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ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE, A CONCEPT WORTH CONSIDERATION

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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ABSTRACT

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INTRODUCTION

" American managers are too little concerned about their workers."

Akito Morita, SONY Corporation

" The inventory goes home at night."

Louis B. Mayer, MGM

The purpose of this paper is to explore the make-up, value, and essence of positive command climate. Is performance affected by organizational climate? If so, how? Does the Army really have any choice other than to foster environments marked by positive command climate? Is there a parallel between corporate management practices and Army executive leadership philosophies relative to climate? If so, what is it? And, finally, is the notion of climate something really new?

Leaders in the Army have changed. Army leadership has come to recognize that positive command climate contributes to the growth of unit and individual morale, cohesion, and performance. This recognition is reflected in Army doctrine, training, and leadership literature. Continued doctrinal and policy focus on the importance of climate is required to preserve the leadership gains achieved during the past twenty years. Leader education in the mechanics of climate formation is essential if leaders are to get the most out of their leadership efforts.

Climate, like leadership, is difficult to precisely define. Part of the problem is caused by changes in how leadership and other organizational elements are viewed through time and by various schools of theory and thought. Joseph Rost, in his book, Leadership for the 21st Century, discovered over 221 definitions of leadership. Further, he posits that present definitions of the word may no longer apply because the original foundation paradigms have changed. In short, as we progress through time, the present may no longer fit the understandings of the past.[1]

Climate has been given numerous definitions much in the same manner as leadership. However, the following definitions begin to explain what climate is. Field Manual 22-100, Military Leadership, offers an official definition:" Command climate may be defined as the atmosphere or environment created within a command by a commander and his chain of command through their exercise of leadership."[2] In this definition, leadership is the central

determinant factor in climate formation. Another definition is provided by LTG Walter Ulmer: " The essence of good command climate promotes esprit and generates increased performance and is probably easier to feel or sense than to describe."[3] Here, LTG Ulmer says what climate does and seems to indicate that it is difficult to precisely say what climate is. DA Pamphlet 600-80, Executive Leadership, provides a Department Of the Army policy level definition, which is rather sophisticated: " Climate effects stem from the impact of structure on the opportunity for personal and professional growth." It goes on to say that " the ultimate task of executive leadership is to reinforce institutional values while providing climate and opportunity for growth and an acceptance of the risk involved in allowing it to occur."

Some researchers view climate as a measure of how well individual and collective values and expectations fit with those of the organization. Schwartz and Davis describe climate as " a measure (typically established by survey) of how well the organizational values fit with the individual soldiers' values or how reality matches expectations."[4] The last official definition I will offer comes from Field Manual 22-103, Leadership and Command at Senior Levels:" a command climate is a shared feeling, a perception among the members of a unit about what life is like." The definition goes on to stress the need to demonstrate caring, freedom to fail while learning, the importance of team building and cohesion, and the need to foster an environment that provides the opportunity for personal growth.

After reviewing the above definitions, perhaps it is safe to condense them into a viewpoint that climate is the result of what members of an organization feel and believe about their work environment and its relationship to society.[5]

Positive organizational climate merits the consideration of military and corporate executives. However, there is some evidence that the commercial sector may be a bit slow to recognize the value of positive climate formation in the work place. The traditional American view of the worker-employer relationship suggests institutional tensions: the union against management, the worker against the supervisor, the time clock against the worker, among others. Deep-seated mistrust is a part of the American work experience. Simply put, many American employers have historically feared and mistrusted their workers, and the workers have feared and mistrusted their employer as uncaring, monolithic adversaries. In Why Leaders Can't Lead, Warren Bennis offers a keen insight: " If these arrogant American chieftains do not begin to see the world as it is, do not finally acknowledge that their employees are their primary asset, not their primary liability, then all their jealously held power, prerogatives, and perks will sooner or later count for nothing because their companies will be acquired, merged, or sunk."[6] Powerful stuff. Corporate America cannot avoid reflecting upon its fragile place in the world of international trade and rising perceptions of a need for changes in the conduct of management if we are to compete. It appears a shift in the orientation toward how the worker is viewed is required.

