem of managing differences among team members.

In describing the Proper Terms and Perceptions above, we used words and phrases such as inflexible, intolerant of ambiguity, risky, and abrasive In reality, there are many more words used to describe the tendencies of the more adaptive and more innovative. See if you recognize any of them in yourself.

Tendencies of the More Adaptive and More Innovative

Tendencies of the More Adaptive

According to, *Substance of Our Styles* by Jablokow, "Because of their preference for working with structure, adaptive problem solvers prefer to approach problems methodically and to seek solutions to problems in tried and true ways. They are often seen as precise, reliable, efficient, and disciplined; they are masters of detail when it comes to an established system, with a sharp eye toward its enabling features, but sometimes a blind eye toward its limitations." People that have this preference are very good at making improvements to existing systems…that's the value of people with this preference. You may know people that are like this. An example might be someone who really likes the details of working with statistics or financial management

Tendencies of the More Innovative

Again according to Substance of our styles by Jablokow "In contrast, innovative problem solvers are liable to think tangentially and to question a problem's definition and core assumptions because of their preference for working with less structure. They prefer to approach problems from unexpected angles, and they may be seen by more adaptive people as being undisciplined, imprecise, disruptive, and disorganized. People that have this preference are very good at completely changing an entire system…that's the value of people with this preference. You may know people that are like this too. An example might be someone who really likes the freedom of working in a "research and development" unit.

Both of them, the more innovative and the more adaptive, bring a lot to the table…in different ways. So how do you surmise whether someone is more adaptive or more innovative? According to The Innovator's Toolkit, Technique 11 – Cognitive Style, retrieved from http://www.innovatorstoolkit.com/content/technique-11-cognitive-style, you can ask the following questions about team members to determine if someone is more adaptive or more innovative.

- Does this person tend to question established rules, assumptions, and structures?
- Does this person become frustrated or annoyed with details?
- Does this person tend to have a steady stream of ideas without too much concern about how they're implemented?

If the answers to the above questions are yes, then this person is more innovative than adaptive. If the answers are no, then the person is more adaptive.

So now that you know how to determine if someone is more adaptive or more innovative, let's look at what we covered in this section. In this section you deconstructed the AI theory. In order to gain appropriate knowledge about AI theory you began by looking at the AI Basics…AI Basic Principles concerning the differences in level and style, the style differences, which lie on a normally distributed continuum from strongly adaptive on one end to strongly innovative on the other end, and problem A versus problem B. Then, you covered the Proper Terms and Proper Perceptions using AI Theory, which explained the importance of using the terms more adaptive and more innovative, and also explained the importance of "it's all relative where you and others fall on the AI spectrum." Finally, you learned about the Tendencies of the More Adaptive and More Innovative which, among others, look at the need for structure or the need for less structure. Both approaches are valuable…and it's important to remember that you need both the more adaptive and the more innovative on your team to solve problems.

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Cognitive Gap, Bridgers, and Coping Behavior

Cognitive Gap:

According to R. Kurt Barnhart in his article, Adaption and Innovation in Flight Training – The Benefits of Cognitive Diversity, "The differences in cognitive style preferences are known as cognitive gaps and must be managed in order for there to be effectiveness in dealing with the original problem…cognitive gaps can exist between two people, two groups of people, or between a person and the requirements for a particular task." According to Kirton (2003/2011), the larger the cognitive gap the greater the potential for conflict and the greater the potential for problem solving. Kirton's ideas on potential for conflict and potential for problem solving follows with the examples of each under the potential for problem solving section:

Potential for Conflict

- **Small Gaps:** A difference in cognitive styles becomes noticeable when the distance between two individuals (or two groups) falls on the extreme edges of a style (e.g. moderately innovative). The advantage of this small gap is there is very little, if any, conflict. If conflict does occur, both individuals find it easy to manage. The disadvantage of this gap is like-minded thinking can lead to less than optimal solutions.

- **Medium Sized Gaps:** These are when one individual (or group) has one style and the other person or group has an adjacent style (e.g. mildly adaptive interacting with a mildly innovative). With this difference, individuals find they must consciously manage the relationship due to minor, but very noticeable conflict caused by their difference in styles. The advantage here is that different perspectives lead to better solutions to problem A (i.e. the task at hand). The disadvantage is that individuals must expend some energy and time coping and managing the relationship (i.e. resolution of problem B).

- **Large Gaps:** These are when one individual (or group) has one style and the other person or group has a style that is separated by one style (e.g. strongly adaptive interacting with a mildly adaptive). When the cognitive gap is at the extreme ends of the ranges for the groups, these individuals (or groups) experience a great deal of conflict and need increasing amounts of coping behavior to manage/maintain the relationship. Once again the advantage of this cognitive gap is a wider range of thinking that can lead to outstanding solutions to problem A. The disadvantage is that individuals usually end up expending way more energy and time coping and trying to fix problem B than they expend on solving problem A. In many cases, without help, these individuals or groups may never even get to problem A.

- **Significant Gaps:** When the cognitive gap is separated by two or more styles (e.g. strongly adaptive interacting with a mildly innovative), the effort required for successful coping rises exponentially with the size of the gap. Moreover, coping becomes even more difficult when this gap lies between two people, one of whom is the boss or when the rewards and penalties for success or failure are high.

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Potential for Problem Solving

The more adaptive and more innovative are equally good at solving problems…but optimal problem solving results from both adaptive and innovative people working on the problem together because it brings all sides (perspectives) of a problem to light. Although this brings problem B into the mix, leaders who manage this cognitive diversity effectively end up with the best possible solutions.

Because all organizations naturally cycle through periods of steadiness-change-steadiness, they need a mix of more adaptive and more innovative people to help with the myriad of challenges that stem from this cycle.

Here's a non-example of creating a mix of more adaptive and more innovative people for problem solving: Imagine a military organization comprised of only adaptive people. We'd have an organization full of people who are extremely good at solving problems by staying within the organization's paradigm, working within the existing structure, rules, and policies, and by ensuring they had group consensus on every decision before implementing any change. This organization would have great efficiency and operate like a well-oiled machine…at first. However, as any SNCO can confirm, nothing in the United State Air Force is static for long. Missions change and when they do, the organization must be able to change and adapt as well. Organizations with only adaptive people handle small, incremental changes just fine…but major changes send it into a death spiral.

Here's another non-example of creating a mix of more adaptive and more innovative people for problem solving: Imagine a military organization comprised of only innovative people. We'd have an organization full or people who are extremely good at solving problems by breaking the rules, working outside the existing structure, rules, and policies, and by having little or no concern for group consensus before implementing change. Although this organization might experience major success when new, it would not be very efficient in the long run because of the constant change and very little rule following (i.e. little stability).

In summary, organizations with only adaptive or innovative people quickly perish (or fail in executing the mission). The take away here is optimal problem solving results from both the more adaptive and the more innovative people working on the problem together which also requires effective management of the cognitive gap (i.e. problem B). An effective method for managing cognitive gap is through the use of *bridgers*.

Bridgers

According to Kirton, (2003/2011), "There are many ways to assist the closing or avoiding of cognitive gaps." Ways to manage cognitive gap include changing jobs, changing the job, position or duties, delegating or reassigning team roles, reorganizing teams, and reassigning certain members. Although these methods may work occasionally, as members of the military, we seldom have the luxury of changing jobs or reassigning people. Thus, we must find another way to manage the cognitive gap. That's where bridgers come in. Kirton's ideas on bridgers follows:

Bridging is a social role that requires:

- human relation skills

- the bridger to be acceptable to those they bridge
- a willingness to fulfill the role

To be a successful bridger, one needs to be willing to undertake the role and ideally have a cognitive preference (style) between those to be bridged. For example, a moderately adaptive person might help bridge the gap between a strongly adaptive person and mildly adaptive person. Likewise a moderately innovative person might help bridge the gap between a mildly innovative person and strongly innovative person. Another example might be a mildly innovative person bridging between a strongly adaptive person and a strongly innovative person.

Although being in the area between those to be bridged is ideal, bridging is possible for people whose style is outside the styles of the people who are interacting. For example, a strong innovator could bridge between a strong adaptor and a mild innovator. Successful bridgers help those being bridged understand each other's approach through the use of interpersonal skills, active listening, and effective questioning techniques. These help both parties understand why and how the other party approaches problem solving and they help both parties understand each other's strengths and weakness, which helps both parties expend more effort on problem A. Bridging is reaching out to people in the team and helping them to be part of it so that they may contribute even if their contribution is outside mainstream. Bridgers are important in maintaining group cohesion and can significantly reduce problem B by redirecting group energy to solving problem A. The bridger fills roles of counselor, mediator, and negotiator. Bridging is a learned skill, one that SNCOs must learn to be effective…there are no "official bridgers" as it is a learned skill.

Coping Behavior

Having a bridger certainly helps when there is a large cognitive gap between two people, a person and a group, or two groups of people. According to Samual Philip and Kathryn Jablokow in their paper, Psychological Inertia and the Role of Idea Generation Techniques in the Early Stages of Engineering Design, "When one's behavior is not in accord with one's preferred style, it is called coping behavior." However, there are times when all of us must behave (i.e. problem solve) outside of our preferred style. Why do we need coping behavior? We need coping behavior because we cannot always solve problems using our preferred style. There are two main reasons for operating outside our preferred style. The first reason is the nature of the problem and the second reason is the nature of the solution (desired by oneself or by authority).

The Cost of Coping Behavior

It is important to understand that everyone copes at some point, and that working outside one's preferred style causes stress. When coping, adaptive people must deal with less structure and risk. Innovative people have their difficulties when problem solving in adaptive

modes/environments. They must constantly remind themselves that to survive successfully in an established group, they need to master the rules and operate intelligently and creatively within consensually agreed constraints just as the more adaptive people do.

We can cope for long periods of time when the behavior required is not too far away from our preferred style. But, the further we move away from our preferred style, the harder it is to continue coping. If we are unable to walk away from a situation for reasons outside our control, and must continue coping, the effort takes a toll on our mental and physical health. Eventually, the effort becomes so psychologically costly (stressful) that, regardless of the consequences, we lose our motive and switch off our coping. When this happens, we see people make life-changing choices in order to get away from the situation so they can return to state where they can use their preferred style. When people switch off their coping, we often see a significant impact…changing career fields, no-notice retirements, separation from the service without benefits, divorces, etc.

Why do people cope?

If operating outside our preferred style is stressful, why do we do it? The answer is *motive,* which generates additional energy and discounts additional discomfort/stress until either the task is complete, or it becomes possible to solve the problem within limits closer to one's preferred style. Of course, if there is no opportunity, then there is no motive. Most dictionaries define opportunity as, "An appropriate or favorable time, occasion, or situation favorable for attainment of a goal." Also, most dictionaries define motive as, "An emotion, desire, physiological need, or similar impulse that causes one to take action." When motive is switched off, coping behavior is also switched off!

SNCOs must Create the Right Environments by Understanding Coping Behavior

Rarely do we get to work in an environment where we can operate entirely within our preferred style. Therefore, as enlisted leaders, we must recognize that actual behavior is always a blend of one's preferred style and coping behavior. Effective leaders create environments where they only ask for minimum coping behavior most of the time and only have to ask for maximum coping behavior in times of crisis.

Summary

This lesson began by deconstructing the AI theory. In order to gain appropriate knowledge about AI theory you began by looking at the AI Basics…AI Basic Principles concerning the differences in level and style, the style differences, which lie on a normally distributed continuum from strongly adaptive on one end to strongly innovative on the other end, and problem A versus problem B. Then, you covered the Proper Terms and Proper Perceptions using AI Theory, which explained the importance of using the terms more adaptive and more innovative, and also explained the importance of "it's all relative where you and others fall on the AI spectrum." Finally, you learned about the Tendencies of the More Adaptive and More Innovative which, among others, look at the need for structure or the need for less structure. Both approaches are valuable.

You also learned how to use AI theory. Understanding cognitive gap will help you manage assignments that you give your subordinates. If you are managing a large team, you would want

to consider using bridgers or be a bridger yourself. You should consider coping behavior and make sure you create an environment where subordinates are only required minimum coping behavior most of the time and only require maximum coping behavior in times of crisis.

In today's environment, we face problem solving on a weekly and sometimes daily basis. For senior leaders, using techniques discussed in this lesson are essential to today's changing environment. By understanding and using AI concepts, SNCOs can be better positioned to lead their organizations and ensure successful mission accomplishment. However, more effective management of problems begins with you! How you use the ideas in this lesson: evaluating whether your team members are more adaptive or more innovative; cognitive gap; bridgers; and coping behavior may very well determine how your problem solving efforts fail or succeed.

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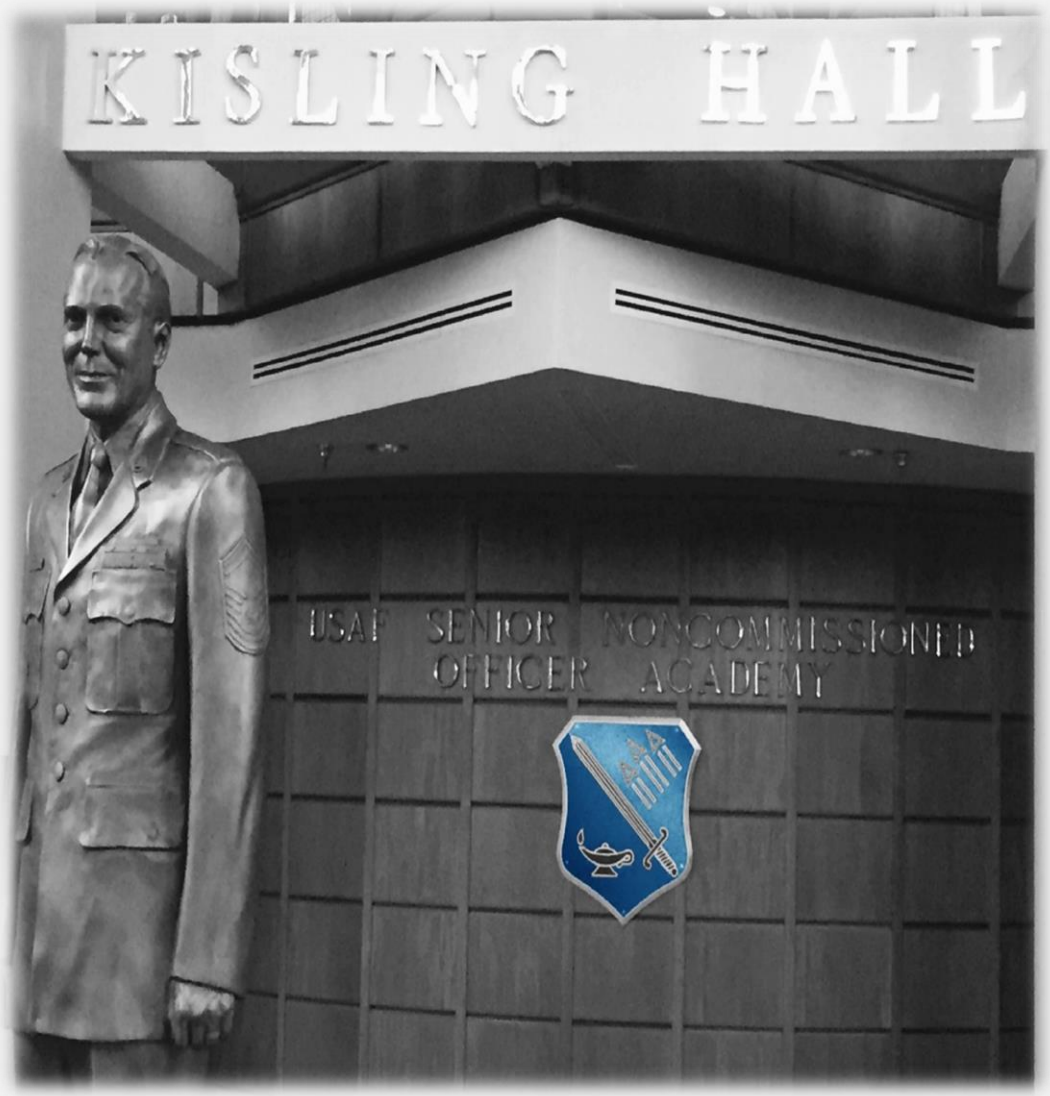
Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide



Ethical Leadership

Inside this Study Guide:

Introduction to Ethical Leadership

- Key Terms
- Ethical Codes
- Ethical Dilemmas

Ethical Behavior

- Ethical Traps
- Ethical Principles
- Ethical Behavior and Organization Climates

Ethical Decision Making

- Five Steps of Ethical Decision Making

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Introduction to Ethical Leadership

As a SNCO, leader, and military professional, it's imperative you conduct yourself with the highest degree of professionalism every day. Whether you direct a small team, are in charge of a large group within the organization, or fill a leadership role in your personal life (parent, coach, etc.), people depend on you to lead in an ethical way. Your behavior and the motives behind them should never create the appearance of impropriety.

Every day, SNCOs make ethical decisions that address issues between what's right, wrong or the lesser of two evils. You may be saying to yourself, "what does 'ethics' really mean?" Or "why is ethical behavior important?" The way these questions are answered can have a direct effect on the decisions you make every day.

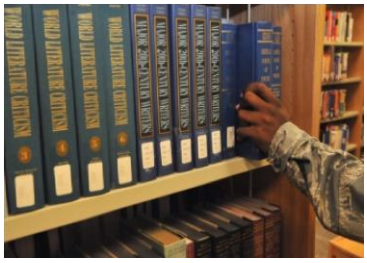
You'll begin this lesson by going over key terms associated with ethical leadership. Next, you'll review the ethical codes adopted by the Air Force to help ensure proper ethical behavior. You'll finish by exploring ethical dilemmas, their potential causes, and ways to address them. However, before you get started, there's one important thing you should know about this lesson…the intent.

The intent of this lesson is to help you understand ethical leadership: what it is, why's it's important and the steps you'll need to take in order to make ethical decisions. You'll most likely read some information you agree with, and some you don't…that's okay. The objective is to help you understand that in some situations there are no absolute "right" or "wrong" answers… there will be ambiguity. In leadership, sometimes you may have to operate in the "gray areas", areas where there's less standardization and clarity. What's important is that when confronted with these situations, you're equipped to apply ethical leadership to guide your actions, decisions and behaviors. Now that you know where this lesson will go, let's start with the key terms.

Key Terms

Ethics

The study of what we understand to be good and right behavior and of how we judge those behaviors. It's a set of standards of conduct that guide decisions and actions based on duties derived from core values. We characterize people as ethical when they act in ways that are consistent with societal moral values. In other words, the ethics of our decisions and actions are defined societally, not individually.



Military Ethics

Values and expected rules of the profession that are appropriate to actions taken within the military environment (Gabriel, 2003). The American military ethic is designed to put principle above self-interest. Personal integrity and moral courage are the keys to viability of that ethic (Flammer, 1976).

Ethical Behavior

Acting responsibly in difficult and/or complex situations; with quality character and judgment.

Ethical Relativism

The belief that nothing is objectively right or wrong. The definition of right or wrong depends on the prevailing view of a particular individual, culture or historical period.

Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership combines ethical decision-making and ethical behavior, and occurs in both an individual and organizational context. A major responsibility of a leader is to make ethical decisions and behave in ethical ways, and to see that the organization understands and practices its ethical codes.

Ethical Dilemma

Situations where one is forced to choose between two alternatives (both alternatives can be unfavorable and/or less right and more right or less wrong and more wrong).

Morals

Values that we attribute to a system of beliefs that help us define right from wrong, good versus bad. Typically, they get their authority from something outside the individual; they come from a higher being or authority.

Ethically Minded Organization

An ethically minded organization exemplifies professionalism, humility, self-control, personal discipline, and values.

Values

The core beliefs we hold regarding what's right and fair in terms of our actions and our interactions with others; what individuals believe to be of worth and importance in their life.

Some of these terms might not be new to you…some you might have seen for the first time. Either way, once you progress further in the lesson, you should have a solid foundation on which to build your understanding of ethical leadership on. Let's keep building by covering Ethical Codes.

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Ethical Codes

Ethical codes are intended to be central guides and references for users in support of day-to-day decision making. They're meant to clarify an organization's mission, values and principles, linking them with standards of professional conduct. There are ethical codes of conduct widely accepted by the Air Force that enable you to make proper decisions when faced with various ethical dilemmas. These codes include the Air Force Core Values, the Oath of Enlistment, Air Force Instructions, and the Uniformed Code of Military Justice.

DOD 5500.7-R, *Joint Ethics Regulation* and AFI 36-2618, *The Enlisted Force Structure* provide additional guidance pertaining to acceptable ethical conduct. These codes provide indispensable guidance making it possible for you to act and behave in an ethical manner in any given situation.

The Air Force Core Values

The Air Force Core Values exist for all members of the Air Force family. They're for all to read, to understand, to live by, and to cherish. The core values are more than minimum standards…they remind us what it takes to get the mission done and inspire us to do our very best at all times.

The United States Air Force has clearly defined its identity by these three simple values: ***Integrity First, Service Before Self,*** and ***Excellence In All We Do***. Each of these core values is further defined by virtues (*presented in the POA & the SNCO chapter*) we must practice and demonstrate in our daily lives. Consistently practicing these virtues should result in habits of honorable thought and action producing an Air Force Professional. Air Force professionalism is a shared belief in, and a commitment to, honorable service based on our Air Force Core Values.

The Oath of Enlistment

Federal law requires everyone who enlists or re-enlists in the Armed Forces of the United States to take the enlistment oath. The Oath of Enlistment into the United States Armed Forces is administered by any commissioned officer to any person enlisting or re-enlisting for a term of service into any branch of the military.

"I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God."

(***Note:*** *According to AFI 36-2606, "Airmen may omit the words 'So help me God', if desired for personal reasons")*

Air Force Instruction

An Air Force Instruction (AFI) is a documented instruction for members of the United States Air Force intended for use by active duty, guard, and reserve members and associated civilians. In almost all cases, an AFI is a form of general order; violation of the AFI by an Airman subject to it can be punished under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. It's one of many forms of directives published by the Air Force Departmental Publishing Office. Air Force members are required to know, understand, and implement AFIs which apply to their duties and responsibilities.

Some examples of an Air Force Instruction include:

- **AFI 36-2903, *Dress and Appearance of Air Force Personnel.*** It provides responsibilities and standards for dress and personal appearance of all Air Force personnel. It applies to all active duty Air Force members, members of the Air Force Reserve Command and members of the Air National Guard, retired and separated members.
- **AFI 36-2618, *The Enlisted Force Structure.*** It establishes leadership and development levels, responsibilities, and official terms of address for enlisted Airmen. It also describes special senior noncommissioned officer positions and standardizes duty titles. Additionally, this instruction includes the Air Force Institutional Competencies which serve as the common language for force development. This instruction applies to all enlisted members of the US Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command.

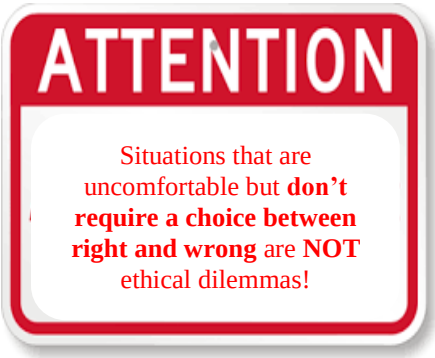
The Uniform Code of Military Justice

The Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) is the foundation of military law in the United States. It applies to all members of the uniformed services of the United States. DOD 5500.7-R, *Joint Ethics Regulation*, provides a single source of standards of ethical conduct and ethics guidance, including direction in the areas of financial and employment disclosure systems, post-employment rules, enforcement, and training.

These codes are tools that can assist you in making decisions that are mostly black and white…right or wrong. However, you should keep in mind that these codes may not be a catchall solution for every situation you face, especially when dealing with issues in the 'gray' area. Let's take a look at these issues, or ethical dilemmas, and ways you can address them.

Ethical Dilemmas

As a leader, there may be times when you're challenged with ethical dilemmas. Remember as you learned earlier, an ethical dilemma is a situation where you're forced to choose between two alternatives, neither of which may result in an ethically acceptable outcome. What causes an ethical dilemma? Well, there are three general causes: *uncertainty*, *competing values*, or *potential harm*.



Uncertainty

Ethical dilemmas could stem from uncertainty as a result of not having all of the facts pertaining to a situation or because you may have little to no experience dealing with a particular situation. Uncertainty also becomes a factor when there may not be a ***clearly*** established policy, procedure, or rule for handling the situation…there's no established *right or wrong* way.

Competing Values

*According to the **POA & the SNCO** lesson, your inability to resolve a values conflict (or adhere to our professional standards) can have a negative impact on your status within the POA. Failure to resolve these conflicts can move you to the left side of the Continuum of Professionalism (less professional).*

Competing values can create ethical dilemmas for some individuals. Remember, you learned in the previous section, values are the core beliefs we hold regarding what's right and fair in terms of our actions and our interactions with others; what an individual believes to be of worth and importance in their life. Because values shape our actions, decisions, and behaviors, they play a central role in professionalism. Unfortunately, even when we strive to adopt and internalize our service's core values, there are times when our personal values conflict with those of the institution, as well as those of our subordinates, peers, and supervisors. However, the mark of a true professional is maintaining high professional standards despite conflicting values. As a senior leader, you should find ways to work through values conflicts while remaining focused on the greater good of the organization and its people.

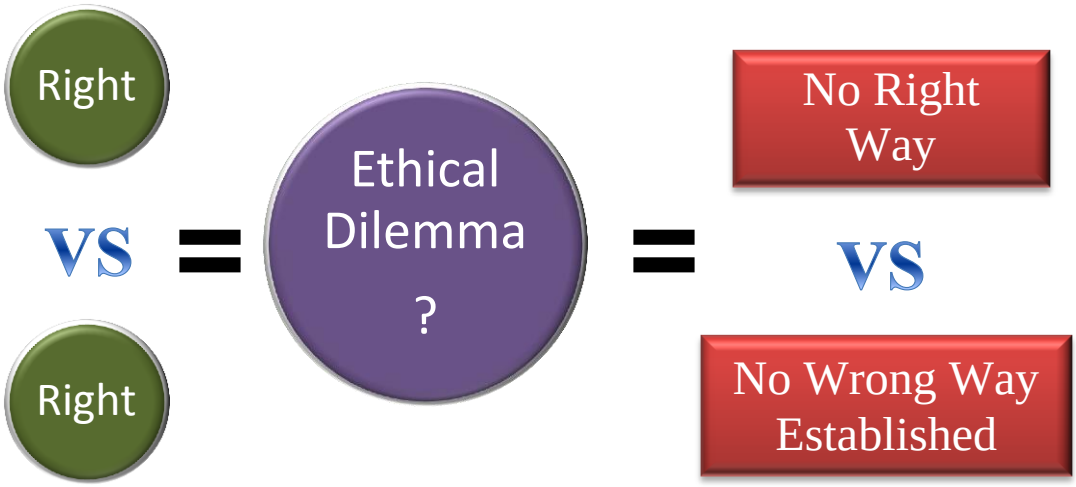
Potential Harm

An ethical dilemma could also stem from potential harm caused by a decision you made. Or in other words, the intentional and unintentional (good or bad) consequences caused by your actions. As a leader you should always attempt to anticipate and consider the *second* and *third* order consequences when making decisions. People generally focus on the immediate result of a decision; the first order consequence of the decision. However, every decision has second and third order consequences, i.e., outcomes that are different than the first desired outcome, yet are directly related to the initial decision. It's important to think through the first, second and possibly third order consequences of your decisions before you make the first decision. Will you always be able to see the future consequences? Maybe not, but it takes a lot more resources (time, people and money) to deal with unattended consequences than it does to consider and plan for their

*According to the **Critical Thinking** lesson, you can use the Reasoning Element of **Implications** and Universal Intellectual Standard of **Depth** in order to think through the consequences of an ethical dilemma and consider all significant factors before taking action. They should help you rationally identify and address potential consequences.*

possibility up front.

By increasing your understanding of the key terms associated with ethical leadership and your knowledge of what ethical leaders should consider when faced with an ethical dilemma, you should be in a better position to adhere to (and ensure others adhere to) the standards that guide your actions, decisions and behaviors. Remember, there are ethical codes of conduct widely accepted by the Air Force that should help you make proper decisions when faced with various ethical dilemmas. Uncertainty, competing values, and potential harm are three factors that may cause ethical dilemmas to occur. As a leader, you'll be faced with various ethical dilemmas - your success depends on your ability to effectively make appropriate decisions when confronted with these situations as they arise.



Ethical Behavior

In order to find examples of senior leaders engaging in unethical behaviors, all you have to do is check your local/national news paper. If, as an institution, we have the AF Core Values to strive for an guide our actions, why is the Air Force still dealing with unethical issues?

As stated earlier, leading in the 'gray area' between right and wrong can be challenging. As a SNCO, there are many pitfalls that can prevent you from walking an 'ethical path' and making sound, ethical decisions. However, if you know what to look for, you can avoid making some of the same bad choices as those you read about in the news.

In this section, you'll learn about some of these potential pitfalls when facing ethical dilemmas…ethical traps. Then, you'll cover how you can use ethical principles such as the Three Os, Ps, Rs, and Ds to help you effectively think through ethical dilemmas. Finally, you'll discover how ethical behavior in your organization impacts its professional climate based on the Continuum of

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Professionalism. Let's examine ethical behavior by looking at the ethical traps.

Ethical Traps

Leaders must think through any ethical dilemma in order to identify all aspects of the dilemma and to identify any ethical traps that may exist. Ethical traps stem from confusion or uncertainty as to what action or behavior should be taken in a given situation. Keep in mind that it may seem all prospective choices have some measure of drawback. This makes it important to be cognizant of potential ethical traps in order for you to choose the course of action you believe will best serve the situation. Those traps are: *Ethical Relativism, Loyalty Syndrome, Worry Over Image,* and *Drive for Success*.

Ethical Relativism

Ethical relativism holds that morality is relative to the norms of one's culture. That is, whether an action is right or wrong ***depends on the moral norms of the society*** in which it's practiced. The same action may be morally right in one society, but be morally wrong in another. Ethical relativism manifests itself when decisions are made based on personal values/beliefs of right and wrong rather than on military rules, regulations, and codes of conduct. Let's look at a few examples.

Example	Considered Moral	Considered Immoral
Eating beef	USA	India
Drinking alcohol	USA	Middle Eastern Islamic Countries
Women in school/business	USA	Afghanistan
Women wearing shorts	USA	Iran, Saudi Arabia, Sudan
Killing newborn females	China, India	USA
Female genital mutilation	Many African nations	USA
Killing female family member who is raped	Somalia, Sudan	USA

As seen in the examples above, ethical relativism reminds us that different societies have moral beliefs deeply influenced by their culture. Consider the negative impact this may have. Leaders become ineffective when acceptable means to mission accomplishment take precedence over established guidelines. The decision to just do what works based on personal values (due to each individual's cultural background) is problematic and oftentimes ethical questions are never raised

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or explored. For SNCOs to be effective and consistent in their actions, decisions should be based on military rules, regulations and codes of conduct.

Loyalty Syndrome

Loyalty syndrome is defined as making decisions based on respect and/or loyalty to an individual, unit, or organization rather than on military rules, regulations, and codes of conduct. This becomes problematic when leaders subordinate the questions of right and wrong due to their value of loyalty to their leadership. In 2003 and 2004, plenty of U.S. soldiers knew of the mistreatment of detainees at Abu Ghraib, but only a few reported the abuse. Why do you think this happened? It may have happened due to the loyalty syndrome ethical trap. In this case, military personnel witnessed the misconduct or learned about it later. When faced with the decision of whether to report the incident as required by their military duty or to protect their comrades, they chose to remain quiet.

*According to the **POA and the SNCO** lesson, one way to avoid the ethical trap of loyalty syndrome is to practice Integrity First's virtue of **Courage.** It states you should have the courage to take personal and professional risks or make decision that might be unpopular.*

SNCOs may make ineffective decisions when issues that require the attention of leadership are hidden, when leaders begin to make excuses or cover for leadership, or when leaders fail to voice objections when senior leadership is wrong. Given the significance the Air Force and all services place on good order and discipline, it's important that military men and women have the moral competence to intervene when wrongdoing is occurring or to report misconduct if they're unable to intervene. When military personnel ignore the misdeeds of others, the abuses continue, cover-ups occur, and the military profession is diminished.

Worry Over Image

Worry over image entails making decisions based on how they'll impact your reputation or standing among peers, subordinates, supervisors, or community rather than on military rules, regulations, and codes of conduct. Concern about what might turn out to be an embarrassing situation (or needing others to see you in a positive light) may cause you to do something less ethical instead of what's right.

"I'll take character over reputation. Your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are."

- AJ Perez

When the decisions of right or wrong are based solely on how they'll impact one's image, this can have a devastating effect on the organization. In the case of loyalty syndrome, leaders may be ***reluctant*** to tell the truth…in worry over image leaders ***aren't interested*** in telling the truth. SNCOs

become ineffective when they refuse to accept negative input and what becomes important is how things are perceived versus how things really are.

Drive for Success

Drive for success occurs when decisions are made based on a "win at all cost" attitude rather than on military rules, regulations, and codes of conduct. Sure, there may be nothing wrong with possessing a sincere drive to succeed. You may be thinking, "If I don't do what's best for me, who will?" The downside of this way of thinking is that it's an "all about me" way of leading instead of leading based on military rules, regulations and codes of conduct.

*According to the **POA and the SNCO** lesson, one way to avoid the ethical trap of drive for success is to exhibit **Warrior Spirit** by placing the welfare of peers or subordinates ahead of our personal needs or comfort.*

By succumbing to this ethical trap, your actions and decision-making become detrimental to your leadership abilities as a result of the self-imposed philosophy to 'win at all costs'. This becomes apparent when your knowledge or what's right and wrong is subordinated to what's right or wrong for ***me***. Put another way, the needs of the Air Force, your people, and the mission take a second seat to your own personal need for success.

Unfortunately, these ethical traps are common ways of thinking for some leaders. If left unchecked they can cripple your effectiveness and undermine your ethics. They must be avoided in order for you to maintain the effectivess of your leadership and the organization. Fortunately, there are principles you can follow to help avoid these traps and maintain ethical behavior.

Ethical Principles

Dr. James H. Toner, formally of the Air War College, explains that military ethics is about knowing what's true and then doing what's right. He takes an interesting approach to make his points memorable by using the following ethical principles: Three Os, Three Ps, Three Rs, and Three Ds. Used in conjunction with the Air Force Core Values, these principles place additional tools at your disposal as you strive to continue leading ethically. Let's look at each principle more closely.

Three Os

Owing…Ordering…Oughting. Military ethics based upon "me-ism" or "egotism" cannot function. Therefore, the three **Os** are important in making ethical decisions.

- You should understand whom and what you ***owe***. We all ***owe*** a debt of gratitude to our country, other services, families, senior leadership, and peers. This is a responsibility all members of the Profession of Arms should understand. It's so important that each service speaks to it in their core values. The Air Force reflects this in "Service Before Self"…specifically, the virtue

***Three Os** include:*

*- knowing specifically who and what you **owe***

*- displaying proper **order** by having moral structuring and ethical priorities*

*- understanding what Airmen should do, or **ought** to do*

of Respect:

- Respect ─You ***owe*** others respect...treating others with dignity and valuing them as individuals. You must always act knowing that all Airmen possess fundamental worth as human beings. You must treat others with the utmost dignity and respect, understanding that our diversity is a great source of strength.

According to Toner, if we know why we ***owe*** what we do, we should be able to recognize the obligation, responsibility, and duty which give rise to moral thinking and ethical reasoning.

- Without the next **O**…***ordering***…military ethics can't properly exist. As a career Airman, you've been taught to look out for your people and their welfare…but it's not that simple. If you're '***ordering***' starts with people first, everyone might be happy, but the mission might not get done. You'll learn more about the proper '***order***' later in this section. The Air Force also reflects ***ordering*** in "Service Before Self"…specifically, the virtue of Duty:

  - Duty ─You are ***ordered*** to follow the rules. To serve is to do one's duty, and our duties are most commonly expressed through rules. Duty is the obligation to perform what is required for the mission. While your responsibilities are determined by the law, the Department of Defense, and Air Force instructions, directives, and guidance, our sense of duty is a personal one and bound by the oath of service we took as individuals. Duty sometimes calls for sacrifice in ways no other profession has or will. Airmen who truly embody "Service Before Self" consistently choose to make necessary sacrifices to accomplish the mission, and in doing so, we honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

- The final **O** is '***oughting***'. Sometimes, what we do might not be what we ***ought*** to do. For example, you '***ought***' to engage in physical activity at least three times a week…but sometimes you might not. You '***ought***' to spend your clothing allowance on updating your uniforms, but sometimes you might not. These may seem like simple examples, but imagine if you were faced with a life or death situation. The Air Force has rules that state what we '***ought***' to do in these cases. However, if you choose to do something else, your choice could have dire consequences. Finally, the Air Force reflects ***oughting*** in "Service Before Self"…specifically, the virtue of Loyalty:

  - Loyalty ─ You ***ought*** to exhibit loyalty, both professionally and personally. Loyalty is an internal commitment to the success and preservation of something bigger than us. Our loyalty is to the Nation first, the values and commitments of our Air Force second, and finally to the men and women with whom we serve. Loyalty to our leaders requires us to trust, follow, and execute their decisions, even when we disagree. We offer alternative solutions and innovative ideas most effectively through the chain of command. Ultimately, loyalty is demonstrated by helping each other act with honor.

Three Ps

The three **Ps** provide the perspective for the way to think about the **Os**. Airmen are to adhere to the precedence of *principles*, *purpose*, and then *people*. Switching the order would negate the entire process. One quick note before moving on, when considering the ***(p)rinciples***, keep in mind that they refer to the requirements and needs of the Air Force and not your individual *principles* and *purpose*.

The three **Ps** are reflected in the Air Force Core Values in the following ways:

- **Integrity First** – Honesty is the hallmark of a military professional. SNCOs acting with integrity are expected to always place ***principle*** first in all endeavors. Integrity is simply doing the right thing, all the time, whether everyone is watching or no one is watching. It's the compass that keeps us on the right path when we're confronted with ethical challenges and personal temptations, and it's the foundation upon which trust is built. An individual realizes integrity when thoughts and actions align with what he or she knows to be right.

> ***Three Ps*** *are ordered as follows:*
>
> *1.* ***Principle****: Truth telling and honor*
>
> *2.* ***Purpose****: Mission accomplishment and duty*
>
> *3.* ***People****: Fellow citizens, Airmen, Soldiers, etc.*

- **Excellence in All We Do** - Mission directs you to develop a sustained passion for continuous improvement and innovation. You should consider this your ***purpose*** and the basis of mission accomplishment. Excellence in All We Do does not mean that we demand perfection in everything from everyone. Instead, this value directs us to continuously advance our craft and increase our knowledge as Airmen. We must have a passion for continuous improvement and innovation that propels America's Air Force in quantum leaps towards accomplishment and performance.

- **Excellence in All We Do** - Teamwork is achieved when the ***people*** of the organization can work together to successfully reach common goals. Teamwork is essential to triumph at every level. Airmen recognize the interdependency of every member's contributions towards the mission and strive for organizational excellence. We not only give our personal best, but also challenge and motivate each other. We carry our own weight, and whenever necessary, help our wingmen carry theirs. We serve in the greatest Air Force in the world and we embrace the idea that our part of the Air Force meets that world-class standard.

Initially, it might sound strange for people to be the last '**P**'. However, by attempting to place people before purpose and/or principle, you could fall into the ethical trap of 'ethical relativism'…making decisions based on ***personal*** values/beliefs of what's right and wrong. You

should keep in mind the three **Ps** can't be re-ordered (based on the situation) if you want to be an ethical SNCO.

Three Rs

The three **Rs** provide guidance when considering the **Os**…they explain that when making decisions, displaying conduct (on and off-duty), etc., there are ***rules*** that provide ethical guidance. The situation, circumstances, or realities can influence if the ***rules*** are followed. Don't forget to consider the results or consequences of decisions and actions beforehand. The three **Rs** can be thought of in the following ways:

> ***Three Rs*** *are as follows:*
>
> *- **Rules** provide individuals ethical guidance*
>
> *- **Results** are the outcome or bottom line-consequences of following or not following those rules*
>
> *- **Realities** are the result of recognizing the importance of the situation, circumstances, or realities*

- SNCOs must follow and enforce established ***rules***. You must understand that there aren't rules that govern ***every*** situation, however; there is guidance in the form of the UCMJ, AFIs, and various policies.
- Many believe that what matters most is the bottom line or the ***results.*** However, not even good ends can justify all means. You must understand that certain means are wrong even though the end may be good.
- You must consider the ***reality*** of the situation. This requires you to examine the truth or actuality of the situation, the way the situation really is, and to appropriately adhere to guiding ethical principles.

Three Ds

The three **Ds** emphasize that you have a moral charge to educate yourself as best as you can in light of the truth, to speak up for truth, and then to act in truth. The three **Ds** can be thought of in the following ways:

> ***Three Ds*** *are as follows:*
>
> *- **Discern** the truth*
>
> *- **Declare** the truth*
>
> *- **Do** what you've discerned*

- You must ***discern*** the facts from assumptions and falsehoods. You're morally charged to gather the facts as they pertain to the truth in all situations. Many times, your people will come to you with problems that fall into the 'gray' area mentioned earlier in the lesson. When presented with situations that involve ethical issues or dilemmas, you can use the Reasoning Elements and Universal Intellectual Standards of Critical Thinking. These tools can help you do your due diligence in determining what is true.
- You must ***declare*** the truth. Once you have ***discerned*** the truth, you must ***declare*** it. This might mean '***declaring***' it to a few individuals or your entire unit (depending on the situation). Don't allow your responsibility to ***declare*** the truth be hindered by an ethical trap such as the loyalty syndrome or worry over image. Failing to ***declare*** the truth when

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you know what it is can damage your creditability and your moral/ethical standing within the Profession of Arms.

Additionally, you should ***declare*** the truth *at the appropriate time*. This means you should only ***declare*** the truth after making a moral decision (i.e., rejecting all unworthy alternatives using critical thinking standards. The alternative of ***declaring*** something true without using critical thinking techniques can lead to verbalizing half-truths, partial truths, or outright lies, which all lead to, at best, poor decisions and at worst, tragedy.

- You must ***do*** what you have *discerned* and *declared*...finding the truth and declaring the truth aren't enough. SNCOs must reflect the highest qualities of a leader and professional. Excellence in All We Do – Discipline required you to uphold the highest personal and professional standards. As a representative of the Air Force, your actions shape the culture of the Air Force and the reputation of the Profession of Arms.

  Your ability to discern the truth, and declare the truth increases your effectiveness as a leader and enables you to act (***do***) in ways that have a direct impact on mission accomplishment. Failure to do what you've discerned and declared can cause your people to see you as a 'hypocrite'…negatively impacting their ability to trust you.

Although the Three **Os, Ps, Rs**, and **Ds** have been presented separately, there's actually an important relationship between them that should help you deal with ethical dilemmas when the answer isn't always clear.

Your ability to identify and avoid ethical traps should increase your effectivness. To avoid ethical traps when making decision, you can use sound ethical principles and Air Force guiding principles such as the core values. The right thing to do isn't always a clear choice and it's often not the opposite of the wrong thing to do. Leadership requires more than simply knowing the Three **Os, Ps, Rs** and **Ds**. You must know what's true and then do what's right. When SNCOs develop a habitual desire to do what they know is right in all situations they begin to tip the organizational climate in the right direction.

Ethical Behavior and Organizational Climates

An organization's climate is determined by its members. Professional actions, decisions, and behaviors can transform a negative corrosive climate into a positive ethical climate just as unprofessional actions, decisions, and behaviors can transform a positive ethical climate into a negative, corrosive climate.

In simple terms, tipping means that collectively, members of the organization can 'tip' the scale of professionalism in either direction. Which direction the scale tips depends on the members of your organization. When you consistently strive to develop others and yourself as professionals, you cultivate more positive or ethical organizational climates across the Air Force.

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Tipping Organizational Climates

When you act with professionalism, you help tip the entire organization to the positive side of the scale. Your positive behaviors and the example you set, help move others to the right on the continuum of professionalism and can have a large transformational effect…tipping the scale to the right side…on the entire organization.

Now you should have a better understanding of how and why an organization's climate is determined by the actions, decisions, and behaviors of its members. Think about what you can do to move your place on the continuum in a more positive direction and how you can influence others members of the organization to do the same.

Understanding how you can move yourself to the right of the Continuum of Professionalism is essential to your Self-Development. Your values drive decisions and those decisions help determine your position on the continuum. One SNCO can begin the process of "tipping" a negative, unprofessional, corrosive organization toward a positive, professional, ethical organization. This can begin a chain reaction of "tipping" across organizations and throughout the Air Force.

> *"In any organization, once the beliefs and energies of the critical mass of people are engaged, conversion to a new idea will spread like an epidemic."*
>
> *- W. Kim and R. Mauborgne*
> *Harvard Business Review*

SNCO Impact in Tipping

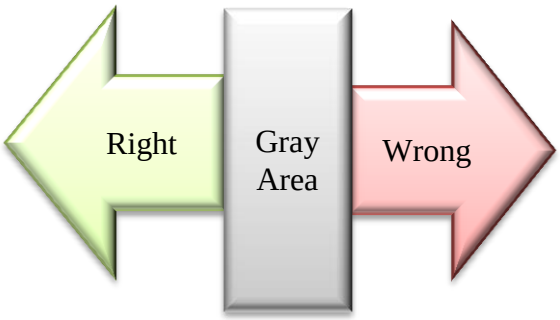
As organizations move towards a more positive and ethical climate, a sense of enthusiasm, common purpose and confidence in the future begins to accelerate the tipping effect. At this point, the professional actions, decisions, and behaviors resulting in the achievement of organizational goals and objectives become the

norm. The new organizational climate makes it possible for Airmen to reach their full potential and, as they advance and/or PCS, instill the positive change in other organizations…thus continuing the process.

Understanding your personal journey up and down the Continuum of Professinalism helps you advance others along the continuum but more importantly, it helps you transform or "tip" the organizational climate to the more professional side of the continuum.

As a SNCO, you must not only ensure you conduct yourself with integrity at all times, but you must also strive to ensure your subordinates conduct themselves with high ethical standards. By setting the example and holding your people to the Air Force guiding rules and standards, you play a pivital role in tipping your organizational climate in a positive manner.

In this section, you learned about ethical behavior. You covered ethical traps, such as worry over image. To think through ethical dilemmas, you must be aware of and avoid traps resulting from confusion and uncertainty. Then, you looked at Dr. Toner's ethical principles: the Three Os, Ps, Rs, and Ds. When used, in conjuction with the core values, they can help you order actions based on principles, purpose, and then people. Finally, you learned how the behavior of an organization's members, specifically its senior leaders like you, can have an impact on whether or not the organizational climate tips toward a positive, ethical climate or a negative, corrosive one.



The Air Force provides rules to help you differentiate between right and wrong behavior. But, when presented with situations and issues that fall into that 'gray area' or with situations that present an ethical dilemma, you need to ensure your decision is made using sound ethical principles. Otherwise, you could end up on the cover of a newspaper highlighting your deviation from the guiding principles that are the foundation of our profession. However, knowing what's ethical and making ethical decisions can cause a problem from some.

Ethical Decision-Making

Airmen today work in a moral minefield. At any moment, a seemingly innocuous decision can explode and harm not only the decision maker but also everyone in his/her organization. When making ethical decisions, it's necessary to identify and eliminate unethical options and select the best ethical alternative.

In this section, you'll learn the steps designed to help you make ethical decisions. You'll also be shown ways to use the supporting principles, such as no rewards for unethical behavior, to reinforce your position and increase your effectiveness.

Ethical decision making *refers to the process of evaluating and choosing among alternatives in a manner consistent with ethical principles.*

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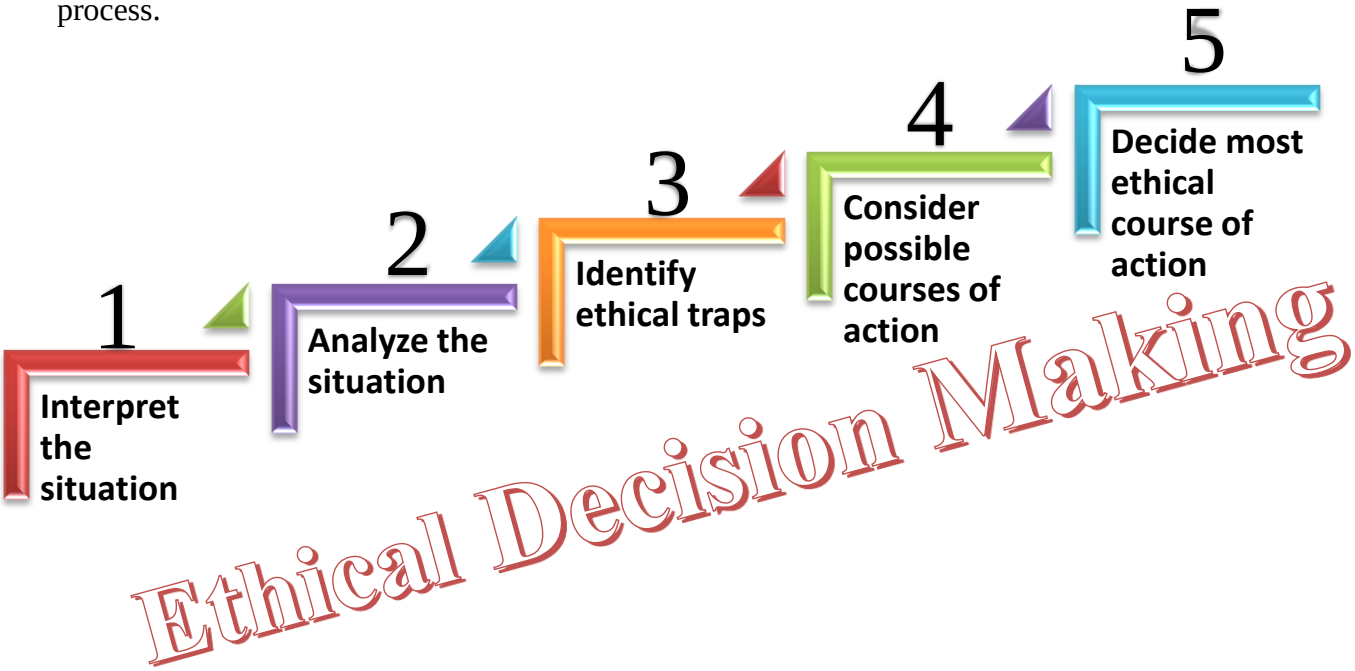
Five Steps of Ethical Decision Making

In the introduction to ethical leadership you learned about the ethical codes used by the Air Force that give SNCOs the guidance needed to ensure proper ethical behavior. The Air Force Core Values and the Uniform Code of Military Justice are tools to help ensure proper behavior, but ***you*** must also be capable of making ethical decisions in the 'gray area' to be an effective leader and military professional. There are five steps to guide you through the ethical decision making process.



Let's break down each step, starting with interpreting the situation.

Step One – Interpret the Situation/Is There an Ethical Dilemma?

Interpreting the situation requires you to stop and think about the circumstances confronting you. Taking time to stop and ***critically think*** could help you determine what ethical dilemmas exist (if any) and also prevent you from making rash decisions. Delaying the impulse to rush to a conclusion provides time for thoughtful insight and can allow you time to put effective actions into motion.

When you analyze the situation you should compare the known facts associated with the issue. Use the who, what, when, where, why, and whom for comparison to the requirements in the ethical decision-making process. You should also ask yourself how the situation impacts the Air Force, your organization, and/or your people.

Your ability to effectively interpret the situation and identify the ethical dilemmas should be the starting point as you proceed to the next step in the process…analyzing the situation.

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Step Two – Analyze the Situation/Why Does the Ethical Dilemma Exist?

Why does the ethical dilemma exist? It could stem from *uncertainty*, i.e., not having all the facts concerning a situation, little to no experience dealing with the situation or maybe you've never encountered the situation before. The uncertainty could also stem from not having a clearly established policy, procedure or rule for handling the issue.

To assist you in step 4 and step 5, you can use ***Decision Analysis*** *(in the Critical Thinking lesson) to help you make a decision that's not only ethical, but rationale and logical as well.*

The dilemma may also be the result of the *potential harm* that may be caused by a previous decision; intentional and unintentional (good or bad) consequences of your actions. Always attempt to anticipate and consider the *second* and *third* order effects before making decisions.

Finally, *competing values* can also cause dilemmas. Remember, always strive to place principle first, purpose second, and people third.

Step Three – Identify Ethical Traps

As a SNCO, you'll need to consider the ethical traps discussed earlier (ethical relativism, loyalty syndrome, worry over image, and drive for success). By understanding and identifying ethical traps, you can choose the course of action that can best serve everyone involved.

When you get to this step, you should really take a moment and assess if your line of thought is leading you towards one of the ethical traps. If so, you should consider the three ***Os***, ***Ps***, ***Rs***, and ***Ds*** to help you avoid them.

Step Four – Consider Possible Courses of Action (COA)

Once you've identified if your line of thinking may lead to an ethical trap…and figured out a way to avoid it (if that's the case), it's time to brainstorm possible COAs. In this step you should make a list of possible decisions that could fix the problem or situation. At this point, don't evaluate them…just brainstorm! You can use your prior experiences or maybe even talk to other individuals for suggestions on possible solutions.

Once you get a list of COAs, you should test each one to identify if there are any consequences or unethical 'side effects' of each COA. You can use Dr. Toner's Six Tests in conjunction with the Air Force guiding principles as a vector.

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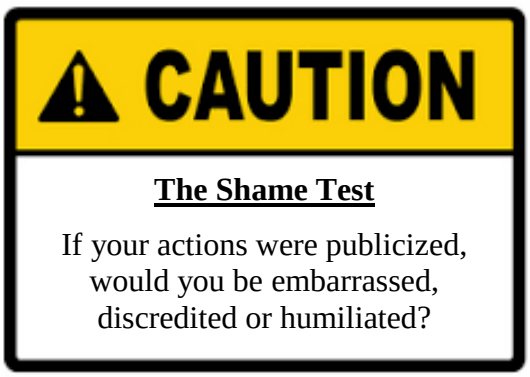
- ***Shame Test***

You've probably seen someone in your career that committed an act or made a decision that you thought was embarrassing or humiliating. You might have even thought, "Wow, I'm glad that wasn't me!"

If you come to a decision and you feel uncomfortable about 'declaring' it, don't ignore this feeling. Apply the "Shame Test" to see if your decision passes it.

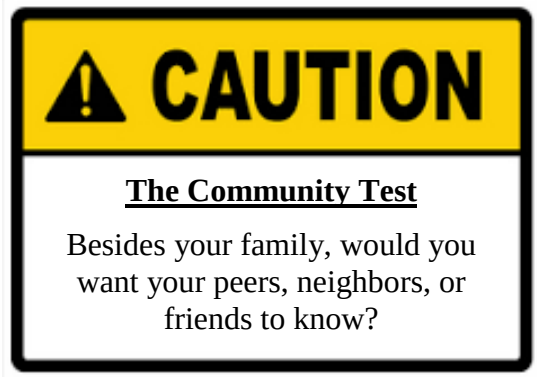


SNCOs bear personal responsibility and culpability for their actions. If you decide your actions, if made public, would be embarrassing or humiliating, then they don't pass the Shame test. If you decide your actions would discredit yourself or the uniform you wear, then they don't pass the Shame test.

If your actions don't pass the Shame test, how will you attract enthusiastic, committed followers and people who genuinely want to work for you? How would you be able to appropriately reflect the values expected as member of the Profession of Arms? It's vital that your reputation is of one who constantly strives to do the right things for the right reasons.

- ***Community Test***

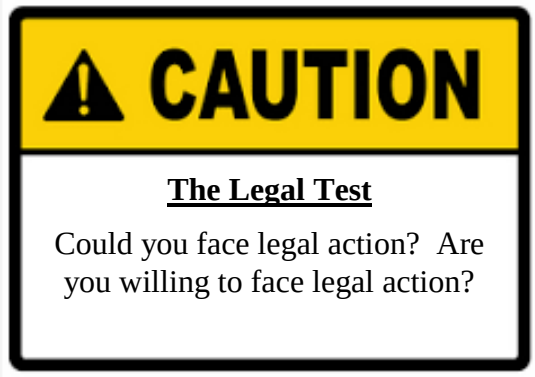
Both personally and professionally, you should never have to worry about who's watching you or who knows of your actions. Every decision you make should be able to withstand the scrutiny of your community (on and off-base). If you have to decide between hiding your decision from the 'light of day', and keeping it private, you should apply the Community test:



If you're decision doesn't pass the Community test, then you may be able to trace the problem back to one of the three Ds…discern, declare, and do. Maybe you haven't discerned the truth or been able to 'weed out' false information (or information that you're not sure will stand up to scrutiny). Otherwise, you should be able to 'declare' with courage.

- ***Legal Test***

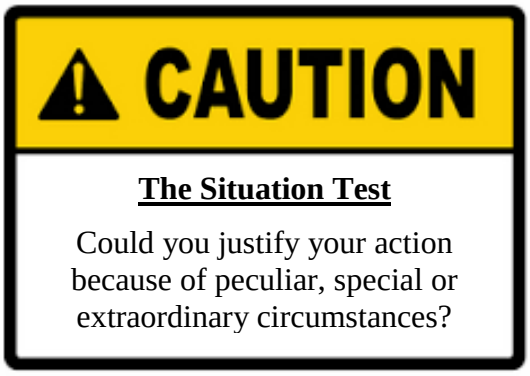
This test should be an easy one to conduct. The Air Force guiding values and standards are clear about what's legal and what isn't. As an ethical leader, you must obey the rules and laws that govern our profession.



If your decision doesn't pass the Legal test, you really should reflect deeply on the three Rs: rules, results, and realities. As a SNCO, you're legally bound to the rules. Considering the 'results' first could cause serious legal issues for you, your organization, or the Air Force. Remember, sometimes the end does NOT justify the means.

You're expected to exercise judgment in the performance of your duties. Effective SNCOs understand that rules have a reason for being, and the default position must be to follow those rules unless there's a clear, operational reason for refusing to do so. Therefore, you should make a concerted effort to know and enforce Air Force (and in some cases, joint) policies, ethical codes, best practices, standard operating procedures and even environmental and safety laws.

- ***Situation Test***

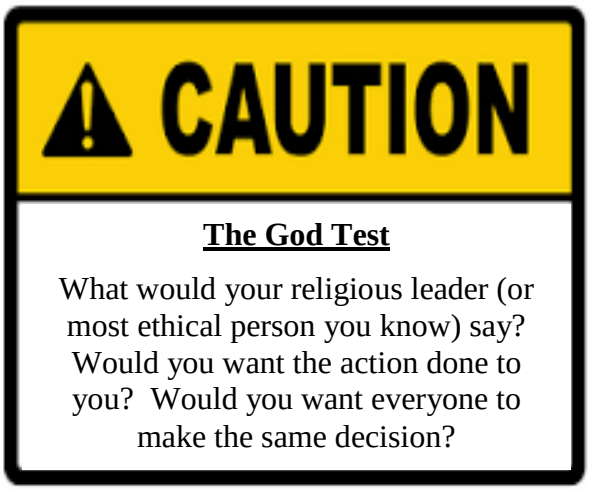


Throughout your career you may have encountered individuals that find it easy to justify their actions no matter the situation. Or, others who prefer to perform the questionable act and seek forgiveness later. As a leader, you must ask yourself if your action is ***truly the ethical thing to do.*** This doesn't include basing your decision on what you…or your small circle of influence… considers the right thing to do.

In order for your decision to pass the Situation test, your 'special circumstance' should be one that either hasn't been experienced by senior leaders before, or one that consists of a unique set of factors that makes it 'fall outside the box' of what's already known.

- ***God Test***

Think of someone in your life that, in your opinion, possess a strong character and exercises the best ethical judgment. This individual, or role model, could be a religious/spiritual leader, a prior supervisor, or even a peer whose opinion you value. Whoever your role model is, image what that person would do if he/she was in your shoes? If



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they would do something different…or not agree with your decision, then it wouldn't pass this test.

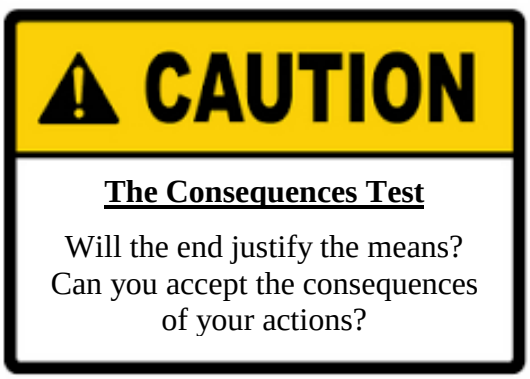
If you're decision doesn't pass the God test, go back and take a look at the three Os: owing, ordering, and oughting. Are you taking into account the people or institution you owe? Have your ordered your thinking using moral and ethical structuring? Is this what you really ***ought*** to do?

Consider this statement by CMSAF James Cody:

> *"As Airmen we step to a higher calling and hold ourselves to the highest standards. We have certain beliefs and truths that strengthen our organization and our nation. At the very heart of this is our Core Values; they are a clear illustration of the price of admission to our Air Force, and the common bond by which we win the fight, strengthen the team, and shape the future. Our values must be much more than words...they must guide us and point us to what is universal and unchanging in our profession of arms. They are the very fabric that bonds our commitment and dedication to duty, honor, country, fidelity and competence."*

Your character is measured by your actions, decisions, and behaviors. Making good choices serves to make you worthy of admiration and builds your reputation as an ethical leader.

- ***Consequences Test***



Let's face it, actions have consequences. An important question to ask before acting is "what will be the potential second and third order effects of my decision be"? Effects that were intentionally caused to produce a specific outcome can spawn an effect that was unintended and/or unpredicted. When determining the consequences don't forget to include the people that will be affected by your actions...subordinates, peers, senior leaders, etc. Don't discount emotional and/or physical costs. Once you apply the tests to your potential COAs, you're ready for the last step…

Step Five – Decide Most Ethical Course of Action

At this point, you've applied Dr. Toner's Six Tests. Hopefully, you should now have a clear COA; however, your work isn't done yet…now it's time to decide if your COA may potentially damage your organization's ethical climate. To make this decision, you can use the following set of principles: Dr. Toner's Supporting Principles.

Dr. Toner believed leaders should create and promote an ethical climate and foster ethical behavior. Therefore, you should ensure your COA doesn't have a negative impact on your organization's ethical climate (or tip it to the left on the continuum towards less professional behavior).

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The Supporting Principles are:

- ***There are no rewards for unethical behavior***. Leaders shouldn't take action, make decisions, or display behaviors that reinforce unethical behavior or conduct. By doing so, you give the impression these are acceptable behaviors for your organization and could cause major damage to senior leader loyalty, faith in the system, as well as the overall organizational reputation.
- ***Sanctions and forgiveness for mistakes.*** Leaders shouldn't always take disciplinary action for mistakes. In order to preserve an ethical climate, you could either forgive the individual or impose sanctions (depending on the mistake). Consider this example:
  - A subordinate provides a customer with incorrect information. As a result, the subordinate is then provided remedial training on the topic and is closely supervised (sanctions) to ensure learning has occurred.

  If this were a one-time mistake, maybe the subordinate can be forgiven. If the subordinate has made the same mistake a few times, maybe sanctions (training/closer supervision) may be needed.

*According to the **FRL** lesson, you can use transactional behaviors such as **Contingent Reward** or **Management by Exception-Active** as a way to handle mistakes instead of disciplinary action.*

- ***Appropriate action taken for dereliction of duty or misconduct.*** There is a difference between a 'mistake' and 'misconduct'. If you determine misconduct or dereliction of duty has occurred, disciplinary action is more appropriate in order to maintain an ethical climate. Disciplinary action can range from a verbal counseling to a court-martial. The tool that's most effective depends on the situation. However, before acting, you should ensure all factors leading to the misconduct are explored.
- ***Applying "Prudence First and Justice Second".*** As a SNCO, you need to consider what's ***right*** before what's ***possible***. Just because something is legal or permissible, doesn't mean that it's the right thing to do. Prudence ***is*** lawful behavior; however it includes being wise and just. Consider this example:
  - A commander, who has Article 15 authority, decides to throw the book at an individual (Article 15) before considering all the factors involved in the misconduct, such as family and financial situation, rank and TIG, TIS, length of time in current position, current scope of responsibilities, and so forth. Punishment under Article 15 is ***'just'*** because the person must face consequences for his/her actions. But, what if the individual had extenuating circumstances impacting his decision to violate standards? Not considering these

Prudence *is the intellectual habit of choosing the right means to achieve worthy ends. It involves reasoning, foresight, and caution.*
- J. Steadman

Justice *establishes and maintains the laws required for the common good and advancement of society.*
- R. Garrigou-Lagrange

circumstances and just 'throwing the book at him' (which is legal) might not be the right thing to do…it might not be ***'prudent'***. Prudence demands you consider all factors to make the punishment fit the misconduct…or crime.

Some may find navigating through the moral minefield…the 'gray area' challenging. Following the Five Steps of Ethical Decision Making can provide a solid path for you to follow. Utilizing the Supporting Principles presented can also provide you with additional support as you strive to create and promote an ethical climate within your organization. These concepts have a direct impact on subordinate and mission accomplishment and can help you increase your effectiveness as a competent leader.

Ensuring your decisions are ethical requires you to critically think about many details and moving parts. There are important questions you need to ask yourself and ethical traps you need to avoid. However, you can use Dr. Toner's Six Tests, AF guiding standards and principles, and Toner's Supporting Principles to help ensure your decisions/behaviors are ethical and don't have a negative impact on your organization's ethical climate. The consequences of your actions can have dire effects on those you lead within your organization.

Summary

Leadership is a privilege and a responsibility. It requires leaders to be ethical both in personal life and in performance of their duties. Leaders are role models whether they choose to be or not, they set the tone for the ethical stance of their subordinates and of the organizations that they lead. The principles discussed in this chapter provide an ethical framework that should guide actions, decisions and behaviors not only in specific situations but at all times.

Among the most important characteristics that define an ethical leader are openness and honesty; the willingness to make the discussion of ethical issues and decisions a regular part of subordinate development and organizational success. When faced with ethical dilemmas, SNCOs must find ways to develop the ability to put aside personal interest and ego while avoiding ethical traps in the interest of the situation or organization.

When you act with professionalism, you help tip the entire organization to the positive side of the scale. As a leader, it's your responsibility to mentor others to lead. Your professionalism and leadership can move others to the right on the Continuum of Professionalism and have a transformational effect on the entire organization.

Finally, and perhaps most important, an ethical leader never stops reexamining his or her own ethical assumptions and what it means to be an ethical leader. Like so many other important

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tasks, maintaining ethical leadership is ongoing. Ethical leadership doesn't end and neither should your effort to continue to explore and practice ethical leadership.

Director and producer Ridley Scott once said, "Life isn't black and white. It's a million gray areas…"

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Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

Critical Thinking

Inside this Study Guide:

Introduction to Critical Thinking

The Proficient Critical Thinker

- Characteristics

Components of Critical Thinking

- Universal Intellectual Standards
- Reasoning Elements
- Essential Intellectual Traits
- Relationship Between the Components of Critical Thinking

Hindrances to Critical Thinking

- Basic Human Limitations
- Use of Language
- Faulty Logic
- Psychological and Sociological Pitfalls

Decision Analysis

- Two System Approach
- Decision Analysis Process

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Introduction to Critical Thinking

Have you ever thought about 'how you think'? When presented with a problem, do you make a quick decision? Or, do you take the time to analyze it? Do you just look at the problem from your point of view? Or, are you able to step outside yourself and think about it from, let's say your people's point of view? Do you let your emotions and biases guide your decisions? Or, do you take the time to look at the problem objectively?

Habits of the Mind are intellectual behaviors that help you produce very powerful results when dealing with problems, dilemmas, contradictory things, situations that are not easily explained or understood, and uncertainties.

In today's environment, you have to be adaptable and able to deal with the abundance of new information that comes in at the drop of a hat. You must be able to analyze and integrate information to solve problems at an incredible pace.

Critical thinking requires you to combine your rational logic, creativity, common sense, and intuition into structured expressions of clear solutions and ideas that are useful and relevant to the task. How many times in your career have you had to come up with new ideas or pick from ideas to determine the best one to accomplish the mission? Critical thinking not only helps us become more effective in mission-related decisions, it's also useful when it comes to reflection and life choices.

This lesson begins with the characteristics of proficient critical thinkers, also known as habits of the mind, to help you adopt the attitude of a critical thinker. Next, you'll examine three components of critical thinking developed by the Foundation for Critical Thinking—a non-profit organization dedicated to change in education and society through the cultivation of critical thinking. Then, you'll investigate various hindrances to critical thinking and learn ways you can avoid them. After that, you'll be exposed to Decision Analysis, an important tool in making critical decisions, and the steps of the process. However, before you get started, it's important for you understand the intent of this lesson.

This lesson was designed with a specific focus. The concepts and principles presented can help you develop ***habits of the mind***. You might be asking yourself, "So, what does that mean?" Well, when going about your daily activities, there are certain things you do on a consistent basis…certain acts you perform that make your day more efficient and productive. For example, you might get a cup of coffee in the morning as soon as you wake up. Based on your experiences, you've learned this act helps you shake off the fuzziness of sleep. Therefore, it becomes a habit (you do this one thing every day). Or, as soon as you get to work, you might check your e-mail before you get started on anything else. Over time, you've learned this one act can help you prioritize tasks you have to accomplish that day…so it becomes a habit. Since you've learned the benefit and helpfulness of these acts, you perform them in an almost ritualistic manner…you do them every day without fail. If you don't, the routine of your entire day might be disrupted.

Critical Thinking is the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it.

- Paul and Elder

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The intent of this lesson is to help you develop 'thinking' habits in the same way as that first cup of coffee or checking your e-mail. They're acts of purposeful thinking you should use in order to make your decision making and problem solving more efficient and productive every day. However, just like you had to learn how that cup of coffee benefits you, this lesson should help you learn how critical thinking can benefit not just you, but your subordinates and mission as well. It'll introduce you to a composite of many skills, attitudes, and tendencies intended to act as a foundation for developing sound reasoning habits and also provide you with tips for their practical use.

Critical thinking as a skill is developed over a ***long period*** and involves ***considerable practice***…just like any other habit. It includes the ability to consider multiple perspectives/approaches and study complex problems ***without bias***. It encompasses the ability to analyze situations critically and reach conclusions that may not follow conventional wisdom but could be the key to success. Effective critical thinkers have mastered intellectual behaviors to the point they become habits; however, they had to start somewhere first. Let's start you on that path by taking a look at the attitude a proficient critical thinker possesses.

The Proficient Critical Thinker

When you are presented with decisions or problems, do you rely on how 'things have always been'? Do you tend to approach situations with a solution already in mind instead of being open to new ideas? Or are you more likely to value your own perspective over the perspective of others? When dealing with important issues, you need to make sure you can approach situations with a certain mindset…a certain attitude to help you select the best solutions.

This section will introduce you to the characteristics (qualities or traits) a proficient critical thinker embodies...the attitude you should adopt. However, changing your attitude about how you think isn't as easy as changing your shoes. If you truly want to be a better critical thinker, you should work on the following characteristics.

> My mother made me a scientist without ever intending to. Every other Jewish mother in Brooklyn would ask her child after school: So? Did you learn anything today? But not my mother, "Izzy," she would say, "Did you ask a good question today?" That difference — asking good questions — made me become a scientist.
>
> - Isador Rabi
> Nobel Prize in Physics (1944)

Characteristics

Open-mindedness

This characteristic involves a willingness to investigate viewpoints that are different from your own. Being open-minded means you're 'open' to ***actively listening*** and ***thinking*** about an idea, solution, or criticism that, on the surface, you might not normally subscribe to...even if you believe your viewpoint is the right one! For example, let's say one of your people has an idea about changing a process in the work environment that's been around for a while and has been working. If your attitude reflects open-mindedness, you would actually listen to his pitch and seriously think about it instead of just saying "NO".

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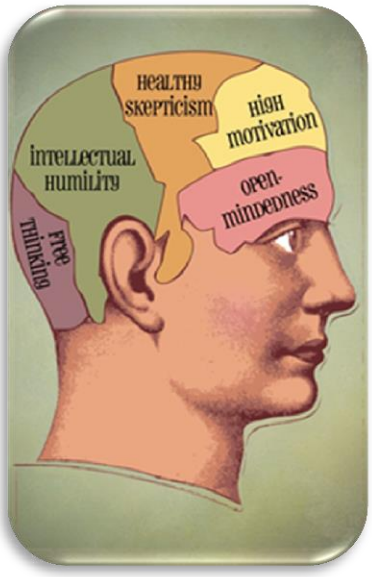
As a senior leader, when it comes to problem solving or decision making, you should be open to others' perspectives and opinions before acting. Otherwise, you could make a decision or suggest a solution that might not be comprehensive or right for the situation.



Healthy Skepticism

To be a healthy skeptic you should ask questions in order to ascertain what's truthful and what's not. Healthy skepticism causes the critical thinker to ask questions instead of immediately 'jumping on the bandwagon' or simply accepting others opinions. This characteristic also includes a bit of investigation to ensure you're fully informed before making decisions. For example, would you buy a house without having experts come out and inspect it for you? Or, would you purchase a used car without first having a trusted mechanic look it over to make sure you aren't purchasing a 'lemon'?

> Critical thinking is skeptical without being cynical. It is open-minded without being wishy-washy. It is analytical without being nitpicky. Critical thinking can be decisive without being stubborn, evaluative without being judgmental and forceful without being opinionated.
>
> - Dr. Peter Facione

On the surface, it may appear that having an open-mind and maintaining a healthy dose of skepticism sound contradictory, but they're not. Critical thinkers must be willing to investigate viewpoints different from their own view, but at the same time recognize when to doubt claims that don't merit such investigation. A critical thinker must be neither inflexible nor naive. Being both open-minded and skeptical means seeking out the facts, information sources, and reasoning to support issues you intend to judge; examining issues from as many sides as possible; rationally looking for the good and bad points of the various sides examined; accepting the fact that your viewpoint may be wrong; and maintaining the goal of getting at the truth (or as close to the truth as possible), rather than trying to please others or find fault with their views. However, when trying to find a 'skepticism balance', you should understand that too much can lead you to doubt everything and commit yourself to nothing, while too little can cause you to believe everything without evidence.

Intellectual Humility

As Socrates noted, "Arrogance does not befit the critical thinker." Having Intellectual Humility means adhering tentatively to recently acquired opinions; being prepared to examine new evidence and arguments even if such examination leads you to discover flaws in your own cherished beliefs; to stop thinking that complex issues can be reduced to matters of 'right & wrong' or 'black & white', and to begin thinking in terms of 'degrees of certainty' or 'shades of grey'. Sometimes, 'I don't know', can be the wisest position to take on an issue. For example, let's say one of your Airmen tested for promotion and missed it by one point. He came to you

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and said he was awarded a medal that wasn't in his records. If this medal was included originally, he would've been promoted. You could take the position that he was supposed to check the accuracy of his records prior to testing and if he didn't, that's his fault…maybe he'll make it next year. But, is it that 'black and white'? Someone with intellectual humility would put aside his belief/opinion and tell his Airman he doesn't know if anything can be done, but he'll check with someone he knows in personnel to see.

Free Thinking

A critical thinker must be a free thinker. In other words, you should have an independent mind. To think freely, you must restrain your desire to believe because of social pressures to conform. You must be willing to ask if conformity is motivating your belief or opinion, and if so, have the strength and courage to at least temporarily abandon your position until you can complete a more objective and thorough evaluation. For example, you could be in a meeting where an idea is presented that everyone agrees with. If you were a free-thinker, you wouldn't just go along because everyone else is. You might say you'll have to do some research on your own before you can decide if the idea is a good one. This can be quite difficult or even impossible for some since others might see your actions as 'holding up the process'.

