

# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

## **Monterey, California**



## **THESIS**

**A FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF THE LEADERSHIP  
EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT (LEAD) PROGRAM  
CURRICULUM**

by

Jo Anne T. Cunningham

June 1999

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(LEAD) PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

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requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MANAGEMENT**

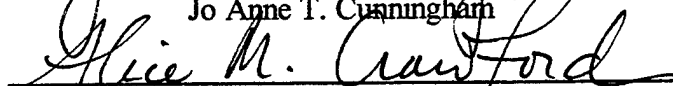
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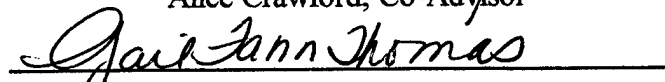
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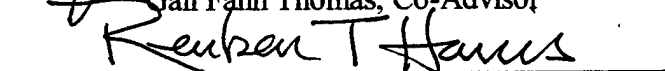
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## ABSTRACT

In 1996 the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, CA designed a graduate education program for Navy and Marine Corps officers who are detailed to the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA). The students complete a Master of Science degree in Leadership and Human Resources Development, then assume duties as a Company Officer. This study is a formative evaluation of the Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program. Its purpose is to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the program, whether the graduates perceive that their leadership skills changed as a result of the program, and provide recommendations for improvements to the program. A literature review includes a discussion of educational program evaluation and qualitative measurement procedures. Interviews were conducted with all members of the first graduating LEAD class. It was found that the graduates believe that the program was beneficial, had a positive effect on their leadership styles, and with some modification, will be a useful tool in educating Company Officers. It is recommended that coordination and communication between and among NPS and USNA staffs be increased to reduce redundancy within the curriculum, take full advantage of LEAD's proximity to USNA, and obtain a common understanding of LEAD program effectiveness criteria.



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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. PURPOSE**

In 1996, the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) designed and implemented a program for the United States Naval Academy (USNA) for prospective Company Officers. The students earn a Master of Science degree in Leadership and Human Resources Development. The Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program curriculum was designed to help prepare these junior officers for the duties they will assume at USNA, particularly those related to the development of naval officers. This study is a formative evaluation of the LEAD program, which focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the program as currently designed.

### **B. BACKGROUND**

Company Officers at the USNA have significant responsibilities for midshipmen development. They are the commissioned officers who have the closest contact with the midshipmen. They perform the duties of mentor, teacher, and disciplinarian. They are the role models that midshipmen strive to emulate. In 1995, USNA leadership determined that a major modification in its Company Officer orientation and

development program could result in a significant positive improvement in the impact that Company Officers have on graduates of the USNA. Further, USNA determined that the new program should be a graduate-level educational program that offered career-enhancing benefits to the participants.

The graduate education program, which was designed by NPS in 1996, allows officers to be detailed to USNA to complete a master's degree in one year and then assume duties as a Company Officer. The LEAD program is innovative in many aspects, including its scope. It was designed based on an analysis of the needs of Company Officers and naval leaders. The course work is unique and relevant because it is designed to acknowledge the experience of the young military officer and the continuing role he or she will play in the development of future leaders. The six Educational Skill Requirements (ESRs) around which the courses were developed are:

1. Management Fundamentals: Leadership, Management, and Organization
2. Evaluating and Improving Group Performance
3. Motivating Subordinates
4. Evaluating and Improving Individual Performance
5. Being a Role Model for Subordinates
6. Managing Educational Processes

Detailed ESRs are provided as Appendix A.

The program is offered at USNA primarily by faculty from NPS who travel from Monterey, CA to Annapolis, MD to teach accelerated courses, usually in one- or two-week periods. When the one-year program is finished, the students have completed the requirements for an NPS master's degree, including a thesis. This on-site education allows hands-on practice for the students, gives them a year to become acculturated to the responsibilities they will face as Company Officers, and affords them the opportunity to conduct thesis research using USNA institutional data.

In August 1997, the first class of 11 naval officers began this innovative and unique program. They graduated in July 1998 and have been serving at USNA as Company Officers since that time.

### **C. OBJECTIVE**

This thesis examines the content of the NPS LEAD program, particularly in terms of how it relates to the graduates' assignments as Company Officers at USNA. The study examines the strengths and weaknesses of the program as perceived by the first graduating class. The goal of the LEAD program is to prepare officers to develop leaders through managing organizations, diagnosing individual and

group performance, motivating subordinates, managing learning and educational processes, and serving as positive role models in the naval community. The main objective of this thesis is to determine whether graduates perceive that the program, as currently designed, is achieving this end.