The Army has made good progress in this area. The Army has come to recognize the importance of caring for soldiers as valued members of the Army team. Caring has become a part of the corporate ethic or culture. As early as 1983, in the Army White Paper titled " The Army Family," caring for soldiers and families was established as a matter of policy.[7]

The function of leadership is central to climate formation. The interaction of the leaders with the led affects the organizational climate. Leader personality impacts most on unit performance because personality effects the perceptions of the led. Some aspects of leader personality have come through repeatedly during the course of my research. These are caring and competence. Perhaps above all else, the leader and the leadership chain must be viewed as competent if a solid foundation for positive climate formation is to be provided. The reason that the perception of competence is central to the issue is that ,in the minds of the led, it gets to the ultimate matter of survival.

Positive climate formation does not imply a " soft " leadership style. There is no implied need to abrogate any authority. What <u>is</u> required is a demonstration of caring and consideration for subordinates. A DCSPER study of over 25,000 soldiers concluded: " Leader consideration is the key to good command climate. Leader consideration, which is basically treating one's subordinates with respect, decency, and interest, has proven to be an important leadership behavior both in this study and in a review of the literature. This factor should not be construed as

representing a weak, democratic leadership style. In fact, one can retain a firm grip on the unit reigns and be considerate at the same time."[8]

Another aspect of leader consideration for subordinates may be made within the context of the structure of the organization. Recent organizational behavior study supports the finding that workers, in addition to needing a sense of where they fit in, need to perceive leader consideration for them if they are to have a strong sense of satisfaction in their work.[9] Increased leader awareness of the power of perceived consideration can help form positive command climate.

Positive leader reinforcement is important to climate formation. Sustained actions which reinforce perceptions of caring, competence and an agreement with values and purposes helps create group perceptions of the organization which forms and becomes the organizational climate. As implied in the climate definitions, leadership is critical to the process of climate formation. The point is that leaders need to understand the dynamics involved and how interaction with the led can produce positive or negative results. Much depends on the quality and the motivation of the led.

An informed leader needs to know his men in a general sense. He should assess how the values and purposes of the unit seem to match with the expectations of his soldiers. If there is a disconnect, it is probably a function of communications and information flow. A leader cannot address climate in a productive manner if he does not have some knowledge of subordinate

expectations.

Climate is important today in both the military and the civilian sectors. As earlier definitions have implied, climate can have an effect on cohesion, performance, dedication and productivity. Advancing technology, the need for quality labor, and world-wide competition highlights the need for positive organizational climate. Today, leaders and managers may no longer be able to overlook the issue of climate. The volunteer military certainly demands an increased awareness of climate-related issues and fundamentals. Clearly, some business and military leadership attitudes need to change from the traditional adversarial, negative reinforcement style.

The Army has been moving in the right direction. Recent key Army doctrinal literature stresses leadership practices which support the tenets of personal worth and individual opportunity to grow. Increasing economic pressure has forced many corporate leaders to restructure their corporate management philosophy to enhance the effectiveness of their companies. Empowerment and recognition of the worth of the work force seem to be the common thread.[10] The Army may actually be in the lead in this approach because the Army has emphasized the importance of empowerment approaches and climate issues since 1983. The Army has recognized the creation of a positive command climate has a favorable bearing on unit and individual morale, cohesion, and performance. This recognition is documented in Army doctrine and policy. For example, Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-69, Unit Climate Profile

Commanders Handbook, states: " Unit climate factors such as cohesiveness, morale, and attitude toward training have a direct impact on the effectiveness of your unit."[11]

PAST AND PRESENT

" Many an institution is very well managed and very poorly led."[12]

The study of the mechanics of organizational effectiveness and command climate has been a matter of interest during the past twenty years. However, the notion of climate within military doctrinal literature is fairly new. The term was first used officially in the October 1983 edition of Field Manual 22-100.[13] Field Circular 25-100, September, 1985, first linked training to command climate. Later, Training Circular 22-9-2 was published in 1986 with the intent to teach the importance of climate to company level officers.

