

JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE
JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL



LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF THE JOINT WARRIOR

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

Signature _____

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ABSTRACT

The art of leadership has been a subject of study and relevance since the dawn of the human race. The actions of leaders throughout history have created and destroyed great empires, sparked scientific discovery, horrified generations, and inspired positive change. The greatest of these leaders have shared a common trait of understanding human nature and the psychology of their followers. Leadership is inexorably tied to human psychology, however, Service, government agency and multi-national leadership development programs, philosophies and definitions vary across the joint force. The joint leader must navigate through this fluid environment utilizing leadership competencies developed through experience, training, education and self development.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Vision for Joint Officer Development (CJCS JOD) outlines the way ahead for the development of senior joint leadership. The Chairman's vision is multi-faceted and relies on a combination of officer in-service experience, joint service experience and joint education. This combination of training and experience will develop officers who are "strategically minded, critical thinkers, and skilled joint warfighters." Immediately upon describing these desired qualities of joint leaders in the CJCS JOD, the Chairman identifies the cornerstone task for his vision and the purpose of this thesis: "... to identify and inculcate a set of joint leader competencies and skills based on the enduring value of the Force."

This paper identifies three competencies critical to joint leadership: (1) Build Trust (2) Communicate and (3) Think Critically. These leadership competencies are not unique to the joint force; however, they are critical to the development and success of joint leaders. The author defends this conclusion through research, interviews and case studies to illustrate the essential nature of these joint leadership competencies. Finally, this study recommends a process and template for joint leadership development in order to effectively prepare military and interagency leaders for joint command and staff responsibility.

Thesis Statement: *Only if the essential competencies of joint leaders are identified and inculcated will the United States military and interagency effectively prepare its senior leaders for joint command and staff responsibilities.*

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INTRODUCTION

The art of leadership has been a subject of study and relevance since the dawn of the human race. The actions of leaders throughout history have created and destroyed great empires, sparked scientific discovery, horrified generations, and inspired positive change. The greatest of these leaders have shared a common trait of understanding human nature and the psychology of their followers. Leadership is inexonerably tied to human psychology and a leader's understanding of the inner knowledge of his followers is essential to his or her success.¹ As GEN Douglas McArthur wrote, "The leader must have developed to the highest degree his own understanding of human nature ... for in battle men will follow only those whose demonstrated efficiency inspires confidence and respect."² These words are particularly true for joint leaders. An understanding of human nature allows the joint leader to succeed in the complex environment of various Services, government agencies and international militaries.

The joint leader must navigate through this fluid environment utilizing leadership competencies developed through experience, training, education and self development. This thesis identifies three competencies critical to joint leadership: (1) Build Trust (2) Communicate and (3) Think Critically. These leadership competencies are not unique to the joint force. They are timeless skills demonstrated throughout history by leaders from Napoleon to Colin Powell. These skills are critical to the development and success of joint leaders. The purpose of the current and future joint force is to support and defend

¹ Capt Adolf Von Schell, Staff Corps German Army. *Battle Leadership*, (Quantico, VA: The Marine Corps Association, June 2007). Lessons on battle command and leadership written by a German officer who served in combat throughout Europe during WW I.

² GEN Douglas MacArthur, USA. *Report of the Secretary of War to the President 1933*, (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1933).

the constitution of the United States by fighting and winning the nations' wars in all domains – air, sea, land and information.³ Our success as a joint force in achieving this goal of victory through full spectrum dominance, synchronized operations with tailored forces in all domains, depends upon our ability to first identify and then inculcate these critical joint leadership competencies in our next generation of senior military and civilian leaders.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) outlines the way ahead for the development of senior leadership for capabilities-based joint forces in the CJCS Vision for Joint Officer Development (CJCS JOD). The Chairman's vision is multi-faceted and relies on a combination of officer in-service experience, joint service experience and joint education. This combination of influences will develop officers who are "strategically minded, critical thinkers, and skilled joint warfighters."⁴ Immediately upon describing these desired qualities of joint leaders, the chairman identifies the cornerstone task for his vision and the purpose of this thesis: "... *to identify and inculcate a set of joint leader competencies and skills based on the enduring value of the Force.*"⁵

Thesis Development

This thesis identifies service common and critical joint leadership competencies by closely examining several Service, interagency and multi-national perspectives and policies on leadership in order to understand how leadership is perceived across the joint force. In order to accomplish this goal, this study will first establish common definitions for critical terms through research of the CJCS JOD and additional related material. A

³ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Vision 2020*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, (June 2006).

⁴ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, (2005), IV.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

combination of research and interviews will be used to identify leadership characteristics and competencies common to the services and agencies which establish the joint force. The study will then determine the characteristics and competencies most critical for success as a leader in the modern joint environment. These identified competencies will be defended using case studies and vignettes to illustrate situations where these vital joint leadership competencies were exercised or were absent. Finally, the study will outline a process for the inculcation of critical joint leadership competencies in order to effectively prepare military and interagency leaders for joint command and staff responsibility.

***Thesis Statement:** Only if the essential competencies of joint leaders are identified and inculcated will the United States military and interagency effectively prepare its senior leaders for joint command and staff responsibilities.*

Framework

There is significant research and data on leadership that spans across history, culture and profession. A comprehensive discussion of the concept of leadership or human psychology is beyond the scope of this thesis. Therefore, this study will examine research, discussions and case studies essential for an understanding of the challenges and core competencies of leadership in the modern joint environment. The paper will include relevant examples of leadership in the business world and foreign countries, but the majority of this research will focus on U.S. military and civilian leadership, culture and psychology. In order to further refine the scope of this thesis and create a common terminology baseline for this paper, the study will define the term “joint” for use in this paper and establish clear definitions for additional critical terms as required.

The term “joint” has evolved from its original use in the 1947 Department of Defense Reorganization Act as a term that described the deconfliction and coordination of activities between the military Services to a term which includes not just the Services of the armed forces, but also the governmental agencies and multinational partners. Congress currently defines the term “joint matters” as “matters relating to the integrated employment of land, sea, and air forces, including matters relating to (1) national military strategy; (2) strategic planning and contingency planning; and (3) command and control of combat operations under unified command.”⁶ Congress’ definition correctly illustrates the tremendous scope of joint operations and their direct link to national military strategy, strategic and contingency planning. Standing Department of Defense (DoD) joint doctrine defines the term “joint” in a much more constrained matter as “Connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate.”⁷

Al Qaida conducted a successful terrorist attack on America five months after DoD published their most recent definition of the term “joint”, and our nation’s experiences since September 11th, 2001 (9/11) drove congress to develop their more comprehensive definition of the term. GEN Peter Pace, CJCS from 2004 to 2006, provides a similarly evolved and mature definition in the 2005 CJCS JOD. The document defines the term “joint” as “the integrated employment of US and multinational armed forces and interagency capabilities in land, sea, air and space and in both the human and virtual domains.”⁸ This definition is based on a practical assessment of our

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP 1-02, Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. (12 April 2001 (Amended thru 17 September 2006)).

⁸ CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*.

nation's experiences in war over a sustained period and accurately reflects the complexity, scope and strategic importance of joint operations.

Of particular significance, the CJCS JOD specifically includes the interagency and multinational forces in the term "joint." Additionally, the document's definition describes the area of joint operations (land, sea, air and space) and goes so far as to mention the "human" and "virtual" domains of joint operations. It renders obsolete the common moniker "joint and interagency" and makes the concept of limiting the term "joint" to the relationship between sister services in DoD appear both antiquated and uninspired. To further illustrate the ongoing transformation of the term "joint", the SECDEF wrote the following in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report: "Interagency and international combined operations truly are the new joint operations."⁹ Because the CJCS JOD constitutes the base document for joint officer development, adherence to the document's definition of the term "joint" will ensure synthesis between the critical joint competencies identified in this research and the CJCS vision. For the purpose of establishing continuity with the CJCS vision, throughout this document the term "joint" will encompass the Services, interagency and multinational forces.

Relevance

"This vision for joint officer development sets the objective and direction of march for transformative changes in how we develop leaders of the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO) envisioned force. *Detailed work on joint leader competencies is both at the heart of the vision and an area to be more fully developed; this task is now under way.* This vision is intended to guide the development of strategies and approaches that will in turn produce the joint leaders required by the Nation."¹⁰

- GEN Peter Pace, USMC, CJCS 2005-2007

⁹ United States Department of Defense., Office of the Secretary of Defense. *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*. Washington, D.C., (6 February 2006).

¹⁰ CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*.

The 108th Congress' Ronald Reagan Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 demonstrates the strategic importance of joint leader development and the United States' resolve to continue the joint force transformation placed into law in the Goldwater Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. The 108th Congress directs the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), with advice from CJCS, to develop a strategic plan to link joint officer development to the missions and goals of the Department of Defense.¹¹ SECDEF outlined the way ahead for accomplishment of this task through the release of the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO) which outlines the fundamental characteristics of, and actions to be taken by, the joint force from 2012 through 2025. These fundamental characteristics of the joint force lay the framework for joint officer development and the CJCS JOD is intrinsically tied to the CCJO.

This research addresses a specific task from the 2005 CJCS JOD, the identification of joint leadership competencies and skills within the services and interagency. The CJCS JOD asserts that in the modern world of joint operations and strategy, joint leadership competencies are vital to national security of the United States. The chairman describes joint leadership competencies as a combination of common, Service and "uniquely joint" leadership competencies. These "uniquely joint" competencies are generally more overarching and focus more on strategy and operations.¹² The JOD raises several questions for research. First, what exactly are the common service and government agency competencies; and second, once they are identified, which, if any, of these competencies are unique to positions of joint leadership? AMB James Bullington, an accomplished State Department Foreign Service

¹¹ United States Congress. Senate, *Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005*, Public Law 108-375, 108th Cong., 2d sess. (28 Oct 2004).

¹² CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, 3.

Officer with joint experience as far back as the Vietnam war, stated that while he does not believe there are leadership competencies “unique” to the joint force, there are several that are vital to the success of joint organizations.¹³ How and via what means do we ensure the development of these critical joint competencies in our military and civilian leaders? Can the United States rely on the current professional development policies of the CJCS, the Services or the interagency to develop leaders tasked with the execution of national defense and foreign policy? In addition to answering these questions, this research will provide a particularly valuable reference on joint leadership for the United States military and government organizations.

¹³ AMB James Bullington, interview by author, Norfolk, VA, October 2, 2007. Examples of competencies AMB Bullington identifies as vital to the success of joint organizations are the ability to build trust and the ability to communicate.

CHAPTER I: THE ROLE OF HUMAN NATURE IN LEADERSHIP

“If I had the time and anything like your ability to study war, I think I should concentrate almost entirely on the actualities of war –the effects of tiredness, hunger, fear, lack of sleep, weather. ... The principles of strategy and tactics, and the logistics of war are absurdly simple: it is the actualities that make war so complicated and so difficult ...”

Lord Wavell to Liddell Hart¹

Leadership is at its core the understanding of human psychology. In order to identify core competencies of leadership for the joint force, one must first examine the instruments of leadership – men and women. Leaders lead people and people are complicated. People are subject to emotions and conditions such as fear, jealousy, pride, fatigue and injury, and leaders must understand how each of these sensations or conditions impacts those in their charge or sphere of influence. The great military theorist Carl Von Clausewitz addressed this human element of leadership by introducing the concept of the “moral dimension of war.”² Clausewitz struggled with a concise definition of this concept and describing the moral dimension as a spirit that “will not yield to academic wisdom” and “cannot be classified or counted.”³ The art of leadership is executed in the moral dimension and is requires both academic insight and experience to master. German Army Captain Adolf Von Schell, a junior officer and combat leader during World War I, describes the inherent complexity and uncertainty of the moral dimension when he writes “The only thing of which we [leaders] are certain is this: the

¹ COL B.P. McCoy, USMC. *The Passion of Command – The Moral Imperative of Leadership*, (Quantico, Virginia: Marine Corps Association, April 2007).

² Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976). 216.

³ Ibid.

psychology of the soldier is always important. No commander lacking in this inner knowledge of men can accomplish great things.”⁴

If the art of leadership is so difficult to master, then what is the importance of studying the subject? The short answer to this question is that leadership is a pre-requisite for the success of an organization, business or culture. Simply stated, leadership wins wars, accomplishes goals, and enables success. The study of leadership remains relevant to the military services, civilian agencies and civilian industry due to its inseparable attachment to human psychology. Leadership addresses the “human element”⁵ of a team or organization. While circumstances have changed from the battles of Alexander the Great or Napoleon to the modern war in Iraq, the human element remains the same. The French military theorist Ardant du Picq wrote, “the human heart is then the starting point in all matters pertaining to war.”⁶ The ability of leadership to influence this human element of an organization makes the ongoing study of leadership important, relevant and timeless.

Leadership is the art that influences what Clausewitz described as the “moral factors”⁷ of war. While Clausewitz is a military theorist and describes the moral factors in the context of war, his principles are equally relevant for any civilian or military organization. These moral factors can be defined as the elements of the human psyche that affect a persons desire to fight or execute his or her assigned responsibilities.

Clausewitz described the moral elements as “among the most important in a war”⁸ and

⁴ Von Schell, *Battle Leadership*.

⁵ Ardant du Picq, *Battle Studies*, trans. and ed. John N. Greely and Robert C. Cotton (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1989).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Clausewitz, *On War*, 216.

⁸ Ibid., 216.

discussed their impact when he wrote: “they [moral elements] constitute the spirit that permeates war as a whole, and at an early stage they establish a close affinity with the will that moves and leads the whole mass of force, ... since the will is itself a moral quantity.”⁹ The art of leadership is the ability to affect or influence this “will” described by Clausewitz.