> Freethinkers are those who are willing to use their minds without prejudice and without fear to understand things that clash with their own customs, privileges, or beliefs. This state of mind is not common, but it is essential for right thinking; where it is absent, discussion is apt to become worse than useless.
>
> - Leo Tolstoy
> Author of War and Peace

High Motivation

Finally, as a critical thinker, you should have a natural curiosity to further your understanding and be highly motivated to put in the necessary work sufficient to evaluate the multiple sides of issues. You can overcome the lack of essential knowledge on a subject by doing the research needed to reach a sufficient level of understanding before making judgments. This may require you to ask many questions, which can be unsettling for those that have to answer them. Failing to do so could cause you to make an uninformed decision. Imagine if your supervisor presented you with an issue to resolve, but you clearly needed more information. Would you have the motivation to ask questions? Or, would you decide asking questions would be too much work and take too much time? A critical thinker cannot be lazy!

Adopting the attitude of a proficient critical thinker is the first step to developing and mastering the habits of the mind. As stated earlier, mastering these habits isn't an easy process. However, to begin, you could start doing a 'self-check' to see how open-minded you are when presented with an idea that goes against the grain. You could walk into new situations with ***intellectual humility*** and say, "I don't know" if you're unsure about an issue. Additionally, you should remind yourself to avoid the "That's the way we've always done it" mentality and try to be a free thinker. Finally, you should practice attaining the level of motivation required to be a critical thinker by putting in the work…doing research, asking questions, etc. If you constantly remind yourself of these attributes, you can start to remove 'mental' roadblocks that might have prevented you from being a critical thinker in the past.

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Adopting this type of attitude helps you 'set the stage' for developing the habits of the mind. Let's continue to build these habits by covering the components of critical thinking…tools you'll use that could make adopting this attitude a little easier.

Components of Critical Thinking

Why do you travel a certain route to work every day? When not in uniform, what do you consider before choosing what clothes to wear? Why do you choose to eat at certain establishments, but not others? When presented with a series of choices, how do you select the 'right' one? You may rely on your intuition to make a decision on these simple problems/situations. This represents a type of thinking you'll learn about later in this lesson. However, when dealing with your people and/or mission related issues, making an ineffective decision could result in a negative impact or critical failure. Therefore, you shouldn't determine what the right idea/solution is based on a whim. You should make decisions or arrive at solutions using well-developed critical thinking components.

In this section, you'll learn components (tools) you can use to help you make effective decisions. These tools are the Universal Intellectual Standards, Reasoning Elements, and the Essential Intellectual Traits. At the end of this section, you'll see how these tools combine in a way that helps you develop the habits of a 'proficient critical thinker' and make informed, well thought out decisions. Let's get started with the Universal Intellectual Standards.

Universal Intellectual Standards

Universal Intellectual Standards are standards which should be applied to thinking to help ensure its quality. The ultimate goal is for these standards to become infused in your thinking, forming part of your inner voice, guiding you to reason better.

Consider the following situation:

You're the superintendent of the base Pharmacy. One of your NCOs comes to you and says, "I have a problem. We've received a number of complaints and I don't know what to do about it."

This example is used throughout this section to aid in your understanding of the content.

Clarity

Clarity is the 'gateway' standard. This means if a statement/problem lacks clarity, you can't determine whether it meets any of the other intellectual standards. Actually, you can't tell anything about it because you don't yet have an understanding of what the problem actually is. Therefore, because of its importance, Clarity should be determined first. When presented with a problem or situation, you could ask the following questions to establish Clarity:

- Could you elaborate further on that point?
- Could you express that point in another way?
- Could you give me an illustration or example?

Let's consider the pharmacy example. To establish Clarity, you might ask: "What are you talking about?" "Give me an example of the typical complaint." "What are the details concerning the complaints?"

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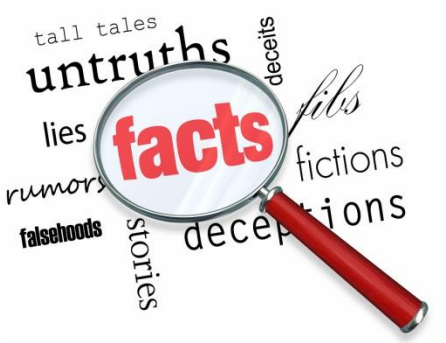
In order to adequately address the problem, you need to have a clearer understanding of what the person asking the question is considering the 'problem' to be. A clearer statement might be:

We've received numerous complaints from customers about the long wait times. What can the technicians do to reduce them?"

As a result of this statement, you now have a clearer understanding of the problem. Now, you can move on to the next standard.

Accuracy



Once you've determined a statement is clear (Clarity), you need to check to see if it's true. You could ask the following questions to determine Accuracy:

- Is that ***really*** true?
- How could we check that?
- How could we find out if that is true?

In the example above, how would you know the complaints are actually about the long wait times? How do you know the problem is something the pharmacy technicians can fix? What kind of metric could you check to establish the accuracy of the problem? You might decide, at this point, you need to engage in some 'fact checking'. So, if you ask these questions, you might get:

> ***"Well, I've read through the complaints and most of them are focused on how long the customers have to wait to get their prescriptions. Many of them find this unacceptable and want something done to fix it. Those that complain suggest we add more technicians and open more windows to reduce the wait times. I've checked the patient wait time tracker and it does show the average wait time has gone up recently."***

As a result of this statement, you can tell the problem is accurate because the NCO has read through the complaints and knows what they say. He has also reviewed the patient wait time tracker and found the average wait time has gone up. Finally, at least according to the complaints, it looks like the issue is something the technicians might be able to fix.

Precision

A statement can be both clear and accurate, but not precise enough. There might be information you need, but isn't provided. In order to establish Precision, you can ask:

- Could you give me more details?
- Could you be more specific?

Using the example, there are a few things that aren't precise enough. The goal is to get as much information as possible before you make a decision. In the statement above, you don't know how many complaints there are…it could be ten, it could be one hundred. Also, you don't know exactly how many complaints are just focused on the

long wait times, or how many complainants suggested adding more technicians and open windows. Finally, you don't know how much the average wait time has gone up.

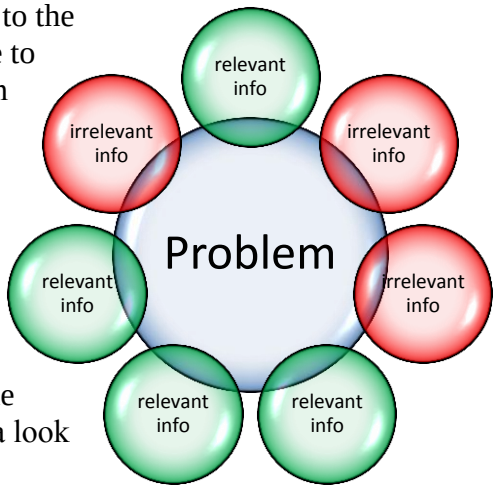
A more precise statement might be:

> ***"Well, we received 80 complaints in the last 30 days. Out of the 80, 70 of them are focused on long wait times, averaging 45 minutes to an hour and a half. The other 10 complaints are about outdated reading materials in the waiting area. All complaints focused on the longer wait times find it unacceptable; however, 50 suggest the fix action should be adding more technicians. The other 20 say the pharmacy is just too small to handle the large volume of patient prescriptions. According to our internally set metric on patient wait times, the goal is 30 minutes or less. We haven't met this goal since last quarter."***

In the statement above, you now know how many total complaints have been received in the last 30 days. You know what they're all focused on. You also know what the average wait time is (according to the complainants) and how many of the complainants suggested adding more technicians would fix the problem. Finally, you know what the goal is for wait times and how long it's been since the pharmacy has achieved the goal.

Relevance

A statement can be clear, accurate, and precise, but not relevant to the question or problem. When presented with a problem, you have to 'weed out' the information that doesn't have anything to do with it. To establish Relevance, you could ask the following questions:



- How is that connected to the question?
- How does that bear on the issue?

In the example above, is it relevant to the problem that some of the complaints are about outdated magazines in the waiting area? Also, is it relevant that many of the complainants think the pharmacy is just too small to handle the work load? Let's take a look at that statement again:

> ***"Well, we received 80 complaints in the last 30 days. Out of the 80, 70 of the complaints are focused on long wait times, averaging 45 minutes to an hour and a half. ~~The other 10 complaints are about outdated reading materials in the waiting area.~~ All complaints focused on the longer wait times find it unacceptable; however, 50 suggest the fix action should be adding more technicians. ~~The other 20 say the pharmacy is just too small to handle the large volume of patient prescriptions.~~ According to our internally set metric on patient wait times, the goal is 30 minutes or less. We haven't met this goal since last quarter."***

If the majority of the problem is the long wait times, then the information about outdated reading materials and the size of the pharmacy isn't relevant to the problem (especially since nothing can be done about that at your level).

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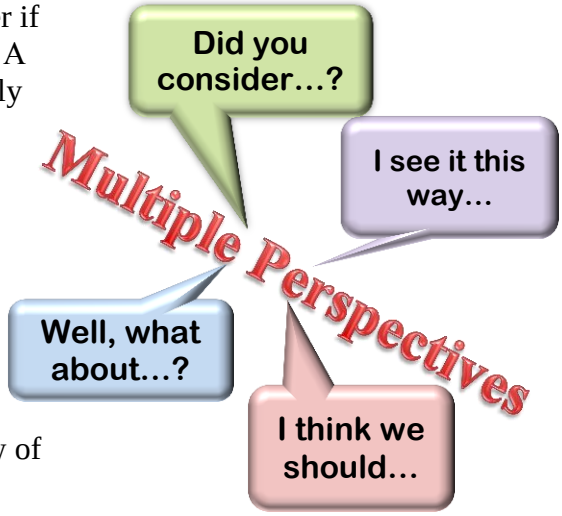
Breadth

When using the standard of Breadth, you should consider if there's an argument/position that hasn't been heard yet. A problem might meet all the previous standards, but is only presented from one perspective. In order to determine Breadth, you can ask the following questions:



- Do I need to consider another point of view?
- Is there another way to look at this question/problem?
- What would this look like from a conservative standpoint?
- What would this look like from the point of view of my subordinates, peers, and/or commander?

In the pharmacy example, so far you only have the perspective of the complainants and what the metrics say. However, you don't have the perspective/point of view of the pharmacy technicians. In order to get a full picture of the problem, you need to be able to see it from all sides. In the example, breadth might look like this:

> ***"I've talked to all the pharmacy technicians and they agree the wait times have been getting longer in the past few weeks. However, they attribute the problem to time spent answering extensive questions some patients have about their medications. They're also having trouble keeping the shelves stocked with the most commonly used medication, so patients have to wait while they restock. Finally, we have two of the ten technicians preparing to deploy and one completing his PCS out-processing checklist."***

Once you establish Breadth, you have information from both sides of the issue, in this case, the customers (complainants) and the pharmacy technicians. In order to make a decision, you should consider the perspective of both.

Logic

When you think, you bring a variety of thoughts together into some order. When the combination of thoughts is mutually supportive and makes sense, the thinking is "logical". When the combination isn't mutually supportive, is contradictory, or doesn't make sense, the combination ***is not*** logical (illogical). Consider the following statements:

- **All men are mortal. MSgt James Smith is a man. MSgt Smith is mortal.**

  In this example, it's true that all men are mortal. It's also true that MSgt Smith is a man; therefore it's logical to assume that he is mortal. These combinations of thoughts are supportive and make sense.

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- **All men are mortal. MSgt Jenny Jones is a woman. MSgt Jones is immortal.**

  In this example, it's true that all men are mortal. It's also true that MSgt Jones is a woman. However, it's not logical to assume she's immortal just because she's not a man. These combinations of thoughts don't make sense. This is actually an example of faulty logic, which you'll learn more about later in this lesson.

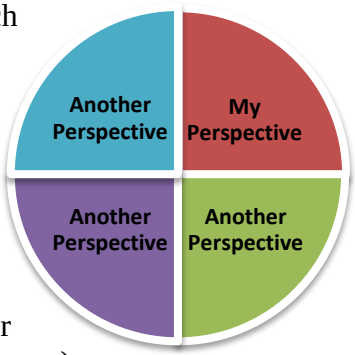
In order to establish if thinking is logical, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does this really make sense?
- Does that follow from what you said?
- How does that follow?
- Before you implied one thing, now you're saying something else. How can both be true?

In the pharmacy example, does it make sense to restock the shelves while patients are waiting? Shouldn't that be done before the pharmacy opens or immediately after the pharmacy closes? Also, originally the NCO said the pharmacy hasn't met its wait time goal since last quarter. But, the pharmacy technicians said the slowdown has only been in the last few weeks. This information doesn't make sense. In this case, you might want to revisit the Accuracy or Precision standard to get better information.

Fairness

You naturally think from your own perspective, from a point of view which tends to favor your position. This kind of thinking can be problematic when trying to make decisions that could impact many people.



Fairness implies the treating of all relevant viewpoints alike without reference to your own feelings or interests. Because you may tend to be biased in favor of your own viewpoint, it's important to keep the standard of Fairness at the forefront of your thinking, especially when the situation may call on you to see things you may not want to see (like problems you weren't aware of or issues that might make you look bad), or give something up you may want to hold onto (like manning or other resources).

In the example involving the pharmacy complaints, what do you think would be the impact on the problem if you (the superintendent) only seriously considered the viewpoint of your people instead of being open to the viewpoint of the customers? You might miss the actual root of the problem because your perspective would be biased. How could the situation be impacted if you thought your people were just lazy and lacked motivation? This biased perspective could cause you to discount your people's perception of the problem and potentially side with the customers' viewpoint. Finally, what if a plausible solution to the problem is to move some technicians around to cover the busy times, but you don't want to upset the current schedule that took you a long time to develop? If you hold on to the current schedule (favor your perspective), you could overlook a solution that might be the easiest to implement because it doesn't require additional resources…other than the time it would take to create a new schedule.

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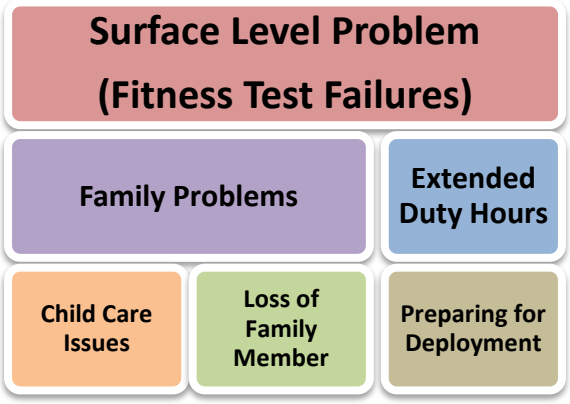
In order to maintain Fairness, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Are you considering all relevant viewpoints in good faith?
- Are you distorting some information to maintain your biased perspective?
- Are you more concerned about your/superiors vested interests than the common good?

Depth



This standard addresses your ability to consider the complexities of an issue instead of just skimming the surface. Sometimes, when your people have problems, they usually aren't one dimensional in nature...there could be more to the problem than what you initially see. You might find there are levels of complexity (or layers) that need to be addressed before the 'surface' problem can be solved. For example, what if you have a problem with fitness test failures in your unit? There could be many different aspects to this problem: time to exercise, your people's eating habits, emotional, mental, social, and/or physical stressors, increased OPSTEMPO, etc. When deciding what to do, you need to consider all potential reasons why the unit is experiencing the failures before you do something like mandate unit PT three times a week. This solution might only address the superficial (surface level) problem, but doesn't do anything about the deeper issues that could be causing the failures. If you don't address them, your solution might work in the interim, but won't fix the problem long term.

In order to ensure Depth, ask yourself the following questions:

- How does your answer address the complexities in the question?
- How are you taking into account the problems in the question?
- Are you dealing with the most significant factors?

In the pharmacy example, it's easy to say, "Let's just add more technicians to handle the large volume of people…that should fix the problem!" However, if you haven't uncovered all the complexities of the issue, if you haven't considered Depth, how do you know your solution will work? What if more people aren't an option? What if you didn't consider if you have the right people working the pharmacy windows? What if those individuals haven't been trained properly? What if the majority of those complaints are from a small group of disgruntled customers? What if the goal of 30 minutes isn't realistic for the size of your customer population? By digging into the issue and not addressing it on a superficial level, you can increase the chances your solution will solve the problem.

The Universal Intellectual Standards help to inject 'quality' into your thinking. Not all standards will be applicable in all situations. However, if you try to include some of them as necessary…develop a habit of using them, they can help you reason with more fidelity.

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Reasoning Elements

Take a moment to consider the difference between 'thought' and 'thinking'. On the surface, they may appear to be the same. However, there is a distinct difference between the two. Thought is undisciplined, random, and unstructured…it can be anything that crosses your mind. Thinking on the other hand, is more purposeful. It's a deliberate attempt to figure something out… to reason. The following are elements you can use to improve your ability to reason.
Let's start with thinking about your purpose.

Think about your Purpose (goal or objective)

All reasoning has a purpose. It's your goal, objective…what you're trying to accomplish. You can also use the term 'purpose' to include functions, motives, and intentions.

When engaging in structured thinking, you should be clear about your purpose and ensure it's justifiable. In order to do this, you should:

- Ensure you take the time to state your purpose clearly
- Distinguish your purpose from related purposes
- Check periodically to be sure you're still on target with your goal or objective
- Choose significant and realistic purposes

To clearly identify your purpose, consider the following questions:

Ask yourself…	What Universal Intellectual Standards can you use to add some quality to your reasoning? Why?
What's my purpose in doing this task?	
What's the objective of this task?	
Should I question, refine, or modify my goal?	
What's my central aim in this line of thought?	
Why did I say….?	

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State the Question at Issue (problem to be solved)

Reasoning is an attempt to figure something out, to settle some question, to solve some problem…for example, figuring out how to meet new mission requirements or solving a morale problem in your unit. However, these problems are really broad and vague. By using this element, you can lay out the problem in a more specific way or use questions to help guide your thinking. For example, if figuring out how to meet new mission requirements is the problem, your question may be, "How can I get more manning to meet the new requirements?" or "What can I do to get my people trained on the new equipment the mission requires?" These questions are more specific and help you key in on what you need to actually solve. If your question is vague, it might lack clarity and distinctness, which result in unfocused and chaotic thinking. So, your question should be clear and precise enough to productively guide your thinking.

To do this, you should:

- State the question at issue clearly and precisely
- Express the question in several ways to clarify its meaning
- Break the question into sub-questions
- Distinguish questions that have definitive answers (yes/no) from those that are a matter of opinion or require multiple viewpoints

The following questions can help you identify the problem that needs to be solved:

Ask yourself…	**What Universal Intellectual Standards can you use to add some quality to your reasoning? Why?**
What question am I trying to answer?	
What important questions are imbedded in the issue?	
Is there a better way to frame the question?	
Is the question clear?	
Is the question too complex?	
Do others see the question the same way?	
What kind of question is it? Personnel? Ethical? Mission related? Or…"	

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Gather Information (data, facts, observations, experiences)

All reasoning is based on data, information, and evidence. When gathering information, you tend to use these items, along with your experiences to figure things out. However, critical thinkers ensure they have all the information they need and they don't assume all the information they have is always accurate or correct. A lack of or incorrect information could cause a 'defect' in your reasoning.

To use the Information element to support your thinking, try to:

- Restrict your claims to those supported by the data you have
- Search for information that opposes your position as well as information that supports it
- Ensure all information you use is clear, accurate, and relevant
- Ensure you have gathered sufficient information to support your reasoning

In order to ensure you're gathering the appropriate information, consider the following questions:

Ask yourself…	**What Universal Intellectual Standards can you use to add some quality to your reasoning? Why?**
What information do I need?	
What data is relevant to my problem?	
Do I need to gather more information?	
Is this information relevant to my purpose/goal?	
How do I know my information *IS* relevant?	

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Watch your Inferences (interpretations, conclusions, and solutions)

All reasoning contains inferences or interpretations you use to draw conclusions (Based on my interpretation of the report, I conclude "X" will happen if we don't…) and also to give meaning to data (I interpret his comments to mean…). Inferring is what the mind does in ***figuring something out***... ("Because this is so, that also is so" or "Since this, therefore that"). However, inferences should logically follow the evidence. They shouldn't be based on emotions, guesses, or other elements that can't be proved. Additionally, try not to infer no more or less than what is implied in the situation.

Therefore, you should:

- Infer only what the evidence implies
- Check inferences for their consistency with each other
- Identify any assumptions underlying your inferences

To ensure your inferences are logical, consider the following questions:

Ask yourself…	**What Universal Intellectual Standards can you use to add some quality to your reasoning? Why?**
What conclusions am I coming to?	
Is my inference logical?	
Are there other conclusions I should consider?	
Does my interpretation make sense?	
Does my solution follow from my data?	
How did I reach my conclusion?	
What am I basing my reasoning on?	
Is there an alternative plausible conclusion?	
Given all the facts, what's the best possible conclusion?	
How should I interpret this data?	

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Clarify your Concepts (theories, definitions, principles, laws, and models)

All reasoning is expressed through, and shaped by, concepts. Concepts are ideas, theories, laws, principles, or hypotheses you use in thinking to make sense of things. For example, you could use the concepts in Full Range Leadership (FRL) to help you figure out why your people's motivational levels are low and what you can do to help increase it.

You should be clear about the concepts you're using (make sure you fully understand the concepts of FRL), ensure there are no 'defects' in them (check to see if FRL is valid and has been proved via credible research), and use them justifiably (Is FRL appropriate for my problem?).

In order to do so, you can:

- Identify key concepts and explain them clearly
- Consider alternative concepts or alternative definitions of concepts
- Ensure you are using concepts with precision

The following questions can help you clarify the concepts you're using to ensure they're clear and justifiable:

Ask yourself…	**What Universal Intellectual Standards can you use to add some quality to your reasoning? Why?**
What ideas am I using in my thinking?	
Are my ideas causing problems for me or others?	
I believe I have a good theory…can I explain it fully?	
What's the main hypothesis I'm using in my reasoning?	
Am I using the concepts as the original author intended?	
What distinctions should I draw in reasoning through the problem?	

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Check your Assumptions

All reasoning is based on assumptions...beliefs you take for granted (like assuming you'll always get paid on the 1st and the 15th of each month…assuming every time you put your car key in the ignition, it'll start). One of the problems with assumptions is sometimes they can be wrong (maybe one day, your car doesn't start). Additionally, assumptions sometimes operate at the subconscious level of thought… you might not be aware you're making them. Whether you're aware of them or not, they can influence your thinking. When making (or when made aware that you're making) an assumption, you should:

- Clearly identify your assumptions and determine whether they're justifiable by sound evidence
- Consider how your assumptions are shaping your point of view

To ensure your assumptions are clear and justified by sound evidence, consider these questions:

Ask yourself…	**What Universal Intellectual Standards can you use to add some quality to your reasoning? Why?**
What am I assuming or taking for granted?	
Am I assuming something I shouldn't?	
What assumption is leading me to this conclusion?	
What's the (policy, strategy, explanation, etc.) assuming?	
What's being assumed in this theory?	
What assumptions am I making about others?	

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Think through the Implications (consequences)

All reasoning leads somewhere. It has *implications* and, when acted upon, has *consequences*. For example, if you make a promise, what are you ***implying***? You're basically saying you're absolutely going to do something, even though you didn't "explicitly" say so. But, what if later, you don't really want to do what you promised? More than likely, you'll start thinking about the ***consequences*** of your action/inaction…what would happen if I did what I promised? What would happen if I didn't?

An **implication** follows logically from your thinking.

A **consequence** is the result of an action.

As a critical thinker, you should work to ensure you have a clear understanding of the implications of your reasoning (you could be implying something you didn't mean to or something that's false) and the consequences of your behavior. You should think through the likely implications of your behavior ***before*** you act.

To do so, you should:

- Trace the implications and consequences that follow from your reasoning
- Search for negative as well as positive implications
- Consider all possible consequences

In order to think through the implications of your reasoning, consider the following questions:

Ask yourself…	**What Universal Intellectual Standards can you use to add some quality to your reasoning? Why?**
If I decided to do "X", what things might happen?	
If I decided NOT to do "X", what things might happen?	
What am I implying when I say…?	
What is likely to happen if we do "this" versus "that"?	
Ask others "Are you implying that…"	
How significant are the implications of this decision?	

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Understand Your Point of View (frame of reference, perspective, orientation)

All reasoning is done from some point of view. It's literally "the place" from which you view something. It includes ***what*** you're looking at and ***the way*** you're seeing it. Additionally, it could have a serious impact on the results of your thinking. Because of this, you should make sure you understand the limitations of your point of view and that you fully consider other relevant viewpoints.

When reasoning from this element, you should:

- Identify your point of view
- Seek other points of view and identify their strengths as well as weaknesses
- Strive to be fair-minded in evaluating all points of view

The following questions can help you assess your viewpoint and identify any limitations:

Ask yourself…	**What Universal Intellectual Standards can you use to add some quality to your reasoning? Why?**
How am I looking at this situation?	
Is there another way to look at it that I should consider?	
What exactly am I focused on? How am I seeing it?	
Is my view the only reasonable view?	
What does my point of view ignore?	
Which of these viewpoints make the most sense given the situation?	
Am I having difficulty looking at this situation from a viewpoint with which I disagree?	
Have I studied viewpoints that challenge my personal beliefs?	

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Employing these Reasoning Elements can help you develop habits to transition from 'thought' to deliberate, purposeful thinking. When faced with complex, crucial problems, you should try to ensure your reasoning is as reliable as you can make it. Otherwise, you risk making a bad decision or implementing a poor solution that could impact your people and your mission. Additionally, these actions might even damage your credibility as a SNCO. However, if you use the Reasoning Elements while thinking, transitioning to structured thought, you'll be well on your way to developing a set of intellectual traits that reflect your ability to engage in effective reasoning regardless of the situation.

Essential Intellectual Traits

Essential Intellectual Traits are traits of mind and character necessary for right action and thinking. They are dispositions of mind and character essential for fair-minded rationality; or said another way, the virtues that distinguish the close-minded, self-serving critical thinker from the open-minded, truth-seeking critical thinker. You should understand and work to develop the Essential Intellectual Traits in order to be a true critical thinker.

Intellectual Humility

Consider these examples: MSgt Merrill is an expert at his job and believes he knows everything there is to know about it. MSgt Moore is an expert at her job, but understands there are many things she still has to learn. Which SNCO is ***less likely*** to engage in flawed thinking?

Intellectual Humility involves being aware of the limits of your knowledge. It includes recognizing any potential sensitivity you might have to a subject/situation based on your personal perspective, being aware of any biases and prejudices you may have, and acknowledging the limitations of your point of view.

> "To know is to know that you know nothing. That is the meaning of true knowledge."
>
> - Socrates

Individuals that exhibit this trait don't claim more than they actually know and, when challenged, are comfortable saying so. Just because you acknowledge your limitations doesn't mean you're spineless or submissive. Intellectual Humility implies you don't *combine* a need to be intellectually better than everyone else, boastful behavior, or excessive pride in your level of intellect *with insight into the logical foundations of your beliefs*. In other words, you don't allow your 'personal self' to impact your 'thinking self'.

Intellectual Courage

This trait involves the need to face and fairly address ideas, beliefs or viewpoints you may have strong negative emotions about or may not want to hear. In the workplace, some people feel there are two topics that should never be discussed: politics and religion. Why is that? These topics might be seen as taboo because they are (for some) a part of our belief system. They can also define our social groups. When these topics (or beliefs) are challenged, we sometimes exhibit a level of fear that prevents us from considering views that conflict with the beliefs at our 'core'…a level of fear that may prevent us from reasoning with fidelity.

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Intellectual Courage is connected with the ability to consider ideas seen as absurd or different (based on our beliefs/viewpoints) are sometimes rationally justified (in whole or in part). Additionally, by displaying this trait, you're willing to acknowledge that conclusions or beliefs you (or your social group) may have can sometimes be false or misleading. This takes courage, especially if the penalties for not conforming to the 'status quo' might be severe.

"Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood."

- Marie Curie

As a critical thinker, you need courage to be true to (and honestly evaluate) your own thinking (and the thinking of others). You shouldn't passively and uncritically accept what you've learned in the past or what you've been told. You should be willing to consider truth in beliefs/viewpoints different from your own, and find fault in some beliefs/viewpoints strongly held by you or your social group. You should be willing to question!

Intellectual Empathy

This trait involves being able to put aside your own viewpoint, assumptions, and ideas in order to step into the shoes of others so you can genuinely understand them. Intellectual Empathy is displayed in your ability to accurately reconstruct the viewpoints and reasoning of others and to reason from premises, assumptions, and ideas other than your own. As a senior leader in your organization, you should be able to see and understand things using the lens of your people and superiors when attempting to reason through a problem or situation. Otherwise, you could make a decision that impacts your people or your mission negatively.

Transformational Leadership's **Individual Consideration (IC)** can help reinforce the trait of Intellectual Empathy. By displaying the IC behavior, you empathize with, listen to, and support your people.

Additionally, individuals that exhibit this trait are less likely to hold on to their position so strongly that they disregard the viewpoints of others. To develop this type of insight, you may need to remember a time when you believed your position was absolutely right, but turned out to be totally wrong.

Intellectual Autonomy

Intellectual Autonomy involves having rational control of your beliefs, values, and inferences. The idea of critical thinking is for you to learn to think for yourself and to gain command over your thought processes. It entails a commitment to analyzing and evaluating beliefs on the basis of reason and evidence, to question when it's rational to question, to believe when it's rational to believe, and to conform when it's rational to conform.

Free thinking and a **high level of motivation**, characteristics of the proficient critical thinker, are exhibited in the trait of Intellectual Autonomy.

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This trait reflects your ***choice*** to think for yourself instead of blindly believing or agreeing to someone else's viewpoint or position. Individuals that exhibit this trait are not intellectually lazy. They're willing to exercise free thinking and are motivated to investigate evidence and data in order to develop their own understanding, independent from the understanding of others.

Intellectual Integrity

This trait involves recognizing the need to be true to your own thinking…to be consistent in the intellectual standards you apply. It includes holding yourself to the same rigorous standards of evidence and proof to which you would hold someone else… practicing what you advocate for others. Additionally, it means you can honestly admit discrepancies and inconsistencies in your own thought and action.

Quite simply, individuals with Intellectual Integrity hold themselves to the same reasoning standards they hold others to. For example, if you require your people to do research in order to gather accurate and comprehensive information, so should you. If you ask your people to put themselves in the shoes of leadership to understand decisions, so should you. If you direct your people to ensure ideas/opinions presented to you are precise, relevant, and logical, yours should be too when presenting ideas/opinions to them.

Intellectual Perseverance

This trait involves being aware of the need to use intellectual insights and truths in spite of difficulties, obstacles, and frustrations you may have or face. It requires a firm adherence to rational principles despite the irrational opposition of others. Intellectual Perseverance includes being comfortable struggling with confusion and unsettled questions over an extended period of time in order to achieve deeper understanding or insight.

This trait could be seen as one of the toughest of the Essential Intellectual Traits. To be intellectually perseverant, you must resist the urge to panic when you don't have all the information you need to make a decision, or get frustrated if you don't know how long it will take to get the information you need. You have to calm your mind so you can reason through the chaos of last minute taskings and other urgent issues. Even when time is short and your stress levels are rising, you should be able to rely on the standards and elements of structured thought. This trait reflects 'going the distance'…not giving up on your thinking process…not giving in to unstructured thought…being comfortable with the ambiguous nature of the moment knowing that eventually (with good reasoning ability), you'll achieve the level of understanding you desire.

Confidence in Reason

This trait involves confidence that, in the long run, your own higher interests and those of humankind at large will be best served by allowing people the 'right' to reason and by encouraging people to come to their own conclusions via their own rational faculties. It also includes faith that, with proper encouragement and cultivation, people can learn to think for themselves…to form rational viewpoints, draw reasonable conclusions, think coherently and logically, persuade each other by reason and become reasonable individuals, despite common obstacles and hindrances we all face.

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This trait is essential for you since SNCOs often fill the role of coach and mentor in the organization. You should give your people the space to think through things on their own and have confidence they can do it. If they can't, you don't write them off…you help them using the tools presented in this lesson.

Transformational Leadership's **Intellectual Stimulation (IS)** can help reinforce the trait of Confidence in Reason. Using the 'IS' behavior, you encourage your people to be independent thinkers using creativity and rational thinking to solve problems.

You should not only work on developing habits of the mind for yourself, you should also encourage this behavior in your people. You can use the Universal Intellectual Standards and Reasoning Elements when helping them work through mission related issues or interpersonal conflicts. This can teach them how to critically think through their problems and reach effective solutions instead of reacting and displaying behaviors based solely on emotions.

Fair-mindedness

Sometimes, when individuals say something is not fair, they're usually assessing a situation from their own point of view…using their own lens. And, in these cases, a decision may have been made that doesn't favor their point of view. As a senior leader and decision maker in your organization, believing that something is 'not fair' based solely on your perspective can result in ineffective, one-sided decisions. This could impact your credibility as a leader and the faith your people have in your ability to lead. However, if you adopt the mindset to consider other's points of view, you'll be well on your way to exhibiting the trait of Fair-mindedness.

Fair-mindedness involves treating all viewpoints alike, without thinking about or referencing your own feelings or interests, or the feelings or interests of your friends, peers, or community. It also implies adherence to intellectual standards without reference to your own advantage or the advantage of your group.

Just like the Air Force expects you to exhibit the virtues associated with the core values, the Essential Intellectual Traits are indicative of the type of character you should exhibit (or at least strive to exhibit) as a critical thinker.

Up to this point, you've learned about the Universal Intellectual Standards, the Reasoning Elements, and the Essential Intellectual Traits. By making it a habit to practice structured thinking every day, you can improve your ability to approach problems and issues from a more logical standpoint and to arrive at more comprehensive solutions. However, there's one more thing you should understand about these critical thinking components…they're most effective when used in conjunction with each other.

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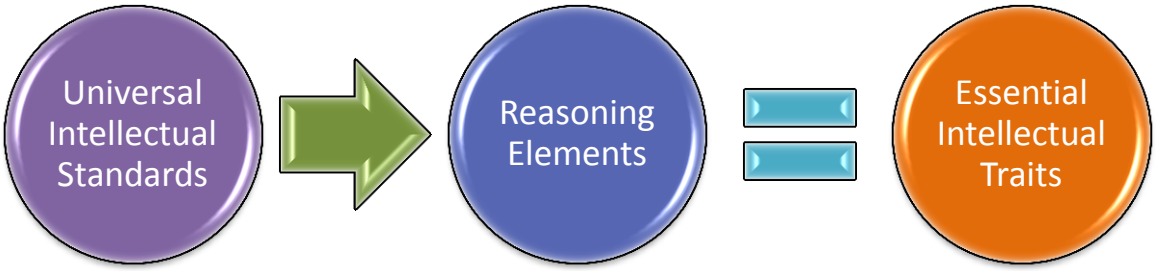
Relationship Between the Components of Critical Thinking

At this point, you've learned a great deal of material about the components of critical thinking. However, each component isn't a 'standalone' entity. The intellectual standards, when applied to the reasoning elements help develop the intellectual traits.



The Universal Intellectual Standards and Reasoning Elements can help you break down any problem in order to assess it from a rational, logical point of view. They can help you make decisions that are more comprehensive and purposeful versus illogical and emotional. As a SNCO, you'll be presented with situations, sometimes even complex problems that may require you to take a step back and think…focusing on what's causing it and what you should do about it. Failing to think through problems might cause you to focus on symptoms (due to not going deep enough) or develop solutions that fail because you haven't considered their consequences. For example, based on the scenario you just viewed, what do you think would be the outcome if MSgt Smith just assumed the problem with low morale was attributed to the lack of team activities and instituted 'mandatory fun' in order to solve the problem? More than likely, since she didn't reason through the problem, she would continue to have the same issue with morale…even after a section BBQ.

Since you'll be charged with leading larger groups of people, it's vital you integrate the Universal Intellectual Standards and Reasoning Elements into your thinking process. Doing so on a consistent basis helps you develop the Essential Intellectual Traits you need to be confident in your reasoning ability.

It may seem like considering these components all the time might be too difficult to do. You shouldn't expect to be an expert critical thinker overnight. It takes some time and effort to master these components every time you're presented with a problem or situation. However, to get started, you can pick one standard and one element at a time and practice using them daily. Once you're comfortable with those, choose another set. By systematically practicing the

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Universal Intellectual Standards and Reasoning Elements, you might find yourself slowly developing the Essential Intellectual Traits of a critical thinker.

The decision you make when selecting what clothes to wear or which restaurant to go to might not result in a catastrophe. But, if you fail to use the critical thinking components when dealing with your people and/or mission related issues, you could make an ineffective decision resulting in a negative impact or critical failure. Therefore, you shouldn't determine what the right idea/solution is to important decisions based on a whim. Nevertheless, even if you practice the components and work on making them habits, there are still hindrances (roadblocks) you may face that could derail your reasoning ability.

Hindrances to Critical Thinking

Each day of your life you become exposed to things that can hinder your ability to think clearly, accurately, and fairly. Some are the result of unintentional and natural human limitations, while others are clearly calculated and manipulative. Some are obvious, but most are subtle or sneaky. Armed with the proper attitude, a critical thinker must next understand how to recognize and avoid (or mitigate) the gauntlet of deception that characterizes everyday life.

This section will cover these hindrances, which are divided into four categories: basic human limitations, use of language, faulty logic or perception, and psychological or sociological pitfalls. Additionally, you'll learn how you can overcome these hindrances as you work on improving your critical thinking skills.

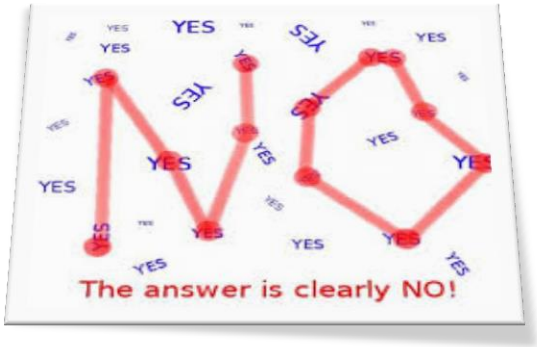
Hindrances are like booby-traps waiting to derail the quality of your critical thinking. In order to deal with or avoid them, you must first recognize them. Let's get started with the first 'booby-trap'…basic human limitations.

Basic Human Limitations

Basic human limitations apply to everyone, including the most proficient critical thinkers. These limitations can remind us that we're not perfect and our understanding of facts, perceptions, memories, built-in biases, etc., can prevent us from seeing or understanding the world with total objectivity and clarity. The best you can do is to acquire a sufficient understanding based on the issue at hand.

Confirmation Bias and Selective Thinking

This occurs when you tend to notice and look for information that confirms your beliefs, while ignoring the relevance of information that contradicts your beliefs. Let's say your base is having problems with DUIs. You might believe this is only a problem with airmen staying in the dorms. However, if you fall victim to this limitation you'll start monitoring, noticing only when someone from that group gets a DUI, while missing (or not looking for) DUIs that are committed by Airmen staying off base.



To avoid this hindrance, you can use the Reasoning Element of **Point of View** in order to objectively evaluate the points of view of others.

By committing this limitation, you might overlook important information you need in order to make an accurate and comprehensive decision. Or, you could target the wrong cause of a problem. Either way, you risk developing a solution that doesn't address the issue or make a bad situation worse. Therefore, to avoid this hindrance, you should obtain and objectively evaluate **all** relevant information and sides of an issue before passing judgment. In the case of the problem with DUIs, you should consider all Airmen assigned to the base that commit DUIs, not just the Airmen staying in the dorms. That way, you may be able to suggest a more comprehensive solution that encompasses the entire base population, regardless of where they reside.

False Memories and Confabulation

This limitation is committed when you're not aware that your memories are often "manufactured" to fill gaps in your recollection, or that some memories of facts, over time, can be unconsciously replaced with fantasy….basically, your memory can mislead you if you're not careful. For example, think back to when you were in Basic Training. You probably look back now and laugh about the experience. You might even think, "It wasn't so bad", or "I really had fun!" However, when you were actually going through it, it might have been the worst experience ever…due to stress, yelling TIs, etc. You might have even thought about quitting!

"Every journey into the past is complicated by delusions, false memories, false naming of real events."

- Adrienne Rich

The reason you can look back on the experience with fond memories now may be due to gaps in your recollection (as the years went by, you've forgotten just how scared you were during that time).

To combat this hindrance, you need to put more reliance on proven facts than memory recollection or testimonies from others and also know your own memory limitations.

Personal Biases and Prejudices

We each have personal biases and prejudices resulting from our own unique life experiences and worldview. They can make it difficult to remain objective and think critically. When you analyze problems with your own "lens", you might overlook certain aspects of a problem or situation. You might even refuse to consider a certain point of view.

For example, let's say you're deployed, working with third country nationals (TCNs). Let's also say you don't have a favorable view of the country and its people. One day, you're presented with a conflict that involves one of your Airmen and a TCN. Your personal bias might prevent you from being objective when dealing with their issue and could create a toxic work environment, or cause you to make a decision that favors your bias or prejudice.

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To resist this limitation, you should first recognize what your biases and prejudices are. Then, work to ensure they don't creep into your thinking process by focusing on the facts, their sources, and the reasoning that support any arguments.

Physical and Emotional Hindrance

Physical and emotional hindrances can severely affect your ability to think clearly and critically. These include stress, fatigue, drugs, and emotionally related hindrances. For example, have you ever had to work long hours, day to day, for an extended period of time with no break/time-off? If so, you might have found that due to a high level of fatigue (and possibly stress) your ability to make effective decisions diminished over time. Or, have you ever experienced a day where, emotionally, you were a little 'off'? It could be that you had an argument with a family member the night before, or may be feeling sadness and/or depression due to the loss of a friend or family member. In these situations, your ability to think may be reduced as a result of the emotional trauma.

Although we've all experienced these (or similar) types of hindrances at some point in our lives, you should restrain from making critical decisions until you've had the opportunity to either rest (if fatigue is a problem) or seek assistance from a professional to help you improve your emotional situation.

Testimonial Evidence

This hindrance occurs when support for a particular position or standpoint is backed up by testimony from a respected figure that's not considered an 'expert' on the topic. You might see this fallacy occur when watching commercials on television or reading magazines. Companies try to sell products by using a famous actor/sports figure to endorse it. They talk about the uses of the product but aren't an expert on it. They hope you'll say, "Since 'X' is using it, it must be a good product" even though you've never researched the product yourself. Additionally, what some of these companies fail to say (or put in tiny writing at the bottom of your television screen) is they paid for the 'testimony' these famous people provide.

You can use the Universal Intellectual Standard of **Accuracy** to evaluate testimonial evidence.

When engaging in critical thinking, you should not rely solely on the testimonies and vivid anecdotes of others to substantiate your beliefs because they're inherently subjective, inaccurate, unreliable, biased, and occasionally fraudulent or exaggerated. You should resist making judgments based on testimonies alone. Do your own research on the topic in order to make a decision.

As stated earlier, these limitations are ones we can all make, simply because we're human and not perfect. However, by knowing yourself (prejudices and biases) and relying on facts instead of memories, you can reduce the chances that these human limitations will hinder your critical thinking ability. Another hindrance that can have an impact on your ability to think critically is the use of language.

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Use of Language

The use of language is highly relevant to critical thinking. The choice of words themselves can conceal the truth, mislead, confuse, or deceive you. From ads which guarantee easy weight loss to politicians assuring prosperity for everyone, a critical thinker must learn to recognize when words are not intended to communicate ideas or feelings, but rather to control thought and behavior.

Ambiguity

This limitation involves a word or expression that can be understood in more than one way. Have you ever said or heard someone say, "We're going to have a G.I. party this afternoon"? So, what does the expression 'G.I. party' mean? For those not familiar with this expression, they might interpret it to mean there will be some sort of party (with balloons and cake) for somebody. However, if you're talking to someone that's been around the military for a while, they should understand it to mean the Airmen (G.I.) will be cleaning up (party) that afternoon.

> "There is no greater impediment to the advancement of knowledge than the ambiguity of words."
>
> - Thomas Reid

If the intended meaning of an ambiguous word or expression cannot be determined, avoid making judgments until the meaning is clear.

Assuring Expressions

These are phrases that attempt to disarm you from questioning the validity of an argument. Expressions such as "As everyone knows…" and "Common sense tells us that…" are examples of assuring expressions. If you buy into this hindrance, it could cause you to avoid asking questions even if you think there's something wrong with the argument. Disregard assuring expressions and instead focus on facts and reasoning that support arguments.

Meaningless Comparisons

These types of comparisons include language that implies something is superior but retreats from that view. An ad can claim a battery lasts "30% longer", but does not say longer than what…an older version of the same battery...another brand of battery?
The comparison really doesn't tell you anything...it's meaningless due to its vagueness. So, you should avoid making judgments if it is not ***exactly clear*** what is being compared.

> "If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough."
>
> - Albert Einstein

Doublespeak Jargon

This limitation involves the use of technical language to make the simple seem complex, the trivial seem profound, or the insignificant seem important…all done intentionally to impress others. You might find this hindrance occurs frequently when writing bullets for evaluation reports or awards packages in order to make the individual standout. But, it may become a

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problem if the language is so technical and/or complex that someone reading it wouldn't know what the individual actually accomplished. For example, "Supported base environmental improvement efforts by eliminating biodegradable products accumulating in workplace; reduced potentially combustible hazards by 100%." This 'technical language' basically said the person merely took out the trash! To avoid this hindrance, learn to recognize the cognitive (factual) content of jargon words and expressions.

Emotive Content

Emotive content is the intentional use of words to arouse feelings about a subject to bias others' thinking…positively or negatively. Instead of using facts and evidence, the person uses words that stir emotion in order to manipulate others into accepting the truth of the argument. For example, let's say you're a member of a group of SNCOs discussing a potential solution to a unit problem. There is 'solution A' and 'solution B' on the table. Someone might argue against 'solution A' by saying, "I'm really ***hesitant*** to accept solution A…I think the results will be ***disastrous*** to our people and ***destructive*** to our mission. Additionally, it could cause our NCOs to see us as just another ***'good ole boy'*** network. Solution A could result in potential ***segregation*** among the enlisted ranks and maybe even perceived ***discrimination***."

In the example, the individual is using words to elicit negative feelings toward solution A. This could cause others to reject the solution based totally on what they felt instead of the facts and good reasoning.

Language is powerful and should be used to draw in emotions, but never as a substitute for reasoning and evidence. As a critical thinker, you should learn to recognize and distinguish the emotive (emotional) content of language and be able to look past it. Try to focus on reasoning and the cognitive (factual) content of language when evaluating arguments (and packages).

You can use the **Implications** Reasoning Element in order to consider if you're unintentionally implying something that's true or false.

False Implications

This occurs when language used is clear and accurate but misleading because it implies something else is true or false when it isn't. For example, let's say your mentor tells you, "Hey, you can get promoted to CMSgt in less than 15 years…if you study hard." But, what your mentor failed to say is you also have to do other things like get excellent evaluations, be active in the community and on base, show increased job responsibility, etc. This is an example of a false implication. It's accurate that you can get promoted to CMSgt in less than 15 years and that you do have to study; however, your mentor ***implies*** through his choice of words that studying is ***ALL*** you have to do to get promoted to CMSgt in less than 15 years.

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To see through false implications, try to understand not only the facts presented, but also their relevance, context, and completeness.

The words others use when making or assessing an argument can be a hindrance and have an impact on your decision making ability, if you're not careful. Learn to recognize when someone is using language to sway you (emotionally) or mislead you. Language (words) can also become a problem when used incorrectly to make or support arguments. This hindrance is faulty logic.

Faulty Logic

Adopted from "Parts of Argument"

Before you jump into this hindrance, you should understand a few things about arguments. Basically, arguments are intended to convince or persuade someone to do or think something. Although there are technically multiple elements of an argument, this section will only focus on a few parts…the claim, reasons/support for your claim, and the evidence to back up your support. If the evidence is strong and supports the claim well, the argument is considered 'logical'. However, problems with arguments can be traced back to issues with one of the three parts.

As a proficient critical thinker, you must be able to recognize when arguments are supported or contain faulty logic. Otherwise, you risk accepting an illogical argument which may lead to an ineffective decision. The following are common faulty logic errors used when attempting to make an argument.

Superstition

Superstition is the result of an erroneous perception of the connections between unrelated events. When making a claim, some people attempt to use it as support or evidence. For example, MSgt Hill says, "My airman is going to receive the Airman of the Quarter award *(claim)* because I gave him a buffalo nickel to carry in his pocket *(reason)*. The last time I received an award, I had that same nickel in my pocket *(evidence)*." In this example, the evidence is based on superstition (the buffalo nickel). There's no logical connection between the coin and receiving the award. More than likely, MSgt Hill received his award due to his accomplishments and hard work, not because of a coin in his pocket.

X is true because you can't prove X is false…
OR
X is false because you can't prove X is true…

Argument from Ignorance

This occurs when you state your claim is true only because it hasn't been proven false (or vice versa). Additionally, this error in reasoning moves the burden of proof from the person making the

claim to the other side *(I think it's true because you can't prove it's false…)*. For example, SMSgt Legend briefs the commander, "Sir, I want to go ahead and institute the new policy on PT failures I suggested last week. I presented my ideas to the other SNCOs during the production meeting. Since no one had any questions, they must all agree with it." This is an example of an argument from ignorance because SMSgt Legend is essentially saying the lack of evidence (no questions asked) IS evidence the commander should accept his claim.

False Analogies

If you make a false analogy to support the validity of a particular claim, you've made in error in logic. This occurs when you assume that because two things are alike in one way, they're alike in other ways (usually the way that supports your claim). For example someone might claim "MSgt Fisher should be able to write bullets as well as MSgt Gray." They support the claim by assuming that since MSgt Fisher and MSgt Gray are both SNCOs and MSgt Gray can write excellent bullets, so should MSgt Fisher. While it's true that MSgt Fisher and MSgt Gray are alike in one way (they're both SNCOs), doesn't mean they're alike in the way that supports the claim (they can both write excellent bullets). In order to be a proficient critical thinker, you must learn to recognize the faulty assumptions behind false analogies.

Irrelevant Comparison

This error occurs when your claim is based on an attempt to compare two things that shouldn't be (or can't be) compared…like trying to compare apples and oranges. For example, you may claim learning how to drive a car is the same as learning how to ride a bike. In this example, there is a big difference in the skills it takes to ride a bike (apples) and the skills it takes to drive a car (oranges). This is an irrelevant comparison. A more valid comparison might be to claim that learning how to drive a car is the same as learning how to drive a pickup truck. Both are vehicles that require similar skill sets to operate. To avoid this hindrance, you should compare like items…apples and apples.

Pragmatic Fallacy

This occurs when arguing something is true because "it works," (meaning people are satisfied with it or they find it beneficial, meaningful, or significant) even though it hasn't been proven. For example, while shopping for new running shoes A1C Sutton attempts to convince A1C Palmer to purchase a certain brand of running shoes because they're advertised to improve your ability to run. A1C Sutton tells A1C Palmer he purchased them last month and his run time on the 1 ½ mile is faster than before he purchased the shoes; therefore he concludes the shoes made him faster…they work! However, just because it *appears* the shoes worked, doesn't mean they did. It could be that other factors had an impact on his run time (practice, weather, environmental conditions, physical/mental condition, etc.). A1C Palmer should do more research…

To avoid this fallacy, try to identify or not ignore, known or other possible variables that may affect the outcome.

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Slippery Slope Fallacy

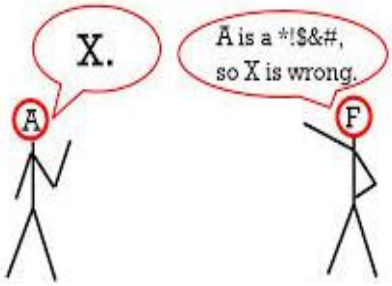
This is an argument that assumes one thing will lead to another…and then another, and before you know it, you're doing something you don't want to do; therefore, you shouldn't do the first thing. For example, "If you eat a doughnut for breakfast today, you'll probably eat one tomorrow, too. Before you know it, you're eating so many doughnuts that you gain 20 pounds and fail your PT test." This is an example of a slippery slope fallacy. It basically argues that if you don't want to fail your PT test, you shouldn't eat a doughnut for breakfast. However, just because you eat one (or a few) doughnuts *occasionally* doesn't mean you'll fail your PT test…this is the misconception. If this were true, no one would ever eat doughnuts!! To avoid this fallacy, you must be able to evaluate the logic (or proof) supporting an alleged adverse chain of events…logically follow the chain!

Critical thinkers should be able to navigate through arguments with ease, especially if they can identify the ones based on faulty logic. However, misleading or incorrect support isn't the only thing you should watch out for. Proficient critical thinkers are also mindful of the hindrances caused by our mental/emotional state and the social relationships we have with others.

Psychological and Sociological Pitfalls

Perceptions are common…everyone has them about certain people, events, or even problems/issues. As a result, they can be easily misinterpreted due to psychological and/or sociological influences. When these misinterpretations are exploited or intentionally introduced during arguments, they can cause your reasoning to be twisted and lead you (or others) to make ineffective decisions or arrive at false conclusions.

Ad Hominem Fallacy



This occurs when you criticize the person (character or reputation) making an argument, not the argument itself. For example, MSgt Longman might disagree with MSgt Johnson's argument. So, he says "Why should we believe what MSgt Johnson said? He's one of the most selfish SNCOs in the unit; he's only looking out for himself!" For a critical thinker, the person making the argument is irrelevant…it's the argument itself that matters. To avoid this pitfall, you should focus on reasons and facts that support an argument, not the person making the argument. However, ***if*** the source is questionable, make sure you independently verify supporting facts.

Ad Populum (Bandwagon Fallacy)

This pitfall occurs when someone attempts to appeal to the popularity of the claim as a reason for accepting the claim (because "everyone" thinks or does it, it must be right). For example, your commander might say, "We're going to do mandatory PT on Friday afternoons. The other units on base are doing it and it works for them, so it should work for us, too." Just because the other units are doing PT on that day doesn't mean that's the right decision for your particular unit.

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Fridays might not be convenient for mandatory PT due to your unit's mission related constraints. A valid claim should be based on sound evidence, not popularity.

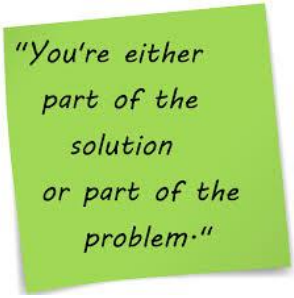
Emotional Appeal

Emotional appeal occurs when making irrelevant emotional appeals to accept a claim (since emotion often influences people more effectively than logical reasoning). For example, arguing TSgt Robinson should get a lower form of discipline for safety violations that would normally result in a serious reprimand simply because TSgt Robinson is going through a difficult divorce and is having a hard time adjusting. This claim might be accepted because you feel pity or sympathy for TSgt Robinson. Since an argument requires logical evidence to support its claim, don't accept emotional appeals as sufficient evidence to support the claim.

Evading the Issue (Red Herring)

This could happen when someone attempts to divert attention to an issue irrelevant to the issue at hand. Red Herrings are distractions that attempt to mislead you. For example, while counseling SrA Bird for being late, she says, "I don't know why we're even talking about this. We're behind on our training tasks and if we don't finish them by the end of the month, some people will be decertified!" In this instance, SrA Bird is attempting to divert your attention from her (being late for work) to training issues (something not relevant to the issue). To avoid Red Herrings, learn to recognize evasion (smokescreens), which imply a direct attempt to avoid facing an issue.

Fallacy of False Dilemma (Either/or Fallacy)



This occurs when someone intentionally restricts the number of alternatives, thereby omitting relevant alternatives from consideration. An example would be someone making the statement, "You are either with us, or with the terrorists!" Seek opposing arguments on the subject which may reveal the existence of other viable alternatives.

Poisoning the Well

This type of fallacy can be considered a ***'preemptive strike'*** against an opponent. It occurs when you attempt to create a prejudicial atmosphere against the opposition ***before*** he/she has had an opportunity to say anything. This makes it difficult for the opponent to be received fairly.

For example, let's say MSgt Rafferty has been called into a senior leadership meeting to discuss time off for the Airmen in his unit prior to an upcoming deployment. MSgt Rafferty would like to advocate for more time off since the deployment is going to be a difficult one. However, before he can make his argument, MSgt Woodard (who doesn't want to give time off due to the number of tasks left to accomplish before they deploy) says,

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> "Look, I already know what MSgt Rafferty is going to say…he looks for ANY opportunity to give his people time off regardless of the situation! They probably spend more time at home than they do at work!" So, before MSgt Rafferty can make his argument, MSgt Woodard has 'poisoned the well'…since it has been said that MSgt Rafferty likes to give his people time off, the other SNCOs might be less inclined to seriously consider MSgt Rafferty's argument once they hear it.

In this example, how much time off MSgt Rafferty gives his people under normal circumstances is not relevant to the issue at hand and shouldn't have any bearing on his argument. The actual issue is whether or not the Airmen should be given time off due to the difficult nature of the upcoming deployment.

When evaluating an argument, you should focus on the argument ***when it's made***, not prejudicial, preemptive remarks intended to sway you before you hear all sides of the argument.

SNCOs should continuously strive to overcome the hindrances of basic human limitations, use of language, faulty logic, and psychological/sociological pitfalls while learning to become a proficient critical thinker. If these hindrances are not avoided, they can limit your ability to solve problems by clouding the issue or could strain communication between you, your subordinates, and superiors by misunderstandings and untrue perceptions.

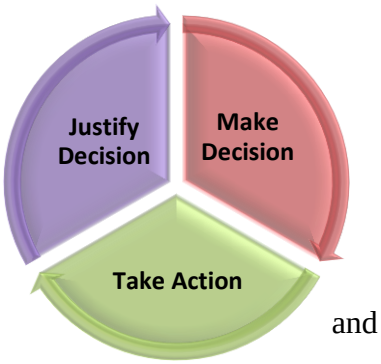
In order to become a proficient critical thinker, you should be able to recognize these hindrances in the arguments and claims of others as well as the ones you make. Try to learn as much as possible about the hindrances to reasoning, as well as consider if you (or those around you) are currently using any in your thinking. By taking these actions, you can work through complex decisions without getting sidetracked due to illogical or faulty thinking.

Decision Analysis

Every decision-making process produces a final choice. The output of which can be an action or an opinion of choice. If you look back to the days when you were a brand new airman just learning your job, more than likely you had to really focus on the tasks that you were performing. Now, through repetition, tasks you once thought of as "complex" are nothing more than routine actions, decisions, and behaviors. It's only after many hours of complex analysis, inferences, and effective judgments that tasks become routine enough as to require little or no thought. As long as you can do things the same way, every time, decisions seem to come easy…they're reactive, instinctive, quick, and holistic. However, what happens when things change? People are often uncomfortable with change because it takes them out of their comfort zone…routines change. When you move to something new or different you have to focus on new (maybe even complex) ways of doing things…you have to take a more deliberative, analytical, and procedural approach. Depending on the situation, both approaches are valuable to the decision making process.

Decision Making is the mental (cognitive) process that results in the selection of a course of action from among several alternative scenarios.

Two System Approach



When faced with a decision, there are two different approaches that can be taken. One is reactive, System-1 thinking, and the other is reflective, System-2 thinking.

System-1 (Reactive Thinking)

Reactive Thinking (System-1) relies heavily on situational cues, prominent memories, and trial and error to arrive quickly and confidently at judgments, particularly when situations are familiar and immediate action is required.

Some of the judgments you make are automatic or reactive, rather than reflective. For example, MSgt Newton has taken first aid training consistently since he joined the Air Force. One day, while exercising at the fitness center, he sees an airman pass out after stepping off the treadmill. He immediately puts his training to use and administers first aid. He didn't spend a lot of time thinking about what he should do…he made a quick decision and took action. Due to his reactive thinking, he was able to assist the injured airman until medical personnel arrived.

> "The only real valuable thing is intuition."
>
> - Albert Einstein

System-1 thinking often feels intuitive…like decisions made in the heat of battle or in moments of crisis. More than likely, these decisions are based on expertise, training, and practice (just like in MSgt Newton's case).

Some of the advantages of using System-1 thinking when making decisions include:

- ***Decisiveness when needed:*** You're able to use your intuition, prior experiences, and training to make quick decisions instead of having to consider extra information. This can be useful in situations where time is limited and decisions need to be made 'in the moment', or in situations where the decision that needs to be made is something routine that you deal with on the daily basis (like what you're going to eat for lunch).
- ***Improved time management:*** Because you don't take a long time to make decisions, you essentially free up time to focus on tasks that require more attention.
- ***Perceived credibility and reliability*** if your decisions are correct. Due to your ability to confidently use System-1 thinking, you can increase your credibility and reliability with your people and your superiors. They can come to you when decisions need to be made on the spot and trust that your decisions should be valid and acceptable.

Using reactive thinking effectively can reduce the amount of time spent 'over thinking' something that can be solved more quickly. As you make successful System-1 (reactive) decisions, you may find that your level of intuition, or at least your reliance on your intuition, increases as well. However, there are a few disadvantages to this type of thinking.

Some of the disadvantages of using System-1 thinking include:

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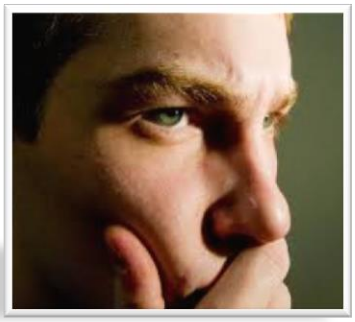
- ***Mistakes made if used too often:*** It's easy to make a mistake if you just 'react' when presented with complex situations that require more analysis.
- ***Overlooked details:*** Since you don't spend a great deal of time pondering the situation before making a decision, you could miss important information that can have an impact on the final decision. This might result in an inappropriate/ineffective decision.
- ***Missed improvement opportunities:*** In reactive thinking, you're relying on past experiences and training in order to make decisions. This type of thinking doesn't allow time for looking at how a process can be improved in order to make it better...reactive thinking can result in 'quick fix' solutions.

Relying on reactive thinking too much may impair your judgment and reliability overall. There are times when making quick, reactive decisions can be detrimental and could have a negative impact on those that work with you, for you, and around you. However, when presented with more complex problems, you should engage in System-2 thinking.

System-2 (Reflective Thinking)



Reflective Thinking (System-2) is broad and informed problem-solving and deliberate decision-making that relies heavily on information, deliberation, time, planning, and comprehensive consideration. If you've ever worked on a car engine and you want the job done right the first time, you would pull out a manual, make sure you have the right tools, and think each step through before proceeding.

This type of reflective thinking is useful for judgments in unfamiliar situations, for processing abstract concepts, and for deliberating when there is time.

Some of the advantages of System-2 thinking include:

- ***Improved critical thinking and problem solving skills:*** As a result of the deliberate and comprehensive nature of System-2 thinking, you can solve problems using logical and analytical processes. When dealing with complex issues, reflective thinking can add quality to your reasoning ability in order to develop more informed, comprehensive solutions.
- ***Forced consideration of logical arguments:*** Since you've taken the time to reflect, you can consider other points of view versus just relying on your own point of view (like in System-1 thinking).

However, because reflective thinking is a deliberate process, there are some disadvantages to using it. They include:

- ***Too much time spent to make a decision:*** Constantly taking too long to make a decision can make you appear reluctant to make the call. This could impact your level of credibility and reliability with subordinates and superiors.
- ***Too much thought put into routine decisions:*** Even though certain situations require System-2 thinking, using it for routine, everyday tasks could cause you to over-think.

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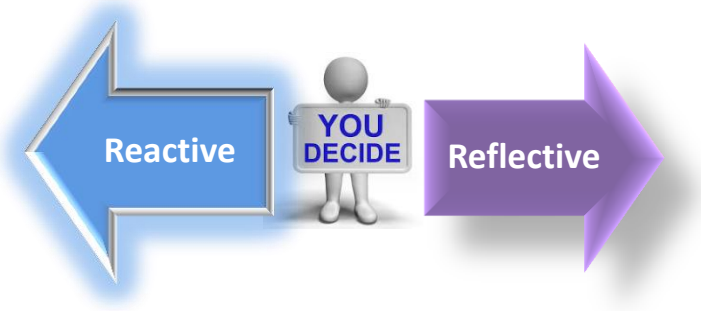
- ***Decreased time management:*** Good time management is important in analyzing individual situations in order to determine what actions should be taken. Using reflective thinking for every decision would be very time consuming…and "time is money." If you spend too much time using reflective thinking, you could throw off your entire schedule for the day…not accomplishing important tasks that need to be done. This could result in a late suspense or even neglecting your other SNCO responsibilities.

Using the Appropriate Systems Thinking

As you think about a two-system approach to decision-making, don't make the mistake of thinking the process is a "head versus heart" or a "right brain versus left brain" approach. Human decision-making isn't this superficial or simplistic. Likewise, don't categorize yourself or your people as System-1 or System-2 thinkers. Every individual uses both systems, not just one.

If you've ever heard (or maybe said), "that's the way we've always done things" it's because too often, many of today's problems are solved by utilizing easy and comfortable approaches to obtain a solution. In reality, as you may have discovered, simple and common approaches aren't always the most effective way of dealing with complex, dynamic, and diverse problems.

As a SNCO and a member of the Profession of Arms, there's an increasing need for you to improve and create impeccable results through systems thinking. In essence, systems thinking is a discipline of seeing the "whole," recognizing patterns and interrelationships, and learning how to structure more effective, efficient decisions.



Many reactive judgments can be good judgments, but can lead to unnecessary risks and mistaken biases if not used carefully. Thus, the true "decision" is which of your reactive judgments should you make reflective? Since you already have the skill set to make decisions using System-1 thinking (intuition, training, etc.), the next section will focus on using System-2 thinking in decision analysis.

Decision Analysis Process

Decision Analysis is a technique to assist you (or a group) when choosing a course of action, taking into consideration the objectives, alternative options, and risks involved. It achieves a structured route towards the best all-around decision. In a team situation, this technique also helps to reduce bias when making decisions.

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Making the right decision in complex situations is critical. That's why Decision Analysis, which is a form of System-2 thinking, can be helpful. You can use it when deciding which solution to implement or which course of action to take. However, before a decision can be made, a number of factors have to be considered and analyzed. In addition to the steps of the process, you can also use the following tools: ***brainstorming*** can help you decide your priorities, ***rating sheets*** can help you make a choice against criteria, and ***solution effect*** analysis can help you identify any consequences of the choices you've made.

This technique formalizes the decision process by highlighting the need to: understand that choices have to be made, discuss those factors that are vital to the success of the decision, agree what action will satisfy these factors, and recognize what could prevent the success of any action. Let's take a look at each step.

Practicing the **"Accuracy" and "Clarity"** Universal Intellectual Standards can help ensure your decision statement is true (what the actual goal is) and clear (no misunderstandings).

Practicing the **"Purpose"** Reasoning Element can help ensure your decision statement is significant (if not, consider using System 1 thinking) and realistic.

Decision Analysis Steps

When attempting to make a complex decision using System-2 thinking, decision analysis can help you by providing a step by step process. The first step in the process is to develop a decision statement.

1. ***Decision Statement:*** In this step, you should prepare a statement that clearly states what decision needs to be made. It acts as a starting point for the process and sets limits for the choices you'll need to make. It should be simple, yet accurate since you'll use it to filter alternatives that aren't in line with this statement later in this process.

   When tasked with solving problems or making decisions in your work environment, this is a vital step. You (or your group) should spend time thinking critically about what decision you need to make. Don't jump ahead to solutions yet! Even though SNCOs should be decisive problem solvers, thinking of possible solutions upfront is more indicative of System 1 (Reactive) thinking. If you don't have a good decision statement, you risk failing to develop an effective, comprehensive solution. This could negatively impact your people or your mission (depending on the type of decision that needs to be made)…resulting in, at the very least, wasted man hours.

2. ***Decision Criteria:*** In this step, you'll focus on the decision criteria you'll use to make the decision. Since this is a very important step that can help focus your attention only on relevant solutions, it has three tasks you need to complete:

   a. ***<u>Determine your criteria</u>***. The simplest way to determine criteria is to conduct a *brainstorming session* with those affected by the decision. This could be peers, co-workers, and/or even subordinates, if applicable. Additionally, if you don't have the expertise to determine what criteria you should be using to assess your alternatives, you could

The "**Gather Information**" Reasoning Element can help ensure you have all the data you need in order to determine your criteria.

ask one or more subject matter experts (SME) for their input.

There's one more thing to consider before moving on. If you're tasked to provide a solution or course of action for a unit issue, you might not be the final decision authority...it could be your supervisor or the commander. In this case, you should speak with him/her to ensure you know what the expectations are. If not, you could go through this entire process and find the solution you picked was not what the final decision authority had in mind.

b. After you compile your list of criteria, you should ***categorize the criteria*** as either a MUST or a WANT. The MUSTs are criteria that are essential for any solution to be effective. This list of criteria will determine which solutions get to 'stay on the table'. If a solution doesn't meet all the MUST criteria, it should be removed from the table.

> If you're making a decision that might impact others in your unit, you can use the Universal Intellectual Standard of **"Fairness"** to ensure you consider all viewpoints (not just your own) when deciding what criteria you should use in order to evaluate the alternatives.

The WANTs criteria are characteristics, traits, accessories, etc. that enhance the solution. In other words, they're the 'nice to haves' but aren't necessary for the solution to work. You'll use these criteria to compare your alternatives…that way, the comparison is fair. If you don't, you might be in a situation where you have different criteria for different alternatives. This might skew the final result. Here's another way of looking at it: What do you think would happen if you supervised several Airmen of the same rank, but had different standards/expectations for each? When it's time to do an evaluation on all individually, you wouldn't have consistent standards to measure them against. Therefore, their ratings would be unreliable and probably unfair.

After you've ensured your solution(s) met the MUSTs criteria, your list of WANTs can help you determine which solution is actually selected. If you're going through this process with a group, use brainstorming to develop a list of WANTs.

c. Before finding solutions, there is one more important thing you need to do: ***weigh your list of WANTs***. This is where you'll assign a weight, or importance, to each of the WANTs criteria. You can use any type of scale, but for most decisions, a 1-10 scale works best, with 1 being least important and 10 being most important. There is no scientific process for this; it's basically how important YOU feel each WANT is. The weight you assign a WANT may be different than the weight someone else assigns the same WANT. Therefore, if working with a group, you may want to have each person assign weights individually, and then use an average score for each WANT. That way, as a group, you're using the same weights to assess the WANTs criteria without personal bias. Without it, you and/or your group might not stay focused on the goal or even stall out later in the process due to disagreements about importance.

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3. ***Alternatives:*** During this step, you'll look for solutions or alternatives to meet the requirements of your decision statement or solve your problem. They can come from many sources…so be open to those that might be a little 'outside the box.' Try to be as creative as you can. If you tend to be highly adaptive, seek outside help from those that might be more innovative or vice versus. That way, you can ensure a wide range of alternatives that might help you meet your decision statement (goal). Again, since this is also a very important step, there are three tasks you need to complete:

If you're having trouble identifying alternatives, you can use the same tools from Step 2: brainstorming, research, or help from a SME.

   a. First you must ***locate alternatives***. During this time, you'll attempt to identify possible solutions. Don't limit yourself because of a fear of reprisal or failure. Additionally, don't let existing rules or organizational norms limit you either. Sometimes, the best alternatives are ideas that haven't been considered before. *(**Note:** Once you've identified your alternatives, consider putting them in a table or worksheet in order to make the results of the comparisons easier to see.)*

   b. Next, you need to ***compare your list of alternatives to your MUSTs criteria***. Since this list of criteria represents your 'must haves', you should be able to evaluate your alternatives very quickly…either they meet the MUSTs criteria or they don't. The alternatives that don't are immediately removed from the table.

      Here's an example of a list of MUSTs and alternatives for someone looking for living room furniture:

Criteria (MUSTs)	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
Costs < $2000	YES	YES	YES	YES
2 chairs and 1 sofa	YES	YES	YES	YES
Brown primary color	YES	YES	YES	YES
Deliver in < 6 weeks	YES	YES	NO	YES

      As you can see in the example above, alternative #3 would be eliminated from contention since it doesn't meet the "deliver in less than 6 weeks" criteria. However, alternatives 1, 2, and 4 meet all the MUSTs criteria and make it to the next phase.

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c. Now, you need to ***select the BEST alternative***. But, instead of just picking one randomly, you can use a systematic process to determine which one is best. Remember that list of WANTs criteria? Well, this is where they become important. You'll compare the alternatives you have left using WANTs criteria.

First, you should create another table that includes columns for the WANTs criteria, the weights you previously determined for the WANTs from step 2c (Remember, these numbers should indicate ***your*** level of importance for each criteria. In the example below, the weights/importance have been added for you), the alternatives that passed the MUSTs test, and a column for scoring.

In the example that follows, you'll see the WANTs criteria and the previously determined weights from step 2c. However, for now, let's leave that column alone and focus just on comparing the alternatives to the WANTs criteria.

In order to compare the alternatives, you're going to use another scale (1-10) to evaluate them based on the items you wanted your living room furniture to have. So, in the table below, the first one is "easily removable washable covers." Let's say alternative #1 offers washable covers, but they're hard to remove. You might not give it the lowest weight because the covers on this alternative are washable. But, you also wanted them to be easy to remove…and these aren't. Based on that, let's give it a weight of 3 out of 10 (remember, this score is based on opinion). Alternative #2 offers easily removable washable covers…which is exactly what you want, so let's assign it a weight of 10. Finally, alternative #4 offers washable covers that are semi-easy to remove, so let's give it a 5.

When all alternatives are compared to that particular WANT, each one weighted differently. All covers were washable, but some were easier to remove than others. This 'difference' is reflected in the table below for all three alternatives (3…10…5).

For the sake of this example, let's say you've compared the other criteria and alternatives and came up with the follow numbers:

Criteria *(Wants)*	**Previously Determined Weight**	**Alt 1**	**Score**	**Alt 2**	**Score**	**Alt 4**	**Score**
Washable covers that are easy to remove	**9**	3		10		5	
Covers can be tumble	**8**	0		4		6	

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dried							
Ottoman included	**6**	0		4		7	
Stain Guard protection	**4**	3		3		10	

Now, it's time to do a little math. Begin by multiplying the ***Previously Determined Weight*** (in the gray column) by the weights you just assigned. For example, multiply the Previously Determined Weight for the washable covers (9) by the weight of alternative #1 (3) and arrive at a number (9x3=27). Put that number (27) in the score column. Do this for all remaining items and alternatives. Then, add up the scores for each column to arrive at the Total Score for each alternative. Here's what your table should look like after all the math is done:

Criteria *(Wants)*	**Previously Determined Weight**	**Alt 1**	**Score**	**Alt 2**	**Score**	**Alt 4**	**Score**
Washable covers that are easy to remove	**9**	3	27 (9x3)	10	90 (9x10)	5	45 (9x5)
Covers can be tumble dried	**8**	0	0 (8x0)	4	32 (8x4)	6	48 (8x6)
Ottoman included	**6**	0	0 (6x0)	4	24 (6x4)	7	42 (6x7)
Stain Guard protection	**4**	3	12 (4x3)	3	12 (4x3)	10	40 (4x10)
TOTAL SCORE			**39** (27+0+0+12)		**158** (90+32+24+12)		**175** (45+48+42+40)

At this point, it seems like the decision is clear: alternative #4 scored the highest (175) and therefore ***appears*** to be the best choice. But, there's still one more thing you need to do that might impact the final alternative selected…Risk Analysis.

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4. ***Risk Analysis:*** After you've selected the alternative that fits your list of criteria, you should conduct a risk analysis to see if there are any adverse or unintended consequences of your selection. Based on your analysis, you might find a risk that's great enough to cause you to abandon the alternative you selected from the previous step. This helps you, as the decision maker, look for anything that could go wrong, plan for contingencies in the event something does go wrong, determine how much risk is involved before committing resources, or think about and evaluate the risks in order to overcome them. *(**NOTE:** If you're not the final decision maker, you can provide him/her with the alternative and associated risks so they can make an informed decision.)*

When deciding the importance of each risk, you can use the Universal Intellectual Standard of **"Depth"** to ensure you're considering the complexities associated with each risk.

Let's say you use this process to address a problem in your unit. You complete each step and select an alternative that best meets your criteria. However, what if this alternative negatively impacts your people? Maybe it requires them to work longer hours for an extended period of time with no break. This could impact their resiliency, which is a risk you feel is too great. Therefore, not only would you not select this alternative, you would go back and put "can't result in longer duty hours with no break" as a MUST criteria back in Step 2. At that point, you would start over with the previously identified alternatives and possibly even find new alternatives to put on the table.