The early to mid eighties was a period where the Army made an intense effort to increase the sopnistication of leadership through doctrinal emphasis and numerous studies. The Fort Hood studies stand out as an example. Observations on enlightened leadership

from LTG Walter Ulmer were widely read. 1983 appears to have been a watershed year for a leadership focus within the Army. The trend has continued through today as evidenced by the emphasis of climate contained in leadership doctrine at the executive level. FM 22-103, Leadership at Senior Levels, stresses leadership factors which produce cohesive, motivated units based on a positive organizational climate.

It is worth reviewing the content of this publication to see what the Army is saying in regard to leadership and the importance of climate: " the perception is based on their understanding of how they will be treated--whether the leadership cares about them personally and professionally. The perception also depends on what professional opportunities they see within the command--freedom to learn and make decisions versus close supervision and many constraining rules..." It goes on to state; " positive climate depends primarily on how those in senior leadership positions communicate their concern through their actions and the actions of their teams..."

Consistent focus in doctrinal literature on the need for a healthy, positive command climate should be continued. If Army leadership and training literature do not regularly keep the climate concept in senior leaders minds, the awareness of the importance of climate and its many related elements may fade.

A possible example of fading awareness is contained in the 1986-87 document, Experiences in Division Command.[14] Fifteen division commanders were interviewed. They rendered sixty-four

comments on leadership. Only one commander, one time, used the term climate. This report indicates that the concept of climate may not even be on the back burner, but off the stove entirely, at least among this particular group.

The good news is that all is not gloom and organizational doom. Remember the Zero Defects age? That era of total intolerance of anything less than perfection bore catastrophic consequences within the military: Inflated body counts; unfair, unwarranted reliefs; false reporting; and warped values became a way of doing business. The Army appears to have learned some valuable lessons from this ethically dry period. The shift to ethical behavior, positive organizational climate concepts, and better treatment of soldiers and their families evolved and grew during the eighties.

As stated earlier, the requirement to retain a volunteer force, among other factors, caused the Army to pay increased attention to the needs of the soldier and his family. The old, uncaring attitude so applicable during the draft era no longer applied to the new reality. Dollars invested in climate-enhancing programs are a recognition of the need to provide an environment that is in line with the expectations of soldiers and their families. One may conclude the Army can no longer place soldiers and families second if it is to attract and retain people of the required quality to operate advanced systems in a complex, competitive environment.

The business world is starting to wake up to the fact that people, not the product or profit, come first. In this case,

clearly, market forces are requiring business leaders to change the management status quo. Organizational performance is beginning to be recognized as being a collective result of individual efforts guided by, ideally, common values and goals. These " newly pronounced " corporate observations dovetail with Army doctrine. There is common agreement in both communities that investment in human emotional capital is necessary. Peters and Waterman, in their book, In Search of Excellence, make a critical observation that every leader should internalize: " Treating people, not money, machines, or minds as the natural resource may be the key to it all. Excellent companies treat the rank and file as the root source of quality and productivity gain. They do not foster we-they attitudes."[15]

CLIMATE DYNAMICS

The stage has been set by discussing the definition of climate and giving some background observations concerning how the Army and the business world have come to recognize the importance of positive organizational climate. Climate seems to be made up of the elements of primary groups, perceptions, the effects of turbulence and empowerment, unit leader-led conflict, and expectations. This list is not presented as being all inclusive.