Successful leadership understands human nature and therefore understands that organizational will is composed of the collective will of individuals. One of the finest historical examples of the importance of understanding human nature to leadership and the ultimate success of an organization can be found in the military history of Rome. As described by du Picq, “the Roman, a politician above all, with whom war was only a means, wanted perfect means. He had no illusions. He took into account human weakness and he discovered the legion.”¹⁰

The Roman legion tactics, most notably the phalanx, were successful because they recognized the strengths and limitations of the human spirit and their formations were designed to leverage human strength and mitigate human weakness. This is most clearly demonstrated in their actual formations consisting of several lines or ranks organized into groups of several ranks called cohorts. The Romans built teams through their organization; each man had his rank and his cohort and had established bonds with the men he would fight alongside in combat. The Romans displayed a profound understanding of human nature in the way they organized their cohorts for combat. The youngest were placed in the front lines while the older, more experienced men were placed in the second and third. The Romans understood that the men in the second and

⁹ Ibid., 217.

¹⁰ Ardant du Picq, *Battle Studies*.

third ranks required greater moral stamina or “will” to enter into the battle after watching their predecessor fall dead or wounded.¹¹ Napoleon echoed the importance of this relationship when he stated “in war the moral element is to all others as three is to one.”¹²

As the Romans demonstrated, leadership must focus on the psychology of the individual in order to influence the will of an organization. The actions of individuals constitute the foundation of the actions and morale of the organization or army. A reality of leadership and of human psychology is that a leader cannot effectively influence more than four or five people at a given moment. Leaders must target the most capable individuals within their scope of influence. S.L.A. Marshall described this concept when he wrote:

“No commander is capable of the leading of an entire company in combat, the spread of strength and the great variety of the commanders problems are together beyond any one man’s compass, and that therefore a part of his problem in combat is to determine which are the moral leaders among his men when under fire, and having found them, give all support and encouragement to their effort.”¹³

Leadership targets the individual, and the affect of this leadership on the individual, whether positive or negative, spreads throughout an organization. In this manner, the actions of a strong leader can positively influence the moral element of an organization and determine the outcome of situations ranging from a battle to the achievement of quarterly sales goals. The legendary Green Bay Packers coach Vince Lombardi eloquently summarized this concept when he stated, “The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual.”¹⁴

¹¹ Ibid., 39.

¹² Ardant du Picq, *Battle Studies*.

¹³ S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War*, (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1978).

¹⁴ Vince Lombardi, addressing the Green Bay Packers (date unknown), (accessed at: <http://www.brainyquote.com> on 02 January 2008).

History abounds with examples of leadership determining the outcome of battles or events. For example, the outcomes of the Union victory at Gettysburg and Shackleton's epic survival with his crew in the Antarctic were both determined by the actions of leaders. Leaders like General Lee, General Grant, General Longstreet and Ernest Shackleton¹⁵ all demonstrated that leadership is the key to the "essential factor"¹⁶ in war or in business – human nature. Recognition of the importance of understanding human nature in leadership will be essential for the identification and inculcation of critical leadership competencies in the joint force.

¹⁵ Ernest Shackleton was the Captain of the ship *Endurance* between 1914 and 1916. He led his crew on an epic 22 month quest to safety across Antarctica after his ship became trapped in the ice. The adventure is described in detail in the book *Endurance, Shackleton's Incredible Voyage* by Alfred Lansing.

¹⁶ Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War*.

CHAPTER II: DEFINING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

“The purpose in establishing competencies for leaders should be to better define what functions leaders must perform to make themselves and others in their organizations effective.”¹

Research in pursuit of joint leader competencies must begin with the establishment of a “common language for leadership concepts”² within a joint operating environment. The most critical terms in this language are “leadership” and “leadership competencies.” The variety of definitions for the term “leadership” alone illustrates the tremendous scope of perspectives on the subject. Merriam-Webster’s dictionary leaves a great deal of room for interpretation by defining leadership as “the capacity to lead”³ while General Electric and University of Michigan Business School management guru Dr. Noel M. Tichy describes leadership as “the ability to teach and drive change in a culture or organization.”⁴

The variety of definitions of “leadership” is not merely the result of different philosophical perspectives and cultures between the profit driven business sector and the joint warfare environment. Definitions of the term “leadership” also vary between the services and the interagency. The United States Army has completed a large amount of research on this topic and defines leadership as “the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission

¹ Jeffrey Horey and Jon Fallesen, “Leadership Competencies – are we all saying the same thing?” (Nov 2003), (accessed at: <http://www.drto mlifvendahl.com/Leadershipcompetencies.pdf> on 18 October 2007). Presented at 45th annual conference of the International Military Testing Association. This paper is a comprehensive analysis and comparison of the leadership competencies of the Services.

² Ibid.

³ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (Springfield: Merriam-Webster’s, Inc, 2003) s.v. “leadership.”

⁴ Noel M. Tichy, *The Cycle of Leadership* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004).

and improving the organization.”⁵ The Department of State separates leadership from management and states leadership is about “causing change.”⁶ Two common threads between the service and government agency definitions is the recognition that effective leadership requires action from the leaders and that it is vital to the success of their respective service or agency. As Noel Tichey writes, “I have come to realize that leadership is the whole game. No institution can be great unless it has a great leader at the top who develops leaders at all levels of the organization.”⁷

The varieties of leadership definitions between the Services, interagency and business world is primarily due to the inherent complexity of leadership. Effective leaders must understand the changing environment of human psychology and modify their leadership style, but not their principles, to reflect the personality, background and culture of their personnel. Thomas Jefferson provided this guidance for leaders: “In matters of style, swim with the current, in matters of principle, stand like a rock.”⁸ Great leaders possess the versatility required to modify their leadership style as the environment their personnel exist in changes. German Army Captain Adolf Von Schell describes this concept and the inherent complexity of leadership when he writes:

“Soldiers can be brave one day and afraid the next. Soldiers are not machines but human beings who must be led in war. Each of them reacts differently; therefore each must be handled differently. Furthermore, each one reacts *differently* at *different* times, and must be handled *each time* according to his particular reaction. To sense this and to arrive at a correct psychological solution is part of the art of leadership.”⁹

⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 6-22. *Army Leadership*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, (October 2006), 1-2.

⁶ AMB Bullington, October 2, 2007.

⁷ Tichy, *Cycle of Leadership*, xxiv.

⁸ Thomas Jefferson, 3rd president of United States (1743 - 1826), (accessed at www.skagitwatershed.org on 28 Dec 2007).

⁹ Von Schell, *Battle Leadership*, 10.

Researchers Jeffrey Horey and Dr. Jon Falleson provide a particularly useful and comprehensive definition in their article *Leadership competencies – are we all saying the same thing?* when they define leadership as “influencing, motivating, and inspiring others through direct and indirect means to accomplish organizational objectives.”¹⁰ This definition functions well across the Services and interagency and will serve as the definition of leadership for this thesis. The definition highlights the human psychology intrinsically tied to leadership and the importance of leadership to the success of an organization.

One critical definition remains to establish a foundation for this research in joint leadership. Similar to the term “leadership”, the term “leadership competency” means different things to different organizations. In many cases, leadership competencies are merely different labels placed on concepts that require more detail to explain how they actually relate to leadership.¹¹ Webster’s dictionary defines competence as “having requisite or adequate ability or qualities and defines a competency simply as “competence.”¹² Based on this general description, a leadership competency may be defined as a skill or action that enables someone to possess an adequate ability or quality of leadership.

While each of the services and interagency have leadership competency frameworks consisting of tables, graphs or charts, their frameworks are in many cases fundamentally different from one another. This variance is best described as a conceptual difference in methods or terms used to define the individual leadership competencies.

¹⁰ Horey and Fallesen, “Leadership Competencies – are we all saying the same thing?” 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹² Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (Springfield: Merriam-Webster’s, Inc, 2003) s.v. “competence.”

Many civilian and military organizations confuse the concept by expressing leadership competencies as either a process or as a function rather than an action. In order to be useful, leadership competencies must be expressed as “an action or behavior that demonstrates what leaders do that makes them successful.”¹³ For example, Special Operations Command identifies “vision creation and execution” as a special operations force (SOF) leadership competency. This SOF competency as is clearly describing a process, but standing alone, it is not particularly useful for a Navy SEAL platoon commander or Special Forces (SF) Battalion Commander. A competency described as an action describing the behavior for success as a SOF leader such as “leads from the front” might be of greater value to the warfighter.

This concept of leadership competencies described as a process or function versus as an action is critical to the definition of the “leadership competency” term. The definition of a leadership competency must make specific reference to an action used to describe or demonstrate a proven and desired method for successful leadership. In a preceding paragraph I defined a leadership competency as a skill or action that enables someone to be an effective leader. Based on the concept of a competency as an action rather than a process, the definition of the term “leadership competency” may be refined as “*an action that demonstrates effective leadership.*” This leadership competency definition will serve as strategic guidance for the purpose of this thesis, to identify critical leadership competencies of the joint warfighter.

¹³ Jeffrey Horey and Jon Fallesen, “Leadership Competencies – are we all saying the same thing?”, 2.

CHAPTER III: LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

“As in a building, which, however fair and beautiful the superstructure, is radically marred and imperfect if the foundation be insecure – so, if the strategy be wrong, the skill of the general on the battlefield, the valor of the soldier, the brilliancy of victory, however otherwise decisive, fail of their effect.”

- Alfred Thayer Mahan, 1890¹

Strategy and leadership exist as mutually dependent elements in the art of warfare. Without a well reasoned, practical and executable strategy, the greatest efforts of a military force are for naught. In short, strategy gives leadership purpose, and leadership is the vehicle for executing strategy. The development of strategy is the role of our senior military and civilian joint leaders. The qualifications our senior leadership requires for successful strategy development are experience and education. The success of the joint force, and of the leaders themselves, is dependent upon the leadership’s development of sound strategy. This inseparable relationship between strategy and leadership highlights the ultimate responsibility of the joint qualified officer: to understand the role and development of national strategy. Without well-trained and experienced leadership, the development of an effective strategy is unlikely or impossible. The endstate of the CJCS vision for joint leadership development is to provide our leaders with the experience and education required to fulfill their primary responsibility to the joint force.

Defining the term strategy and understanding the role of strategy is essential for development of joint leaders. The military theorist Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini provided a broad description of strategy and its overarching characteristics when he wrote “Strategy is the art of making war upon the map, and comprehends the whole theater of

¹ Alfred T Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History: 1660-1783*, (New York: Dover Publications, 1987).

operations.”² Joint Pub 1-02 defines strategy as “the art and science of developing and employing instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national, and/or multinational objectives.”³ Strategy deals in terms of ends, ways, means and risk. The Joint definition clearly describes the endstate of strategy (ends) as the achievement of national objectives and the tools for achieving the endstate as the elements of national power (means). The element of risk is inherent to strategy and may best be described as the potential that the ends may not justify the ways and means.⁴ The role of the strategist is to identify strategic concepts that answer the question of how (ways) the elements of national power or resources (means) will be utilized to achieve a desired outcome or objective (ends). This endstate is typically manifested as policy. While strategy itself is holistic rather than purely political, it is inescapably tied to political objectives. The overall objective of strategy is to advance national interests relative to other nations, states or circumstances.⁵

The CJCS JOD outlines the strategy for the development of joint officers and targets the military rank of O-6 as the culmination point for joint leadership training and experience. At this point in a military officer or equivalent civilian leader’s career, he or she may serve as a Joint Force Commander or Deputy. The essential skill at the heart of the chairman’s vision for these O-6 joint qualified leaders is the ability to think strategically. Joint Pub 1 illustrates this concept by describing competent joint warfighters as “skilled at strategic thinking.”⁶ The “target” rank of the joint qualified

² Antoine Henri de Jomini, *The Art of War*, (London: Lionel Leventhal Limited, 1992), 66.

³ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP 1-02, Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*.

⁴ Harry R. Yarger, “Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy.” (Feb 2006), 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. (14 May 2007).

officer is important to a discussion of the relationship between joint leadership and strategy. These joint leaders are the bridge between strategy and operations. They must be able to understand and develop strategy in order to bridge the gap between strategy and action. Based on the CJCS guidance these joint leaders, military and civilian, may be synonymously described as strategists.

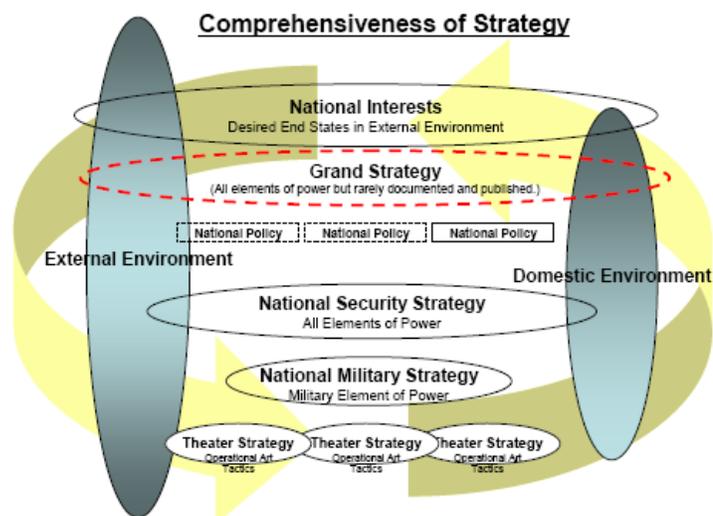
In his book, Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy, Harry Yarger describes three roles for the strategist: leader, practitioner, and theorist. He states that each role requires distinct competencies. While only one role has the title of “leader”, all three are essential skills of joint leadership. Yarger explains that the leader provides at a minimum the vision, inspiration, direction and personal impetus necessary to allow the practitioner and theorist to operate in a focused and coherent matter.⁷ The actions a leader takes to provide this vision, inspiration and direction will be expanded upon later in this thesis as the essential competencies of joint leadership. Additionally, the leader must rely on education and experience to take a holistic approach to strategy and the consideration of risk. Simply put, the leader must determine whether the attainment of the desired outcome justifies the risk of initiating action.⁸ The leader must take a holistic approach to strategy and comprehensively consider the potential outcomes of action on the strategic environment in order to mitigate risk. Additionally, the leader must consider the potential effects of Clausewitz’s concept of friction in the development of a strategy. Good national strategy is dependent upon educated and experienced joint leadership.

⁷ Yarger, 7.