Continuing with our furniture example, let's say alternative #4 (the one with the highest score) has two chairs with high backs. When you go to the furniture store and sit in one of them, you realize your dad likes to visit often, but he has back problems…this type of chair would be too uncomfortable for him. So, now you have a choice to make.

You can use the Reasoning Element of "**Implications**" in order to help you consider all possible consequences (risks) during this analysis.

1. If you decide the style of the chair is a risk you can accept, (he should be able to sit in the chair), you can keep alternative #4 and the process is over…the solution has been selected to address your decision statement.

2. If you determine the risk isn't acceptable and you don't want chairs with high backs; it now becomes a criteria. You just have to decide how important it is:

   a. If it's so important that it's ***essential***, you should add it to the MUSTs list. If you do, then you'll have to start the entire Decision Analysis process over with all previously identified alternatives and possibly find new alternatives to be assessed…in other words, you have to keep looking at living room furniture..

   b. If it's important, but not a deal breaker, it should be included on the WANTs list. If you add it to the WANTs list, you'll need to assign it a weight and re-accomplish steps b and c.

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If you don't conduct a risk analysis, you could select an alternative that either does more damage to the situation or might even cause additional problems that you'll have to find solutions for. Either way, failing to conduct a risk analysis could require additional work and might impact your timelines, if applicable, and even your ability to accomplish your mission effectively.

Even though this process might take some time, it's worth the effort! After going through it, you can select the best solution and consider possible risks for your problem as well as have hard data to back up the selection.

Realistically speaking, senior enlisted leaders don't need to run every decision they make through such an extensive process. In fact, the Air Force depends on SNCOs to apply their extensive knowledge and experience (System-1 Thinking) to most day-to-day decisions. However, there are times when SNCOs have to make critical decisions and solve complex problems. In these cases, by using the Decision Analysis process (System-2 Thinking) you should increase your chances of making high quality, fact-based decisions.

Summary

This lesson began with a brief overview of the proficient critical thinker. Here, you learned that characteristics such as being open-minded to investigate new ideas and motivated to reach a sufficient level of understanding on a subject before making judgments can help you develop the proper attitude a critical thinker should have. Next, you started to delve deeper into critical thinking by covering its components. You learned that if you commit yourself to incorporate the Universal Intellectual Standards and Reasoning Elements into your daily reasoning…work to make them 'habits of the mind', you're well on your way to exhibiting the Essential Intellectual Traits that critical thinkers possess. Then, you learned there can be roadblocks to purposeful reasoning. These 'roadblocks' or hindrances such as use of language and psychological pitfalls can mislead you and others if not identified and addressed appropriately. After that, you walked through the decision analysis process, which is a System-2 (reflective) approach to decision making. By using this structured process, you can increase your chances of making effective decisions for complex issues, backed up by fact-based data.

Critical thinking as a skill isn't something you can read about and automatically put in your leadership toolbox. It should be 'mastered'. In order to do so, you must make adjustments in how you reason through everyday problems and situations. Just like having that first cup of coffee in the morning or checking your e-mail as soon as you get to work are habits you may have developed overtime, critical thinking involves 'habits of the mind' that also need to be practiced and refined over time.

As an Airman and SNCO, the Air Force expects you to represent the Profession of Arms in the most effective way possible. You and every other member of our profession are held to a higher standard as a result of the trust bestowed upon us by the American People. To meet this high standard, you must demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and self/subordinate development. This commitment will require you to think about problems and situations in a more purposeful way. It'll challenge you to stop looking through your 'lens' and look through

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the 'lens' of others, both up and down the chain of command. This commitment will require you to be a proficient critical thinker.

> A.E. Mander, author of *Logic for the Millions*, once said, *"Thinking is skilled work. It is not true that we are naturally endowed with the ability to think clearly and logically – without learning how, or without practicing. People with untrained minds should no more expect to think clearly and logically than people who have never learned and never practiced can expect to find themselves good carpenters, golfers, or pianists."*

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Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

The Profession of Arms & the SNCO

Inside this Study Guide:

The Profession of Arms

- Military as a Profession
- The American POA
- Three Dimensions of POA

The Air Force Guiding Values and Standards

- Air Force Core Values
- Warrior Spirit

Progressive Professionalism (P2)

- The Continuum of Professionalism
- Direction, Discipline, and Recognition (DDR)
- Development

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The Profession of Arms

In a 1995 article written for Airpower Journal, former Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Ronald R. Fogleman stated, "As members of the joint team, we Airmen are part of a unique profession that is founded on the premise of service before self. We are not engaged in just another job; we are practitioners of the Profession of Arms (POA). We are entrusted with the security of our nation, the protection of its citizens, and the preservation of its way of life. In this capacity, we serve as guardians of America's future. By its very nature, this responsibility requires us to place the needs of our service and our country before personal concerns. "

Renewing our commitment to the POA is essential to ensure we maintain the best led and best trained Air Force in the world. Fighting America's wars is an ugly business but it must be done. Our professional status was earned by the men and women who have gone before us and is carried on by every Airman who wears the uniform today. We, more than anyone else, should understand what it means to serve in the Profession of Arms.

This lesson starts by covering the military as a profession. The Profession of Arms, or POA, shares many of the attributes of most professions; however, there are additional characteristics that distinguish it from others. To help further your understanding you'll learn about the three dimensions of the Profession of Arms: physical, intellectual and moral. Let's begin by looking at the distinction between the military and other professions.

All professions share the following characteristics:

- *Deliver a specialized service to society*
- *Develop and maintain a body of specialized knowledge*
- *Establish a unique subculture*

Military as a Profession

The purpose of any profession is to serve society by effectively delivering a necessary and useful service. To fulfill societal needs, professions such as medicine, law, clergy, and the military develop and maintain distinct bodies of specialized knowledge and impart expertise through formal, theoretical, and practical education. Each profession establishes a unique subculture that distinguishes practitioners from the society they serve (and other professions) while supporting and enhancing that society. Professions have their own unique standards of performance and codes of ethics to create and maintain their effectiveness. They also develop particular vocabularies/terms, establish journals, and sometimes adopt distinct forms of dress (lab coats, police uniforms, etc.). Society grants professions a great deal of autonomy in exchange for holding their membership to high technical and ethical standards.

The military profession, or POA, is different from others in two ways. First, the consequences of failure in the POA for both individual members of the Armed Forces and the Nation are more

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serious than those in any other profession. Most professions serve individual clients...the military serves a collective client, the Nation. The military's actions/responsibilities have a broad impact in extent and magnitude. Some of these responsibilities include the recovery of a community or country devastated by natural disaster (Operation Unified Response - Haiti), the defeat of enemy forces (Operation Iraqi Freedom), or the security of the Nation (Operation Noble Eagle). Therefore, failure of the military profession could result in catastrophe for our Nation and the nations of others. We work, study, and train throughout our careers to ensure the military profession will not fail in the call of duty.

The second way the POA is different from other professions concerns its individual members. When we take our oaths of office, it includes an understanding of the "unlimited liability" clause. According to General Fogelman,

> *"No other profession expects its members to lay down their lives for their friends, families, or freedoms. But our profession readily expects its members to willingly risk their lives in performing their professional duties. By voluntarily serving in the military profession, we accept unique responsibilities. In today's world, service to country requires not only a high degree of skill but a willingness to make personal sacrifices."*

While members of some professions engage in dangerous tasks daily, only we, members of the Armed Forces, can be ***ordered*** to place our lives in peril anywhere at any time. The obligations we undertake, risking life and well-being for the greater good, are in many ways extraordinary. However, even though the POA is different from other professions, ***our*** POA…the American POA… has its own distinct features.

The American POA

Most nations maintain a military; therefore, the POA is global. American Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Guardsman consider their counterparts from most other nations as peers. We're members of a community born of similar experiences, military cultures, and values. However, the American POA is distinguished from the others due to three characteristics: service orientation, distinct sub-culture, and body of theory/specialized knowledge.

Service Orientation

A service orientation is essential for an occupation to be categorized as a profession. It's widely accepted that the individuals who make up a profession should not be in it solely for their own material benefit, but that they view themselves as having at least some sense of duty towards the issues of the society in which they live i.e., health care, education and counseling.

These issues could potentially impact the public's quality of life and well-being. As a member of the American POA, you swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, not a leader, a people, a government, or a territory. That solemn oath ties your military service directly to the founding document of the Nation. It instills a nobility of purpose within each of us and provides deep personal meaning to all who serve.

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Distinct Sub-culture

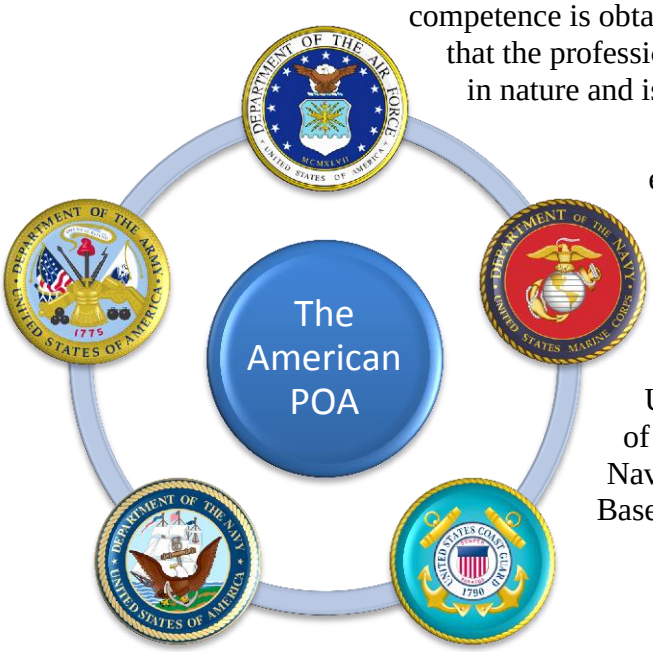
A distinct-subculture is usually the most obvious aspect of all professions. A profession's sub-culture includes the values, norms and symbols that are accepted by the profession. These may include such things as its insignias, emblems, distinctive dress. Clear and controlling symbols which characterize the professions may not be encountered in nonprofessional occupations.

The American POA is distinguished by the professionalism of its officers and noncommissioned officers. They're given considerable authority early in their careers, are expected to exercise initiative to identify and resolve unforeseen circumstances, and are developed through a series of schools that equips them for greater responsibilities as they are promoted. Members of the profession certify and credential individual professionals at appropriate levels of competence. The levels of certification and expertise often reflect progression within the profession. This combination of professional development and experience in making decisions within general guidelines rather than rigid rules develops flexible and self-aware leaders.

> "The American people rightly look to their military leaders to be not only skilled in the technical aspects of the profession of arms, but to be [people] of integrity."
>
> - General J. Lawton Collins
> Army Chief of Staff
> (1949-1953)

Body of Theory/Specialized Knowledge

This charteristic is more than simply having the technical training and skill to do a given job. Professional competence is critical to a profession because the service provided by professions could have beneficial or devastating effects on the population it serves. Samuel Huntington, an authority on sociology of the profession, contends that professional competence is obtained only by prolonged education and experience and that the profession's body of knowledge is predominately intellectual in nature and is generally applicable irrespective of time and place.



The American POA is also 'joint' in nature and essence. It encompasses specialized knowledge of land, maritime, aerospace, and special operations that it applies through unified action. For example, Joint Base Andrews is a United States military facility located in Prince George's County, Maryland. The facility is under the jurisdiction of the United States Air Force 11th Wing, Air Force District of Washington. In 2009, Andrews Air Force Base and Naval Air Facility Washington were merged to form Joint Base Andrews.

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In the past two decades, the American military has advanced technologically at an unprecedented rate. More importantly, it has integrated technology into combined arms and joint operations beyond the militaries of most other nations. These advances are evident in the three dimensions of the POA.

Three Dimensions of POA

The POA has three dimensions: physical, intellectual, and moral.

Physical Dimension

The POA is physical because warfare is a physical 'business'. The joint force applies powerful measures to destroy assets and resources essential to our adversaries' interests. As a result, physical strength is necessary in order to endure demanding situations associated with military operations, such as deploying forces over vast distances or moving them through complex environments. The nature of these situations requires considerable physical energy, stamina, skills and training…all of which can have an impact on the health of the force.

In order to handle the physical dimension of the POA, you must attain and maintain excellent physical conditioning. You must also meet Air Force fitness standards and set a positive example for your people.

The Air Force helps to ensure our service is ready to operate in demanding situations via The Air Force Fitness Program. The program's goal is to motivate Airmen to participate in a year-round physical conditioning program that emphasizes total fitness (aerobic conditioning, strength and flexibility training) and healthy eating. The benefits of an active lifestyle help to increase productivity, optimize health, and decrease absenteeism while maintaining a higher level of readiness needed to meet this dimension of the POA and uphold our part of the joint force.

Intellectual Dimension

As the military instrument of national power, the POA has an intellectual dimension due to the expertise required to employ joint forces in military operations. From the strategic perspective, this expertise is exercised in concert with the other instruments of national power (diplomatic, informational, and economic). From the operational and tactical perspectives, military professionals exercise their expertise against intelligent adversaries actively seeking to defeat them in life-and-death situations.

This dimension also encompasses two cultural aspects of the POA…internal and external. The internal aspect pertains to knowledge of the military's values-based culture (addressed later in the Air Force Guiding Values and Standards section). The external aspect pertains to the need to adapt to varying environments with different cultural and political values. Military professionals must be culturally aware; sensitive to differences and the implications those differences have on the operational environment. You'll learn more about the importance of culture in today's environment in the Cross-cultural Competence lesson of this course.

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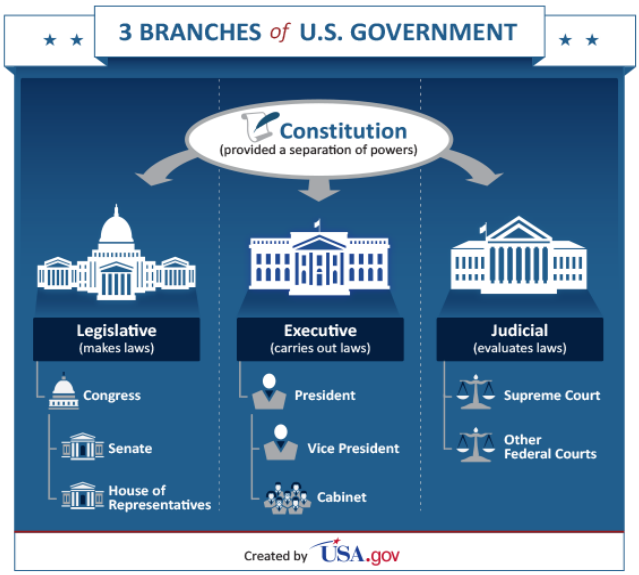
Moral Dimension

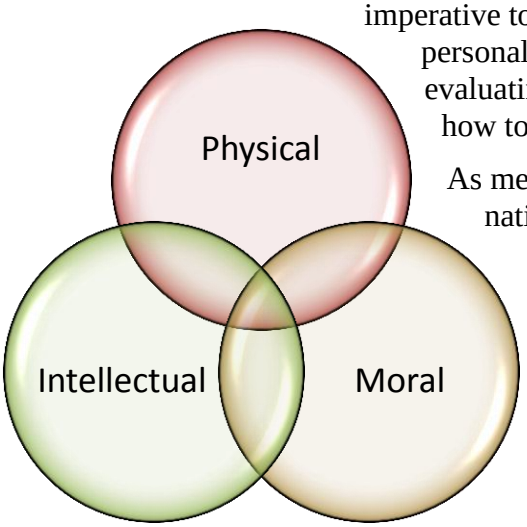
While the use of force is sometimes necessary for the common good, the authority to wield it carries a moral responsibility of the greatest magnitude. The moral and ethical tenets of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence form the basis of the military's professional ideals. The Law of Armed Conflict, Uniform Code of Military Justice, and Code of Conduct give structure to its moral standards.

Included in the moral dimension is civilian control of the military. The Armed Forces don't wage war in their own name or under their own authority. Under the Constitution, the decision to use military force belongs to the American people, acting through Congress and the President. Under the Constitution, Congress, representing the people, has the authority "to raise and support Armies and to provide and maintain a Navy." Once Congress has approved the use of force, the President directs that use. The Supreme Court interprets laws passed by Congress as they apply to the Armed Forces and the authority of the President as Commander in Chief.



Thus, the military is responsible to the legislative (Congress), executive (President), and judicial (Supreme Court) branches of government in their separate functions. Once the Nation decides to authorize military action, it relies on the professionalism of its military leaders to ensure the judicious application of force.

The physical, intellectual, and moral dimensions form the foundation of the POA and are the basis of professional military education and leader development. Military leaders should continuously strive to cultivate expertise in their Service's capabilities. They're constantly mastering changing security environments, technologies, and military techniques. Therefore, it's imperative to master these dimensions. Through study, practice, and a personal commitment to a career-long process of learning, teaching, evaluating, and adapting, SNCOs should seek to better understand how to integrate that knowledge into joint operations.



As members of the POA, we're entrusted with the security of our nation, the protection of its citizens and the preservation of its way of life. The ability to differentiate between the "unlimited liability" clause of the military and other professions is an essential first step to increasing your effectiveness. The American POA further distinguishes itself from other professions in its distinct sub-culture, body of theory/specialized knowledge, and service orientation. Finally, dedicating yourself to the physical,

intellectual and moral dimensions of the profession is yet another indication of professionalism. In order to be considered professionals, we need to act like professionals in every aspect.

Airmen with patriotism, pride in their profession, commitment to the Air Force and its values, and belief in the essential purposes of the military are true professionals that provide the inner strength of cohesive units. Professional Airmen, like you, that embody the military as a profession, who understand the intricacies of the dimensions enable the Air Force to attain its service ideal.

The Air Force Guiding Values and Standards

The Air Force profession is nestled within the American POA. The value of our contribution depends on the ability to achieve the mission—fly, fight, and win in air, space, and cyberspace. To accomplish this, the Air Force needs men and women that understand what it means to be an Airman—who embody Air Force culture.

As a SNCO, you're responsible for promoting an understanding and an appreciation of Air Force culture. You must demonstrate, inspire, and develop in others an internalized understanding of Air Force values and standards. Fulfilling these responsibilities is an important part of your contribution to the Air Force mission.

In this section you'll learn about the Air Force Core Values that should be instilled in all Airmen. Next, you'll cover the Airman's Creed…our promise to the Nation and our colleagues. Then, you'll end with the mindset all Airmen should have as a part of the Air Force culture…warrior ethos. Let's start with the core values.

Air Force Core Values

The Air Force Core Values—*Integrity First*, *Service Before Self*, and *Excellence in All We Do*—are much more than minimum standards. They are, essentially, the three pillars of professionalism that provide the foundation for leadership at every level. They inform you of the price of admission into the Air Force itself, point to what is universal and unchanging in the POA, help you get a fix on the ethical climate of an organization and when necessary, serve as beacons vectoring you back to the path of professional conduct.

Each of the core values are defined by 'virtues'. They're the desired behaviors and characteristics we must practice and demonstrate, showing that we truly value Integrity, Service, and Excellence. Practicing these virtues can lead to habits of honorable thought and action.

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Integrity First

Integrity is a character trait. It's the willingness to do what's right even when no one is looking. It's the "moral compass"— the inner voice; the voice of self–control; the basis for the trust imperative in today's military. Consider these virtues as they specifically pertain to the POA:

A person realizes integrity when thoughts and actions align with what he/she knows to be right.

- ***Honesty:*** This is the hallmark of integrity. As public servants, we're trusted agents. Honesty requires us to evaluate our performance against standards, and to conscientiously and accurately report findings. It drives us to advance our skills and credentials through our own effort. The service member's word must be unquestionable. This is the only way to preserve the trust we hold so dear with each other and with the population we serve.
- ***Courage:*** This virtue isn't about the absence of fear. Instead, it's about doing the right thing despite the fear. Courage empowers us to take necessary personal or professional risks, make decisions that may be unpopular, and admit to our mistakes; having the courage to take these actions is crucial for the mission, the Air Force, and the Nation.
- ***Accountability:*** This virtue is about responsibility with an audience. That audience may be the American people, our units, supervisors, fellow Airmen, families, loved ones, and even ourselves. Accountable individuals maintain transparency, seek honest and constructive feedback, and take ownership of the outcomes of their actions and decisions. They're responsible to themselves and others and refrain from actions which discredit themselves or our service.

Integrity First, the voice of self-control, paves the way for allowing the moral fortitude required to be an effective SNCO. When displayed, it's easier to display the core value of *Service Before Self*.

Service Before Self

This core value tells us that professional duties take precedence over personal desires. The following virtues are at the foundation of the POA:

- ***Duty:*** This virtue reflects the obligation to perform what's required for the mission. While our responsibilities are determined by the law, the Department of Defense, and Air Force instructions, directives, and guidance, our sense of duty is a personal one and bound by the oath of service we took as individuals. Duty sometimes calls for sacrifice in ways no other profession has or will. Airmen who truly embody *Service Before Self* consistently choose to make necessary sacrifices to accomplish the mission, and in doing so, we honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice.
- ***Loyalty:*** This virtue is an internal commitment to the success and preservation of something bigger than ourselves. Our loyalty is to the Nation first, the values and commitments of our Air Force second, and finally to the men and women with whom we serve. Loyalty to our leaders requires us to trust, follow, and execute their decisions, even when we disagree. We offer alternative solutions and innovative

ideas most effectively through the chain of command. Ultimately, loyalty is demonstrated by helping each other act with honor.

- ***Respect:*** This virtue requires us to treat others with dignity and value them as individuals. We must always act knowing that all Airmen possess fundamental worth as human beings. We must treat others with the utmost dignity and respect, understanding that our diversity is a great source of strength.

Failure to adhere to *Service Before Self* diminishes your commitment to the core values and places mission success at risk. To ensure the mission is successful, effective SNCOs should always strive for excellence in all endeavors.

Excellence in All We Do

Excellence in All We Do directs us to develop a sustained passion for the continuous improvement and innovation that will propel the Air Force in quantum leaps towards accomplishment and performance. Members of the POA strive for excellence in the following areas:

This core value doesn't mean perfection in everything is expected. Instead, you should continuously advance your craft and increase your knowledge as an Airman.

- ***Mission:*** This virtue encompasses operations, product and resources excellence. The complex undertaking of the Air Force mission requires us to harness the ingenuity, expertise, and elbow grease of all Airmen. We approach it with the mindset of stewardship, initiative, improvement, pride, and a continued commitment to anticipate and embrace change. Our work areas, processes, and interpersonal interactions must be undeniably professional and positive. Our people are the platform for delivering innovative ideas, strategies, and technologies to the fight.
- ***Discipline:*** This virtue reflects an individual commitment to uphold the highest of personal and professional standards. Airmen commit to a life of discipline and self-control. We demonstrate it in attitude, work ethic, and effort directed at continuous improvement, whether it be pursuing professional military education or nurturing ourselves physically, intellectually, emotionally, or spiritually. Each Airman represents the entire Air Force. Our appearance, actions, and words shape the culture of the Air Force and the reputation of the entire military profession.
- ***Teamwork:*** This virtue is required to triumph at every level. Airmen recognize the interdependency of every member's contributions towards the mission and strive for organizational excellence. We not only give our personal best, but also challenge and motivate each other. We carry our own weight, and whenever necessary, help our wingmen carry theirs. We serve in the greatest Air Force in the world, and we embrace the idea that our part of the Air Force meets that world-class standard.

The Air Force Core Values must be an integral part of the decision-making process that drives your actions, decisions and behaviors. They remind you what it takes to get the mission done, inspire you to do your very best at all times, and are the common bond among all comrades in arms. As a member of the POA, you need to continually teach, reinforce and practice the core values. They're the glue that unifies the force and are manifested in the Warrior Spirit.

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Warrior Spirit

Airman's Creed

We have all found ourselves standing at promotion ceremonies and other military functions where we recite the Airman's Creed. But why do we say the Airman's Creed? Better yet, what does it mean? To understand the why, we need to understand how ours came to be.

On 18 April 2007, General T. Michael Moseley, CSAF, introduced the Airman's Creed to the Air Force. At that time, the Air Force had been involved in continuous combat operations for over 16 years. During that period, Airmen became highly specialized and technically capable across a broad spectrum of operations, which resulted in a drift toward an emphasis on technical proficiency and away from a warfighting orientation. The Airman's Creed is intended to remind all Airmen that they aren't just a "conglomeration of diverse specialties, skill sets, or jobs," but theirs is the profession of arms. It allows Airmen to think and act with one mind, and with a commitment to fundamental warfighting beliefs. Airmen are warriors, and are dedicated to flying, fighting, and winning. Following its release, it replaced all existing Air Force-related creeds.

The Creed serves to guide all Total Force Airmen and places emphasis on the warfighter. It encapsulates what it means to be an Airman, to have pride in service and captures the warfighting ethos of the Air Force. Let's take a moment to examine the elements of the Creed.

> ***A creed*** *is a set of fundamental beliefs or guiding principles. The word 'creed' derives from the Latin* ***credo*** *which means "I believe".*
>
> *- Profession of Arms Center of Excellence (PACE)*

- ***I am an American Airman:*** Air Force members are defenders of the Nation. Consider the importance. This phrase is repeated throughout the creed.
- ***I am a Warrior:*** Airmen employ the world's greatest airpower **and** go "outside the wire." Establishing air dominance or clearing roadside bombs, Airmen are there. Warriors.
- ***I have answered my Nation's call:*** Many ***enter*** the military for various reasons, but most ***join*** when they discover the pride in serving their country.
- ***My mission is to Fly, Fight, and Win:*** Everything we do is to ensure mission success. We as Airmen will fight for what is right, and fight to win.
- ***I am faithful to a Proud Heritage, A Tradition of Honor, And a Legacy of Valor:*** History makes you smarter, and heritage makes you prouder. Heritage is a reflection of our past and shapes us today.
- ***Guardian of Freedom and Justice:*** A call to the Constitution. Airmen swear an oath to support and defend against all enemies foreign and domestic.
- ***My Nation's Sword and Shield, Its Sentry and Avenger:*** Airmen protect while taking the fight to those who threaten the American way life. As avengers, they fight for those who have fallen.

- ***I defend my Country with my Life:*** Airmen stand tall, and if necessary pay the ultimate price for their country and their countrymen.
- ***Wingman, Leader, Warrior:*** As leaders and warriors, in time of war or peace, each Airman, to the best of their ability, is responsible for ensuring the safety and security of their fellow wingmen.
- ***I will never leave an Airman behind, I will never falter, And I will not fail:*** As Airmen, no matter the situation, we all come home together. As Americans, we will not waiver in our decisions, and this is no way we accept failure.

Warrior Ethos

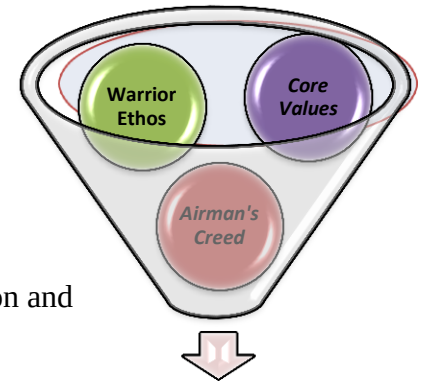
Warrior ethos describes the frame of mind of the professional Airman and is part of our Air Force culture. It's a guiding principle for you to live by. It declares your selfless commitment to your Nation, mission, unit, and fellow Airmen. When internalized, it produces the will to win with honor. Warrior ethos moves us to fight through all conditions to victory, no matter how long it takes—no matter how much effort is required.

Warrior spirit is the embodiment of Warrior Ethos. At the most basic level, we exhibit warrior spirit by:

- Maintaining military bearing and professional etiquette
- Placing the welfare of peers or subordinates ahead of our personal needs or comfort
- Maintaining ourselves, physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially.

Warrior spirit requires that you to take responsibility for mission failures, share mission success with your unit, and foster the development of the POA in your people. The Air Force Core Values, Airman's Creed, and Warrior Ethos are mutually dependent. Together they guide your personal conduct. As an Airman, you can't follow one while ignoring the other. By taking an oath to defend the Constitution, you accepted a set of responsibilities that other citizens don't. You demonstrate your commitment to Air Force Core Values and standards by willingly performing your duties at all times and subordinating your personal welfare to that of others without expecting reward or recognition. In return, the Air Force is committed to the welfare of all Airmen and their families.

The Air Force's guiding values and standards should guide your conduct and decision-making processes and establish the standards expected of all professional Airmen. As a senior leader, you must reflect the highest qualities of a leader and professional by embodying Air Force culture. It is also critical that you help others progress as professionals by instilling an appreciation of Air Force culture and our values. Professional Airmen, who understand what it means to be an Airman and who embody Air Force culture help accomplish the mission and support the Air Force's contribution the POA.



President Theodore Roosevelt once said:

> *"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."*
>
> - America's Air Force: A Profession of Arms

Progressive Professionalism (P^2)

So how would you rate your professionalism? How would you rate the professionalism of others? Where would you start?

Professionalism in the workplace is based on many factors. They include how you dress, carry yourself, your attitude and how you interact with others. Professionalism necessitates that each person perform their tasks with genuine earnest and honesty. It is evidenced when you do your job with sincerity, maintain professional etiquette, and instill ethics in the workplace.

The Air Force Core Values tell us to strive for excellence in all we do, which directs us to continually seek to improve ourselves as professional Airmen. Likewise, Air Force Instruction 36-2618, *The Enlisted Force Structure*, directs SNCOs to develop military professionalism in themselves and subordinates. However, developing professionalism is a process…a progression.

This section provides a starting point that should enable you to evaluate your effectiveness, and the effectiveness of others. You'll also gain insight into various methods of increasing your level of professionalism. You'll end this section by covering ways of developing yourself and others through Direction, Discipline and Recognition. Let's start by taking a look at the *continuum of professionalism*.

> *"Organizations whose members view themselves as professionals outperform, outsmart, and outlast organizations that don't."*
>
> *- PACE*

The Continuum of Professionalism

The goal of Progressive Professionalism, or P^2, is for all members of the POA to deliberately and consistently work toward and remain as professional as possible. The continuum of professionalism provides a way to visually represent your 'progression' or degrees of professionalism. Each person has varying degrees of professionalism which can be measured by their actions, decisions, and behaviors. As such, everyone has strengths that can help them to move closer to the ***more professional*** side of the continuum and weaknesses that may cause them to drift closer to the ***less professional*** side. Additionally, everyone makes choices that can have an impact on where they fall on the continuum as well.

As stated earlier, your status within the POA (and on the continuum) isn't static…you can move ***at any time based on the situation and your actions***. The continuum serves as a means to conceptualize this idea. Let's look at three qualities that can be used to measure your level of professionalism and impact your position on the continuum.

Professional Methods

This quality involves the actual application of professional knowledge and theory to any given situation. Just as surgeons apply their knowledge of anatomy and physiology to perform operations, SNCOs apply professional methods to lead the enlisted force in accomplishing the mission.

Professional Methods include:

- *Technical knowledge*
- *Communication*
- *Leadership and Management skills*

From the time you entered the Air Force until now, you have been continually exposed to rigorous training. The training you received in basic training provided you with the foundation of what it means to be an Airman and the methods of our profession that differentiates it from others. While in technical school you were provided professional knowledge in your specific Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) in order to perform your job. This training further differentiated the methods and theory you apply…so your level of professionalism should have increased. But you didn't stop there. You're still engaged in learning additional professional methods (training/education) today…just like this course…in order to improve your level of professionalism, even at this point in your career.

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As a senior leader, your continued monitoring and commitment to ensuring professional methods are maintained and enhanced should add value to the meaning of professionalism for you and those you lead. If done effectively, these actions can help you (and others) continue to move further along to the right side of the continuum.

Professional Character includes:

- *Attitude*
- *Alignment with core values*
- *Alignment with AFI 36-2618*

Professional Character

Professional character involves the combination of emotional, moral and intellectual qualities and behaviors exhibited at all times by all members of the profession. Having a professional attitude is the driving force behind the character traits displayed by professionals...the essence of airmanship.

According to the Merriam Webster's dictionary, in early aviation history, the term "airman" was synonymous with "pilot" and the term "airmanship" meant skill in piloting or navigating aircraft. Today "Airman" with a capital 'A' describes all those who serve in the United States Air Force and "airmanship" is simply the art of being a professional Airman.

For the enlisted force, airmanship centers on two critical documents: The Air Force Core Values ("The Little Blue Book"), and AFI 36-2618, *The Enlisted Force Structure* ("The Little Brown Book"). Together, they describe the emotional, moral, and intellectual qualities and behaviors common to all successful enlisted air-minded military professionals.

The United States Air Force wants individuals of high moral character to further develop into the future leaders of the Air Force and our Nation. AFI 36-2618 charges SNCOs to "Demonstrate, inspire, and develop in others an internalized understanding of the Air Force Core Values and the Airman's Creed." As you previously learned, they're the core of our culture and the essence of Airmanship. Your pledge to fulfill these responsibilities as a member of the POA helps to move yourself and others to the right side of the continuum.

Professional Standards include:

- *Quality and quantity of work*
- *Ethical behavior*
- *Professional relationships*
- *Adherence to and promotion of core values*
- *Adherence to and promotion of AFI 36-2618*

Professional Standards

Professional standards are the yardstick a profession uses to measure the performance and behavior of its members. These standards are best expressed by the core values, Airman's Creed, and Warrior Ethos. Since values shape our actions, decisions, and behaviors, they play a central role in professionalism. Unfortunately, even when we strive to adopt and internalize our Service's standards, there are times when our personal values conflict with those of the institution, as well as those of our subordinates, peers, and supervisors. For example, you could be taking a class at night, but a last minute tasking came up as you were walking out the door. At that

moment, you might weigh the importance of your personal versus professional obligations: Do I just leave so I can get to class on time? Or should I stay, miss class, and complete this tasking? For some, this situation might cause a values conflict.

Values conflict is normal—an unavoidable part of professional life. However, the mark of a true professional is maintaining high professional standards despite conflicting values. Put another way, professionals find ways to work through values conflicts while remaining focused on the greater good of the organization and its people. The ability to subordinate your values to those of the organization demonstrates your dedication to the POA and a declaration of your level of professionalism. This helps you move towards the most effective side of the continuum.

The continuum of professionalism is a sliding scale that helps you see how your actions, decisions and behaviors have an impact on your level of professionalism using the lens of professional methods, standards, and character. The Air Force doesn't expect perfection...but it does require progression. Another focus area that can move you and your subordinates to the right of the continuum is direction, discipline, and recognition.

Direction, Discipline, and Recognition (DDR)

DDR is the foundation of Progressive Professionalism (P^2). Though it's used to help maintain a high degree of professionalism throughout your career, it's particularly critical in your early development as an Airman. While in basic training, you received a lot of direction and discipline. At the time it may have been difficult to see how the lessons being drilled into you were important. Now, it's probably easier to reflect on those lessons and apply them to everyday life.

Even though you may have been granted a bit more freedom and opportunity, that pattern continued through technical training and into the first several months (or years) of your career. Direction and discipline were integral to you learning your job and adjusting to life in the Air Force.

Hopefully, self-discipline took over and following directions and responding positively to discipline became second nature. But what motivated you to remain disciplined? For many, recognition for a job well done was enough to stay motivated.

Recognition isn't just a nice thing to do for people. It's used to reinforce behavior or encourage improvement as applicable. Subordinate recognition is a communication tool that reinforces and rewards the most important outcomes they create for the organization. When you recognize people effectively, you reinforce the actions, decisions, and behaviors you most want to see them repeat.

Providing recognition may help your subordinates take pride in their work, in their job responsibilities, and feel appreciated for their contributions. Airmen that feel appreciated oftentimes go the extra mile and have a heightened level of commitment towards the organization, which helps to advance the POA. In short, you should continuously strive to support and promote a positive atmosphere in which praise prevails.

Direction, discipline, and recognition are tools you can use to slide yourself and others along the continuum of professionalism. However, in order to get effective results, you should utilize the proper techniques as you apply DDR. Hopefully, the tools you'll learn in this course can help

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you use DDR appropriately and have a positive impact on your and your people's professionalism.

Development

Another factor that can have an impact on you and your people's position on the continuum of professionalism is the focus on development. The environment in which the POA operates is ever-changing. As a result, Airmen should engage in continued development to remain adaptable and mission ready at all times. For a SNCO, you're expected to develop yourself as well as your people.

Self-Development

In order to grow as a SNCO, you should continually assess your skills, qualities, and leadership abilities, identify improvement areas, and engage in self-development to address them. These actions can help propel you up the path of P^2. While others may help you recognize development opportunities, only you know what you need to improve…only you can transform opportunities into learning experiences to increase or improve your knowledge, skills, and attitude. Self-development is ***your*** responsibility.

Professional SNCOs seek out self-development opportunities and are willing to stretch themselves beyond their comfort zone...risking personal failure to move further to the right on the continuum of professionalism. This may mean asking for help when you really don't want to, taking a class you're not sure you'll be successful in, or volunteering to fill a role you might not have any experience with.

Regardless of the opportunity, you should commit to and synthesize as much as you can so you can make the most of all learning experiences. Many of these 'learning experiences' typically stem from one of four broad categories: formal learning activities, informal learning activities, formal assignments, and informal assignments.

- ***Formal learning activities*** are deliberately designed to obtain a specific learning outcome. Examples include Basic Military Training School (BMTS), Technical Training School (TTS), First Term Airman Center (FTAC), Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME), ancillary training, and college courses.
- ***Informal learning activities*** are additional learning activities (outside of a formal setting) that result in a learning outcome. Examples of informal learning include peer-to-peer communication, reading, internet research, talking with experts, mentoring moments, and managing and leading teams and organizations.
- ***Formal assignments*** come through official military channels. Examples include permanent change of station (PCS), permanent change of assignment (PCA), temporary duty assignments (TDY), and additional or special duties and tasks assigned through formal military channels, e.g., additional duty first sergeant, resource advisor, superintendent, and flight chief.
- ***Informal assignments*** originate from sources other than formal military channels. Examples include positions within other professional organizations (Top III, AFSA),

volunteer positions, and additional or special duties and tasks assigned through non-formal military channels.

Developing Others

Developing others is an important part of Warrior Ethos and is central to your leadership role in advancing the POA. As a matter of fact, as a SNCO, you're charged (According to AFI 36-2618) to deliberately develop your people/peers into better followers, leaders, and supervisors. Through your leadership you should:

- Provide purpose (the 'why'), direction (the 'how'), and motivation (positive reinforcement) while operating to accomplish the mission and improve the organization. This can help your people understand the organization's 'big picture' and help them understand their piece of it.
- Set the example for others by demonstrating exemplary conduct in your professional and personal life. Whether you realize it or not, your people are watching you…using your example to figure out the kind of senior leader they want (or don't want) to be. You indirectly develop them by conducting yourself as a professional and working towards the right side of the continuum.
- Encourage your people to adopt and internalize the core values and develop the mental, physical, and emotional attributes of a warrior. Your people are members of the POA and have certain responsibilities to it. Helping them see the connection between the core values, warrior ethos, and warrior spirit can create buy-in to the POA and our obligation to the Nation and its citizens.
- Mentor your people by encouraging them to learn about themselves (preferences, traits, temperaments, etc.) and how they deal with circumstances. Encourage them to practice their adaptability and interpersonal skills so they can effectively problem solve and work through conflicts at their level.

Mentoring is a good process to use to develop your people. One tool available to assist you is MyVector. It's an Air Force web-based community that encourages mentoring, career planning and knowledge sharing for the Total Force. A mentor's main purpose is to help others define individual goals and find ways to achieve them. According to Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, "Mentoring and networking are two of the most important things for leaders to embrace." Keep in mind, each person is different and there isn't a cookie cutter approach to every situation. Additional features of MyVector that can assist both the mentor and mentee are:

- ✓ a real-time mentoring plan
- ✓ discussion forums
- ✓ a bullet tracker
- ✓ the ability to dialogue online

Constantly striving to move yourself and others to the right on the continuum of professionalism is the essence of P^2, and can have a transformational effect within and across organizations. When you consistently develop yourself and others as professionals, you cultivate more positive/ethical organizational climates across the Air Force and, in-turn, advance the POA.

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Mentoring requires time, effort, and dedication, therefore; it's important to establish a flexible relationship that supports your and your mentee's needs. When developed appropriately, the end result is a long-lasting relationship through which you and your mentee can collaborate throughout your career.

Understanding your personal journey across the continuum of professionalism helps you advance others along the continuum as well. Applying the appropriate levels of DDR provides a foundation for your subordinates. When applied appropriately they receive the necessary direction required so they know what you and the Air Force expects of them. Discipline is necessary to ensure they continue to adhere to the standards and guiding values provided to them. Most importantly, well deserved recognition reinforces positive behaviors and perpetuates improvement and reinforces the expected behavior in the POA. Development, for yourself and others not only helps meet the needs of the POA, but more importantly, helps to ensure it continues to advance to meet our environment's ever-changing needs.

Summary

There are many occupations that are associated with the term professional. It's the Air Force's position with the American Profession of Arms that distinguishes it from others. It's important to remember that as a SNCO, you're responsible for promoting an understanding and an appreciation of Air Force culture. Embodying the established guiding values and standards should not only increase your effectiveness, but should provide an exemplary model for your subordinates to emulate. Our ability to remain the world's preeminent Air Force is dependent on your ability to not only apply the methods learned here to increase your professionalism but, in your ability to effectively develop others in the advancement of the Profession of Arms.

You began this lesson by covering the POA. You learned about the military as a profession and the characteristics of the American POA. Additionally, you learned more about the dimensions that make up the POA. These characteristics provided a foundation for your understanding of the POA. Next, you learned more about Air Force guiding values and standards. Remember it's these core elements that provide the purpose and direction that will enable you to become a more effective leader. In the Continuum of Professionalism section you learned about professional methods, standards and character and how these qualities help move members to the right side of the continuum thus increasing their effectiveness. Finally, you covered Progressive Professionalism. That section described how you can accomplish professionalism through Direction, Discipline and Recognition and development of yourself and others.

As you learned in this lesson, there are many options available to help achieve the end-goal; advancing the POA. The Air Force's contribution to the POA depends on its ability to fly, fight and win in air, space and cyberspace. Now it's up to you to apply what you have learned to lead and develop the next generation of leaders that will ensure that mission is accomplished.

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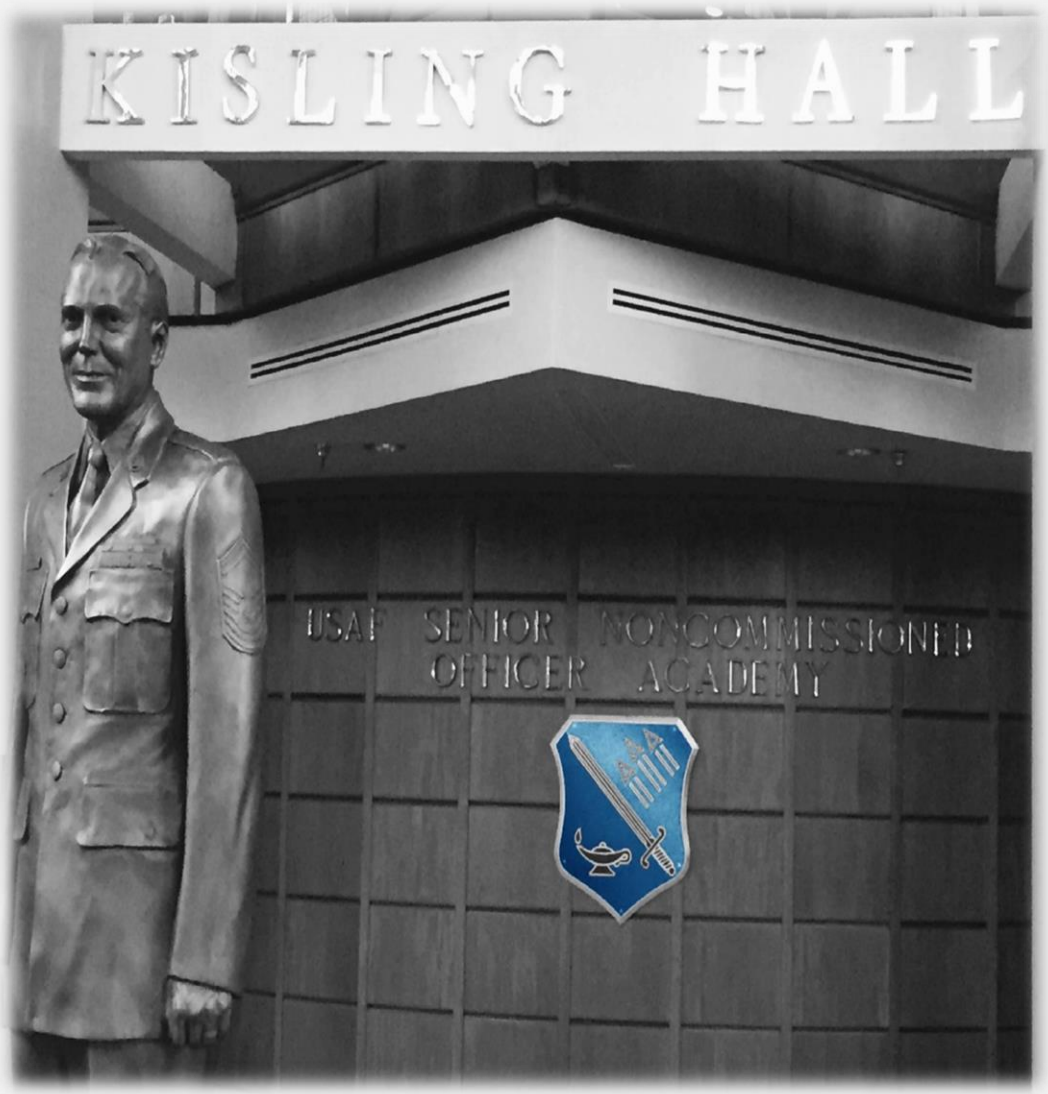
Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide



Change Management

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Introduction to Change Management

In today's environment, change is an inevitable part of Air Force life. You've probably dealt with organizational change associated with personnel reductions, deployments, or missions – either as the one tasked with implementing a change or as someone who dealt with the effects of a change. You might have even had to help your subordinates deal with the ups and downs associated with an organizational change. If you have, how did it go? Did your subordinates respond positively? Did you have to deal with people that didn't want to get on board with the change?

How you manage change personally and how you lead your subordinates through organizational change are *critical* to your success as a SNCO. By remaining flexible and learning to anticipate some of the pressures for change, you can help your subordinates and organization navigate through the uncertainty and ambiguity associated with change in order to become more effective in meeting mission needs.

This lesson begins by covering *Adaptability*. Here you'll go over some key attributes in the definition of adaptability as well as the three elements of flexibility. You'll then move on to dealing with resistance to change. At this point, you'll learn about the importance of addressing the reactions to change your people might have along with a few tips to minimize resistance to your change efforts. Next, your focus will shift to understanding the requirements for change. Explaining the strategic pressures that drive change can help your people better understand why the change is necessary. After that, you'll combine prior knowledge of change theories you learned in the NCO Academy, like Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations, with concepts from this lesson, to see how you can effectively lead organizational change.

Before this lesson begins, you need to have an understanding of its focus and intent. At the Airman Leadership School level, change management was focused on you as a change target…maybe even a change agent (of small changes). Most of the changes you dealt with probably impacted you and your subordinates or small work team. At the NCO Academy level, change management was focused on you as a change agent and target, maybe even a change sponsor if you were the NCOIC in your work center. More than likely, the changes you had to implement dealt with work center level practices and procedures.

In this lesson, change management focuses on you leading your people through ***organizational*** change. These types of changes impact your entire organization and you're more than likely serving as a change agent…tasked with implementing the change. So, as you progress through this lesson, keep that focus…you're implementing an organizational level change in your area of responsibility.

Understanding the flow and focus of this lesson can help provide some context and perspective as you cover the

Organizational Change *is generally considered to be an organization-wide change, as opposed to smaller changes such as adding a new person into the work environment.*

It includes leading/managing changes to organizational culture, unit level processes, environment, responsibilities, and policies/procedures.

- Dr. Gary Evans

material presented. With that in mind, let's get started with the concept of adaptability.

Adaptability

Take a moment to think about how you respond to organizational change. Do you adapt faster than your peers? Or, do you find you have a harder time doing so? What is it that allows some people to adjust more effectively than others? As a SNCO, how you adapt to organizational change could have an impact on how your people respond...positively or negatively.

In this section, you'll cover the definition of adaptability and its importance in leading and managing change. You'll build on that foundation by breaking down adaptability into three elements: cognitive, dispositional, and emotional. If, at that time, you find you need to improve in one or more of these elements, don't fret. You'll also learn how you can develop your own flexibility as well.

Before you can lead and manage change effectively, you should ensure you and your people maintain a certain level of adaptability before, during, and after the change. You can start by first looking at the attributes that define adaptability.

Definition of Adaptability

In the working definition of ***adaptability***, there are two attributes that really stand out. First, "***actively seeking information***" means SNCOs should be proactive in researching a pending or in-progress change. You shouldn't wait for a change to happen, then find out information about it afterwards…that might be too late. As a leader, you should try to obtain as much information as possible, as early as possible. After all, your people and other stakeholders will almost certainly have questions and you'll be the one they come to for answers. Be prepared!

> ***Adaptability*** *is the ability to adjust oneself to changed, unexpected, or ambiguous situations by actively seeking information and by demonstrating openness and support of different and innovative change ideas.*

Next, "***demonstrating openness***" refers to establishing a communication style that welcomes new and different ideas while withholding judgment until those ideas can be fully explored. By allowing your people the opportunity to share new ideas or opinions, you help create an environment of trust and mutual respect. This trust and respect can go a long way when trying to make or impact a change and may be the difference between success and failure.

Why is it important for you to be adaptable? Well, the more adaptable you are, the easier it is for you to ready yourself for change. By actively seeking information as early as possible, you can arm yourself with the necessary knowledge to be able to process the change internally and help others do the same. And by demonstrating openness in support of new change ideas, you can employ strategies that help you translate your subordinates' good ideas into great results.

Adaptability can be broken down into three different elements that, when considered, can be a factor in how your people respond to change.

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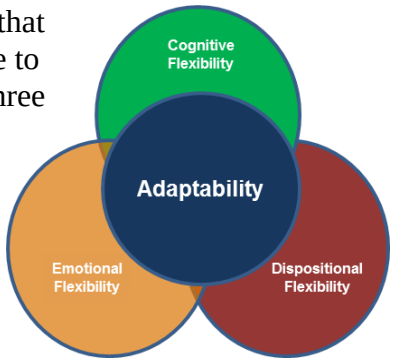
Three Elements of Adaptability



SNCOs need to respond effectively to change. However, sometimes that happens and sometimes it doesn't. What is it that allows some people to adapt to change more effectively than others? The answer involves three types of flexibility: cognitive, emotional, and dispositional.

According to Calarco and Gurvis, from the Center for Creative Leadership, this three-part framework was originally developed by Steve Zaccaro of George Mason University in 1999, and was expounded upon by others since. Their studies have shown leaders must exhibit at least two of these three characteristics in order to be perceived as adaptable. So, let's start by tackling cognitive flexibility first.

Cognitive Flexibility

Cognitive flexibility involves incorporating different thinking strategies and mental frameworks into your planning, decision making, and day to day activities. But what does this really mean? Well, possessing cognitive flexibility means you're able to keep multiple scenarios in mind so you can adjust to changing, unexpected, or ambiguous situations. When presented with a situation that needs a solution, you would execute plan A, while having a plan B, C, and D available just in case something changes. Otherwise, if plan A fails, may waste precious time, effort, and resources figuring out why the plan failed and what you need to do to fix it. Cognitively flexible leaders have already considered the 'what might go wrong' scenarios and are ready to execute another plan, if necessary.

To develop cognitive flexibility, you should:

1. ***Be curious*** about what's happening in your organization. Find out what ***is*** happening as well as what ***should be*** happening. Basically, *diagnose* your situation. What's going well? What needs to be improved? What is your organization missing? Ask questions of your leadership and your people in order to collect data before you make a decision and act. Once you understand what's going on in your organization, you can adapt more easily to change that could improve some of the shortfalls you may have identified.

2. ***Accept that 'different' is not right or wrong***…it's just different. Just because an idea or solution someone presents to you is different from something you would develop doesn't make it wrong. Everyone in your organization is not going to be like you or see things the same way you do. You're a member of a diverse organization. Adaptable leaders take advantage of the ways we are all

Adaptable leaders with cognitive flexibility:

- *Scan the environment to detect coming change*
- *Develop an understanding of the coming change*
- *Create multiple strategies to address the change*

different versus forcing everyone to conform to their way of doing things. Being open to this difference in thinking might require you to do some reflection on how you approach change.

3. ***See and be seen.*** Walk around and see what's happening in your organization. Don't be afraid to roll up your sleeves and help out with some of the daily tasks your people have to do. This is a good way to get their perspective on how things actually are on a day to day basis. It can also benefit your people because during difficult, changing times, they need to see you're interested in finding out what's going on, firsthand…not by word of mouth.

4. ***Have a plan.*** Know ahead of time how you'll deal with problems (resistance, crisis, etc.) if they arise, but don't get too attached to a single plan. Always have a plan B and plan C ready to execute, when needed. This plan could include things like how you might get additional resources, if needed, who you might need to reach out to in other organizations if you come across a roadblock you don't have the experience to remove, or even what you can do if the change just won't work. However, the expectation isn't for you to have a plan for every possible situation…that would be impossible. Being an adaptable leader means you can put thought into what *might go wrong* and create a plan to address it if you need to.

5. ***Understand resistance.*** Be informed about the underlying concerns and issues that may account for your people's ***possible*** resistance during the change. This doesn't mean everytime a change is instituted, your people will automatically resist. It just means some of your people might have unique circumstances that could prevent them from getting onboard with a change initially. For example, what if a change involves drastically reorganizing the unit's duty schedule? If some of your people have child care issues that would make it difficult to conform to the new hours, they might be initially resistant to the change. Adaptable leaders know their people's unique circumstances and issues up front, so they can be better equipped to deal with the reasons why their people might resist early in the change process.
6. ***Observe what's going on*** so you can stay informed about the changing pressures facing the organization. Talk to your people about the things they have experienced as you make the transition. This might include engaging them in a discussion about what they need in order to do their jobs better or even ways to improve processes or procedures. Scan your environment to identify changes and diagnose their implications early on.
7. ***Commit to learning.*** Adapting requires learning. Continuous education is essential to developing and honing your cognitive abilities. The ability to critically think is an essential trait in effective leaders.

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Emotional Flexibility

Emotional flexibility is the ability to change how you deal with your own and others' emotions. An emotionally flexible leader is comfortable with the process of change, including grieving, complaining, and resistance without giving in to or getting pulled off course by emotions and concerns.

Developing emotional flexibility isn't a tough undertaking. In order to develop emotional flexibility, you should:

1. ***Use your support systems.*** Look to mentors, supervisors, friends, family, and trusted peers for support during a difficult change. Sometimes it might be helpful to 'vent' to someone that can empathize with your situation. Additionally, encourage your subordinates to do the same.
2. ***Offer feedback.*** Provide prompt feedback, both positive and negative, that's specific and clear. This might include feedback to the change sponsor or to the people that have to implement the change. Providing honest feedback can give you practice dealing with the emotional reactions of others while facing your own emotions and/or resistance.
3. ***Act decisively*** when faced with a difficult decision. Communicate clearly and make timely decisions. Even though doing so may be hard, it's more harmful to your people and the situation to waver or avoid reality.
4. ***Avoid bulldozing change.*** Take time to explain ***why*** the change is important versus "bulldozing" your way through it. Patiently explain the details of the change, answer any questions your people might have, and listen to their concerns.
5. ***Change your approach, if necessary.*** Based on how the change is progressing, you might have to change your approach in how you address emotional reactions toward the change effort, etc. Your approach might have to become more directive or more participative, depending on the situation. You might have to use more disciplinary type activities or more motivational type activities to deal with 'negative' emotions and get the change effort back on track. Become comfortable using a variety of methods and techniques so you can adjust your management style to changing situations.
6. ***Face reality.*** Adapt to changing situations with realism, openness, and optimism. Be honest with yourself and others about how the change will impact them and how the change effort is progressing. Otherwise, you could damage your credibility during the change and with future change efforts.

Adaptable leaders with emotional flexibility:

- *Understand and manage their own emotions*
- *Connect with and address the emotions of others*
- *Engage emotionally to help others get on board with the change*
- *Maintain a balance between emotion and actions*

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7. ***Find ways to motivate others.*** Let's face it…sometimes changing from something known to the unknown can be unnerving and difficult. Everyone, at some time or another, needs a little motivation. Consistently encourage and motivate those individuals impacted by the change. You can use techniques such as Transactional (Contingent Reward) or Transformational (Inspirational Motivation) Leadership to motivate others. However, you should understand this isn't a 'one size fits all' situation. Try to ensure the technique you select is appropriate for the individual.
8. ***Address resistant individuals.*** Resistance isn't always 'negative'…something you'll learn later in this lesson. Someone might be resistant to a change because his/her issue or situation hasn't been addressed. Remember the earlier example of changing the unit duty hours? If someone's daycare issues aren't addressed promptly, their resistance (as a result of frustration, stress, anger, etc.) might evolve into negative behaviors. If you moved quickly to address the individual's concerns, you might prevent negative behaviors from emerging. However, if you don't address the concerns or handle issues promptly and effectively, you may hurt morale, foster resentment, and/or stifle the change.

Adaptable leaders with dispositional flexibility:

- *Are optimistic about change*
- *Support others through change*
- *Balance uncertainty with a positive attitude*
- *Are aware of their own preferences and tendencies related to change*

9. ***Listen.*** Learn to use effective listening skills to help identify how your people are dealing with the change emotionally. Listening to others helps you gain clarification on issues associated with the change while modeling the preferred behavior.
10. ***Collaborate.*** Involve others in the beginning stages of a change initiative. Showing concern and considering your people's ideas helps you gain their commitment to the change.

The ability to adapt to your people's various emotions is important when managing change. As they experience the transition, you may see your people displaying emotional reactions (you'll learn more about theses later in the lesson). However, instead of ignoring them or taking a harsh position, you should use a supportive attitude, using the actions above to address them. Doing so helps create a more inclusive environment and can help your people adjust to the change with less apprehension.

Dispositional Flexibility

Leaders who display dispositional flexibility operate from a place of optimism grounded in realism and openness. They can acknowledge a bad situation while simultaneously visualizing a better future, despite the difficulties and challenges, and see change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Increasing your level of dispositional flexibility can help you see change as something positive that can make your mission and subordinates more effective. To develop dispositional flexibility, you should:

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1. ***Be genuine.*** Leading change by example requires honesty and authenticity. Understand your own reactions to change so you can be straightforward with others.
2. ***Immerse yourself.*** Jump right in to meet the people involved with the change and learn all you can about the upcoming transition.
3. ***Accept change as positive.*** Look for the benefits of change…for yourself, peers, subordinates, and organization.
4. ***Adapt your plans.*** Be prepared to shift plans based on unexpected or unplanned changes during the transition to the new norm.
5. ***Cast a wide net.*** Involve key people in the design and implementation of change. This requires building good networks and relationships.
6. ***Rehearse.*** Take the time to practice new skills and behaviors to help make them familiar. The more you rehearse and practice, the quicker the change can become a part of the new 'norm' in your organization.
7. ***Be a mentor or coach.*** These relationships allow you to guide individuals in how to meet expectations and may provide opportunities to assist those that may be resistant.
8. ***Pay attention to life beyond work.*** Shifting between work and family, as well as other personal interests, requires you to be adaptable. Attend to work ***and*** life issues and encourage your people to do the same.
9. ***Seek feedback.*** To balance your perspective, seek feedback (positive and negative) from a variety of sources, both up and down the chain of command in your organization as well as peers in other organizations.

As a senior leader, your attitude towards change can be contagious…your people are looking at you…following your lead. If you display a pessimistic disposition towards a change, your people might too. However, you shouldn't be overly optimistic about it either. They may see right through that! Exhibiting behaviors from either extreme end of the scale (pessimistic/optimistic) could result in a failed change effort. Additionally, it could also negatively impact your credibility as a leader as well. Just try to be as honest as possible about the change and use the techniques above when needed. This should help them process the change in a more authentic way.

Cognitive, emotional, and dispositional flexibility are important 'skills' you should develop (and encourage in your people) in order to be truly adaptable. They represent a balance of thought, emotion, and optimism that can be useful when managing change. Failing to develop these elements (and encourage them in your people) could impact the successfulness of your change effort and may increase resistance along the way.

Change is ever present and often occurs quickly. For leaders, the implications are both personal and organizational—and the consequences of not adapting to change can be severe. By learning to develop your cognitive, emotional, and dispositional flexibilities, you should be more effective for yourself, your people, and your organization. The key then, is to embrace change and use it as an opportunity to grow and learn. The more positive experiences you have with change, the more you become comfortable with, and skilled, at adaptability. This, in turn, can

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help you lead change more effectively in your organization, especially when faced with resistance as you attempt to institute the change.

Resistance to Change

It's been said the only thing constant in the world today is change. In the Air Force, dealing with resistance to change can be one of the toughest jobs you have as a SNCO. Not only are you held accountable for getting yourself through a change effort, as a change agent, you're also responsible for leading your people through change as well.

Your success in implementing and leading your people through change hinges on your ability to address the reactions your people might have towards the change. How your people react to change emotionally and cognitively can either enhance or hinder your change effort.

In this section, you'll learn how you can enhance your ability to minimize resistance to change by addressing your people's reactions to the change. You'll start by briefly covering two theories that explain some of the common reactions people have when change happens. Then, you'll go over how you can minimize resistance to change by first recognizing that resistance is normal, but is something you must work to reduce. At the end of this section, you'll be provided with tips you can use to help minimize resistance in your organization.

To minimize resistance to change, you first need to understand why people react the way they do, when presented with a change.

Reactions to Change

If you were to go to the internet and search for 'change management', you'll find many articles and websites dedicated to helping managers/leaders address change management in their organizations. However, one of the things you might discover is many of these articles/websites give advice based on the work of two experts in their fields of study: Elisabeth Kubler-Ross and Claes Janssen. Let's start with Kubler-Ross.

Kubler-Ross

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, a psychiatrist that specialized in the study of how people handle death, grief and loss, developed a 5 Stage Model: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance to help explain the reactions some people might experience. Although this model was originally intended to address grief and loss, for some people, change can also be viewed in the same way…depending on what is changing. For example, if your organization is downsizing, this can be seen as a loss for some. Or, if your unit experiences a major shift in organization where people are uprooted from their current positions and moved to new positions, this could also cause a period of grief and loss as well. Your people might react to major change (or potential loss) in the following ways:

- **Denial:** In this stage, your people might initially attempt to 'deny' the change. They might say things like, "I can't believe this is happening" or "Leadership will never buy off on this change." Psychologically, this stage can be positive in that it gives your people time to let the change sink in. However, you don't want them to stay in this stage.
- **Anger:** Once the initial shock of the change sets in, some of your people might experience anger. Have you ever heard your people say, "This isn't what I signed up for!" when faced with a major change? Your people might start picking apart the details of the change…attempting to find reasons why the change won't work. As a leader, your first reaction to this stage might be to respond in a harsh way. Just remember your people are human beings and that this is a NORMAL reaction to dealing with major change. However, you should expect and require your people to express this reaction in a professional way. Later in this section, you'll learn how you can help your people get through this stage.
- **Bargaining:** In this stage, your people might attempt to put off the change or find ways to not implement the change. They may recommend alternatives to the change (something they may be more comfortable implementing) or try to put off implementing the change until 'the time is right'. For example, if attempting to implement an organizational change that adjusts everyone's duty hours, your NCOICs might counter with ways to keep the same duty hours while making changes in other areas. While this isn't necessarily a negative thing, if your role in the change is that of a change agent, bargaining can delay the implementation of the change.
- **Depression:** When your people realize their alternative plans won't work, or they can't derail the change, depression sinks in. Remember, change can be viewed as a loss by some. This 'loss' can be felt internally (loss of stability or comfort) or externally (loss of the normal way of doing things). Signs of depression in your organization might manifest in ways such as a decrease in motivation from those that are normally motivated, or a decrease in unit/work center productivity. They may make statements like, "Why should I work hard now…things are just going to change anyway."
- **Acceptance:** As your people realize the organizational change is going to happen, they should move into the stage of acceptance. Since they now understand the change is inevitable, this could turn out to be a very creative and productive stage. They may start to come up with ways to make the implementation of the change less 'painful'. You might also find that your support base starts to grow as people say things like, "Well, since we can't do anything about it, let's try to make sure the change is at least successful." As a supervisor and leader, this could be a good time to encourage and support your people and their ideas.

It's important to note that not all of your people will be in the same stage at the same time. Some of your more innovative people might get to the Acceptance stage faster than some of your more adaptive people…and this is okay. Additionally, according to Kubler-Ross, people can cycle through these stages or regress to previous stages. In a situation involving change, this could occur based on the introduction of new information or 'changes' to the change. That's why it's vital you keep the communication flowing up and down the chain of command as much as possible. If you understand these are normal reactions people have to change, you can prepare

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yourself to address them as your people experience them, which may lead to less resistance to the change itself.

Another popular theory that explains how people react to change, which was based, in part, on Kubler-Ross's theory, is Janssen's Model of Change.

Claes Janssen

According to Marvin Weisbord, Janssen, a social psychologist, developed a tool for visualizing how people experience change. Janssen's model is based on the perceptions, feelings, or aspirations triggered by external change. Weisbord states that Janssen's model represents cyclical phases, not unlike the process of death and dying…which is captured in Kubler-Ross' model. Janssen's model consists of the following phases: Contentment, Denial, Confusion, and Renewal.

- **Contentment**

  In this phase, people are satisfied with the 'status quo' and are calm and comfortable with how things are. Productivity in your organization should be high as the norms are being maintained…like a well-oiled machine, everything is running smoothly and the mission is being accomplished. At this point, your job as a SNCO and leader should be focused on grooming and growing your people, as well as ensuring that standards are being maintained.

  You can groom and grow your people by ensuring expectations and standards are communicated and understood at all levels in the way intended and by ensuring that training is occurring. You should conduct periodic checks of your people's training records and make yourself available to answer questions and provide feedback. You should also consider assessing training by conducting no-notice evaluations and observations of your people using the current procedures.

  Another thing you can do to help your people perform to the best of their abilities is to provide recognition to those that are excelling in their duties. You should ensure your recognition program is fair and equitable, and your people know you'll be consistent in your submissions.

  Finally, don't micromanage or micro-supervise. You're the expert to ensure things aren't done improperly; however, you should ensure there's room for learning opportunities. People learn from their mistakes. By effectively leading your people in this phase, your organization should be operating as a synergistic team. However, once an organizational change is introduced, your people might move into the next phase: Denial.

- **Denial**

As the change is introduced, your people might go through a period of denial. They might deny the change is coming…even to the point where they might not believe leadership will execute the change or follow through with it. In this phase, you might encounter emotional reactions from your people, such as anger or fear because they may be unaware of the details of the change or simply afraid of the uncertainty the change may cause. If you're faced with these emotions, you should understand they are normal reactions people experience when they are pushed outside the comfort zone they experienced in the Contentment phase. Because of the reactions your people might experience in this phase, your organization's productivity might drop to a low level, depending on the type of change being introduced.

Transformational Leadership (Individual Motivation)

To help you move your people past the denial phase, you should attempt to paint an optimistic and enthusiastic picture of the future in order to motivate and inspire your people to achieve the goal.

In this phase, it's very important for you to conduct an assessment to see where your people are concerning the change and how they are reacting to it. Each will have his or her own perception about the situation. Whether you realize it or not, the people around you may begin to feel threatened, stressed out, worried, or may begin to lose trust in you and/or the organization.

Assessing your people can help you focus on your future decision-making strategies and plans. During this time your interpersonal skills, as well as your technical skills, should aid you significantly in helping others through the change process and the reactions normally seen in this phase.

As stated earlier in this lesson, your SNCO responsibilities include leading and managing teams; translating leaders' directions into specific tasks and responsibilities your team understands and executes; helping leaders make informed decisions; studying decisions to understand goals; and promoting a culture of adaptable Airmen. Acting on these responsibilities should reduce the time you spend in the Denial phase. Simply put, you can be in this phase internally or mentally for as long as you feel is necessary; however, externally, you must do everything you can to lead others through this phase with a tone of confidence and forward-looking optimism.

Fortunately, there are a few interpersonal skills you can apply to help you better understand those in the Denial phase and help them work through their concerns to get them to Confusion or Renewal. According to Weisbord, you can:

1. ***Share information.*** You should be honest with your people about the change, by providing them with as much background information as you can. The more your

people know about the change, the easier it might be to usher them out of the Denial phase. This should be a face to face communication exchange with you explaining what you know about the change while giving your people the opportunity to ask questions about it. Attempt to share information about the change as often as you can. This can help bring back the trust that might have been lost at the beginning of this phase.

2. ***Welcome input.*** Work on creating an organizational environment where input is welcome. Using effective, appropriate, and positive interpersonal skills, you can encourage others to open up and express their concerns about the change. By being open to your people's input, you might find they see holes in the change plan that you (or senior leadership) don't see.

When dealing with those in the Denial phase, you should always treat them with respect. Listen to their concerns without judgment and show them that you appreciate their input. You can also rely on your interpersonal skills to help you answer any questions they may have and address any issues or concerns they bring to you.

Hopefully, by being open and honest when sharing information with them and by welcoming and respecting their input you can help them leave the Denial phase and move on to the Confusion phase.

- **Confusion**

In this phase, your people are starting to accept the change is going to happen…however, they might be a little scattered and unsure as to what to do next. They might be trying to understand how they fit into the new change and what the new standards and expectations will be. Depending on the type of change being implemented, they could experience a bit of depression and anger due to the loss of the 'old ways of doing things'…longing for the comfort they experienced in the Contentment phase where everything was comfortable.

To help those in this phase, you could use your connection power to find out as much information as you can, to help fill any gaps in what's known about the change. You may have provided enough information to get others out of the Denial phase, but now, more detailed information is needed so you, and the others, can begin to form a picture of the new state.

Now that some, if not everyone, has moved out of the Denial phase into the Confusion phase, you should rely on your observations and conversations to determine who the adaptors and the innovators are; remember A-I Theory? Who the creators, advancers, refiners, and executors are; remember Team Building? You can use these people to help reduce confusion and create some excitement and energy concerning the change.

This is also when the change supporters, and those with constructive action ideas, can get with those still having difficulty, or those who don't know what to do, to assist in

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reducing the confusion. Due to this interaction, you might see positive changes in productivity as people attempt to accept their role and responsibility in the change.

You should also set and explain short-term goals. Setting short-term goals may break up the change into manageable parts…making the change seem easier to execute. Focusing your efforts here, sets the foundation for commitment to core tasks and activities brought about by the change. This is where your knowledge of others could assist you in determining who may help you in carrying the change forward. Getting others' buy-in now, can assist you as your people transition into the Renewal phase.

- **Renewal**

In this phase, the change effort has gained momentum…a new sense of energy and commitment may be displayed towards the change. At this point, emotionally, your people should be ready to help out. The exciting part about this phase is people start to develop ideas to help carry the change forward. Let them brainstorm, but keep them focused. Give people enough structure so they can build the new environment, or implement the change, as a unit. As the senior leader, you should spend time offering to help where your skills are needed. Make yourself available as a coach, mentor, mediator, and flexor. A lot of your positive energy should be centered on the future. Committed leadership and energized people can make the change happen successfully.

*In the Renewal phase, try to display the Essential Intellectual Trait of **"Confidence in Reason"** as the change gains momentum. Encourage your people to develop ideas own their own while having faith in their ability to do so.*

Weisbord's notion of enacting dignity, meaning, and community can help you down the path of being the most effective, appropriate, and positive change leader possible. With a thorough understanding of the reactions your people experience when they go through change, you can help them push through some of the chaos and lead them back to a contentment state of maintenance…operating like the well-oiled machine they were, but with the ***new norms*** established as a result of the change. Productivity should be high once again and everyone should settle into a comfortable zone, just like before the change was introduced.

Before moving on, it's important you understand a few key items about this model. First, like Kubler-Ross's model, not all people in your organization will be in the same phase at the same time. This may require you to offer different types of support and handle different types of emotional reactions throughout the introduction and implementation of the change. It's vital for you to remain adaptable, using and encouraging emotional, cognitive, and dispositional flexibility throughout this process.

Next, you should understand that it's possible for your people to regress to a previous phase depending on your level of involvement with them or based on the change itself. For example, your people could be moving out of denial into confusion, but if you aren't providing enough information or if they feel as if you might be withholding information, they may regress back

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into denial. Or, if they are moving into renewal, but there's a 'change' to the change introduced, they could regress back to the Confusion or even the Denial phase.

Using Kubler-Ross' and Janssen's models as a way to understand the psychological and behavioral processes at work during change should allow you to act with greater power and precision in leading effective, lasting change. If you know what your people are experiencing when a new change is being implemented, you can help them through their reactive "ups and downs" of the change process by providing information, structure, and support.

People react to change in many different ways. How they react may result in resistance to the change effort. However, how you address these reactions, as a SNCO and change agent, can determine how much resistance you might face. Abraham Maslow, a psychologist credited with creating Maslow's hierarchy of needs, once said, "If you only have a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail." As you progress through the change process and deal with your people's reactions, you shouldn't view reactions to change as a nail to be hammered. Instead, you should understand that seemingly negative reactions (fear, anger, denial, depression, etc.) to change are a normal part of being a human being. Once you understand this, you can use other 'tools' to address the reactions with a sense of 'dignity' and 'community'…hopefully reducing the amount of resistance you may face. By dealing with change in this way, you can create and maintain a productive organization.

By providing guidance and support as your people react to change, you can address potential issues early in the change effort. However, if the reactions turn into resistance, you must work to minimize it in order to keep the change moving forward.

Minimizing Resistance to Change

Resistance to change is a normal part of the change process. Some might say that as a change agent, you'll always be faced with some level of resistance, whether it's *active* or *passive*. However, it might seem unrealistic to walk around your organization telling people that 'resistance is futile.' That action alone could cause a negative reaction and increase the level of resistance. Dealing with your people's reactions to change ***IS*** something you can have an impact on. By addressing the reactions, you can quite possibly reduce the amount of resistance you may face. Although there's no 'secret formula' to eliminate resistance, you can start by 1) recognizing resistance and 2) learning a few tips to help you reduce it.

> ***Active resistance*** *includes finding fault, ridiculing, appealing to fear, and manipulating.*
>
> ***Passive resistance*** *includes agreeing verbally but not following through, feigning ignorance, and withholding information.*
>
> - Albert Bolognese

Recognize that Resistance is Normal

In an article titled "Employee Resistance to Organizational Change", Albert Bolognese explains that if senior leaders don't understand, accept, and make an effort to work with resistance, it can have a negative impact on even the most well-intentioned, well-thought out change effort. He also states that as a senior leader in your organization, it's your responsibility to create and

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maintain a climate that minimizes resistance behavior (reactions) and encourages acceptance and support.

- ***Positive Resistance***

As stated previously, resistance to change is a normal part of the change process. However, when we hear or read the word 'resistance' we tend to automatically think of it as something negative. But, that's not always the case…resistance can be useful. According to Bolognese, insightful and well-intended debate, criticism, or disagreement doesn't necessarily equate to negative resistance, but rather may be intended to produce a better understanding of the change as well as additional options and solutions. Resistance to change can cause the change agent to slow the process down and take a more comprehensive look at the change plan. Maybe there is a part of the plan that needs more work. Or, maybe there was a detail in the plan that was overlooked.

When faced with resistance, you should take a step back, analyze the reactions your people are exhibiting…why they are resisting, and critically think about the way forward. Once you understand that, you respond with effective actions to help minimize that resistance.

Tips to Minimize Resistance

In order to minimize resistance, you can use the following:

- ***Use and encourage cognitive, emotional, and dispositional flexibility.*** When faced with organizational change, you want your people to be able to adapt as quickly as possible. Connect with your people by providing as much feedback as possible. You should also get out and see what's going on…what your people are dealing with…using your own eyes. Finally, collaborate with your people as early in the change process as possible. Help them identify with and create a sense of ownership during the implementation of the change.
- ***Know why the change is necessary.*** How can you effectively lead the change effort if you don't know why your organization has to change in the first place? When it comes to change at the organizational level, people will look to you for answers. So, do your homework…educate yourself about the need for the change.
- ***Communicate before, during, and after the change.*** You should always keep your people aware of what's going on with the change. You may be privy to information they don't have or sit in meetings they don't attend. When you learn something new about the change, pass it on. Remember, earlier it was stated the amount of communication shared can have an impact on the amount of trust your people have in you during this challenging time.
- ***Allow time for the change to sink in.*** Let's face it…not everyone is going to get on board with every change when it's first announced. Communicate with your people early enough so they can have time to let the change sink in. This gives them a chance to think about how the change will impact them professionally and/or personally…or even write down some questions to ask when the time arises. Additionally, giving your people time to digest the change, may help them progress pass through the Denial and Confusion phases faster.