Climate formation is effected by a collection of individuals sharing some degree of common experiences, perceptions, and expectations. They make up primary groups. This primary group provides an individual and collective frame of reference and is the cement which produces organizational cohesion. Individuals identify with the overall organization through their emotions, values, and perceptions as shaped by their primary group interactions. This cornerstone organizational factor is the most important single part of the climate equation. Recent management research appears to support this observation. Pfeffer, in his study of small group

interaction within organizational structure, states that " people who are in contact with others will come to share their attitudes and perceptions of the work environment, and people who are structurally equivalent will come to share the same attitudes."[16] Leaders should be aware of the importance of small group dynamics in positive climate establishment as it closely relates to the formation of common perceptions, goals and expectations. Soldiers respond and relate to each other in small groups. Their loyalties to the unit and to each other are greatly influenced by their small group experiences. If organizational small groups are rock solid, then overall unit cohesion, with the ability to withstand great stress, should be enhanced. One possible example of a unit with strong cohesion is taken from the experiences of World War One: " German battlefield cohesion resulted from the individual soldier's personal reinforcement due to interactions through which he received esteem and respect from his primary group...squad, platoon, and company...and to his perceptions of his immediate officers and NCOs as men of honor eminently deserving of respect and who cared for their men."[17]

At least in the quote presented above, a very strong climate of cohesion based on mutual respect, regard and caring, and unity of purpose may have helped the unit better endure the challenges facing them. Here is an example of what the German 35th Fusiliers experienced: " In twenty-seven consecutive days the 35th Fusiliers, part of the German second corps, marched 408 miles, an average of 15 miles a day. This period included at least eleven battle days

and no rest days. All marches were made under full field pack. On September 7th and 8th, in the movement to attack the north flank of the French Sixth Army, this regiment marched 44 miles with only a three hour halt. The entire march was conducted under the most difficult traffic conditions."[18] In this case, primary group interaction may have provided the cement of cohesion. Mutual respect, common goals, fear, and other factors could have provided the climate to support the uncommon achievements of the unit.

Perception plays a central role in climate formation because it has an effect on what an individual believes. Leaders need to be socially perceptive. Recent management research supports this statement as follows; " For example, leaders who are socially perceptive will for the most part be quicker in perceiving and understanding how changes in a particular market can be exploited for organizational gain. There are three reasons for social perception: to determine problems that hinder organizational progress; to better understand personnel dynamics regarding cohesion and morale, and to assess opportunities for organizational growth."[19] Simply put, perceptive leaders are better able to recognize problems and work toward solutions favorable to the organization. Climate can thus be enhanced by perceptive leadership acting in concert with the led.

Leader action and personality has a bearing on subordinate perception. Some researchers assert that the led should perceive a good leader as having two primary qualities: " First, he must be perceived by his troops as caring and concerned about them. Second,

he must be perceived as ready and willing to share the risks, sacrifices, and endure the hardships of battle along with the men he leads."[20] General George Stilwell comes to mind as an example of one who fit the above qualities. Not particularly lovable to be sure, Stilwell never the less led by example and saved lives through iron-willed discipline and resolve. He led a march of over 140 miles from Burma to India at age 62. His subordinates may have hated him at the time, but his care for them brought them out alive. The climate of that particular march must have been one of grim determination driven by the fierce resolve of the leader. The led most certainly had no problem perceiving who was in charge and what the goals were.

Perception, as related to climate, needs to be considered carefully. Crossed perceptions can occur. Senior leadership may indeed, in its perception of the organization's well-being, be misled from time to time. For example, the soldier thinks the unit stinks, and the commander thinks he has the best battalion in the division. Each perceives the situational experience differently. Where you stand depends on where you sit! The commander, perhaps because of his ego, may tend to filter out bad news. This may happen consciously and subconsciously. The Private, on the other hand, may often have experiences which he perceives negatively. The informed leader should be aware of this possibility. One defense against crossed perceptions is communications, with a stress on leaders actively listening to subordinates. Active listening and open communications are an essential ingredient in achieving common

accuracy of perception.