⁸ Ibid., 8

The purpose of planning is to create certainty so that people and organizations can act. This relationship and difference between strategy and planning is important to the identification of critical joint leadership competencies because while a joint leader must be an effective strategist, skill as a military planner is not a requirement for military and civilian leadership in a joint environment. The joint leader must function effectively in the uncertain or “grey” world of strategy. The primary responsibility of the joint leader is to understand and develop strategy, and the experience, education and actions required to excel as a strategist form the foundation for joint leadership competencies.

Senator Ike Skelton provides some refinement to this foundation of joint leadership competencies when he writes: “[Strategy development]... requires a comprehensive understanding of national objectives and all means of national power – military, diplomatic and economic – as the precursor to linking ends with means.”⁹ While strategy is hierarchical, Senator Skelton’s remarks reflect the revolving relationship between national objectives and the elements of national power. The comprehensiveness of this relationship is reflected in figure 2 below:



⁹ Ike Skelton, “Whispers of Warriors: The Importance of History to the Military Professional,” *Naval War College Review* 53 (2000): 8.

Figure 1¹⁰

Understanding the relationship between strategy and leadership is an inherent requirement to identifying and inculcating the critical competencies of joint leadership. The CJCS JOD identifies the military rank of O-6 and equivalent civilian authority as the finished products of joint leader development. Execution of the CJCS vision for joint officer development calls for the identification of critical joint competencies in order to inculcate these competencies throughout a joint leader's career and prepare that military officer or civilian for joint task force (or equivalent) leadership. These joint leaders are at their core strategists, and the required roles of the strategist reveal the fundamental requirements for joint leadership and serve as a starting point for the identification of critical civilian and military joint leadership actions or competencies.

¹⁰ Yarger, 9. Diagram illustrates the hierarchy of strategy.

CHAPTER IV: THE EVOLUTION OF JOINT WARFARE

The future of national and international security lies in interoperability and cooperation among the Services, the interagency, international partners, and non-governmental organizations. Each service brings to the fight unique and critical capabilities, but those capabilities are only as good as the contribution they make to the overall strategic effort. Nobody goes it alone today.”

- ADM Mike Mullins, USN, CJCS 2007¹

History

In order to identify the critical competencies of joint leadership, we must first examine the history of joint warfare. While there are recorded instances of land and maritime force cooperation for operations dating back as far as the 16th century, the context of these operations consisted of transporting troops over long distances and supporting them from sea. The first truly joint operations took place along the western rivers during the American Civil War and were largely the result of geography.² The Union Navy supported federal forces along the Mississippi in coordinated campaigns and turned the tide of the war in the battles of Shiloh and Vicksburg.

The next development in joint warfare took place in 1918 during World War I (WWI) with Allied and German use of aircraft to support land forces. Following the conclusion of WWI, the U.S. Marine Corps led the continued development of doctrine and procedures for joint amphibious operations with help from both the Army and Navy. The Germans also continued to evolve their capability for joint operations into coordinated attacks with aircraft, tanks and infantry that later became known as Blitzkrieg.³

¹ ADM Mike Mullins, “Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Guidance 2007-2008,” (OCT 2007).

² Williamson Murray, “The Evolution of Joint Warfare,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* 31 (2002): 32.

³ *Ibid.*, 34.

Shortly after Pearl Harbor and the U.S entry into World War II (WW II), President Roosevelt met with Winston Churchill at the Arcadia conference and took what became a significant step toward the establishment of a permanent joint force by designing a unified high command to work alongside the British Chiefs of Staff in a new supreme military body called the Combined Chiefs of Staff. This new organization reflected the composition of the British Chiefs of Staff and eventually became known as the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). President Roosevelt and the congress allowed this organization to function without legislative sanction throughout WWII in order to maintain what the President felt was the flexibility required to fight a war.⁴

Prior to Roosevelt's establishment of the unified high command that became the JCS, the Secretaries of the Army and Navy coordinated war plans and activities through an organization consisting of their military heads and chief planners called the Joint Army and Navy Board. The Joint Board was originally established in 1903 in response to public criticism over repeated failed attempts at coordination between the Army and Navy in the Spanish-American War. The Service Secretaries intentionally designed the Joint Board to be without the authority to originate initiatives in pursuit of its charter to improve coordination between the Services. The Joint Board was strengthened in 1919 and given the authority to create but not execute its own initiatives.⁵

While the Joint Army and Navy Board was eventually disestablished in 1946 following WWII, the value of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the planning of massive joint and combined Allied operations highlighted the utility of the joint force concept and

⁴ Ronald H. Cole, Lorna S. Jaffe, Walter S. Poole, Willard J. Webb, "The Chairmanship of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," (accessed at www.jcs.mil on 28 Dec 2007):4. This document is a product of the Joint History Office and outlines the development and history of the CJCS position.

⁵ Ibid., 5.

preserved the existence of the JCS following WWII. The success of the JCS and joint operations was most evident in the Pacific theater as the services worked together to overcome the tremendous distances between military objectives. As Eisenhower wrote in 1946, "Separate ground, sea, and air warfare is gone forever. If ever again we should be involved in war, we will fight it in all elements, with all services, as one single concentrated effort."⁶ WWII forever validated the requirement for the JCS and the concept of joint warfare.

Congress established the JCS organization into law in the Defense Reorganization Act of 1947. This act was particularly significant because it served as the impetus for continued advancements in joint warfare beyond those accomplished between the Services simply out of operational necessity. The law defined the duties of the joint staff and established limits on JCS membership and staff size. Most significantly, the Defense Reorganization Act of 1947 directed the JCS to prepare strategic plans for the military, established unified commands in strategic regions, and to act as principal military advisors to the President and the Secretary of Defense.⁷

Arguably, the National Defense Act of 1947 has remained largely intact over the years despite a series of congressional amendments in 1949, 1953, 1958, 1967, 1978, and 1986. Among other changes, these amendments established the position of Chairman for the JCS (1949), strengthened the position of the Chairman (1953) and elevated the Chairman to a voting member of the JCS and added the Commandant of the Marine Corps as a voting member for USMC issues (1958). Additional amendments established

⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, memorandum to Chester W. Nimitz, April 17, 1946. (Accessed at: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,864230,00.html> on 18 Dec 07). Posted on the library wall at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, VA.

⁷ *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*, Public Law 99-433, 99th Cong., (OCT 1, 1986): Chapter 4.

a four year term limit for JCS members (1967), established the Commandant of the Marine Corps as a full voting member (1978), and designated the Chairman as the principal military advisor to the President and Secretary of Defense (Goldwater-Nichols 1986).⁸

Improvements to the JCS organization evolved over time and through experience and were directed by the legislative branch rather than the Department of Defense (DOD). The current organization and role of the Joint Staff closely matches the intent of the 1947 legislation to create an organization with a charter to plan and advise civilian leadership on military affairs rather than an organization designed to command military forces. Joint warfare operations, tactics and equipment continued to transform through Korea, Vietnam and Desert Storm under the oversight of the Joint Staff, however, coordination and cooperation between the services has been the key ingredient for success of the modern day joint force throughout the history of congressional direction to DOD. This cooperation has been and continues to be largely the result of trust built through individual relationships, education and experience, although due largely to human nature, congressional intervention has been as vital to the establishment of the joint force as the cooperation between the Services.

The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act is an example of congressional intervention driving joint force development and breaking down barriers between the Services. Goldwater-Nichols was a historic accomplishment that poured the foundation for the operations and composition of today's joint force. This 1986 act was a battle of wills between the Congress and the Services and resulted in

⁸ National Defense University, Joint Forces Staff College. *Joint Staff Officers Guide 2000*, (accessed at: www.jfsc.ndu.edu/current_students/documents_policies/documents/jsogpub_1_2000.pdf on 18 Dec 07)

legislation directing the continued development of the joint force despite the fierce objections of many of the Service Secretaries and military chiefs. Of particular importance to this thesis, the Goldwater-Nichols Act required the Services to engage in joint officer training and established what became the Joint Service Officer qualification program. Almost a full 20 years after Goldwater-Nichols, the 2005 Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act tasked the SECDEF to develop a comprehensive plan for joint officer management and joint officer professional military education that aligns officer training and career progression with the goals of the Defense Department.⁹ Goldwater-Nichols and the Ronald Reagan National Defense Authorization Act are the impetus for the strategic guidance and continued development of today's joint force.

Strategic Guidance

CJCS is responsible for developing and promulgating joint strategic guidance and does so in multiple documents including the Joint Vision 2020 (JV 2020), the Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO), Joint Pub 1, and the Chairman's vision for Joint Officer Development (CJCS JOD) to mention a few. CJCS guidance is nested within the strategic guidance provided by the President and Secretary of Defense. This thesis will not conduct a complete review of CJCS strategic guidance to the joint force but will instead focus on four documents that collectively outline the Chairman's strategic guidance regarding the vision, fundamental actions, characteristics, values and professional competencies of the joint force. The first of these documents is JV 2020, the second is the CCJO, the third is Joint Pub 1 and the fourth is the Chairman's vision for Joint Officer Development (CJCS JOD). JV 2020 has been replaced by the CCJO,

⁹ CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, iv.

however, this document provides some exceptional insight into the foundations of joint leadership and remains valuable reference for this thesis.

The national strategy documents (NSS, NDS, NMS) outline the national strategic goals and challenges. JV 2020 and the CCJO provide broad guidance for the continued transformation of the joint force over the next 15 to 20 years to meet these goals and succeed in the challenges outlined in the NSS, NDS and NMS. JV 2020 describes a future vision of the joint force and complements the fundamental actions and characteristics of the joint force described in the CCJO. Joint Pub 1 is joint doctrine that identifies, defines and describes the values of the joint force. The CJCS JOD is a comprehensive document that addresses a vital task of the CCJO – to lead force development. Implicit in that task is the development of future joint officers.¹⁰ The CJCS JOD provides focused guidance on the development of future military, civilian and multinational leaders in the joint force and identifies three broad descriptors overarching critical joint leadership competencies.¹¹ The hierarchical relationship between these documents and the National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS) and the NMS is outlined in figure 2 below.

¹⁰ Ibid., iv.

¹¹ Ibid., 2.

Joint Strategic Guidance

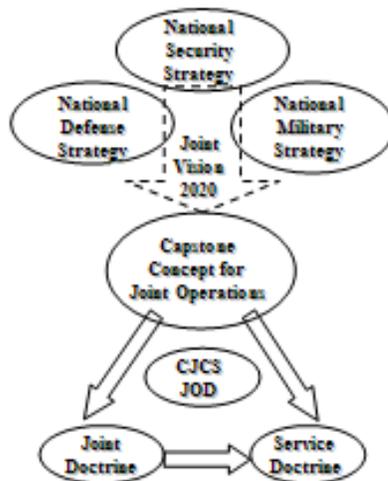


Figure 2¹²

Joint Vision

“Jointness is an *understanding* broadly of what your fellow soldiers, sailors, airman, and marines bring to the battle and *trusting* them to do it right and well – and their feeling the same way about you. All frills and lobbying aside, the essence of jointness is understanding and trust.¹³

The future vision of the joint force is based largely on the establishment of trust and a culture of cooperation between individuals in the Services, interagency and multinational organizations. The Joint Vision 2020 document expanded on the concept of cooperation between the services, government agencies and multinational partners through the concept of full spectrum dominance. While there is some debate among joint planners regarding the relevance of the document following the release of the CCJO, JV 2020 remains a valuable resource and expands upon the National Military Strategy concept of full spectrum dominance and its implications for the future joint force. Full spectrum dominance is defined as “the ability of US forces, operating unilaterally or in

¹² Diagram by author.

¹³ COL Lawrence B. Wilkerson, “What Exactly is Jointness?” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, (1997).

combination with multinational and interagency partners, to defeat any adversary and control any situation across the full range of military operations.”¹⁴ This definition highlights the critical components of joint warfare to include the interagency and multinational partners but includes a caveat that the US may engage in unilateral operations. Like the original defense reform act of 1947, the vision of joint warfare continues to evolve over time and with experience. Since the publication of this Joint Vision 2020 document in the year 2000, the essential role of multinational and interagency coordination with our military has become a vital part of our joint vision for the achievement of national objectives.

The attainment of full spectrum dominance requires two key elements of joint warfare: flexibility and interoperability. Flexibility is a function of the synergy of the core competencies of each of the services and interagency operating as a team, and interoperability is the foundation for achieving joint flexibility. Both flexibility and interoperability rely on effective joint leadership and an environment of cooperation for their execution. Following this reasoning, effective joint leadership is a requirement for the attainment of full spectrum dominance and is the ultimate foundation of the joint force. Joint leaders may be described by characteristics, values and competencies. An examination of the characteristics of the joint force is the next step toward the stated thesis goal of identification and inculcation of critical joint leadership competencies.

Actions Required of the Joint Force

The purpose of the CCJO is to describe how joint forces are expected to operate across the range of military operations between 2012 and 2025. From the perspective of joint leadership training and development, the two most important functions of the

¹⁴ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Vision 2020*, 6.

document consist of identifying and defining the fundamental values and characteristics of the joint force. While these concepts do not necessarily directly translate into joint leadership competencies, they provide a foundation for joint leadership research. The critical leadership competencies of joint leaders must complement the values and characteristics of the joint force in order to be valid. The CCJO describes the desired endstate of the joint force. Critical leadership competencies may be identified by outlining the required capabilities of future joint leaders to effectively function in the joint environment articulated through the CCJO's description of the fundamental actions and characteristics of the joint force.