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- ***Offer to help those that might be struggling with the change.*** Be a 'hands on', visible leader. Even though you may have NCOs under you that interact with the Airmen on a daily basis, they all need to see that, as a senior leader in your organization, you're willing to roll up your sleeves and jump in the trenches to help all your people having difficulty understanding or implementing the change. This shows them you're not only committed to the change, but more importantly, you're committed to them.
- ***Be the change you want to see.*** Let your people see you 'walking the talk' as it relates to the change. They should see you're motivated to make the change work and you have a positive, helpful attitude about the change itself. If the change involved implementing new procedures, let your people see you following them. This might require you to do a little 'self-reflection' as to where you stand internally about the change. However, remember that in order to be considered an adaptable leader, you should practice dispositional flexibility…seeing opportunity for growth and success, even in a difficult and challenging situation.
- ***Encourage proactive instead of reactive responses.*** As your people go through the process of implementing the organizational change, listen for and encourage proactive responses from them, while addressing the reactive ones using your leadership tool box.

  Here are some examples of both types of responses:

Reactive Responses	Proactive Responses
This change is terrible!	This change is going to be challenging.
We have no say in what goes on.	We can talk to leadership if we have a problem.
We have to protect what we've been doing. Its' working, right?	The change is different from what we've been doing…it might take some time to get used to
Leadership never listens to us!	Let's share our ideas with leadership!
There's a fault in the plan…leadership needs to do something about it!	There's a fault in the plan. Let's show our leadership that we're creative problem-solvers

If you find that you're hearing a lot of reactive responses, this may be a warning sign that there is some resistance to the change and your people might be stuck in the Denial phase or merely exhibiting fear of the change. Although this is natural human behavior, it can have a negative impact (lower morale, stall the change, etc.) if you don't properly deal with it. First, try to address the reactive responses by using emotional and dispositional flexibility. If that doesn't work, you may have to use a more 'transactional' leadership style *(see box)* to get the results you want to see.

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Resistance to change can stall your change effort, if not properly managed. Using your understanding of how people react to change, based on the Kubler-Ross and Janssen models, you should be able to identify and address behaviors ***before*** they turn into resistance. Communicating important information with your people before, during, and after the change is just one thing you can do during the transition to help minimize resistance, if it does occur. Maybe, if you explained the strategic level requirements driving the change, they may become more receptive to your change initiative.

Requirements for Change

Have you ever wondered why change happens so often in the Air Force? How well does your organization adapt during change? What elements either help or hinder your organization during change?

Powerful forces have changed the landscape for organizations--particularly over the last several decades. Organizational reengineering…downsizing…restructuring…mergers…globalization …world conflict…and political influences have impacted change for every level of the Air Force.

As a SNCO, you should understand what drives Air Force level change in order to determine what requirements you must meet to implement the change. The ability to master these skills separates a good leader from an extremely skilled and competent leader.

This section focuses on the requirements for change. You'll start by uncovering some of the pressures for change. Here, you'll discover how the environment, demographics, and other sources cause your organization to undergo change. Next, you'll learn how to decide if change is necessary by synthesizing change requirements. With this in mind, let's get started with the pressures for change.

Pressures for Change

Effective leaders understand that change in the strategic environment is a continuous process. What drives this constant state of change? At its essence, change is about survival. Powerful forces in the environment continuously pressure organizations to change structures, policies, and practices to adapt to the changing world. Organizations that don't adapt, or are slow to adapt, can lose their competitive advantage, become irrelevant, or cease to exist. In this section, we'll take a look at pressures from the internal environment, external environment, globalization, peace, and demographics. Let's start with the pressure that's closest to you…your organization's internal environment.

Internal Environment

This pressure for change is driven by what happens in the internal environment…your organization. Within this environment, your organization may have to manage and deploy resources in ways that help attain and maintain optimal mission effectiveness. This may require changes in how you plan and budget for necessary resources and any additional adaptations you might have to do in order to stay competitive and cost-effective. As a result, policies and standard operating procedures as well as current structures and internal processes may need to be altered in order to reflect the transitions in your organization.

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On the surface, you might not think of PCSing as something that drives change internally on an organizational level...that's just the nature of the military, right? However, personnel turnover (depending on the role and responsibility of the individual leaving/coming in) could cause a change in leadership philosophy or management style your people will have to adjust to. For example, you may have a new commander that has different priorities or leadership philosophy than the previous one. Or, a new first sergeant that revitalizes programs that have been dormant for a while. These are all examples of pressures for change that happen in the internal environment.

External Environment

Pressures for organizational change also come from the external environment. Innovations in technology are never-ending. The rifled musket, steam-driven warships, and the jet engine are just a few examples of advances in technology that led to major changes within military environments. More recently, innovations in information technology and the resulting information age put continual pressure on organizations to change. Changes driven by Information technology may facilitate structural decentralization (it may be more advantageous to spread out geographically since changes in technology make it easier to 'stay connected') and downsizing (since the military can spread further out, the need for large forces/multiple organizations decreases). As a result, power often shifts from centralized functions to operating units. Finally, changes in technology (new systems, software, etc.) in your organization could require people to develop new skills in order to continue to perform the mission.

Globalization

With globalization comes greater competition, especially for a workforce quality. Wider differences in the skills, attitudes, and needs of an internationally diverse workforce can cause an increase of communication problems within the organization. Also, geographic dispersion caused by globalization might create conflict between regional offices and central headquarters, for example, a conflict between USPACOM and NATO. Or conflict among regional offices, for example between USAFRICOM and USAFE. Globalization creates the challenge of building cohesion and common purpose in the face of cultural and organizational differences. For change leaders, all of this is made more complex because many of these variables are not under your control.

> ***Globalization*** *is a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations. It is usually driven by international trade and investments, aided by information technology.*
>
> *- SUNY Levin Institute*

Peace

Peace creates other pressures to change. Peace…or increased stability…causes, in the minds of some people, the need to reduce the size of military forces. As a result, the remaining smaller forces must increase their capabilities. For example, when a particular region becomes more stable and the number of forces in that area is reduced, the smaller remaining forces must continue to complete their missions and the missions of those forces that left. Additionally, due

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to the decrease in military forces, the budgets that supported them can be reduced. This might create friction between the combatant commanders or between the services.

Demographics

Demographic changes in the population can create enormous pressure for change in organizations. Due to demographic diversity, friction and conflict may develop. To reduce this conflict, organizations should make structural changes to policies and procedures, if needed that guarantee inclusion and equal treatment for all. Additionally, demographic pressure could cause organizations to develop new training programs to educate its personnel on the diverse workforce's various needs--for example, religious beliefs and practices, and language differences.

Pressure for change never stops. Managing organizational change requires strategic leadership to constantly scan the external environment to determine and even anticipate when change may be necessary internally...they should be proactive in these endeavors. This could involve, for example, understanding when environmental change necessitates organizational change and when it does not. Making an internal change to accommodate an external change that has already occurred is reactive.

A well-crafted, well-managed strategic vision can help balance reactive and proactive changes. Understanding the pressures for change can provide insight into why the Air Force changes and how your organization and mission can be impacted. For example, like in the previous scenario, a peace-driven change can have an impact on the number of new personnel arriving in your organization. Reductions might cause you to have to rethink how your unit goes about its daily mission.

Changes driven by the external environment could also mean your unit receives new equipment that might require adjustments in training for your people. Finally, your unit could receive a new commander that might have a different leadership philosophy than the previous one. As a SNCO, it becomes your responsibility to help your people make the transition as seamlessly as possible.

If you can understand the pressures for change…the 'why' behind changes that happen to our Air Force and your unit, you can use this information to brainstorm what you need to do to help your organization get through the change effectively and efficiently.

Synthesizing Requirements for Change

As a SNCO, you may have little to no control over the ever-changing strategic environment. However, it's your job to adjust as a result of the changes in the strategic environment (remember, you should be proactive). You can start by assessing the potential change initiative.

Assess the Potential Change Initiative

When assessing a potential change initiative, you should take a look at what's going on in the external environment and in your unit's internal environment. Has a change in technology resulted in a new process or new piece of equipment in your unit? Do your people have the right skillset to make the process effective or utilize the new equipment?

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Next, assess your organization's ability to handle the change. Are there sections and people that can handle the new process/equipment with no adjustment? Are there sections and people that might struggle with the change?

Think about what changes you need to make. Consider if there is a way to get those that are ready and can cope together with those that aren't ready and might need a little more help coping with the change.

Making the Change Happen

Once you've assessed the parts of your organization that can or can't cope, then you need to start processing the change itself and decide what you need to make it happen. You can use the next series of questions to help you figure this out.

- ***Who do you need to tell?*** This may include informing your unit's leadership about potential pitfalls or explaining to your people how the change might impact them.
- ***Who can you get to help you make the changes?*** You should think about organizing a group of people with the skill set you need in order to get the change moving. In the case of a technological change, this might be people in your unit – or even outside your unit – with experience in operating the new equipment. In the case of a process change, this could be peers that have had to put the new process in place in their units.
- ***How should you go about making the changes?*** Once your group is organized with the right people, start brainstorming how you might go about making the changes? You might consider putting together a change plan that takes into account all the people and processes that will be impacted as well as proposed timelines.
- ***How will you know if you have effectively implemented the right changes?*** You should also include in your plan, metrics that should let you know if the change was right for your unit and if it was implemented effectively.
- ***What are the opportunity costs of making (or not making) the changes?*** Another item you should add to your change plan is the opportunity costs of the change. You can use a tool called the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis to help you figure this out. The SWOT can help you identify opportunities the change will allow your organization to take advantage of, as well as potential strengths, weaknesses, and threats. You'll learn more about the SWOT analysis in the Continuous Improvement lesson.
- ***What resources will you need?*** Your group should discuss if the change will require additional resources such as money, time, facilities, etc. If this is the case, you should estimate this cost in your plan.
- ***What are the personnel costs of the change?*** The biggest resource – people, should be considered separately since this might be the hardest resource to manage. Will the change require more people? Will it require them to work more hours? What will be the potential impact of the change on your people?

By asking these essential questions to synthesize change requirements, you can accomplish two goals: first, the answers should help determine if the change is actually necessary; and second, if

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the change is necessary, the answers should provide valuable input for developing a change implementation plan.

Failing to synthesize change requirements could lead to the wrong people being put in the wrong positions, poor planning, lack of direction, lack of leadership…and ultimately a failed change effort.

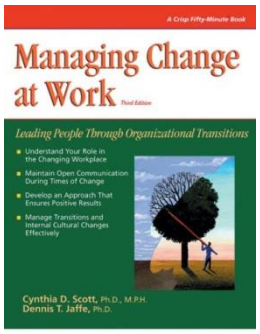
At this point, you should now have an understanding of the requirements that drive change both inside and outside your organization and even the Air Force. While you may not have any control regarding these strategic level changes, you can impact how they are implemented. You've been provided information to help you assess whether or not your organization has the capability to implement the change along with questions you can use to determine what needs to happen in order to make the implementation successful.

To manage change effectively, you should understand the requirements that impact change in your unit and the Air Force. You can use this understanding to help your organization adapt to the change quicker and even lead your people through the transition more effectively.

Leading Organizational Change

Strategic management of change is all about identifying and embedding in the organization those changes that will ensure the long-term survival of the organization. In order to do this, there are a few theories that, if appropriately applied, can help you lead your organization through the change effort. In this section, you'll receive a brief overview of Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations theory and Lewin's Phases of Change. Then, you'll discover how the concepts in this lesson, when applied to these theories, can help you lead change more effectively.

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory



According to Cynthia Scott, author of Managing Change at Work, when five percent of the people in a group adopt a change, it becomes imbedded…it has started to grow 'roots' within the organization. When 20% adopt it, the change is unstoppable.

To push change to an unstoppable level, it's important to understand how people adopt change. Have you noticed the some people in your organization are always willing to try anything new…they look forward to change; while it takes more convincing to get others to adopt the change?

Everett Rogers, a sociologist, communication scholar, and writer popularized a theory called the "Diffusion of Innovations" which he says explains how, why, and at what rate new, innovative ideas are adopted. Rogers identified five categories of adopters that are based on how quickly a person adopts new ideas: Innovators, Early Adopters, Early Majority, Late Majority, and Laggards.

- **Innovators** are those individuals in your organization that see potential and opportunity in almost any situation. This small population of your people is willing to adopt the change the fastest…maybe because they are likely to be more adventurous than the others, or maybe because they enjoy being on the 'cutting edge' of innovation. Innovators imagine the possibilities and will be eager to give the change a try.

Innovators can be useful in your organization. You don't have to do much to get these people on board with the change early...since they're not hard to convince. As a result, they can make it easy to get started on that 5% of people you need (according to Scott) to imbed the change in the organization.

- **Early Adopters** are usually your social and opinion leaders, unlike the innovators. They should be able to see the advantage in adopting the new ideas early on in the change process. Although they still represent a small portion of your population (but a bit more than your innovator group) they're comfortable with adopting new…well thought out, ideas. However, unlike the innovators that are going to jump in, feet first, to appeal to early adopters, you need to provide them with information about the change. If you have it early on in the change process, provide the change plan or other strategies/information on the change implementation. Some of the information might even come from the innovators based on their 'feet first' experience. Since early adopters are respected in their organization, they're going to make 'judicious' decisions about the change because others are looking to them for advice and guidance. So, by focusing your efforts on the early adopters (or social/opinion leaders), you have a better chance of getting the change moving.

Innovators and Early Adopters adopt new ideas quickly but make up a small percentage of your organization. However, they'll have a huge impact on the next group that, when they come on board with the change, will make it unstoppable…the early majority

- The **Early Majority** provide an important link in the change process because they tend to represent mainstream thinking. If you can tap into the early majority group, you can get a feel for how people are feeling/reacting to the change. These are the people that are going to sit back to see how the change is going to work first. They're waiting to see what the trusted and respected opinion leaders (early adopters) are going to do since they're only going to get on board once they know the change has a chance for success. The early majority might want to see a few short-term goals accomplished before they get on board. Look at it this way…they won't be one of the first to adopt the change, but they won't be the last, either.

  Continuing with the example of the electronics company and the new smartphone, the early majority is going to wait until the innovators and early adopters identify problems/bugs in the new product and give the company the chance to work them out first. Once they are sure the product is good, they will go make the purchase. They might also see someone they respect with the new phone…thinking, "Well if Chief Smith has it, it must be good! I think I will buy one, too."

  In the change process, once this group gets on board with the change, it's already at a point where it's unstoppable. However, since they do represent, typically, what a large percent of your people are thinking, you still need to focus some effort here to ensure they stay on board with the change. Share some success stories of the change …maybe (depending on the change) you could provide some testimony from peers at other bases where the change was implemented successfully. Or, if you've been tracking metrics on the change, show them what the numbers say about the change's success.

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- The **Late Majority** is the other large part of your population. However, unlike the early majority, this group tends to be more skeptical of the change. They might not adopt the change until the early majority has adopted it…maybe even after feeling the weight of peer pressure from the early majority.

Those in the Early Majority and Late Majority categories are slower to adopt change, but make up the largest percentage of the population. Laggards, on the other hand, are the last population…and the slowest to adopt a change.

- **Laggards** tend to be very traditional in their views. They might be the ones that say, "We've always done it this way…this way works…we don't need to change." Laggards may be less educated and/or uninformed ***about the change***, which tends to make them more close-minded and afraid of moving to a new norm. They're content with what they have and may only adopt something new because they feel they have to. This group tends to be suspicious of change and sometimes even the change agent! They must be *absolutely certain* that a change won't fail before they get on board.

*On the surface, it might seem like the laggards want to stall your change effort. However, try using the Universal Intellectual Standard of **"Fairness"** to ensure you've considered their viewpoint even though it's different from your own and to ensure you aren't biased to their perspective concerning the change.*

By using your understanding of the Diffusion of Innovations theory, you can identify those individuals that can help you get the change started in your organization, the 'opinion leaders' that can sway more people to get on board with the change, and finally, those individuals that might need a little more information in order to buy-off on your change effort. Another theory that can help you succeed in your change effort is Lewin's Phases of Change.

Lewin's Phases of Change

You may recall from the NCO Academy that Kurt Lewin described change as a process of unfreezing, changing, and refreezing.

Here's a quick review:

- ***Unfreezing:*** This phase is intended to motivate your subordinates and help get them ready for change. Unfreezing involves:

  1. Creating a felt need for change

2. Dealing with possible resistance to the change by developing an implementation plan (if you haven't done it prior to unfreezing), using effective communication skills, and actively seeking buy-in for the change.

- ***Changing:*** This phase includes the movement from the old way of doing business to the new way. Changing involves the actual modifications to technology, tasks, structures, or people. The change phase involves:

  1. Monitoring progress
  2. Adjusting the plan as necessary.

- ***Refreezing:*** This phase involves the locking in (or refreezing) of the new processes/procedures until they are a permanent part of daily operations. Refreezing involves:

  1. Observing subordinates and evaluating the results of change
  2. Ensuring new procedures are documented
  3. Rewarding/recognizing individuals who have adapted
  4. Reinforcing benefits of change with resistors

These phases can give you better insight into what you need to do in order to get your people from the current 'status quo' to successfully adopting and adapting to the new state. But, let's take your understanding of these phases, the Diffusion of Innovations theory, adaptability, and resistance to change up a notch. In totality, you can use these concepts to effectively lead and manage change in your organization.

Hopefully, you can now see how all the concepts in this lesson come together to help you deal with the ups and downs of organizational change. It's important that you remember transitioning from old norms to new norms can be a fragile process…your people shouldn't have to go through it alone. Therefore, you should be as visible, helpful, and supportive as possible.

Lewin's Phases of Change provide a structured approach to help you move your people through the change effort. You can make the journey more effective (and less stressful for everyone) if you consider how your people react to change emotionally and psychologically, as well as the difference in the rate at which they adopt change…some people don't jump on board with change right away. By using the concepts in this lesson and other tools in your leadership toolbox, you can work to put out fires and keep everyone (and the change effort) on track.

Janssen's Model of Change to move your organization through the change effort. Also, you can employ the right people (especially innovators, early adopters, and early majority) to help facilitate the change process thereby ensuring effective mission accomplishment.

Summary

This lesson on Change Management began with an examination of the three elements of adaptability—cognitive flexibility, emotional flexibility and dispositional flexibility—and practical strategies for improving those skills. Next, the lesson shifted to dealing with resistance to change, which involves addressing the reactions to change your people may have, with a sense

of dignity and community, as they progress through your change effort. Then, you explored the pressures for strategic level change and how they can drive change in your organization. After that, you combined your understanding of the change theories you learned at the NCO Academy with concepts from this lesson to lead your organization through the change more effectively.

In today's environment, Airmen face change constantly and often are required to respond quickly. For senior leaders, the implications of change are both personal and organizational—the consequences of not adapting to change can be severe. By understanding how change affects people, and then using effective methods for managing organizational change, SNCOs can be better positioned to lead their organizations and ensure successful mission accomplishment. However, effective change management begins with you! How you adapt to change, your level of flexibility when dealing with change, and how you lead your organization through change can determine whether or not the change effort fails or is successful.

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Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

Diversity

Inside this Study Guide:

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Diversity

Focus of Diversity at the AFSNCOA

Until now in your Professional Military Education (PME), the focus of Diversity lessons at the Airman Leadership School and the NCO Academy have been on individual and personal differences between individuals. The lessons learned at previous levels of PME will serve as an important starting point for this lesson. Stereotyping, collusion and discrimination just to name a few have negative effects on personnel and Air Force missions. The primary focus of the Diversity lesson at the SNCO Academy is on addressing diversity concepts at the organization level. It also expands the concept of diversity to include a wider range of differences that leaders will experience while leading their units. As key leaders in our organizations, we must leverage diversity to increase the effectiveness of our organizations and get the maximum contribution from our personnel.

Diversity Defined (AFPD 36-70, Diversity)

Diversity in the Air Force is broadly defined as a composite of individual characteristics, experiences, and abilities. Diversity concepts are consistent with the Air Force Core Values and when properly employed add greatly to the Air Force Mission. Air Force Diversity includes, but is not limited to, personal life experiences, geographic background, socioeconomic background, cultural knowledge, educational background, work background, language abilities, physical abilities, philosophical/spiritual perspectives, age, race, ethnicity, and gender.

Diversity encompasses:

- **Demographic Diversity** - inherent or socially defined personal characteristics, including age, race/ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, family status, disability, and geographic origin.
- **Cognitive/Behavioral Diversity** - differences in styles of work, thinking, learning, and personality.
- **Organizational/Structural Diversity** - organizational/institutional background characteristics affecting interaction, including Service, component, and occupation/career field.
- **Global Diversity** - intimate knowledge of and experience with foreign languages and cultures, inclusive of both citizen and non-citizen personnel, exchange officers, coalition partners, and foreign nationals with whom we interact as part of a globally engaged Air Force.

Diversity Considerations

Diversity is Multidimensional

Diversity is multidimensional. It includes all of the similarities and differences that together make each of us unique. In addition to our individual personality or temperament, we each belong to a variety of identity groups. Some of these groups such as our profession or religion are chosen, while others are assigned by society based on visible characteristics such as gender, age,

race, and ethnicity. We respond to one another's invisible identities (i.e., sexual orientation or religion) based on our assumptions about each of these identity groups. We each experience our own group identities differently, depending on the meaning that the group has to us in our lives. How we experience our own and others' group identities depends on the cognitive map or worldview that we operate from in relation to that group, even when our worldview operates outside of our own conscious awareness.

Diversity is a Military Necessity

Air Force capabilities and warfighting skills are enhanced by diversity among its personnel. At its core, such diversity provides our Total Force an aggregation of strengths, perspectives, and capabilities that transcends individual contributions. Air Force personnel who work in a diverse environment learn to maximize individual strengths and to combine individual abilities and perspectives for the good of the mission.

Diversity concerns are often associated with a minority population, although diversity does not always imply minority. Air Force diversity initiatives complement, but remain separate and distinct from, Air Force Equal Opportunity (EO) compliance programs and activities.

The Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF) establishes diversity policy through AFPD 36-70 which states that:

- All leaders will be directly engaged in and accountable for all aspects of diversity initiatives and their implementation, including barrier analysis.
- All supervisors and managers are responsible for evaluating and strengthening their subordinates' opportunities for success.
- All personnel are expected to understand the importance of diversity, including mutual respect, thereby helping to promote and strengthen an Air Force culture that values inclusion of all personnel in the Total Force and views diversity throughout the workforce as a force multiplier in accomplishing the mission of the Air Force.

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Diversimilarity

Proper management of diversity first requires proper perspective. The traditional view of diversity can be illustrated using the melting pot metaphor. Perhaps you have seen video clips from the popular ABC television series entitled Schoolhouse Rock, first televised in the 1970s. One of the classic songs from this show is "The Great American Melting Pot," written by Lynn Ahrens and sung by Lori Lieberman (viewable on YouTube.com). At that time, diversity was considered to be a form of assimilation where you simply melt right in and blend into the collective American culture. If we treat everyone alike, on the surface it would seem as though we could never make a mistake. The problem with this idea, however, is that everyone is not the same, and the objective of our dealings with others should not be to avoid mistakes or to protect ourselves. Similarly, if we only see others as being different, our approach will create its own set

of problems; we will fail to create the best possible environment because to some extent we must all be the same for the sake of efficiency and good order and discipline in our organization. The proper perspective for managing diversity can be expressed as "We are different but we are the same." This alternative view of diversity, referred to as "diversimilarity," respects differences between people while highlighting similarities.

Striking the Right Balance

When we talk about striking the right balance, we are talking about relationships between individuals or between an individual and the institution, especially where the institution reflects the attitude of its leadership. To successfully manage diverse organizations, leaders must first have a clear understanding of the organizational culture and the extent to which individual members of the organization should be expected to adapt to that culture. If we ask for one hundred percent adaptation or assimilation, we are asking individuals to give up too much of their individuality. If we ask for no adaptation, then our organization has no culture of its own and it fails. Striking the right balance between the individual's need to align with the organizational culture and the organization's need to recognize individual differences leads to success in managing diversity. This balance creates an environment in which each of us can excel by working to our full potential.

Common ground is necessary in any organization, but at the same time, leaders must understand that individuals need to nurture their differences. In his autobiography, General Colin Powell talked about the environment at Fort Leavenworth as follows:

"Nevertheless, we had made it this far up the ladder precisely because we had the ability to shift back into the white-dominated world on Monday morning. Leavenworth represented integration in the best sense of the word. Blacks could hang around with brothers in their free time, and no one gave it any more thought than the fact that West Pointers, tankers, or engineers went off by themselves. That was exactly the kind of integration we had been fighting for, to be permitted our blackness and also to be able to make it in a mostly white world."

General Powell describes his Fort Leavenworth environment as a place where he was the same for the good of the organization, but was allowed to be different. Of importance is the suggestion that others recognized the need for black students to nurture their differences during off-duty time.

Most of us tend to nurture our differences by sharing experiences with those who have a common background. We should be supportive when our Airmen spend time together nurturing their differences as a break from many hours or days of being the same for the sake of the organization. These opportunities to nurture differences often give Airmen the strength to do a better job of being the same when the time comes to do so. For example, when a group of Hispanic Airmen are speaking Spanish after work, it is not a betrayal of their English speaking co-workers but rather a welcomed opportunity to nurture their differences as a break after spending the work day being the same. The same applies to a group of women who may have lunch or dinner together. It has nothing to do with segregation but everything to do with integration.

To a certain extent, all Airmen are the same. This means that men can mentor women and one ethnicity can mentor another, at least to the extent that they are the same. The mentorship that we can offer our subordinates will adequately provide for their needs, regardless of gender, ethnicity, or religion. On the other hand, a small part of a woman's mentorship needs often can only be

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provided by another woman. The same is true for ethnicity and religion. However, the fact that a black Airman can only get the last five percent of his or her mentorship needs from another black Airman is no reason for a white Airman to avoid providing the first ninety five percent of the mentorship as reflected in the extent to which the two Airmen may be the same. We all can and should seek to satisfy the mentorship needs of our fellow Airmen and subordinates, regardless of our differences.

Individual Consideration – The FRL/ Diversity Connection

The Full Range Leadership (FRL) transformational leadership approach of individual consideration works hand-in-hand with the principles of Air Force diversity and diversity management. Individually considerate leaders recognize important individual differences in followers that can influence their levels of motivation and performance and promote their development. When leaders treat others as individuals with different needs, abilities, and aspirations (and not just part of a group of subordinates), they are displaying individual consideration. Individually considerate leaders are more effective in diverse work environments because their subordinates feel valued and are more willing to embrace and become part of the organizational culture.

Judging to Valuing Ladder

Addressing organizational climate and attitudes—The people element:

Each person uses a learned or systematic way to help understand differences in people. One such system that illustrates this is the Judging to Valuing Ladder. When judging others (the first rung), we typically do so against the backdrop of our own preferences.

This doesn't take into account their preferences or behavioral traits, and as a result our judgment can be unrealistic. As we consider this, it's important to understand how and why other people are not like ourselves so that we can have a better relationship with them, which leads us to genuinely respecting them for who they are. Once we respect others and their differences, we are able to appreciate their contributions, even though they are different from us. As senior leaders, we do not want carbon copies of ourselves walking around the organization.

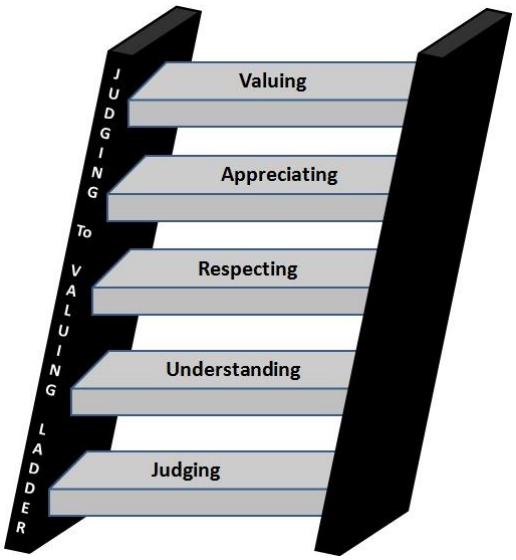

Figure 1. Judging to Valuing Ladder

We need to value others and make the most of their different contributions to the organization. Rather than judge, let's understand, respect, appreciate and value the talents that each behavioral tendency brings to the organization.

The relevance of the Judging to Valuing Ladder at the organization level is that in order to leverage diversity in the unit, a leader cannot be stuck at the "*Judging*" rung of the ladder. To get the best performance from all Airmen and to lead the most effective teams, we need to progress to the "Valuing" rung of the ladder. This is done by first understanding and applying critical

thinking to overcome our stereotypes and tendencies that may limit us (Judging). We all have value differences that sometimes cause us to be narrow-minded; this must be overcome to be effective. As leaders we must talk to our people to *understand* (the second rung) the differences we have as individuals. Ignorance or assumptions often cause negative effects, whether intended or not. In talking with our people, we build a *respect* (the third rung) for our differences and in the process also may discover their special talents. With respect for another individual and understanding of their abilities, we learn to *appreciate* (fourth rung) and *value* (top rung) what each individual brings to the organization. When we reach this point, we are in the best frame of mind to leverage the diversity in our people.

Fostering Inclusive Environments

Air Force diversity is grounded on mutual respect among all personnel. For diversity to add value, it is critical that we open our mind and make a sincere effort to understand the perspectives of others. There is never a guarantee that people with different perspectives will come to agreement, nor should there be. Freedom of conscience is one of the oldest American traditions, and it exemplifies the ideals for which we fight. What matters most is that we remain sufficiently open-minded, listen to each other's perspectives, and, when appropriate, share our own. Our goal should always be to seek a greater understanding and a mutual respect of our fellow Airmen. Effective leaders understand the necessity to foster inclusive environments based on trust and respect in order to maximize unit performance. Inclusion encompasses providing individuals in an organization challenging tasks, responsibility within their span of control, and support to grow and develop. It involves extending consideration to all qualified candidates. Inclusion provides an opportunity for individuals to be a part of "the team," thus motivating them to employ their talents and contribute to the organization and mission. To ensure all members feel like an equal part of the team, they must be given opportunities to share their thoughts and opinions at appropriate times. In turn, members should be expected to show respect for others regardless of the situation and treat one another in an equitable manner at all times. It is not possible to be considerate of others and simultaneously treat them poorly. When we are consistently considerate to others, they feel valued and respected. Fostering inclusive environments helps units develop an appreciation for the diversity of perspective within their ranks and lays the groundwork for leveraging diversity for mission accomplishment. Potential returns on investment include member/employee development, improved performance, increased productivity, reduced attrition, and making the Air Force more attractive to potential applicants, thus, enhancing the Air Force's ability to be a leading competitor in the search for talent.

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From Gold to Platinum to Rainbow

If members in an inclusive environment are expected to show respect for others regardless of the situation and treat one another in an equitable manner at all times, it stands to reason that effective leaders of diverse organizations should be modeling this behavior and monitoring others to ensure they are doing the same. But what exactly does respect and equitable treatment look like?

The Golden Rule is arguably the most essential basis for the modern concept of human rights in which each individual has a right to just treatment and a reciprocal responsibility to ensure justice for others. A key element of the Golden Rule is that a person attempting to live by this rule treats all people with consideration, not just members of his or her in-group. The Golden Rule has its roots in a wide range of world cultures, and is a standard which different cultures use to resolve conflicts.

The Golden Rule essentially states either of the following:

- One should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself (positive form), or
- One should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated (negative/prohibitive form, also called the Silver Rule)

The Golden Rule is an objective leaders should establish for themselves and for their subordinates in their interactions with others. However, leaders must be careful of how they interpret the rule and, more importantly, how their subordinates view it. Treating others the way we want them to treat us is valid at the macroscopic level or as a general way of working with people. For example, it makes sense to treat others with kindness because we want others to treat us with kindness. It would be a mistake, however, for us to use our own culture or our own preferences as the sole basis for determining how we treat others.

Consideration of others is about understanding other people so that we can treat them accordingly. The Golden Rule should be interpreted as, “Treat others as you would have them treat you if you were in their place.” We can capture this interpretation in what is sometimes referred to as the Platinum Rule. In his letter entitled “On Diversity,” Colonel Andre H. Sayles, founder of the Army’s Consideration of Others Program, added his own twist with his “Rainbow Rule,” which states “Treat others the way they would have you treat them.” His motivation for calling it the Rainbow Rule is based on the myth that a rainbow extends from a pot of gold. This parallels the manner in which the Rainbow Rule is an extension of the Golden Rule. He also noted how the colors of the rainbow are joined together for a single purpose in the same band of refracted light, but with each color retaining its distinction or difference. This is exactly how we build effective diverse organizations. Individuals must join together and be the same for the sake of the organization, while the organization respects individual differences and allows those differences to be visible. The Rainbow Rule is a straightforward way of understanding the importance of consideration.

We Need to Communicate

Unlike the Golden Rule, the Rainbow Rule obliges its practitioners to first understand others. By and large, people fail to understand each other because they fail to communicate with one another. Understanding others is best achieved through a series of frank, face-to-face discussions in a combination of one-on-one and group settings. Only by communicating can we understand how

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we are the same within the institutional culture and how we are different. Honest open discussion helps us understand how we can subordinate our individual views for the benefit of the organization and how the organization should respect our differences. We each look upon ourselves as an individual and as part of an organization. When the institution looks back at us and sees the same picture, we are beginning to achieve our goals.

Implementing Diversity Considerations into Planning, Decisions, Operations, and Daily Mission Activities

Five Part Transformational Process

It's easy enough to imagine our own organizations as perfect models of Air Force diversity but getting there is a tremendous challenge that requires a deliberate approach and persistence. The following five part transformation process is an effective way for leaders to move their organizations and their members from awareness to understanding to action.

Step 1: *Discovery*. Hold events that grow awareness of diversity as an important leadership and organizational strategic imperative. This step helps individually considerate leaders be alert to the individual needs of followers.

Step 2: *Assessment*. Systematically review the organization's culture, climate, and practices from the perspective of diverse stakeholders to include a barrier analysis. This step assists individually considerate leaders to recognize differences among people in their strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes.

- Barrier Analysis

  A barrier analysis is an investigation of anomalies found in workplace policies, procedures, and practices that limit or tend to limit employment opportunities for individuals based on any of the characteristics, experiences, and abilities found in the definition of Air Force diversity (including members of any race or national origin, either sex, or based on an individual's disability status). Barrier analysis identifies the root causes of those anomalies, and if appropriate, eliminates them. Barrier analysis should not end with unit processes and practices; it is equally important for leaders to examine their leadership practices to identify areas to improve. Do we include or do we exclude individuals knowingly or unknowingly? Do we use or condone collusion in our units? With whom do we direct our mentoring efforts, with all of our subordinates or just a few? These are just a few questions leaders should be asking themselves to determine barriers in our own styles of leading people.

Step 3: *Exploration.* Deploy targeted and ongoing training and professional development to build on the strengths and address the challenges identified through the assessment phase. This step helps individually considerate leaders provide learning opportunities for followers.

Step 4: *Transformation*. Introduce fundamental change to people, policies, procedures, culture, and climate to better address the needs of a diverse workforce and customer base. This phase establishes a pattern of incremental success for elements of the leadership system.

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Step 5: *Revitalization.* Pursue continuous renewal of the organization's commitment to diversity leadership as a distinctive competence and strategic imperative. This phase institutionalizes diversity leadership into the organizational culture.

Each diversity initiative will have its own set of challenges and accomplishments. Organizational leadership should plan periodic opportunities to celebrate progress, to acknowledge struggles and to recommit to diversity goals.

Understanding the factors that move organizational diversity forward or hold it back can make the difference between success and failure.

Factors that Support the Transformational Process

Commitment by leadership: Direct personal involvement of leaders is essential at every phase of diversity work and the ability to articulate why diversity is beneficial to the organization is a litmus test for leadership. The commitment of top leaders energizes an organization, provides momentum during slow periods, and increases the likelihood of lasting change.

Needs assessment and planning: An effective written plan for achieving greater diversity grows out of a careful assessment of an organization's current staffing and policies as they relate to diversity. For even the most committed organizations, it is important to lay the groundwork for a successful process by examining areas of need and developing a definition of diversity that the organization can embrace as an achievable goal.

Assigned staff member: Continuity and leadership are critical components of successful diversity initiatives. A specific staff person should fulfill the role of diversity coordinator and oversee all stages of an organization's diversity-related activities. The coordinator must have the full support of leadership. The role of diversity coordinator becomes part of this person's job description and must be considered in concert with the person's other responsibilities.

Diversity committee: The most effective diversity committees take a task oriented approach to planning and implementing diversity activities. Each member of the committee can play a catalytic role by advocating for diversity within their individual departments, advising the diversity coordinator, and sharing the workload.

Broad involvement: The opportunity to become a member of the diversity committee should be offered to everyone within the organization. To create a sense of ownership and commitment to the diversity process and its outcome, the committee should include a broad cross-section of Airmen.

Resources: Realistic planning should accommodate staff time for diversity committee meetings, organization-wide activities, and the diversity coordinator's responsibilities.

Training: Diversity training should be tailored to address specific needs and issues that are identified through a diversity assessment. By exploring differences among individuals, successful training can lead to greater understanding of racial, ethnic and cultural diversity, which in turn can improve interactions among staff and prompt changes in attitudes and behavior.

Changes in policy: Changes in policies in response to anomalies found in workplace policies, procedures, and practices that limit or tend to limit employment opportunities for individuals

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based on any of the characteristics, experiences, and abilities found in the definition of Air Force diversity will lead to more diversity within an organization.

Acknowledgement of discriminatory or less than inclusive practices is the first step in the process the change.

Factors that Inhibit the Transformational Process

Organizational culture and inertia: An organization with a history of accomplishment and excellence may find it difficult to acknowledge lack of diversity as a shortcoming and to take the steps needed to achieve diversity.

Lack of leadership involvement and support: Involvement of top leadership is essential for successful diversity efforts. Without this involvement, diversity efforts are on a weak footing within the organization and progress is difficult to achieve and is often transitory.

Organizational complexity: Reaching and involving employees can be difficult for organizations with a large number of workers in a variety of different roles and settings.

Difficulty getting staff involved: Heavy workloads and many competing demands on time make it difficult to secure staff involvement in diversity work.

Resistance: Resistance to diversity often arises when individuals feel that their power or privilege is threatened. It is critical to identify areas of resistance and address the fears and issues from which it arises. If not resolved, resistance can make it difficult to affect true change within an organization and to institutionalize that change into policy and practice. Communication and understanding between individuals can greatly reduce resistance and inclusion is a very effective way to gain support for diversity efforts. It is especially important when changes are needed; think of it this way, when you make people part of the solution will they criticize?

Turnover: Turnover creates the challenge of familiarizing new staff and board members with diversity efforts and securing their commitment.

Poorly planned training: Poorly planned training can create more problems than solutions. Large group sessions can be particularly counterproductive if difficult issues are raised without allowing sufficient opportunities for follow-up, feedback, and resolution of those issues.

Oppression model: When diversity training is based solely on identifying and addressing one group's oppression of another, the outcome may lead to divisiveness and confusion that will very likely block progress.

Burnout: Diversity work requires substantial effort, and rewards are not always immediately obvious. Without consistent involvement of staff and significant support from leadership, the potential for burnout is very high.

Success itself: Change can be threatening for individuals and for organizations as a whole. Organizations that participate in the five part transformational process without taking change management principles into account are likely setting themselves up for failure.

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Religious Diversity

The US military is a diverse group. Although Christianity is the most popular religion, others such as Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and even lesser known faiths, as well as atheism, make-up the diversity of our military. Part of what makes the US military so powerful is our diversity. Embracing this diversity makes us even stronger.

Religious Accommodation

We will remain officially neutral regarding religious beliefs, neither officially endorsing nor disapproving any faith belief or absence of belief. We will accommodate free exercise of religion and other personal beliefs, as well as freedom of expression, except as must be limited by compelling military necessity (with such limitations being imposed in the least restrictive manner feasible). Commanders and supervisors should ensure that requests for religious accommodation are welcomed and dealt with as fairly and consistently as practicable throughout their commands. They should be approved unless approval would have a real, not hypothetical, adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, or discipline. When disapproved, supervisors should seek reasonable alternatives. Avoidance of schedule conflicts between official activities and religious observances can enhance unit effectiveness and demonstrate mutual respect. You should create a climate where Airmen believe their requests for accommodation are welcomed and will be fairly considered. Be familiar with basic guidance that includes worship services, holy days, Sabbath observations, dietary requirements, medical issues, and apparel that are addressed in AFI 36-2706, *Military Treatment and Equal Opportunity Program*, Chapter 8, AFI 36-2903, *Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel*, tables 2.6 and 2.9, and AFJI 48-110, *Medical Services Immunizations and Chemoprophylaxis*, 2-66. Also, anticipate the needs and requests for accommodation from your Airman and whenever possible, avoid scheduling conflicts with major religious observance days.

Summary

The reading began with a review of some key concepts indispensable for leaders of diverse organizations. Given the fact that, as SNCOs, we are responsible for so much of an organization's daily mission activities, the reading discussed how diversity considerations can be implemented into planning, decisions, operations, and daily mission activities. Barriers to diversity are anomalies in workplace policies, procedures, and practices that limit or tend to limit opportunities for individuals based on characteristics, experiences, and abilities. There are also barriers in our own leadership styles that if not dealt with will affect the organization as a whole and limit the positive impact of diversity. Leaders of diverse organizations can and should implement those considerations into just about everything they do.

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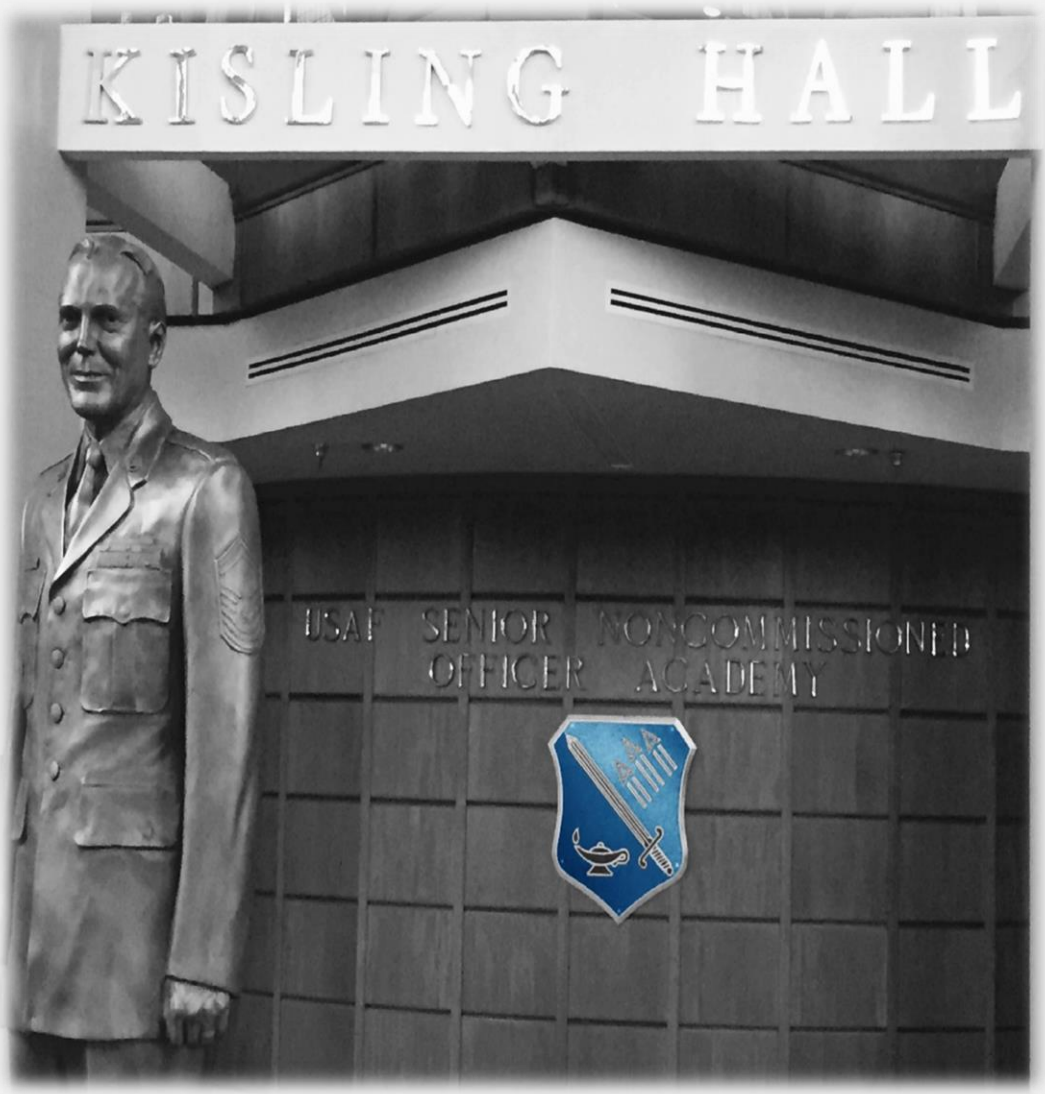

Cross-cultural Competence

Inside this Study Guide:

Introduction to Cross-cultural Competence

Key Terms

Cross-cultural Competence (3C) Model

- Knowledge
- Motivation
- Learning Approaches

12 Domains of Culture

Culture Tendencies

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- Individualism

Cross-cultural Communication

- Communication Skills
- Communication Styles

Impact of Cross-cultural Competence

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Introduction to Cross-cultural Competence

Today's Air Force finds itself interacting in more Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, Multicultural (JIIM) environments than ever before. SNCOs who are unprepared for such an environment, find it very challenging and frustrating to deal with cross-cultural situations effectively. Since mission success may very well depend upon your ability to "positively influence" the outcome of a variety of cross-cultural situations, the Air Force has made Cross-cultural Competence one of its institutional competencies.

You'll begin this lesson by learning a few key terms associated with Cross-cultural Competence (3C). Next, you'll examine the 3C Model which explains its components and its relationship to learning about other cultures. Then, you'll jump into the 12 Domains of Culture, where you'll explore common cultural categories, such as Family and Kinship, and explore the importance of each. After that, you'll take a look at two Culture Tendencies that can assist you when attempting to build relationships with other cultures. An understanding of these tendencies should help you in the next section…Cross-cultural Communication. Here, you'll learn how an understanding of different communication skills such as paralanguage, can help you maintain strong cross-cultural relationships.

While there are many different aspects of 3C you'll need to understand, let's start the ball rolling by covering key terms to help you better understand the concepts in this lesson.

Key Terms

Culture

Culture is the creation, maintenance, and transformation across generations of semi- shared patterns of meaning, sense-making, affiliation, action, and organization by groups. It consists of shared sets of traditions, belief systems, and behaviors that are shaped by many factors (e.g., history, politics, resources, etc.). Culture can be learned through a process of socialization or passed down generationally.

Domains of Culture

Domains of Culture are broad categories under which humans commonly organize cultural knowledge, beliefs, values, and behavior (e.g., kinship, gender, economic exchange, etc.).

Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is the tendency to negatively judge other cultures (beliefs, values, etc.) by the values and assumptions of your own culture. This tendency can limit your ability to understand others since you may see their culture as inferior to your own. Some actions SNCOs can take to mitigate/eliminate the notion that one culture is better than another culture is to suspend one's judgment, become educated on the culture, and educate others on the culture.

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Cultural Relativism

Cultural Relativism (often seen as the opposite of ethnocentrism) is the tendency to understand people's beliefs and practices within the context of *their* culture, rather than from your own cultural point of view. It includes understanding that people usually behave logically within their cultures, but our logic and their logic may not be the same. Although practicing cultural relativism requires you to suspend your judgment about cultural practices, it doesn't mean you have to personally accept, adopt or promote those practices…a common misunderstanding concerning relativism.

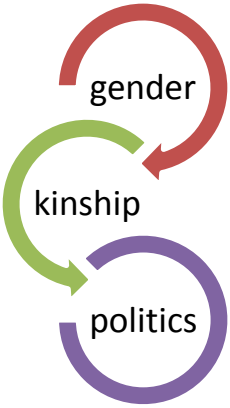
> *"Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry, and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends."*
>
> *— Maya Angelou*
> *Poet and Civil Rights Leader*

Cross-cultural Competence

Cross-cultural Competence, or 3C, is the ability to quickly and accurately comprehend, then appropriately and effectively act across all cultural environments without necessarily having prior exposure to a particular group, region, or language.

Holism

Holism is the idea that all aspects of culture are interconnected and integrated, although the relationships between aspects of culture vary from group to group. Therefore, change in one area may affect change in another area. Recognizing that cultures are holistic systems, falls in line with "systems thinking," a concept you learned about in the Critical Thinking lesson. Systems thinking helps people conceive of indirect (second and third order) effects of their actions.



Worldview

Worldview is the overall perspective from which a person sees and interprets the world…a collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group. Examples include:

- Role of individual versus collective – which is more important, the individual's choice, or the decisions of the larger group?
- Power, prestige, and legitimacy – whom has the right to lead in this culture? How are they selected?
- Degree of human agency and potential – how much control do we have over our own lives?

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Paralanguage

Paralanguage is the non-verbal features that accompany speech and contribute to communication but aren't considered part of the language system (e.g., tone, pitch, rate, and pauses).

Power distance

The extent to which the less powerful members of a culture, organization and/or institution (e.g., family, unit, government, etc.) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally

- ***High power distance culture***: those in authority openly demonstrate their rank, boss/subordinate relationship is rarely close/personal, and class divisions within society are accepted.
- ***Low power distance culture***: superiors treat subordinates with respect and don't pull rank; subordinates are entrusted with important assignments; blame is either shared or very often accepted by the superior due to it being their responsibility to manage; and managers may often socialize with subordinates.

Macro-cultures

These are the most powerful or most widely practiced cultures in a particular society, whether the society is a region or entire country. It's the 'mainstream' or dominant values, beliefs and behaviors. For example, in the Japanese culture, the majority of the society values family, institutional affiliation, and homogeneity (being similar/alike).

Micro-cultures

These are the 'subcultures' within the macro-culture. They're the group of people living within a larger society who share values, beliefs, behaviors, etc. that are different from the macro-culture. For example, 'the South' could be considered a micro-culture in America. There are certain behaviors that the majority of southerners share (sweet tea, dialect, etc.). These behaviors might be seen as different by someone from New York (which has its own micro-culture).

As a member of the Air Force you belong to a macro-culture (American values, beliefs, etc.) and the micro-culture of the Air Force (specific rules that guide military people only).

Understanding the different terms is the first step to learning how to become more cross-culturally competent. With deployments being the norm these days, a basic knowledge of them can make it easier to operate in cross-cultural environments. However, the key terms are just the beginning. Let's see how they fit into the next topic…the Cross-cultural Competence model (3C model).

Cross-cultural Competence (3C) Model

Ruth Benedict, an American anthropologist, once said "The crucial differences which distinguish human societies and human beings are not biological. They are cultural." It might be easy for you to understand and deal with others' 'biological' differences…maybe because you've been exposed to them since you were a child. However, can you deal with cultural differences as easily?

As a member of the American Profession of Arms and senior leader in your organization, you might be put into situations where you'll have to form working relationships with people from different cultures or with people that have different beliefs and values from your own. Your ability to understand these differences and adjust can have an impact on whether or not your mission succeeds or fails. This 'ability' is nurtured in the 3C model.

In this section, you'll break down the outer components of the 3C model: knowledge, motivation, and learning approaches. Then later in the lesson you'll explore the inner components. Let's get started by focusing on the first component of the model…*knowledge*.

Knowledge

The 'Knowledge' component of the model addresses understanding how culture influences people's beliefs, values, and thought processes. Such knowledge can be acquired via observation and orientation (OODA Loop), mentoring, and the study of cultural elements.

It might appear that this component only focuses on understanding other cultures; however, you should be able to understand your own cultural influences and how they may generally impact (or be interpreted by) other cultures. You can start with something as simple as learning a few etiquette differences amongst cultures.

For example, in the US, when drinking wine, people typically sip it along with dinner or during other occasions. In our culture, this is perfectly acceptable. However, according to the article "*15 International Food Etiquette Rules that Might Surprise You*", in the country of Georgia, wine is drunk only at toasts and the whole glass should be downed at once…but, the glasses are small! In our culture, drinking wine this fast might be seen as excessive, irresponsible behavior.

You can find many examples of cultural etiquette differences online. The point is what might be seen as a 'normal' practice in our culture might be frowned upon (or even considered an insult) in other cultures. That's why it's important to acquire as much knowledge as you can about cultural differences…mistakes could damage an important relationship with could result in a negative impact to your mission.

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OODA Loop

Another way you can gain knowledge about other cultures is through activities such as observing and orienting, using a framework like the OODA Loop. The stages of this framework are natural processes you go through when making decisions and acting upon them. In the context of gaining cross-cultural knowledge, you should pay attention to how you practice each of these stages:

The OODA loop, created by John Boyd, consists of four stages:

- *Observe: Gather data*
- *Orient: Make sense of data you observed*
- *Decide: Select a course of action*
- *Act: Implement course of action*

- "Observe" people in other cultures as much as possible. For example, how do they go about their daily lives? How do they interact with each other?
- "Orient" yourself to the situation to understand what you've observed. You can compare what you see with what you know…asking questions to learn more, and questioning your assumptions.
- When "Deciding" how to proceed, think about how your cultural beliefs, values, etc. influence your ideas. Are you making a decision based on what's appropriate in the American culture? Also, ask what a person in the other culture might think a "normal" possible decision is.
- Once you've gathered data about other cultures, oriented yourself to the situation, and decided on a way forward, it's time to put your decision into "Action". After you do so, you should review what happened as a result of your action; reflect on what you've learned, and what you might do better next time.

Orienting Yourself

(Critical Thinking)

When attempting to make sense of what you've observed, you should ensure you're using good reasoning. For example, you could use the Reasoning Element of ***Assumptions*** *to determine if your understanding of the situation is justifiable by evidence and to make sure your 'cultural' point of view isn't impacting your assessment of the situation.*

Additionally, you should use strategies to practice cultural relativism and avoid ethnocentrism like, suspending judgments based on your own cultural perspective. Remember, what's normal for you may not be normal for others. Try to think about the point of view of the people from the other culture…what might not sense to you, may make sense to them. Adjust your behavior or advise your Airmen to adjust their behavior to accommodate different perspectives and in order to accomplish your mission and form cross-cultural relationships.

Using the structured OODA Loop, you can gain knowledge about a culture as well as use it to help you adjust your behavior to accommodate different perspectives while still accomplishing the mission.

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Mentoring

As a senior, you should use the knowledge you gain to mentor your people and increase their awareness of cross-cultural differences. You can use the tool MyVector to help in this endeavor. This tool is a place for mentors and mentees to come together and develop positive, professional relationships; give helpful, honest guidance; and find sound advice. It's a resource to increase your knowledge of important military issues (such as challenges in cross-cultural situations or even 'best practices' you can use to enhance these situations).

Understanding elements of culture

Finally, you can build your knowledge through understanding cultural domains and other cultural characteristics, which will be covered in the next section. These elements of culture can help you recognize patterns in others' cultures that should lead you to greater understanding of people's beliefs, values, thought processes, and behaviors. They can also help you make sense of the knowledge you gain about other cultures by comparing them in both general and specific ways.

While it's important, knowledge is only one component in the model. You must have the motivation to seek that knowledge. Let's cover the importance of *motivation* in the 3C model.

Motivation

Motivation can be explained in various ways, but for the purpose of this lesson, it focuses on being *proactive* and *positive* about gaining cross-cultural knowledge (the "knowledge" part of the model) and sharing it with your people. You can accomplish this by:

- ***Seeking out knowledge about other people and their cultures.*** As a senior leader, you should exceed the expectations you have for your people. If you expect them to be culturally aware, so must you. You can take a class, do research, or even talk with someone from a different culture. Additionally, the cultural/heritage events sponsored by your based (for example, Asian-American Heritage Month) are fun, educational opportunities to learn about other cultures as well.

> ***POA & The SNCO***
>
> *As an Airman, you work in culturally diverse environments, both at home and deployed. The* ***Intellectual Dimension*** *of the POA requires you to be sensitive to cultural differences and their implications as you conduct your duties and accomplish your mission. Therefore, ethnocentric behavior can't be practiced/promoted by members of the POA.*

- ***Seeking to be proactive in reducing ethnocentrism in your unit.*** Be 'tuned in to' your people and their comments/attitudes pertaining to other cultures. Correct sub-standard behaviors or those that could be perceived as discriminatory or offensive. Also, help your people see the value of understanding other cultures and how that understanding can enhance their personal and professional lives.

- ***Seeking cross-cultural knowledge and strategies as resources and methods that help you accomplish your mission.*** You can try to learn a few key phrases in the native language (salutations, common foods, etc.) to help you interact with others. Also, being familiar with the local

cultural "Do's and Don'ts" can help you avoid situations that could result in a mission stall. Finally, you may receive local country briefings upon deploying to a specific location to help you interact safely and more effectively with the locals to accomplish your mission.

- ***Developing a positive attitude toward cultural differences.*** Your attitude can have an impact on your level of motivation. If you possess a negative attitude towards a specific cultural or even towards wanting to know about other cultures, it can have a negative impact on your motivation. Imagine if someone said, "Look, I'm only going to be in this country for a few months. I have no reason to learn anything about the locals or their culture since I'm going to be out of here as soon as possible. I don't have the time to do it anyway!" How effective would this individual be at forming relationships with individuals from other cultures if they're not even willing to try?

While motivation can be seen as an 'internal' characteristic, your level of motivation in cross-cultural situations can have an 'external' impact on your mission.

For example, imagine you're in a situation where your people are running out of drinking water and you need to access more water quickly. There happens to be a body of water close to your location, but you must get approval to use it from the local tribe. This task/mission should *motivate* you to find information (knowledge) about the tribe so you can request permission appropriately. If you lacked the motivation to acquire the appropriate knowledge, your mission could fail (no water)…that's why motivation is an important part of the model. But, for the outer part of the model to be complete, there's one more component to cover…*learning approaches*.

Learning Approaches

Culture-general *is an approach that emphasizes common aspects and domains of the culture concept, providing individuals with knowledge (concepts, theories, processes, etc.) and skills that offer broadly-applicable general principles and serve as a framework for culture-specific learning.*

- AFCLC

When learning about culture, there are two approaches you can take depending on the situation: a general approach or a specific approach.

General Approach

This learning approach is similar to acquiring a basic cultural 'awareness' that certain aspects of culture are shaped by our values, beliefs, etc. and that there are differences between your cultural beliefs and those of other cultures. It provides *foundational* knowledge that fosters an understanding that cultural domains and other characteristics of culture such as family, kinship, community, etc. may vary from your own. This approach, awareness of cultural differences and influences, can assist you no matter where you find yourself in the world. It can also be beneficial if you're going to a specific country, but have no time to learn its unique characteristics.

For example, you're more than likely aware of the difference between how your culture views women in the workplace and how other countries view that same issue. However, this

understanding is a 'general understanding' until you start to make a comparison between your cultural view and a specific culture's view.

Specific Approach

This learning approach, unlike the general approach, centers on a specific culture. Using this approach, you tend to delve deeper into a country's beliefs and values system, learning key elements to enhance your interactions and/or relationships. This approach orients you more effectively to various cultures and country specific situations. Examples include country orientation briefings, Basic Combat Convoy Course, close quarter marksmanship training, Combat Lifesaver training, etc. Additionally, you may be required to attend specific training based on your AFSC and duty assignment.

> ***Culture-specific*** *is an approach that emphasizes specific aspects of particular cultures, affording individuals much of the knowledge and/or skills necessary to interact more competently with individuals of other cultural backgrounds.*
>
> *- AFCLC*

Both approaches (general and specific) are essential for Cross-cultural Competence, since you'll encounter many cultures and unique situations throughout your Air Force career, and may or may not have time to prepare yourself with all the specific knowledge necessary. But, there are a few things you can do to maximize both approaches:

- ***Pay attention to how you (and your people) learn best.*** Adults learn in different ways: (auditory, visual, and tactile). Regardless of the approach (for example, if you have a visual preference, you might want to learn about other cultures by reading about them or just watching how they go about their daily lives. If you have a tactile preference, you might want to get involved…interacting with them as much as possible), try to tailor it using your learning preference to make the learning experience more effective.
- ***Take advantage of others' experiences.*** You can learn from others by reviewing products such as; After Action Reports, Lessons Learned documents, notes on Key Leader Engagements, unit diaries, etc. These products contain historical information you can incorporate with the knowledge you've already acquired in order to get a more complete picture (both idealistic and realistic) of the culture.

Learning as much as you can (generally and specifically) about culture…in the way you (and your people) prefer, if possible, can help you navigate the unfamiliarity of cross-cultural situations more effectively. When these skills are used in conjunction with the other components of the model, you increase your ability to influence what happens in your immediate environment. Additionally, you can increase your chances of influencing those around you to help build and sustain more productive cross-cultural relationships.

Since cultural differences might be harder to understand than other differences you're exposed to, it's important that you do your due diligence…using the 3C model as a tool…to help you and your Airmen acclimate to any cultural situation in order to ensure your mission is successful.

According to Ruth Benedict's quote, "cultural differences distinguish societies". So, before we explore the center part of the 3C model (relate, negotiate, and communicate), let's take a 'general approach' to learning about these differences by taking a look at the 12 Domains of Culture.

12 Domains of Culture

You've probably deployed to another country at some point in your career…or you may deploy sometime soon. Depending on the location, you might find that what you see is totally different from what you're used to in the United States. Not only is the language unfamiliar (which you expected), but the local people dress differently, interact with each other differently, and at first, you might not be able to make sense of it all. At this point, you may think, "How am I going to make it through my deployment in this unfamiliar environment?"

If you take a step back and really assess the culture you're in, you'll probably notice some of the same basic structures you see in American culture…family, relationships, recreation, etc. These structures, or domains, are present in all cultures…they're just practiced different. As an Airman and member of the Profession of Arms, it's your responsibility to figure out a way to use the 3C model and a basic understanding of the domains, in order to help your team acclimate to the culture and to ensure your mission is successful.

In this section, you'll learn about 12 Domains of Culture, using a general learning approach, to give you a basic understanding of each and examples of the specific domain that consist of three parts: the culture-general understanding (point of commonality/comparison amongst all cultures), the typical American experience, and a typical experience from another (various) culture. As you read each example, think about how the different practices impact other domains, as well as how they would influence your worldview. With this in mind, let's start with one of the easier domains to identify with…family and kinship.

Family and Kinship

Family and Kinship refers to the different ways people recognize relatives and the rights and status afforded to those relatives. This domain covers cultural practices, structures, beliefs, and values. It also includes the relationships with people you treat like family, regardless of your actual genetic relationship to them. They're the first social affiliations in a person's life. They help to define what's culturally acceptable and unacceptable, who are friends and enemies, how a person's identity develops, who a person or group will turn to in times of trouble, and the ways the culture will be transmitted to future generations. Beliefs about family and kinship can influence ideas and practices regarding origins, ancestry, residence, inheritance, etc.

➢ **EXAMPLE:**

- ***Culture-general Understanding*:** Everyone is born into a family. This is their first introduction to culture and society.
- ***Typical American Experience:*** As an adult, a person generally looks outside of their family for a life partner/mate and usually makes decisions concerning residence based on individual goals.
- ***Typical Senegalese (West Africa) Experience:*** Marriages are frequently arranged by parents. Once the individuals are married, a couple usually resides in the same home as the husband's parents.

Religion and Spirituality

Religion and Spirituality refers to a culture's way of defining and relating to the sacred and supernatural. *Religion* is the *organized* system of practices, structures, beliefs, and values related to the sacred and supernatural. As an organized system, a religion can be a part of the social order (the system of status and class) of a culture because it advocates certain practices and beliefs as different (and usually better) than others. *Spirituality* refers more generally to *less organized and more personal* practices, beliefs, and values related to the sacred and supernatural.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding*:** Everyone has beliefs about the origin of earth, the purpose of their existence, and the proper ways to act. All religions have beliefs or practices that members should adhere to in varying degrees.
  - ***Typical American Experience:*** Religious faith is private, but not a secret. Due to the diversity of the American culture, there's no penalty for not practicing or believing in a specific faith.
  - ***Typical Iranian Experience:*** Religion is the foundation of all authority in the country to include political and legal. Iranian citizens may be severely punished if they don't follow certain religious dictates on behavior.

Learning and Knowledge

Learning and Knowledge refers to the means and methods for learning and distributing (teaching) knowledge. *Learning* is a cognitive development process that occurs in formal or informal settings to include personal experiences, institutional academic programs, reading, and one-on-one/group interactions. Learning that increases knowledge is essential to a culture's survival. *Knowledge* is a cultural resource that can be taught, manipulated, or withheld, depending on a culture's system of political and social relations.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding*:** All cultures teach children what they need to know to be successful in their particular society.
  - ***Typical American Experience:*** Kindergarten through twelfth grade is the standard, minimal expectation. School subjects include a wide variety of topics to equip children with basic skills for the modern, technological, highly interconnected world.
  - ***Typical Afghani Experience:*** The terrain and harsh climate make it difficult for children to access education. Additionally, cultural norms oppose the education of girls. And for some, early marriages often interrupt the education of girls fortunate enough to have entered school.

Sex and Gender

Sex and Gender pertains to ways different cultures acknowledge biological differences between men and women *(sex)*; the ways they assign roles, responsibilities, and status to masculine, feminine or other identities *(gender)*; and their beliefs and values that support gender differences. People's sex and gender often influence or even fully determine their relationship to parts of

every other cultural domain, such as their access to resources, their work, the kinds of social and political relations they can enter, and how they can worship.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding*:** All cultures have beliefs and values that underlie different approaches to 'mixing' the sexes.
  - ***Typical American Experience:*** There's very little distinction between activities that are appropriate for males versus females. Males and females can have nearly identical opportunities and educational levels at all ages. Dating usually begins around age 15.
  - ***Typical Middle Eastern Experience*:** Dating usually takes place under the supervision of parents. Being alone with someone of the opposite sex who isn't a family member is not customary. People of the same sex holding hands while walking is considered an ordinary display of friendship.

Economics and Resources

Economics and Resources pertain to the ways people allocate, produce, distribute, and consume goods and services. Among other topics, it includes attention to the variety of practices, structures, beliefs, and values related to raw natural materials, human labor, careers, means of production, and means of exchange, such as monetary exchange, gift-giving, reciprocal exchange, and so forth. Information about economics and resources can help one understand the importance assigned to different resources, jobs, and forms of exchange.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding*:** Location and environment – both natural and man-made, have a large impact on this domain and how it plays out in a culture. Political and Social relations (particularly the stability of) also have tremendous impact.
  - ***Typical American Experience:*** Generally leads the world in the industrial, technological and communications spheres, Americans have an abundance of natural resources to include rich and healthy farmland. Since the country is surrounded on three sides by oceans, Americans have long enjoyed a strong free market with ample accessibility of transport along with a stable economic and monetary system that feeds our high values of individualism, achievement, and success.
  - ***Typical Moroccan Experience:*** Only gaining independence in 1956, and maintaining government control over industries until 1993, Moroccans have the largest slums in the Arab world. Along with widespread illiteracy, this society is slow to gain traction in benefitting from their natural resources and strategic position near major trade routes.

Political and Social Relations

Political and Social Relations pertains to how people interact with each other and includes the cultural practices, structures, beliefs, and values related to societal organization and governance. *Political relations* refer to a culture's patterns of dividing power among people, exercising that power, and governing groups of people. *Social relations* refer more generally to a culture's patterns of relationships created outside the government or legal structure to survive and

accomplish life's tasks, which include: dividing food, celebrating traditions, educating children, and practicing religion.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding*:** All cultures must organize in ways that help to protect resources and reinforce acceptable behavior.
  - ***Typical American Experience:*** With democracy and the ideas of fair play, equality, and freedom of expression, we generally practice a concept of pluralism – giving all groups a say in governance, whether it's a school project or our federal elections.
  - ***Typical Tribal Society Experience:*** Many cultures still rely heavily on the authority and hierarchy of tribes that work in tandem with social and political institutions. This often manifests in a form of patronage – giving representation or financial benefits to various powerful groups (i.e. warlords or tribal sheiks) in return for support or restraint of violence.

Aesthetics and Recreation

Aesthetics and Recreation refers to people's expression of beauty and style, as well as people's methods of recreation. Aesthetic and recreational practices, structures, beliefs, and values surpass what's needed for physical survival, but they may also be an integral part of everyday life. These aspects are often what people associate with culture since they're very observable in classical or folk art, clothing, music, games, and sports.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding:*** Recreational activities tend to both segregate (by interest) and unify groups of people.
  - ***Typical American Experience:*** There isn't one nationally recognized sport. The major sports in American culture include baseball, football, and basketball. Since the sporting leagues are divided by region, sports tend to create micro-cultures within the country based on the team and its players.
  - ***Typical Iranian Experience*:** In this region, a particular sport usually represents a society's culture. For example, notions of strength and bravery are valued in the Iranian culture, so weight-lifting, wrestling, and Taekwondo are popular sporting events.

Sustenance and Health

Sustenance and Health covers the ways humans feed themselves and treat their bodies. More specifically, a focus on *sustenance* leads to discussion of the patterns of subsistence, such as what people produce and eat at different times. The focus on *health* includes the values placed on food rituals, taboos, and beliefs regarding food properties, discussions pertaining to healthy lifestyles and how to become or remain healthy.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding:*** In nearly any society, you can find food that's surrounded by tradition or 'rules' about its consumption.

- ***Typical American Experience:*** Americans can generally relate to burgers and hot dogs for Memorial Day celebrations, and turkey and stuffing for Thanksgiving. Additionally, we keep 'elbows off the table' and eat with our mouths closed!
- ***Typical Japanese Experience:*** Loudly slurping soup is considered a compliment, but lodging chopsticks vertically into a bowl of rice, or using them to pierce food isn't normally acceptable.

Technology and Material

Technology and Material refers to the material resources that cultures have access to or can procure. Each culture maintains practices, structures, beliefs, and values concerning its technology and material and range from how to use tools to the beliefs about who can use certain tools (and who can't) based on the structural hierarchy of people within the culture. This domain also incorporates both artistic and practical uses of technology and material.

➢ **EXAMPLE:**

- ***Culture-general Understanding:*** Use of technology in a culture is highly dependent on interplay from the Economics & Resources and Political & Social Relations domains.
- ***Typical American Experience:*** Whether to build a pipeline from Canada to Nebraska to exploit an alternative technique of producing oil has environmentalists solidly pitted against investors because environmentalists view it as environmentally questionable whereas investors view it as an alternative technique of producing oil.
- ***Typical Djiboutian (Horn of Africa) Experience:*** With only 1,900 miles of roadways of which about 10% are paved, and an electrical grid that covers only half the country, the economics and politics of Djibouti tend to concentrate infrastructure around the ports and in Djibouti City.

History and Myth

History and Myth pertains to a culture's study and acknowledgement of the past, both its own and others,' and includes history, scientific knowledge, first-hand experiences, testimonies by credible sources, as well as existing mythology. The practices, structures, beliefs, and values that relate to history and myth may also improve the group's understanding of its creation, origin, existence, predicted end, and the individual roles within the group.

➢ **EXAMPLE:**

- ***Culture-general Understanding:*** Myths and the stories people tell, can reveal much about that culture's values.
- ***Typical American Experience:*** The story of George Washington chopping down a cherry tree represents the importance of honesty and integrity.
- ***Typical Afghani Experience:*** A popular Afghan story highlights the value of always keeping at least one 'trick' in reserve, in case you need to use it even against a friend.

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Language and Communication

Language pertains to the means and methods humans have for exchanging information. Language, both verbal and nonverbal communication, is crucial to establishing and maintaining social relationships. By translating experience into language, humans gain knowledge that can be exchanged with other members of the group or society.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding:*** Communication shapes culture, and culture shapes communication.
  - ***Typical American Experience:*** Everything in the American culture is based on the English language. It's the one language officially practiced by society (educational institutions, government, etc.). Although more accommodations are being made for other cultural languages, the English language unifies our culture.
  - ***Typical Middle Eastern Experience (Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan):*** This regional area is one of the world's must linguistically diverse areas. It includes Farsi, Dari, Pashto, and Urdu. As a result of the multiple languages (which are sometimes different based on educational status or governmental affiliation) it's difficult to build strong national identities.

Time and Space

Time and Space refers to the practices, structures, beliefs, and values that people of a culture apply to the concept of time and the use of space. This includes a culture's interpretation of time (e.g., past, present, and future as well as the use of calendars), space (e.g., living space, personal space, etc.), and communication (verbal pauses, standing distance, etc.). Attention to time and space helps a culture order its world and interact with its natural surroundings.

- **EXAMPLE:**
  - ***Culture-general Understanding:*** The ways that people in a culture structure their time and use space/distance can communicate and indicate cultural priorities and beliefs.
  - ***Typical American Experience:*** Most of us make a clear distinction between social lives and work lives, with work time being dedicated to getting results. Additionally, we tend to want more personal space when communicating with individuals other than intimate partners.
  - ***Typical Middle Eastern Experience:*** Spending time to build and solidify relationships is essential. If a meeting is scheduled, and a need arises with family or friend, it's understandable to be late or reschedule. Also, it's common to see people of the same sex stand much closer to each other.

In this section, you learned there are general structures seen in all cultures, but may be expressed differently based on beliefs and values…the 12 Domains of Culture. You looked at each one and were provided a general American view and the view of a different culture to compare the differences. Based on these examples, you should see the differences between cultures aren't necessarily good or bad…right or wrong. They're just differences. Understanding the general

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domains can help you acclimate faster to a culturally diverse environment while you learn specific details about the culture you'll have to interact with. This should help you make sound decisions when working with other cultures in order to effectively accomplish your mission.

When deploying to an unfamiliar environment, you should now have a basic knowledge of cultural differences so you can process what you see and experience by lenses other than your own. Being motivated to learn as much as you can, should help reduce the anxiety and frustration you may feel when you're initially exposed to another culture. While the domains can help you initially orient yourself, you also need to understand the cultural tendencies that can have an impact on how you interact and form relationships to accomplish your mission.

Culture Tendencies

Did you grow up in a close family with lots of relatives around? Or, did your family unit just consist of those closest to you? Whether you know it or not, your answer to these questions had an impact on how you experienced your culture…they helped shape your cultural lens.

In a cross-cultural environment, the tendency towards family can have an impact on how cultures interact with each other, how much influence the family holds in the society, and how these tendencies impact individual actions. By understanding the relationship between family and influence, you can approach situations more prepared and use your knowledge of this relationship to improve the effectiveness of your mission.

In this section, you'll cover to two cultural tendencies: collectivism and individualism. You'll see how these tendencies can impact family structure as well as how decisions are made and individual values and beliefs. The information provided in this section is based on *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind,* by Geert Hofstede (as cited by the Air Force Culture and Language Center, Hofstede, G. 2010). Let's get started with collectivism.

Collectivism

In Hofstede's book, most cultures in the world (with the exception of North America and Western Europe), tend to lean toward collectivism. In a more collectivist culture, the group is more important than the individual. People tend to defer to its 'hierarchy' and put their personal interests and needs second to the needs of the group. Those cultures that are collectivist in nature tend to exhibit the following characteristics:

Collectivism *is the tendency to consider extended family affiliations and being a member of a larger group (ethnic, national, tribal, etc.) as very important throughout a person's life.*

- ***Relationships and status are important***. Therefore, individuals might be more resistant to make agreements or commitments since they understand that they may be speaking 'for the group' and not just for themselves. As a result, they may decide to wait or defer a decision to the group.
- ***"Family" consists of blood relatives of multiple generations***…on both parents' sides of the family, including in-laws. An individual usually lives with their family of orientation

until marriage, and even may live in the same household, building, or neighborhood after marriage (usually, a wife moves to her husband's family household).