In Crisis in Command, Gabriel and Savage offer the finding that " the higher one's military status, the less one's tendency to perceive differences between the ideal military ethic and the way it operates in practice."[21] This seems to support the idea of crossed perception. In another study, Hershey and Blanchard conducted a perception comparison survey between workers and management.[22] Here are their results. A ten rating denotes the weakest view on an issue and a one represents the strongest level of importance attached to an issue.

CONDITION	MGT	WORKER
Good work conditions	4	9
Being informed	10	2
Fair discipline	10	2
Appreciation of work performed	8	1
Loyalty of management to the workers	6	8
Good pay	1	5

Promotions	3	7
Understanding of personal problems	9	3
Job security	2	4
Interesting work	5	6

As can be seen from the above data, there was a significant difference on what the two groups viewed as important to them, especially in the basic areas of being informed, fair discipline, appreciation, and understanding personal problems. Perhaps one conclusion that can be drawn from this is that it is dangerous for leaders to assume that their followers have the same perceptions of an issue as they do. Leader awareness of this condition can reduce the opportunity for leader versus led conflict as leadership strives to foster group oriented goals, values and expectations.

A recent survey conducted in 1990 by The Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences asked a population of 30,000 soldiers the following question: " What is the level of morale in your unit? " Officer and enlisted responses are provided below.[23]

	Officer	Enlisted
High or Very High?	45%	22%
Low or Very Low?	14%	38%

Here again, there appears to be a significant difference of opinion between the leaders and the led. In fact, it seems that the enlisted had just the opposite view of how things were going in their units as compared to the views of the officers in the survey. This data is presented only to add some support to the possibility of crossed perceptions existing in organizations. If this data is correct, it would indeed be dangerous for an officer to make the assumption that his enlisted soldiers share his perceptions concerning morale. He can not assume, he must find out.

Organizational climate is a mix of interrelated elements as stated earlier. Tosi posits that " The factors of attitudes, motives, jobs, physical setting, formal and informal organizations, and social systems are woven into an overall pattern of interdependency."[24] Turbulence and leadership stability are part of the elements forming climate. Stability of leadership is essential if unit cohesion and a strong climate are to develop. Ironically, turbulence, both of leaders and the led, nearly obliterates stability. Rotational policies during the Vietnam War

provide one example where many units were essentially groups of strangers. The 1st Infantry Division (M) during 1988-90 had a turnover rate of 12% per month, with subordinate battalions often having higher rates of turbulence. One result of such turbulence is a natural focus on the short term. Rapid turnover of leadership forces an organizational short view and probably creates unneeded change. The new leader has to make his mark in his limited time in charge. Often, a shift in agenda is required resulting in increased worker frustration or a " here we go again" attitude being formed. With rapid leader turnover, consistency of policy may be difficult to achieve.

American executives change jobs on average once every two or three years.[25] This causes bottom line fixation and creates organizational stress because annual performance appraisals are a natural product of such management turbulence. The military has a similar problem. Turbulence and the stress of annual evaluation can pose challenges to leadership in the formation of positive command climate.

Leadership turbulence harms management in developing a long view and it may reduce a leader's ability to develop accurate perceptions. Business Week reported in an article on corporate management that " most top managers are lacking a gut feeling for the gestalt of their business."[26] In other words, they know their business technically, they just do not appreciate the importance of their workers. Perhaps many leaders are chronically shortsighted regarding their employees mainly due to a short-term bottom line

fixation. Again we recall the historic adversarial, suspicious relationship between management and the workers or between the leader and the led. Some technically capable leaders may not have a clue when it comes to working with people and getting their best efforts willingly. Some perceptive leaders, however, are watchful for those little things from which positive results can be obtained. Admiral Elmo Zumwalt was skipper of a lackluster vessel with the fixed radio call sign " Sapworth ". The ship stood out in no area other than in its mediocrity. Zumwalt was watchful and perceptive. He was looking for some way to re orient the crew and to generate esprit. He decided to change the call sign to " Hellcat ". He pumped up the crew to realize their new identity. No longer saps, but Hellcats![27] Morale improved. The name change, along with many other leadership actions, helped enhance self esteem, unity, and performance. In short, the climate was changed.