The CCJO focuses on solving military problems in concert with civilian and multinational partners to solve broader U.S. national security problems.¹⁵ The document identifies three fundamental actions the joint force must take to solve military problems while cooperating with civilian agencies and multinational partners: (1) Establish, expand, and secure reach, (2) Acquire, refine, and share knowledge and (3) Identify, create, and exploit effects.¹⁶ The first of these fundamental actions, establish, expand and secure reach, refers to reach in the context of military operations. Methods of executing this fundamental action include the establishment of mutually beneficial relationships with civilian and multinational partners. The establishment of these relationships will take time, personal contact and an extension of access to classified information and intelligence that requires a change in DOD culture. This joint action is not limited to military engagement, instead, the joint force must leverage all the elements

¹⁵ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, Version 2.0, (AUG 2005), (accessed at: http://www.dtic.mil/futurejointwarfare/concepts/approved_ccjov2.pdf on 23 Oct 2007)

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

of national power, diplomatic, intelligence, military and economic (DIME) in the pursuit of physical, virtual and human operational reach.¹⁷

The second required action of the joint force is to acquire, refine and share knowledge. The endstate of this action is a joint force capable of remaining inside an adversaries decision cycle. The late U.S. Marine Corps COL John Boyd described the concept of an adversaries decision cycle as an OODA (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act) loop.¹⁸ Remaining within the adversaries OODA loop requires timely, relevant and prioritized intelligence from strategic, operational and tactical sources shared horizontally and vertically across military services, government agencies and nations. Similar to the first required action of the joint force, this action is requires access to and coordination between civilian and military sources.¹⁹

The final action required of the joint force is to identify, create and exploit effects. This action requires the joint force to integrate joint capabilities with the elements of national power to drive change and create desired effects. Most critical to this action is a holistic outlook on the part of the joint force when contemplating the methods for achieving effects across the DIME. There are several common themes between each of the required actions of the joint force outlined in the CCJO. These themes are: building trust by extending access to civilian and multinational partners, versatility to enable rapid decision-making, determination to take action utilizing all the elements of national power, and agility to identify, create and exploit effects. These themes are the impetus for the joint force characteristics and are an essential data point in the process of identifying critical leadership competencies of the joint force.

¹⁷ Ibid., 12.

¹⁸ COL John Boyd, USMC, "Boyd's OODA 'loop,' sketch", (accessed at www.d-n-i.net on 29 Dec 2007).

¹⁹ CJCS, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, 13.

Joint Characteristics

“These [identified] joint characteristics are considered important because they will guide how the joint force is developed, organized, trained and equipped and must be reflected in all subordinate concepts of the joint operations concepts family.”²⁰

Webster’s dictionary defines characteristics as traits, qualities or properties that distinguish a person, thing or class.²¹ The CCJO utilizes the common themes linking the fundamental actions of the joint force to identify the eleven primary joint force characteristics listed in figure 3 below:

<p><u>The future joint force must be:</u></p> <p>Knowledge Empowered Networked Interoperable Expeditionary Adaptable/Tailorable Enduring/Persistent Precise Fast Resilient Agile Lethal</p>
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Figure 3²²

Each of these joint characteristics is vital to the development of the joint force; however, within the scope of this thesis, they may be organized into four clusters of characteristics using the themes developed from the analysis of the fundamental actions of the joint force: (1) building trust (2) versatility (3) determination and (4) agility.

The first joint characteristics clusters falls under the theme of building trust and consists of the traits: *knowledge empowered, networked and interoperable*. The endstate

²⁰ Ibid., 20.

²¹ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (Springfield: Merriam-Webster’s, Inc, 2003) s.v. “characteristics.”

²² CJCS, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, 20.

of this cluster of characteristics is to reduce what Clausewitz described as the “fog and friction of war”²³ by building relationships and sharing knowledge across military, civilian and international boundaries. The characteristic *knowledge empowered* enables “better decisions made faster throughout all levels of command”²⁴ and relies on trust between elements of the joint force built through experience, communication and cultural awareness. The traits *networked* and *interoperable* entail a seamless transfer of information between the joint force to enable decentralization, improve collaboration and enable unified action across the DIME. As described in the CCJO, “Trust is key to interdependence between actors in the joint force.”²⁵ The building trust joint cluster captures the characteristics most vital to the success of the joint force.

The second characteristic cluster is organized under the theme of versatility and includes the characteristics: *expeditionary* and *adaptable / tailorable*. This versatility characteristic cluster applies directly to the competencies of joint leaders. Officers within the joint force must be capable of making rapid, accurate decisions with incomplete information in a time sensitive environment. This characteristic cluster is also particularly descriptive of the joint force. The joint force must be forward and engaged to be relevant and effectively pursue the strategic goals of the United States. The characteristic *expeditionary* describes “the joint force mindset that inculcates an expeditionary perspective into all aspects of joint force planning, training and education.”²⁶ The traits *adaptable* and *tailorable* require a background of experience and education inculcated first within the Services and civilian agencies and then within the joint force. Versatility

²³ Clausewitz, *On War*.

²⁴ CJCS, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, 21.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

is a characteristic cluster dependent upon the skill, education and experience of the joint leader for execution.

The characteristic cluster grouped under the theme determination consists of the traits *precise, resilient* and *enduring / persistent*. This characteristic cluster falls directly in the realm of what Clausewitz described as the “moral factors” of war. These traits enable the joint force to sustain its will throughout losses and setbacks while simultaneously breaking the will of the adversary. Clausewitz categorized these joint characteristics under the term “perseverance.” While describing the trait he wrote “... there is hardly a worthwhile enterprise in war whose execution does not call for infinite effort, trouble and privation; ... only great strength of will can lead to the objective.”²⁷ GEN Colin Powell had this to say about the challenges of war and the need for perseverance – “You can not slay the dragon every day. Some days the dragon wins.”²⁸ *Precision* requires a thorough knowledge of joint force capabilities developed only through education and experience. This knowledge enables the joint force to remain focused and determined despite the inevitable fog and friction of war. Clausewitz writes, “it is steadfastness that will earn the admiration of the world and of posterity.”²⁹

The final cluster falls under the theme agility and consists of the joint characteristics *fast, agile, and lethal*. This cluster of characteristics emphasizes the requirement for the joint force to operate within the enemy’s decision cycle as previously described by Boyd’s OODA loop. *Fast* refers to the ability to make rapid, accurate decisions and complements the characteristic of *agile* by enabling the joint force to make

²⁷ Clausewitz, *On War*, 227. Clausewitz describes perseverance as the “essential counterweight” to the certain unpredictability and inevitable confusion of war.

²⁸ Oren Harari, *The Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002)

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 227.

multiple quick adjustments to plans and operations in response to the unforeseen decisions or actions of an adversary. The characteristic *lethal* addresses the joint forces ability to destroy adversaries through kinetic and non-kinetic means. A key element of this characteristic is the ability of the joint force to leverage technology in the employment of lethal force.

The joint force characteristics are nested within the fundamental actions to be taken by the joint force through the themes: building trust, determination, versatility, and agility. The CCJO describes the inculcation of these characteristics within the joint force as the solution to military problems while emphasizing the importance of conducting operations in an environment of cooperation between the military services, civilian agencies and international coalitions. The CCJO identifies the future leaders of the joint force as the means for the solution and highlights several required joint leadership traits in the statement below.

“Execution of complex operations as described in the solution requires knowledgeable, empowered, innovative, and decisive leaders, capable of leading the networked joint force to success in fluid and perhaps chaotic operating environments. Future joint leaders will require more comprehensive knowledge of interagency and foreign cultures and capabilities.”³⁰

Finally, the document calls the future leaders of the joint force to enable the success mechanism, “the causal interaction by which the implementation of this concept is expected to bring about success,”³¹ described through the characteristics and fundamental actions to be taken by the joint force.

The CCJO expends considerable effort highlighting the importance of these joint characteristics due to their impact on the development, training and equipping of the joint

³⁰ CJCS, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, 24.

³¹ *Ibid.*, C-1.

force. The same reasoning applies to the goal of this thesis, the identification and inculcation of critical joint leadership competencies. Any identified competencies must reflect the characteristics of the joint force. As previously discussed, leadership is inherently tied to human psychology and human decision-making is guided by values. In addition to the consideration of the characteristics of the joint force, the identification of critical leadership competencies requires a study of the values of joint warfare.

Joint Values

Joint Pub 1 identifies five values of joint warfare: *integrity, competence, physical courage, moral courage, and teamwork*. These values are shared between the services, represent “the essence of military professionalism” and are vital for operational success.³² Values are defined as principles or qualities intrinsically desirable.³³ The values of joint warfare are not themselves competencies, but they are related. Leadership competencies, or actions that demonstrate effective leadership, are nested in these joint values. Joint values essentially identify the principles of leadership the joint force considers essential to the achievement of strategic, operational and tactical goals.

The first of the joint values is *integrity*, or the firm adherence to a code of moral principles.³⁴ Integrity entails honesty and requires the joint characteristic of *enduring / persistent* described in the CCJO. Integrity is quite simply the foundation of joint force leadership. It is “the cornerstone for building trust” and essential for inspiring confidence and forming the teams required for the operational success of the joint force.³⁵ When

³² Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. (14 May 2007), (accessed at www.fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/index.html on 30 Dec 2007)

³³ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (Springfield: Merriam-Webster’s, Inc, 2003) s.v. “values.”

³⁴ Ibid. s.v. “integrity.”

³⁵ CJCS *JP-1*, I-3.

U.S. soldiers tortured and humiliated prisoners in the Abu Ghraib detainment facility in Iraq, they demonstrated that a lack of integrity in any member of the joint force can have a negative impact on a strategic scale. Gen. Paul Kern who directed the investigation into Abu Ghraib, described the prisoner abuse during a news conference as "a loss of moral values,"³⁶ a loss of integrity. Three years after the moral failure at Abu Ghraib, the United States is still reeling from the blow and struggling to again define itself as John Winthrop's proverbial "city on the hill" built on a foundation of integrity. While integrity is not defined as a leadership competency, it is an essential element of every leader in the joint force.

Joint leaders must also be competent. *Competence*, the second value of joint warfare identified in Joint Pub 1 (JP-1), refers to the quality of being well qualified physically and intellectually.³⁷ A common theme throughout JP-1 is that the effectiveness of the joint force relies on the strength of the Services. This concept applies directly to the value of competence. Service, agency or organization competence is a prerequisite for the development of joint warfighter. Service competency enables critical thinking and the joint characteristics of *knowledge empowered, agile and lethal*. "Building Service competence is an intense, lifelong affair,"³⁸ and there simply is no method or path for becoming a competent joint warfighter without establishing service competency.

Joint competence is defined as the ability to integrate service, agency or national competencies into the joint force.³⁹ The joint force demands competent leadership

³⁶ Associated press, Aug 2004, (accessed at www.cnn.com/2004/US/08/25/abughraib.report/index.html on 30 Dec 2007).

³⁷ Cognitive Science Laboratory, Princeton University, (accessed at www.wordnet.princeton.edu on 30 Dec 2007).

³⁸ CJCS, *JP 1*, I-4.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, I-3.

capable of working for or as a Joint Force Commander. Competent leadership implies “the ability to keep an organization whole and healthy”⁴⁰ and requires specific competencies of joint force leaders. These competencies include the ability to “communicate decisions to subordinates, rapidly develop alternative courses of action, generate required effects, assess results and conduct follow-on operations.”⁴¹ The requirement for service competence prior to joint competence applies a constraint for planning joint leadership development.

The joint values of *physical and moral courage* transcend the joint force. Courage is a value venerated in military history and tradition. Examples of physical and moral courage have been immortalized through the words and examples of men and women in great battles and times of crisis. Words such as those uttered by Lieutenant Colonel Ray C. Allen at Bastogne, “This is our last withdrawal. Live or die, this is it ...”⁴² or the words of Admiral David G. Farragut in Mobile Bay, “Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead.”⁴³ Courage impacts every aspect of the joint force from operations to planning. Webster’s dictionary defines courage as the mental or moral strength to persevere and withstand danger, fear or adversity.⁴⁴ It requires the joint characteristics of *enduring / persistent* and it is required for the success of the joint force. The importance of physical and moral courage in the joint force cannot be underestimated. Courage is tied to honor,

⁴⁰ Oren Harari, *The Powell Principles: 24 Lessons from Colin Powell, Battle-Proven Leader*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005). This book describes the concept of leadership pre-requisites.

⁴¹ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP 5, Joint Operation Planning*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. (Dec 2006), (accessed at www.fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/index.html on 30 Dec 2007).

⁴² Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War*, 155. Observations on battle command from a British military observer during WW II.

⁴³ Orders given to Captain Drayton of the USS Hartford on 5 August 1864 during the Battle of Mobile Bay, (accessed at www.nps.gov on 30 Dec 2007).

⁴⁴ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (Springfield: Merriam-Webster’s, Inc, 2003) s.v. “courage.”

and “personal honor is the one thing valued more than life itself by the majority of men.”⁴⁵

“Joint warfare is team warfare.”⁴⁶ *Teamwork* defines the joint force. The strengths of the services, agencies and nations are united for the achievement of a common goal. The value of *teamwork* is essential to the characteristic cluster of building trust and specifically relies on the joint characteristics: *knowledge empowered, networked, interoperable* and *adaptable / tailorable*. Team building requires a firm understanding of human nature and is the responsibility of the joint leader. The joint leader builds teams out of the military, civilian and multinational resources of the joint force in order to create the flexibility, common perspective and interoperability vital to the existence of the joint warfare. The absence of *teamwork* in the joint force can be debilitating and requires the determination and persistence of joint leadership. This point is emphasized in by author Michele Flourney in her analysis of the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review: “When the government experiences operational failure or costs that are higher than expected, as in Iraq, it is often because of a lack of integrated interagency [joint] planning, interagency [joint] unity of effort on the ground, ...”⁴⁷

The five values of joint warfare described in JP-1 complement the eleven characteristics of joint warfare outlined in the CCJO. Analysis of the CCJO’s joint characteristics led to the identification of four themes throughout the document building trust, determination, versatility, and agility. The CCJO is the base document driving joint leadership development, but as the head of a family of joint concepts, the document

⁴⁵ Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War*, 149.

⁴⁶ CJCS, *JP-1*, i.

⁴⁷ Michele A. Flourney, “Did the Pentagon get the Quadrennial Review Right?” *The Washington Quarterly*, (2006).

provides only general guidance required for the development of joint leaders. The key document used by CJCS to focus the scope of joint leadership development is the CJCS JOD.