- ***The family maintains importance through adolescence and adulthood*** as a source of group affiliation. This affiliation can influence, but doesn't absolutely determine, where one lives, what political candidates and parties one supports, one's religious identification, and so on.
- ***People tend to remain economically and legally dependent on their family of orientation*** until marriage, and even sometimes after. Instead of turning to the government or other institution to borrow money, buy a house, find a job, or find someone to do home repairs…as Americans tend to do. Individuals in a collectivist culture tend to turn first to their extended family network.

When interacting with a culture that has collectivist tendencies, you should understand how decision making is made and the impact that can have on your ability to perform your mission. You might have to wait an extended period of time for answers to questions (because the 'collective' must be consulted). Additionally, since those that are considered 'elders' are at the top of the social hierarchy, information might only come from them, so you must respect this 'information flow'. Also, they may also only want to talk with the senior person in your team…regardless of experience. Try not to be offended by this.

Individualism is *the tendency for the individual's needs to take precedence over the extended family's needs. Extended family ties play a less important role.*

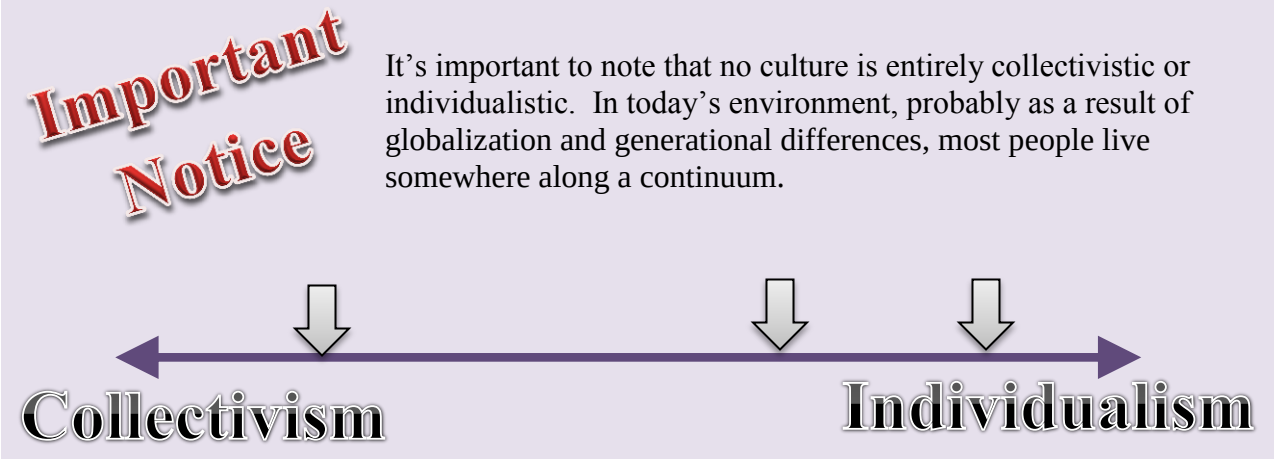
You should respect their beliefs and values so you can build better relationships with the leaders in your area. While collectivism is one tendency typically seen in some cultures you'll deploy to, you're probably more familiar with cultures that have individualistic tendencies.

Individualism

In Hofstede's book, individuals in the U.S. and most Western European cultures tend to be more individualistic. Individuals in this culture tend to seek independent living situations and value their ability to make their own choices. The most meaningful definition of family is the nuclear family (the parents and children). Those cultures that are individualistic in nature tend to exhibit the following characteristics:

- As a child grows into adolescence, ***he or she becomes less dependent on family and identifies more strongly with other groups or micro-cultures*** (e.g., sports, political, religious, etc.). After basic education is finished and/or they go away to college, they normally maintain their permanent residence with their family.
- As the individual matures, ***he/she pursues their own goals and interests***, which may differ from their nuclear family.
- When the individual initiates his/her own family unit (as a result of procreation), ***they usually live apart from their family of orientation.***

- Typically, ***adults turn to financial institutions (government, banks, and money lenders)*** as well as their family for economic support or assistance (i.e. getting a loan, finding a job, etc.).
- Individuals ***value self-sufficiency and only seek help if needed***.



Understanding the difference between these cultural tendencies can help you acclimate to some of the 12 domains, such as the Family and Kinship domain, in your cross-cultural situation. It could help clear up any confusion and uncertainty when interacting with others so you can build relationships by exhibiting respect and understanding… ultimately leading to mission success.

Building relationships so you can effectively influence in cross-cultural situations is an important part of the 3C model. However, your understanding of communication in these environments should help you *maintain* the relationships you worked hard to build.

Cross-cultural Communication

As a senior leader in a cross-cultural situation, you might not know how to speak the local language without an interpreter, but you can be aware of how you (and others) are communicating non-verbally. A mistake or misinterpretation can have a negative impact on your ability to influence and might cause those from other cultures to be insulted or refuse to establish a positive relationship with you as a representative of the Air Force.

In this section, you'll learn the nuances you need to be aware of when communicating in these situations. You'll learn about verbal and non-verbal signals such as paralanguage and haptics. Next, you'll cover two different, culturally-based, communication styles: low context and high context. Let's continue to improve your cross-cultural competence by starting with non-verbal communication skills.

Communication Skills

In the Communication and Language domain, you learned about the importance of communication, verbal and non-verbal, in establishing relationships. While learning the local language might take some time, you can recognize verbal and non-verbal signals that can relay communication without understanding the actual words someone is saying.

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Paralanguage

In Ting-Toomey's paper, *Toward a Theory of Conflict and Culture*, the author notes that this skill influences the way you perceive and are perceived by others. Different aspects of paralanguage include:

- ***Rate of speaking* (faster or slower):** In the U.S., speaking slowly can be associated with less intelligence or one person not understanding what another is talking about. As you know, sometimes when you're translating a question into your 3rd or 4th language, it takes time to formulate a response…which has nothing to do with intelligence.
- ***Intonation* (rising or falling to emphasize words or phrases):** Research has shown that when Arab speakers ask information-seeking questions in English, they are perceived as accusatory because they end the question with falling intonation, whereas in English, we end the question with rising intonation. For example, think of this sentence with both rising and falling intonation: "Why did you do that?"
- ***Pitch* (the highness or lowness of the tone of voice):** Arabic speakers use a higher pitch range which native English speakers perceive as aggressive or possibly threatening. In the Thai language, the same word may have very different meanings depending on the context and on whether the tone is high, low, rising, or falling. Here's an example:

Nonverbal communication

Nonverbal codes are a type of paralanguage, too. Nonverbal communication sends messages without/or in addition to, words. You must be observant since all nonverbal behavior has communicative value.

Haptics *communicates information through the use of touch.*

Proxemics *communicates information through the use of distance.*

Chronemics *communicates information through the use of time.*

Kinesics *communicates information through the use of movement.*

- ***Haptics*** involves the functions, perceptions, and meanings of touch. When you think about haptics, from a cross-cultural perspective, factors related to who touches whom, when, where, and how are all connected to your cultural upbringing. Research has shown that touching in public places occurs much more frequently in countries such as Venezuela and Italy than it does in countries like Japan or the U.S.
- ***Proxemics*** is the study of the communicative effects of space or distance. Because you have needs for both privacy (distance) and to be interdependent (nearness), one way you manage this tension is by defining and defending a territory. For example, in the U.S., we typically learn through our culture how close is too close to stand when talking to a colleague at work versus how close one might stand next to a loved one. These distances vary across cultures, and can affect communication success if not properly observed.
- ***Chronemics*** is the study of how people perceive the use of time and how they structure it in their relationships. This is a form of nonverbal communication because your use of

time sends a message without using a single word. Whether in an academic, business, or social environment, members of different cultures use and perceive time differently.

Some expressions in American language reveal our culture's preoccupation with time. Phrases such as "time is money," "out of time," and "wasted time" are indicators that a good deal of emphasis is placed on punctuality in our culture. This of course isn't the case in many Latin American and Muslim cultures whose attitude about time is much more flexible. Also, time plays into certain cultural practices. For example, many Scandinavian countries don't conduct business during summer months, while Muslims fast between sunrise and sunset during Ramadan.

Chronemics is the most complex of the non-verbal communication styles and requires further examination. Anthropologist Edward T. Hall spent years studying chronemics, and discovered that most cultures fit into one of two categories: monochronic or polychronic. Here's a list of their characteristics:

- *Monochronic:*
  - have a more linear sense of time
  - view time as something that is earned, saved, spent, or wasted
  - typically value punctuality, adhere strictly to schedules and deadlines
  - prefer to work in a systematic manner completing one task at a time
  - time is measured by events that happen one after another, in the past, present, and future
- *Polychronic:*
  - antithesis of monochronic cultures
  - time is treated as cyclical, uncontrollable, and/or naturally disorderly
  - time is viewed as uncontrollable due to the unpredictability of life that may cause a situation to change depending on how events unfold
  - allowances are made for certain unforeseen circumstances, such as running into an old friend, and delays are viewed as part of life
  - a certain amount of latitude is allowed for being late—or not showing up at all for a meeting

➢ ***Kinesics*** is the technical term for the study of movement and gesture. It comes from the Greek word "motion" and includes gestures, body movements, facial expressions, and eye behavior. The "hook'em horns" image is very common at University of Texas football games … but in Norway it means "salute to Satan." Former President Bush was photographed many times making this gesture, and it made the front page of Norwegian newspapers.

Paying attention to paralanguage and other types of non-verbal communication in a cross-cultural situation can help you better understand the culture you're being exposed to. Another communication area you should understand is the two types of communication styles.

Communication Styles

In Hall's book, *Beyond Culture*, he states that two different communication styles can create roadblocks in building relationships if they're not understood: high context and low context. The terms "high context" and "low context" are used to describe broad cultural differences between societies. In terms of cultural communication, a message's context (as well as other factors) can be influenced by the roles of the people communicating and those around them, the hierarchy between the people present, the speaker's relationship to the group, and the history of the people involved, etc. However, you should keep in mind that no culture ***completely*** adheres to high context or low context communication styles…they're merely tendencies.

High Context Communication

High context *refers to societies or groups where people have close connections over a long period of time. Many aspects of cultural behavior are not made clear because most members know what to do and what to think from years of interaction with each other.*

In cultures that have a tendency toward high context communication, its usually essential to establish a relationship and trust with your counterpart before you can proceed with business. Therefore, professional engagements are often culturally scripted, and any attempt to accelerate the tempo at the expense of social pleasantries could likely result in deadlock. When interacting with cultures where Western influence and globalization are prominent, you may find the pace has quickened in some areas. However, you should still respect, and be ready to adapt to if possible, the local cultural communication styles and conceptions of time and space.

These many tendencies lead toward communication styles that favor the listener's ability to read between the lines, understand intonation, and slight gestures. Therefore, understanding and utilizing elements of paralanguage is important! Speakers tend to choose words that are ambiguous, knowing that an adept listener should understand based on the context of the interaction. In fact, listeners bear the responsibility of correctly interpreting a speaker's message, and can be criticized if they don't "get it." Lessons are taught through analogies, parables, or other stories that illustrate knowledge and wisdom. These aren't attempts to be sneaky, disrespectful, or obtuse. This is the way people in high context cultures have grown up communicating, and it seems natural to them. They may even highly respect people who are good at communicating in this way.

People in cultures that tend toward high context communication aren't likely to refuse a request outright. Doing so might offend the asker and damage the long-term relationship between the parties. It might not be up to that person to give his or her assent, because of the hierarchical nature of their group relationships. Saying no might also draw undue criticism to a person for making promises that may not be kept. A high context communicator may therefore be vague, using phrases such as "it might be difficult," "it would not be a problem", or "Inshallah" that will not definitely commit them to a course of action.

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A culture's worldview also influences the ways people interpret the meaning of context in communication. Many collectivist cultures like those predominant in East Asia (Japan, Korea and China), as well as most Middle Eastern, Arab, Latino, and Mediterranean cultures tend toward high context communication styles. In these cultures, one's relationship to the group is a dominant factor in any interaction; it must be preserved and enhanced at all times. That's why group loyalty, patronage, and hierarchy are so important to people in more collectivist cultures. They're more likely to postpone making decisions, since that would be disrespectful to those in the hierarchy above them. They're also less likely to disagree publicly with someone or openly criticize another person, since that would reflect poorly on the other person's family/reputation, and might bring that person's whole clan down upon the offender.

High Context Traits:

- *Less verbally explicit communication, less written or formal information*
- *More internalized understandings of what's communicated*
- *Multiple cross-cutting ties and intersections with others*
- *Long term relationships*
- *Strong boundaries of who's accepted as belonging, versus who's considered an 'outsider'*
- *Decisions/activities focus around personal face-to-face relationships, often around a central person who has authority.*

Low Context Communication

When listening to someone speak, people in relatively low context cultures pay more attention to the explicit meaning of the verbal message. Low context communicators often stress lots of detail, facts, and statistics with little regard to how the message is delivered. They favor communication that gets directly to the point rather than communicating through analogies and high context hints. It's the sender's responsibility to provide a clear message that can easily be decoded by the receiver.

Low context *refers to societies where people tend to have many connections but of shorter duration or for some specific reason. In these societies, cultural behavior and beliefs may need to be spelled out explicitly so that those coming into the cultural environment know how to behave.*

Many relatively individualistic cultures, like those predominant in North America and much of northern Europe, have tendencies toward low context communication styles. This isn't to say that group membership and hierarchy aren't valued, but people pay deference to their role in the hierarchy by taking responsibility on themselves. They need to prove their point with verifiable information, since they don't rely on the power of their social group to back them up. Additionally, saving face for the group is less of a concern, "saying what you mean and meaning what you say" are more highly valued characteristics in low context communication.

When people with these differences in communication style interact, they often experience conflict based on communication rather than on their dedication to a particular mission. For example, high context communicators are apt to become impatient and irritated when low context communicators insist on giving them information they don't need, like "preaching to the

choir." Conversely, low context communicators are at a loss when high context communicators don't provide enough explicit information about how to proceed or whom to talk to. They may also tire easily of hearing analogies instead of facts.

The American military exercises a low context communication style. We consider direct, concise, and clear language valuable, and we expect people to quickly deliver their message. Anything else is typically reacted to with impatience, confusion, frustration, and even contempt.

Often, low context communicators assume that high context communication is ineffective — not true. The effectiveness comes from listeners knowing how to interpret the speakers' message and how to reply in a way that's culturally appropriate. However, people who have worked closely with coalition forces, local populations, and nongovernmental organizations can attest that mission success is often directly linked to their ability to adapt to unique, high context, communication situations. Your counterparts may judge you as more respectful and trustworthy if you can understand, respect, and adjust to their way of communicating. However, if you only use a low context approach, it can hinder communication with those same counterparts. In turn, you should explain your way of communicating to them so that each party better understands the other's style.

Low Context Traits:

- *Rule oriented, people play be external rules*
- *More knowledge is codified, public, external, and accessible*
- *Sequencing, separation of time, space, activities, relationships*
- *More interpersonal connections of shorter duration*
- *Knowledge is more often transferable*
- *Task-centered*
- *Decisions and activities focus around what needs to be done, division of responsibilities*

Once again, you should remember that while all cultures use low and high context communication patterns, one form becomes the 'tendency'. While most Americans tend to be low context communicators, there are certain situations when we may adopt high context communication techniques. For instance, we roll our eyes at a friend during a boring meeting or begin an inside joke that we don't need to finish since others already know it. Also, many micro-cultures found within the U.S. or in other countries may deviate from the communication context adopted by our macro-culture. The following table highlights some of the differences between high and low context cultures.

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High and Low Context Culture Differences		
Factor	**High context culture**	**Low context culture**
Overtness of messages	Many covert and implicit messages, with use of metaphor and reading between the lines	Many overt and explicit messages that are simple and clear
Locus of control and attribution for failure	Inner locus of control and personal acceptance for failure	Outer locus of control and blame of others for failure
Use of non-verbal communication	Much nonverbal communication	More focus on verbal communication than body language
Expression of reaction	Reserved, inward reactions	Visible, external, outward reaction
Cohesion and separation of groups	Strong distinction between in-group and out-group/ Strong sense of family	Flexible and open grouping patterns, changing as needed
People bonds	Strong people bonds with affiliation to family and community	Fragile bonds between people with little sense of loyalty

When operating in a cross-cultural environment, learning the local language can be extremely beneficial to accomplishing your mission. However, that might be a lofty goal. If you can understand how other cultures communicate using paralanguage and other non-verbal elements, you can lessen the chances that you'll accidently insult someone or damage a relationship due to the language barrier.

So, when in situations where you're leading teams with multi-cultural members, learning about their customs and etiquette are important to interaction. However, when attempting to get the team moving toward its goal, you have to learn their culture's nuances of verbal and non-verbal communication to make up for the language gap and increase your level of Cross-cultural Competence. These actions (along with the others in this lesson) can have an impact on your effectiveness to influence, which brings us back to the 3C model.

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Impact of Cross-cultural Competence

Being a senior leader in a JIIM environment isn't an easy task. Not only are you responsible for your Air Force people, but you may be responsible for sister service members and/or coalition partners. According to AFI 36-2618, you're expected to provide highly effective leadership. You must lead and manage teams…regardless of cultural background. Cross-cultural competence and the 3C model can help you meet this responsibility.

The center of the 3C model houses the "relate, communicate, and negotiate" skills. As you attempt to lead and manage multi-cultural teams, these skills are beneficial to ensuring the mission is effectively accomplished.

Relate

How can you lead effectively if you can't relate to the members of your team? You probably couldn't…at least not effectively. Just like you don't get to pick the individuals in your work centers (normally), you don't get to pick your team members in a JIIM environment. Therefore, you should acquire the knowledge you need in order to relate to those that are different from you. For example, you should learn how those that have different cultural beliefs and values view certain aspects such as time and space. If you don't, you could schedule a meeting during an inappropriate time. Or, you may not be able to explain to your other teammates why the individual had to leave the meeting unexpectedly. Relating to those you lead can help bridge the gap between those from your culture and those from other cultural environments. This can have a positive impact on your team's ability to accomplish their mission. Failure to do so can cause cultural divides or increase them…if they're already present.

Communicate

Sometimes, it's easier to communicate with those that are most like you. However, in a JIIM environment, this mentality could cause mission failure. As a senior leader, you should learn the communication nuances of the cultures you're interacting with in order to be cross-culturally competent. Although you may not know the local language or the communication nuances of individuals on your JIIM team, you can use your understanding of paralanguage and non-verbal cues to reduce misunderstandings.

Additionally, understanding that cultural communication styles differ can also help you become more effective in leading your team as well. Since our culture has a tendency toward low context, interacting with cultures that have a tendency toward high context can make situations seem more ambiguous or even give the impression that those from a low context culture are disrespectful. Understanding the differences and using your leadership skills, you can prevent or reduce any negative consequences (conflict, cultural obstacles, etc.) that may arise from within a JIIM team you might be leading. Ignoring these differences, maybe even thinking they'll work themselves out, could result in interpersonal issues within your team and may reduce your team's productivity.

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Negotiate

While effective communication can help reduce negative consequences of melding a JIIM team, it may not eliminate them. Therefore, you may have to rely on your negotiation or mediation skills in order to get every refocused.

As the leader of this unique type of team, your people have to believe that you're an impartial party. This is especially important because you don't want your team to perceive that you have 'loyalties'…for example, to only Air Force people or Americans. Otherwise, your negotiation/mediation efforts might fail. You should be able to show that you're willing to listen to everyone's viewpoint and encourage collaboration whenever possible.

Influence

Since the essence of leadership is the ability to influence, mastering the "relate, communicate, and negotiate" skills at the center of the 3C model can help you gain and maintain influence with your JIIM team. In a deployed environment, one of your major responsibilities may be to take your group from various backgrounds/cultures and mold them into a functioning team. You need influence in order to do this. Without this influence, your ability to lead your diverse team can decrease…negatively impacting their ability to complete the mission.

Summary

This lesson began with an examination of the terms associated with Cross-cultural Competence. These terms provided the foundation for you to start increasing your level of Cross-cultural competence. You also learned about the Cross-cultural Competence (3C) Model that not only will improve your competence, but to also improves your ability to influence your people and your environment. Next, you learned about the 12 Domains of Culture. Even though, on the surface it appears that we're all different, most cultures share the same broad categories…it's how they're practiced in each culture that highlights our differences. Then, you looked at Culture Tendencies of collectivism and individualism. Understanding the difference between these culture tendencies can help you acclimate to some of the 12 domains, such as the Family and Kinship domain, in your cross-cultural situation. After that, you jumped into a very important part of 3C…cross-cultural communication. In this section, you covered communication skills such as paralanguage and other non-verbal cues, as well as the low and high context communication styles. When exposed to various cultures, you can use general cues like haptics and kinesics to provide insight into how the culture communicates without actually learning the local language. Finally, you wrapped up the lesson by gaining an understanding of 3C's impact on your ability to relate, communicate, and negotiate in a JIIM environment.

Since the Air Force and DOD are sending members of the Profession of Arms into cross-cultural situations on a daily basis, all members should have the necessary tools to accomplish their mission in the most effective manner possible. As a senior leader, these tools can enhance your ability to lead others from diverse backgrounds to ensure mission success.

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Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

Mediation

Inside this Study Guide:

Introduction to Mediation

- Negotiations Refresher
- Key Terms
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Styles of Mediation

Mediation Process

- Mediation Preparation
- Stages of Mediation
- Deal with Impasse

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Introduction to Mediation

Imagine that two of your peers walk into your office with a dispute. They need your help to resolve it. They've tried to work it out on their own, but they've reached a roadblock. They've asked you, as an impartial party, to listen to each side of the story and help them reach an agreement. What would you do?

In today's Air Force, this situation isn't uncommon. You might be asked to help in similar situations, peer-based situations, in situations dealing with individuals from other units or even other countries. Your ability to manage and lead the mediation process can help pave the way for dispute resolution, and in some cases allow the Air Force to continue its mission, if it stalls.

Before we get into the details of mediation, you first need to review a short refresher on negotiations. Next, you'll learn a few key terms that should provide a foundation for mediation to use throughout the lesson. Hopefully, this information is familiar since you should've learned it at the NCO Academy. Then, you'll briefly be introduced to Alternative Dispute Resolution so you can see where mediation falls in the spectrum of resolution tools available at different levels in the Air Force. Finally, you'll look at the different styles of mediation, including suggestions for when and why you should use them.

Now that you know where you're heading and the goal of this lesson, let's begin to build this foundation with a quick negotiations refresher.

The goal of this lesson is to increase your familiarity with mediation concepts and provide a few tools you can use to help resolve disputes at the lowest level possible. This lesson ***IS NOT*** *intended to make you a "skilled mediator". If, after reading this lesson, you're interested in becoming certified as a mediator, or want to learn more about the other alternative dispute resolution options, please see your base Alternative Dispute Resolution office or visit the following website* http://www.adr.af.mil/ .

Negotiations Refresher

Later on in this lesson, you'll learn what mediation is and when it should be used. However, for now, you just need to understand that mediation happens ***after*** negotiations fail. Therefore, you need to have a negotiations refresher before you can fully understand the mediation process. As previously stated, this section may be a refresher for you. But, if it's new to you, the following information should help familiarize you with the basic principles of negotiations.

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Negotiation

Although there are multiple definitions of negotiation, the Air Force defines it as "a process involving two or more people or groups where the parties have a degree of difference in positions, interests, goals, values or beliefs, and the parties strive to reach agreement on issues or a course of action".

For example, two NCOICs have to work together to solve a problem…one NCOIC wants to implement solution A, the other NCOIC wants to implement solution B. If they were engaged in a negotiation process, they would both try to work out their differences and come to a mutually agreed upon solution.

Interest

An interest is the reason behind your position. It's the "why" behind what you want.

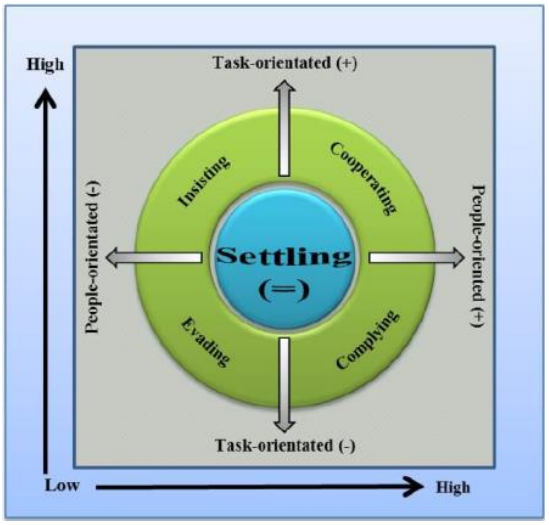
Using the previous example, one NCOIC might want to implement solution A because he ***doesn't want his people to work additional duty hours*** (his interest). The other NCOIC wants to implement solution B because she wants ***additional resources*** (her interest) to help solve the problem.

To help determine interests, investigate your position through a series of questions that begin with who, what, when, where, and why.

Negotiation Preferences and Styles Chart (NPSC)

The NPSC includes five negotiation strategies that can be used while negotiating to win acceptance of other parties involved and to ensure relationships aren't destroyed. They are:

- **Evade** *("Not now, can you come back later?")*
- **Comply** *("Yes, absolutely, let's do it your way!")*
- **Insist** *("Take it or Leave it")*
- **Settle** *("Let's just split the difference and call it a day")*
- **Cooperate** *("Let's work together and come up with an even better idea")*



The Who, Stakes, and Situation

Before the negotiation process starts, it's important to consider the Who, Stakes, and Situation. Your answers can determine or have an impact on the NPSC strategy you select.

- **Who:** Who are you dealing with? (A supervisor…peer…subordinate?)
- **Stakes:** What do you stand to gain or lose? (Something important or vital?)
- **Situation:** What are the current and future circumstances? (Is it a critical situation?)

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For example, if you're dealing with a superior, you probably won't be able to use the Insist strategy. Or, if you stand to lose something extremely important, you might want to use the Cooperate strategy.

TIPO Model

The purpose of the Trust, Information, Power, and Options (TIPO) model is twofold. First, it illustrates how trust influences your use of information and power, and how information and power influence the way you develop options to resolve a dispute, solve a problem, and find a solution. Second, understanding how trust, information, and power impact any negotiation session should motivate you to assess situations beforehand.

A careful proactive assessment can give you a good idea of the strategy your opposite plans to use which allows you to select the most effective negotiation strategy. Here's an example of how assessing the situation using the TIPO model can help you select your strategy:

Cooperate Strategy			
Trust: Both parties trust each other	***Information:*** Both parties are willing to (freely and reliably) share information due to their trusting relationship	***Power:*** Since their is a trusting relationship, power is shared	***Options:*** Due to the exchange of information and trust, multiple options are generated and explored

Normally, mediators are brought into situations where negotiations fail. That's why it's important to have an understanding of the negotiation terms…ultimately, as a mediator, you want to get the parties back on track towards negotiating. However, you need to learn a few more terms…those associated with mediation.

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Key Terms

In order for you to understand the mediation process, it's important that you know a few key terms associated with it. These terms (used later in the lesson) provide the foundation for you to effectively understand and use the mediation concepts.

Mediation

When a negotiation breaks down or reaches a roadblock, mediation is an option that attempts to meet the needs of all participants in order to help them get back to a point where they can reach an agreement or continue to negotiate. It's intended to be non-adversarial in nature, resulting in less stress for everyone involved. The mediation process promotes understanding, builds confidence and trust, and enables parties to move forward while maintaining (or re-establishing) positive relationships.

Mediator

An individual that facilitates communication, promotes understanding, focuses negotiating parties on their interests (rather than their positions), and seeks creative problem solving to enable the parties to reach their own agreement.

Dispute Resolution

This is any process in which an alternative means is used to resolve an issue in controversy. A neutral (or someone able to maintain neutrality) is appointed/asked and specified parties participate.

Caucus

This is an optional stage in the mediation process where the mediator holds a private meeting between with each party in a dispute. This usually occurs when communication breaks down or sensitive issues arise that shouldn't be discussed in front of the other party.

Stakeholder

These are outside parties who have a vested or personal interest in the initiation, processing, and resolution of an existing dispute. Commanders, first sergeants, supervisors, subordinates, neighbors, and family members are all potential stakeholders of mediation.

Emotional Control

Your ability to effectively control outwardly visible emotional reactions is vital. A reaction can jeopardize your all-important neutrality and credibility. While venting should be embraced and not feared, you must end joint sessions if it appears that either or both parties are close to losing control of their actions. You should remain calm and maintain the quality of the proceedings and the safety of the participants.

Impasse

This occurs when the parties are deadlocked…no longer progressing toward an agreement in negotiation or mediation.

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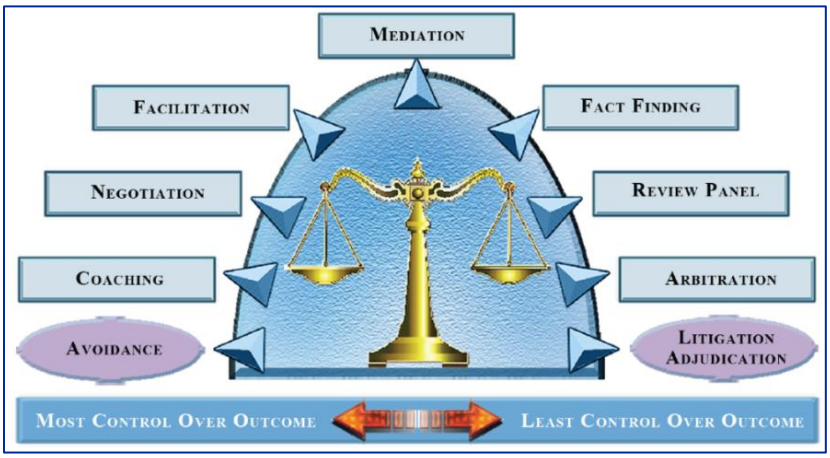
Understanding the key terms associated with mediation sets the foundation for the mediation process. However, it's also important for you to be aware of all the tools, in addition to mediation, available to resolve disputes.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Negotiation and mediation are two options, in a spectrum, the Air Force suggests when attempting to resolve disputes. The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) spectrum provides an array of options for disputes that occur as low as the unit level, to disputes that occur as high as Air Force level (possibly involving total force and/or host nation issues). Some options are appropriate for use by supervisors and unit leadership, while others are more appropriate options used by those at the strategic level of leadership and in the legal community. So, let's take a brief look at ADR.

What is it?

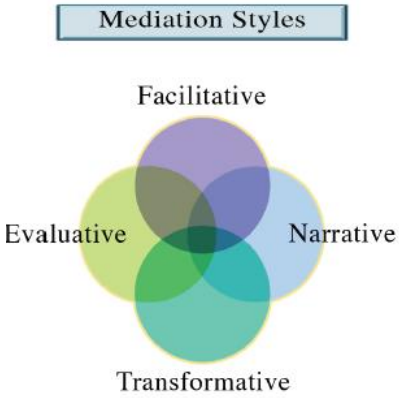
ADR is an "umbrella" term that encompasses many different options to resolve disputes. They include avoidance, coaching, negotiation, facilitation, mediation, fact finding, review panel, arbitration, and litigation/adjudication. Some options can be more successful if an individual has a high level of power and/or control over the outcome (for example, if you're trying to resolve a dispute in your section and you're the flight chief). While, some options are more appropriate in situations where an individual has less control over the outcome and are usually reserved for use by legal counsel (for example, a dispute involving a contractor and the Air Force).



ADR Sample Spectrum

Although there are some options in the ADR spectrum that are appropriate for SNCOs to use, the rest of this lesson will only focus on the 'mediation' option of dispute resolution.

Styles of Mediation



Mediation has been practiced using various styles, appropriate for use in different situations. Each style comes with its own pros and cons; therefore it will be helpful for you to have a working knowledge of the uniqueness of each style and when each should be used. They are: evaluative, transformative, narrative, and facilitative. These styles are not always cut and dry. The styles can overlap and you may transition from one style to another during the mediation. Let's begin reviewing the different styles of mediation, starting with the evaluative style.

Evaluative

In an evaluative style of mediation a subject-matter expert (SME) acts as mediator. The SME describes the issue, offers an opinion on the strengths and weaknesses of each party's side, and suggests options to resolve the matter. This style of mediation can be used in situations where the parties lack the expertise to devise effective solutions or when parties need an expert to evaluate the solutions. In your unit, the mediator that uses this style could be in a leadership position, like a flight chief or superintendent, or someone that has experience and has been successful in dealing with the issue causing the dispute.

Evaluative mediation can be an effective option due to the inexperience of the parties in dealing with the issue…which could be the cause of their stalled negotiation. This mediator brings perspective and experience to the table to help the parties break through their roadblock in order to get back to the negotiation.

In order to effectively use this style of mediation in the dispute, you should have knowledge and expertise in the area of the issue so you can provide advice on the things they need to think about during the mediation process. Additionally, you would have knowledge concerning the strategic point of view so you can communicate the big picture with the disputants (if required). As an evaluative mediator, you should provide alternative options on how the parties should proceed.

Critical Thinking

When using the evaluative mediation style, you should consider the ***Essential Intellectual Trait*** *of* ***"Confidence in Reason".*** *You should encourage your people to come to their own conclusions or state their own opinions. This helps them think despite the obstacle they face.*

Transformative

Transformative mediation focuses on empowerment, enabling parties to define their own issues and seek solutions on their own. It enables parties to see and understand (not agree with) the other party's point of view. In this type of mediation, the goal is for all parties to approach the current problem—as well as later problems—with a stronger, yet more open, view.

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The transformative style of mediation can be used if negotiation failed because the parties didn't feel empowered to make decisions or if they didn't feel valued or recognized by the other party during the negotiation process. It's often used in interpersonal conflicts (family, neighbors, co-workers, etc.); however it can be applied to other situations where empowerment and validation are important as well.

Critical Thinking

When using the transformative style, encourage your people to consider the ***Reasoning Element*** *of* ***"Point of View".*** *This should help them identify weaknesses in their own point of view, but should also help them identify the strengths in the other party's point of view.*

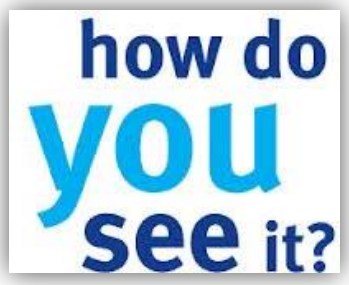
This style of mediation can be effective because it allows the parties to define their own issues and seek to resolve them while encouraging them to see each other's point of view. By encouraging discussion and focusing on the emotions of both parties, they should begin to feel empowered while they communicate their unique point of view. As a result, when using this style of mediation, you should be able to help parties maintain and strengthen their relationship.

For example, if the dispute was a result of an interpersonal issue (disrespect for one another, negative emotions, lack of trust, etc.), which prevented them from agreeing on a solution, then the transformative type of mediation would be more appropriate.

You could help the parties get to the root of the issue (which may be a lack of respect and insight into each other's point of view), and work to address that.

Narrative

Narrative mediation is both an approach and a methodology, providing mediators with a way of incorporating stories into the very fabric of mediation. The narrative technique works to "deconstruct" how each party sees the conflict, uses open-ended questioning, and constructs alternate stories to achieve understanding and cooperation. This style of mediation is similar to the interpersonal counseling you might do with your subordinates…helping them identify the problem while using questioning techniques to guide them in developing comprehensive solutions.



In order for narrative mediation to work, you should be a ***completely neutral party***. You shouldn't give advice, recommendations, or opinions. However, you should encourage the parties to discuss matters freely and to work together to develop a solution.

Narrative mediators listen to and interpret each party's points of view in order to find a connection. Once the connection is established, the parties should be able to find options for resolutions.

Narrative mediation works because it helps remove the feelings of "overall responsibility" from the parties involved.

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Facilitative

The facilitative style of mediation (adopted by the Air Force as a best practice to mediate workplace disputes) is used when negotiation stalls due to a communication breakdown between the parties. The mediator works to increase and enhance communication by encouraging the parties to discuss matters freely without judging or taking sides. This method is effective because the mediator helps the parties clarify issues, reevaluate positions, and analyze interests all with a focus on resolving the dispute that brought them to the mediation table. However, both parties have to ***voluntarily*** agree to participate in the facilitative mediation process or else it won't work.

Critical Thinking

*When using the facilitative style, consider using the **Universal Intellectual Standards** of **"Clarity"** and **"Accuracy"** to help the parties focus on the dispute so they both have a clear picture of the problem.*

For example, let's say the parties have tried to work towards an agreement, but because each one wants to hold tightly to their own position, communication has broken down, the negotiation has stalled, and the level of trust between them is now low.

Using the facilitative method, you would help them focus on reestablishing effective communication while focusing on their interests versus their positions. You wouldn't provide suggestions on solutions, but would use questioning techniques to have the parties collaborate in order to come up with solutions on their own.

Knowing the four styles of mediation is important to understanding mediation and how it can help you…help others, resolve disputes. The styles can blend together depending on how the mediation process is progressing. Using the appropriate style with the situation you're dealing with should ensure your efforts to mediate are effective and successful.

You began this section with a refresher on negotiation concepts. Next you learned a few key terms—including mediation and mediator. Then, you looked at the different options available via the ADR spectrum, including coaching and facilitation. Finally you explored the styles of mediation: facilitative, transformative, evaluative, and narrative. Remember, the Air Force tends to use the facilitative style of mediation more than the others when dealing with workplace disputes.

Mediation is a very effective means for resolving a wide variety of disputes, especially those that occur in your organizations or between your people. The process is highly flexible and can be adapted to meet the needs of particular parties or situations. As a SNCO, you're encouraged to explore the variety of situations and conflicts where mediation may be of assistance. Your ability to manage and lead the mediation process can help pave the way for dispute resolution and, in some cases, help the Air Force continue its mission if it stalls. However, before you can manage the mediation process, you must first learn about each step.

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Mediation Process

Two NCOs have asked you to help them with a dispute they can't resolve. You've accepted the request to mediate their situation and want to help them resolve their issue. But now what? What do you say? How do you get things started?

Recognizing the importance of helping your leadership, peers, subordinates, family, etc. work out their disputes is the first step in facilitating mediation. However, this responsibility shouldn't be taken lightly due to the impact it can have on your people, mission, and family life.

Consider the following situation:

MSgt Jones is the flight superintendent. There have been interpersonal issues between day shift and swing shift during changeovers that are negatively impacting the mission. MSgt Jones has seen the shift leaders attempt to work the issues out on their own many times, but the problem is getting worse.

This example is used throughout this section to aid in your understanding of the content.

As a SNCO, disputes might be brought to you (you're asked to assist), or you may notice that, after your people have attempted to negotiate on their own, issues still continue to plague your work environment. Either way, you can use the mediation process to help get your people back on track towards negotiating a solution to the dispute.

This section starts with preparing for mediation. Here you'll cover items such as how to assess if mediation is appropriate and the best time to start the mediation process. Next, you'll jump into the stages of the mediation process to include the mediator and parties' opening statements. Finally, you'll end this section by learning a few tips you can use to deal with an impasse if one should occur during mediation.

Understanding how to accomplish the mediation process is crucial to effectively resolving disputes. Therefore, you should ensure you adequately prepare for it before starting the process.

Mediation Preparation

To increase the chances that the mediation process will be successful, you must prepare by accomplishing the following steps:

1. Gather sufficient information about the dispute
2. Assess a dispute to determine whether mediation is appropriate
3. Determine when to offer mediation

"Good preparation opens the mind to possibilities – and possibilities are the lifeblood of mediation."

- S. Mutch

Gathering Information

The first step of the preparation process involves gathering sufficient information from all parties. You should attempt to interview:

- The initiating party…the one requesting assistance with a dispute

- The other individual involved in the dispute with the initiating party
- Individuals that seem to have tried (and failed) to negotiate
- Anyone else you determine to have relevant information regarding the dispute (e.g., customers, supervisors, co-workers, etc.)

Critical Thinking

To assist you with the first step of preparation, you can use the ***Reasoning Element*** *of* ***"Information"*** *in order to ensure you have all the information you need. Additionally, you can use the* ***Universal Intellectual Standard*** *of* ***"Relevance"*** *to 'weed out' the information that's not applicable to the dispute.*

If you're in a situation where you haven't been asked to mediate a dispute but believe a problem exists that needs to be addressed, you should first ask the parties if they've attempted to negotiate a solution on their own. If the answer is no, suggest they sit down and try to work out the issue themselves before offering mediation as a tool to work out the dispute.

If you don't gather comprehensive information while preparing for mediation, it might present itself during an inappropriate time…resulting in a disruption to the process or a negative impact on your creditability (you might be seen as someone that didn't do his/her "homework" first).

One final note…information obtained during the interviews or during the process itself shouldn't be shared with others unless 1) it reveals something the Air Force says must be reported (e.g., criminal acts), and 2) permission is granted by the individual to share it.

Assessing Mediation Appropriateness

It's important to understand mediation is a "tool" and just like some construction projects call for a hammer, and some a screwdriver, mediation is only appropriate in certain circumstances. After gathering sufficient information from the parties, you need to determine whether mediation is appropriate for resolving the dispute.

When a dispute exhibits one or more of the following factors, it's probably appropriate for mediation:

- ☑ The parties are interested in finding a solution to the dispute or problem, but they can't work it out on their own. Personality conflicts or poor communication between them have caused their negotiations to break down.
- ☑ It's important those involved in a dispute continue to have a positive, professional relationship. For example, if two of your peers have failed to negotiate a dispute and you want them to continue to maintain the same

Critical Thinking

When attempting to determine if mediation is an appropriate tool, you can use the ***Reasoning Element*** *of* ***"Implications"****. Consider the consequences of the situation before taking action.*

professional relationship they had prior to the dispute, mediation could be an appropriate tool to get them back on track. Otherwise, the work environment might become toxic if their relationship is negatively impacted as a result of the dispute.

- ☑ The demands of one of the individuals are unrealistic and a discussion of the situation with a mediator may open a dialogue toward the discovery of options for mutual gain.
- ☑ Negotiations have reached an impasse and the parties wish to avoid establishing precedent. For example, if negotiations between two SNCOs result in an impasse, they wouldn't want to give the impression to others in the unit that walking away from an impasse is acceptable. SNCOs need to set an example of continued cooperation, even in difficult situations.
- ☑ The parties desire a prompt mutually acceptable resolution in lieu of another time consuming dispute resolution process.

On the other hand a few factors that might make a dispute ***inappropriate*** for mediation include:

- ☒ An indication that fraud, waste or abuse was committed by either party.
- ☒ Allegations of criminal misconduct or complaints filed under Article 138, Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).
- ☒ The dispute involves military personnel quality force actions, such as involuntary administrative separations, denials of reenlistment, resignations, and promotion propriety actions.
- ☒ Disputes in which there is substantial evidence that one of the parties initiated the action to harass or intimidate, or is otherwise deliberately abusing the process.

Since these are not all-inclusive lists, effective SNCOs should use these guidelines and their best judgment when considering mediation appropriateness.

When to offer Mediation

Once you've decided that mediation is an appropriate tool to offer, you should think about when it would be best to do so. Although mediation can be effective at any stage of a dispute, it's generally accepted that using it early (or as soon as possible) carries a greater chance of success. One reason for this success is the early stage of a dispute tends to be informal—an environment well suited to mediation. Another reason is parties' positions tend to harden the longer a dispute continues. So, if a dispute is considered appropriate for mediation, then it should generally be offered as soon as it's practical.

In the scenario presented earlier, MSgt Jones has seen an escalation in the dispute between the day and swing shift that's having a negative impact on the mission. She has also seen the shift leaders attempt to work it out on their own many times, but no progress has been made. So, MSgt Jones decides that mediation is appropriate and begins to prepare.

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Preparation is an important part of the mediation process. It ensures you have the information needed to help the parties formulate options that could resolve the dispute. Since you now have the ability to effectively prepare for mediation by gathering information, determining appropriateness, and deciding when to offer mediation; let's look at how to use what you've learned during the stages of mediation.

Stages of Mediation

The facilitative mediation model provides a process that can be used at the lowest supervisory levels, for handling work center disputes. This model is usually effective because those involved in the dispute must agree to at least come together, voluntarily, in order to work out the dispute. If they won't, they're probably not ready for mediation.

This model contains the following stages.

The stages of mediation are most effective when completed in succession. Although the stages aren't lock-stepped, you should attempt to accomplish one step before moving onto the next, with the exception of the caucus (which may not be needed). For example, an effective mediator would not move into a caucus before the joint discussion occurs. However, a mediator may move backwards to joint discussion after a caucus occurs.

Understanding the stages of mediation is critical when attempting to solve a dispute, let's begin by exploring stage one.

Stage 1: Mediator's Opening Statement

In this stage, you'll meet with both parties together for the first time. Begin the session by establishing rapport with both parties to put them at ease, followed by your opening statement. The purpose of the opening statement is to:

- establish a structure for the mediation session
- ensure the parties' understand the mediation process
- gain the parties' commitment to the process

Proficient public and interpersonal communication skills are critical for mediators, especially when delivering the opening statement. That's why you're strongly advised to prepare your opening statement in advance and practice delivering it before initiating the

The following skills can help mediators during their opening statement:

- Establish rapport
- Eye contact and body posturing
- Reception of verbal/nonverbal cues
- Awareness of tone and volume
- Control of facial expressions and gestures

mediation session.

An opening statement begins with your introduction, explaining your credentials and qualifications – if applicable, and how that background makes you a suitable mediator. You should also assure the disputing parties that you'll maintain a neutral and impartial position throughout the session. Confirm the parties' consensual agreement to mediate, that their attendance is strictly voluntary, and that each party is prepared, or at least attempting, to resolve the dispute. You may need to reference these agreements later in the process, especially if attempting to move beyond an impasse.

The next element of any successful opening statement is the establishment of ground rules for the mediation session. These guidelines should set the tone for the following stages, offer an opportunity for you to establish some credibility among the disputing parties (behavior you will and won't accept), and help to ensure the discussion remains positive and productive.

For example, you may require each person to:

- take turns speaking and not interrupt one another
- call each other by their names instead of the impersonal "he" or "she"
- refrain from blaming or attacking one another
- ask questions in order to gain understanding

Before moving to the next part of the opening statement, you should offer an opportunity for the parties involved to add any additional ground rules they feel are important. This helps create buy-in from both parties as their perspective and opinions are considered up front. Without establishing ground rules the mediation could potentially become unprofessional and trust may degrade.

Next, you explain the five stages of the mediation process and ensure each party understands what type of information can or can't be held in confidence.

Lastly, you should congratulate the parties for being willing to attempt to settle their dispute through mediation and introduce a feeling of confidence in the process they're beginning.

For example, MSgt Jones may accomplish stage one like this…

Good morning everyone. I'm here to help you work through your disagreements and develop a solution that is satisfying to all of you. I'm happy you are both willing to work with me and each other. Even though I'm the flight superintendent, I want to assure you both that I will stay neutral, not taking anyone's side. You can help me by remaining respectful of each other's opinions and ideas. Do you have any rules you would like implemented? This is my opening statement, as the mediator. Next you will give an opening statement before we move into a discussion. If needed we will take a break and I will talk to you separately. After you have reached an agreement or an agreement no longer seems possible we will close the mediation. I would like to congratulate you for being willing to settle your dispute through mediation.

The opening statement is important to your credibility as a mediator and ensures the parties are aware of the process. Let's move on to how the parties' should provide their opening statements.

Stage 2: Parties' Opening Statements

In the second stage of the mediation process, the disputing parties have an opportunity to offer their opening statements.

Here, they're given adequate time to speak about the issue at hand and share their interests without interruption. Each party should fully explain the issue, their interests, and positions as they see it so that all parties, including the mediator, understand.

This may be the first time each party hears the other party's view on the issue. Because of that opportunity, you should allow both parties to fully explain their positions, even if they become emotional. Although you may think it would be uncomfortable, venting by the parties can be the first step in putting the dispute behind them and moving toward a resolution.

It's extremely important for you to *actively* listen and *take notes* during these opening statements, paying careful attention to the issues and interests as articulated by the parties. You may need to refer back to your notes during later stages of the mediation to ensure you're considering facts and not what you believe was said. Many times the issues defined by the parties in these opening statements differ from those articulated or understood previously. You can learn a lot about the parties and the issue during this stage.

During the parties' opening statements, you may discover hidden concerns or interests, thus revealing the true source of the dispute. This type of information is invaluable later when getting the parties to focus on interests instead of positions. You can determine how severe the existing differences are between the disputing parties and what challenges may be ahead of them when attempting to reach a mutually satisfying resolution. You may also determine who might need caucuses more often and how much work/time would be needed to assist them in understanding the other party's views on the issue.

Always remember that for a successful mediation, all parties should view the process as a means of communicating to reach a settlement. It's not a forum for making accusations. You must recognize when parties aren't able to effectively convey their issues and interests due to poor attitudes and emotional loss of control. It's critical that you make all parties aware of the dangers, or repercussions, of their words and actions…especially when they're fueled by their uncontrolled emotions. Reminding them of the ground rules is a good way to address these issues and get them back on track.

Let's get back to the scenario. The shift leaders may provide the following opening statements:

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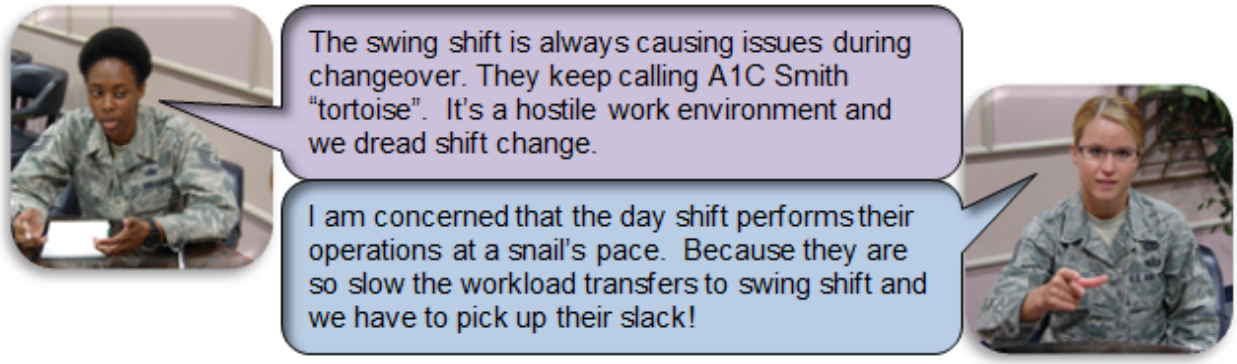


Now that the parties have given their opening statements, let's begin the joint discussion.

Stage 3: Joint Discussion

With all parties' opening statements completed, you should now have a better understanding of their interpretation of the issue, where they stand, and why. Now, the mediation process moves into a joint discussion. This is the first opportunity for you to interact with the parties, focusing less on their positions and more on their interests.

You should facilitate a conversation between the disputing parties. Effective questioning, using open-ended and follow-up questions, are extremely useful here. You should ask questions that clarify the controversial issues. As the communicative exchange develops between the parties, you may find that you only need to actively listen.

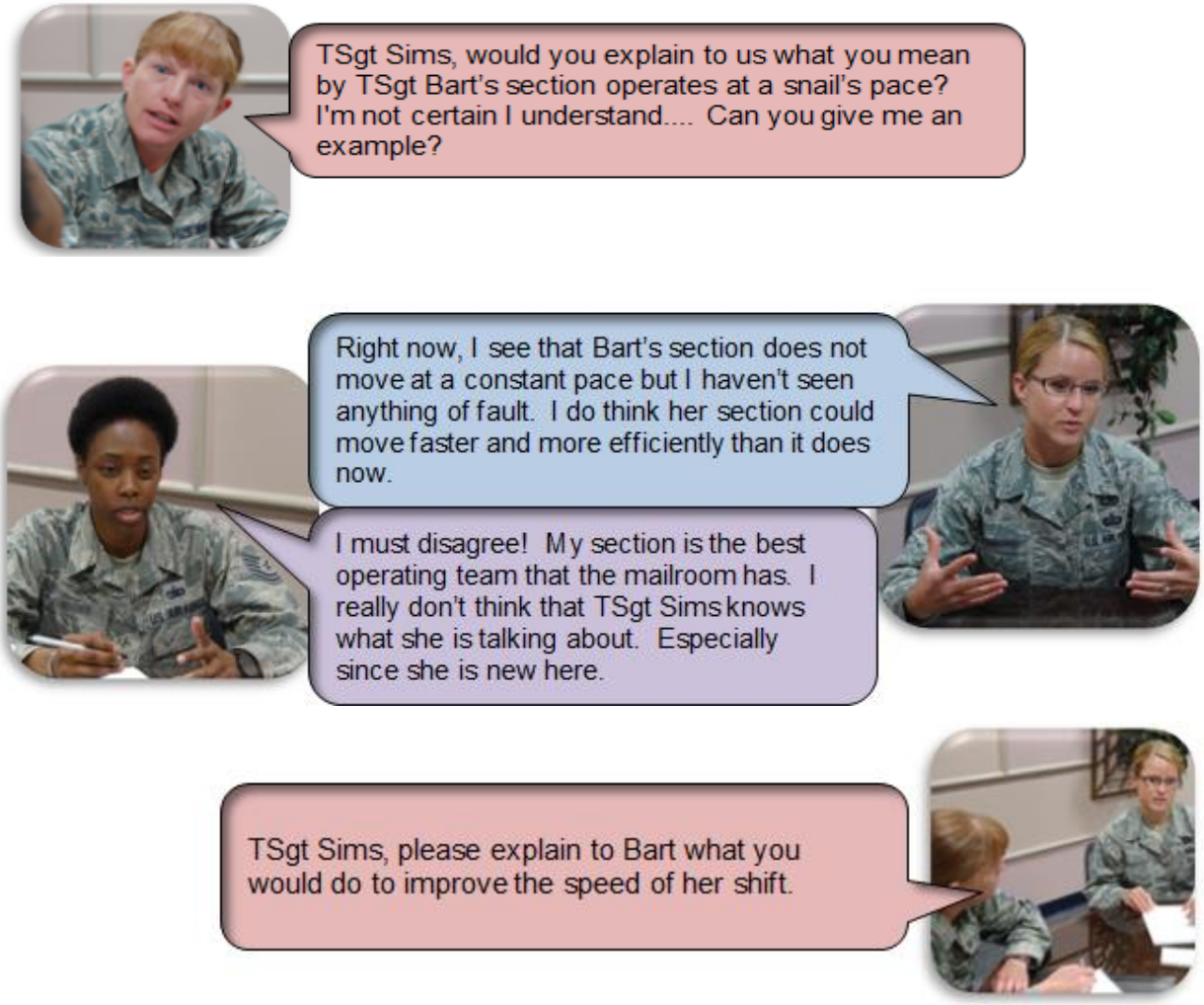
This stage allows you and the parties to begin considering possible options to resolve the situation. After brain-storming options, the parties should agree on criteria for selecting the options that satisfy the interests of both. If joint discussion breaks down or issues arise that are sensitive (or should be discussed in private), you should suspend the joint discussion and move to caucus.

Critical Thinking

*One tool you can use in the Joint Discussion stage is the steps of **Decision Analysis**. They can help both parties clearly identify the problem, brainstorm possible solutions, and evaluate each solution using criteria they develop together.*

> ***Note:*** *Any party may request a caucus at any point. It's your responsibility to honor the request so you can get them back to the joint discussion, if possible.*

Joint discussion is the first opportunity for both TSgts and MSgt Jones to interact.



MSgt Jones should encourage the parties to ask questions and discuss the issues more with each other…the focus should be on them. Remember, during a facilitative mediation the mediator encourages the parties to discuss matters freely without judging or taking sides.

If the parties are unable to communicate with each other, you should continue to serve as the buffer between the two by using questioning techniques to get them talking again. If the parties still are unable to communicate, you could use some of the characteristics of the other styles of mediation. For example, in order to focus on why they're unable to communicate, you might change to a more narrative style. Or, if the reason they can't communicate is due to someone not feeling valued or respected, you could use a more transformative style. However, the goal should be to get back on the facilitative path.

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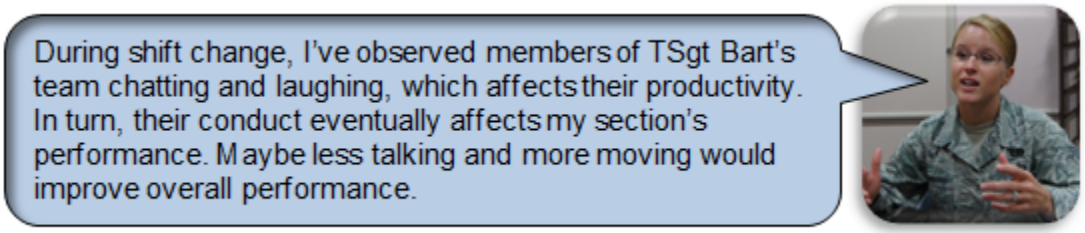
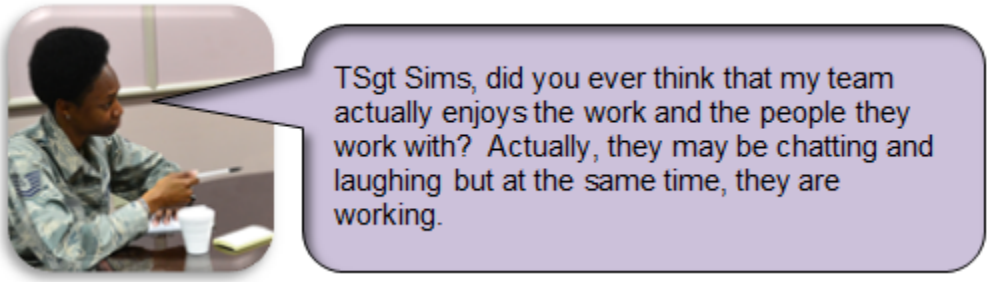




Joint discussion is vital to getting the parties to discuss their issues and work towards options for a resolution. If, during the joint discussion you can't get them on track or working towards an agreement, you might have to move to the fourth step…caucus.

Step 4: Caucus

If joint discussion breaks down, or issues arise which are sensitive, the joint discussion should be suspended and you should move to a caucus. Simply stated, a *caucus* is a "private meeting". This is an optional stage that can occur at any time during the mediation process but, when needed, usually occurs when joint discussions collapse. These are private, one-on-one discussions between you and each party.

You may call a caucus when:

- the parties need to cool off and refocus
- you need a break
- a meeting with a subject matter expert is necessary
- you need to discuss sensitive or potentially private information with the proper party
- you and a particular party need to explore options for settlement in a secure setting

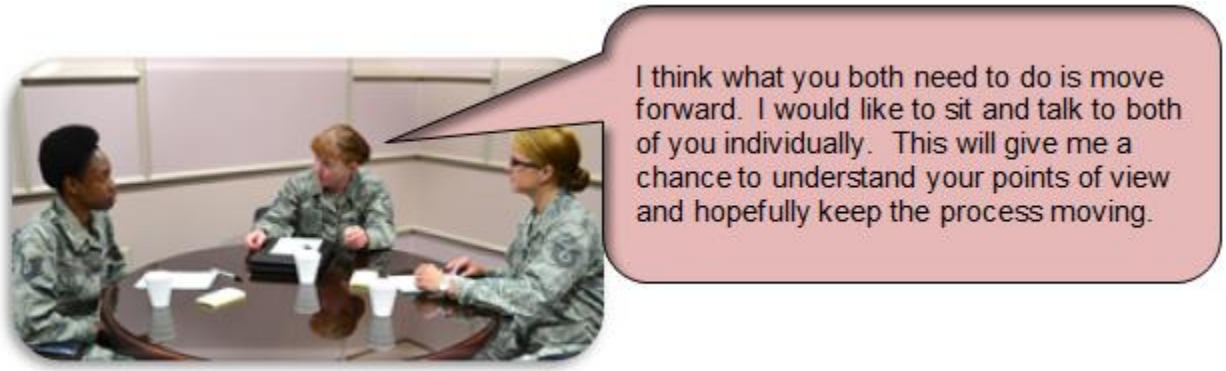
Maintaining privacy after the caucus is most important for promoting and providing a free and open environment. To avoid confusion, you should verify, at the end of each caucus, what information the individual wishes to withhold and what information you can share with the other party. Parties must understand they have the power to ask for an individual meeting with you, and you can request one at any time, as well.

Comprehensive Fitness

As a mediator, this process can be mentally taxing. As you go through it, keep an eye on the ***Social Fitness domain****. The tenet of* ***social support*** *is necessary for optimal performance. If you need to, take a break and talk with a trusted mentor or family member in order to get emotional or informational comfort. This should help you deal with any stress associated with the mediation process.*

Additionally, a caucus can provide an opportunity to cultivate a positive relationship with each party. Positive relationships build trust which can make the parties more open to sharing information. During a caucus, you can strengthen these relationships by demonstrating a deeper level of empathy than you could in a joint discussion. You can also let the individual know that you understand their feelings and interests.

Let's check back in with MSgt Jones…



Here MSgt Jones realizes the need for a caucus.

Because there are many reasons for a mediator to pause for a caucus during joint discussion there is no one example for this private meeting. In the scenario with MSgt Jones, it seems she realized the two shift leaders need to explore options for a settlement outside the joint discussion. They may just need to cool off and refocus before they're able to effectively discuss the issues that are causing them not to communicate. As a mediator you should concentrate on the Problem B's that are affecting the parties from reaching a solution. Also, focus on demonstrating empathy to strengthen trust and positive relationships, which will hopefully increase communication leading to those Problem B's being discussed.

After the caucuses are over you bring both parties back to reinitiate the joint discussion. The information you learned during the caucuses can help formulate effective questions to guide the parties to an agreement. Once the parties have come to terms, or you realize they can't come to terms, you then move from joint discussion into closure.

A-I Theory

During the caucus, attempt to focus on and resolve the Problem B's that might be causing joint discussion to breakdown. If you can address and resolve the Problem B's, you can get the parties back on track to finding solutions for the Problem A's (task related issues).

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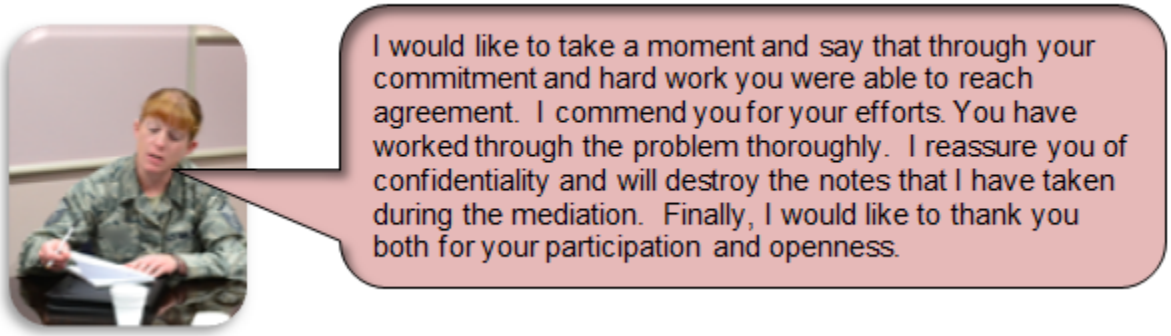
Step 5: Closure

This is the final stage of the mediation process. At this point, there are two possible outcomes:

- If both parties weren't able to agree and all possibilities (e.g. caucuses) have been exhausted, or one or both parties have removed themselves from the mediation…the mediation should end. At this point, the closure stage may require you to reconvene a second session or refer the parties to someone else that might be able to help.
- If both parties were able to mutually agree to a satisfactory outcome, then the mediation can be considered "successful". The closure provides the setting and structure for the parties to work out the details concerning their agreements and confirm they're satisfied with the solution.

During the closure, you should arrange a follow-up session to discuss the selected solution's effectiveness in meeting the interests of both parties. Regardless of the outcome, congratulate the parties for considering and participating in mediation and encourage them to let you know about any progress made once the session is over.

Let's see how MSgt Jones closes the mediation…



As a SNCO it's important that you use the information you've learned to guide you through the mediation process. The use of each stage should allow the disputing parties to interact and communicate their interests. However, not all sessions flow perfectly…sometimes you might have to get the parties past an impasse.

Dealing with Impasse

Impasse is the failure to make progress toward resolution, and can be a significant challenge in any mediation. There are a number of tools you can use to get past impasse. In this section you will learn about reality checking, BATNA and WATNA, and fostering understanding of other's view. Let's begin with reality checking.

Reality Checking

Reality checking a process that works to get the parties to understand, typically through a series of questions, the weaknesses of their issue or demand. When parties have no claim for what they seek or unrealistic demands of the other party, reality checking is necessary. Although reality checking can be used at any point in the mediation, it can especially be helpful in a caucus setting to address impasse.

Reality checking is accomplished by questioning parties about their claims, defenses, demands, or positions. You should start by asking questions based on the specific elements of the dispute. The party's answers should allow them to reconsider the strength of his or her position and move beyond impasse.

Thorough questioning should help the parties realize the strength and weakness of their demands positions, and/or interests. However, you should do nothing in this process that compromises impartiality or neutrality. You should never render an evaluation of the parties' claims and positions. Taking sides during mediation might cause the other party to shut down, stop openly sharing information, and quit developing options for an agreement.

There are many questions you could ask to help a party understand the weakness of their issue or demand:

- What would it take for you to accept the proposal if it was presented to you?
- How would you suggest funding your solution?
- What feedback or advice do you believe the commander would provide you?

Although the questions you ask might be different, you should engage in active listening throughout the mediation to help you tailor the questions to fit the specific issue or demand.

Now that you understand how to get a party to reflect on the weakness of their issue or demand through reality checking, let's move to the next tools for dealing with impasse…BATNA and WATNA.

BATNA and WATNA

A great technique to use with parties who wish to leave the table or are unwilling to work towards settlement is to discuss their *Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement* (BATNA) and their *Worst Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement* (WATNA). Simply put, the parties need to know what alternatives they may take on their own if they fail to reach resolution.

Comprehensive Fitness

You can deal with impasse more effectively if you have a good level of ***Spiritual Fitness****. The tenet of* ***Perseverance*** *should help you stick with the mediation process even when both parties seem to be unyielding. Don't get discouraged despite the obstacles an impasse may present…stick with it!*

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BATNA: *The best course of action the party can realistically take if resolution isn't reached in mediation.*

WATNA: *The worse possible course of action that the party may face if resolution isn't reached in mediation.*

Recognizing a party's BATNA is important because it's the alternative the party can invoke if a solution isn't reached…the "I'll take my ball and go home" alternative.

Similarly, getting parties to contemplate the probability and gravity of their worst-case scenario (WATNA)…the "I'll lose my ball altogether" solution…can often have the effect of compelling parties' return to the table or their reconsideration of settlement options.

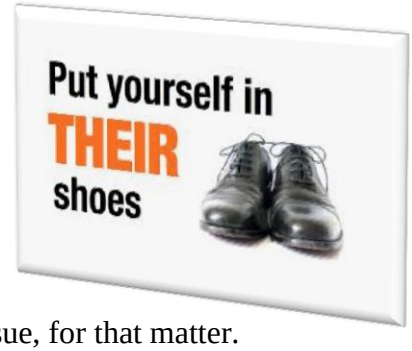
The parties should already know their BATNA and WATNA before mediation begins, but it's important for you as the mediator to know these options as well. Knowing the parties BATNA and WATNA can help you fully understand the issue and interests involved in the dispute so you can assist them in determining possible options for a mutually satisfying agreement.

BATNA and WATNA are key tools that can help you get parties past impasse and work toward an agreement. Let's move on and discuss how fostering an understanding of other's view can assist with impasse as well.

Fostering An Understanding of Other's View

One of the strongest barriers to resolution of a problem is the inability or unwillingness of the parties to "see" the problem from their opponent's point of view. A skillful mediator uses empathy, feelings, and motives to help the parties overcome this barrier.

Empathy…understanding another's situation…allows you to put yourself in the other person's position, to "walk a mile in their shoes." Although you can help each party understand the other's point of view, this doesn't mean you have to share, agree, or even sympathize with them. It merely provides new perspectives that may open options previously hidden.



Rephrasing and Reframing are two important active listening techniques that promote constructive dialogue between parties attempting to negotiate a resolution to a dispute, or any other issue, for that matter. They are indispensable tools that can be especially useful when mediating disputes involving multiple parties or groups. These techniques can help you foster the understanding of the parties' point of view during the mediation process.

Rephrasing (paraphrasing…not restating) lets a person know that he or she has been heard and, more importantly, correctly understood by the listener. It's used to prevent misunderstandings.

For example, if someone said "I'm fed up with your whining. If you would pitch in and help, we could get things done." To rephrase this, it could look like, "You want me to stop complaining and offer some help." This is what the speaker said, but not in the same exact words.

Rephrasing does at least the following two things:

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- If you're the ***speaker***, rephrasing by others can reassure you they were actually listening to what you have to say. Additionally, you can provide clarification if something wasn't rephrased accurately.
- If you're the ***listener***, rephrasing what the speaker said helps to validate what you've heard by checking your understanding. It should be either reinforced or modified based on the speaker's agreement/disagreement or clarification.

Here are some examples of rephrasing:

Rephrasing Examples:		
Validate Emotions	***Convey that you understand***	***Reveal a concern, worry or desire***
It sounds like you felt you were attacked.	You were upset when…	If I understand you correctly, you want…
This event seems to have made you angry.	You believe that…	You seem to be concerned that…
It seems you feel ignored and unappreciated.	You seem to be saying…	What seems most important to you is…

Reframing is a bit more complex. It's the arrangement of a collection of ideas, feelings, facts, and/or concerns into a single common theme, often moving the parties in a more constructive direction. Reframing ties separate and scattered statements together and often gives the parties a common, perhaps previously unrecognized, focus or theme.

It can be a little confusing to tell the difference between rephrasing and reframing. Basically, it boils down to this:

- Rephrasing is just a 'summary of what was said'
- Reframing considers what was said, identifies the emotion, and attempts to change the perspective. Reframing changes how the person views the situation. So, if one person says something is a problem, you could 'reframe' it into an opportunity for growth. It changes 'negative' into 'positive'

When rephrasing or reframing, remember to **validate**! Never assume what you rephrase or reframe is accurate until it's confirmed by the speaker. Also, don't assume that you must be solely responsible for conducting activities. Sometimes, other group members can perform the tasks of rephrasing or reframing because of their familiarity with the situation and the speakers.

However, during this process, understand that parties may commit the error of interpreting the other's motives through their own filters, perceptions, and fears. As a result of this interpretation, try to diffuse any negative signals expressed by either side as soon as possible.

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One of the pitfalls you can make as a mediator is possibly committing the same type of error. You should never assume your own fears or concerns are the same as those of the parties, or that the parties' motives and perceptions are the same as yours. Making assumptions can impact neutrality and trust with everyone involved in the mediaton. To ensure you aren't making this error, get the parties to discuss their perceptions either in caucus or during the joint discussion session. This can prevent you from drawing incorrect assumptions about the parties' motives or perceptions.

Dealing with an impasse may seem like a huge undertaking. However, if you can help both parties get past their roadblock, you can get them back on the road to a successful mediation.

In this section you covered the mediation process. You started with preparing for mediation. Don't forget that in order to successfully help both parties deal with their dispute, you must first understand what brought them to you in the first place. Next, you covered the stages of mediation. Even though this lesson isn't designed to make you an official mediator, if you follow this structured process, you can get both parties communicating and focused on a collaborative solution. Finally, you went over how to deal with an impasse if one should occur. By understanding both parties BATNA and WATNA, you can help them zero in on their interests which might hopefully change their position.

The mediation process can be extremely helpful when attempting to get a derailed negotiation back on track. As a matter of fact, mediation, if done appropriately, can have an impact on your subordinates and mission.

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Summary

This lesson began with a section that introduced mediation by starting with a negotiations refresher, key mediation terms, and an explanation of the styles of mediation. Although you have four to choose from, the Air Force recommends the facilitative style for dealing with workplace disputes. In some cases, you can switch between the different styles depending on the issues you encounter during the mediation. Next, you learned about the mediation process, which must start with preparation. By effectively gathering information and interviewing individuals associated with the dispute, you can make a determination if mediation is an appropriate tool to use. Failure to prepare could put you at a disadvantage during the mediation session because you may learn something at an inopportune time that you should've learned before the process began. Once you determine that mediation is a good tool to use, you can get everyone together and start the five stages of mediation. It's vital to the outcome of the process that you maintain impartiality and encourage trust/honesty so those involved feel more comfortable opening up and discussing their interests.

Dealing with disputes is a responsibility you have as a SNCO…they happen quite often, so you can't turn a blind eye to them. Regardless of the type of dispute (interpersonal, mission related, etc.), you should try to reconcile them as quickly as possible…otherwise, they can have a negative impact on your mission and your people's morale.

Author Steve Goodier once said, "We don't get harmony when everybody sings the same note. Only notes that are different can harmonize. The same is true with people." Mediation is a tool you can use in order to reduce the chaos brought about by conflict/disputes and create an environment where those around you agree to put their positions aside and harmonize.

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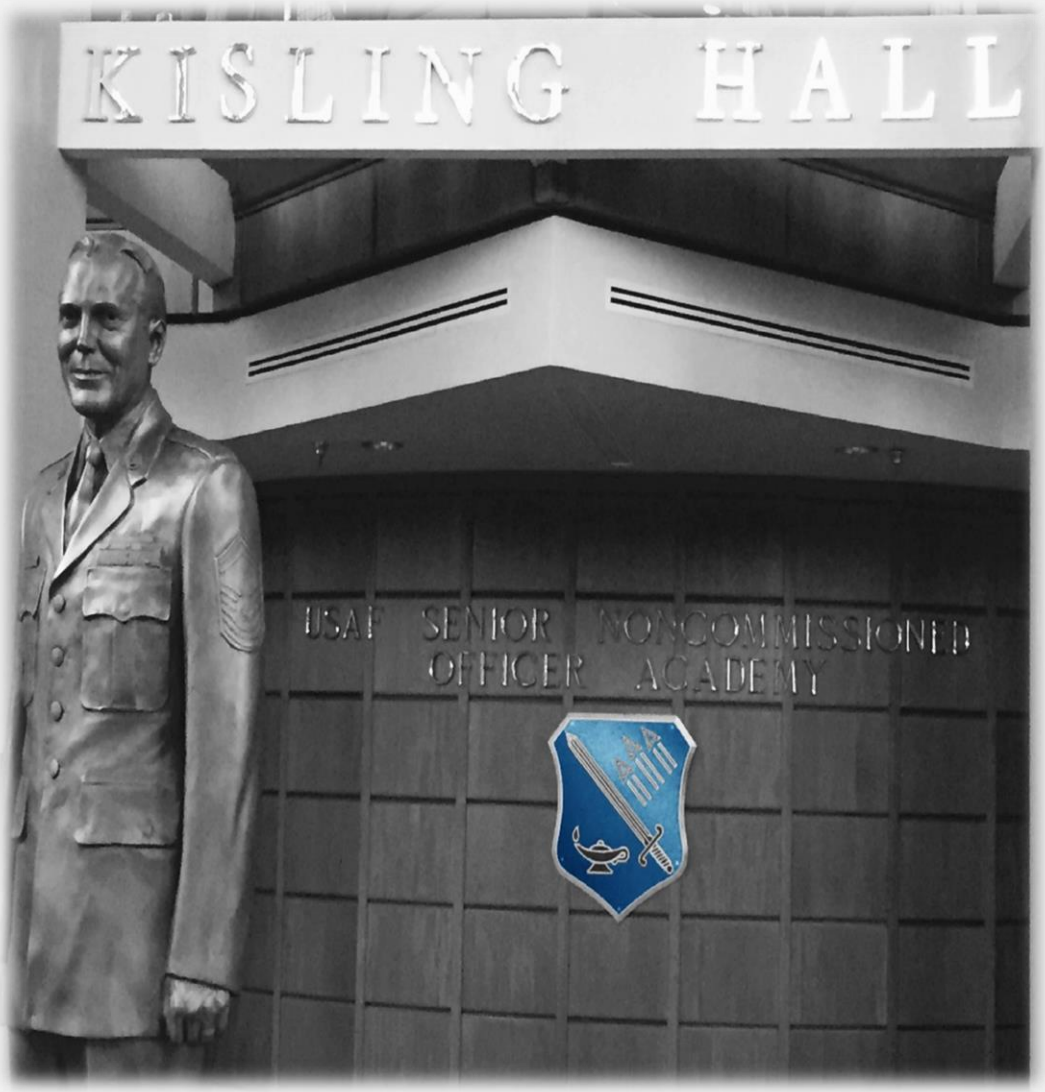
Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide



Emergent Leadership Issues

Inside this Study Guide:

Importance of Emergent Leadership Issues (ELI)

- Focus and Intent
- ACE

Equal Opportunity Program

- Equal Opportunity Systems

Substance Misuse

- Effects of Substance Misuse
- Education and Intervention

Suicide Awareness and Prevention

- Why Suicide
- Programs and Policies
- Developing a Relationship of Trust

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

- Individual Involved in a Sexual Assault
- Leadership Roles
- Whistleblower Protections

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Importance of Emergent Leadership Issues (ELI)

Many issues occur in our Air Force that can be difficult to address. This lesson will discuss the f emergent leadership issues of ***Equal Opportunity, Substance Abuse, Suicide,*** and ***Sexual Assault***. These four ELIs are occurring throughout the Air Force and are not going to be reduced without support from leaders like you! Before you begin to cover the different ELI sections, you need to have an understanding of the overall focus and intent of this lesson. It is imperative that you as a SNCO know how to use ACE when an Airman is dealing with stressors that may lead to a decision that could negatively affect not only the organization but their career as well. Let's begin by discussing the focus and intent of the ELI lesson.