Subordinate empowerment is another element of climate. Trust is the key to subordinate empowerment and extends to the idea of self worth. One having a high degree of feelings of personal worth may feel more positive about the organization in which he finds himself, if it empowers him. The Army has made significant progress in this area since 1983. Many doctrinal publications stress the importance of the notion of " freedom to learn " and subordinate empowerment in the training environment. Perfect performance is not expected, but learning is. The adoption of the after action review process or, AAR, in key Army training doctrine indicates a recognition of the value of new approaches in how the Army is run.

It suggests a movement away from the older Zero Defects era and from traditional management methods. One author suggests that empowerment is more likely to lead to success than the traditional authoritarian leadership style.[28] A different view of empowerment was presented in a recent article in Fortune Magazine. The author stated that " companies talk a good game about employee empowerment, but as times get tough, top management calls the shots."[29] In other words, as the impact of decisions gets potentially more severe, the decision process goes to higher levels. This appears only natural. A unit fighting for survival on the battlefield is not going to view empowerment in the same light as if it were back in garrison during day-to-day business. As far as climate goes, subordinates should understand that if required, power will revert to top leadership at the expense of individual empowerment if the success of the mission or enterprise is at issue. Leaders should be aware of the need to shift empowerment as the situation requires, and the led need to understand this point also. Common understanding of this need to shift power will preserve the climate of the organization through a reduction in the opportunity for leader-led conflicts.

Caution may be appropriate in a discussion of empowerment. In order to be effective and perceived as a reality on the part of subordinates, empowerment must be more than something skin deep employed as a tactic to fool subordinates into feeling good. Quinn Mills, in his book, Rebirth of the Corporation, speaks of what he terms " counterconventional leadership." He says that empowerment

is not valid and will be perceived as such if empowerment is;
" done as an island of change in the midst of a sea of tradition. In this case, true empowerment is a yard wide and an inch deep."[30]

Expectation is yet another element of climate. James MacGregor Burns, in his book, Leadership, talks about the need to head toward transformational leadership through matching worker expectations with those of the organization if the full effort of the employee is to be obtained.[31] Again, the Army is probably ahead of the pack as it strives for increased leader sophistication. DA Pamphlet 600-80, Executive Leadership, points out the need to consider expectations and for senior leadership to be sensitive to the higher order effects of policy on climate. Expectations are addressed in page forty-four of the document as follows:
" Executives at the senior level are responsible to ensure active monitoring of the outcomes of stated values at the operational level and ensure the obligation is fulfilled and perceived as fulfilled by the members of the organization and society."[32] In short, a soldier enlists with a certain set of expectations of what the Army stands for--what it is all about. The only point being made here is that organizational climate is enhanced when there is a match or at least significant agreement between the reality of the situation and individual expectations.

The situation does not have to be pleasant to form good climate based on expectation agreement. In fact, a sense of cohesion, esprit, determination, and the conviction in shared goals can grow in the face of terrible conditions as we saw earlier in

the German and Stilwell examples. Climate can actually be enhanced if expectations are properly taken into account.

KEY LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

Getting the best effort out of human resources is one view of what leadership is all about. Rost offers a more formal definition: " Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes."[33] This modern definition is based on Rosts' contention that former views of leadership are a product of the industrial era and that a post-industrial paradigm has changed how leadership must be defined and viewed. Put another way, time and change effects how leadership may be appropriately defined because leaders and the leadership culture has changed.

Given the admitted complexity of leadership, some leader qualities stand out as being valuable for positive climate establishment. They are: the value of the " common touch ", respect for subordinates, integrity, common sense, and, viewing

people as valued resources.