The JOD reviews the guidance published in the CCJO and assigns three broad descriptors for joint leadership: (1) *strategically minded*, (2) *critical thinker* and (3) *skilled joint warfighter*.⁴⁸ The CJCS JOD provides guidance for the development of joint doctrine and these categories are reflected in JP-1 where joint leaders are described as “skilled at strategic thinking, skilled at applying strategic and operational art and having a joint perspective.”⁴⁹ These descriptors are not leadership competencies in themselves, but instead, they provide overarching guidance for the identification of leadership competencies and mark the transition from leadership theory into leadership action. The previously discussed values, characteristics and themes found within the CCJO nest within these three broad descriptors. The descriptors are particularly significant because they are the Chairman’s guidance for the development of leadership competencies in the sub-components of the joint community, the military Services and interagency. The Chairman repeats the following principle of joint warfare throughout the CJCS JOD: “joint officers are built upon service officers.”⁵⁰ With that principle in mind the next step in the process of identifying and inculcating critical joint leadership competencies is the examination of the leadership competencies of the services and interagency.

⁴⁸ CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, 2.

⁴⁹ CJCS, *JP-1*, I-3.

⁵⁰ CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, 1.

CHAPTER V: SERVICE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

“Service skills form the very core of US military capability. Joint warfare relies upon Service traditions, cohesion, and expertise. When combined with the ability to integrate these qualities into joint operations with partner military services and other defense, logistical, and intelligence agencies, they become a formidable and capable force. Successful joint operations are made possible by the capabilities developed and embodied in each Service.”¹

Effective leadership is based on an understanding of human nature and psychology, yet each military service and government agency takes a different approach to the identification of its core leadership competencies. Additionally, each places a varying amount of importance and effort on leadership development. For example, the U.S. Army describes leadership development as one of the service’s top priorities in the 2007 Army Posture Statement, but the most recent State Department Strategic Plan mentions leadership development only once in a paragraph discussing human resources. Several of the services and interagency organizations are only now beginning to identify leadership competencies and emphasize leadership development as vital to the success of their mission.

The Services and arguably the interagency will reference the CJCS JOD for guidance on their respective leadership development programs, but there will be variety in their desired leadership competencies. The leadership competencies of the Services and agencies will reflect their assigned missions, organizational culture and resources. The strength of the joint force depends on the unique skill sets and leadership inherent to its various components. Joint force commanders do not want cookie-cutter leaders, they need leaders capable of applying their unique background and perspective to the challenges of the joint force. These joint leaders must possess “an unprecedented ability

¹ CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, 1.

to integrate capabilities across the depth and width of the joint force”² and possess what Dr. Noel Tichey describes as “edge.” This “edge,” or the ability to think critically (and tell the emperor when he is not wearing clothes), is the result of Service, agency or nation specific skill sets and competence.

Contrary to what is suggested in the 2005 JOD, joint leadership competencies can not be unique to the joint force. The JOD describes joint competencies as “a combination of leader competencies common to all services plus the unique joint leadership competencies that define the fully qualified and inherently joint Colonel or Captain.”³ Because the joint force relies on the strength of the services, joint leadership competencies must originate from within the services and agencies. Just as joint officers are not “born joint,”⁴ joint leadership is not born from outside the Services and agencies. The very nature of the joint force prevents the development of competencies “unique” to the joint force. The critical leadership competencies of the joint force will originate from within the services and agencies and complement the characteristics and overarching values of the joint force.

While leadership is based on human nature, different leadership competencies are more valuable to some organizations than others. For example, the critical leadership competencies of a U.S. Army infantry officer will not mirror the desired leadership competencies of a State Department Foreign Service Officer (FSO). The critical leadership competencies of the joint force may be identified by first identifying, comparing and contrasting the leadership competences of the services and interagency to identify common competencies. Once these common competencies are identified, they

² Ibid., 3.

³ Ibid., 3.

⁴ Ibid., 1.

may be analyzed against the characteristics and values described in the CCJO and JP-1. Additionally, these common competencies may be used to test the validity of the three broad leadership descriptors in the CJCS JOD. A comprehensive analysis of each of the leadership development programs and competencies of each Service, agency and partner nation is beyond the scope of this thesis and is not required to identify the majority of common leadership competencies. This thesis will use the leadership development programs of the U.S. Army, Special Operations Forces and Department of State to represent the diverse elements of the joint force identify the competencies of the components.

United States Army

“An Army without trained leaders is a contradiction in terms”
- General Douglas MacArthur, 1933⁵

Following WWI, the U.S. Army formally identified leadership training as one of its most significant shortfalls. In his annual report to congress on the state of the military in 1933, Army General Douglas MacArthur stated, “Training – professional training - and the skill and knowledge and morale resulting there-from are the first indispensables to efficiency in combat.”⁶ This statement was significant because it drew a clear connection between leadership and combat readiness. The U.S. Army leadership development program of today continues to recognize this connection between leadership and combat readiness and has invested a tremendous amount of effort into leadership programs, doctrine and written guidance. The modern Army vision identifies soldiers as the core of the army and leadership as an overarching element of combat readiness for the

⁵ GEN Douglas MacArthur, USA, *Report of the Secretary of War to Congress*, (1933), 22.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

operating and generating force. The Army Vision describes leaders as “Innovative, adaptive and confident in leading soldiers and civilians.”⁷ Additionally, the Army vision also identifies broad leadership competency descriptions of “leading change, building teams, confronting uncertainty, and solving complex problems.”⁸

The core leadership competencies of the Army are identified and defined in various levels of detail throughout a number of formal documents including the 2007 Army Posture Statement, Army field manual 6-22 (FM 6-22), and in Army Regulation 600-100, Personnel – General, Army Leadership. This regulation defines leadership competencies as “related leader behaviors that lead to successful performance, are common throughout the organization, and are consistent with the organizational mission and values.”⁹ Army FM 6-22 identifies the following eight “core leader competencies:” (1) Leads others (2) Extends influence beyond the chain of command (3) Leads by example (4) Communicate (5) Creates a positive organizational climate (6) Prepares self (7) Develops others (8) Gets results.¹⁰

While each of the core Army leadership competencies has application in the joint force, only a few nest cleanly within the three broad joint competency descriptors (*Strategically minded, Critical thinker, Skilled joint warfighter*) listed in the CJCS JOD: (1) Extends influence beyond the chain of command, (2) Communicate and (3) Prepares self. “To extend influence beyond the chain of command” speaks directly to interaction with the joint force. The Army is directing their leaders to move beyond the boundaries

⁷ The Honorable Francis J. Harvey and General Peter J. Schoomaker, *A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2007*, (accessed at <http://www.army.mil/aps/07/> on 23 OCT 2007).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 600-100. *Personnel – General, Army Leadership*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, (March 2007), 4.

¹⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*.

of their unit and service in order to extend the influence of their operations and create a positive impression of their force. This external engagement requires the competency the Army describes as “essential to all the other leadership competencies”¹¹ – “communicate.” Leaders in the Army and the joint force must be gifted communicators, active listeners able to express ideas and translate goals into actions.¹² “Prepares self” describes a leader, aware of his or her strengths and weaknesses, who tenaciously strives to improve their performance through a pattern of “lifelong learning.”¹³ The concept of “lifelong learning” is mentioned throughout the joint strategic guidance and is specifically described in the CJCS JOD as “a competency-based lifelong continuum of learning where the outcome is a ... officer suitable for joint command and staff responsibilities.”¹⁴

While the Army does not suffer from a shortage of written guidance on leadership, there is some confusion as to the scope of core leadership competencies in the service. The Army posture statement uses the analogy of the “pentathlete” (figure 4) to describe the characteristics, values and competencies of Army leaders of the 21st century and separates these descriptive qualities into two categories of “multi-skilled leader and leader attributes”¹⁵ connected by the Army Ethos.

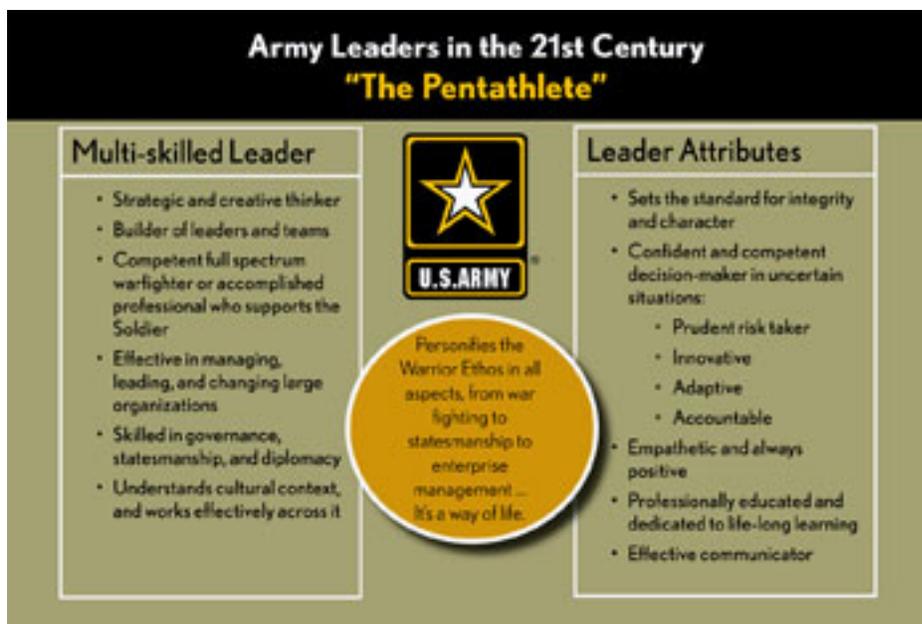
¹¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 600-100. *Personnel – General, Army Leadership*.

¹² Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*, 2.

¹⁵ Harvey and Schoomaker.

Figure 4¹⁶

This diagram is a poignant demonstration of the tendency of the services and agencies to dilute the effectiveness of their leadership guidance through the use of dozens of undefined descriptors. While the pentathalete diagram lists some valid characteristics and competencies of leadership, the sheer volume of descriptors and the undefined terms do not refine or clearly identify the core competencies of the service.

Despite some confusing diagrams, The Army has successfully tied its leadership development to that of the joint force. The Army has two overarching service competencies: (1) Train and equip soldiers and grow leaders and (2) Provide relevant and ready land power capability to the Combatant Commanders as part of a joint team.¹⁷ Narrowing the scope of those service competencies to leadership, one of the Army's core competencies is to grow leaders, the other is to provide those leaders to the joint force.

¹⁶ Harvey and Schoomaker.

¹⁷ General Peter J. Schoomaker, "The Way Ahead – Our Army at War – Relevant and Ready." (accessed at <http://www.army.mil/thewayahead/relevant.html> on 09 JAN 08).

The Army leadership development charter is to build Army leaders while keeping an eye on the competency requirements of the joint force. While serving as the Army Chief of Staff in 2004, GEN Peter Schoomaker described the endstate of this concept when he wrote, “ In the end, we seek a bench of leaders able to think creatively at every level of war, and able to operate with equal comfort in Army, Joint, interagency and multinational environments.”¹⁸ The Army recognizes that the leadership competencies of the joint force are built on the leadership competencies of the services.

While each of the Army’s eight described core leadership competencies is valid, only three may be described as competencies critical to the joint force: (1) extends influence beyond the chain of command, (2) communicate and (3) prepares self. These core competencies represent the characteristics and values of the joint force outlined in the CCJO and JP-1. They nest within the broad descriptors of strategically minded, critical thinker and skilled joint warfighter listed in the CJCS JOD and describe specific actions required of a leader in the joint force.

Special Operations

“Of every one hundred men in battle, ten should not even be there. Eighty, are nothing but targets. Nine are the real fighters, we are lucky to have them since they make the battle. Ah, but the one – one is the warrior – and he brings the others home.” – Heracles¹⁹

The above quote from Heracles is not a mindset exclusive to SOF, however it captures the ethos of the SOF community. Above all else, SOF personnel consider themselves warriors; and that warrior ethos defines the SOF concept of leadership

¹⁸ Les Brownlee and Peter J. Schoomaker, “Serving a Nation at War: A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities,” *Parameters*, (2004), accessed at: http://www.army.mil/professionalwriting/volumes/volume2/june_2004/6_04_1.html on 30 Dec 07).

¹⁹ McCoy, *The Passion of Command, The Moral Imperative of Leadership*, 57.

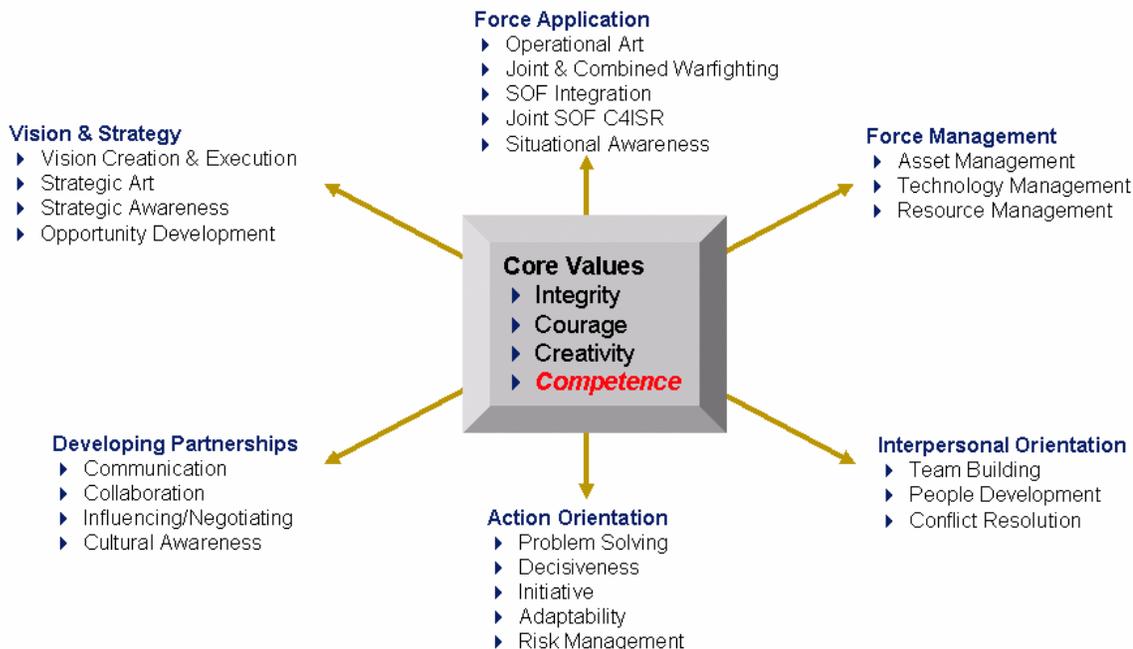
development. The majority of SOF operations are conducted as part of a joint force and SOF leadership development re-enforces the joint force concept that the collective strength of the individual services creates the strength of the joint force. SOF personnel are first experts in the skill sets of their particular branch or designator. SEALs excel in maritime operations, Army Special Forces Special Operations Forces (SOF) excel in unconventional warfare, and Air Force commandos excel in air mobility. Together, these units complement each other and are bound together by the same warrior ethos.