Focus and Intent

In this lesson, you will focus on education, prevention, and leading your organization through ***emergent leadership issues***. When they occur these issues can have a detrimental impact on your organization, mission, and the Air Force. Now that you are a SNCO, or preparing to become one, you will be more involved with the ELI that occurs within your scope.

Emergent Leadership Issues *are the evolving situations that occur and can be detrimental to an organization, mission, and the Air Force image if not handled properly.*

The intent of this lesson is to prepare you for these difficult discussions and give you tools that will assist you when leading your organization through these occurrences.

In the Comprehensive Fitness lesson, you learned about the importance of being resilient and a wingman to those you influence. Being a wingman and ensuring you and the people you influence are resilient will assist you in properly handling ELI that occur. When individuals have the sense of belonging that is influenced by the Comprehensive Airmen Fitness (CAF) program they are less likely to consider suicide, misuse substances, or participate in adverse behavior. As you progress through this lesson you will see how effectively handling many ELI directly relate to being a wingman.

Since you now know the focus and intent of this lesson, to help you effectively educate, prevent, intervene, and lead your organization through ELI, let's move on and cover a tool that will help you begin a discussion with a wingman that may be at risk; ACE.

ACE

Wingmen not only help deal with stressors they also should know when something is wrong or seems 'off' with their wingman. As a SNCO, you should promote the idea that everyone needs help occasionally and foster the idea that the strong seek help when needed. The ACE model can help you with ways to intervene when you witness destructive behaviors in others and they're not seeking help for themselves. You can use ACE for any emergent leadership issue you encounter.

- **Ask** your Wingman:
  - about the warning signs of distress you have seen.

- directly about the issue. "Are you having thoughts of killing yourself? Do you have a substance misuse problem? Are you having trouble with stress?"
- the status of their four domains of fitness (Physical, Emotional, Social, and Spiritual).

➢ **Care** for your Wingman

- Calmly control the situation.
- Show sincere concern and actively listen to show understanding.
- Remove any items that could be used for self-injury.

➢ **Escort** your Wingman

- Never leave your Wingman alone or allow him or her to engage in self-destructive behavior.
- Escort to someone who can help, chain of command, mental health, chaplain, or medical provider, and stay until positive handoff is complete.

True wingmen remain alert, get involved, and take action because they believe getting help is a sign of strength-*NOT* weakness! It is important to use ACE in a place and time when your wingman feels comfortable. It would not be as effective to ask your wingman directly about an issue while in public or in the company of others. If you truly believe your wingman is distressed do not take "No" for an answer. Continue the conversation while actively listening and communicate your concerns for their wellbeing. The ACE model will help you be a good wingman by intervening after witnessing destructive behaviors.

There is a strong relationship between the ACE and effectively confronting ELI. Through communicating directly with a distressed wingman you can cause issues to surface that need to be addressed, which when handled appropriately will lead to becoming more effective. If you do not follow the ACE concept and do not directly communicate about issues with your wingman it could be detrimental to the organization. There is no organization in the Air Force that would be able to remain at its current level of effectiveness after one of their Airmen committed suicide. Not dealing with stress and destructive behaviors effectively will lead to ELI causing the mission to degrade. Let's move onto the first ELI and discuss the equal opportunity program.

Equal Opportunity Program

It is the policy of the United States Government, the Department of Defense, and the Air Force, not to condone or tolerate unlawful discrimination, to include sexual harassment, of any kind. This zero tolerance policy ensures that once unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment is alleged, immediate and appropriate actions will be taken to investigate and resolve the allegations ensuring any proven unlawful behavior is stopped. The Equal Opportunity (EO) program assists organizations in conducting and continuing a campaign to eradicate every form of unlawful discrimination and harassment from the workplace. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any Airman, military, or civilian who is in violation of the EO program.

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Equal Opportunity Systems

There are many EO systems that form the EO program. These systems help guide our Air Force to ensure every person is given a fair chance and is not subject to a hostile work environment. Begin your review of the EO systems with unlawful discrimination.

Unlawful Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination entails failing or refusing to hire or promote, discharging, or otherwise discriminating against any individual with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because of a person's race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or prior EO activity. In the military EO context, discrimination is any unlawful action that denies equal opportunity to persons or groups based on their race, color, sex, national origin, or religion.

Unlawful Harassment

Unlawful harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature particularly when submission to such conduct is made directly or indirectly as a term or condition of employment, and/or when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the person. Unlawful harassment also includes creating an intimidating hostile working environment.

Sexual harassment is defined in AFI 36-2706 as "Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment."

Prevention is the best tool to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Commanders and supervisors at every level should take steps to prevent sexual harassment from occurring. Clearly communicate to employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Provide sexual harassment training to employees. Establish or insure an effective complaint or grievance process is available. Take immediate action to investigate and resolve all employee harassment complaints; and take appropriate action when a complaint is confirmed or substantiated.

Complaint process

The EO complaint process attempts to resolve grievances at the lowest level possible through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). When available, installation EO offices will provide ADR through facilitation or mediation through the EO complaint process. When ADR does not resolve the issue or is not appropriate, an informal or formal complaint is initiated through the EO office.

The ADR spectrum provides an array of options for disputes that occur as low as the unit level, to disputes that occur as high as Air force level.

There are *two* types of complaints available for military members to file EO complaints:

- Military ***Informal*** Complaints: The purpose of the informal complaint process is to attempt to resolve the issue at the lowest possible level. The military EO informal complaint program addresses allegations of unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or sexual harassment.
  - Only military personnel, their family members, and retirees may file military informal EO complaints. Third parties, to include commanders, supervisors or co-workers, may not file an informal complaint on behalf of another individual.
  - There is no time limit for filing informal complaints and no requirement for commander approval before accepting informal complaints older than 60 days.
- Military ***Formal*** Complaints: The purpose of the formal complaint process is for military members, retirees, and their family members to formally present allegations of unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment to the EO office to attempt resolution. The military EO formal complaint program addresses allegations of unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, or sexual harassment.
  - Only military personnel, their family members and retirees may file military formal EO complaints. Additionally, to file a complaint an individual must be the subject of the alleged unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment. Third parties, to include commanders, supervisors or co-workers, may not file a formal complaint on behalf of another individual.
  - The EO office will not accept a complaint more than 60 calendar days after the alleged offense occurred unless the installation or center commander approves.

There are *two* types of complaint processing available for civilians to file EO complaints:

- Civilian ***Informal*** Complaints: The objective of civilian EO counseling is to seek opportunities to resolve issues at the lowest organizational level at the earliest possible time. An aggrieved person who believes that they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age (40 and older), disability, genetic information or who believes that they have been subjected to sexual harassment or retaliated against for opposing discrimination or for participating in the complaint process.
  - AF employees, former employees and applicants for employment who meet the criteria outlined in 29 CFR Part 1614 may file civilian EO complaints.
  - The complainant must consult an EO Counselor within 45 calendar days of when they becomes aware of the discriminatory action or the effective date of the personnel action
- Civilian ***Formal*** Complaints: Formal complaints are processed in accordance with 29 C.F.R. Section 1614. EO directors process formal complaints.
  - A formal complaint must be filed at the installation where the alleged discrimination occurred, and the complainant or the attorney designated to represent the complainant must sign and date it. It must describe the action(s) or practice(s) that form the basis of

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the complaint that was discussed with the EO specialist/counselor during the Informal phase of the process.

- A complainant may amend a complaint at any time before the mailing of the notice required by 29 C.F.R. Section 1614.108(f) at the conclusion of the investigation, to include claim(s) that are like or related to those raised in the complaint.

To file an EO complaint contact your installation EO office or call the Air Force Discrimination Hotline at 1-888-231-4058, or the National Guard Bureau's EO Hotline at 703-607-5462 or 1-800-371-0617.

Legal Implications

The legal implications from a substantiated EO complaint can be very diverse and range from administrative actions to a prison sentence. The EO office will not recommend any legal implications for substantiated EO complaints. The EO office works directly with the installation legal office and they suggest legal implications that will vary with every complaint.

Reprisal - Prevention and Detection

The objective of reprisal prevention and detection is to assure anyone having grievances may voice them without fear of reprisal.

The unit and geographically separated unit commanders are charged by AFI 36-2706 to ensure the alleged offender is cautioned against taking reprisal or other retaliatory actions against the complainant or witnesses if they suspect or discover their identity.

Reprisal *is taking or threatening to take an unfavorable personnel action, withholding or threating to withhold a favorable personnel action, or any other act of retaliation against a military member for making or preparing to make a protected communication.*

Prevention is part of your responsibilities as an SNCO. Anytime there are opportunities for reprisal within your organization ensure the personnel involved understand reprisal and the consequences involved.

Detection in military EO cases settled using ADR, the EO office will follow up at least once within 30 calendar days after the resolution of the case to ensure reprisal does not occur and the parties adhere to the agreement. In cases that are not settled through ADR, it's everyone responsibility to report any reprisals that are detected.

When a reprisal is detected and reported to the EO office they will immediately refer any military member who claims to have been subjected to reprisal for having made a protected communication, including an informal or formal EO complaint, to the installation IG and document on an AF Form 1271.

Now that you have reviewed the different EO systems that help prevent and detect EO issues, let's switch gears and discuss the EO system that assesses human relations within an organization and provides recommendations for improvement.

Unit Climate Assessment

The purpose of the unit climate assessment (UCA) is to assist unit commanders at all levels in assessing their unit's human relations climate (HRC) and to make recommendations for improvements. When conducting the UCA the EO office uses one or more of the following tools: survey distribution and analysis, individual interviews, observations, focus groups, unit trend data, and reports. The UCA team must obtain the unit commander's approval of the methods used to assess unit effectiveness prior to conducting the UCA.

The EO office must conduct UCAs on units with more than 50 personnel assigned every two years or upon a unit commander's request. Unit commanders can delay the start of their UCA due to mission requirements, but may not waive the requirement to conduct a UCA every two years. If a UCA is delayed, the EO specialist will place a memorandum for record in unit continuity folder explaining the delay.

Participation in the UCA program for military members and civilian employees is strictly voluntary. Unit commanders should encourage unit members to participate in surveys and/or interviews.

Three UCA types provide the commander with flexibility:

- **Type I UCA:** This type will be the primary assessment method for assessing an organization's human relations climate. It is the most comprehensive method. It includes unit trend analysis (data gathering), survey access code distribution, survey analysis, individual interviews or focus groups derived from the survey analysis, and a final written report.
- **Type II UCA:** This type includes unit trend analysis (data gathering), survey access code distribution, survey analysis, and requires a final written report.
- **Type III UCA:** This type includes interviews only and requires a final written report containing the results and analysis. This type is usually used for units with fewer than 50 personnel.

The survey is a very important tool to the UCA process. The survey provides the commander insight into unit perceptions and serves as the starting point for developing personal interviews. When conducting UCA Type I or II, the UCA team will use the Air Force-approved UCA Survey to survey unit members. Team members and unit commanders may not delete or modify questions contained in the Air Force-approved UCA Survey. Unit commanders may, at their discretion, include up to 10 additional questions to the survey.

The survey assesses and reports both positive and negative perceptions of a unit's human relations climate that may potentially impact the EO climate, unit cohesion or mission effectiveness. Conducting interviews is an integral part of UCA Types I and III. The team will consider the best interview method when gathering data, such as personal interviews, focus groups, or group interviews. The unit commander must approve the interview method.

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The number of personnel to be interviewed is based on the size of the unit and the capability of the team. For more information on suggested interview sample sizes review AFI 36-2706, Table 12.2. The team will select a representative mix of personnel in the unit based on sex, race, national origin, grade, AFSC and operational function. The team will also interview unit members from all work shifts.

Allowing interviewees to elaborate on certain subjects may uncover new subjects of interest for the unit commander. In addition, the unit commander may opt for option III (interviews only) when they have specific needs, issues, and concerns requiring clarification.

The survey, survey analysis, and specific unit commander concerns are the key sources for developing interview questions (options I and III). When required, trend data review (e.g., complaints, personnel actions, legal actions, or unit council concerns) will also be a source for follow-up questions. In all cases, the unit commander will approve interview questions.

The final report culminates the UCA. It provides a record of the visit and summarizes relevant information gathered from trend data review, post survey briefing and interviews. The final report will not contain names, new or unexpected information, or verbatim comments extracted from the survey.

When you witness any EO issue, it is imperative that you respond to the situation appropriately and ensure the behavior does not continue. Eradicating unlawful discrimination and harassment from the Air Force is the goal of the EO program and should be the mission of every SNCO.

As a SNCO, considering EO in your organization is important. Treating everyone as equals and not allowing a hostile work environment is important for a heathy organization. Now that you know the EO program, begin reviewing substance misuse.

Substance Misuse

Misusing any substance is not acceptable behavior. The Air Force does not tolerate the illegal or improper use of drugs by Air Force personnel. Substance misuse is a serious breach of discipline, is incompatible with service in the Air Force, automatically places the misusers continued service in jeopardy, and can lead to criminal prosecution. As a SNCO it is important for you to understand how substance misuse effects the Air Force as well as your organization. Educating members and intervening when necessary is imperative to being a good wingman.

Take a moment to review the primary objectives of the Air Force Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) Program.

- Promote readiness and health and wellness through the prevention and treatment of substance misuse and abuse.
- Minimize the negative consequences of substance misuse and abuse to the individual, family, and organization.
- Provide comprehensive education and treatment to individuals who experience problems attributed to substance misuse or abuse.

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- Restore function and return identified substance abusers to unrestricted duty status or to assist them in their transition to civilian life, as appropriate.

With the ADAPT primary objectives in mind, let's move onto the effects of substance misuse and abuse.

Effects of Substance Misuse

The effects of substance misuse can be detrimental to the Air Force mission and readiness, morale, and health and wellness of everyone the substance misuser comes in contact with while using. Let's begin our discussion on how substance misuse can effect the Air Force by reviewing the impact on mission and readiness.

Mission and Readiness

Substance misuse adversely effects or impairs the user's mood, coordination, judgment, safety, and increases impulsive behavior. Members under the influence do not perform effectively in follower or leader roles, areas of substantial responsibility, and technical knowledge or ability. Additionally, members are at a higher risk of driving under the influence (DUI), which is a leading cause of death among 18-24 year olds. DUI is a serious breach of discipline and there will be repercussions both military and civilian after an Airman is charged with a DUI. Also, there is a higher risk of suicide and increased risk of accidents, falls, burns, and drowning. The mission and readiness will suffer in many ways from substance misuse. The assigned tasks of the misuser may not be completed and the organizations programs, key duties, and mission essential requirements may suffer

Drug *is defined as any controlled substance included in Schedules I, II, III, IV, and V in U.S.C. 812, including anabolic or androgenic steroids, or any intoxicating substance other than alcohol, that is inhaled, injected, consumed, or introduced into the body in any manner to alter moods or function.*

Drug Abuse *is the illegal, wrongful, or improper use, possession, sale, transfer, or introduction onto a military installation of any drug defined in AFI 44-121, ADAPT.*

Substance *is alcohol and other mind or mood altering drugs, including illicit drugs, prescribed medications, and over-the-counter medications.*

Substance Misuse *is the use of any illicit drug or the misuse of any prescribed medication or the abuse of alcohol.*

Substance Abuse *is a diagnosis provided by a Mental Health provider; see DSM-IV-TR for criteria.*

Morale

Members who abuse substances are in a higher risk of relationship problems, both personal and professional. This causes the users and the organizations morale to degrade. As a SNCO you may be supervising a section where a substance misuser is currently working. If the substance misuse issue is not discovered and the member continues to be a part of the work center you may find tasks are being pushed off on others and their workload and stress levels are increased while their morale decreases. After a substance user comes forward with their problem or is caught misusing, the organizations morale will plummet due to the absence of the misuser during treatment and the realization that substance misuse was present in the organization.

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Health and Wellness

Substance misuse causes increased risk of high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease, birth defects, addiction, ulcers, diseases of the liver, pancreatitis, malnutrition, and overall high mortality. In addition, substance misuse tends to lead to questionable sexual behavior, which increases the risk of contracting a variety of sexually transmitted diseases.

Substance misusers also are a health and wellness risk to everyone that crosses their path. Due to their lack of awareness and impaired judgment substance misusers can cause accidents that would have easily been avoided.

With an understanding of how substance misuse effects the Air Force you can anticipate that it's important to eliminate substance misuse for our profession. Educating our members and intervening when necessary is the path toward stopping substance misuse.

Education and Intervention

Substance misuse and abuse prevention is a collaborative effort shared among various agencies to include the mental health (ADAPT), drug demand reduction, leadership, supervisors, and co-workers. Education is focused on preventing substance misuse and intervention is focused on treating a member after substance misuse has occurred.

Education: The focus changes depending on the member's rank and position, examples are:

- Military members at their first permanent duty assignment receive training on prevention, peer acceptance, role models, responsible behavior, healthy alternatives, and legal/administrative consequences of substance abuse and misuse.
- Military members in the grade of E1 through E4 on a second or subsequent permanent change of station receive training that emphasizes identification, assessment, and referral of personnel displaying signs of problematic substance use and misuse, and the services that are available for treatment.

When it comes to educating Airmen on substance misuse your roles and responsibilities, as a SNCO, are clear:

- Prevent substance misuse by educating (and mentoring) our Airmen on the negative consequences of and dangers of excessive alcohol use, on the zero tolerance policy for drug abuse and role modeling responsible use of alcohol.

When education fails to prevent substance misuse, an intervention may be necessary.

Intervention: This is a structured event that should include the misuser's family, friends, and supervision.

Intervention *is the process of helping the member recognize at the earliest possible moment that he or she needs treatment for self-destructive drinking or drug abuse. This professionally structured event includes significant others in the member's life.*

During the event each member, if willing, should discuss how the actions of the misuser have affected them and their desire for them to seek help. The substance misuser has the option for self-identification, which is admitting they have a substance misuse problem to their leadership, unit commander, first sergeant, military medical professional, and/or mental health provider. If the member self-identifies during the intervention you should contact your installations mental health clinic for further instructions.

If a member does not self-identify there are also command and medical referrals:

- **Command Referral**: In accordance with AFI 44-121 and applicable DoDIs, a unit commander will refer all service members for assessment when substance use or misuse is suspected to be a contributing factor in any misconduct, e.g., DUI/driving while intoxicated (DWI), public intoxication, drunk and disorderly, spouse/child abuse and maltreatment, underage drinking, positive drug test, or when notified by medical personnel.
- **Medical Referral**: Medical personnel must notify the member's unit commander and the ADAPT Primary Manager when a member of the armed forces:
    - is observed, identified, or suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
    - receives treatment for an injury or illness that may be the result of substance use.
    - is suspected of abusing substances.
    - is admitted as a patient for alcohol or drug detoxification.

Your roles and responsibilities, as a SNCO, when it comes to intervention and treatment are:

- Know your subordinates' well and communicate problems they may be having. Assist them by making referrals when appropriate. After a referral is made take an active role in assisting them with recovery.
- Report and refer all substance misuse or suspected substance misuse incidents, e.g., showing to work smelling of alcohol, DUI, public intoxication, drunk and disorderly, spouse/child abuse and maltreatment, under-age drinking, positive drug test, or when notified by medical personnel.
- Direct drug testing within 24 hours of suspected alcohol related incidents of misconduct, episodes of aberrant or bizarre behavior, or where there is reasonable suspicion of drug use and the member refuses to provide consent for testing. Encourage Commanders to ensure Blood Alcohol Tests (BAT) is taken as soon after the incident as possible to determine the level and intensity of alcohol involvement.
- Supervisors must contact the ADAPT staff before an assessment to provide pertinent information on the member's duty performance, on- and off-duty behavior, or other incidents. Document all incidents of deteriorating work performance, unexcused

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absences, or tardiness, unacceptable conduct, and any steps already taken to help the employee resolve these problems. (Contact the Civilian Personnel Office for guidance when dealing with civilian employees).

- Report all slips and relapses so the treatment team can assist the member to get back on track before an incident occurs.

Education and intervention are important aspects of the ADAPT program. Through education, the Air Force attempts to mitigate the lure of misusing substances. When education alone does not deter a member from substance misuse the intervention and the referral processes attempts to stop the destructive behavior and assist the member in receiving the help they need.

Benefits of the prevention and treatment program

Effective prevention and treatment programs lower healthcare costs result in fewer missed workdays, higher production, better quality of work, and smarter better decision-making. In addition, it returns our most valuable resource, people, to a productive status (as opposed to loss through termination, sickness, death, etc.). Finally, prevention and treatment programs help reduce suicides, accidents, and accidental deaths while helping reduce relationship problems.

There are four levels of activities within the ADAPT program that are focused on prevention and treatment:

- **Universal (Primary) Prevention and Education**: This includes population-based outreach, education, prevention programs, screening, and consultation. Community-based prevention and education efforts will be delivered by ADAPT staff through coordinated efforts with other community agencies. Clinic based services, screening and consultation will be delivered through the ADAPT Program.
- **Selective (Targeted) Prevention**: This involves global screenings for alcohol misuse, as well as initiatives to prevent future alcohol misuse, prescription drug misuse, or drug use with individuals who are identified as high risk or are suspected of substance misuse. Selective prevention includes screening, assessment, education, brief preventive counseling, and tailored feedback in specific individuals or groups identified as moderate to high risk.
- **Indicated Prevention**: This is indicated for those who are engaging in destructive drinking but have not yet developed problems associated with their drinking. Individuals in this group can be identified through screening in primary care or other appropriate setting. The majority of these individuals are best served through motivational interviewing and brief advice. This focuses on those who are already in the early stages of alcohol and substance use.
- **Treatment and Continuing Care (Aftercare)**: Provide evidence-based substance use disorder treatment for individuals who are abusing or are dependent on alcohol or drugs that follows the clinical practice guidelines. The primary aim should be restoring function, improving quality of life, and returning members to productive and unrestricted duty, or to assist them in their transition to civilian life, as appropriate.

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The four levels of ADAPT prevention and treatment are important to reducing and eliminating substance misuse. Which of the four levels do you think would have benefited A1C Nat?

Now that you have covered how education and intervention can combat and heal substance misuse through prevention and treatment, let's move on and discuss your roles and responsibilities, as a SNCO, that apply to substance misuse.

Influence of Senior Leaders Attitudes on Substance Misuse

Perhaps the most important thing to remember, as a senior enlisted leader, is how much influence your attitude toward substance misuse can have on the organization. When you model behavior expected from members of the Profession of Arms (POA), it results in higher mission readiness, better morale, and increased health and wellness. It also establishes an environment where members seek help for problems with alcohol without fear of negative consequences.

Having a positive attitude and communicating that substance misuse and abuse will not be tolerated will have a positive impact on your organization.

Without the education and intervention initiatives, substance misuse would have a larger effect on the Air Force. Your effort to prevent and treat substance misuse plays a key role in your wingman's resilience.

Substance misuse can be detrimental to the Air Force mission and your organization. Your effort to combat substance misuse ensures the mission is accomplished effectively and efficiently. With wingman culture in mind, let's examine another emergent leadership issue: suicide awareness and prevention.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention

Some people feel the only solution to the problems they are facing is to take their own life. Suicide is an extreme manifestation of psychosocial problems. As a SNCO it is your responsibility to know the warning signs and risk factors for suicide. There may be one or more members within your organization right now that are considering suicide. Prevention and early intervention is always preferable to crisis response.

Why Suicide?

Although no one knows for sure, there are several theories why people commit suicide. One well accepted theory suggests it is the combination of burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness that comprises the desire for suicide.

Perceived burdensomeness is a sense that, "I am a burden to others, I don't contribute to the group, and I'm a liability to the group's well-being or safety." Thwarted belongingness is a sense that, "I have no connection to others and those previously meaningful relationships that I did have, have been strained beyond recovery or lost outright."

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In theory, both perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness can be "corrected" with increased social support. In addition to a strong wingman culture that provides a great deal of social support, the Air Force has 11 specific policy and training elements which collectively comprise the Air Forces' approach toward taking care of Airmen. Wingman culture is centered upon Airmen taking care of each other. Now that you understand why some people consider and choose suicide, perceived burdensomeness and thwarted belongingness, let's move on and discuss the programs and policies that can help combat suicide.

Risk Factors: *Includes, but is not limited to, such factors as relationship difficulties, substance abuse, legal, financial, medical, mental health, and occupational problems, along with depression, social isolation, and previous suicide threats/gestures which may increase the probability of self-harm*

Suicide Awareness: *Heightened individual and community awareness of suicide, suicide risk factors, and the fact that suicide is only the "tip of the iceberg" of psychosocial problems.*

Suicide Prevention: *A community-based approach that includes family, friends, and many different professional and social service providers, committed to reducing suicide by creating a safety net that provides protection and adds support for those in trouble by addressing the entire iceberg of afflictions to individuals, families, and their communities.*

Programs and Policies

There are many programs and policies centering on suicide that help take care of Airmen. A comprehensive suicide prevention program overseen by an effective Community Action Information Board and Integrated Delivery System must address the entire range of stressors and must consider the range of behaviors that negatively affect individuals, families and communities. While we cannot cover all the programs and policies in detail, what follows are the programs and policies that you, as a SNCO, should be most familiar to assist your wingman in getting help when necessary. Let's begin with covering the limited privilege suicide program.

Limited Privilege Suicide Program

The goal of this program is to identify and treat those Air Force members who pose a genuine risk for suicide because of impending disciplinary action under the UCMJ. The intent is to encourage help-seeking by reducing barriers to care. Information protected under this program may not be used in existing or future UCMJ action, or when weighing characterization of a service member who is being separated.

It is important to understand the limited nature of protection. Information in the LPSP behavioral health file can be disclosed to other medical personnel for purposes of medical treatment, a member's confinement military commander, and to other authorized personnel with an official need to know.

Key Points of the LPSP:

- Applies only to those Air Force members who have been officially notified (written or verbal) that they are under investigation or suspected of violating the UCMJ.
- If an individual involved in the processing of the disciplinary action has the belief that the member being disciplined may present a risk of suicide, that individual should

communicate their concern to the member's commander along with a recommendation for a mental health evaluation under the LPSP program.

- The mental health provider conducting the evaluation will determine whether or not the member poses a risk of suicide. Treatment will be initiated as deemed appropriate.
- The limited protection offered by this program lasts only as long as the mental health provider (MHP) believes there is a continuing risk of suicide. The MHP will notify the commander when the member no longer poses a risk of suicide.
- Members in this program are granted limited protection with respect to the information revealed during or generated by their clinical relationship with the MHP.

Commander Directed Mental Health Evaluation

Supervisory personnel, including commanders, may encourage Air Force members to voluntarily seek mental health care. The Air Force recognizes that members who receive help from mental health professionals can improve their job performance as well as their overall well-being, and consciously endorses caring involvement by supervisors. Supervisors and commanders may not, however, under any circumstances attempt to coerce members to voluntarily seek a mental health evaluation.

For individuals who are a current danger to themselves or others, an emergency mental health evaluation is appropriate. Refer to Mental Health during normal duty hours or, most installations have a Mental Health provider on call 24/7. If you do not know your installations processes for normal and after hour mental health evaluations now would be a great time to learn. Call your installations Mental Health Clinic for more information.

For individuals who are not currently a danger to themselves or others, but are in need of assistance and there is a question about their being fit for duty, the commander can direct the person to Mental Health for a Commander Directed Evaluation (CDE). Only commanders or persons substituting for them with G-series orders can direct the person for a CDE.

Hand-Off Policy

This policy applies to interviews of active duty and Air Force Reserve Component members and Department of the Air Force civilian employees.

The hand-off policy has the objective of caring for Airmen facing criminal or administrative action who are at an increased risk for suicide. They can easily feel isolated from family, friends, and other social supports when needing them most. After being questioned by investigators, members are immediately handed off to their first sergeant, immediate supervisor, commander, or a unit representative designated by the commander. The hand-off policy is not all-inclusive to Airmen facing actions, any person that is a threat to themselves or others should not be left alone.

Supportive base agencies do not allow subject members to depart alone. They only release members to their first sergeant, commander, supervisor, or other designee, who are responsible for ensuring members, receive the necessary support to safely handle their personal crisis. For agencies that do not have authority to detain individuals, and in situations involving Air Force

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civilian employees, instances may arise when an interviewee chooses not to cooperate with the hand-off. When a direct hand-off is not possible, notify the individual's first sergeant, commander, or supervisor or their designees as soon as possible.

This policy applies *regardless of the subject's reaction or emotional state*. Take special care if the individual appears to be emotional, distraught, or stunned during the process of the interview.

For members incarcerated, relay any concerns you may have to the confinement facility officials regarding risk for self-harm. When released from incarceration on bond pending trial, it is important that leaders monitor distress and risk for suicide and collaborate with the Mental Health Clinic. Not considering the hand-off policy can have disastrous effects. Allowing a person to be alone after knowing they are facing criminal or administrative actions may end in self-harm, harming others, and/or suicide.

Confidentiality and Privacy Rules

Communications between a patient and a psychotherapist or an assistant to a psychotherapist made for the purpose of facilitating diagnosis or treatment of the patient's mental or emotional condition are confidential communications and shall be protected from unauthorized disclosure. However, confidential communications will be disclosed to persons or agencies with a proper and legitimate need for the information and who are authorized by law or regulation to receive it, unless the evidentiary privilege described below:

- **Military Rule of Evidence:** This evidentiary rule provides a patient with the privilege of refusing to disclose and to prevent any other person from disclosing a confidential communication made between the patient and a psychotherapist or an assistant to the psychotherapist, in a case arising under the UCMJ, if such communication was made for the purpose of facilitating diagnosis or treatment of the patient's mental or emotional condition.
- **Who May Claim the Privilege under Military Rule of Evidence:** The privilege may be claimed by the patient or the guardian or conservator of the patient. A person who may claim the privilege may authorize trial counsel or defense counsel to claim the privilege on his or her behalf. The psychotherapist or assistant to the psychotherapist who received the communication may claim the privilege on behalf of the patient. The authority of such a psychotherapist, assistant, guardian, or conservator to so assert the privilege is presumed in the absence of evidence to the contrary.
- **There is no privilege under this rule**:
    - when the patient is dead;
    - when the communication is evidence of spouse abuse, child abuse, neglect, or in a proceeding in which one spouse is charged with a crime against the person of the other spouse or a child of either spouse;

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- when federal law, state law, or service regulation imposes a duty to report information contained in a communication;
- when a psychotherapist or assistant to a psychotherapist believes that a patient's mental or emotional condition makes the patient a danger to any person, including the patient;
- if the communication clearly contemplated the future commission of a fraud or crime or if the services of the psychotherapist are sought or obtained to enable or aid anyone to commit or plan to commit what the patient knew or reasonably should have known to be a crime or fraud;
- when necessary to ensure the safety and security of military personnel, military dependents, military property, classified information, or the accomplishment of a military mission;
- when an accused individual offers statements or other evidence concerning his mental condition in defense, extenuation, or mitigation, under circumstances not covered by R.C.M. 706 or Mil. R. Evid. 302. In such situations, the military judge may, upon motion, order disclosure of any statement made by the accused to a psychotherapist as may be necessary in the interests of justice; or
- when admission or disclosure of a communication is constitutionally required.

Developing a Relationship of Trust

On average, 1 out of every 3 Airmen is having a major life problem right now, but they are not currently getting help for it. Suicide represents a failure to find other more effective ways to cope with problems that seem insoluble.

In order to help reduce this type of failure you must not only know and promote protective factors, you must recognize warning signs of suicide and be willing to take appropriate action to be good a wingman. You must help others in trouble find more effective ways to cope, as SNCOs you must instill and support a culture that believes asking for help is strength NOT weakness, and you must expose and eliminate the myths surrounding the implications of seeing mental health providers.

Developing a relationship of trust is crucial to ensure your wingman knows it's acceptable to seek help when needed. One of the important aspects of developing a relationship of trust is, knowing the signs of distress to recognize during discussions and in the presence of your wingmen.

Common Barriers to Seeking Help:

- Denying the problem exists
- Avoiding the problem altogether.
- Fear that accessing help will result in a negative career impact.
- Fear that the chain of command will be contacted.

Signs of Distress

Recognizing warning signs are important and just as important as knowing protective factors and then creating an environment that promotes these factors. Below are some of the high-level warning signs.

- Threats of harming or killing oneself
- Seeking means, such as access to weapons or pills
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
- Giving away personal belongings

Being about to recognize the high-level warning signs of suicide is imperative to getting the person exhibiting the warning signs help immediately. Next are the low-level warning signs.

- Hopelessness
- Rage, anger, seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in highly destructive activities
- Increased alcohol or substance misuse
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society
- Anxiety, agitation, insomnia, hypersomnia
- Dramatic changes in mood
- No perceived reason for living or sense of purpose

Knowing the low-level warning signs of distress is key when developing a relationship of trust. Having a trusting relationship will make these warning signs easier to observe. It is also important to know what the typical services your installation and local community have to offer your wingmen in distress.

Protective Factors to Prevent Suicide:

- Unit cohesion and support
- Access to helping resources
- Knowing it's okay to seek help
- Optimistic outlook
- Effective coping and problem solving skills
- Family support
- Sense of belonging
- Positive relationships
- Physical activity
- Membership in the community
- Feeling of personal control over their lives
- Healthy and balanced four domains of fitness

Typical Services Offered:

- Financial counseling
- Mental health counseling
- Respite care
- Couples group
- Employment assistance
- Parenting groups
- Life skills services

Effective Ways to Intervene During Distress

In accordance with AFI 90-505, frontline supervisors shall recognize and effectively intervene when personnel suffering from emotional distress secondary to a variety of life problems.

Communicating with your wingman is an important aspect of developing a relationship of trust. When you and your wingman trust each other it opens the channels of communication that allow difficult issues to be discussed. Reflect back to the ACE model section, if you believe that your wingman may be contemplating suicide then you should discuss the warning signs you have witnessed, and then ask directly "Are you having thoughts of killing yourself?"

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Discussion centering on high-level warning signs may not be able to be put off until a time and place your wingman feels comfortable. When high-level warning signs occur immediately pull the person into a location that you can have this difficult discussion.

Another important consideration is how the discussion could be perceived or accusations that could come afterwards. If you believe there may be negative perception or false allegations that could come of the meeting, ask a fellow SNCO, preferably of the opposite sex, to sit-in on the discussion. This way a witness will be present to relay what occurred during the discussion.

Having a trusting relationship is crucial to being a good wingman. Knowing the warning signs of distress will assist you in having those difficult conversations.

We do not prevent suicides in the hospital emergency room; we prevent them in the unit by addressing quality of life concerns on a daily basis. Suicide is a major concern for the Air Force. The simple fact that 1 out of every 3 Airmen is having a major life problem right now, and is not currently getting help for it, is reason enough for every SNCO to be an active participant in suicide awareness and prevention.

This requires knowing protective factors, risk factors, and advanced warning signs, as well as knowing what to do and how to do it when others appear to need help. Knowing what to do includes supporting behaviors and a thorough understanding of the LPSP, hand-off Policy, and CDE process, and the myriad of programs available for members in crisis.

It's paramount for SNCOs to focus on early recognition and intervention, to be visible in their concern about suicide, and to create an atmosphere of teamwork and camaraderie while continuously affirming and encouraging help-seeking behavior. Focusing on truly knowing your Wingmen will help you, as a SNCO; see the warning signs and risk factors that can lead to suicide.

AFI 90-505 states frontline supervisors must promote an environment which encourages Airmen to seek help when they are distressed and does not tolerate any actions (hazing, belittling, humiliating, etc.) that prevents Airmen from responsibility seeking help or professional care.

If you are personally considering suicide or know someone who is but you cannot reach a helping agency call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline, 1-800-273-8255 (TALK), to speak to a veteran/military counselor, or visit their website at www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Suicide has a global reach, being aware of this leadership issue and constantly working towards prevention could potentially save lives. Now that you understand the importance of suicide awareness and prevention, let's move onto another important leadership issue; sexual assault prevention and response.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response SAPR Program reinforces the Air Force's commitment to prevention through the development, implementation, and assessment of policies and programs to prevent and respond to sexual assault. The policies and programs are designed to empower Airmen to serve as catalysts for attitude and behavior changes, fostering an environment that cultivates a culture of dignity, mutual respect and trust. The Air Force is

committed to introducing comprehensive prevention initiatives with continued focus on building both individual and community collaboration to promote social change. The Air Force's goal is to provide exemplary support throughout victim reporting, response, victim advocacy, investigations and offender accountability when a sexual assault occurs.

Sexual assault is criminal conduct that violates the standards the United States of America expects of its men and women serving in the Air Force and is inconsistent with the Air Force core values.

It's the Air Force policy that:

- Airmen will strive to eliminate sexual assault by fostering a culture of dignity and mutual respect among Air Force members and provide environments free of sexual harassment and assault.
- The SAPR Program will provide education and training to all our military and civilian members throughout their Air Force careers, to prevent sexual assault, enhance response capability, establish victim support, encourage victims to come forward, and hold perpetrators of this crime appropriately accountable.
- A trained and immediate sexual assault response capability from a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocate (SAPR VA), or Volunteer Victim Advocate (VVA) will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, for all locations including deployed areas. For each sexual assault report, when SAPR assistance is requested, the individual providing the response (SARC, SAPR VA, and/or VVA) will ensure victims are protected, treated with dignity and respect, and receive timely access to appropriate medical treatment and services.

No Airman should be afraid of another Airman in any situation. In combat, you depend on each other–you trust each other with your lives. When sexual assault occurs by an Airman against another Airman, trust is broken, cohesion is destroyed, and lives are altered. Rebuilding trust, cohesion, and lives can take a long time.

In the general population, the highest at-risk age group for sexual assault is the 18-24 year old group. This means that in the Air Force, we are guiding a large population who is at a high risk for this crime, both in terms of victimization as well as perpetration. Your subordinate supervisors are teaching their subordinates to protect each other in times of danger. That requires a tremendous amount of trust. Sexual assault betrays and breaks that trust, sometimes permanently. It can turn Airmen against each other, cause them to take sides, and undermine the entire unit.

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Individual Involved in a Sexual Assault

How you respond to sexual assault can help or harm the victim. Law enforcement experts recognize that sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes committed. Many surveys indicate fear and embarrassment as the top reasons why this crime is not reported. Instead, victims suffer in silence. Some of that fear and reluctance occurs because, in general, little is done in society to protect and support victims of sexual assault, even among groups. As a SNCO you can help change this perception. If you are sensitive to victims of sexual assault, your Airmen will know, and will be more likely to come to you if they are assaulted. If victims are treated supportively and without judgment, if they receive the care they need, they are more likely to elect an unrestricted report. This is to the benefit of the Air Force as a whole; sexual assaults should be investigated and the perpetrators held accountable for their actions. Let's begin the discussion on how to respond when an individual is involved in a sexual assault with the immediate response.

Do's and Don'ts of Sexual Assault Response:

Do's
- attend to safety and medical
- considerations first
- contact the SARC and notify Security Forces
- be aware of personal biases that might get in your way
- listen with sensitivity
- be a role model

Don'ts:
- blame the victim
- judge
- press for details
- assume there is only one appropriate reaction to a sexual assault

Immediate Response

There are many resources available for victims of sexual assault to help them heal both physically and mentally. The Air Force is committed to ensuring sexual assault victims are protected, treated with dignity and respect, and provided support, advocacy, and care.

Sexual assault is an act of violence, it's necessary to provide an individual involved in a sexual assault immediate response after the act of violence occurred to counteract and mitigate the long-term effects. When a victim comes to you, the first priority is their safety and well-being. Once the immediate needs are taken care of, you should also be prepared for ongoing support of the victim and the organization. Seek input from the victim about time off for counseling or medical issues and any other issues that may impact their ability to perform military duties. Work with your supervisor to support the victim through the recovery process.

The SARC is the first point of contact for reporting a sexual assault and is considered the center of gravity when it comes to issues of sexual assault. A SARC is responsible for education, victim support, and maintaining a volunteer staff of Victim Advocates. The SARC is located on your base or at the base that provides your support. The SARC is linked to helping agencies throughout the base and local area.

Immediate response will vary depending on the victim and your status. There are two types of sexual assault reports; restricted and unrestricted. ***Restricted reports*** are closed and commanders and law enforcement are not contacted. ***Unrestricted reports*** are open and include the involvement of commanders and law enforcement efforts to prosecute the perpetrator. This

option is recommended for victims of sexual assault who desire an official investigation and command notification in addition to healthcare, victim advocacy, and legal services. Victims can decide to make a restricted report unrestricted any time after the report is made. This option is for adult victims of sexual assault who wish to confidentially disclose the crime to specifically identified individuals without triggering the official investigative process or notification to command. Depending of the victim (military, civilian, DOD civilian, family member, etc.) and the person notified of the sexual assault affects the actions taken.

All personnel are eligible to file an unrestricted report. Only active duty military, DoD civilians, and dependents who are 18 years of age or older are eligible to file restricted reports.

Only the SARC, VA, or healthcare personnel can file a restricted report. There are also mandatory reporters that must report a sexual assault when informed. First sergeants, commanders, and anyone in the person's chain of command are all mandatory reporters. Ensure you wingmen understand the victim reporting options and services as well who can file a restricted report. Referring people directly to the SARC before they state they have been a victim of sexual assault will keep their reporting options open.

	Restricted	Unrestricted
Confidential	Yes (with exceptions)	No
Investigation	No	Yes
Command Involvement	No	Yes
Medical Exam	Forensic Exam	Forensic Exam
Medical Services	Available	Available
Counseling Services	Available	Available
Victim Advocate Services	Available	Available

Victim Reporting Options and Services

Long-Term Response

Long-term response includes understanding how victims respond to past sexual assaults and the triggers that may cause them to "relive" that traumatic experience. Knowing and caring for your wingmen in the organization can ensure they are not suffering in silence when reliving a past experience of sexual assault.

Sexual assault has long lasting effects on the victim and the people close to them. Six months after being raped, the majority of victims still experience what one researcher called a distinct "core of distress." Another study documented that at 15 to 30 months after being raped, more than 40 percent of victims still suffered sexual dysfunction, restricted social interaction, suspicion, fears and depression. Three years after the rape, a variety of psychological symptoms persist, leading researchers to believe that many victims never recover completely. In one study of criminal victimization of a community-based sample of 391 women in Charleston, South Carolina, 23.3% of the women had been victims of completed rape. Of those women, 57% developed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. At the time of the assessment, which was an average of 15 years post-rape, 16.5% of the rape victims who had not had treatment had current symptoms of PTSD.

Every victim responds individually and some victims appear to recover well. In one study, between 20% and 25% of untreated victims were relatively symptom-free one year post-rape,

and some victims reported functioning better at this time than they did pre-rape. However, the absence of PTSD does not prove that nothing happened. Moreover, we are coming to understand that a one-year follow-up does not tell the full story; the reality is that psychological trauma has no specific end point.

It's important to know the members of your organization when effectively providing long-term response. One of your closest co-workers may be a sexual assault victim and you have no idea. Recognize what may trigger a victim of sexual assault and make it clear that anyone can have those difficult conversations with you in confidence that there will be no negative effects.

Be the SNCO that people trust and feel they can share these difficult issues. Through providing effective immediate and long-term response to individuals involved in a sexual assault you will help shape the culture of caring and hopefully show the organization that sexual assault should be reported and the perpetrators held accountable.

Rape Myths

There are many myths that center on rape. Through stating the myth and discussing the facts it will help you be better prepared to support an individual involved in a sexual assault and lead your organization toward a zero tolerance mindset.

Myth: **Rape is sex**. Fact: The victims experience Rape as an act of violence. It is a life-threatening experience. While sexual attraction may be influential, power, control and anger are the primary motives. Most rapists have access to a sexual partner. Gratification comes from gaining power and control and discharging anger. This gratification is only temporary, so the rapist seeks another victim.

Myth: **A victim should be discouraged from dwelling on the rape. They should "forget it".** Fact: This advice generally comes from people who are more concerned with their own feelings than the victim's. All victims should be offered the opportunity to talk about the assault with those personally close to them and knowledgeable professionals. Victims who are not allowed to talk about the rape have a much more difficult time recovering from it.

Myth: **Sexual assaults are rare deviations and affect few people. After all, no one I know has been raped.** Fact: Sexual assaults are very common. Most likely, someone close to you has been profoundly affected by sexual assault. Not only are victims reluctant to discuss their assaults but many have succeeded in **totally blocking the assault** from conscious memory. However, the trauma remains and may come to the surface at another crisis or when the opportunity to discuss it with a sympathetic person arises.

Myth: **Women often make false reports of rape.** Fact: Only two percent of reported rape and related sex offences are false (which is approximately the same rate of false reports for other crimes). Although cases are dropped because of insufficient evidence for conviction, this should not be confused with false reporting.

Myth: **Women fantasize about being raped.** Fact: No woman fantasizes about being raped. Fantasies about aggressive sex may be controlled and turned off if they become threatening. In rape, the victim is unable to control the violence and stop it.

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Myth: **Rape cannot happen between married couples.** Fact: Many states now have laws against rape in marriage. The idea that a spouse cannot be raped suggests married people do not have the same right to safety as do unmarried ones. Most spouses have experienced some form of sexual abuse within their marriage. It is also known that estranged or ex-spouses sometimes use rape as a form of retaliation.

Myth: **Sexual assault is an impulsive, spontaneous act.** Fact: Most rapes are carefully planned by the rapist. A rapist will rape again and again, usually in the same area of town and in the same way.

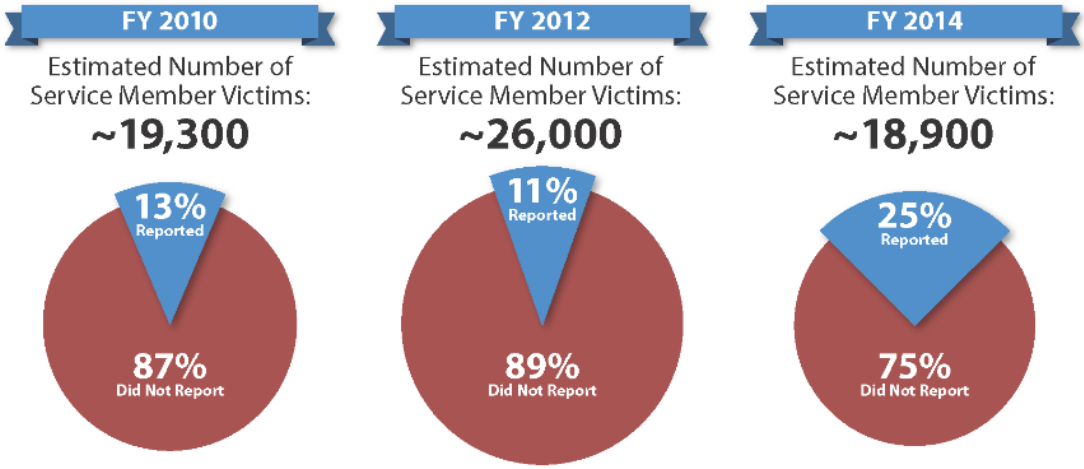
Myth: **Rape is a crime of passion.** Fact: Rape is an act of ***VIOLENCE***, not passion. It's an attempt to hurt and humiliate, using sex as the weapon.

Myth: **People "ask for it" by their dress or actions.** Fact: Rapists look for victims they perceive as vulnerable, not people who dress in a particular way. Assuming that a victim provoked an attack by where they are or the way they dress is victim-blaming. No person, whatever their behavior, "deserves" to be raped.

If rape myths are viewed as facts, it can have a negative impact on your organization. As a SNCO you must ensure you wingmen within the organization know the facts of rape before having these difficult conversations. Understanding the different rape myths and ensuring your organization members don't advocate rape myths will foster a supportive environment where people feel they can discuss this difficult issue. Now that you understand the facts of rape myths, let's discuss the details and trends of sexual assault in the military.

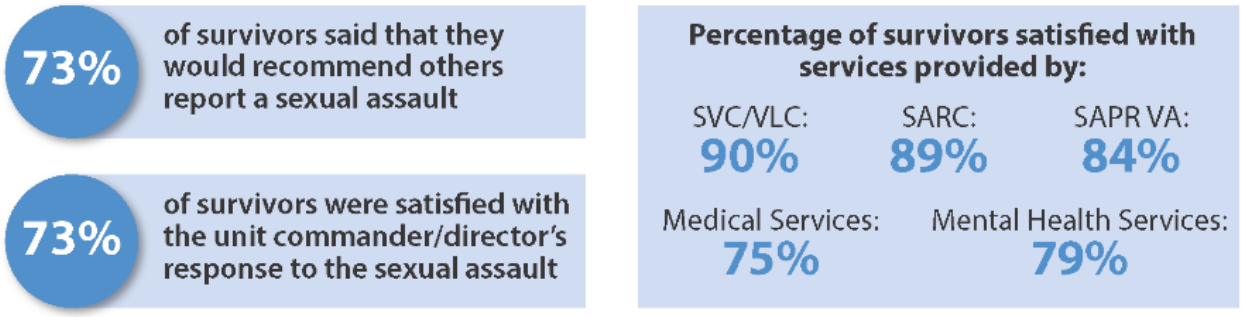
Details and Trends

Through reviewing the details and trends as they relate to sexual assault we can see how the military perception is beginning to change. The *2014 SAPR Annual Report Highlights* outlined how prevalence and reporting has changed from 2010 to 2014.



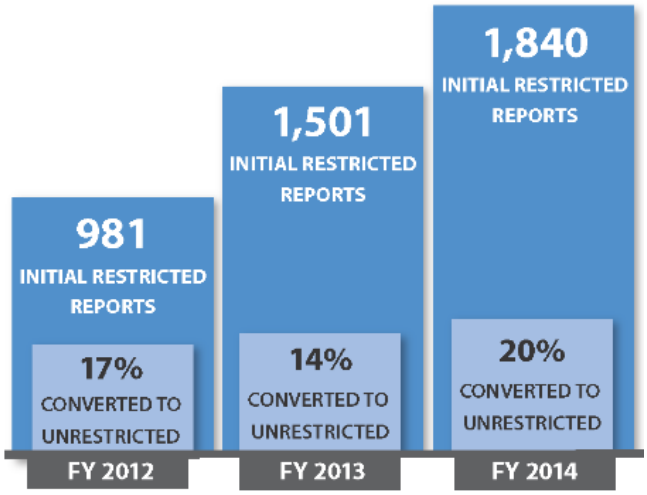
The estimated number of service member victims of sexual assault has decreased over the last four years while the percentage of reported assaults has increased. This leads us to believe that the prevention and response program is influencing the culture. As a SNCO, you should effectively include prevention and response when leading your organization. As you effectively

lead and foster the SAPR concepts the percentage of reported sexual assaults will continue to increase while the number of service member's victims continues to decrease. Now what you see how the perception is changing due to the SAPR program and leader influence, let's look at the details of satisfaction with reporting experience with sexual assault survivors.



The details show the majority of survivors were satisfied with the services provided and most would recommend others report a sexual assault. Hopefully, with prevention and response education and leadership increasing the percentage of satisfied reporters will also increase. Let's now look at how many reports have been converted to unrestricted reports over the last three years.

The conversion rate of restricted reports has fluctuated from 2012 to 2014 but the conversion rate in 2014 was the highest of the three years. When a report is restricted there is no criminal charges filed and the perpetrator is free to commit the crime again and again, until someone steps forward and files an unrestricted report. It is important to communicate that filing a restricted report is good; however, we want guilty perpetrator to be brought to justice for the violent crime they have committed.



Responding appropriately to an individual involved in a sexual assault is important to changing the perception that surrounds the victim, and foster an environment of change within the organization and the Air Force. Your members of your organization will learn from how you, as an SNCO, prevent and respond to sexual assault. Being an effective leader will lead to the next generation of leaders following in your footsteps. Let's move on and discuss the leadership roles that apply to sexual assault.

Leadership Roles

The crime of sexual assault negatively impacts Air Force mission readiness and thus requires the full attention of all Airmen. Historically, issues related to sexual assault have been viewed as women's issues and, as such, educational efforts have been geared toward risk reduction versus true crime prevention. There is a difference. For example, risk reduction messages involve

specific strategies: "women, don't leave your drinks unattended," while prevention messages refer more broadly to changing social norms: "both men and women, challenge rape-supportive attitudes and behaviors that have the potential to harm fellow Airmen." The truth is that both men and women, as leaders in the Air Force, have an important role to play in the prevention and response of sexual assault. Airmen can foster a climate among peers that doesn't allow perpetrators to hide, or to commit repeated offenses. It is imperative that you as a SNCO know your roles that apply to sexual assault and the roles of your commander as well.

SNCO

As a leader in the Air Force, you are responsible for preventing sexual assault by setting an example with your own behavior and guiding the behavior of your subordinates as well.

Earlier in the lesson, you learned about your immediate and long-term roles for caring for victims of sexual assault, but how can you help prevent sexual assault from occurring?

First, set an example with your own behavior:

- Refrain from sexist and gender-biased comments and actions
- Coach, redirect, and mentor when you hear or see this behavior in others
- If a situation seems dangerous to you, trust your intuition and intervene

Second, actively encourage your subordinate supervisors to do the same.

Through effectively accomplishing your leadership roles you will help prevent sexual assault from occurring and effectively lead the victim and organization after a sexual assault has occurred. When unrestricted reports are filed the organization commander has set roles, move onto the next section to learn more about the commanders roles when an unrestricted sexual assault is reported.

Commanders

Commanders (or equivalent) notified of a sexual assault must take immediate steps to ensure the physical safety, emotional security, and medical treatment needs are met, and that the AFOSI or appropriate criminal investigative agency and SARC are notified. The victim and alleged offender's commander(s) will determine whether temporary reassignment or relocation of either the victim or alleged offender is appropriate.

Commander's will:

- Protect sexual assault victims, witnesses, bystanders (who intervene), responders, or other parties to the incident from coercion, ostracism, maltreatment, discrimination, reprisal, and retaliation.
- For complaints received about an individual assigned to their unit concerning one of the above listed parties, the first commander in the chain of command will develop a plan to immediately address the issue, and forward the plan to the installation commander as well as the host wing commander.

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- If the incident report concerns a sexual assault victim, the complaint is discussed during the victim's monthly case management group (CMG) case review. Reports of coercion, retaliation, ostracism, maltreatment, or reprisal remain on the CMG agenda for status updates, until the victim's case has reached final disposition or has been appropriately addressed according to the installation inspector general and the CMG chair. Assertions of reprisal are reported to the installation inspector general and addressed in accordance with Title 10 USC 1034, DoDD 7050.06, and AFI 90-301.

The commander's leadership role when notified of a sexual assault is dependent on the situation; but, there is a tool that commanders must utilize when an unrestricted report is initiated; The Commander's 30-Day Checklist.

Commanders 30-Day Checklists

The Commander's 30-Day Checklist is intended to serve as a baseline for the first 30 days for the commander's response to adult sexual assault victim(s), alleged offender(s), and unit in the event of an Unrestricted Report of sexual assault. The checklist may be expanded to meet military Service-specific requirements and procedures. These checklist items do not represent all of the responsibilities assigned to commanders for the entire SAPR program, and it is important for commanders to take time prior to an incident to become familiar with their Service SAPR policies and installation SAPR personnel. There are other important SAPR requirements to consider past the 30-day timeframe covered in this list.

Providing effective leadership when a sexual assault has occurred can help the victim and the organization begin the healing process. Through a climate of zero tolerance you can help prevent sexual assaults from occurring and stop rapist from committing more crimes.

Leadership involvement is key to sexual assault awareness and prevention, let's move on and discuss one of the reasons victims of sexual assault sometimes suffer in silence; whistleblower protections.

Whistleblower Protections

Air Force personnel who file an unrestricted or restricted report of sexual assault will be protected from retaliation, coercion, ostracism, or maltreatment, or threat of retaliation, coercion, ostracism, or maltreatment, for filing a report. Ensuring your Airmen will discuss sexual assault with you or a helping agency is important. Retaliation, reprisal, ostracism, and maltreatment or the fear of these occurring will affect a person's decision on whether to report a sexual assault. Knowing these terms and communicating to your organization and wingmen that the will not be tolerated is an important part of fostering an environment for sexual assault victims to seek the help they desperately need and begin the healing process. Let's start by reviewing retaliation.

- Retaliation - The taking or threatening to take an adverse personnel action, or withholding or threatening to withhold a favorable personnel action, with respect to a military member because the member reported a criminal offense or;
- Coercion, to include force or threats to persuade someone to do or not do something or;

- Ostracizing a military member, to include excluding from social acceptance, privilege or friendship with the intent to discourage reporting of a criminal offense or otherwise discourage the due administration of justice or;
- Maltreating a military member, to include cruel or violent treatment by other persons; that
    - when viewed objectively under all the circumstances, is abusive or otherwise unnecessary for any unlawful purpose, that is done with the intent to discourage reporting of a criminal offense or otherwise discourage the due administration of justice, and that results in physical or mental harm or suffering, or reasonably could have caused physical or mental harm or suffering.

All personnel in the victim's chain of command, officer and enlisted, when they become aware of allegations of retaliation, reprisal, ostracism, or maltreatment, are required to take appropriate measures to protect the victim.

Being a leader comes with duty and responsibility. Part of that responsibility is to coach, and sometimes direct your subordinates to act with integrity; and to model that behavior yourselves. Set a climate in which all Air Force members are treated with respect. Watch for warning signs of a potential sexual assault and intervene early, especially where alcohol is present. Let the safety of your Airmen, the efficiency of your unit, and the integrity of the Air Force motivate you to take action.

In conclusion, the USAF has **zero tolerance** for sexual assault both because it is a crime and it goes against our Core Values. The Air Force is a family. We don't prey on one another; we protect one another.

Sexual assault affects everyone: individuals, the unit, and the Air Force itself. This is why an assault on any Airman is an assault on all Airmen. Perpetrators are more likely to carry out a sexual assault in a climate that condones sexist jokes, sexist gender expectations, and other disrespectful or harmful behavior.

If you become aware of a sexual assault, respond sensitively to the victim, whether female or male. Listen and suspend judgment. Take a stand against any disrespectful behavior toward others, and coach your subordinate supervisors to do the same. You are responsible for preventing sexual assault, and for responding sensitively and appropriately when it occurs. This is a leadership issue.

Summary

This lesson on Emergent Leadership Issues began with a section that explained the focus and intent of ELI, and how to ask, care, and escort your wingmen that may be distressed or on the path to an ELI. Next, the lesson moved to the EO program and explained the systems involved, such as unlawful discrimination and unlawful harassment that can lead to complaints being filed. Then, you refreshed your memory on substance misuse and the effects this ELI has on mission and readiness, morale, and health and wellness. Also, within substance misuse you covered how education and intervention can lead to misuse prevention and treatment. After that, you moved

to suicide awareness and prevention and learned why some people choose suicide and the programs and policies that help Airmen get the help they need when contemplating suicide, like the CDE, hand-off policy, and the confidentiality and privacy rules. Then, you learned how developing a relationship of trust, by knowing the signs of distress and effective ways to intervene when you see the signs of distress can prevent suicides before hospital emergency room has too. Next, you reviewed the sexual assault prevention and response section that discussed how to immediately and long-term response to victims of sexual assault to include understanding rape myths, details, and trends to aid in your response. You also reviewed the different leadership roles that apply to sexual assault; your role as a SNCO, the commander's role, and the 30-day checklist that will serve as a baseline for their response to an adult sexual assault victim. To finish the sexual assault section you learned about the whistleblower protection that protects victims or anyone reporting a sexual assault on another's behalf protection from experiencing, or fear, of retaliation, coercion, ostracism, or maltreatment.

The impact an ELI can have on you, your subordinates, and mission effectiveness can be massive; educate, prevent, and intervene when necessary and you will lessen the blow, or eliminate the occurrence all together. Through understanding ELI and having the ability to prevent and when necessary lead an organization through these difficult occurrences you will protect our most precious resource; people.

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Senior Non-Commissioned Officer ALE Study Guide

Continuous Process Improvement

Inside this Study Guide:

Why Continuous Process Improvement?

- Definition of Continuous Process Improvement (CPI)

Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century (AFSO21)

- AFSO21 Misconceptions
- AFSO21 Culture
- Waste
- Go and See
- Value Stream Mapping(VSM)

AFSO21 Tools

- Standard Work
- 6-S
- Visual Management
- Cell Design/Flow
- Theory of Constraints (TOC)

OODA Loop and 8 Step Problem Solving

- OODA Loop
- 8 Step Problem Solving
- Airman Powered by Innovation (API)

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Why Continuous Process Improvement?

As SNCOs, we should be looking and thinking daily about innovative ways to use our resources more efficiently. According to our core values, we must pursue excellence in all we do.

One way we can do this is through a culture of Continuous Process Improvement or "CPI" which is the strategic, never-ending, incremental refinement of the way we perform tasks.

Continuous Process Improvement helps us shed "non-value added" tasks to ensure every Airman's efforts contribute directly to accomplishing the Air Force mission — to fly, fight, and win in air, space, and cyberspace.

Definition of Continuous Process Improvement (CPI)

CPI provides the Department of Defense (DoD) a time-tested and proven approach for analyzing how we currently conduct business and improve our operations. CPI has been around since the early 1900's and was built upon the best management practices from scientific studies and industry applications. CPI concepts have been employed in the private and public sectors and have shown to be relevant and applicable to any organizational process in industrial, service, office and field operational environments. It is the DoD's choice in executing how we improve our systems and processes.

CPI provides leaders and workers with proven performance improvement tools to build a strong warfighter support structure. It works in improving cycle time and reliability, optimizing costs, improving safety, reducing energy consumption, and improving availability of warfighting capabilities. As Senior Enlisted leaders, we must understand and apply CPI so, we, our organizations, the Air Force and the DoD can obtain strategic, never-ending, incremental refinement of the way we perform tasks and processes.

Think of the time we would have if we could shed "non-value added" tasks to ensure every Airman's efforts contribute directly to accomplishing the Air Force mission — to fly, fight, and win in air, space, and cyberspace. In pursuit of Continuous Process Improvement, the Air Force created Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century (AFSO21).

Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century (AFSO21)

The intent of AFSO21 is to deliver a consistent and disciplined problem solving approach that is encoded in the DNA of every Airman. It's important to understand that AFSO21 is the Air Force's unique CPI model to learn how to evaluate and improve systems and work processes. AFSO's approach uses portions of Lean, Six Sigma, Business Process Reengineering, and Theory of Constraints, with some of the greatest emphasis on "Lean thinking." AFSO21 focuses on generating efficiencies and improving combat capabilities across the Air Force and applies to all processes associated with the Air Force mission. We learned in the Strategic Planning lesson how Strategic Alignment and Deployment (SA&D) incorporates a vision and a mission and helps with aligning the most important areas of concern as our top priorities. We walked through SA&D Steps to Implementation, but we stopped at the Cascade and Communicate. As you can see, CPI methodologies are enablers to execute those strategies.

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Figure 1.

AFSO21 is the last step in this process and the foundation for its success. The AF has a burning platform, meaning we continuously face challenges in the form of continual fiscal constraints, manpower reductions, lagging currency of compliance directives, serial reorganizations, continuous personnel churn and on top of all that mission growth due to global tension. Strategic agility means always moving towards process innovation and organizational adaptability to confront and overcome these difficulties.

SNCO's work contributes to the highest levels of the Air Force Mission. The Air Force has a burning platform and must transform. We must leave behind any AFSO21 misconceptions, only then can we expand our circle of influence and reduce the burden on our Airmen.

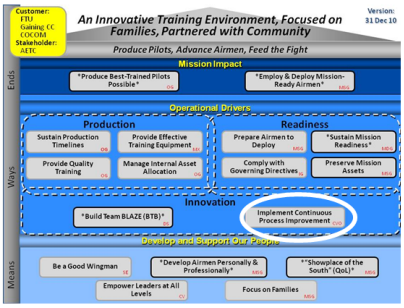
AFSO21 Misconceptions

Professionals cannot indulge themselves in self-pity, discouragement, anger, frustration, or defeatism. They have a fundamental moral obligation to the persons they lead to strike a tone of confidence and forward-looking optimism. To do this we must move past our own personal biases, like those discussed in Critical Thinking.

"Misconceptions about AFSO21 are everywhere. Do you have them?" AFSO21 is not the blind search for metrics without logical application, or the ceaseless quest for "great" performance-report bullets. It's not a chance for leaders to get promoted or show their face on Air Force News. And, for those older folks among us, it's not Total Quality Management, and shouldn't bear the "scars" of the Air Force's metrics-driven, top-down, non-customer-focused implementation strategy. But why should you care? If you're working overtime and weekends, you should care. If you're a customer who sits in a queue frustrated, you should car. If you're a supervisor and want to make life better for your people, you can. If you're stressed, you can make work easier and more productive for yourself and your team. If you care about the future of our Air Force and its members, you care about AFSO21.

Recall from Strategic Planning where Metrics were discussed. If your duty section's Metrics are in the "red," meaning not meeting the goal, does that mean "dead" in you, your supervisor, and Commander's mind? It shouldn't, with Strategic Planning and AFSO21; it is an opportunity for unit progression.

Objective P3.2
Implement Continuous Process Improvement



Key Objective Points

- Implement CPI to make better use of limited resources
- Accomplish the required number of CPI events per CC's AIP
- Identify critical areas of improvement for 14FTW

Events Implemented	AIP Events	GB/BB in the Wing
G ≥ 6	G ≥ 3	G ≥ 2 BB and 6 GB
Y 3-5	Y 2	Y 1 BB or 3-5 GB
R ≤ 2	R ≤ 1	R ≤ 0 BB or 2 GB

Objective Champion

Capt Adam Waite
CVO

	Measure Statement	Data Frequency	Previous Results	Current Target	Current Status	3 Month Forecast
Operational Drivers	1. Number of AFSO21 Events Implemented.	Annual	3	6	4	Y
	2. Percent of AIP events completed.	Annual	3	4	3	Y
	3. Number of certified GB/BB in the wing.	Quarterly	0BB 2GB	2BB 6GB	0BB 3GB	R

Figure 2

There is no problem if objectives are continually "green" during strategy reviews. However, strategy maps are supposed to focus on areas of concern over the near term. So…talk about this with your leadership. If a Metric is continuously in the green, the objective may no longer need to be on the strategy map. Strategy isn't about always looking good, but looking for improvement opportunities.

It's crucial to dispel the misconception that AFSO21 focuses on people not processes, if you keep cycling through people hoping to fix the process or move into the "green"; you are part of the problem. 99% of the time when you get to the real root cause of a problem it has nothing to do with the people, however, it may have everything to do with the training, the value stream, and the amount of people or resources available.

For example, the United States Air Force Academy's (USAFA) Superintendent had an objective that 100% of the Cadet physicals be completed by the student's third year. This way they could be medically cleared to be classified into Air Force specialties appropriately, i.e., pilots weren't medically disqualified after being selected. The Cadet Physical's section to fulfill this objective were working 7 days a week, 14-16 hour days trying to reach this goal, but were falling short (continuously in the "red"). They were stressed and overworked with zero morale; the Squadron Superintendent was concerned and asked the Commander for an AFSO21 Rapid Improvement Event (RIE), as she felt additional manning was needed.

A RIE using 8 Step Problem Solving (which we will discuss in full later) was conducted for 3 days; the event led to this section gaining 2 additional Medical Technicians for a year to catch up on the lagging physicals and a full time civilian Optometry Technician. The whole value stream (process) was then reworked into a Cell design (discussed later), making the external customers (Cadets), the internal customers (Dental & Optometry), and the duty section more effective, efficient and happy. The job not only got done and done right, but exceeded the General's standards. As you can see red doesn't mean dead nor does AFSO21 always mean cutting manning and resources. It's about doing things smarter so everyone benefits.

Governed by proven process improvement techniques, AFSO21 has already significantly increased Air Force combat capability and it will continue to do so, but only if we create an atmosphere like they did at USAFA, needed to generate buy-in.

AFSO21 Culture

Fundamentally, AFSO21 is a mindset to attack problems and identify opportunities for improvement. It emphasizes the use of our greatest resource – our innovative, dedicated Airmen-- guided by world-class leadership and the AF's unique core values. AFSO21 is a transformational initiative empowering all Airmen to eliminate waste from every end-to-end process. We are the key to AFSO21 success, we MUST create an environment where every Airman thinks about improvement, and is empowered to communicate with his or her supervisor, commander or a change agent. Even processes that work well can be better. Improvements center on missions that Airmen handle daily and should encompass the Lean Principles.

Lean principles:

- Specify what creates "value" from the customer's perspective
- Identify all the steps along the process chain
- Make all the processes "flow"
- Produce only what is "pulled" by the customer
- Strive for perfection by continually removing wastes

Lean principles are built on what is value-added from the customer's perspective. Value is defined as a need the customer is willing to pay extra to receive, easily expressed in terms of a specific required product or service. In the commercial sector value can be related to the bottom line in terms of corporate profits. In the federal sector, it is related to requirements identified by the customer.

If you refer back to the USAFA example, you can see who the customers are in the process. If we and our Airman understand our customer's needs we can work toward eliminating non-value-added activities that lead to waste.

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Waste

At the core of process improvement is solving problems that create waste in the day-to-day work of our Airmen. Waste is anything that adds cost or time without adding value (DOWNTIME). Only the constant elimination of waste will drive us toward perfection. Thus, our Airman need to know what waste is when they see it.

Defects - having a direct impact to the bottom line, quality defects resulting in rework or scrap are a tremendous cost to organizations.

Look for:

- Is there well documented standard work?
- Does equipment have a maintenance schedule?
- Are there effective cross-training programs?
- Do employees have the proper amount of time to do their work?

Overproduction - to produce an item before it is actually required.

Look for:

- Is work being performed ahead of schedule?
- Is this form a duplicate of some other form?
- Can information on a form be used in other areas?
- Is someone using all the information that is being provided?
- How many people approve the form?

Waiting - whenever goods are not moving or being processed, the waste of waiting occurs.

Look for:

- Are there delays in the delivery of work or information?
- Are there issues with punctuality with internal or external customers?
- Are there certain times when delays are more prevalent?
- Can you see a constraint or bottleneck in the process?
- Have delays been a problem or are they a recent development?

Nonstandard Over Processing - Often termed as “using a bazooka to swat flies,” many organizations use expensive high precision equipment where simpler tools would be sufficient.

Look for:

- Is more effort put into the work than required by internal/external customers?
- Has this work been done before?
- Is more information obtained than is required?
- Are there redundant phone calls and e-mails?

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- Does the step add value?

Transportation - moving product between processes is a cost that adds no value to the product.

Look for:

- How is the information or work that is being transformed being delivered to other processes?
- Is work being delivered to the right place at the right time?
- Has work been consolidated where appropriate?
- How far is material being transported and how long does it take?

Intellect – human brainpower squandered in processes that do not require intelligent thought: expediting, chasing paper, injuries etc. This concept is seen as any failure to fully utilize the time and talents of people.

Look for:

- Are employees placed where they can and will use their knowledge, skills and abilities to the fullest?
- Are employees encouraged to suggest improvements to how work is done?
- Are employee suggestions/solutions implemented?
- Use of problem solving teams to improve how work is accomplished.
- Do leaders and managers follow-up and hold process owners accountable for action plans resulting from problem solving events?

Motion - this waste is related to ergonomics and is seen in all instances of bending, stretching, walking, lifting, and reaching.

Look for:

- Can walking be reduced by repositioning equipment?
- Is information, tools, or material at point of use?
- Are there areas that impede the flow of work?
- How much repetitive human motion is involved in the work and how can such motion be mitigated?
- How much human reaching, stretching, bending, or kneeling is involved and how can such motion be mitigated?

Excess Inventory - stockpiles of both in-process and finished goods inventories are a direct result of overproduction and waiting.

Look for:

- Are there boxes of material sitting on the floor?
- Are you using the hall for storage?

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- Are there outdated materials or manuals in the area?
- Is material moving through the processes in batches or single-piece?
- Are you overstocking material?
- How much are you paying for inventory and do you use all of it?

Most processes operate at less than 10% efficiency. Waste is really a symptom rather than a root cause of the problem. Processes exist whether they are visible or not, work somehow gets done but at what cost? Most waste is invisible to those most familiar with the process. You can't improve what you can't see; the Process Owner or Team Lead must walk the process to identify the eight wastes by doing a Go and See.

Go and See

When actively engaged in problem solving, the Process Owner or Team Lead should physically go to the actual place/source of the problem and observe first-hand what is taking place. If there is a team of individuals working to resolve a particular problem, then it is recommended that the entire team travels to the actual place to examine the full process before deciding on the true issue.

Everyone on the team will be able to walk the process (Value Stream), agree to what they are seeing and have the same fundamental understanding about the possible problem at-hand. This recommendation is made because of the simple fact that problems, when articulated or explained by others, are reflected through their personal perspective/biases/filters. Without actually laying eyes on the process, you can only accept the points of view of others and make the best determination you can with the available information. Ultimately, this can lead to identifying the wrong problem and instituting ineffective countermeasures.

Look for:

- Are performance standards visible
- Are schedules being met
- Are employees having difficulty
- Is work being performed correctly
- Where to do you see waste (DOWNTIME)?
- Defects?
- Constraints?
- Variation?

After your Go and See it is imperative to Value Stream the current process.

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Value Stream Mapping (VSM)

VSM is a simple diagram of every step involved in the material and information flows needed to bring a product from order to delivery. The maps can be drawn from different points in time as a way to raise consciousness of opportunities for improvement. It also helps to create understanding of the flow of materials and information, and the value that is created.

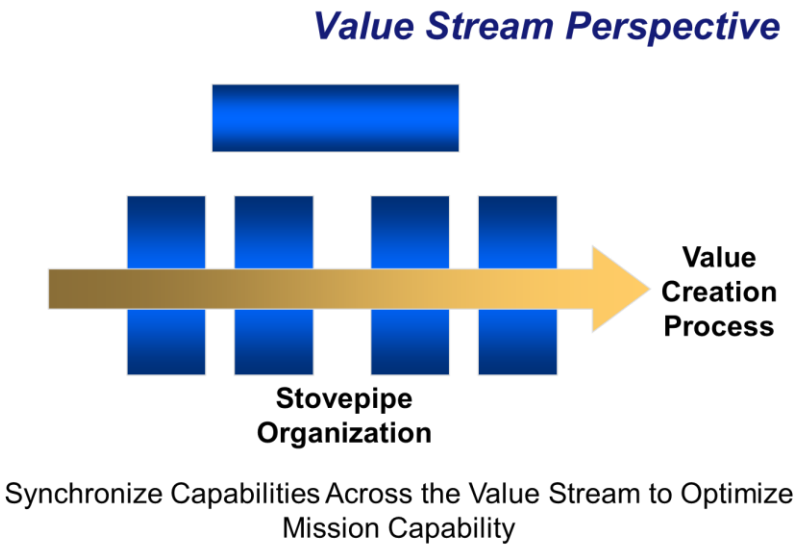

Figure 3

These maps should take into account everyone in the process, i.e. Internal/External customers. In the picture above you can see the Stovepipe Organizations we have in the AF. If we make changes in let's say the Medical Group, how will that affect the Operation's Group? This will be discussed more in depth in 8 Step Problem Solving.