An attempt will be made to relate the above leader qualities to positive climate formation by expanding their relation to climate for leader applications.

The leadership quality described as the " common touch " simply means that a leader is perceived by the led as being genuine. In more informal parlance, the leader is not viewed as a self-centered phony. Leaders who do not try to be anything other than what they naturally are may be more able to establish rapport and empathy with their work force than if they were acting in a manner foreign to their nature. Common touch does not imply trying to be a buddy to anyone. It simply means, " be yourself " and be natural around subordinates.

Respect, or regard and consideration for others, seems to be related to empowerment. It is an essential element of positive climate formation. Respect for subordinates must be demonstrated. The tightly structured, rank oriented military system provides a framework wherein mutual respect and dignity can be abused. Care must be taken at all levels of leadership to keep the importance of respect in mind. Respect could be viewed as the fuel for self-esteem. Leadership must reinforce this basic human need by providing genuine respect to their work force. Respect, like many other leadership factors, does not imply softness or making things easy on people simply to make them feel good. Respect may be embodied in an iron-willed determination to make subordinates adhere to standards. The followers may not be receptive and the

leadership may not be popular as the organization is forced to rise to essential performance levels. However, if good communications within the unit exists, the reasons for the leader's demands for high performance will be understood by most. Through communications, the climate of the organization can be energized even if faced with unpopular tasks. In the context of a military unit, tough training to perform and survive may be the ultimate form of respect leadership can bestow upon the led. The trick is getting them to see it that way.

Integrity is a center-piece element of leadership; thus it is important to command climate. Without the perception of leader integrity, all leader efforts, approaches and actions may be viewed as hollow. The led will probably recognize the leader for what he is. The unit may perform, but most likely from a negative reinforcement or punishment avoidance basis. One author lists integrity as the top priority among leadership qualities: " Our best qualities are integrity, dedication, magnimity, humility, openness, and creativity."[34] It really comes down to this: if a leader is to have any moral force in establishing a positive climate in an organization, he must be perceived as being a person of integrity.

Subordinates must believe their leaders have common sense. Leaders who make decisions that seem to make sense to followers may be better able to establish a favorable climate within an organization. Simply put, the followers need to perceive that leaders are making the right decisions. The real significance of

common sense is that it helps convince the work force that they work in a rational structure or environment. Workers may well become frustrated when the decisions made within the organization or do not appear to make sense. One behavioral scientist believes; " Workers work within a system that-- try as they might --is beyond their control. It is the system, not the individual skills, that determines how they perform."[35] Perceptions that leaders use common sense in decision making can reduce leader-led conflict and can increase the level of confidence and trust in the work force because they are more prone to believe that most decisions are made in the interest of the greatest chance for obtaining favorable outcomes. Leaders need to be aware of how their decisions are perceived by their followers. If they are, they will be better equipped to maintain effective communications within the unit and they will be more able to keep a positive climate based on common understanding of decisions made.

Finally, people must believe they are viewed as having value if they are to be fully integrated into an organization. Expectations, common values and goals cannot be formed if the work force feels the leadership does not value them. Historically American management has shown little respect or regard for their workers. Rost, in his study of 21st century leadership says that some of this attitude may be a function of our industrial revolution. He suggests that a paradigm shift may be necessary.[36] The post-industrial school of thought places more importance on the value of human resources. The Army has stressed this value since

1983 in training and leader doctrine. Again, the Army appears to be on firm ground in its approach to leading organizations.

The benefits of treating workers with respect and showing some regard for their value is not new, but perhaps the general growing recognition of the essential need for it is. One simple example of how young soldiers reacted to being treated as if they were of value to the organization comes from the Indian Wars. In this one instance, " a grizzled old sergeant was held in very high esteem simply because he treated the troops well and with humane consideration."[37] Our doctrinal literature recognizes the importance of the worth of the individual by the emphasis placed on the opportunity to grow professionally and personally. The focus on caring for soldiers and including the Army family as a valued partner is another example of Army leadership recognizing the worth of the work force.