The LEAD program is new. The curriculum was developed exclusively for USNA. Four months had elapsed between the time the first class graduated and the time the data were collected for this thesis. Four months is not long enough to determine whether the program is meeting its long-term goal, but it is long enough to obtain some initial feedback from those involved to determine whether the program, as designed, needs modification. Therefore, an early, or formative evaluation is appropriate at this time. A final, or summative evaluation will likely be conducted later to determine long-term effectiveness.

#### **D. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study answers the following research questions:

1. What are the strengths of the program?
2. What are the weaknesses of the program?
3. Do graduates perceive that their skills in leadership development have changed as a result of the program?

4. How can the program be modified to better prepare officers to assume the role of Company Officer?

The researcher approached these questions by conducting interviews at the U.S. Naval Academy with the 11 members of the first class of graduates of the LEAD program.

#### **E. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

Chapter II of this study presents the results of a review of published literature regarding educational program evaluation, formative evaluation, and interview data objectivity. Chapter III contains information on the research methodology employed, and presents the analysis of the interview data obtained during the interviews conducted with the LEAD program graduates. Chapter IV summarizes the researcher's findings, puts forth conclusions, and provides recommendations for curriculum improvement and further study.



## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

This chapter provides a review of the literature related to formative evaluation. It discusses how and why educational programs are evaluated, what types of measures should be used to determine program effectiveness, program validity, and two types of program evaluation--formative and summative. This background provides a context for the formative evaluation conducted in this research. This chapter then provides a discussion of quantitative and qualitative measurement. Finally, since this study uses interview data, the objectivity of qualitative data is discussed.

### **B. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Guralink (1960) defined the word program as "a plan or procedure," and the word evaluation as an "appraisal." Therefore, program evaluation refers to the process of appraising a plan or procedure. Systemic evaluation provides the information necessary to improve programs.

Educational program evaluation is the systematic

collection of descriptive and judgmental information necessary to make effective education and training decisions related to selection, adoption, value, and modification of instructional activities. (Goldstein, 1993) In all evaluation contexts there are multiple, often competing, potential audiences with vested interests in the program being evaluated. These stakeholders may be policy makers, program administrators, or staff, as well as beneficiaries. So, unlike most other social scientists who assume an audience of peers/scholars, evaluators must negotiate whose questions will be addressed and whose interests will be served by their work. This mixed audience can make reporting results difficult. (Greene, 1994)

For example, program effectiveness depends on one's vantage point. Administrators may see effectiveness as high test scores, beneficiaries as greater ease in job accomplishment, and those who fund it as decreased labor costs. However evaluators must do more than describe the results of data analysis. They set standards against which a program will be judged, which may be disputed by the various stakeholders. (Greene, 1994) Whatever standards are chosen, the program should not be labeled as either good or bad; rather, it should be considered a dynamic entity that

is constantly being molded to accomplish its purpose in meeting its objectives. (Goldstein, 1993)

Unfortunately, few programs are ever evaluated. The word "evaluation" itself raises all sorts of emotional defense reactions. (Goldstein, 1993) Often, the people whose programs are being evaluated are not thrilled at the prospect. For them, an independent evaluation threatens the survival of the program and perhaps even their jobs. (Babbie, 1998) These reactions can also be a result of a failure to recognize that instructional programs are research efforts that must be massaged until the required results are produced. (Goldstein, 1993)

### **C. CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT**

The Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) for successful job performance are identified in the analysis phase of the training program, and should also be used to provide input for the establishment of measures of training success. (Goldstein, 1993) These measures are generally broken down into two categories, process measures and outcome measures.

Process measures examine what happens during the training. They help determine the source of the effect. Outcome measures refer to criteria, like learning and

performance, that represent various levels of achievement. They are critical to determining the viability of instructional programs, yet sometimes the strict use of them makes it difficult to determine why the criteria were achieved. To compare pre-data and post-data, without conceptions of the processes, sometimes leads to inappropriate conclusions, as can be seen in the following example provided by Goldstein.