The SOF community is composed of small units from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines who routinely operate as part of the joint force. SOF provides a good cross-section for leadership development of the services and a particularly important perspective for the identification of joint leadership competencies. SOF typically deploy as part of a Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) where it is common for forces of one service to find themselves under the operational control (OPCON) or tactical control (TACON) of a SOF or conventional commander in a sister service. Additionally, SOF units typically do not possess the number of personnel and mobility assets required to execute their assigned missions or sustain their forces forward. They rely on the services, agencies and other nations for the operational and logistic support. The Army is working to develop leaders who reach beyond their own services for solutions to operational and tactical problems, and SOF must do the same as a matter of principle and of practicality.²⁰

In 2005, Special Operations Command (SOCOM) hired Booze Allen Hamilton consulting to conduct an educational requirements analysis for joint leaders in support of Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) curriculum development. The consulting

²⁰ Brownlee and Schoomaker.

company conducted a thorough review of SOF leadership development programs and identified what they believed to be SOF leadership competencies. Booz Allen Hamilton organized the SOF competencies into six competency clusters containing 24 competencies linked together by four SOF core values to create the joint SOF competency model (figure 5).



Joint SOF Competency Model

Figure 6²¹

Similar to the Army's "pentathlete" diagram, the Booz Allen Hamilton SOF competency model condenses a tremendous amount of information into one diagram that is useful for curriculum development, but not easily digestible for the joint leader.

While the study achieved its goal of assisting JSOU refine its leadership development program for the next decade, its definition of competencies was flawed.

²¹ Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc., *Joint Special Operations University Educational Requirements Analysis for Academic Years 2005-2010*, 2005, ES 5.

Rather than define competencies as actions, the consulting agency defined competencies as “a meaningful aggregate of mission-driven knowledge, skills, and abilities that individuals should exhibit to successfully perform their job and organizational role.”²² The result is the majority of the identified SOF competencies are “aggregates,” and as such, they require context and explanation not found in the competency model. While identified SOF competencies such as “strategic art” and “opportunity development” are vague enough to render them useless to the operational and strategic joint leader, the joint SOF competencies of (1) teambuilding, (2) adaptability and (3) communication nest well within the three broad descriptors of the JOD (strategically minded, critical thinker and skilled joint warfighter). These three competencies are particularly relevant in the special operations world where actions like teambuilding and communication and adaptation frequently describes not just a SOF competency, but the mission itself.

U.S. Department of State

The Department of State began teaching leadership in 1989, however, the organization did not invest much of their limited resources in leadership development until Colin Powell became the 65th Secretary of State in 2001. Secretary Powell recognized that leadership development was vital to the long-term success of the State Department and inserted formal leadership instruction into the Foreign Service Officer (FSO) training curriculum. Prior to Secretary Powell’s direction, DOS leadership development was largely the result of experience and personal mentorship.

Much of this mentorship came from organizational leaders like AMB James Bullington. A veteran FSO with experience in Vietnam, AMB Bullington taught FSOs leadership and recognized Powell’s tenure as a turning point for leadership development

²² Booze Allen Hamilton, Inc., ES 1.

in the State Department. AMB Bullington reflected that Secretary Powell “thought about leadership and thought about the role of leadership in the institution.”²³ In short, Secretary Powell had a vision for the future of the institution, and leadership development was a requirement to make that vision a reality.

Just as the leadership competencies of the Services reflect their cultures and missions, so to do the leadership competencies of the State Department. There are some significant cultural and institutional differences between the Services and DOS. While the Services have the mission of fighting and winning our nations wars, the State Department has a mission of diplomacy. Culturally, DOS leaders spend the majority of their career with a lack of command experience and limited leadership training. The State Department places a great deal of importance on the development of interpersonal relationships. Characteristics such as written and oral eloquence are valued over more military characteristics like lethal and fast.

Because the DOS does not currently fall within the scope of the CCJO, CJCS JOD, the institution does not possess a set of leadership characteristics or competencies intentionally nested within Joint doctrine. The initial guidance connecting the DOS and the military Services is the National Security Strategy (NSS). The subordinate National Military Strategy (NMS) identifies three strategic principles of “agility, decisiveness and integration”²⁴ and five desired joint attributes of “superior technical skill, operational experience, intellectual understanding, and cultural expertise”²⁵ that guide the leadership development programs of the Services. The State Department’s Strategic Guidance Plan is also written within the guidance of the NSS, however, the DOS document does not

²³ AMB James Bullington, 2 OCT 07.

²⁴ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. *National Military Strategy*. Washington, D.C., (2004), 7.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

specifically mention the development or of leadership competencies or characteristics. Instead, the document appears to assume the DOS leadership will possess the leadership skill required to execute the seven strategic tasks outlined in the Strategic Guidance Plan.

The first real mention of DOS leadership competencies is in the FSO training program. The training identifies and describes 15 leadership competencies necessary for success as an FSO (figure 6).

DOS Leadership Competencies

- Develop a vision
- Be passionate
- Communicate
- Build mechanisms for action
- Know yourself
- Know your subject
- Know your people
- Stay physically fit
- Support your people
- Be courageous
- Be open and collaborative
- Use mission orders
- Seek out feedback
- Challenge status quo
- Use situational leadership
- Put integrity first:
Establish **TRUST**

Figure 6²⁶

Because the DOS identifies their leadership competencies as actions, the competencies are easily understood and relevant to the joint leader as presented. Despite the significant differences in cultures and missions between the DOS and military Services, the DOS leadership competencies of (1) *develop a vision*, (2) *communicate*, and (3) *put integrity first: establish trust*, align within the CJCS JOD broad competency descriptors of “strategically minded, critical thinker and skilled joint warfighter.” These DOS competencies center on interpersonal skills and reflect the DOS mission of diplomacy.

*Leadership Pre-requisites*²⁷

²⁶ AMB James Bullington, 02 OCT 07.

Great joint leadership requires more than simply executing the competencies of the Services and agencies; great leadership requires certain “pre-requisites” of the individual leader taking the action. Leadership researcher Oren Harari developed this concept of leadership pre-requisites and identifies five: (1) competence, (2) character, (3) courage, (4) loyalty and (5) confidence.²⁸ These leadership pre-requisites are not competencies within themselves but are instead characteristics of the joint leader. The joint leader requires these characteristics to develop joint leadership competencies. For example, in order to develop the Army competency of “leads by example”, the leader must first possess the characteristic of competence simply to effectively carry out the example.

Similar to the varieties of competencies found between the services and agencies, leadership researchers identify a variety of these leadership pre-requisites. Researchers John Zenger and Joseph Folkman label five “distinctive traits” of great leaders: (1) character, (2) personal capability, (3) focus on results, (4) interpersonal skills and (5) focus on change.²⁹ Comparing Harari’s leadership pre-requisites with Zenger and Folkman’s “distinctive traits” identifies unanimous agreement on the essential traits of character and competence and provides important insight into the inculcation of critical joint leadership competencies. Zenger and Folkman go so far as to state: “Our research shows that a person with low marks in character has *absolutely no chance* of being perceived as a great leader.”³⁰

²⁷ Oren Harari, *The Powell Principles: 24 Lessons from Colin Powell, Battle-Proven Leader*.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ John H. Zenger, and Joseph Folkman, *The Handbook for Leaders – 24 Lessons for Extraordinary Leadership*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007).

³⁰ Ibid., 21. Italics added for emphasis.

Because Harari, Zenger and Folkman highlight the characteristics of character and competence as pre-requisites for great leadership, an examination of these traits in the context of service and interagency leadership is an important step for joint leaders. If the leadership characteristics of character and competence are in fact pre-requisites for great leadership, then confirmation of their existence in our future joint leaders must be the first step in the process of critical joint leadership competency inculcation in the joint force. But how does the joint force measure character and competence?

Harari defines the term “character” as a “coherent set of behavior, values and ideals”³¹ and describes a leader with character as “a person who stands for something.”³² Based on this description, character simultaneously encompasses the judgment, behavior and moral courage of the joint leader. Zenger and Folkman provide four extremely valuable and specific methods for developing and analyzing the character of leaders in the joint force: (1) Follow through on commitments, (2) Keep your word, (3) Make decisions with the good of the organization in mind rather than a personal agenda, (4) Treat others with respect and (5) Look to collaborate rather than compete. These five actions capture some key actions of leaders with character serve as outstanding guideposts for developing leaders in the joint force.

Harari describes competence as a leadership pre-requisite and Zenger and Folkman identify personal capability as a critical skill for great leaders. Harari defines “competence” as “relevant knowledge and experience”³³ while Zenger and Folkman define “personal capability” as “skills that must be in place for an individual to be

³¹ Harari, *The Powell Principles: 24 Lessons from Colin Powell, Battle-Proven Leader*.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

perceived as a strong leader.”³⁴ Competence essentially entails a level of knowledge and experience appropriate to the position of leadership. Zenger and Folkman identify professional leadership skills as: “technical knowledge, problem solving, innovation, and initiative”³⁵ and instruct leaders to “understand the technology, perfect professional skills and try new things”³⁶ in order to be competent.

This chapter has outlined the various leadership competencies prescribed by the services and civilian agencies. Additionally, the chapter has addressed the concept of leadership pre-requisites and highlighted the traits of character and competence as characteristics required of joint leaders. Great joint leadership requires certain pre-requisites” of the individual taking the action. The critical competencies of joint leaders must both nest within the competencies of the services and agencies and rest upon the leadership pre-requisites of great leadership. The following chapter will identify and discuss the critical competencies of joint leadership.

³⁴ Zenger and Folkman.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER VI: CRITICAL COMPETENCIES OF JOINT LEADERS

“The most important considerations in developing and establishing leadership competencies should be how they will be used to influence leadership assessment, selection, development, and performance management processes. Even the best framework of leadership has no value if it is not used productively by that organization.”¹

There are so many identified competencies between the services and interagency that there appears to be an affirmative answer to researchers Horey and Fallesen’s thesis question: “Leadership competencies: Are we all saying the same thing?”² There are three tools that enable the researcher to sort through the dozens of Service and agency leadership competencies and extricate those critical to the joint force: (1) the three broad descriptors of the CJCS JOD, (2) the definition of a leadership competency (*an action that demonstrates effective leadership*) and (3) the perspectives of current joint force leaders. The first two tools allow the researcher to methodically and analytically filter through the large numbers of Service and agency competencies. The third tool, perspectives of current joint force leaders, is firmly in the grey area of opinion based on experience. The advantage of this tool is that it incorporates relevance, practicality and human nature into the identification of critical joint leadership competencies. This last tool will prevent the establishment of yet another verbose academic framework of leadership competencies largely irrelevant to the modern joint leader.

Based on the research conducted within the scope of this thesis, there are three critical joint leadership competencies: (1) Build trust (2) Communicate and (3) Think critically. These leadership competencies critical to the joint force are common

¹ Horey and Fallesen, “Leadership Competencies – are we all saying the same thing?” 2.

² Ibid., 3.

throughout the services and describe proven actions that make joint force leaders effective. They fall within the three broad descriptors of the CJCS JOD, describe actions rather than concepts, and have been validated in articles by and interviews with experienced leaders in the joint force. These competencies are not generic, static nor permanent and require constant attention from the joint force leader throughout his or her career. Additionally, these critical joint leadership competencies are interdependent. Joint leaders must develop all three to succeed in the joint force. The following paragraphs examine these competencies in greater detail, provide insight from successful joint force leaders, and describe clear steps leaders can take to develop these critical competencies.

Build Trust

“For the joint force to function at all, there must be a high degree of mutual trust.”

- Joint Pub 1³

“How important is trust? ... It’s all about trust.”

- GEN Peter Pace⁴

Great joint leaders devote a tremendous amount of time and energy to building trust up, down and sideways in the joint force. Because the joint force is composed of disparate elements from different services, agencies and nationalities, trust is the cornerstone of mission success. Building trust is not a generic trait of the joint force leader, it is a leadership competency that is developed through experience and an understanding of human nature. In his book *The Powell Principles*, Oren Harrari states that trust is built “by demonstrating the key attributes and personal traits that are likely to

³ Joint Pub 1, Pg IV-18

⁴ GEN Peter Pace, interview by author, Washington, DC, 12 Dec 2007.

build peoples confidence in you.”⁵ The joint force leader must proactively and tirelessly work to develop trust within whatever joint organization he or she is assigned.

The fluid nature of the joint force makes building trust a competency that requires daily effort and attention. Actions the joint leader can take to build trust in the joint force fall into three categories: (1) understand cultures, (2) build teams and (3) build relationships. The experiences of RADM Michael Lefever, commander of the combined disaster assistance mission in Islamabad, Pakistan (OPERATION LIFELINE) following the devastating 7.6 magnitude earthquake on 8 October 2005 provide an exceptional background for the discussion of these three categories of actions the joint leader can take to build trust.

Deployed as the commander of an Expeditionary Strike Group executing a seven month deployment in CENTCOM, RADM Lefever found himself in Pakistan within a few days of the disaster tasked to provide humanitarian relief and simultaneously improve the perception of the United States in Pakistan. His mission required nothing less than coordinating the efforts of international militaries, services, government agencies and non-government agencies (NGOs) from around the world to assist the people of Pakistan.⁶ Despite the tremendous challenges facing the joint force, OPERATION LIFELINE was an unequivocal success and will serve as a case study for the leadership competency of building trust.

The action of understanding cultures requires the joint leader to expend time and effort to research and comprehend the capabilities and organizations of other agencies and governments. Methods for accomplishing this task depend largely upon background

⁵ Oren Harari, *The Powell Principles: 24 Lessons from Colin Powell, Battle-Proven Leader*, 13.