CONCLUSION

" Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience."[38]

George Washington

" Gain the love of your men, treat them with kindness and humanity, and attend to everything that may contribute to their health and conscience."[39]

Baron Von Steuben, 1778

This study has reviewed many aspects of command climate. It is complex and our understandings of elements of organization such as leadership, culture, structure and climate, are evolving. Through my efforts in this study, I have concluded that climate is related

to performance. This tie is acknowledged in Army leadership and management doctrine. Further, I believe the Army has served its membership well in its shift to sophisticated understandings of organizational behavior and may actually be ahead of American corporate understanding of the matter. Again, such tenets as empowerment, freedom to learn and grow, cohesion, agreement on common values, goals and purposes point to a modern view of management and leadership in the Army.

The Army does have a choice in deciding to implement climate enhancing programs. The important point to acknowledge is that the Army has indeed made significant effort to acknowledge the worth and importance of its human resources and has improved the climate within the Army as a whole.

Climate may be a new term, but the concept is anything but new. A contemporary of Sun Tzu wrote over two thousand years ago, " if people are treated well, the led will serve gladly."[40] One could argue that what he was describing was an aspect of climate through a positive approach to leadership and the recognition that the led should have some consideration. I do not imply that the realities of his day directly equate to ours, but merely suggest that techniques and approaches which result in higher performing organizations have been around a good while, whereas our understanding of the mechanics involved has not.

The Army, in its efforts to provide an environment that supports learning in a less threatening, post-Zero Defects style, has made a change in its culture and, over time, has produced

leaders who are willing to support such approaches as mentoring, freedom to learn, empowerment and other techniques. Schein, in his study of organizational culture and leadership, says that " the culture creates the patterns of perception, thought, and feeling of every new generation in the organization, and, therefore, also 'causes' the organization to be predisposed to certain kinds of leadership. In a sense, the culture produces the leaders."[41] He goes on to state that culture determines climate. While a study of culture is beyond the scope of this paper, if what Schein says is true, indeed the climate within the Army may have changed because the leaders have changed. One might speculate on the possibility that the Vietnam experience and the resultant recognition of a need to review ethics and leadership in general may have set the stage for a new generation of leadership approaches in the Army.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on my findings during the course of this study. The value of positive climate should be kept in the forefront of leadership publications and

associated doctrine. Leaders should be provided organizational climate formation education early in their careers to enable them to be more aware of the opportunities available to get the most out of their leadership efforts. Instruction should be provided during BNCOC/ANCOC and at all levels of officer courses to include pre-command courses for battalion and brigade commanders. Senior leadership should continue to actively support the tenets of FM 25-100 as it sets the tone of the learning climate in the Army:
" Under senior leaders and training, the thrust is on learning, mentoring, and the AAR process. Senior leaders mentor, guide, listen to, and 'think with' subordinates to challenge their depth of knowledge and understanding."[42]

Increased stability for both leadership and the led is essential if positive climate is to be efficiently enhanced and the associated benefits are to be maximized. Leader turbulence forces a short view and can cause problems in organizations. Certain leaders, because they feel under intense pressure to " make their mark, " may damage their units in the process. In his study of corporate executives, Kaplan observes that " ... burning ambition, extreme hard work, and aggressive style causes their organization to excel but at a considerable human cost. If you are not careful, they'll burn themselves out and the organization too."[43] It appears that the Army may need to redefine career success if turbulence in command positions in particular is to be reduced.

The Army is on the right track. I believe it is an effort we can all be proud of. In A Passion for Excellence, Peters and Austin

state " Create a climate of pride. Instill individual dignity. Provide challenge and opportunity to each. Intangibles do matter."[44] The Army has recognized the importance of these intangibles and is clearly determined to produce an Army with an organizational ethic devoted to learning, dedication, and pride. In essence, an organization having a positive command climate.

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