It's a long-term journey to implement a culture of change and empowerment. It's a delivery driver, asking why the airfield entry point can't be moved 20 feet so he doesn't have to get out of his van six extra times a day. It's a vehicle mechanic questioning why he has to walk 200 feet to dispose of oil filters, and then taking the initiative with his supervisor to move the hazardous-material container closer. It's a senior master sergeant and his team changing their work layout at no cost, eliminating the expeditor process, reducing their delivery times from 19 to two hours and transparently exceeding all customer needs.

All of those changes and many more can happen at your base right now. You as an Airman and especially as a leader of Airman must strive to develop this culture through the use of AFSO21 tools in your units.

AFSO21 Tools

There are dozens of tools from which an Airman can choose. You will be amazed at how quickly these can be applied in your units once learned. While you read through these visual your work center, do you see anything you can make more efficient? Here are a few of the most universally applicable tools.

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Standard Work

Standard work represents the best known way to complete a task. Standard work ensures that the same work will take the same amount of resources to achieve the same results every time. This is the bedrock foundation of Continuous Improvement. Without standard work, it is impossible to tell if improvements are due to chance or due to our efforts. Standard work is unique to each process, but they all share certain characteristics:

- It should be the best, safest, easiest, most cost effective and productive way to complete the task.
- It preserves the corporate knowledge of everyone who has done the process in the past for the benefit of everyone who will work the process in the future.
- It provides the basis for measurement against a standard.
- It provides the basis for training future team members on how to perform a task.
- It ensures meeting the customer Critical to Quality (CTQ) requirements.
- It minimizes operator driven variability.

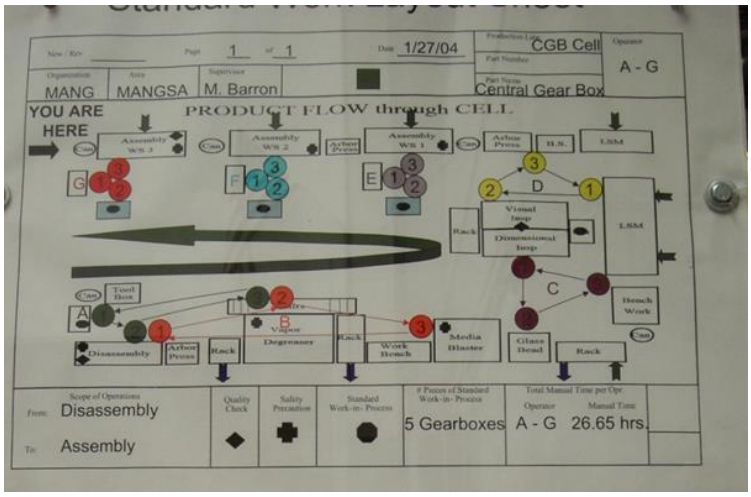

Figure 4. Robins AFB Production Control Board Standard Work design

6-S

This tool has a place for everything and makes it obvious when everything is not in its place. 6-S is the key to Workplace Organization – allowing for effective and efficient flow of the process. Creates a workplace organized, stabilized, and ready for further improvement. Benefits include improved morale, improved safety, improved space utilization, improved discipline and care. 6-S also exposes Waste in the process and sets the foundation for further improvements (often used as first step in improvement process). 6-S includes:

1. **S**ort – eliminate what is not needed
2. **S**traighten – arrange items to be accessible and visible
3. **S**hine – clean everything and keep it clean

4. **S**tandardize – create rules to maintain first 3 S's
5. **S**ustain – keep 6-S activities from unraveling
6. **S**afety – Identify and eliminate safety hazards

Visual Management

A workplace organized such that one can visually separate normal from abnormal working conditions. The ideal state is that all personnel should be able to manage every aspect of the process at a glance using visual data, signals and guides. Benefits are easier access to process information, informed decisions, and better ownership of process control by workforce. Pull being one of the Lean Principles is a big part of this Visual workplace, there are visual cues for when an item is needed ie: Pull got its start in America in the grocery business: The grocer replaced on their shelves, products demanded or consumed by the customer. The grocer needed deliveries on time, the proper brand, and the right price and size to satisfy the customer. To do this, the grocer used communication with supplier and customer, visual clues and rotation of stock first in first out.

Cell Design/Flow

Focuses on designing how workers are arranged relative to the work and to each other. A poor cell design is when processes control what people do instead of people controlling what processes do. This is an unarguable sign that there is a need for implementing cell design into an existing value stream or process flow. Remember the USAFA RIE? Before the RIE, patients were traveling to 3 different clinics, Cadet Physicals, Optometry, and Dental with multiple appointments. With the addition of the civilian Optometry technician in Cadet Physicals and a new process that flowed through both clinics it narrowed it to 2 clinics and one day to get everything done.

Figure 5. Cellular Flow

Utilize Value Stream Maps and Spaghetti Diagrams to redirect the flow of assets through a shop and to eliminate constraints.

Theory of Constraints (TOC)

TOC is a process improvement technique focused on maximizing throughput by use of a "constraint-based" approach. TOC seeks first to identify the constraint preventing greater throughput, like a hose with a crimp. Every system will have one process step that is the most limiting and therefore degrading the system's ability to achieve the organizational goal. This

limiting process step is the constraint. The constraint must be identified and the system managed in relation to that constraint. Trying to improve any process step other than the constraint by definition will not result in any greater throughput from the process and will in all likelihood make things worse.

Constraints can be broadly classified into one of three categories: internal resource constraints, market constraints or policy constraints. In order to manage performance, constraints must be identified and treated specially.

TOC Implementation steps:

- Identify the constraint
- Decide how to exploit the constraint
- Subordinate all other processes to above decision
- Elevate the constraint
- If, a new constraint emerges, return to Step 1. Don't let inertia become the constraint.
- Change the system if required

Tools should be selected based on how well they address the root cause(s) identified in the use of the OODA Loop and the Eight Step Problem Solving Model. If there are gaps between where your organizational objectives should be and where it is now, this is where a Rapid Improvement Event using AFSO21 8 Step Problem Solving should be used to get to the Root Cause of the issue.

Figure 6. Gap Analysis

OODA Loop and 8 Step Problem Solving

OODA Loop

The OODA Loop (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act) was originated in the 1950's by Col. John R. Boyd, USAF. The OODA loop is an objective description of the decision making process. Due to Col. Boyd's emphasis on the infinitely repeating nature of decision making it is an excellent match for the AFSO21 principle of Continuous Improvement. Both principles are based on the concept that the process is never done. The OODA loop process can be sped up to gain advantage in quick decision making situations, it can be observed at the theater level when one Air Force plans and executes cycles of combat sorties faster than the opposing Air Force can react to the damage created by the previous cycle of sorties, thus preventing any effective defense or counter attack. The four steps of the OODA loop further breaks it down into an Eight-Step Problem-Solving Model that is flexible enough to be effective at any level; Air Force, MAJCOM, Wing, Value Stream and Individual Airmen levels.

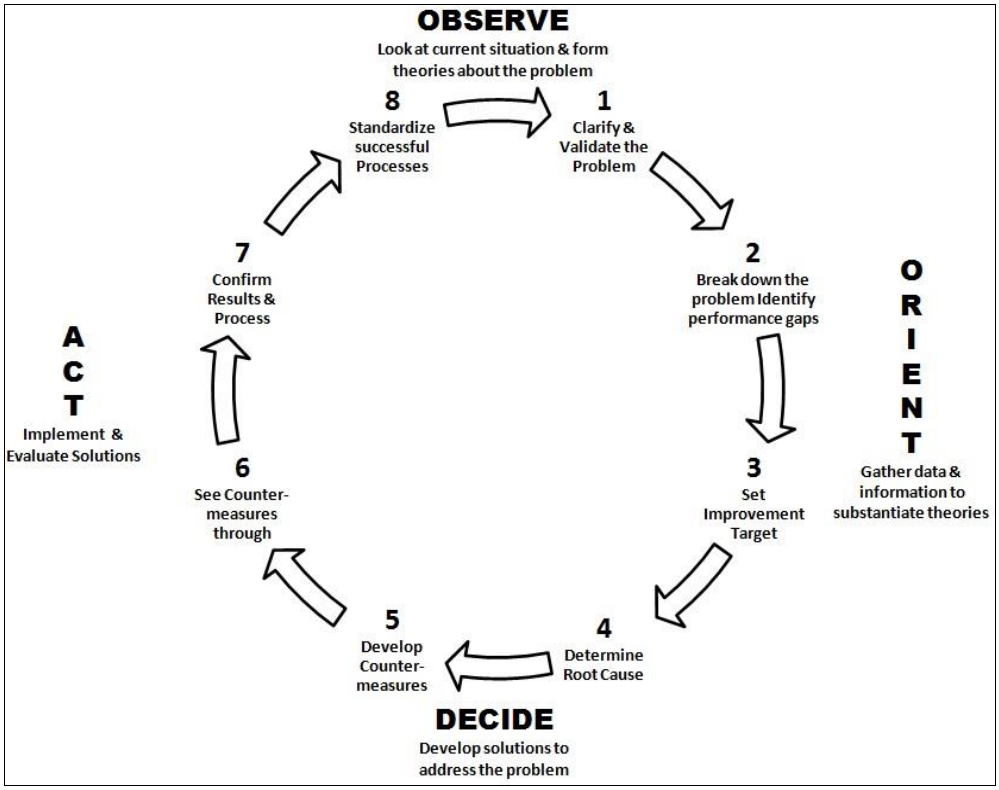

Figure 7. 8-Step Problem-Solving Process

8 Step Problem Solving

STEP 1: *Clarify & Validate the Problem* OODA

The critical first step to effective Problem-Solving is to clearly understand the problem. Any problem solving effort that begins with "We all know what the problem is, so what are we going to do about it?" is doomed to failure before it begins. This mindset leads to several obvious errors. First, because the "obvious solution" is often just a band aid and doesn't address the

underlying problem. Second, this mindset closes out the possibility of innovative solutions that are better suited to solving the real problem. Using the information gathered from your Go and See you can start to get to the bottom of the real issue.

Which problems first?

There are lean tools that can assist the Air Force leader in deciding which problems should be tackled:

- Strategic Alignment and Deployment (SA&D) – As discussed in Strategic Planning, each organization has this, if you don't know what this is, you'd better find out quickly. This organizational tool provides a framework for ensuring resources and activities are linked to the key strategies, directives and goals of the enterprise. Any individual problem solving effort can have greater impact if it is aligned with the rest of the organization.
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis – Provides an objective means to identify areas of need for problem solving efforts.
- Voice of the Customer (VOC) – Only one entity can define value - the customer. Understanding who the customers are and what their needs are is a prerequisite to understanding whether or not those needs are being met.
- Value Stream Mapping (VSM)/Voice of the Process (VOP) – Overview of the process at any level to determine areas of needed focus.

How to craft a problem statement

A good problem statement should include:

- *What* – is the problem? Often, two or three words (a noun and a verb) are enough. e.g. Target missed, Aircraft broken, Repair slow, Computer crashed, Airmen discriminated against.
- *Where* – did the problem happen?
- *When* – did the problem happen?
- *What* – is the significance of the problem? Many problems exist, some are more critical than others. When tackling any problem, Air Force leaders should ask themselves: "Will solving this problem further the strategic goals of my organization?"

Consider the following situation: Your boss just put you in charge of the fuels flight distribution section where you supervise the fuel truck operators. Their current average response time to fuel aircraft is 40 minutes. This has been a gradual increase over the last 4 months when the average response time was 25 minutes. The acceptable standard is no more than 30 minutes. Therefore, your problem statement might be,

"Average response time to fuel aircraft on the ground has increased from 25 minutes to 40 minutes over the last 4 months. The increase in time to refuel the aircraft has caused delays and missed sorties."

This problem statement is clear and specific and uses measurable terms of quantity and time. It's objective and clearly identifies the current condition.

STEP 2: ***Break Down the Problem/Identify Performance Gaps*** **OODA.**

Once the proper target is identified and the problem is clearly defined, data should be gathered about the problem area. This is sometimes a frustrating step for Airmen who want to move to taking action and implementing solutions. But the better a problem is understood the better the solution will be. Often, the more thorough the evaluation of a problem in this step, the better a leader can judge the impacts of potential solutions offered later and evaluate solutions during implementation.

If you do not understand the current process, it is impossible to fix it. Using the information gleamed from your Go and See start Value Stream Mapping (VSM) the current state. As discussed earlier, this is the primary tool for defining the current state, the ideal state, and the practically achievable future state. A vision is a view into the future that succinctly describes how the organization will conduct business. It implies a gap between the current state and a better future state.

Current-State Mapping

The goal is to identify all areas in which the flow is not smooth from process to process without interruption. The three elements mapped are:

1. The flow of Materials.
2. The flow of Information.
3. The flow of the product through the processes.

Once the current state is mapped there are two tools that can assist in understanding what the data is saying.

1. Performance Gap Analysis – Refer to Figure 3. Gap Analysis above. What is the difference between the level of performance seen today and the level of performance identified as needed tomorrow?
2. Bottleneck Analysis (or Constraint Analysis) – Which step(s) in the process are inhibiting the flow of the entire process. Sometimes referred to as the weakest link, or the slowest step, this analysis is defined by the Theory of Constraints (TOC).

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Current state mapping lays out the process to be able to set improvement targets.

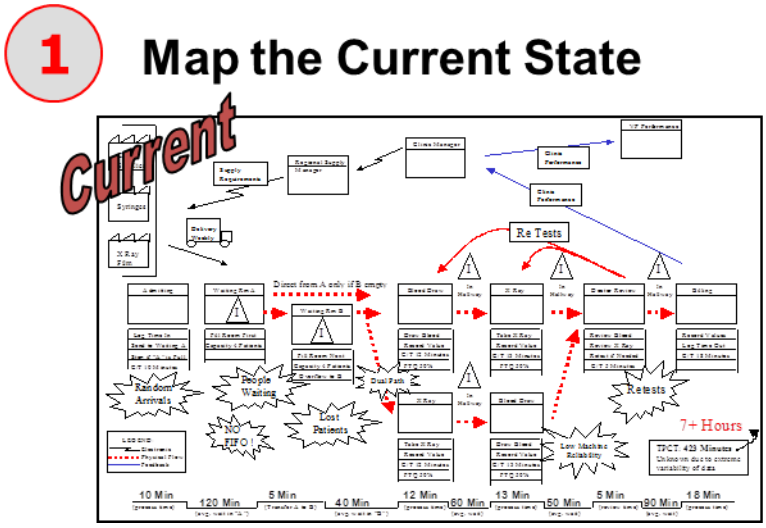

Figure 8

STEP 3: *Set Improvement Targets* OODA

Once you have developed a clear and objective problem statement, Step 1, Clarify & Validate the Problem and Broken down the problem/Identified performance gaps in Step 2, you then need to set improvement targets on two levels simultaneously, the strategic and the tactical.

At a high level, the Air Force leader must create that vision of what the organization will strive to become. A future state can be defined as "better" only when it supports effective fulfillment of the organization's mission.

Future-State Mapping

- The Future State Map will create a vision for the implementation of a Lean/CPI System.
- The map will represent how things will change so that everyone can be aware of what will happen.
- The Future State Map will show opportunities for improvement.
- The Future State Map may have several iterations.
- First develop an Ideal State without consideration as to how it will be achieved – no restraints or constraints should be considered. This is especially important if the people in the process cannot move past the current way of doing business.
- Then develop a map showing the first steps necessary to reach the ideal state.
- There is no —final state because methods continually improve.

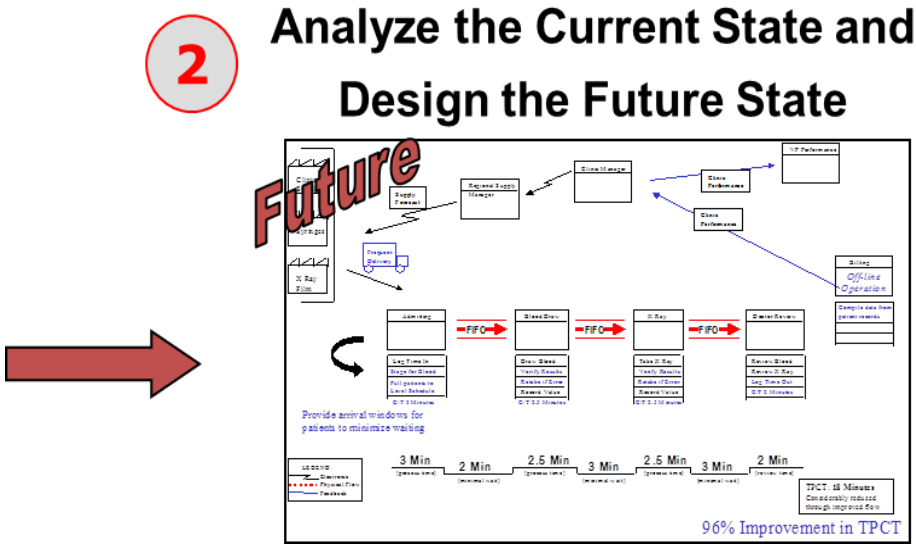

Figure 9

Tactical Targets

Tactical targets define the performance levels required to make the vision a reality. Targets should be challenging but achievable and have B-SMART characteristics.

- ***B**alanced* – Ensure goals are balanced across the multiple fronts of organizational output and multiple targets;
- ***S**pecific* – Have desirable outputs that are based on subject matter expert knowledge and experience and are applicable to the process improvement activity;
- ***M**easurable* – Includes time frames and have data that is obtainable from specific sources;
- ***A**ttainable* – Resources are available; may have some risk, but success is possible;
- ***R**esults Focused* – Link to the mission, vision, and goals and are meaningful to the user;
- ***T**imely* – Provide step-by-step views versus giant leaps and are measurable at interim milestones.

At this point, you should take your Current/Future Value Streams and your B-SMART goals and begin determining root causes.

STEP 4: *Determine Root Causes* OODA

All too often Air Force leaders find themselves addressing problems that have been "solved" many times before. This is usually due to problem solving efforts directed at the symptom(s) a problem presents rather than at the root cause of the problem. If an aircraft is constantly breaking down and becoming non mission capable, should the goal be to: reduce aircraft usage, improve repair cycle time, improve the quality of replacement parts, improve the aircraft design, or improve the aircraft design process? Clearly, each step becomes increasingly difficult but each step also has a greater impact in preventing the recurrence of the problem. Root Cause Analysis

is a tradeoff between digging as deeply as possible and finding the deepest point that is still within the team's sphere of influence.

There are six tools that can assist the Airman in determining the "true" Root Cause. These tools are defined in detail in the ASFO21 playbook; we will only cover ***two*** in this lesson.

1. **5 Whys? -** To prevent a problem from ever occurring again, teams must address the root causes of the problems rather than just the symptoms. The Five Whys helps teams to drill down to the chain of events that lead to a problem. Teams should not take five as an absolute, as they may need to go deeper than five and rarely ever reach root causes in fewer than five steps. Teams should be cautious as the Five Whys implies that every event has only one cause. Often there are several factors that come together to cause an event. At times, teams may drill down to items that are out of there sphere of influence. Although the teams may not be able to control the ultimate root cause, they can at least inform those who do and implement countermeasures as far down the root cause chain as they are able.

   One of the strengths of the Five Whys is its simplicity. Teams start with a simple problem statement and ask, —Why did the problem occur? When an explanation is reached the team asks why again…five times.

   1. **Why** did the aircraft launch late?
      - Because the fueling team was slow.
   2. **Why** was the refueling team slow?
      - Because one Airman from the fueling team was in the infirmary with a broken leg.
   3. **Why** did the Airman break his leg?
      - Because the Airman slipped on an oil spill in the hangar.
   4. **Why** was there an oil spill in the hangar?
      - Because a machine in the hangar had old washers that were leaking oil.
   5. **Why** didn't the maintenance department change the washers?
      - Because the maintenance department's budget was cut, and they chose to slide all the preventive maintenance events by six months.

   If we were to stop at the first, which is what we have a tendency to do on a daily basis, we would have thought there was a problem with the team. Second why, the solution is to move that Airman somewhere else, then someone else slips. Third why, clean up the spill and then it's there again. You get the point; keep drilling until you get to the true root cause!

2. **Fish Bone Diagrams –** (a.k.a. Cause and Effect Diagrams) - A simple way to visually depict the relationship between specific categories of process inputs and the undesirable output;

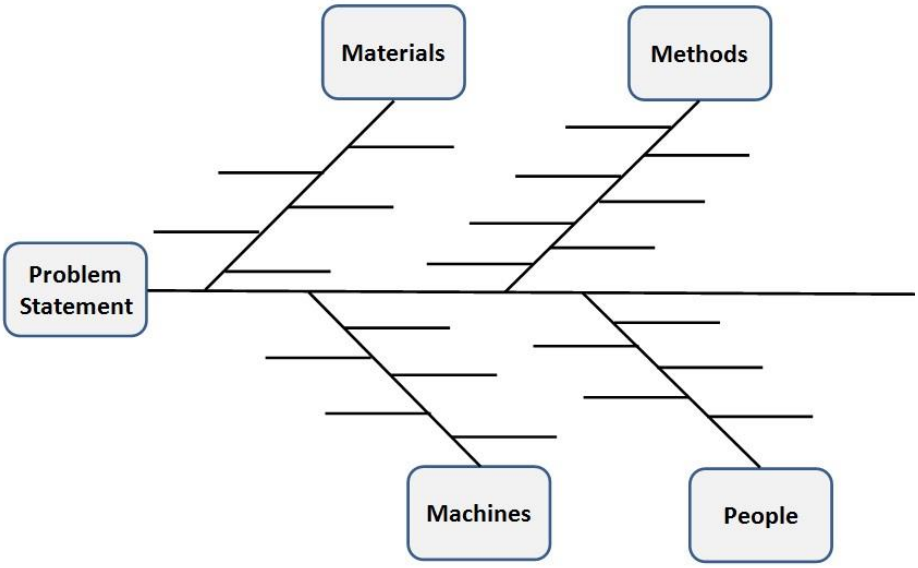

Figure 10 Fish Bone Diagram

Fill in the fishbone by generating as many causes as possible using brainstorming. Although the diagram uses the 3Ms and a P (Materials, Methods, Machines, and People), feel free to categorize causes in ways that make sense for your situation. Two other useful categories include the 4Ss (Surroundings, Suppliers, Systems, and Skills) and the 4Ps (Policies, Procedures, People, and Plant). Do not worry too much about the categories; they are not as important as identifying potential causes.

Root Cause Analysis can be as much an art as a science. Airmen should keep four questions in mind to help guide them through the process.

1. Which of the Root Cause Analysis tools should I use?
   - Why these tools?
   - Who do I need to involve in the Root Cause Analysis? Ten heads are better than one. Account for cultural issues related to the problem.
2. What is (are) the root cause(s) according to the tools?
3. Will addressing these root causes address the performance gap?
4. Can the problem be turned on or off by addressing this root cause?

Once the root cause is determined, the team must decide the best solutions with the most impact.

STEP 5: *Develop Countermeasures* OODA

The decision making and solution development step is over half way through the Eight-Step process. If the first four steps have been done correctly, this should be the easiest step of all. As simple as this step should be, there are some very important guidelines the Air Force Leader should follow in order to ensure the greatest possible likelihood of success.

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The key principle to remember is that the impact of a solution is a combination of the quality of the solution and the acceptance of the solution by the people who must implement it. The relationship is similar to a mathematical formula;

(Quality of solution) X (Acceptance) = Impact

An excellent solution that receives no support has zero impact. On the other hand, an average solution that receives some support will have some impact. With the entire first half of the Eight-Step Problem-Solving Model focused on the left half of the equation, it is now up to the Air Force leader to present the solution in such a way as to gain its acceptance by those that must implement it.

Guiding Principles when Developing the Countermeasures:

- Use the AFSO21 Standard Action Plan, Time Line, and Report Out templates available at the end of this lesson. The reports provide a common structure to ease information sharing and provide a concise format;
- Select the most practical and effective countermeasures – use the "Keep it Simple" principle;
- Create a clear and detailed action plan;
  - Use the same B-SMART principles, defined in Step 2, Set Improvement Targets,
  - Reference facilitation techniques as appropriate,
- MOST importantly, build consensus with others by involving all stakeholders appropriately. By judiciously involving stakeholders in the solution creation step, the stakeholders will develop a sense of ownership in the solution and therefore, in the solutions success. This also prevents the complaint that the stake holders are victims of the solution process.

- Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!

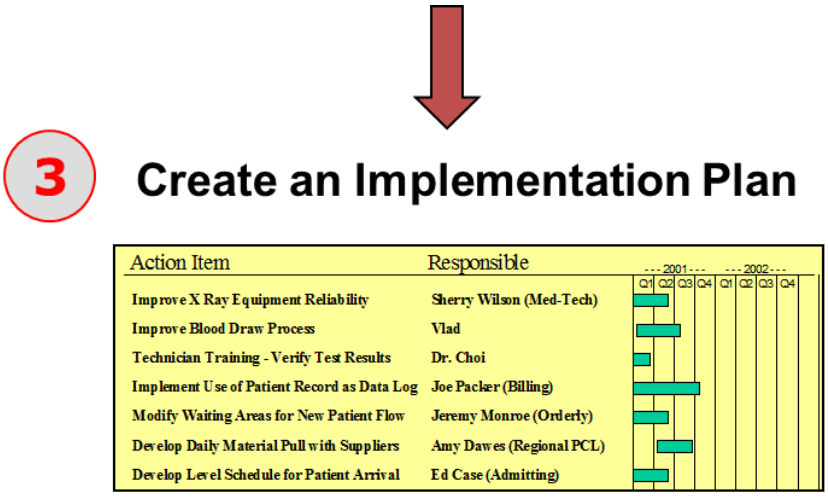

Figure 11

Finally, consider other alternatives rather than attempt to implement ineffective countermeasures or ones that are not feasible or have little impact.

STEP 6: *See Countermeasures Through* OODA

Action comes at the end of the OODA Loop for a reason. Air Force leaders acting before they are ready for this step are likely to be as successful as the marksman with the motto "ready, fire, aim." There are three key questions the Air Force leader must answer before taking action:

1. Which improvement philosophy best fits my situation?
2. What is the best setting for implementing my solution?
3. What process improvement tools are most appropriate?

Setting

The Action Form shows an area to mark each of the below settings. Sometimes at the end of the 8 Steps we will find that to fix processes we can't always "Just Do It." It may require another Rapid Improvement Event or as in the case of a total reorganization it may require a full Improvement Project. If it does require "Project Management," this is where we look for resources to run a Project. The first step of any large scale project is to find out the feasibility, meaning can your organization afford it, and then start the planning process. There is software online that will break the project down for you, give you a timeline and help you plan. There are also numerous books on the subject that will walk you through Project Management. Our focus in this lesson is on Just Do It's, i.e. move a piece of equipment from one location to another and RIE's i.e. walk through another 8 Step Problem Solving event. The largest factor in determining the most appropriate setting is the scope of effort required.

1. **Just Do It** (a.k.a. Point Improvement) – One person (or a small team) in less than a day.
   - Use torque wrenches instead of adjustable wrenches;
   - Route paperwork via email instead of US Postal Service or USAF distribution channels;
2. **Rapid Improvement Event (RIE)** – A small team in less than one week. A Charter must be developed, a team selected and communication begun as early as possible.
   - Improve aircraft servicing cycle time;
   - Improve 1st pass yield of brake shoe repair;
3. **Improvement project** - A large team over a long period.
   - Shorten aircraft annual overhaul cycle time;
   - Write software to track annual overhauls.

In addition to these three areas, there is almost always some form of TRAINING required to make the solution work. The training can often be linked to the communications plan developed in Step Five "Develop Countermeasures." The training is usually needed at several levels simultaneously. Implementers and front line supervisors need the most intensive training, with less detailed but no less important training at echelons above. Customers and Suppliers of the targeted process may also need training.

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STEP 7: *Confirm Results & Process* OODA

Step Seven closely mirrors the data collection portion of Step Two "Breakdown the Problem and Identify Performance gaps.". The project(s) should be monitored for:

- Performance relative to the Baseline developed in Steps One and Two;
- Performance relative to B-SMART targets established in Step Three;
- Performance relative to where we thought we would be at this stage of the solution implementation;
- If we are not meeting targets by deadlines, do we need to return to Step Four Determine Root Cause(s)? Incorrect Root Cause(s) determination is the most common mistake made by Process Improvement efforts.

In addition to the conventional measures mentioned above, the Team Leader or someone they designate may have to act as a Project Manager and evaluate other dimensions of the solution implementation as well. Each project in the portfolio must be evaluated as to its overall fit in the command's Strategic Alignment and Deployment. Each project must be tracked to determine if its actual impact is different than originally projected; to evaluate compliance with standard work (affects repeatability of any successes); and to determine the sustainability of results. (Are teams achieving their objectives by executing the plan as written or are they improving results merely by using twice as many resources or working twice as hard?)

STEP 8: *Standardize Successful Processes* OODA

Step Eight is the most commonly skipped and under completed of the entire Problem-Solving Process. It is very tempting to take new found knowledge and skills and immediately move on to the next improvement initiative, skipping the effort of ensuring the results stick.

Step Eight can be defined by the answers to three Questions:

1. What is needed to standardize the improvements?
   - Tech order changes, Air Force Instruction changes, Official Instruction changes.
   - Equipment materiel changes, Vendor or Supplier changes;
   - Changes at training commands, Changes by mobile Training Units.
2. How should improvements and lessons learned be communicated?
   - CPI Management Tool (PowerSteering®);
   - Key Meetings;
   - Air Force Publications, Message Traffic, Chain of Command;
   - Communities of Practice (Air Force Knowledge Now);
3. Were other opportunities or problems identified by the Problem-Solving Process?
   - Restart the OODA Loop – This should be the Air Force Leader's first instinct, as the OODA loop is infinite.

The never ending cycle of the OODA Loop and the Continuous Improvement Process closely parallel one another. Effective problem solving must follow the Observe, Orient, Decide, and Act process. Attempting to skip, reorder or short cut steps invariably leads to, at best, sub-optimal solutions and at worst, outright failure.

Most of all get experienced help. Each base will have trained AFSO21 facilitators in the form of Greenbelts and at least one Master Blackbelt assigned, and they will more than likely work for the Wing. Utilize their help to identify opportunities, drive AFSO21 behaviors, and sustain improvements. SNCO's must ensure they and their organizations are building a culture, utilizing the tools available following the Eight-Steps, and selecting solutions that are aligned with the needs of the organization will ensure the greatest impact.

Airman Powered by Innovation (API)

According to the Air Force Guidance Memorandum (AFGM) 38-01, the Airmen Powered by Innovation (API) Program replaced the following programs: Innovative Development Through Employee Awareness (IDEA), Best Practices (BP), Productivity Enhancing Capital Investment (PECI), and expanded the Air Force Smart Operations for the Twenty-first Century (AFSO21). Since the Air Force objective is to improve its effectiveness and efficiency, the API program works within our ever changing and often challenging financial environment to create resource savings and improved mission performance,. AFGM 38-01 provides the guidance and procedures for processing ideas, including the brief overview below:

1. *Authorities, Roles, and Responsibilities:* This section explains the roles and responsibilities of people and offices involved in the API program. These responsibilities range from what all Airmen should do to what key players will do within the API program. One of the key players is the Organizational Level Decision Maker (OLDM) who has the authority to approve an idea and direct implementation. Examples of OLDMs would be Wing Commanders, MAJCOM Commanders, and HAF 2-Digits.

2. *Airman Powered by Innovation Ideas Process:* This section explains the four phase API idea process which includes: Ideation/Submission Phase, Evaluation Phase, Implementation Phase, and Hold-the Gains Phase. Airmen can submit ideas by using the following website: https://ipds.afpc.randolph.af.mil. Once an idea is submitted, the four-phase process begins.

3. *Ideas Approved for Implementation:* This section covers ideas approved for implementation and awards. Ideas approved for implementation can exist at the following levels: Local implementation, MAJCOM-wide implementation, and Air Force wide implementation. The ideas that deliver confirmed results in effectiveness and/or efficiency when implemented will be categorized into tangible or intangible results. Once the ideas are determined to be tangible or intangible then the awards can be based on the tangible or intangible benefits in an effort calculate the award amount. AFGM 38-01 contains specific award amounts that are listed in the following tables: Table 5.1 Quick Guide for Calculating Awards based on Tangible Benefits and Table 5.2 Scale of Awards Based on Intangible Benefits (IAW 36-1004).

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Summary

Wrapping this lesson up, we should point out the functional role of SNCOs concerning process improvement. SNCOs are expected to constantly improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Put simply, SNCOs are expected to find ways to be more effective in order to free up resources (money and people) so the Air Force can utilize these resource(s) in other areas. This also includes finding ways to reduce backlogged work in order to more effectively and efficiently accomplish the primary mission. AFSO21 is an Air Force-unique model to implement Continuous Process Improvement practices into our day-to-day operations. It uses portions of various process improvement approaches and blends them into a standard model that fits Air Force needs. As this approach was developed, we were mindful of the processes we share with businesses that are successfully implementing these improvements, as well as inherent differences between us. Most importantly, this architecture is based on the idea that process improvement will never be complete and it's our jobs as SNCOs to build a culture that understands and uses the Lean tools available to all Airmen. Remember good processes can always be made better!

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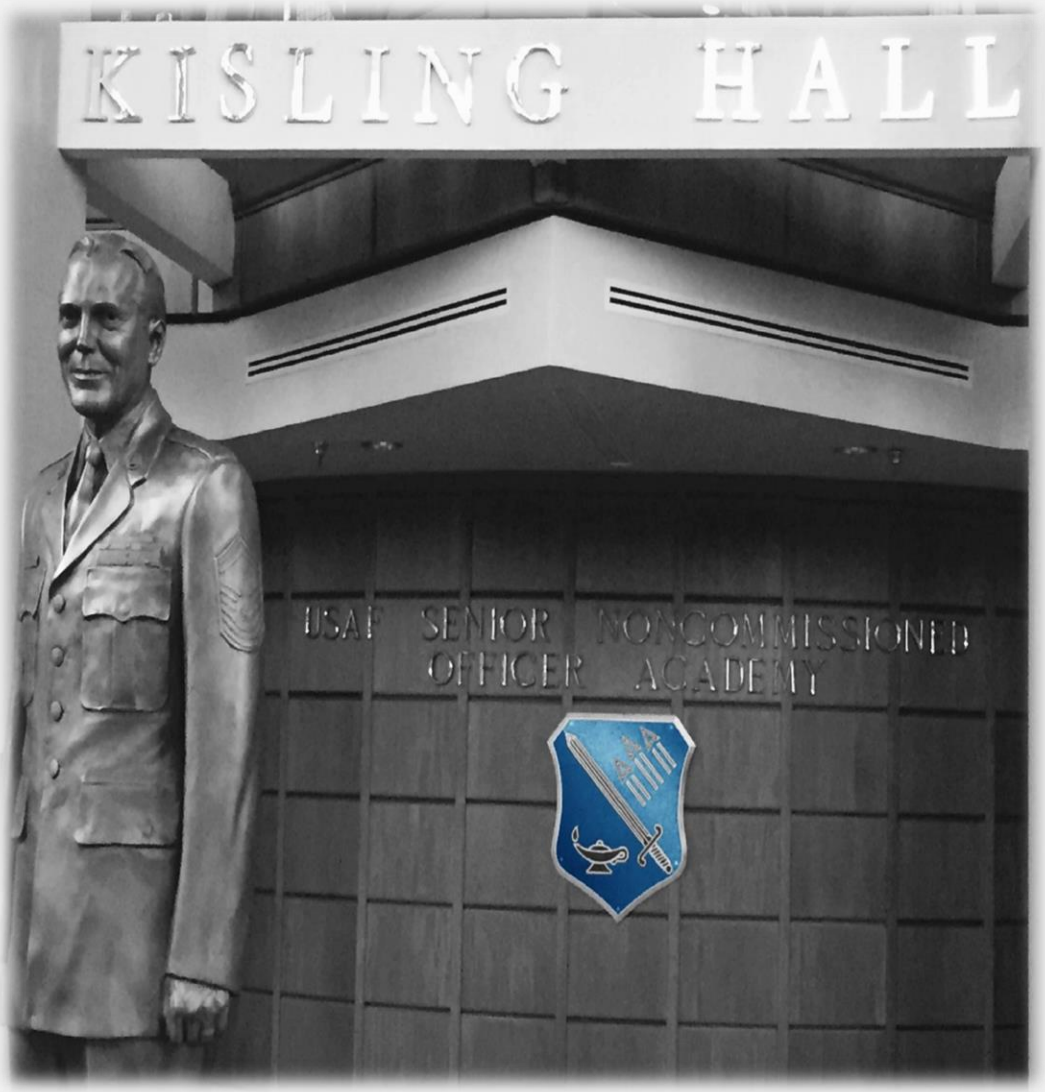

Resource Stewardship

Inside this Study Guide:

Resource Stewardship

Financial Management

- Financial Key Terms
- Execution Plan
- Building an EP
- Budget Review
- Budget Cycle

Manpower Management

- Organizational Structure
- Program Allocation and Control
- Requirements Determination

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Resource Stewardship

In simple terms, resource stewardship is the prudent use of allocated funds and the efficient and effective use of time as well as assigned facilities, space, equipment, and people.

SNCOs must be aware of timelines and milestones associated with resource stewardship and be able to determine, analyze, and prioritize them well enough to not just effectively accomplish their mission in the near-term, but ensure long-term success as well.

Ensuring success is not easy given the number of variables that affect resource planning. First, you must know what your mission is today as well as what it will be several months and years down the road. When we are faced with personnel turnover with mismatched arrival/departure dates, budget cycles coupled with recent belt-tightening, space utilization and manpower audits, military-to-civilian position conversions, and so forth, we discover that determining, analyzing, and prioritizing timelines and milestones is more difficult and time consuming than it looks. However, with a little knowledge and lots of practice, managing the resources under your control will soon become another familiar and routine responsibility. Now that we understand better what resource stewardship entail and all of the forces that impact it, let's begin our journey with a discussion about financial management.

Financial Management

The goal of this main point is not to make you a financial expert, but to help you gain a working knowledge of financial management concepts that Air Force leadership considers most important to SNCOs. In pursuit of that goal, we'll look at some Financial Key Terms, resource allocation first, then cover the budgeting process, and conclude with the Anti-Deficiency Act.

Financial Key Terms

There are many definitions associated with how the Air Force manages finances. It is important for you to understand them because they will be used later in the chapter.

- **Allocation** — The system of dividing expenses and income, among the various branches and departments.
- **Apportionment** — A distribution by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) of amounts available for obligation in appropriation or fund accounts of the executive branch. The distribution makes amounts available on the basis of time periods (usually quarterly), programs, activities, projects, objects, or combinations thereof. The apportionment system is intended to achieve an effective and orderly use of funds. The amounts so apportioned limit the obligations that may be incurred.
- **Continuing Resolution Authority (CRA)** — Budget authority resulting from legislation introduced as a joint resolution and enacted by the Congress to provide authority for federal agencies to continue operations until a specified date or until the regular appropriations are enacted. The Continuing Resolution usually specifies a maximum rate at which obligations may be incurred based on the rate of the prior year, the President's Budget Request, or an appropriation bill passed by either or both Houses of the Congress. Obligations under Continuing Resolution Authority are usually controlled by apportionment. There is no —standard CRA language. Each CRA enacted must be

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carefully read for the specific provisions pertaining to the particular fiscal year being addressed.

- **Cost Center (CC)** — The organization that gathers and distributes cost data. An example of a cost center is your financial analysis or public affairs office.
- **Cost Center Managers (CCM)** – They are the base or point of initial action in the building block process of operating budget developments. CCMs develop resource requirements and narrative justifications that determine the validity of operating budgets and Operational & Maintenance (O&M) execution plans.
- **Element of Expense Investment Codes (EEIC); Financial Focused** — These represent the final breakout in the budget structure. The number varies with the major command (MAJCOM), depending on the number of sub-elements required for local management. This part of the budget structure is quite similar to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) object classification. Air Force EEICs and DoD elements of expense are in the Financial Management Data Dictionary.
- **Financial Management Board (FMB)** — The senior advisory committee chaired by the Commander or Deputy Commander and includes group commander level members and the Comptroller (at installations), Directors, and special staffs (at commands). The FMB approves budgets, financial plans, and revisions. The FMB also distributes the annual funding, establishes priorities, and ensures consistency with programs and missions. FMB approval represents the final, approved installation or command budget submitted to higher command and the final distribution of funds received from higher command. The chairperson calls FMB meetings. The FMB retains minutes for review by higher authority.
- **Financial Working Group (FWG)** — Reviews program and cost factors, compares actual with prior year costs, reviews justifications, periodically evaluates performance against estimates, and submits a recommended financial plan to the FMB. The comptroller or the financial analysis officer chairs the Financial Working Group (FWG) and designates appropriate resource advisors and other members to comprise the FWG.
- **Fiscal Year (FY)** – October 1st through September 30th each year. Each FY is divided into quarters with specific actions within the budget process that take place within each quarter.
- **Obligation** — A commitment of allocated funds to a specific contract, purchase, equipment item, et cetera.
- **Resource Advisors** — The resource advisors monitor and help prepare estimated requirements for resources. They participate in the development of obligation and expense targets, and they monitor the use of resources in day-to-day operations. They are the key player in ensuring the budget is being executed. There are resources advisors at both group and squadron levels.
- **Responsibility Center Manager (RCM)** — The RCM normally heads an organization that plans, organizes, directs, and coordinates activities of subordinate organizations and functions. RCMs are the principal level that manages financial resources. The RCM

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directs work by subordinate functions (usually CCs) that, in turn, use resources to do that work.

Execution Plan

Do you track the funds your organization spends? How do you know if you have funds available to continue supporting the mission? Do you have a list of mission requirements that you do not have the money to purchase?

As a SNCO, the amount of planning and effort and how well you determine and analyze requirements will greatly enhance your ability to secure funds for your organization and that in turn will affect how effectively you accomplish the mission.

People, equipment, facilities, and funds are all considered important resources; however, funding determines resource availability and knowing the method for securing funds is important for every SNCO.

This section will help you understand the execution plan. You will begin by reviewing the purpose of the plan. Then, you will discuss the essential elements like listing mission critical requirements projected for the upcoming FY. Next, you will learn how to gather information for the plan. Finally, to wrap up this section, you will cover the budget review where we'll discuss the purpose for the budget review and how to justify unfunded requirements. So, now you know what to expect, learning about the execution plan, let's begin by discussing the purpose behind the plan.

Purpose

The execution plan, or EP for short, is a paper or electronic product used to identify costs and justification for mission critical funded and unfunded requirements. It also outlines how the funds will be spent.

The EP is used to ensure the reasonable distribution of the President's Budget consistent with accomplishing Air Force program objectives. All levels of an organization use the EP to identify and prioritize key requirements for current year spending and for developing next year's budget via the EP.

Despite mission differences, most organizations' EPs include the same basic requirements. These include, but are not limited to, government purchase card items, equipment purchase, personnel training, and temporary duty costs. Most organizations also have information technology costs such as the purchase, repair, or replacement of computers, monitors, and copiers. Other common areas include civilian pay, building maintenance and repair, and custodial contracts. As a SNCO you must determine, analyze, and prioritize available funding and apply sound financial management principles to ensure mission effectiveness; the document you need to accomplish this charge is the EP.

To learn more about the EP that controls spending within your organization contact your organization's resource advisor (RA). The RA must coordinate execution planning with the managers above and below them in the chain of command, and they must deal directly with

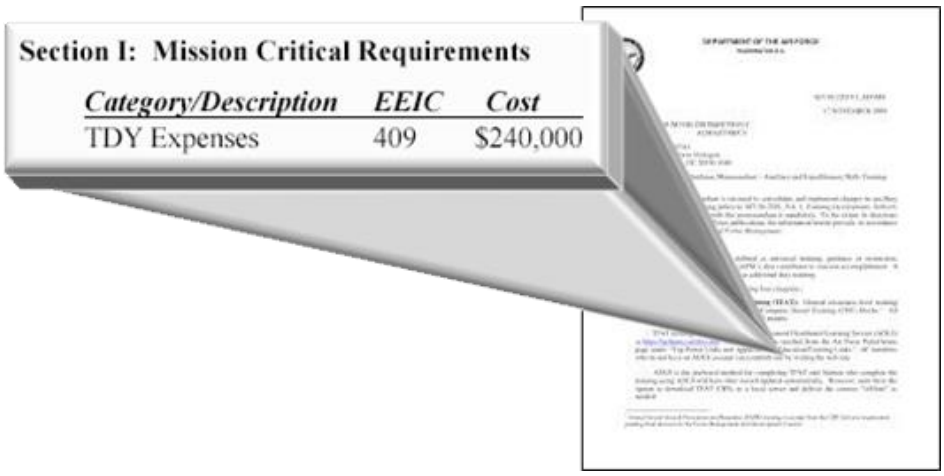
RCMs and CCMs. When you begin taking on supervisor and superintendent roles you will need to direct information to the RA. Now that you have an understanding of the purpose behind the EP; to protect, justify, and secure funds necessary for mission accomplishment, let's move on to the essential elements involved.

Essential Elements

Although there is no Air Force standard for what an EP must look like, the most effective plans include the following sections: Mission Critical Requirements, Justification, Unfunded Requirements with justification, and a Spend Plan. While we are reviewing each section, view this as if we are looking at last year's EP as our starting point prior to submitting this year's EP. Let's take a closer look at each section.

- ***Listing Of Mission Critical Requirements Projected For The Next Fiscal Year***

This section lists all mission critical requirements. These are items that if they are not funded, you will not be able to complete your mission or it will be drastically hindered. This section should include the category/description of the expense, an element of expense investment code (EEIC), and the estimated cost. List all mission critical requirements in this section. Review the example below:



Section I: Mission Critical Requirements

Category/Description	*EEIC*	*Cost*
TDY Expenses	409	$240,000

A majority of the time, an EP has been established wherever you may be assigned. If you are reviewing last year's EP, the items in this section were approved and budgeted for. If you are reviewing your EP for submission for the upcoming FY, then you will need to determine if items in this section are still mission critical requirements. One other question to ask when reviewing your EP for submission is, were there any unfunded items on last year's EP that were funded and are still mission critical requirements? If so, you will move those items from the unfunded section to this section for this year's EP submission.

If you are reviewing a past EP, make sure the EEIC is still current and applicable to all expense categories. An incorrect EEIC on your EP will cause it to get sent back or denied. For example, you may have a requirement of TDYs for mandatory training, but if you apply an EEIC of 61950 (Government Purchase Card EEIC) your EP will be sent back or that expense may get denied and not be funded.

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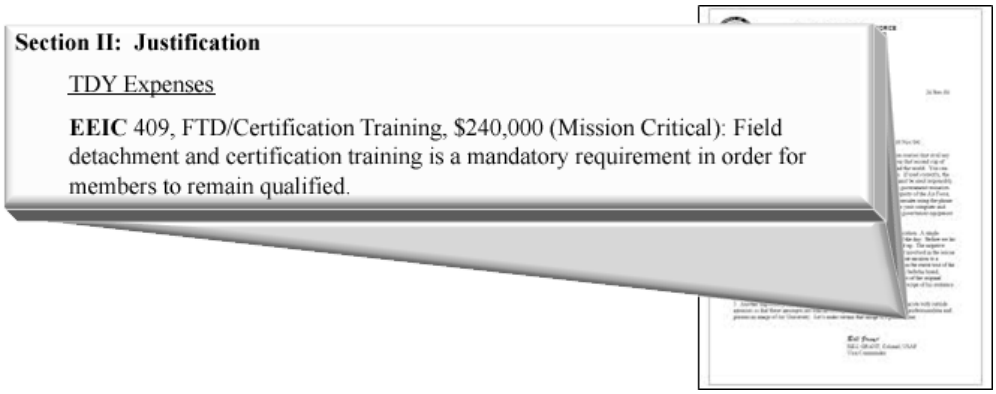
Another consideration for this the funded listing is the amount of funds you will need for the requirement. If you determine an item listed in this section is still mission critical, you need to analyze if the associated costs are still the same. Use last year's cost as a starting point and then do some cost analysis. For example, if your workcenter has printer paper as a mission critical item, has the cost of paper increased since last year? Has it decreased? If so, you will need to adjust the cost associated with this item. You also should consider any mission variances. Consider the "TDY Expenses" in the example above; has the amount of members requiring certification changed? If the number has increased or decreased it would affect the $240,000 required. Have there been any changes to the AFIs or policies that are requiring this training? Has there been any changes to the certification course; location, cost, or length?

Usually it is acceptable to vary the cost for your funded mission requirements by a percentage. Let's consider the amount of members requiring in the examples has increased and the cost will be $250,000 this FY. Most organizations will allow a small percentage of cost fluctuation before requiring an unfunded request. Communicate with your RA and discuss your organizations' policy. After you have properly listed all funded requirements, it's time to provide justification for each item.

- ***Thorough Justification of Mission Requirements***

After you have completed your listing of funded mission critical requirements you must provide adequate justification for each expense. The justification section includes short narratives justifying each requirement identified in the Mission Critical Requirements section. Review the example below:


Section II: Justification

TDY Expenses

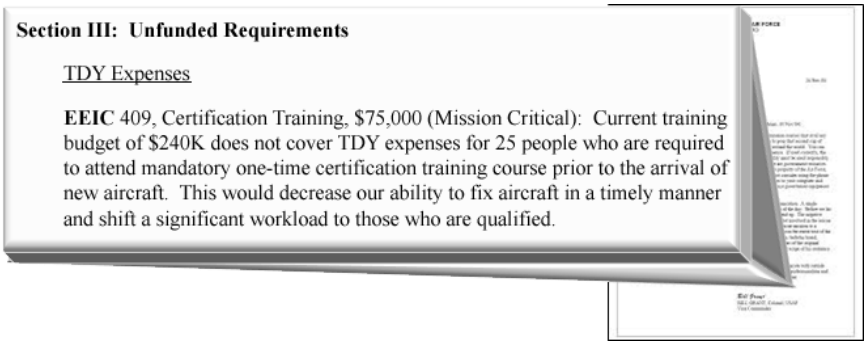
EEIC 409, FTD/Certification Training, $240,000 (Mission Critical): Field detachment and certification training is a mandatory requirement in order for members to remain qualified.

Justifying your funded mission requirements honestly is very important. Do not attempt to justify requirements that are not absolutely necessary like funding TDYs that are not mission critical. Remember, funds that are given to your organization may be more effective in another unit.

Most of your expenses in this section will already have an acceptable justification already written on your past EP in the funded or unfunded section. Use the old justification as a starting point, then reflect on mission variances and if any of the requirements have changed. Later in the chapter you will learn more about how to provide a strong justification statement for mission requirements.

- ***Listing Unfunded Requirements***

After justifying your funded mission requirements it's time to list and justify unfunded mission critical requirements. This section lists mission essential requirements that exceed projected funding with a cost and narrative justification for each requirement. Review the example below.



Section III: Unfunded Requirements

TDY Expenses

EEIC 409, Certification Training, $75,000 (Mission Critical): Current training budget of $240K does not cover TDY expenses for 25 people who are required to attend mandatory one-time certification training course prior to the arrival of new aircraft. This would decrease our ability to fix aircraft in a timely manner and shift a significant workload to those who are qualified.

In the unfunded requirements section you should list all the requirements that your anticipated funds will not cover.

If you do not consider the unfunded requirements list and do not properly prioritize the resources on your EP you will not receive the funds you need. Now that you have justified your unfunded requirements, let's move to the final section; the spend plan.

Detailed Spend Plan

The final section that should be included in the EP is the spend plan. The spend plan illustrates how projected funds will be spent over a 12-month FY period. Review the example below:

382nd AMXS Execution Plan																
	1st Quarter				2nd Quarter				3rd Quarter				4th Quarter			
Expenses	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Qtrly Target**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Qtrly Target**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Qtrly Target**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Qtrly Target**
GPC Items	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
Training	500	500	500	1,500	500	500	500	1,500	500	500	2,500	3,500	500	500	500	1,500
Technology Cost	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000

The spend plan is where all your hard work formulating the list of funded mission critical requirements gets divided into what month you plan on spending those funds. The spend plan gives you a way to track your spending throughout the year. Ensuring your organization is not over or under spending each month and quarter is very important. If you are underspending, the funds you are not using to purchase those mission critical requirements could be pulled from the organization and used somewhere else. If you are overspending, without approval, you could be held criminally liable. You will learn more about over- and under-spending later in the chapter.

It is important to avoid simply, taking the cost of your expenses and dividing by the months in the year when filling out the spend plan. Here is another chance to consider mission variances and which month you will need extra or fewer funds. Take Vehicle Operations for example: during base inspections they are responsible for providing vehicles to the inspection team coming TDY to the base. These vehicles are normally pulled from vehicle fleets across the base

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and then the remaining requirements are rented. Before the vehicles are given to the inspection team they have to be thoroughly cleaned; a clean vehicle gives a good first impression to welcome the inspectors to the base. Because there are usually 30 to 50 vehicles given to the team it requires much more cleaning supplies to be on hand the weeks before the inspection. Let's assume the inspection next year will be in May, while analyzing your timeline you should plan to purchase the extra supplies in March or April, depending on how long the supplies normally take to arrive after purchase. This type of planning is important when determining and analyzing the milestones within your organization.

Another consideration you should be contemplating is the CRA, which you briefly learned about in the key terms section. If sequestration occurs, do you have the appropriate funds planned in October to continue accomplishing the mission?

Building an EP

It is important for you, as a SNCO, to know where, when, and how to gather information while building an EP. Take a minute to consider SMSgt Foyes' situation below:

> "After being tasked to submit the organizations upcoming FY EP, I only renamed and submitted my last year's document. I had just returned from a deployment and did not think anything had changed. In November one of the section NCOICs asked why her upcoming TDY was not being funded."

Don't follow SMSgt Foyes lead…ensure you gather information properly when constructing an EP! It is not wrong to begin with the previous and past EPs; however, consider mission changes, leadership inputs, and section leaders' advice. Now let's look at using previous EPs when gathering information.

One of the best places to start gathering information is previous and past EPs. These documents should be the basic road map of how your organization formats the EP. The only warning with starting with the past EPs is not to finish with them. Organizations that continually submit the same EP over and over are not effectively analyzing the resources required for the mission accomplishment.

Observance of the mission and whether any changes may have occurred is a factor in additions and subtractions from the EP. To be an effective SNCO, you must not only know your mission, but also what funds are needed to effectively accomplish that mission.

Next, get leadership input and priorities for the budget. There may be critical requirements that have not been discussed prior that need to be added to the EP. You as a supervisor or superintendent constructing the EP will not be able to know everything that needs to be purchased throughout the year. That is why it is important to communicate with leadership, and the section managers while gathering EP information.

Finally, get out and communicate with the Airmen in the organization. The people with their noses to the grindstone will almost always have something to add that will help them ensure mission efficiency and effectiveness. Getting out and discussing the organizations critical requirements with the Airmen is important. Gathering information is an important step, next you must use this information to complete the justification sections on the EP.

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Three guidelines for justifying requirements

There are three simple guidelines to follow when submitting justification for funded and unfunded requirements. The more effort you spend justifying the organizations requirements when you are submitting the EP, the better chance you will have of receiving mission essential funding.

> ***First***, justify the mission needs in a narrative; this is a very important factor because there are so many important requirements competing for limited reallocated funds. The best EP submissions not only describe what is needed, but provide a picture of the mission, explain the item in detail, and most importantly, emphasize the mission impact if the requirement is not funded. Although justification usually comes from current mission requirements, it can also come from changes in mission or unexpected mission-related circumstances.
>
> ***Second***, details are provided and clearly states: who needs the funding, what will be funded, how many need to be purchased, and when funding is needed.
>
> ***Third***, the quantitative details are vital: Just like in EPRs, numbers help quantify and sell the need for your mission essential requirement.

Using the proper steps to gather information to include in your organizations EP is vital. The steps are not necessarily sequential, you could begin with communicating with the Airmen and end by reviewing the past EPs. The important "take-a-way" is to accomplish each step in an effective manner. Then you must analyze the information and author effective justification statements for each requirement you need to purchase. By thoroughly gathering information at the right places and properly justifying you will increase the likelihood for mission accomplishment, which is the SNCO's primary purpose.

Now that you understand where to get the information to include in the EP and how to justify your requirements, let's take a look at the Budget Review.

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Budget Review

Take a second to think about a time when another section received a lump sum of money and you didn't. Do you know what process the other section used to secure those funds?

When you develop a perfectly sound EP, more often than not, the mission will change or unforeseen expenses pop up and throw the timelines, milestones, and resources completely off track. Or, you know about the expense but the current year spend plan isn't large enough to cover it. Fortunately, the budget review exists to help us through both situations. So, let's get started with the purpose of the budget review.

Purpose

The budget review (BR) is a review cycle conducted twice during the FY to identify, validate, prioritize, and request additional money for unfunded requirements through reallocating funds that were not spent. As a SNCO you are responsible for securing funding, resources, and equipment needed to accomplish your organizations mission; which often requires requests for unfunded requirements and ensuring your funds are spent appropriately and on-time.

The BR assists with:

- unforeseen expenses that are not in the current budget
- known expenses that cannot be covered by the current budget
- reallocating funds that were not spent

The BR is the process where organizations ensure allocated funds are being spent effectively and mission essential unfunded requirements are reviewed for potential funding at installation level and then above.

Remember, the unfunded requirements section in the EP. That section is what your RA submits for funding consideration during the BR.

You have probably been involved in this process in some way or another. You may have received fall-out money, which is unallocated funds, and were pleased because you were able to purchase items needed to accomplish the mission more effectively or efficiently. On the other hand, you may have watched with envy while other organizations reaped the benefits of fall-out funds or even had your funds reallocated. Getting unfunded requests funded is not difficult for those willing to put in the time and effort to justify requirements and meet submission deadlines.

The BR is an important piece of financial management. Without the BR organizations would not be held liable for not meeting or exceeding their spending targets. There has been SNCOs that do not track their organizations spending, the BR is the process that discovers that overspending has occurred and stops the process before too much of the AFs money is blown. The BR also helps with reallocating funds that were not spent. Think back to MSgt Davis and his two fire trucks that need oil changes. If one or both trucks were recalled and the 112 quarts of oil is not purchased, the funds that were not spent need to be pulled back from the VM flight and reallocated to another organization that has mission critical unfunded requirements that are degrading the mission.

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Think of the BR as a promotion board; there will be a panel that reviews all the unfunded requirements that have been submitted and determine which requirements get the unallocated funds.

Because the unfunded requirement section in the EP is used during the BR it is imperative to properly justify your unfunded requirements. After completing the three steps to justify requirements; justify mission needs, provide details, and quantify you will have an effective unfunded section to submit to your organizations RA. Once submitted, your RA will compile all the unfunded requirements in the organization, then wait till the next BR review cycle to submit them to the financial working group (FWG). Hopefully, you will receive the fall-out money to fund the unfunded requirements you submitted.

As a SNCO you must be aware of the BR process, if you understand the BR process you will have a better chance of securing funding to purchase resources and equipment needed to effectively accomplish the mission.

The EP is the document that drives your organizations allocation and spending. The sections within the EP will let you, as a SNCO, know what funds are available to continue supporting the mission, and list the mission requirements you do not have the funds to purchase; which fuels the organizations unfunded requirements during the BR. The amount of planning and effort you put into creating and managing your organizations EP will determine the level of mission accomplishment. So, ensure you are following the core value of "Excellence in All We Do" when you are drafting or reviewing your organizations EP…your mission will be accomplished more effectively because you did.

Budget Cycle

The budget cycle is an endless cycle of planning, programming, revising, adjusting, and spending. Each cycle lasts one FY which begins on 1 October and ends on 30 September of the following year. Each FY is divided into quarters and specific actions take place within each quarter as outlined in the budget cycle.

Another way to look at the budget cycle is through timelines and milestones. The budget cycle offers concrete dates for determining, analyzing, and prioritizing budgeting actions and decisions. Along the same lines, each budget cycle includes several milestones such as quarterly spending targets, EP submissions, and end-of-year close out.

The significant timelines and milestones in the budget cycle that are important for SNCO effectiveness are: BR submissions in the 2nd and 3rd quarter, and the end of FY closeout. The next FY EP inputs are submitted in the 2nd quarter to provide enough time for the different levels of coordination to review the requests and must be approved prior to 30 September. Remember the BR is used to secure funding for equipment and resources needed to accomplish your mission. If you do not submit your BR inputs on time it may be a long wait until you can fund your unfunded mission requirements. It is important to monitor your spend plan each quarter and at the end of FY closeout. If your organization has excess funds that have not been spent according to the spend plan they may be pulled from you and given to another organization during the BR.

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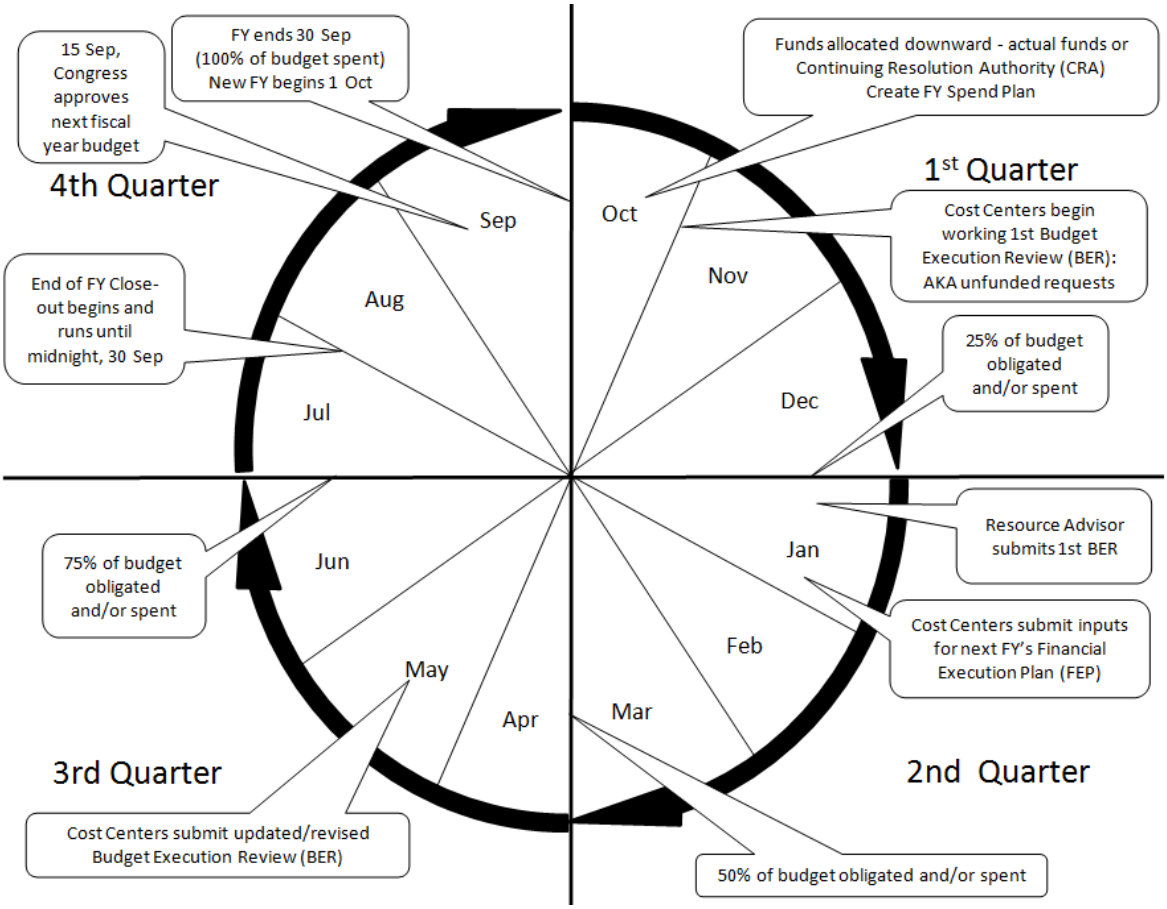

Figure 1. Budget Cycle (Typical)

The Financial Management process is how you as a SNCO will manage your organizations resources and funds to ensure effective mission accomplishment. Understanding the budget process and budget cycle will ensure your organization does not contribute to the next FY budget decreasing due to under-execution. Determining, analyzing, and prioritizing the timelines and milestones within the budget cycle will ensure you are effectively managing your organizations funds that have been entrusted to you. With a firm grasp on your responsibilities as a SNCO when it comes to Financial Management, let's move onto Manpower Management.

Manpower Management

This section is going to arm you with the tools necessary to not only better understand how manpower in the Air Force operates, but also enable you to determine, analyze and prioritize your manning by making the pertinent changes necessary to keep your organization running at its optimum ability. You're going to be exploring three components of Manpower Management to help you fulfill your role as a senior leader in your unit. The first component will help you understand how an organization is structured and how it plays in to manpower requirements. Next, you'll learn how manpower requirements come from the DOD to your Unit Manpower Document (UMD). The last component will help you manage your organization's manpower requirements. Now that you know what we are going to cover within Manpower Management, let's begin with Organization Structure.

Organizational Structure

Understanding Organizational Structure is important for you as a SNCO because this deals with the overall functionality of organizations. To comprehend this better, you must first learn that the Air Force Organizational Structure follows *five* management principles:

- *Emphasis on Wartime Tasks:* Organizations must be structured to accomplish wartime tasks without reorganizing
- *Functional Grouping:* Organization must have a clear-cut purpose, goal and scope, with one individual in charge have parts that form a logical, separable activity, a close relationship among the parts, constituting a complete entity and a natural division of work that clearly defines where responsibility begins and ends;
- *Lean Organizational Structures:* Organizations must encourage rapid decision making, so they should be flat structures without intermediate levels, unless mission requirements cannot otherwise be met;
- *Skip-Echelon Structure:* The chain of command and responsibility for mission accomplishment runs through commanders at all levels. Problems, however, often are solved by staff communication through the functional chain, bypassing echelons where the function is not found.
- *Standard Levels:* Organizations must be established at the lowest level required to successfully accomplish the primary mission..

As a senior leader you are required to be able to determine and analyze resources required for the mission. Before you can make your requirements determination, you need to ensure your meeting these management principles. The Organizational Change Request (OCR) is an instrument for the SNCO to be able to manage the organization if changes are required. The instrument is used to activate a new organization, inactivate an existing organization, re-designate an existing organization, or reorganize/restructure an organization as a whole. Office Symbol Codes (OSC) identifies the organization structure and functional responsibilities within a unit. An OCR action may drive a need for an OSC to be added or deleted. Changes should have a clear, overriding purpose that has easily recognizable and defensible organizational and cost benefits. AF/A1M is the approval authority for any variations from standard structure.

Now that you know how your organization should be structured using these management principles, you can see how it can affect your ability to manage your manpower effectively. Let's now move on to our next manpower component which is Program Allocation and Control.

Program Allocation and Control

In order to determine your manpower requirements, it is important to understand the process that takes place to determine the positions you see on your manpower documents. This is done through Program Allocation and Control. All budgeted and programmed manpower resources for the Air Force are derived from two sources: The Department of Defense (DoD) Future Years Defense Program (FYDP) and The Air Force and Financial Plan (F&FP). DoD uses program elements in the FYDP to budget for and control its resources. A Program Element Code (PEC), found on the Unit Manpower Document (UMD), accounts for each DoD program in the FYDP.

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The Directorate of Manpower, Organization and Resources (HQ USAF/A1M) allocates programmed manpower resources to the commands directing implementation of approved programs. The commands translate these manpower resources into manpower authorizations by updating the UMD by organization, AFSC, grade, program element code, etc. The manpower offices provide this detailed identification to the Personnel community to begin the actions necessary to recruit, train, and assign people.

The Air Force uses three types of manpower to perform required work: military personnel (active duty, Air Force Reserve, Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMAs), and National Guard), in-service civilian employees, and contracted services.

Military positions required to perform Air Force missions are identified by grade and skill using the manpower requirements determination process. The Air Force considers enlisted skill level, rather than grade, the primary indicator with regard to experience and/or effectiveness required to perform a task. The Air Force documents all funded and unfunded manpower requirements in the Manpower Programming and Execution System (MPES), which is where the UMD is housed.

Statutory ceilings constrain the number of field grade officers (colonels, lieutenant colonels and majors) and senior enlisted non-commissioned officers (chief master sergeants and senior master sergeants). Colonel and chief master sergeant review boards are established to review, validate, and recommend those positions to be funded at the grade of colonel or chief master sergeant. Parameters for the remaining lower officer and enlisted grades are established through the grades allocation process which applies to lieutenant through lieutenant colonel and airman first class through senior master sergeant grades.

Requirements Determination

The Air Force considers manpower a limited resource which is sized to reflect the minimum essential level to accomplish the required workload. A manpower requirement is the manpower needed to accomplish a mission and is based on MAJCOM or higher headquarters directives or programs. A manpower requirement can be documented as a funded manpower authorization or an unfunded requirement on the UMD.

The Air Force Management Engineering Program (MEP) provides manpower standards to help commanders determine manpower requirements.

The MEP provides the framework for developing Air Force manpower standards and analysis tools to identify minimum and essential manpower required to accomplish approved missions. AF/A1M has approval authority for manpower standards applicable to the Active Component, whether applicable to multiple commands, a single command, or a single location; and NGB/A1M has approval authority for all manpower standards pertaining to ANG units.

Manpower standard defines work center requirements and quantifies manpower needed to perform key processes for specific workload volumes. They are developed to standardize work center processes within functional areas and identify where differences exist. Manpower standards are developed by the Air Force Manpower Agency's Manpower Requirements Squadron who work with Air Force Functional Area Managers (FAM) and/or Career Field Managers (CFM).

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It is crucial for you as the SNCO in charge of a unit to understand the impact of these unfunded positions as well as the funded positions. Manpower standards capture workload and shows what work earns manpower. Understanding the budget process is an important factor here, because an organization may earn manpower requirements, however budget will dictate what is funded, tying back into funded and unfunded positions. If you can show your unfunded positions are in fact in line with the Chief of Staff of the Air Forces priorities, which will be validated by Air Force Manpower Standards, then you may very well get the funding you actually need and turn them into funded positions to effectively accomplish your mission.

SNCO's Functional Roles

The SNCO's functional role in helping develop manpower standards is two-fold.

- *Functional Role #1:* Whenever manpower conducts work performance measurements, it is critical for SNCOs to make sure the person conducting the study observes an average performer. Allowing manpower to observe the sharpest airman will more than likely skew the results of the study because the sharp airman will complete the work in less time than the average airman. Just the opposite is true for a below average performer.
- *Functional Role #2:* The second functional role concerns manpower career field workshops. Since these workshops attempt to determine the career field's future needs, SNCOs should fully support these important events by sending their sharpest SSgts and TSgts. The best choices are those who perform the mission daily, are considered the "go to" person, and who possess the ability to think strategically.

When it's been determined your manpower requires changes, you will use an Authorization Change Request (ACR) to propose adjustments to a Unit Manpower Document (UMD). Some examples of how you would properly utilize an ACR include: making changes to Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC); adjustments in grade or skill levels; and changes to Support Assistance Request (SAR), or Personnel Reliability Program (PRP) codes. You would not submit an ACR when the problem is created by a temporary shortage of assigned personal or lack of workers' skills. Nor would you submit one for self-imposed or peaking workloads. Your Wing or Vice Wing Commander must approve all ACRs in which authorizations impact across group lines of command or are on the wing staff. Your Group Commander must approve all ACRs in which your authorizations impact across squadron lines of command within his or her group. Your Squadron Commander has ACR approving authority only when all authorizations impacted are subordinates of and report to him/her. In order to be the most effective SNCO possible when it comes to Requirements Determinations it is imperative that you fully understand the appropriate uses for an ACR.

> **Note:** Check with your local Manpower Office before composing or submitting an ACR. They can save you time and frustration by offering expert advice and direction. Also, contact your MAJCOM functional manager and ensure the current UMD is accurate and that previously submitted ACRs are confirmed

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Summary

The impact of resource stewardship cannot be overstated in today's Air Force fiscal environment. As SNCOs, we must include financial management and manpower concepts into our discussions and decision making. This reading provided you a broad overview concerning resource stewardship, and you were exposed to the appropriation of funds, the budget cycle, and the Execution Plan (EP). You also learned about manpower management to include the Unit Manpower Document (UMD), and the Authorization Change Request (ACR). You now have an increased knowledge base to enlighten your resource discussions and decision making to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources and your unit's mission success.

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Financial Execution Plan (Spend Plan)																
	1st Quarter				2nd Quarter				3rd Quarter				4th Quarter			
Expenses	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Qtrly Target**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Qtrly Target**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Qtrly Target**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Qtrly Target**

Annual Budget: _____

1st Quarter Target: _____

2nd Quarter Target: _____

3rd Quarter Target: _____

4th Quarter Target: _____

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Element of Expense Investment Codes (EEIC)			
EEIC	**Title**	**EEIC**	**Title**
409	TDY Expenses	56992	Purchased Maintenance of Other Equipment (exercise equipment, specialized mission equipment)
43501	Transportation of People - Base Bus Service	61900	Other Supplies & Materials, Non-SF
47171	Leased Space	61950	GPC card (office/classroom supplies, printing cost, small furniture buys, registration fees)
47200	Rental of Computer Equipment	628	General Support Div, AF Stock Fund, Issues/Turn-ins (tools, deployment equipment, uniforms)
47300	Rental of Other Equipment	63720	IT purchases - software
53100	Misc Contract Services (LDS, cleaning contract)	63730	IT purchases – Small computers (HW)
55590	Misc Contract Services, Mission Support	639	Other Equipment, Non-SF
55950	Honorariums	641	Ground Fuels (vehicles, carts)
567	Purchased Maintenance of Leased Computer Equip		

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Financial Execution Plan Format				
dd mmm yy (Use assignment due date)				
MEMORANDUM FOR				
FROM:				
SUBJECT:	FY_ _ AFSNCOA Financial Execution Plan			
1. The purpose of this document is to provide the Barnes Center with a detailed FY_ _ Financial Execution Plan for the AFSNCOA.				
Section I: Mission Critical Requirements				
	Category/Description	EEIC	Cost	
Section II: Justification				
	EEIC (Code), (Category/Description) $XX.XX, (Mission Critical): Add funded requirements justification narrative here…			
Section III: Unfunded Requirements				
	EEIC (Code), (Category/Description) $XX.XX, (Mission Critical): Add unfunded requirements justification narrative here…			
Section IV: Spend Plan				
	See attached Spend Plan			
2. If you have any questions concerning this Financial Execution Plan, please contact (student's Rank, First Name, Last Name), 416-1234.				
//signed/xxx/dd mmm yy// _____, CMSgt, USAF Commandant				

Unit Manpower Document

Explanation of Attributes

Unit Manpower Document (UMD)

The UMD is a computer product detailing a unit's organization and manpower composition. Its purpose is to provide commanders and managers a consolidated document detailing the organizational structure, (the number, skills, grade and security requirements of manpower authorizations), the position number for each authorization and other pertinent data needed for management of manpower resources.

Military and civilian personnel offices also use this database to develop computer products for personnel management. This makes the manpower position number common to both systems and facilitates cross-referencing information from these products.

Interpreting the UMD

The UMD serves as a baseline on all management actions dealing with manpower. Any change to the UMD requires a formal request and signed by the appropriate commander (see Authorization Change Request [ACR] below).

Note: This product ***does not*** reflect personnel manning.

What follows is an explanation of most data codes found in the UMD.

1. ***CID (Command Identifier):*** *Identifies to which command the UMD applies--0J - Air Education and Training Command (AETC) or 1C - Air Combat Command (ACC).*
2. ***POS (Position Number):*** *A 10-digit number assigned to each manpower authorization. The first 8 digits provide identification and interface capability between manpower and personnel data systems. The last two digits represent the CID.*
3. ***AFSC (Air Force Specialty Code):*** *Identifies the positions required/authorized specialty. The data code field may be overridden by the use of a Duty Title Code, which is explained in paragraph 10. The AFSC description can be found by going to the AFPC web site, going to the "search" function and typing in AFECD (for enlisted AFSCs) and AFOCD (for officer AFSCs). (refer to AFI 36-2101)*
4. ***SEI (Special Experience Identifier):*** *A three-character code, which indicates the requirement of special experience or qualification. The individual must possess the prerequisites in AFI 36-2101 prior to the MPF assigning him/her to the position. SEI codes common to an AFSC are found in AFI 36-2101 (not applicable to civilian authorizations).*
5. ***GRD (Authorized Grade):*** *The authorized grade that is funded by Congress. It consists of the alpha characters for military rank and the current GS rank or TBD for civilian positions. When there are Contract Manpower Equivalents (CME) additions, CME is entered in this column. CME is the number of in-service man-years that would be required if the contracted workload was performed in-house at the same workload and performance level required in the contract performance work statement.*

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6. ***RGR (Required Grade):*** *Shows the required grade for the particular position as earned by manpower standards, guides, etc. Differences between the required grade and the authorized grade are caused by funding constraints and by Career Progression Group (CPG) allocations.*

   Note: Career Progression Group (CPG), The Air Force allocates grades, by AFSC, to the commands. The actual allocation is the percentage of enlisted grades in each AFSC (first three digits of a particular career field) that can be used as authorized grades on the UMD.