⁶ RADM Michael Lefever, interview by author, Washington, DC, 3 Dec 2007.

of the joint leader and the amount of time he or she has to devote to research prior to assuming their role in a joint command. As was the case with RADM Lefever, Joint leaders frequently find themselves operating in areas they never imagined they would find themselves with a limited knowledge of the local culture, religion and terrain. At a basic level, understanding culture involves academic research on the area of operations and a review of intelligence reports on local military and political situation. If time is at a premium, as is frequently the case with contingency operations, then the joint leader must strive to supplement reading with personal interaction among the local population and experience gained through walking the ground.

While the term culture implies a reference to nationality, it is equally descriptive when used to describe the idiosyncratic nature of organizations. For example, there are tremendous differences in perspectives between the U.S. Army and the NGO Doctors without Borders. Because both entities will share the same operating environment, it is imperative that the joint leader understand the composition, mission, agenda and composition of both organizations. This cultural awareness is the basis for building trust between the members of the joint force and those additional players living or operating within the joint force's geographic area of responsibility. The joint leader must develop national and organizational cultural awareness in order to build the relationships required for joint force mission success. The action of understanding cultures must continue through the joint leader's time as a member of the joint operation.

The action of understanding cultures allows the joint leader to build both teams and relationships. Once the joint leader understands the capabilities, agendas and concerns of the components, he or she can build teams that place the right capabilities

against the right mission. Upon his arrival in Pakistan, RADM Lefever relied on his experience and limited research to establish an organization that placed the right capabilities and cultures in the right place. RADM Lefever continued to utilize his increasing cultural awareness to make improvements to his organization in order to leverage the strengths and mitigate the weaknesses of the disparate elements in the area of operations. Building teams empowers others and provides organizations and individuals with a venue for being heard. RADM Lefever accounts much of his operational and strategic success in Pakistan to the development of these teams. They provided each of the members the opportunity to state their ideas, concerns and opinions and provided RADM Lefever opportunity to listen.

Building effective teams requires cultural awareness, but leading those teams requires personal relationships. Building personal relationships is a core action required of all leaders and a measure of effectiveness among leaders in the joint force. Former TRANSCOM commander, GEN Handy, USAF (Ret), emphasized this point in a lecture at the Joint Forces Staff College when he stated, “professional friendships with officers in other services impact success as a joint officer.”⁷ Joint leaders must actively work to develop personal relationships throughout their career. These relationships can begin in schools, joint or multinational exercises, during tours on joint staffs, in interagency billets, or in combat.

In a discussion about building trust, GEN Pace stated, “Trust is critical and is built by working together. The more dire the situation, the faster trust builds.”⁸ While GEN Pace is an advocate of building personal relationships to foster trust and recognizes that

⁷ GEN Handy, USAF (Ret). Delivered during a lecture given to the Joint Advanced Warfighting School on 17 Dec 2007.

⁸ GEN Peter Pace, 12 Dec 2007.

trust builds more quickly in combat, he also stated, “If you have never been with them before, combat is the wrong place to build trust.”⁹ In the case of RADM Lefever, he relied on previous relationships and built new ones in what GEN Pace described as “dire” circumstances. While future joint leaders will inevitably find themselves in both scenarios, they must balance joint education, jobs in the joint force and billets within the interagency with their service career milestones. Essentially, future joint leaders strive to place themselves in situations where they can build personal relationships within the joint force prior to combat.

RADM Lefever immediately began building relationships with key players in the Pakistan disaster relief effort including the U.S. ambassador, Pakistani political and military leaders, and the leaders of dozens of multinational militaries and NGOs. While personality, cultures, education and background all play a role in building relationships, RADM Lefever found that nothing cemented a relationship between any cultures better than the ability to deliver on promises. Personal relationships in the joint force are based in large part on credibility and effectiveness. The best way for joint leaders to build relationships in the joint force, particularly in a combat or crisis environment, is to demonstrate the ability to come through when you accept a responsibility in a team or organization. The actions of understanding cultures, building teams, and building personal relationships will enable the joint leader to obtain the critical joint competency of “build trust.”

Communicate

“Leaders must talk if they are to lead. Action is not enough. A silent example will never rally men.”¹⁰

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War*, 146.

The ability to communicate extends beyond the talking S.L.A. Marshall describes in the above quotation; however, Marshal's thesis that communication is a critical competency of leadership is as true for leaders in the joint force as it was for Army infantry leaders on the battlefields of World War II. Effective communication requires effort, procedural competence (public speaking) and interpersonal skills developed through experience and an understanding of human psychology. There are three actions for the joint leader to take in order to develop the critical joint competency of communication: (1) actively engage your personnel (2) strengthen and utilize interpersonal skills and (3) become an effective public speaker. These three actions are both mutually supportive and interdependent. A great public speaker with poor interpersonal skills may fail as a joint leader due to a lack of a receptive audience. A leader with poor interpersonal skills may actually lower the trust of his men with active engagement. The joint leader must succeed all three areas to master the competency of communication.

The success of a joint leader as a communicator is typically proportional to their level of effort. Engaging personnel requires time. Effective joint leaders may spend as much as 50% of their work day actively engaging their personnel. The target audience of the joint leader is the individual, and the most effective method of communication between individuals is face to face. GEN Pace describes the priority of communication methods for modern leaders as "first in person, then on the phone, then e-mail with a follow-on phone call."¹¹ Personal communication with personnel builds trust between individuals and impacts the success of an organization. GEN Pace explained this

¹¹ GEN Peter Pace, 12 Dec 2007.

correlation between human psychology and organizational effectiveness when he said, “make time to sit down with your people, giving folks your time lets them know they are important.”¹²

Throughout history, active engagement of personnel has been a matter of practical importance to the joint leader. During WW II, Fleet Admiral Nimitz considered one of his most important duties that of getting to know the officers and as many of the men in the Pacific Fleet as he could.¹³ In recent history, RADM Lefever spent over 50% of his time as a humanitarian aid joint task force commander traveling outside of the U.S. Embassy compound directly communicating with the men and women in his command. He described the importance of this unfiltered communication with his forces when he said, “The CDR must stay at the operational or strategic level, and the only way to have a successful strategy or to make correct decisions about risk management is to actually see the operations and talk to the folks carrying out the mission.”¹⁴ Engaging personnel is an essential dimension of risk management throughout a joint force operation.

A joint leader’s interpersonal skills can be the difference between effective and ineffective leadership in the joint force. Interpersonal skills refer to an individual’s ability to communicate and interact with other people to achieve desired effects or results.¹⁵ Researchers John Zenger and Joseph Folkman outline several actions the joint leader can take to improve their interpersonal skills. These basic actions read like a discussion between a father and his young son and include (1) look people in the eye when you talk

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Henry Adams, *The War Lords: Military Commanders of the 20th Century*, ed Michael Carver, Weidenfeld and Nicholson (Boston: Little-Brown, 1976).

¹⁴ RADM Michael Lefever, 3 Dec 2007.

¹⁵ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (Springfield: Merriam-Webster’s, Inc, 2003) s.v. “interpersonal skills.”

to them (2) learn and use peoples names (3) do not dominate the conversation and use all the “air time” and (4) smile when meeting and greeting other people.¹⁶

These skills are basic enough to merit questions regarding the validity of their inclusion in a thesis examining professional leadership, however, their importance to the joint leader is such that their omission would be an egregious error. Zenger and Folkman emphasized the importance of these skills when they wrote, “Inter-personal skills seem to make the most difference in whether leaders are considered extraordinary.”¹⁷ These interpersonal skills facilitate communication at all levels of the joint force and are easily and rapidly mastered. Joint leaders must constantly reflect on their utilization of these basic traits as they improve their ability to communicate up, down and across the joint force.

GEN Pace emphasized the importance of interpersonal skills during a recent interview. Even as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “personality is very important. Leaders need to be close to their people.” The closeness GEN Pace refers to is a mutual respect and trust between members of the joint force fostered by the joint force leadership.

Good interpersonal skills also reflect the ability of a leader to know if his or her communication is working. The endstate of communication is mission effectiveness. A leader must be able to recognize the facial expressions and body language of their target audience to determine if their method of communication is succeeding. “Part of communicating is knowing if your communication is working. You can adjust “how” you

¹⁶ John H. Zenger, and Joseph Folkman, *The Handbook for Leaders – 24 Lessons for Extraordinary Leadership*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007), 29.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

are communicating based on the feedback (body language) you are getting.”¹⁸ This recognition of the audiences response and the ability to modify your communication style is equally important when engaged in personal conversations and when speaking in front of a large group.

Perhaps the greatest challenge many joint leaders face while developing the critical joint competency of communication is to become an effective public speaker. Public speaking can entail the formal presentation of a speech to a large group, but the joint leader more routinely speaks to impromptu audiences from his or her joint unit. Public speaking requires interpersonal skill, preparation and experience. The action of becoming an effective public speaker is required to master the critical joint leadership competency of communication.

The joint leader can develop the critical joint competency of communication by actively engaging his or her personnel, developing strong interpersonal skills and through effective public speaking. “Leadership is ultimately about producing results,”¹⁹ and communication is a vital piece of the leadership continuum. Joint leaders must excel as communicators in order to coordinate the actions of an organization, drive change and produce results. Effective joint leaders utilize the competency of communication to create unity of effort among the disparate civilian and military elements of the joint force.

Think Critically

“One of the simplest truths of life is that it is possible for a problem of major dimensions to exist within fighting bodies (or any other organization) and remain unrecognized for years until one person points it out.”²⁰

¹⁸ GEN Peter Pace, Interview 12 Dec 2007

¹⁹ Zenger and Folkman, *The Handbook for Leaders – 24 Lessons for Extraordinary Leadership*, 29.

²⁰ S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire: The Problem of Battle Command in Future War*, 10.

Listed as one of the three broad joint competency descriptors in the CJCS JOD, the ability to think critically may be more accurately described as a critical competency or action required of the joint leader. There are three priorities for the joint leader to develop the critical joint competency of thinking critically. First, the joint leader must understand history. Senator Ike Skelton emphasized this point when he wrote, “Serious study of history is essential to the development of exceptional military professionals.”²¹ Second, the joint leader must challenge existing procedures and standards. This leadership trait includes empowering your people to do the same. Finally, the developing joint leader must recognize that both jobs and experience matter. A leader’s assignments affect his or her ability to think critically. Developing critical thinkers require assignments where they obtain operational experience and are exposed to a variety of cultures and leadership.

One of the first challenges RADM Lefever faced in his assignment as a humanitarian relief JTF Commander in Pakistan demonstrated the importance of understanding history. RADM Lefever arrived in Pakistan and immediately met with the Pakistani leadership. The Pakistani leaders questioned RADM Lefever as to why they should trust the JTF commander when the U.S. had “abandoned” Pakistan with the Pressler Amendment. This non-proliferation amendment became law in 1985 and prohibited the US from exporting arms to Pakistan over concerns about feeding a nuclear arms race between Pakistan and India. The Pakistani impression remains that the U.S. turned their backs on Pakistan and supported Pakistan’s greatest enemy.²² The Pakistani leadership was sincerely concerned that the U.S. would abandon them again in the wake of the natural disaster. Because RADM Lefever was familiar with this piece of Pakistani

²¹ Ike Skelton, “Whispers of Warriors: The Importance of History to the Military Professional,” 7.

²² RADM Michael Lefever, 3 Dec 2007. The Pressler amendment was signed into law in 1985 by President Ronald Reagan.

– U.S. history, he was quickly able to address the Pakistani concerns and begin the process of building trust. This exchange served as a reminder for RADM Lefever to consider the Pakistani view of his operations prior to execution and think critically about the Pakistani perception of the U.S. role in the humanitarian efforts.

The most common vehicle for joint leaders to understand history is through education. Education is a vital part of joint leader development and one of two ingredients required to build a foundation for critical thinkers, “.. leaders are intellectually empowered by a background of experience and education.”²³ Education and experience are inextricably linked in both civilian and military joint leader development. The National Strategy for the Development of National Security Professionals describes education as an “opportunity to enhance a person’s capacity for critical and innovative thinking, and level of understanding of authorities, risks, responsibilities, and tools to perform a current or future national security mission successfully.”²⁴ DoD joint professional military education (JPME) programs emphasize an understanding of history as a characteristic of joint leadership, however, a critical thinker must embrace the Army’s concept of “lifelong learning”²⁵ and remain a ravenous student of history throughout his or her career.

A joint leader’s ability to think critically enables him or her to challenge existing standards or procedures. This process can also be described as managing risk. RADM Lefever empowered those beneath him to challenge existing standards and procedures

²³ CJCS, *Capstone Concept for Joint Operations*, 22.

²⁴ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, *National Strategy for the Development of National Security Professionals*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, July 2007). (accessed at <http://www.whitehouse.gov> on 12 Feb 2008).

²⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Regulation 600-100. *Personnel – General, Army Leadership*.

and described this decision as “vital to the success of the humanitarian effort and U.S. relations with Pakistan following the disaster.”²⁶ RADM Lefever and his U.S. and international commanders had to constantly assess risk and make decisions that were not in line with existing standards. For example, RADM Lefever and the commander of a Marine Expeditionary Unit conducting humanitarian assistance in Pakistan as part of the JTF made the decision to send the Marines forward to deliver relief supplies into the Hindu Kush without their personal weapons. The Marine commander recognized that images of armed U.S. Marines in Pakistan could quickly be taken out of context and used as propaganda by violent extremist organizations in the region with the intent to display the humanitarian relief efforts as a U.S. occupation and destabilize the government of President Musharaff. The commander weighed the risk to the mission against the risk to his forces and decided to send the Marines forward without any visible weapons. The ability of RADM Lefever and the Marine commander to assess risk and challenge existing regulations and procedures ultimately resulted in tactical and strategic success for the United States in Pakistan.