In a study of computer-assisted instruction (CAI) in a school setting, two teachers agreed that each would teach one class traditionally and one class via CAI. Further, they agreed to develop an exam that would cover the material that was presented in each of the classes. At the end of the first grading period, it was found that the students who were taught by traditional methods outperformed those taught by CAI under both teachers. Later though, at the end of a different testing period, it was found that the CAI class taught by one of the teachers had improved to the extent that it was equivalent to the two groups taught by traditional methods. The other CAI class performed much worse than the other three classes. If the evaluators had collected only outcome measures, they may have reasonably concluded that one teacher had mastered teaching by CAI, while the other teacher had not. In this case though, the

evaluators also observed the instructional process to gather further information about the program. In this way, they learned that the teacher for the CAI group that had improved dramatically had become disturbed over the poor performance of his students, offered remedial tutoring, and essentially turned his CAI section into a traditional group. (Goldstein, 1993) This study relies heavily on process measures to determine whether a change took place during the course of the program. If it is determined that a change did take place, the researcher will determine whether the graduates believe that the change can be attributed to the program. In other words, the program's validity will be assessed, as discussed below.

#### **D. PROGRAM VALIDITY**

Researchers ask the following questions in program evaluation: 1) Does an examination of the various criteria indicate that a change has occurred? 2) Can the changes be attributed to the program? 3) Is it likely that similar changes will occur for new participants? 4) Is it likely that similar changes will occur for new participants in the same program in a different organization? By answering these basic questions, the evaluator can determine whether the training is valid. This study is primarily concerned

with two aspects of validity, which are described below.  
(Goldstein, 1978)

### **1. Training Validity**

Training validity refers to the validity of the training program only, not performance of the job. Validity is determined by the performance of trainees on criteria established for the training program during the needs assessment process. The needs assessment would not necessarily focus on the behaviors needed in the transfer setting. Rather, it would attend to the particular goals to be achieved as a result of the instructional program.

### **2. Performance Validity**

Performance validity of the training program is measured by performance in the transfer setting. The establishment of performance validity has the additional burden of determining whether performance has positively transferred from the program to the job. To establish performance validity, the concern is with designing training programs based upon a needs assessment of on-the-job performance. Training in one environment should lead to performance in another. Upon completion of training, the trainee will enter a new environment where transfer of

learning can be affected by all of the interacting components that represent organizations today.

The organization needs to be examined to ensure that the system-wide components of the organization, like organizational goals, resources, and constraints, match those of the educational program. Many training programs are judged as failures because of organizational system constraints. For example, Fleishman, Harris, and Burt designed a training program in 1955 that was intended to produce more considerate foremen. At the end of the program, the foremen became more considerate than the control group. Later, investigators collected further data that indicated that the positive changes were not maintained. Supervisors were not supportive of the new behavior, so the foremen reverted back to their old behavior. To prevent organizational conflicts such as this, organizational analysis should be part of the needs assessment process. The LEAD program's validity, and how the KSAs learned in the program "fit" within the existing Naval Academy organization are crucial to determining whether the program, as currently designed, is meeting its intent. (Goldstein, 1978)

## **E. FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATION**

The purpose of evaluation determines the measures and process used. There are essentially two types of evaluations, summative and formative. A summative evaluation is the evaluation of the final product or outcome of a program. Conversely, a formative evaluation is used to determine if the program is operating as originally planned, or if changes are necessary before the program is implemented. Formative evaluation stresses try-out and revision processes, typically using process criteria. (Goldstein, 1993) Another view is that formative evaluation is conducted for the purpose of improving programs by elucidating their strengths and weaknesses, in contrast to summative evaluations, which are done for the purpose of making decisions on whether or not programs are effective, and whether or not they should be continued or terminated. (Patton, 1980)

Because of these basic differences, Goldstein (1993) says that formative evaluation should be conducted and deemed adequate before a summative evaluation is started. This study is formative in that its intent is to determine whether the program, as designed, needs modification. Long-term effectiveness will likely be determined later when a summative evaluation is conducted.

Since formative evaluations are aimed at improving program quality, they often focus on gathering descriptive information about the quality of the program activities and outcomes, not just the levels or amounts of attainment. Judgments about quality most often require data of considerable depth and detail. They require qualitative data in order to answer the questions that are posed. (Patton, 1980)

#### **F. QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MEASUREMENT**

The basic distinction between quantitative and qualitative data in social research is the distinction between numerical and non-numerical measures. Some aspects of program operations can be measured in terms of quantity. For instance, in an educational program designed to reduce teenage drug use, pre- and post-training data were compared to determine whether there was an aggregate decrease in drug-related arrests, accidents, or other incidents. Or, on an individual level, pre- and post-training tests could be administered to measure the amount of learning that takes place during the training. However, some things do not lend themselves to counting.