   For example, the total authorized 832XX AFSCs authorized in the command, 1% may be allocated in the grade of CMS, 2% SMS, 7% MSG, 11% TSG, 22% SSG, 33% A1C. (NOTE: THIS IS AN EXAMPLE ONLY.)

   CPG allocations are updated on an annual basis and are computed by bumping the total Air Force allowed grade percentages against the required. Since we are limited, the commands have the responsibility to see that the grades are used in the most appropriate positions to adequately discharge the mission.

7. ***MNT (Manpower Type Code):*** *A 5-digit code used to identify the funding designation for manpower requirements. A complete list of all MNT codes is available in MPES. The most common codes include:*

RXXXX =	Unfunded Full Time In-service Appropriated
XXXXX =	Funded Full Time In-service Appropriated
XXXCX =	Funded Full Time Contract Appropriated

8. ***API (Aircrew Position Identifier):*** *Indicates a requirement exists for an officer or enlisted possessing operational flying status. This is a required entry for all officer authorizations; however, a "0" in this column depicts officer authorizations that do not require rated expertise. Enlisted API codes will be alpha, while Officer API codes will be numerical.*

A	CAREER ENL AVIATOR – CEA – LINE FLYERS	1	PILOT LINE FLYERS
B	CEA STAFF/SUPV WING/BELOW MUST FLY	2	NAVIGATOR LINE FLYERS
C	CEA STAFF/SUPV WING/BELOW NOT FLY	3	RATED STAFF/SUPV WING/BELOW NOT FLY
D	CEA STAFF/SUPV ABOVE WG MUST FLY	4	RATED STAFF/SUPV ABOVE WG NOT FLY
E	CEA STAFF/SUPV ABOVE WG NOT FLY	5	FLIGHT SURGEON

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F	CEA/OT&E/IOT&E/FMS—MUST FLY	6	RATED STAFF/SUPV WING/BELOW MUST FLY
G	CEA FLYING DUTIES IN NON-USAF UNITS (EXCHANGE PROGRAMS)	7	RATED FLYERS IN NON-USAF UNITS (EXCHANGE PROGRAMS)
Z	NON-CAREER ENL AVIATOR POSITIONS	8	RATED STAFF/SUPV ABOVE WG MUST FLY
0	NON-RATED OFFICER POSITIONS	9	AIR BATTLE MANAGER

9. ***PEC (Program Element Code):*** *Represents a subdivision of programmed cost data (people, equipment, and facilities) related to a weapon system or support function. The AF Data Dictionary provides a complete list of all AF PEC's along with the AF definition of the PEC. (refer to para 8.1.)*

10. ***DTY (Duty Code):*** *A 3-digit code used to identify those requirements or authorizations that levy specific roles, duties, or titles on the individual filling them. It overrides the AFSC title.*

	099	Sec/Clerk/Steno		271	Superintendent
	113	Commander		277	Vice Commander
	135	Deputy		326	Supervisor
	137	Deputy Commander		338	Flight Commander
	189	Flight Chief		415	Section Commander

11. ***CEC (Civilian Employment Group Category):*** *Shows the category in which the civilian would be hired. Some examples are provided below. Again, a complete list of all the CEC codes can be found in the Reference Tables in MPES.*

CEC	**DESCRIPTION**	**CEC**	**DESCRIPTION**
10	Salaried (GS)	**50**	Deutsche-Mark/Moduk
20	Wage (WG)	**70**	NAF
30	Direct Hire Non US citizen	**80**	Contract Manpower Equivalent (CME)
40	Indirect hire Non US citizen		

12. ***SAR (Security Access Requirement):*** *Indicates the security access necessary for normal recurring work to be performed in the work center by the designated authorization. (Refer to AFI 31-501, Para 7.6.3.).*

Code	**Access Level**

Blank	No Access Required
5	SSBI: Single Scope Background Investigation (Top Secret)
6	NACLC: National Agency Check with Local Agency Check and Credit Check (Secret Military)
7	ANACI: Access National Agency Check with Written Inquiries and Credit Check (Secret Civilian)
8	NACI: National Agency Check with Written Inquiries and Credit Check (No Access Civilian)
9	NAC: National Agency Check (No Access)

13. ***PRP/SCI (Personnel Reliability Program/Sensitive Compartmented Information):*** *Status code identifies authorizations that require a PRP or SCI qualified individual.*

***Code**	**Description**		
D	*Controlled Nuclear Weapons Duty (Prior nuclear experience not required)*		
N	*Certified PRP Critical – prior nuclear experience required*		
Z	*Nuclear experienced required, PRP **not** required*		

*Many additional PRP/SCI codes exists; see appropriate personnel/assignment AFIs

14. ***MSI (Manpower Standard Implementation):*** *Identifies the type of manpower standard used to determine the manpower requirements for a work center.*

MSI	**Description**	**MSI**	**Description**
A	AF REENGINEERED	**1**	CMS TIER 1
C	MAJCOM REENGINEERED	**2**	CMS TIER 2
F	CREW RATIO	**3**	CMS TIER 3
L	LCOM	**4**	CMS TIER 1 VARIANCE
M	COMPETITIVE SOURCING	**5**	CMS TIER 2 VARIANCE
N	OUTSIDE AIR FORCE	**6**	CMS TIER 3 VARIANCE
P	AF STUDY ONGOING	**7**	CORE COLONEL OR CMSGT

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S	MAJCOM STUDY ONGOING	**8**	EXTERNAL OR FIXED COLONEL OR CMSGT
U	NOT COVERED BY MANPOWER STANDARD	**9**	VARIANCE COLONEL OR CMSGT
W	MAJCOM DIRECTED		

15. ***CRK1 and CRK2 (Command Manpower Remarks code):*** *Identifies unique characteristics of manpower authorizations that are not defined by other data codes. It identifies manpower authorizations, which MAJCOMs may use to define manpower data.*

16. ***PAS (Personnel Accounting Symbol):*** *The PAS identifies the organization to which a manpower authorization belongs. The PAS has four alphanumeric characters and each organization has its own PAS.*

17. ***Unit:*** *Identifies the unit designation assigned to the PAS code.*

18. ***ILC (Installation Location Code):*** *Identifies the location of the unit or installation in geographic coordinates.*

19. ***Installation:*** *A term used to describe a geographic location where military operations or duties are conducted. For Example, Osan AB.*

20. ***SCC (Installation State or Country code):*** *Identifies the state where the installation is located. For example, KS for South Korea (ROK)*

21. ***SUB (Subcommand code):*** *Identifies where in the MAJCOM authorizations are assigned.*

22. ***PAL (Personnel Accounting Level):*** *The second through fourth indicator to specific units or groups of units. It permits their aggregation into the hierarchy desired by the major command or assignment. This code is used specifically in the personnel arena and not used in AETC.*

23. ***CBP (Consolidated Base Personnel):*** *Number designates where the servicing Military Personnel is located. The CBP makes up the first two characters of the PAS code.*

24. ***CCP (Central Civilian Personnel):*** *Number designates the location of the servicing Civilian Personnel.*

25. ***MET (Servicing Manpower and Organization Office (MO) code):*** *Designates the location of the servicing MO. Normally, this code is the same as the CBP code.*

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26. ***Identity:*** *Used to segregate the various types of manpower categories into distinctive groups: active, reserve, guard, Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA), non-permanent party (NPP) and CME.*

27. ***PPN (Parent PAS number):*** *Identifies the PAS code of the parent unit.*

28. ***Parent Unit:*** *Next higher level unit. An organization that directly administers units, detachments, or operating location assignments to it. (refer to AFI 38-101)*

29. ***OSC (*Organization Structure Code):*** *A 2 to 7 character code that identifies the internal organization structure of the unit. It is used to identify where a group of authorizations belong within the overall organization. The lesser number of characters in the OSC; the higher echelon placement of that function in the unit. OSCs are useful to determine who reports to whom in the organization. Listed below are examples of OSCs and how they matched to an organization chart.*

OSC	Title		
CC	Command		
CCQ	Orderly Room		
FSM	Manpower and Personnel Flight		
FSMM	Manpower and Organization Branch		
FSMP	Military Personnel Branch		
FSMPM	Military Personnel Force Management		

** Note that each succeeding level adds an additional character in the OSC.*

30. ***OSC Summary and Unit Summary:*** *This shows on the UMD the total number of authorizations, by quarter, under each OSC. The totals are broken out by officer, enlisted and civilian.*

31. ***FAC (Functional Account Code):*** *Six characters identifying a homogenous grouping of tasks. AF FAC is used to identify each function to facilitate the analysis and accountability of its manpower requirements. AF FAC does not equate to an OSC or office symbol code. (refer to AFI 38-201)*

The first four characters describe the AF function. The last two characters are used to identify specific work. The first digit of the FAC represents the major groups of functions. The functional groups are divided into seven categories to identify the major type of work performed:

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FAC	**Description**		
1XXX	Command and Command Support		
2XXX	Maintenance		
3XXX	Operations		
4XXX	Mission Support		
5XXX	Medical		
6XXX	Research and Development		
7XXX	Activities Outside the USAF		
The first and second digits of a function code, when combined, represent the basic function of the major grouping (11XX - Info Mgt., 15XX - Comptroller, etc.). The third and fourth digits of the function code represent a shred-out of the basic function (sub-function) and a shred-out of the sub function, respectively.			

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Additional ACR Information	
Consider all of the following before submitting changes and/or justifying manpower changes. Be as specific, factual, and brief as possible.	
CONSIDERATIONS	
Air Force Manpower Standards	If requested changes conflict with existing Manpower Standards, provide justification why the changes are absolutely necessary for mission accomplishment.
Mission Impact	Explain how requested changes enhance the mission and impact if not approved.
Change in Mission/Workload	Either cite directive (AFI, chapter and paragraph) or attach applicable documentation/directive from Headquarters, or both if applicable.
UTC/UMD	Ensure changes to military authorizations ***DO NOT*** cause a UTC/UMD mismatch.
Zero Balance Action	Ensure there are no overall quantity changes in PECs, grades, and military or civilian categories.
Contract Services	Rule out the use of contract services before submitting ACRs for increased authorizations.
Program Element Code (PEC)	If an increase in manpower is requested, ensure the identified trade-off positions are within the same (PEC).
Assignment Action	If any part of the requested change causes an assignment action, ensure the requested effective date allows sufficient lead-time for personnel changes (current quarter +2 more quarters).
ADDITIONAL COORDINATION	
MAJCOM Functional OPR	If required, discuss proposed changes with OPR and include OPR's name, office symbol, and DSN number.
Civilian Personnel Office (CPO)	Have CPO coordinate on all changes to civilian authorizations; endorse the ACR stating, "*No adverse civilian action will be caused by the requested change.*" Provide the CPO representative's name, office symbol, telephone number, and date coordinated.
SAR	Coordinate changes with SFS POC and get his/her concurrence/endorsement before submitting ACR.
PRP	Coordinate with base PRP monitor and get his/her

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	concurrence/endorsement before submitting ACR.
APPROVAL AUTHORITY	
Squadron Commander:	Approves ACRs within his/her squadron.
Group Commander:	Approves ACRs within his/her group.
Wing Commander (or vice):	Approves ACRs that cross group lines of command or are on the wing staff.

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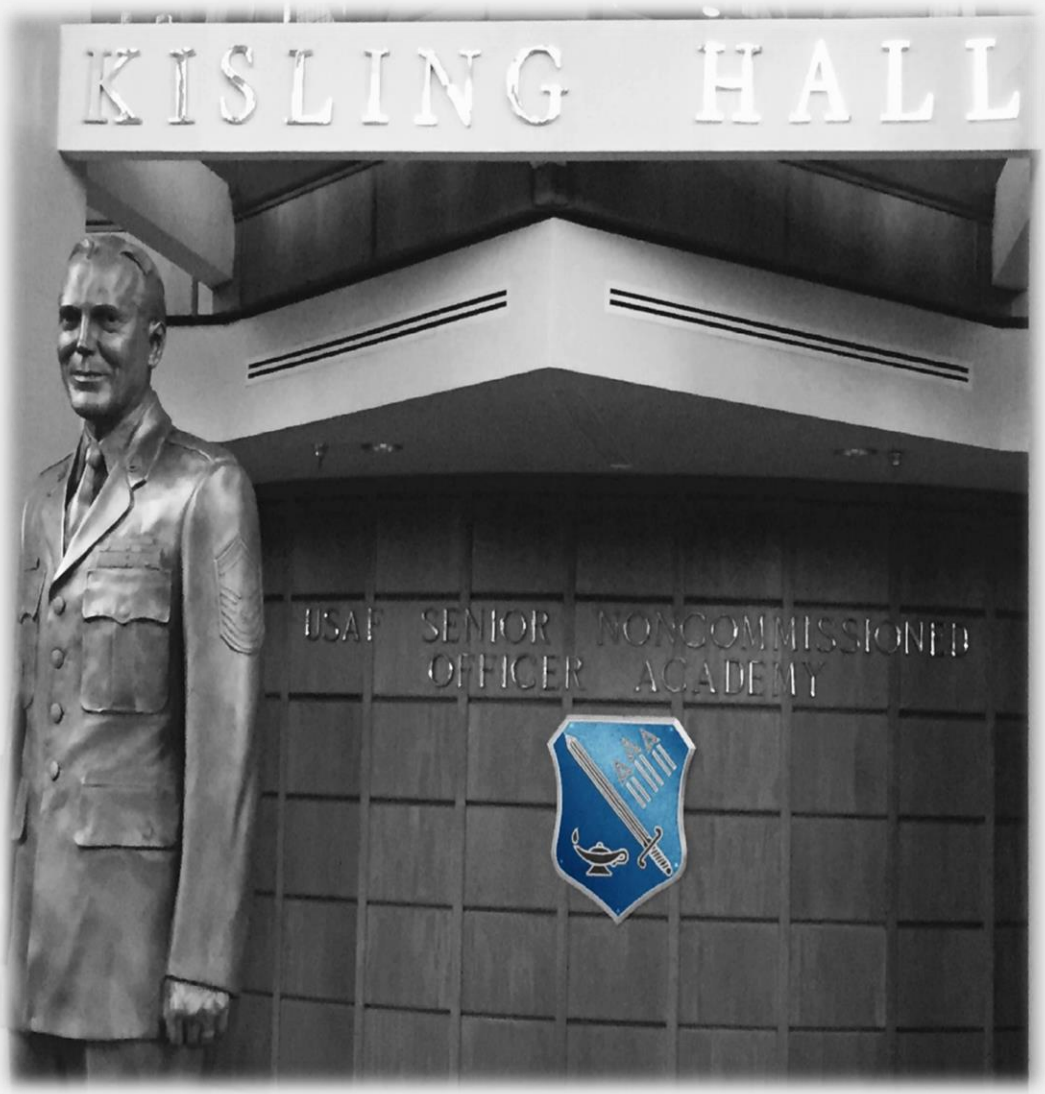

Project Management

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Introduction to Project Management

Whether planning for a temporary runway closure, developing a new professional military education course or planning a retirement ceremony for a coworker, project management is involved to ensure the intended outcome follows the plan. The key factor, therefore, is to successfully complete the project without any time or cost overruns. Managing projects is indeed a challenge that calls for developing a definite strategy and creating a workable methodology. Successful project management has several significant characteristics. To understand the value of project management, it is first necessary to understand the fundamental nature of a project and the core characteristics of the project management triangle.

In this section, you'll start by covering the definition of project management. You'll then cover the three constraints of the Project Management Triangle: time, cost, and scope. You'll discover that quality and quantity reside in the center of the triangle and you'll also learn how each constraint affects the entire triangle. Let's begin with a working definition of project management.

Definition of Project Management

In their book, *Successful Project Managers*, Jeffrey K. Pinto and O.P. Kharbanda define project management as a combination of human and non-human resources pulled together in a temporary team to achieve a specified purpose. They go on to say it is the process of leading, coordinating, planning, and controlling a diverse and complex set of processes and people in the pursuit of achieving project objectives.

With this definition in mind, it may be worthy to examine what project management is not. A project is not a program; programs are ongoing. Comprehensive Airman Fitness is a program. Its goal is to build and sustain a thriving reslilient Air Force community that fosters mental, physical, social and spitutual fitness.

A project, by definition, is a temporary activity with a single objective and a specific timeframe attached. Although temporary could be in terms of years, a project is unlike a program. For example, when constructing a new facility, it may take months or even years to complete; but it is still a temporary activity with a single objective and a specific timeframe attached.

Understanding the definition of project management will aid you as you continue to progress through this lesson. An important thing to note before moving on is, projects are limited by their product quality and process quality requirements. This is further illustrated by the Project Management Triangle.

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The Project Management Triangle

The Project Management Triangle is used by managers to analyze or understand the difficulties that may arise due to implementing and executing a project. All projects, regardless of their size, will have many constraints. Although there are many such project constraints, these should not be barriers for successful project execution and for effective decision making. There are three main interdependent constraints that exist with every project; time, cost and scope. Let's examine each of these constraints and then look at how to face challenges related to each.

- **Time:** the amount of time available to complete a project.
- **Cost:** refers to the budgeted amount available for the project.
- **Scope:** determines what must be done to produce the project's end result.

As before mentioned, projects need to be performed and delivered under certain constraints. The Project Management Triangle illustrates the intricate relationship among these primary constraints. Each side of the triangle represents a dynamic constraint, while the center of the triangle represents the quality or performance of the project outcome. Any change to one or more constraints affects the others, while changes to the sides will impact the center.

The term ***time*** defines the amount of time available to complete a project. Most of us do not have infinite amounts of time available within which to work, but instead we have deadlines based on specific requirements of a solution or a product. Completion of tasks depends on a number of factors such as the number of people working on the project, experience, skills, etc. Time is a crucial factor which is uncontrollable in many cases. Failure to meet the deadlines of a project can create adverse effects. If schedules change, tight time constraints could mean increased costs and reduced scope. Why? Because it would likely either take more resources to accomplish a task faster than budgeted for, or some portion of the end result will need to be modified or worst case omitted all together. If neither of these constraints has the flexibility for adjustment, then the overall quality of the product is likely to diminish.

- **Example:** During a project to create a new mobile phone handset, your customer asks that the launch date be brought forward two weeks to coincide with a major industry show.
- **Impact:** Costs increase as more people are added to meet the new deadline. Some features of the product are removed and put into a Phase 2 release to reduce delivery time and meet the new launch date. The most important constraint in this case is time.

Cost refers to the budgeted amount available for the project. It's important for both the project manager and the organization to agree to an estimated cost when undertaking a project. Budgets will ensure that the project is developed or implemented below a certain cost. If the budget or cost changes, a tight budget could mean increased time and reduced scope. Sometimes, unforeseen events cause project managers to have to allocate additional resources in order to meet the deadlines; adding additional

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project costs. In other words, if you do not have the resources available to accomplish the goal, then the goal may need to be modified. Alternatively, you could wait until more resources are available, but that would increase the amount of time it will take to complete.

- **Example:** During an automotive engineering project, an unexpected budget cut is imposed on your project after the company posts poorer than expected 4th quarter financial results.

- **Impact:** Scope is cut, quality is reduced, and the schedule is pushed back so that cheaper resources can be found. The most important constraint in this case is cost (the money the company is willing to spend).

Scope determines what must be done to produce the project's end result. This consists of a list of deliverables, which need to be addressed by the project team.

A successful project scope statement should be concise and clear. Anyone reading the statement should have a good idea of what the project consists of (and what will not be part of the project). This statement will give an overall view of the project.

For example, "The catalog will feature 100 products" is better than "The catalog will feature many products" and "The project will be completed over six months" is preferable to "The project will be completed over a period of time." The more specific you can be, the better.

A well-written Scope Statement is an important resource for helping to manage stakeholder expectations. Of course, predicting the future is impossible. However, your Scope Statement represents your project commitments based on what you know today and expect to be true in the future. If and when situations change, you may have to assess the effect of the changes on all aspects of your project and propose the necessary changes within your Scope Statement. Your project's requesters always have the option of both accepting your proposed changes (and allowing the project to continue) or canceling your project altogether. The end goal should always be to provide a quality product that meets or exceeds performance expectations which leads us to the center of the triangle.

- **Example**: During a software development project, your customer increases the scope. The client asks that new features be added to the software after learning that a competitor's product will be in direct competition with their own. It is important the product includes these new features if it is to compete successfully.

- **Impact:** The budget and schedule increase as a result of adding the additional features. More people are added to the project to minimize disruption to the schedule, thereby increasing the project's overall cost. The most important constraint in this case is scope (features of the product).

In the center of the triangle is ***Quality*** or ***Performance***, which will reveal how well the project achieves its stated end result. Any changes among the primary constraints could affect the quality or performance of the project outcome. For example, if the scope increases, we can assume the cost and amount of time to complete the project will also increase, which could affect the resulting quality. Your role as a project manager is to provide the appropriate tools and

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techniques to enable the team to organize their work and manage these constraints. This means you should be able to adjust and adapt as constraints change over the duration of a project.

It is always a requirement to overcome the challenges related to the project triangle during the project execution period. Project managers need to understand that the three constraints outlined in the project management triangle can be adjusted if and when necessary. The important aspect is to focus on your adaptability and deal with it. The project manager needs to find ways of striking the right balance between the three constraints so that quality of the project will not be compromised.

A project manager's role in ensuring quality or performance revolves around responsibility. The following factors outline a project manager's role:

- The project manager needs to define the project and split the tasks amongst team members. The project manager also needs to obtain key resources and build teamwork.
- The project manager needs to set the objectives required for the project and work towards meeting these objectives.
- The most important activity of a project manager is to keep stakeholders informed on the progress of the project.
- The project manager needs to asses and carefully monitor risks of the project.

In order to overcome the challenges related to The Project Management Triangle and to meet the project objectives, the project manager needs to have a range of skills which include:

- Leadership
- Managing people
- Negotiation
- Time management
- Effective communication
- Conflict resolution

You will learn more about many of these concepts as you progress throughout this course. For now, the important thing to remember is Project Management is often represented on a triangle. A successful project manager needs to keep a balance between the triple constraints so that the quality of the project or outcome is not compromised.

In this section, we established a working definition of project management, which is the process of leading, coordinating, planning, and controlling a diverse set of processes and people. We also discussed what project management is not. Lastly, we covered the Project Management Triangle, and identified the associated constraints: time, cost, and scope, and how they impact quality or performance.

Senior enlisted leaders and managers are always involved in various projects that contribute to successful mission accomplishment. Your ability to ensure projects meet cost, time, scope, and performance objectives is vital to your success and will enable your organization to deliver and

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sustain its warfighting capabilities. As you increase your knowledge of Project Management, you will be able to integrate it into your daily activities. You'll find it useful both in and out of the workplace. The challenge is to make Project Management a habit of the mind. You'll soon begin to see the benefits of taking a step back and viewing situations from a Project Management perspective so that you can approach them systematically. In order to do that you successfully, also need to increase your understanding of the Project Management Process.

The Project Management Process

Projects go through a number a stages characterized by a distinct set of activities or tasks that take the project from conception to conclusion. Successful management of this process requires a disciplined approach. Projects may be big or small, constrained by cost and time; therefore it is important to take a structured and defined approach to managing them through their entire lifecycle.

Because of its nature, coordinating all these activities requires a systematic process approach. A systems approach requires the identification of the processes that make up the entire project management framework. This framework will help you understand the basic structure required to properly manage a project by identifying the most important elements that need close supervision and careful analysis. Dividing the project into smaller components may make it easier to monitor and possibly less challenging to lead. In this section, you'll cover the traditional phased approach to Project Management starting with the ***Project Initiation Stage***.

Project Initiation Stage

The initiation process defines the nature, purpose, and scope of the project. It's the beginning of the project; it sets the project's course and lays the foundation upon which to build. In the initiation phase ideas are explored and developed while goals, objectives and outcomes are specified. The goal of this stage is to examine the feasibility of the project. In addition, decisions are made concerning who is to carry out the project, which party (or parties) will be involved, and whether the project has an adequate base of support among the stakeholders. In this stage, the current or prospective project leader writes a proposal, which contains a description of the above-mentioned matters. The prospective sponsors of the project evaluate the proposal and, upon approval, provide the necessary financing. The project officially begins at the time of approval. Questions to be answered in this stage are:

- Why this project?
- Is it feasible?
- Who are possible partners in this project?
- What should the results be?
- What are the boundaries of this project?

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Identifying objectives ensures a common understanding of the project purpose and helps to reduce conflict among all those involved. Many misunderstandings and conflicts arise because the parties that are involved in a project are not clear on these matters. For example, customers may expect a working product, while the members of the project team think they are developing a prototype. A sponsor may think that the project will produce a working piece of software, while the members of the project team must first examine whether the idea itself is technically feasible.

Delivering a successful project depends on a clear definition of the goal. Accurately defining the scope is vital to ensuring the project successfully meets the intended outcomes. You, and those involved, need to know exactly what is trying to be achieved. Any lack of clarity in the early stages may result in problems later. Another factor to be mindful of is that projects tend to expand once people have become excited about them. The underlying thought is, while we're at it, we might as well do this also. The better you define your objectives, the more clearly you can evaluate possibilities to achieve them. If new objectives are continually added and the project repeatedly expands, it is almost certain to go off schedule, and the original intended outcomes are less likely to be met. Goals help by acting as filters; if an objective cannot be traced back to one of the original goals identified during the initiation stage, then it is outside of the scope of the project and should not be included. Once you have successfully defined the nature, purpose, and scope of the project you can begin the ***Planning and Design Stage*** of the project.

Project Planning and Design Stage

The second project management step is planning the project. Much of the work of project management falls into this stage. Although some planning begins during the initiation phase, now is the time to focus on specifics. Don't be tempted to dive into the project before creating a project plan. The project plan is a document that will be more specific and defined than the project proposal. During this stage you'll need to project the team's deliverables and develop a logical timeframe by which to produce them. The main purpose is to plan time, cost, and resources adequately to estimate the work needed and to effectively manage risk during project execution. Your project plan should detail what tasks need to be done, the deadlines by which those tasks must be done, who needs to do them, when they need to be done, and how to do them. The project plan helps organize and control the project by:

- Breaking the overall project down into smaller pieces
- Providing visibility of ambiguous tasks which might otherwise be overlooked
- Providing a single point of reference
- Describing the sequence of events
- Providing a baseline with which to compare project execution
- Anticipating potential issues/events in order to mitigate them

Project planning generally consists of four steps:

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Step 1: Define Project Goals

A project is deemed successful when the needs of the stakeholders have been met. The stakeholders are everyone directly or indirectly involved in or impacted by the project. This includes the project sponsor, the customers, the project leader, and the team carrying out the project. Once you understand who the stakeholders are, the next step is to find out their individual needs or considerations for the project. The best way to accomplish this is by conducting interviews with each of them. Their needs and requirements must all be considered when defining the project goals. The degree of success in meeting those needs and requirements directly correlates with determining the success of the project as a whole.

Once all the interviews have been conducted, the next step is to compile and prioritize a comprehensive list of needs. From the prioritized list of needs, create a list of goals that can be measured easily. A technique for doing this is to review them against the SMART principle. SMART is an acronym for:

Specific	• Well defined • Clear to anyone that has a basic knowledge of the project
Measurable	• Know if the goal is obtainable and how far away completion is • Know when it has been achieved
Attainable	• Can be reached
Realistic	•Within the availability of resources, knowledge and time
Time Based	•Enough time to achieve the goal •Not too much time, which can affect project performance

Once you have established a clear set of goals, record them in the project plan along with the stakeholder's needs and expectations. A complete plan is very helpful in eliminating redundant work and organizing the efforts of those participating. The project leader must be able to articulate exactly what the project should achieve. Without clear definitions of the goals, it is unlikely the project team will be able to achieve the project deliverables as expected. This leads us into the next stage, ***define project deliverables***.

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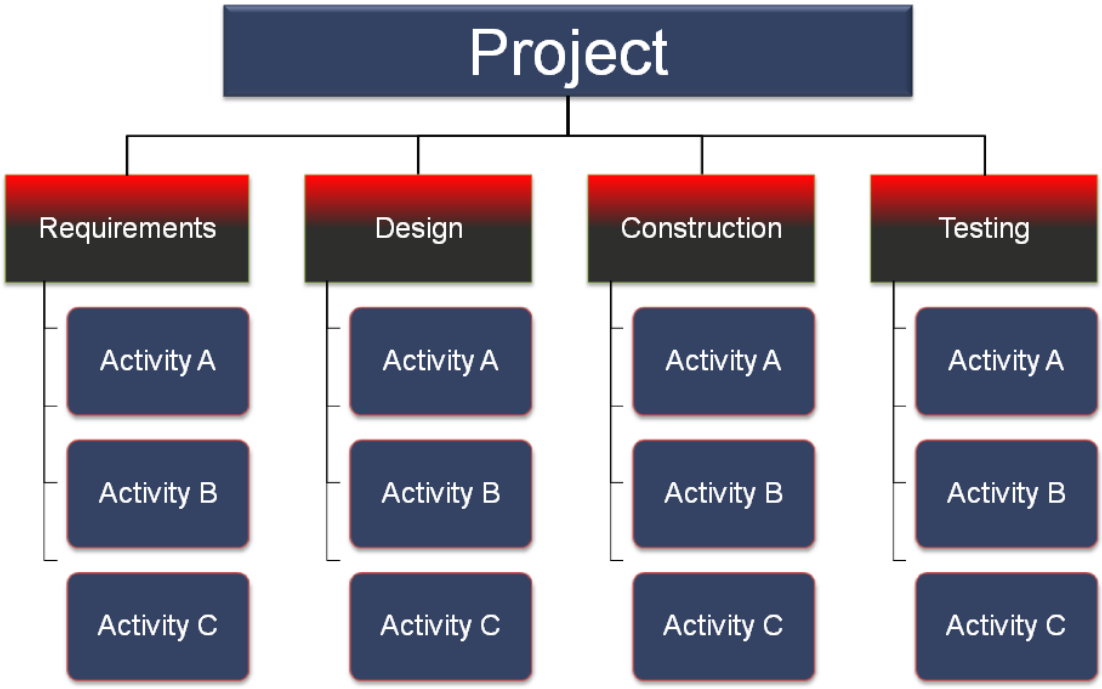
Step 2: Define Project Deliverables

Using the goals you defined in step 1, create a list of products and/or services to deliver in order to meet those goals. A deliverable usually has a due date and is tangible, measurable and specific. A deliverable can be given to either an external or internal customer and satisfies a milestone or due date that is created and produced in the project plan. A deliverable can be a software product, a design document, a training program or other asset that is required by the project plan. Document the deliverables on the project plan and estimate when/how each item must be delivered. More accurate delivery dates will be established during the ***project scheduling step***.

Step 3: Define Project Schedule

The project schedule needs to lay out the course of the project in a logical manner from start to finish. You begin by creating a list of tasks to carry out for each deliverable identified in Step 2, including the number of hours and/or days it will take to complete each task, and the identification of the personnel who will carry out the task. By establishing the duration of time each task will take to complete, you can determine the amount of time required for each deliverable and project an accurate completion date.

One method you could choose to use is a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), which is a tool utilized to visually represent a project by organizing it in smaller, more manageable, pieces. It might be process oriented and laid out by specific actions to accomplish for each deliverable. It could be product oriented and arranged by each deliverable. Either way, the WBS reduces confusion by breaking down a project, making it easier to manage, and visually showing all deliverables, tasks, durations, and personnel that are required to accomplish the tasks.



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As the project schedule and WBS further define and clarify realistic timelines required to produce the desired outcomes, you may come to realize that an initial imposed deadline is unrealistic or unfeasible. If this occurs there are a few alternatives you could consider. For example, you might decide to renegotiate the deadline. In this case, consider the project sponsor, the stakeholders, and the requirements that originally drove the imposed deadline and determine if negotiation is realistic and feasible? If it is determined they are not, it may cause an overall delay in the project. Another possibility would be to employ additional resources. Consider potential impacts; are funds and/or manpower available to do so? Would additional resources be the most efficient and effective way to address the situation? Maybe you should seek to reduce the scope of the project. With fewer products to deliver, less time may be required to deliver them. These are just a few options that may be considered; whatever avenue you explore, you should use the project schedule and any ***supporting plans*** to justify your intended course of action.

Step 4: Create Supporting Plans

The process of developing supporting plans is primarily concerned with the actions necessary to define, integrate, and coordinate all subsidiary planning documents into a single plan. They provide further detail to address key areas identified in the project management plan.

Human Resource Plan

This single sheet document identifies the organizations and individuals in the project by name. It details the number and type of personnel needed to carry out the project, as well as start dates and the lengths of time they'll be required. This plan is should not be overlooked. It provides each individual involved and organization tasked an accurate description of their roles and responsibilities on the project.

Communications Plan

The communications plan is a document that lists the stakeholders who need to be kept informed. It defines how, when, and why communication will take place. It should explain what information needs to be communicated, how often it will be disseminated, and the manner in which it will be provided. Clear communication both solves and prevents problems and helps ensure timelines stay on track. Key elements of the communication plan include:

- a brief background for the plan
- the stakeholders analysis
- the project objectives
- the communications strategy
- potential issues and risks
- budget information

A common mechanism used for conducting communication is a weekly or monthly progress report. Content should include how the project is progressing, milestones reached, and efforts planned for the upcoming period.

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Risk Management Plan

The risk management plan evaluates the projected phases and tasks of the project for potential risks. You will find it beneficial to proactively search for risks throughout the project life cycle in order to outline mitigation actions for the identified risks. Being prepared to address risks as they surface will help to correct the issues and get back on track as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Some examples of common project risks include:

- Time and cost estimates too optimistic
- Customer review and feedback cycle too slow
- Unexpected budget cuts
- Unclear roles and responsibilities
- Stakeholder input is not sought, or their needs are not properly understood
- Stakeholders change requirements after the project has started, or add requirements after the project has started
- Poor communication resulting in misunderstandings, quality problems, and rework
- Lack of resources

Risks can be tracked by using a log or a matrix. Begin by brainstorming risks before you begin the project, documenting what you will do to prevent the risk from occurring, and what you will do to mitigate the effects if it occurs. It is important to review the matrix regularly; adding new risks as they are identified. As the project manager, you should attempt to determine the likelihood of a given risk occurring and predict its potential impact before it happens. Considering these two aspects together will help to determine the priority of efforts compared to the mitigation efforts of other potential risks.

Float

Each task within a project should have an anticipated timeframe associated to it. Float is a term that describes the amount of time available to complete a given task beyond the amount of time that was originally allocated. Because some of the risks mentioned above can delay a project, it is important to understand the concept of Float, which is simply extra time built into a project's timeline. Another way to look at Float is how many delays (minutes, hours, days, even months) a project can have without interfering with the projected completion date.

In simple terms, Float comes from adding together the differences between the minimum and maximum amounts of time it takes to

complete each task associated with the project. This formula determines the earliest possible and latest completion dates for the project.

Ideally, projects should never go beyond the latest agreed upon completion date and, whenever possible, should be completed by the earliest date possible. Effective project managers know delays are unavoidable, so they purposely build Float into their project timeline. In addition, effective project managers never reveal the earliest possible date for completing a project. Instead, they inform stakeholders and decision makers of the latest completion date. That way, if the project is executed on time, everyone is happy, and if the project comes in early, the project leader becomes the hero. Once the planning has been conducted it's time to move into the next stage; ***execution.***

Project Execution Stage

Once you have established the project's goals and outcomes, and you understand how you are going to achieve them through the initiation stage and the planning and design stage, you are ready to execute your plans. The execution process involves coordinating people and resources, as well as integrating and performing the activities of the project in accordance with the project management plan.

Resources to Consider:

- *Technical*
- *Financial*
- *Political*
- *Communication*
- *Personnel*

During the project execution, the project lead uses a wide range of resources at their disposal. The goal is to integrate all activities and aspects of the project together in order to achieve a successful outcome. The project lead monitors quality and timeliness of the products identified as deliverables during the execution stage while maintaining oversight of the potential risks identified in the risk management plan. The deliverables are produced as outputs from the processes performed as defined in the project management plan. Throughout this stage, the project lead needs to adhere to the plan of maintaining communications with the stakeholders.

Maintaining communication creates an avenue for free-flowing feedback. Real-time feedback enhances your ability to make adjustments as needed and increases stakeholder's confidence in the product. Conducting regular meetings with the project team provides a forum to discuss progress with task accomplishment and any project problems or issues that may have arisen. Now that the execution has begun, ***monitoring and controlling*** become important.

Project Monitoring and Controlling Stage

During the Project Monitoring and Controlling Stage, the project manager must observe all aspects of project execution in order to quickly identify potential problems, to investigate the causes of issues, and to apply corrective actions if necessary. Regular observation and measurement of project performance enables the identification of variances from the project management plan.

Monitoring and Controlling includes the following:

- Measuring the ongoing project activities (*where we are*)

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- Monitoring the project variables (cost, effort, scope, etc.) against the project management plan
- Comparing the current project performance baseline (*where we should be*)
- Identifying corrective actions to address issues and risks (*how we can get back on track and or stay on track*)
- Ensuring that only approved changes are implemented

Status reports are a common way used for controlling a project. At regular intervals or as milestones are achieved, status reports should be delivered to whoever is responsible for the ultimate success of the project. It may be helpful to develop a standard template for a status report. Complex projects justify more in depth status reports than simple projects would require. An in-depth report should be written during the ***project completion stage***.

Project Completion Stage

Projects can go astray for various reasons. When this occurs it leaves everyone feeling dissatisfied and unrewarded for the work (often extra work) that they have done. One reason for this happening may be that no one verified that all of the agreed upon project objectives had been completed, leaving aspects of the project in limbo. Or, someone may notice that the project was under budget and spend the remaining budget on something outside of the project scope. It could be that due to lack of monitoring and controlling, the project just drifted into over expenditure and is now considered unsuccessful.

By carefully monitoring and maintaining the project plan, the project will not only be under control, but may be officially closed at the end. It is at the end of a project that you'll see the benefits of keeping tight control throughout the process. The time and effort spent ensuring that any extra work was specified, budgeted, resourced, and fully authorized will be rewarded by an 'on time-on budget' project report.

The last formal piece of work the project team should undertake is the Project Review. This event should be a formal review of what went well with the project and what didn't go so well. It should include all aspects of the project:

- ***objectives review****; were all of the agreed upon objectives met*
- ***performance criteria****; did the project meet the customers expected key performance indicators*
- ***financial criteria****; were finances utilized appropriately*
- ***resource utilization****; were resources utilized appropriately*
- ***slips and gains of time;*** *was time estimated and utilized appropriately*
- ***quality of work****; was the quality of worked performed satisfactorily*
- ***adherence to the project definition and plan****; did the project follow the defined plan and remain with the agreed upon scope*

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Even if the project was unsuccessful, over-ran, and brought shame to those who were responsible for it, it should be formally closed and the team, who worked hard for its success, rewarded for their effort.

Allow the team time to reflect on and prepare for the review and ensure there is plenty of time for a thorough group discussion. Keep the meeting positive, don't overly dwell on negatives, but ensure that the positive lessons are brought out from each negative event. Doing better next time should be the theme of the review rather than delving into the minute detailed reasons for each perceived failure. Start with what was done right, what you were pleased with, and then move on to what went less well.

The outcomes from the Project Review should be incorporated into a Project Report. Ensure the report provides the measures of the relative success (time, budget, performance, delivery) and also clearly details the lessons learned. It is best to deal with unpleasant truths with care. For example, if the project team had little or no management support (assuming they positively asked for it), then it may be best to report that with the benefit of hindsight. It would be better to have had a formal management review of the project at its key stages.

The motto, "Think before you act" is at the heart of the project management process. Projects go through a number of stages characterized by a distinct set of activities or tasks that take the project from conception to conclusion. Successful execution of each stage will have a direct impact you and ultimately the mission.

Summary

The Project Management lesson began with an introduction to project management, including a definition of what project management is, and what it is not. Next, it explored the project management triangle, and how the constraints of time, cost, and scope are related to each other and to the final product's quality and/or performance. The lesson continued by exploring the project management process and its five stages: project initiation, project planning and design, project execution and construction, project monitoring and controlling, and project completion.

Air Force requirements, mission changes, and organizational initiatives all necessitate effective project management in order to improve processes, products, and people. SNCOs are regularly appointed to lead and manage these projects. Your ability to take a step back and view every project from the project management perspective will aid you immensely from beginning to end.

As project manager, to be at the end of a project and to report that the project plan has been fully met, on time and on budget, is a significant achievement, whatever the project size or complexity. Project management almost always involves change management, which makes it very important to consider the effects of the project on people who have to adapt to the change. Change is difficult, even when it is good and made for the right reasons. Remembering this, during and at the end of your project, will help you achieve a project that is well received as well as successful. By increasing your understanding of project management concepts and their positive impacts, SNCOs are better able to approach the projects they lead with confidence.

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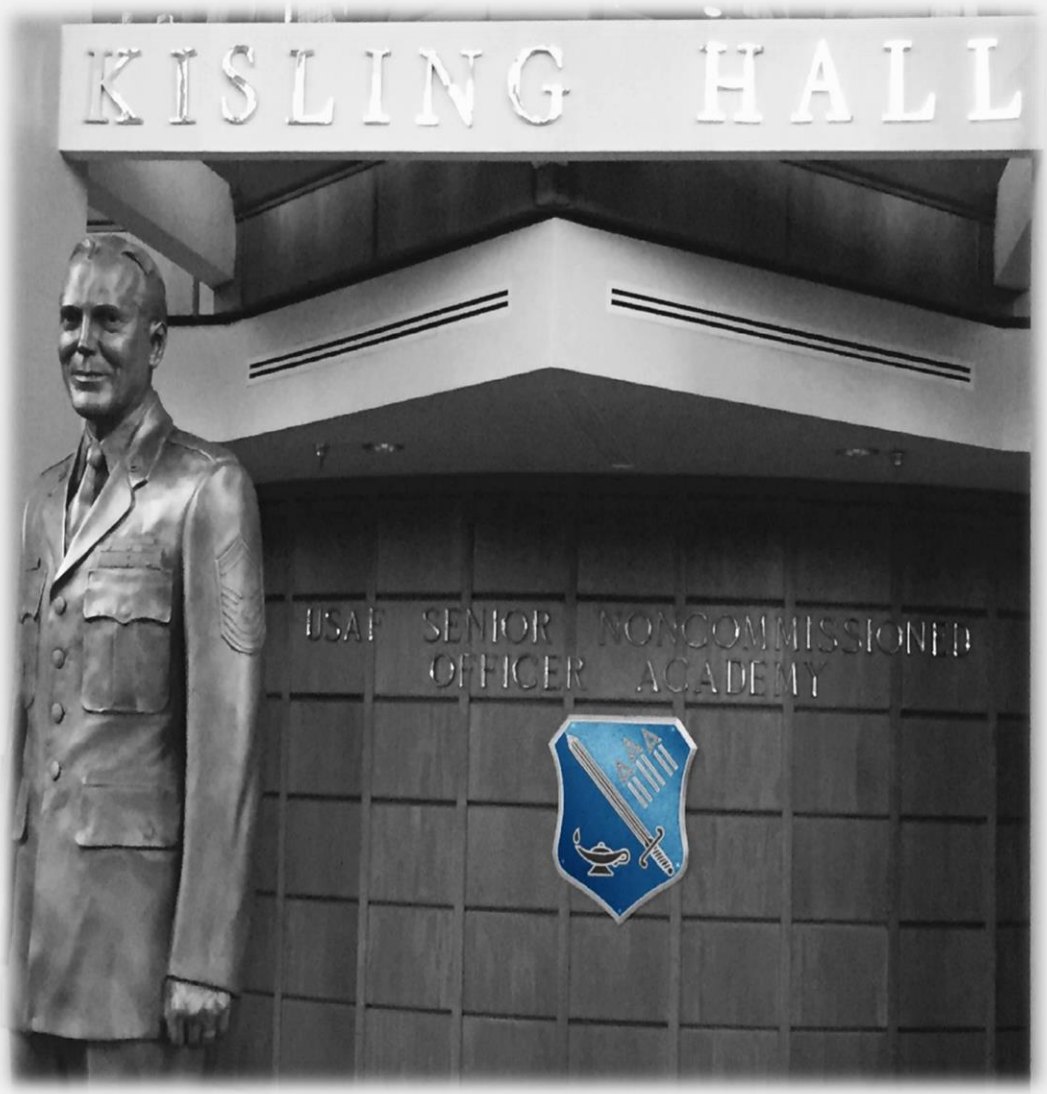

Strategic Planning

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Definition and History of Strategic Planning

According to the online Business Dictionary, Strategic Planning is the systematic process of envisioning a desired future, and translating this vision into broadly defined goals or objectives and a sequence of steps to achieve them. Strategic planning begins with the desired-end and works backward to the current status. At every stage of strategic-planning the planner asks, "What must be done at the previous (lower) stage to reach here?"

The history of strategic planning begins in the military. According to Webster's New World Dictionary, strategy is "the science of planning and directing large-scale military operations, of maneuvering forces into the most advantageous position prior to actual engagement with the enemy." Although our understanding of strategy as applied to management has been transformed, one element remains vital: aim to achieve not just mission completion at all costs but progression towards a superior and necessary future state.

According to Wall and Wall, taking its name and roots from the military model, early models of formal strategic planning "reflected the hierarchical values and linear systems of traditional organizations. Undertaken by elite planning functions at the top of the organization, its structure was highly vertical and time-bound. A certain period would be set aside to analyze the situation and decide on a course of action. This would result in a formal document. Once this was done, the actual work of implementation - which was considered a separate, discrete process - could begin." Although individual definitions of strategy vary between authors, traditionally, theorists have considered planning an essential part of organizational strategy.

Mintzberg suggest that Strategic planning in organizations originated in the 1950s and was very popular and widespread between mid-1960s to mid-1970s, when then people believed it was the answer for all problems, and corporate America was "obsessed" with strategic planning. Following that "boom", strategic planning was cast aside and abandoned for over a decade. The 1990s brought the revival of strategic planning as a "process with particular benefits in particular contexts."

Gouillart takes us into the subsequent newer models of strategic planning which were focused on adaptability to change, flexibility, and importance of strategic thinking and organizational learning. "Strategic agility" is becoming more important than the strategy itself, because the organization's ability to succeed "has more to do with its ability to transform itself, continuously, than whether it has the right strategy. Being strategically agile enables organizations to transform their strategy depending on the changes in their environment."

The Air Force (AF) is focusing on this strategic agility and its impact not just on our service as a whole but also on our country and its ability to survive. Strategic Alignment & Deployment (SA&D) is a component of Air Force strategic planning and guidance (AF/A8X) and must be understood, valued and implemented correctly by SNCO's.

Strategic Alignment and Deployment (SA&D)

SA&D is the method used to ensure everyone in AF organizations is working effectively towards the same goals identified by senior leadership. It is a product of annual strategic and performance planning.

Traditional Management	vs. SA&D
• One-way communication	• Two-way communication
• Management after the fact	• Immediate self-correction
• Individual skill oriented	• Collective skills-process oriented
• Fails to eliminate chronic problems	• Focus on problem solving-root cause
• Used as an intimidation weapon	• Used to improve and share information
• Lacks linkage	• Links all levels

The 2015 AF Strategic Master Plan has been revised to develop overarching, long-range strategic guidance. This 20-year Strategic Master Plan advances the strategic vectors and imperatives set by America's Air Force: A Call to the Future to provide a strategic framework that will shape the Air Force's future. It provides consistent direction across all Air Force portfolios and brings year-to-year coherency to our plans and programs. MAJCOMS and WINGS are either currently or beginning to use SA&D to build their mission, vision, goals and objectives that drive the organization to achieve and focus its mission.

SA&D is designed to:

- Align the enterprise to achieve the priorities, goals, objectives, metrics and tasks impacting the entire organization.
- Provide a common/standard methodology to deploy metrics and action plans throughout the enterprise.
- Communicate commander's intent relative to goals, objectives, metrics and action plans.
- Assign accountability and responsibility at all levels.
- Ensure alignment throughout the organization.
- Concentrate the organization on high-leverage outputs.
- Form a disparate group of individuals into a team with a common goal.

SA&D is a planning process, to understand how it starts, let's look at the parts. The first being, Strategy.

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Strategy

Per the Air Force Strategic Plan, Strategy is about choices ─ what we choose to prioritize, our action in support of our priorities, the order in which we take them, and how we allocate resources against our priorities to support the Nation's Objectives. As you can see, the AF Strategic Plan emphasizes choices, every day as SNCO's you make choices on where to focus your efforts (e.g., manpower and allocating funds). Failing to provide a well-communicated strategy at all levels of management can create confusion and undermine organizational motivation and focus. Your ability to provide guidance on how to align with strategy rather than broaden it should not be taken lightly. The alignment of a strategic vision to employee productivity is a key contributor to the success of an organization. This alignment encourages and stimulates employees' creativity so that they can perform more effectively to support the organizational goals and objectives

Alignment

This piece of the process is the strategy communication link for the organization and enables improvement at every level. It is our execution tool, not a strategic planning tool. Alignment is the translation of the vision into measurable results. It involves a clear set of strategic objectives and vision translated into day-to-day action and creates an environment for innovation by the process of gap analysis and continuous improvement. SA&D alignment is achieved through cascading strategy from the top down.

Cascading Process

The purpose of cascading strategy is to communicate, align, and validate HQ, NAF, Wing, and intra-Wing strategies. This process develops a strategic "line-of-sight" between Commander's strategic priorities and Airmen's responsibilities & accountabilities. Have you heard of this before? If not you may want to start sitting in on some of your organization's strategy meetings. The below chart taken from the AFSO21 Playbook shows the cascading process.

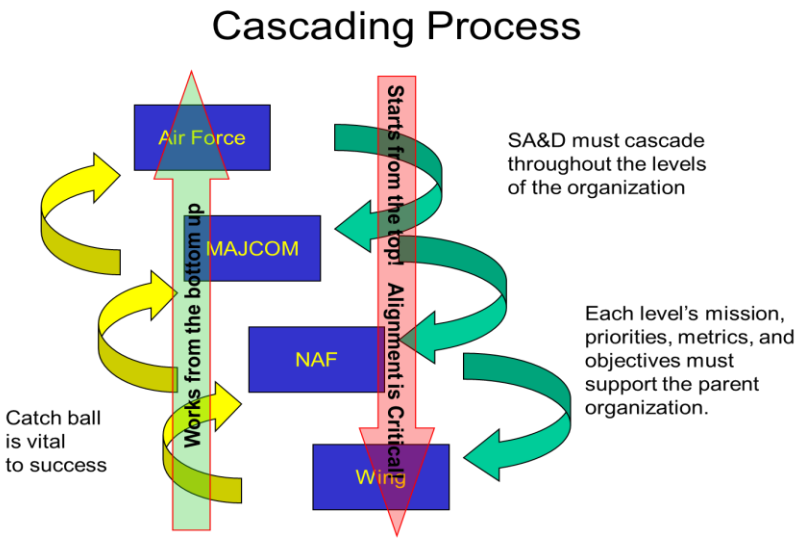

Figure 1, Cascading Process

The green arrows indicate the cascading of goals from one level to another. This is an important step where intense dialogue takes place to make sure intent and direction is clear. The yellow arrows indicate the catchball process. Catchball is a participative approach to decision-making. It promotes workforce feedback and continuous dialogue. The analogy to tossing a ball back and forth emphasizes the interactive nature of policy deployment. Again, intense dialogue is necessary to ensure feasibility and buy-in.

Depending on the organization, there can be multiple parent organizations (e.g. AF and Combatant Commands). Alignment is critical to maximize results and minimize the effort on non-critical projects. There must be sanity checks of mapping strategies from bottom to top. If there isn't a clear map – the organization may need to drop the item or metric. SNCO's are the key in this process, for the most part we are leading those at the Tactical level and usually our bosses link into the higher levels of the organization. If the strategy doesn't convert into tactical application, we may be wasting valuable resources and time.

This leads us to the first step of the SA&D process which is building and aligning organizational mission and vision.

SA&D Misson and Vision

Mission

To allow a cascading alignment of SA&D, a mission statement must be developed. To put it simply a mission statement is the purpose of the organization, the reason it exists. An effective mission statement must:

- Give reasons for the organization to exist over the next 3 years and beyond
- Best describe the unified mission of the organization
- Indicate how unique/different the organization is from other similar institutions

Here is one example of how PACAF and 2 sub units would build their mission statements to align with the AF mission statement:

- **Air Force** – The mission of the United States Air Force is to fly, fight and win…in air, space and cyberspace.
- **PACAF** – Provide Pacific Command integrated expeditionary Air Force capabilities to defend the homeland, promote stability, dissuade/deter aggression, and swiftly defeat enemies.
- **5th AF** – Serves as the HQ PACAF forward element in Japan, conducting activities to include maximizing partnership capabilities and promoting bilateral defense cooperation. 5th AF also serves as the air component to US Forces Japan.
- **35th Fighter Wing** – Defend US interests in the Pacific and assist in the defense of Japan with sustained forward presence, worldwide deployable forces, and focused mission support.

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Notice the cascading effect. They aren't the same, yet they support each other. Some may seem a bit wordy, what do you think? One of the most simple mission statements in the AF was found at Dover AFB. Where they simply used one word for their existence, "Deliver."

How easy is that to remember? It says exactly why they exist and their purpose. Also, although not in so many words, it shows a direct link to their Major Command, AMC's mission which is to "provide global air mobility ... right effects, right place, right time." Mission may be enduring and it may change based on many factors, however one thing is for certain, an organization cannot move forward without a vision.

Vision

Vision….is a statement of an ideal state of being or existence in the future that is inspiring and empowering…creates a context for process of planning a future for the organization.

A vision should:

- Be grounded in reality or organization's present situation
- Should create some problems for the organization
- Stakeholders (those with an investment in the organization) must be able to see themselves or their interests represented in the vision
- Should invite and inspire people to want it

The key message here is the status quo is not a viable alternative and should bring about change. A task without a vision is drudgery; it creates unity of purpose for all in the organization. Vision helps determine the strategic priorities and a context for objectives so that their relationship to the entire organization is clear. Your vision statement should be a snapshot of the future as you want it to be.

Here is an example of AETC's Vision aligning with a cascading effect:

- **Air Force** – The United States Air Force will be a trusted and reliable joint partner with our sister services known for integrity in all of our activities, including supporting the joint mission first and foremost. We will provide compelling air, space, and cyber capabilities for use by the combatant commanders. We will excel as stewards of all Air Force resources in service to the American people, while providing precise and reliable Global Vigilance, Reach and Power for the nation.
- **AETC** – Deliver unrivaled Air, Space and Cyberspace education and training.
- **Air University –** Be the intellectual and leadership center of the Air Force.
- **Barnes Center for Enlisted Education** – Develop Airmen with a Warrior Ethos and a Passion for Leading in the cause of Freedom.

The AF vision is pretty wordy, but it has many organizations to try to capture for a future state. Many organizations develop mission statements, vision statements, goals, etc…However, few organizations develop well structured, meaningful strategies to get from point A to point B. A vision without a plan is just a dream; this is why a strategy map is vital to achieving our future state.

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SA&D Strategy Map

A strategy map is a plan to move an organization from their current state to a more desirable future state. Building a strategy map happens in steps that lead the organization through development of a way ahead. It is almost impossible to have a successful strategic plan without doing an "honest" assessment of where the organization is today. If the initial assessment is overstated in terms of current performance, then the plan is by definition overly aggressive.

Assess the Current Situation

To assess the current situation identify performance gaps and opportunities. Rate current performance against last year's plan (if available). Look into the performance of critical processes, are any missing the mark? Is morale up or down? Is training and development working or is it even happening at all? One tool to utilize in this process is a SWOT analysis. SWOT is used to brainstorm strengths and weaknesses from an internal stand point. Internal means within the organization. Then brainstorming Opportunities and Threats from an External stand point. External is anything outside the organization. Gather your team together and go through each of these areas as seen in the example below.

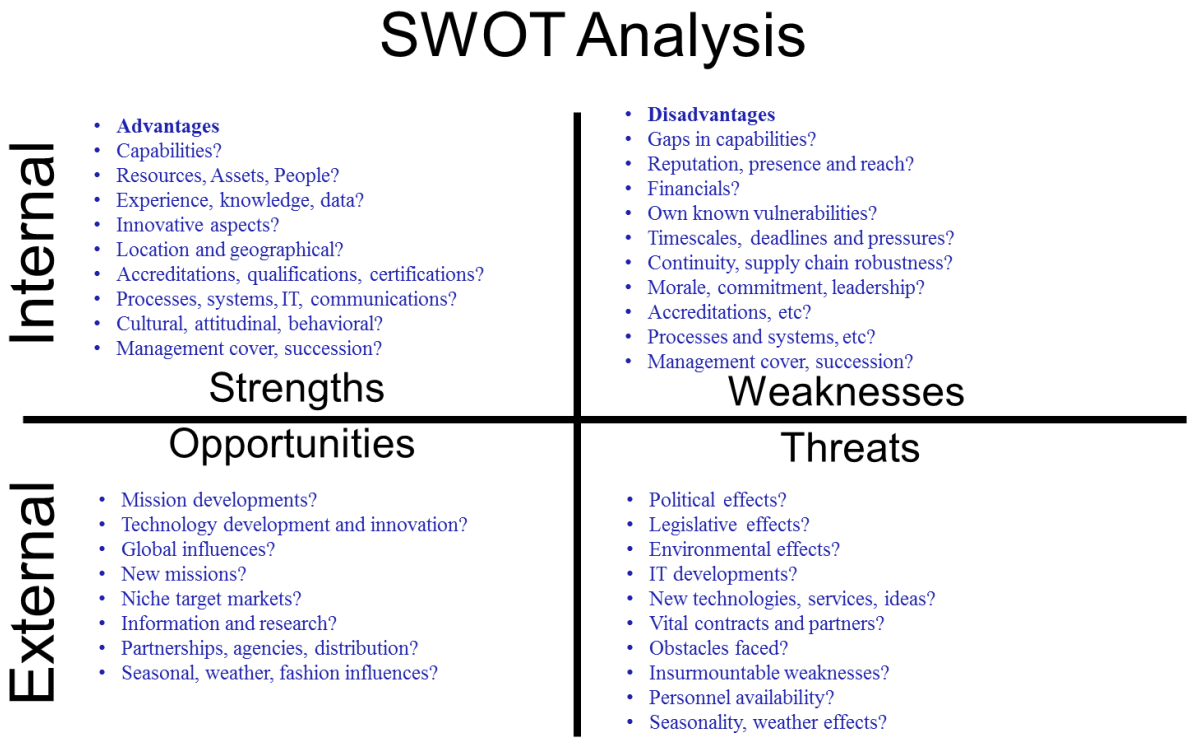

Figure 2, SWOT Analysis

Once you see where some of the gaps exist, align with, and develop the biggest impact Priorities, End State and Goals that make sense for your unit.

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Priorities, End State and Goals

Priorities

Priorities identify major strategic focus areas on your watch (3 to 5 Priority Statements). Emphasis is on what strategically needs to change or improve to excel in executing the NAF's/Wing's mission. They should be directed at achieving the target customers' requirements. Customers can be internal or external to the organization. Examples of an internal customer would be your organization's Commander, Unit Resource Advisor, Unit Deployment Manager, Civil Service employees, Airmen etc. Examples of external customers may be the President, tax payers, the Wing, other organizations, outside people that rely on services you provide, etc. Priorities have significant impact on how Mission will be achieved.

The 2015 AF Strategic Plan identifies Five Priorities, which should be well known to most. Presently, these provide the foundation for aligning AF wide activities and investments:

- **Provide Effective 21st-Century Deterrence**: The nuclear mission remains the clear priority of Air Force leaders, but the Air Force also offers many additional capabilities to deter a wide range of actors.
- **Maintain a Robust and Flexible Global Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Capability:** The Air Force will employ agile multi-domain solutions to detect, characterize, deter, and defeat adversaries. This requires an agile, coordinated multi-domain ISR approach that provides commanders with multiple options.
- **Ensure a Full-Spectrum Capable, High-End Focused Force:** The Air Force must focus on the skills and capabilities that deliver freedom of maneuver and allow decisive action in highly-contested spaces. However, we must retain the ability to succeed in low-intensity conflict.
- **Pursue a Multi-Domain Approach to our Five Core Missions:** To achieve the most effective solutions across the spectrum of military operations, we will increasingly integrate and employ capabilities operating in or through the cyberspace and space domains in addition to air capabilities.
- **Continue the Pursuit of Game-Changing Technologies:** We must continue to pursue radical improvements in technology, that when combined with new approaches and organizational changes expand or maintain asymmetric advantages over adversaries. This requires the identification and harvesting of potential breakthroughs in thinking that might amplify the enduring effects that strengthen our advantages in air, space, and cyberspace.

As these priorities are redefined, the rest of the Air Force will need to align to the new priorities. Adaptability is vital to your organization staying relevant. To meet this priority, you first need to define an end state.

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End State

An end state is similar to a mini vision statement. It connects the dots of where you are today versus where you want to be for a particular priority. It helps communicate bounds of each Priority, paints a picture of the outcome, and gives a typical time period of one to three years. When working through your strategy map it is important to start with the end in mind. An example end state would be: "*Deliver a highly-qualified, expeditionary-focused force to the combatant commanders*." For this desired end state to be achieved, goals must be developed.

Goals

Goals clarify what must be achieved to realize an end state and provide a measurable way to let you know if you have successfully accomplished your priorities. These include quantitative metrics like time, percentage, rankings with results to be realized in one to three years. Goals break down into objectives, which involve SNCO's working with leadership to drive initiatives. Great care needs to be taken to set goals that will inspire the "right" type of behavior. Often, organizations only set goals they can control, rather than those related to the customer. An example Goal might be: "*Decrease Deployment Equipment issues by 20% in 2 years*." This is a made up goal but it gives you an idea of how they should be written. Goals usually cannot be achieved just by doing business as usual. Goals further break down into Objectives; this is where SNCOs must work with leadership to drive initiatives.

Objectives

Objectives consist of two to three statements that inform members how each Priority will be accomplished. They give strategic direction on how to execute tasks, initiatives, and process improvements. They should inspire and motivate the workforce to a higher level of performance and drive significant operational change. Objectives should be understandable, executable, relevant, and concise. To increase effectiveness, someone should be assigned to each objective to ensure action is taken and accountability is assigned. A customer-focused example would be:

"Provide effective deployment equipment." If you were the Unit Deployment Manager for your organization, you would align your own objective by examining the effectiveness of your equipment. To measure the objectives success, you need to develop metrics that help identify how well you are doing at accomplishing the objectives..

Metrics

Metrics communicate the intent of the objective statement and reflect how the objective will be achieved. Measuring the execution and effectiveness of your objectives is crucial; otherwise, you might discard a solid objective just because you didn't know it was working. Metrics drive behavior so it is important to develop metrics that are beneficial to the whole organization. Tasks state the tactical actions or deliverables that will positively influence the metrics. This is the area where most strategic plans falter. Most people like the idea of having Mission and Vision statements and objectives to throw around, but very few go the distance and actually develop meaningful metrics AND measure them to ensure objectives are being furthered. Remember: what gets measured is what gets done.

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Tasks

Tasks are a concise, simple, and understandable action statement consisting of specific deliverables. Their purpose is to support the objectives at a level where target completion dates can be established. They provide the tactical direction and processes to achieve the Objectives intended results (Recommend 1 to 3 Tasks per Objective). Tasks identify specific actions or steps to be taken within the short-term (12 months or less). Tracking tasks ensures objectives are met within prescribed timelines and many businesses utilize a Balanced Score Card to communicate and measure the execution of their strategy.

Now let's look at an example of a Strategy Map.

Mission

Why Does the Command exist? Who are the Command's Target Customers?

EXAMPLE: Provide PACOM integrated expeditionary AF capabilities to defend the Homeland, promote stability, dissuade/deter aggression, and swiftly defeat enemies

Priority Statement: identifies a major strategic focus up to the next three years which is necessary to achieve the Command's mission. **End State** describes how we will know the Priority has been fully implemented. **Goal Statement** clarifies what strategically must be realized. It includes a one to three year quantifiable stretch target that cannot be achieved just by doing "business as usual". EXAMPLE: **Priority**: Posture our forces **End State**: Organized	**Objective:** communicates what operationally must be accomplished to realize the intent of the Priority Statement (recommend 2 to 3 Objectives per Priority) EXAMPLE: **Objective:** Advocate adequate resources to support new missions and leverage Total Force Integration Best Practices 1. Transition seamlessly to Joint Basing	**METRICS:** provides leadership with a means to monitor, analyze and communicate performance so the Command can determine if the Objective is being successfully implemented (recommend 1 to 3 Metrics per Objective) EXAMPLE: 1. Best Practices identified/implemented 2. Advocacy processes defined 3. % reduction in energy consumption	**TASKS:** lists of tactical actions or deliverables that will "move the needle" on Metrics and achieve the desired outcomes of the Objective (recommend 3 to 5 Tasks per Objective) EXAMPLE: 1.1 Identify capacity needed to bed down new missions 1.2 Build organizations to optimize active and reserve manpower 1.3 Ensure timely execution of Joint Basing implementation plans to meet Congressional

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and equipped to support the joint team and successfully execute the national defense strategy for current and future missions with low-to-moderate risk. **Goal**: Execute assigned missions and bed down new missions by FY17	2. Investigate opportunities to divest, centralize, regionalize, strategic source, and transform missions in a constrained resource environment		mandates 1.4 Eliminate/Reduce/Restructure contracts to meet fiscal realities 1.5 Reduce facility footprint/energy consumption to meet fiscal realities

As you can see in the above example, each step is done to ensure the prior step is met. This is a very easy to read example of Strategy Mapping. Many businesses utilize a Balanced Score Card (BSC) to communicate and measure the execution of their strategy.

Balanced Score Card (BSC)

The BSC is a strategy management system for establishing and communicating an organization's mission, vision and strategy map to customers, stakeholders and employees, and for aligning day-to-day work to the strategy. It is a more dressed up version of the above Strategy Map and normally displays measurements, ie: metrics identifying whether or not objectives are being met. Based on Alignment, it is a strategy execution tool, not a creation tool. Right now AETC, AFMC, AF Logistics and USAFA are using this method, but leadership is working to get all MAJCOMs on board as thousands of organizations have proven its success. For example, the Royal Norwegian Air Force Chief of Staff Maj Gen Tomas Colin Arche stated in an interview in 2000, "when I was promoted to Chief of Air Staff in 2000, the Air Force had no clear vision and strategy to meet these challenges. I was convinced that the BSC could help me develop and implement a new vision and strategy for our Air Force. This tool matches my way of communication: it is visual, simple, and to the point.

The Balanced Scorecard combines all important elements of leadership and management into one system, and helps me maintain a strategic focus." He was right with a 50 % increase in training and exercises without an increase in budget. As well as an increase in flight hours without an increase in cost. This is only two of his successes many successes.

The intent of BSC is to have an organization see how BALANCED IT IS OR IS NOT in the key perspectives it has chosen to align its strategies. Being in the Red or not meeting that objective (measured by its metrics) means this is a focus area. Here is an AETC example that shows how a BSC might look with the Cascading Process and measurements.

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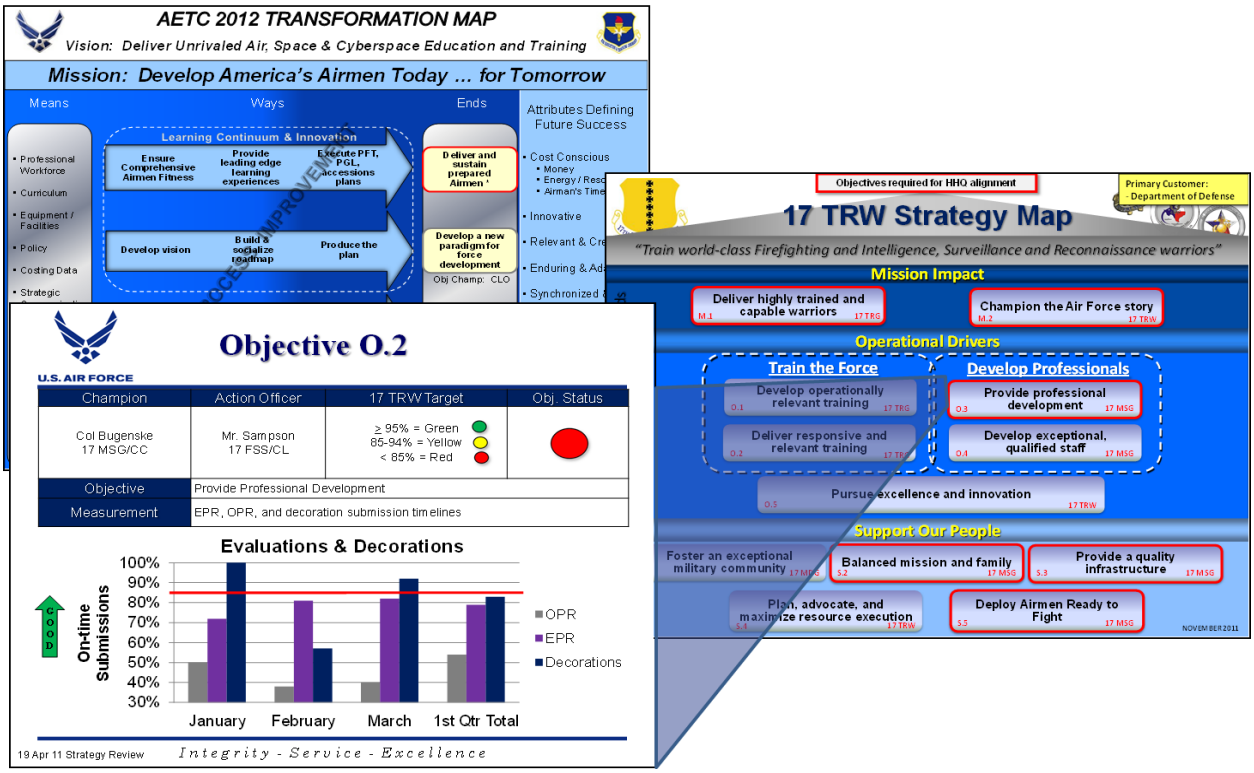
Strategic Alignment



This is a quick synopsis of BSC and is just an overview; this is a process and should be used in organizations as a graphic representation of organizational alignment and priorities. Remember it is a strategy execution tool, not a creation tool and should be utilized to align and measure your priorities with meeting your organization's priorities.

Here is a real world example of how a SA&D Aligns and Cascades from MAJCOM to unit level: For 2012, AETC has a desired Priority to "Develop a New Paradigm for Force Development." This flows to their subordinate unit of Air University, who must build their own Objective. Then onto their subordinate unit of The Barnes Center for Enlisted Development.

Hence the development of EMPE Next, where Enlisted Professional Military Education Centers AF wide are looking at smarter and more cost effective ways of educating the force, such as through distance learning. The SNCO Academy then works to achieve this objective by developing an Objective of "Build a SNCOA Transformation team" to meet the intent of EMPE Next. A team was built to transform the curriculum and anything outside of this Task is considered waste. With good management, this is where we need to ensure leadership at all levels understands how we contribute to higher level Priorities and what is detracting from achieving our end state.

An example would be if the team (because they are no longer in the classroom) was tasked to work on painting and storage clean up. This would be non-value added to a time restricted end goal and should try to be negotiated (refer to negotiation lesson) with leadership by the SNCO leading the team. Will the negotiation always work? No because some things fall into AF, MAJCOM or Wing Commander priorities that fall outside your scope of influence, i.e.: Base Honor Guard or Security Forces Augmentees, all this must be taken into account when deciding to negotiate. But the key is communicating mission impact. We have covered a lot of ground showing you as a SNCO the bigger picture, now we will show you a strategy to utilize this in your scope of influence.

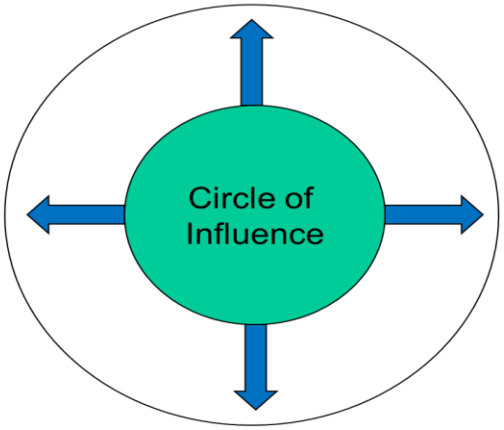
SNCO Utilization

As a Senior Enlisted Leader you are in a strategic position to put strategy into play and monitor its execution. Knowing your circle of influence can help you work with leadership; peers and subordinates to ensure you are aligning across the enterprise and not just leading with blinders on. Remember that as small as your circle of influence may seem, it can crush an organization's Vision and Mission if the Priorities don't Align and we don't see the bigger picture. Proactive SNCO's know their organization's Priorities, if they don't, they ask. Stephen Covey defines proactive as "being responsible for our own lives…..our behavior is a function of our decisions, not our conditions. Proactive people focus on issues within their circle of influence. They work on things they can do something about. The nature of their energy in doing this is positive, enlarging and magnifying. They increase their Circle of Influence.

Where is Your Circle of Influence?

- Air Force?
- MAJCOM?
- Wing?
- Squadron?
- Personal?

- Increase it by being proactive



If for some reason your leadership doesn't know the Group's, Wing's, MAJCOM's etc…Priorities and Goals, you may have to go to a higher level and work towards infusing this into your work center, begin by explaining the impact not aligning will have on the mission. The below steps are not the only way to introduce this process to your unit but gives you an idea of how to achieve Alignment, buy-in and implementation

- Make sure your Priorities are aligned with higher level Priorities.
- To achieve line of sight alignment, try a "top down, bottoms up approach"; i.e. before locking in your goals, flow them down throughout the organization and ask your unit to do the following: 1) Recommend any needed changes to your goals 2) Develop their own aligning goals.
- Then flow back to the top (Catchball) & negotiate….be flexible and lean forward to incorporate good ideas generated thru this process. You will realize a major dividend in the form of buy-in from your people.
- Assign accountability to where the work gets done. Accountability for accomplishment is the backbone of SA&D….it must be clear and unambiguous.
- Increase employee buy-in with personal objectives and incentives that align with the strategy, ie: time off, leading the next objective, etc.…
- Then communicate the existing culture, the vision and the new culture (end state) you wish everyone to aspire to throughout the organization.
- Every person in your organization should know your Goals and have a clear understanding of how he or she supports your Goals.
- On your walk-around, quiz your workers. If they don't know, find out why and fix it. Get out in your organization and talk to your people, utilize FRLD-Individual Consideration and Intellectual Stimulation. Re-emphasize your Vision and Goals at the next Commander's calls or other available venues.
- Knowledge, skills and currency are all important. Use your personal training programs to provide employees with skills required to execute the strategy.
- Make sure you make all of this visible through the use of a Strategy Map or BSC tailored to your unit. Remember metrics are powerful motivators. Build a culture of innovators who can spot problems and work to eliminate them

Aligning allows the employees to develop a clear line of sight between the strategic objectives and the work he or she does every day. Our Airmen want to know how their work contributes to value creating activities. Get to the WHY we are doing business this way and how they contribute.

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Summary

Strategic Planning is critical to any company's survival and the AF is no exception. The AF must plan and focus its strategy with less money and resources. SA&D is the process ensuring organizations are Aligned using a cascading process. Each level must support the last in their use of Mission, Vision, Priorities, End State, Goals, Objectives, Metrics, and Tasks. The Balanced Score Card is tool that effectively communicates this process. To truly focus you and your Airman's efforts you must know your leadership's Priorities. Stove Pipe leadership, meaning focusing on only your piece of the organization leads to constraints and waste, which we discuss in full in Continuous Process Improvement. SNCO's are the key to Strategic Planning and its success AF wide.

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