The humanitarian relief effort following the horrific 2005 Pakistan earthquake is an example of an outstanding job for developing critical thinkers. The situation in Pakistan allowed developing leaders to watch their senior officers assume risk, challenge existing regulations and procedures and build trust between people, organizations and nations. Joint officers were provided with exceptional operational experience and insight into Pakistani society, geography and culture. The bottom line is that assignments like the humanitarian mission to Pakistan have a tremendous impact on the joint leader’s ability to think critically and ultimately succeed as a joint warfighter.

²⁶ RADM Michael Lefever, 3 Dec 2007.

The most important aspect of any service or joint assignment is operational experience. The value of experience was acknowledged as far back as Napoleon,

“The impressions which he [the leader] receives successively or simultaneously in the course of a day should classify themselves in his mind in such a way as to occupy the place which they merit, for reason and judgment are the result of the comparison of various impressions taken into consideration.”

Critical thinkers require operational experience in order to successfully understand and plan joint strategy and operations. Experience in an operational environment provides the joint leader with the foundation he or she needs to become a critical thinker. The navy helicopter pilots flying relief missions into the Hindu Kush serve as a good example for discussing the importance of experience in developing joint leaders. Shortly after initiating helicopter operations, the JTF received reports of a surface to air missile (SAM) launch against one of the Navy helicopters. The Navy helicopter squadron commander made the decision to continue flying relief missions before the SAM report could be confirmed or denied. The report was eventually proven false, but the Navy Commander made his decision based on his perceptions of the operating environment and his experience in the cockpit. The quality of a leader’s reason and judgment are inherently tied to his or her ability to process and compare various perceptions in order to make good decisions. This is the essence of critical thinking. The context for this ability to rapidly process information, or a “rolodex” of comparisons, is built on experience.

CHAPTER VII: INCULCATION

Joint Leader Development:

- Provide [leaders] more joint experiences, education and training
- Prepare senior officers to lead joint task forces and other joint operations
- More effectively integrate tactical operations with interagency and multinational components

- National Military Strategy¹

In order to develop the type of leaders described in the 2004 National Military Strategy, the joint force must approach leader development in the context of phases over the course of a leader's career. The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) has developed a SOF leader development model (figure 8) that serves as a useful example of this concept applied to a section of the joint force. The JSOU model outlines the milestones of a SOF leader's development over the timeline of his or her career. These milestones run across the timeline in themes including job, professional military education, SOF competencies and JSOU training.

¹ CJCS. *National Military Strategy*. 26. Brackets added for clarity.

SOF Leader Development

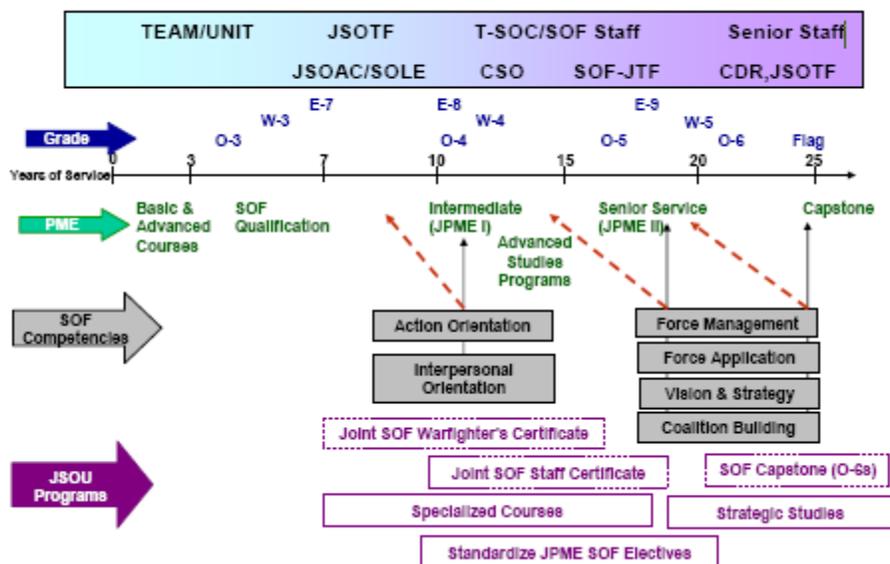


Figure 7²

The JSOU model may be improved and applied to the whole of the joint force through the introduction of joint leadership development phases. Researchers John Zenger and Joseph Folkman introduced this idea and developed a concept of leadership development across a career (figure 8) using what they describe as “four career stages that cannot be skipped.”³ Each stage emphasizes the inculcation of core competencies commensurate with the leader’s experience and role at any point along his or her career. Using this model, an organization may “target” leaders for the development of specific leadership competencies commensurate with their experience and simultaneously define the standards for career progression in an organization.

² Joint Special Operations University, “Joint Special Operations University Strategic Plan, Academic Years 2006-2013,” (May 2006), (accessed at <https://jsoupublic.socom.mil/azimuthSurvey/Strategic%20Plan%20Final.pdf> on 4 March 2008): 12.

³ Zenger and Folkman, *The Handbook for Leaders – 24 Lessons for Extraordinary Leadership*.

Stages of leader development

- **Stage 1:** Individuals must prove they can learn the business and develop a solid foundation of technical expertise
- **Stage 2:** Individuals continue to build technical skills and they become “independent contributors.”
- **Stage 3:** Become mentors
- **Stage 4:** Become “organizational visionaries”

Figure 8⁴

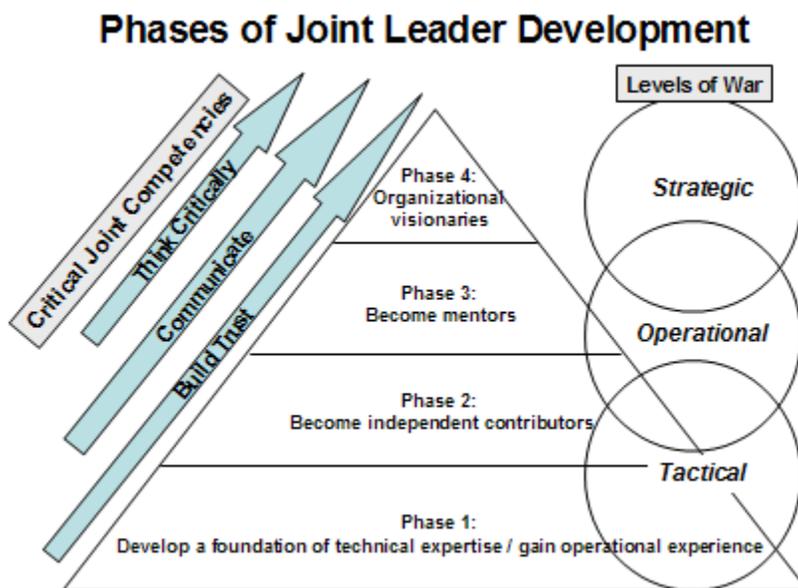
Due to the essential factor of human nature in leadership, Zenger and Folkman’s career stage descriptions are as applicable to the joint force as they are in the business world. The term “stages” is better described as “phases” in the context of the joint force to emphasize the continuity of joint leader development. These “phases” may be projected over the career path of a military officer, foreign service officer or government service employee without modification of their description. Each phase provides a portion of the foundation required for the development of joint leadership competencies, however, the inculcation of a specific joint competency does not stop with a transition from phase to phase in a joint leader’s career. The critical joint leadership competencies of build trust, communicate and think critically apply across the four phases; their priority for development simply changes based on the leader’s position and experience.

The three levels of war: strategic, operational and tactical provide a useful analogy for the description of the career phases of joint leaders. For example, the initial stage of a military officer or government employee’s career corresponds to the tactical level of war. Junior leaders are engaged in tactical assignments and are building technical

⁴ Ibid.

skills and a reputation which they will carry with them for the remainder of their career. This is their “first impression” and is a vital phase in their development for laying the foundation of operational and technical competence they will require to build trust among their seniors and subordinates in the joint force. This stage does not exclude development in the areas of critical thinking and communication, however, the development of those competencies requires more time and experience than stage I entails.

Stage II may be described as the period of transition from the tactical to operational level of war. During stage II, the joint leader continues to develop the technical skills and operational experience necessary for building trust. Additionally, the leader will have increased interaction with higher levels of organizational leadership and increased numbers of subordinate personnel. The joint leader must possess the critical competency of communication in order to execute his or her responsibilities. Stage III describes the operational level of war. The ability to think critically continues to develop through experience and education and becomes the priority for critical joint competency inculcation. Stage IV is the realm of a fully developed joint leader engaged in the operational and strategic levels of war. This leader possesses a wealth of operational experience and builds trust, communicates well and thinks critically as a matter of course. Figure 9 illustrates this relationship between the stages (phases) of leadership development, the inculcation of critical joint competencies and the levels of war.

Figure 9⁵

While prescribing a career model for each of the services and government agencies is beyond the scope of this thesis, the four phases of leadership development may be applied as a template across any career path in the joint force. Joint leaders can be “targeted” for the development of critical joint leadership competencies appropriate for their current position on the timeline of their career. Using this construct, the JSOU SOF leadership development model has been modified to illustrate the phases of joint leadership development and critical joint competency inculcation across the career of a SOF leader (figure 10). This template may be effectively utilized with any career path in the military or civilian joint force.

⁵ Adapted by the author from Zenger and Folkman, *The Handbook for Leaders – 24 Lessons for Extraordinary Leadership*.

SOF Leader Development

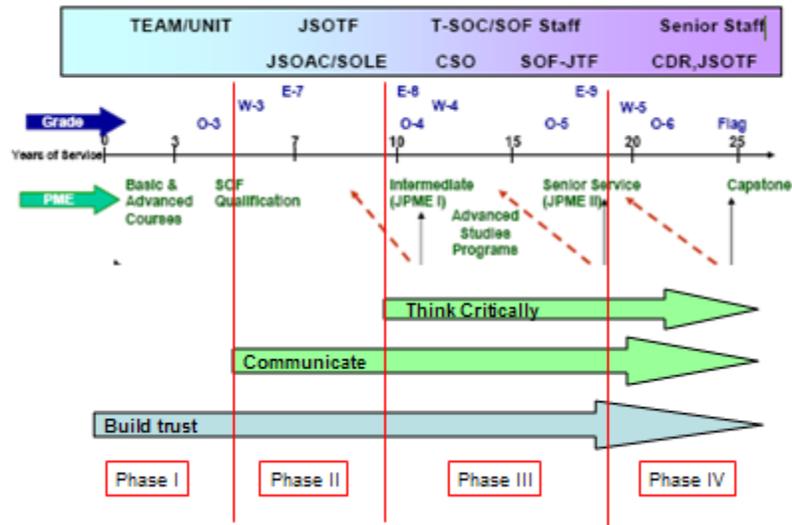


Figure 10⁶

⁶ Joint Special Operations University, 12. Modified by author 4 Mar 2008.

CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSION

The 2005 CJCS JOD effectively outlines the vision for leadership development across the joint force. The document recognizes the civil-military environment of the modern joint leader and expands the definition of “joint matters” to include the coalition and interagency. The Chairman’s vision identifies the need for joint leaders to function across the spectrum of civil-military operations and recognizes that joint leader development relies on a combination of in-service experience, joint experience and professional education. The CJCS JOD broad competency descriptors of strategically minded, critical thinkers and skilled joint warfighters are nested within and complement the characteristics and values outlined in the CCJO. While the broad competency descriptors provide some measure of direction, the Chairman acknowledges the need for additional research “to identify and inculcate a set of joint leader competencies and skills based on the enduring value of the Force.”¹

A tremendous amount of research has been conducted in the wake of the CJCS JOD tasking by each of the military services and organizations ranging from RAND to Joint Forces Command. The collective effort of this group of institutions identified dozens of leadership competencies, values, attributes, characteristics, principles, imperatives and ethos, however, there is no one study that looks across the services to identify competencies critical to the joint force. In addition, each of the services, government agencies and civilian institutions researching leadership varies in their definition of terms. Once listed, many of the organizations used power-point slides to

¹ CJCS, *Vision for Joint Officer Development*.

describe or link leadership competencies that were vague, confusing, non-actionable or a combination of all three.

The confusion surrounding this variety of definitions and research formed the basis for researchers Jeff Horey and Dr. Jon Fallesen in an appropriately titled article “Leadership Competencies: Are we all saying the same thing?”² These researchers defined leadership as “influencing, motivating, and inspiring others through direct and indirect means to accomplish organizational objectives.”² Based on this definition, leadership competencies are actions that demonstrate effective leadership. In other words, leadership competencies are actions that influence, motivate and inspire people to achieve the goals of an organization.

The identification of joint leadership competencies involves an examination of the relationship between leadership and human nature. An analysis of the history, characteristics and values of the joint force; combined with a review of the leadership competencies of the Services and interagency revealed three competencies critical to the joint force: (1) build trust, (2) communicate and (3) think critically. These competencies are not unique to the joint force, however, they identify actions essential to the success of joint leaders and the continued effectiveness of the joint force. The development of each competency requires a foundation of technical competence, experience and professional education.

The development of these critical competencies in the joint force requires recognizing four phases of leadership development in joint doctrine. Each leadership development phase corresponds with a period of a joint leader’s career where they may be “targeted” for the development of critical joint competencies. This four phase template

² Horey and Fallesen, “Leadership Competencies – are we all saying the same thing?” 2.

may be projected across the existing services and interagency career paths (figure 12). Rather than developing new career paths or additional joint training requirements for officers balancing joint requirements with service milestones, the inculcation of critical joint competencies may be achieved through phase specific leadership development training and milestones over the span of a joint leader's career.

Dr. Nesmith, a Joint Advanced Warfare School faculty member, frequently states: "history never repeats itself ... exactly." However, the course of history spanning from the legendary 300 Spartans at Thermopolis to GEN Petraeus and AMB Crocker in Iraq has demonstrates again and again the critical role of leadership in both civil and military operations. There is a tendency in the modern joint force to assume the pre-existence of leadership competencies in their developing leaders and neglect the requirement for structured leadership development. The characteristic of "lifelong learning" described in the CCJO may be overcome by the intense challenges of running of combat operations and executing deployment training cycles. The greatest leadership development challenge facing today's joint force is to expend the precious resources of time and effort required to ensure the development of leaders and the inculcation of critical joint competencies across the Services and agencies. History will record our success.

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