There are effectiveness measures that possess quality dimensions that require description, not scaling. For

example, how did the training affect the student personally? Did the training evoke a change in attitude towards drugs? Did the training cause the teen to be less likely to take drugs in the future? The answers to these questions require a description of the student's perspective and situation to record the meaning of the experience for the student, and these observations are not easily reduced to numbers. How people seem, their demeanors, and how they act are qualitative observations. (Babbie, 1998) These are detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors. Often they include direct quotes, thus providing a good deal of depth and detail.

This study seeks to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the LEAD program, as well as provide recommendations for program improvement. In addition to identifying strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for improvements, the researcher will explore whether the LEAD program graduates perceive they have changed as a result of this program. While change might appear to be an issue more properly addressed in a summative evaluation, it is considered crucial at this stage in determining whether the LEAD program, as currently designed, is capable of meeting its intended goals. If no change occurs in the short-run, it is highly unlikely that change will occur in the long-

run. If no change is likely to occur in the long-run, then the program will be ineffective. So, the question seems appropriate at this time. Do the graduates perceive that their skills in leadership development have changed as a result of the program? Were they better prepared to assume the duties of Company Officers than if they had not gone through the program? In depth, qualitative data will allow the researcher to explore these questions.

#### **G. OBJECTIVITY IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

Guralink (1960) defines being objective as being "concerned with the actual characteristics of the thing dealt with rather than the thoughts, feelings, etc. of the artist, writer, or speaker." Kirk and Miller (1986) suggested that objectivity is the goal of qualitative research, and that in the natural sciences, it is achieved in two ways. First, experience is recorded so it is accessible to others, and it may be duplicated. Second, experimental results are reported in terms of theoretically meaningful variables that are measured in ways that can be defended as correct in terms of pertinent theories.

Kirk and Miller (1986) describe objectivity by defining it as the "simultaneous realization of as much reliability and validity as possible." Reliability refers

to the degree to which the finding is independent of unintentional circumstance of the research, and validity is the degree to which the finding is interpreted in an accurate manner. Stated in another way, reliability is the extent to which an experiment yields the same answer over and over, while validity is the extent to which it gives the correct answer. Since data validity and reliability are closely related under the umbrella of objectivity, and this study uses primarily interview data, the reliability and validity of interview data are discussed below.

### **1. Interview Data Reliability**

Reliability is a potential concern whenever a single interviewer is the source of the data. How the interviewer is feeling on the day of the interview could color what he or she observes. There is no certain guard against the interviewer's subjectivity. Additionally, by virtue of the fact that an interview can be quite in depth, it can also be very personal. For instance, if an interviewee states that someone is conservative, what conservative means is dependent upon the interviewee's political orientation. Someone else's description of the same individual may be completely different; therefore, the reliability is suspect. (Babbie, 1998)

## **2. Interview Data Validity**

The question of validity is even more complex. Validity is dependent upon the level of shared agreement on the meaning of concepts between interviewer and interviewee, and the level of bias injected into the interpretation of the data. To determine whether something is valid requires agreement for the terms that we use and the concepts that they represent. These concepts are agreed on meanings that we assign to terms, thereby facilitating communication, measurement, and research. Our concepts don't exist in the real world, so they can't be measured directly. They must be interpreted. (Babbie, 1998)

Data do not speak for themselves. The researcher isn't neutral, unbiased, or invisible. Data do not flow nicely, and data may be contradictory. Sometimes the researcher doesn't mention what data were excluded and why. No matter how organized the researcher is, he or she eventually becomes buried in research notes, transcripts, tape recordings, or whatever. Since the 1970s, sociologists have come to grips with the problematic and sometimes contradictory nature of data, and with the unspoken influence of the researcher as author. (Fontana and Frey, 1994)

## **H. LITERATURE IMPLICATIONS ON THESIS**

This thesis is a formative evaluation of the NPS LEAD program. Its intent is not to evaluate whether the program is good or bad, but to determine whether the program is operating as originally planned and to recommend modifications, if necessary, to achieve that end. The researcher is independent of the program and presents an analysis as free from bias as possible. Chapter III provides detail on how the data were collected, the reasoning for the choice of data that were used, and the process of data analysis. Chapter III also presents the results of the data analysis including perceptions of the training and performance validity of the LEAD program. The researcher believes that the information provided in this chapter regarding interview data reliability and validity are crucial to understanding both the strengths and weaknesses of this method of data collection.

### **III. ANALYSIS**

#### **A. DATA COLLECTION**

This thesis uses information obtained through in-depth interviews. The population that the researcher interviewed was the first graduating class, which consisted of 11 Navy Lieutenants. They were all male and represented a wide range of naval officer occupations. Eight of the 11 were United States Naval Academy (USNA) graduates; the other three had previous enlisted Navy experience.

The researcher conducted personal interviews with all of the graduates, which were recorded on audio cassettes. Nine of the 11 interviews were conducted face-to-face at USNA. Due to time and travel constraints, the remaining two were conducted via telephone.

Prior to the beginning of each interview, the researcher made every effort to place the interviewee at ease by setting a tone of trust. Each interview was conducted in a private room to inspire casual conversation and frank responses to the questions. The interviewees seemed to feel comfortable conveying their thoughts to the researcher. Perhaps this is because the researcher is a

Navy Lieutenant with experience in a Navy-sponsored master's degree program.

The interview questions were open-ended to allow interviewees to openly discuss any experiences they felt were related to the subject addressed. At times, the interviewer used probing questions to help the respondents clarify the points that were being expressed. The interview protocol can be found in Appendix B.

#### **B. DATA ANALYSIS AND THEME DEVELOPMENT**

The data were compiled by question and then analyzed through the use of content analysis to identify trends and recurring issues related to the formative evaluation of the LEAD program curriculum. Five broad themes were derived from the data. Four of the five themes contain information that was broken down into sub-themes. The themes and sub-themes are shown in Appendix C and elaborated on in this chapter.

#### **C. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES CONTRIBUTE TO MIDSHIPMAN DEVELOPMENT**

Ten of the 11 LEAD program graduates reported that they learned methods or techniques in the program that aid in training midshipmen.

## **1. Graduates Have Improved Their Counseling Skills**

The 11 LEAD program graduates were asked what they do differently since graduating from the program. Three of the Company Officers replied that their counseling skills had improved. Graduate EEEE recalled a counseling situation in which he used what he learned in his Managing Diversity class:

One of my first class midshipmen was dating a female first class. They had a nasty breakup, and it really blew up. You know, was there sexual harassment, or was it because she was a female? He felt that because a female was involved that the case was handled differently. We got into a long discussion about it, and he's like, women aren't treated differently here. He said, "I don't care if women want to compete with me for billets and stuff like that. I welcome the challenge," and blah blah blah. I kept telling him, because you are a white male, you are the traditional power base of this country. White men have always been in charge. It's only been in recent history that women have been given basic rights, like voting and stuff. And even then, they were still discriminated against. Of course, you're sitting on top of the hill. It's easy for you to say, come on, I welcome the challenge. I cannot believe that I was spouting all this stuff that we'd talked about in class, and trying to get him to understand it.

Graduate JJJJ noted that he learned how to make someone feel more comfortable in a counseling situation:

Anytime a mid comes into my office for counseling, if they hadn't been counseled by me before, they'll come in and set the chair right in front of the desk. So, I'll move my chair over, so we're sitting closer, not that we're buddy buddy or anything, but it shows that there's more of a

personal concern, like let's really talk here, with no barriers. I think that does help. I think they're more open....I think they're a lot more relaxed.

Interviewee GGGG said that he learned that counseling should never be personal, and that the counselor should always try to find something good to say:

I'm trying to make the individual more willing to be honest with, not only themselves, but with their subordinates. ...I want them to look at all aspects of the performance, but it should never be personal. That's what I'm trying to tell them. You know, I could tell you that your room is messy and your uniform is messy, but I don't think you're a bad person. Even when I'm correcting them, I'm always trying to find something good to say, whether it's, hey, your uniform's bad, but your shoes are looking really good. Get the rest of your uniform to look like your shoes. I'm always trying to find something positive in what they're doing. It's not always easy to do.

## **2. Graduates Have Improved Their Motivating and Rewarding Skills**

Four of the 11 stated that they have learned new and innovative ways of motivating and/or rewarding their people, and are passing them on to the midshipmen. However, it was stated that, in the Naval Academy environment, motivating on a personal level is difficult due to time constraints. Graduate FFFF gave an example of how he motivated a midshipman to do something that she was fearful of:

I have a young lady, who's a non-jumper, meaning they just won't jump off the 10-meter board. I believe in leading by example. I don't believe in just saying, you just need to go do it. I try to

be compassionate if people have a real fear. This is a real fear for these kids. I try to internalize their fear, so I can see it through their eyes. Standing on that ten-meter board for any length of time, even I begin to understand it. I mean, I had her jumping off the 7.5 meter board and I try to explain to her that it's just an extra second. Just one more second from there to there. Well, she finally did it yesterday, and that's a beautiful thing.

With regards to rewarding, Company Officer KKKK stated that the USNA awards are given on a fixed ratio, fixed interval system, and that awards are based on a certain Grade Point Average (GPA), number of pushups, etc. He learned from the program that this is not the way to sustain motivation:

We had a course on motivation and empowerment. It talked about the way you distribute awards.... From the program I learned that the best way to sustain motivation is variable ratio/ variable interval rewards, to where the reward is not in exchange for doing something. It comes on the back end. It's a reinforcement for something you've already done. And with the variable ratio / variable interval you never know when the reward is coming. You never know exactly where the reward is going to be.

Now, he rewards his people in this manner:

The person who has a "D" in swimming who is never going to get the "A," is never going to get a system-provided award. The person who goes to extra instruction every day, spends lots of hours in the pool, taking private lessons on their own, working hard and making improvement, they're demonstrating the behaviors that I want them to, particularly when they have a problem, so I reward that behavior. That's something that I wouldn't have thought to do before. As well as, I would not have thought--instinctively, I would've given

an award as an exchange for something, as opposed to just an award for an award's sake.

Program graduate IIII said that he learned the value of rewarding. He also mentioned that USNA's award system is fixed in nature, but his emphasis was on how a leader must be constantly on the look out for those times to reward:

The time you put aside to reward people and look for things that need rewarding is the first thing that goes when you're dealing with a schedule. The course--it just reemphasized that it is just as important as the other things, and the reason why the perception has changed is because we're dealing with the people above us. We're reacting to things that are putting pressure on us. So, we're applying our time to the things that are putting the pressure on us. So, we're reacting to the fires. The program has showed us that, if you're just paying attention to that, you're going to lose the positive rewards, you know, rewarding your people. So that, in the long term, you're going to end up with a lower performing company, because you're not covering all the bases like you need to.

This officer went on to say that rewards don't have to be substantial:

Just being involved, caring, or just recognizing somebody's work is often enough of a reward. A reward doesn't have to be something substantial. You can do a lot by just recognizing people at morning quarters. Just letting people know. We learned that through a lot of different case studies. Those types of things make a difference in somebody's output--their performance level.

Officer GGGG uses this technique to improve group motivation and morale:

What I try to do is to get the squad leaders to organize squad outings. Get them to go to a sporting event out in town, or go to a sporting event here at the Yard, together. Trying to get them to do things, as a group. And I will approve them to do it at times when they normally couldn't, such as Friday nights, which is usually when only the first and second class have liberty. But, if the first class squad is willing to give up its liberty time, and the second class--if they're willing to do something as a squad, in uniform, no drinking, I will allow them to do that. I think the fourth and third classes are pretty receptive to that. They realize that this is kind of a good deal, and they realize that their second and first classes are giving up something so that they can participate in a group event.

### **3. Graduates Let Midshipmen Make Decisions and Solve Problems**

Four of the 11 LEAD program graduates stated that they are more willing to allow the midshipmen to make decisions, solve problems, and live with the consequences, good and bad. Graduate BBBB stated:

I just said, hey, you guys got a problem, here are the cones I laid out. I want you to drive between these cones, and come up with a solution. The solution that you guys come up with, I'll accept, and you're going to live with it.

His actions reflect participative decision making. Theory states that when individuals are allowed to participate in the decision making process, they will be more committed to the decision that is made than if they are just directed to do something. Graduate HHHH uses a similar tactic when implementing policy:

I guess what I do is throw ideas out at them, and try to get them onboard. To get them thinking that this stuff will support an idea, so that it becomes a positive thing in their minds. Not to think of it like, this is the new policy from the Lieutenant. I go, what can we do to support this idea or this policy? So that it becomes an active idea in their minds. Instead of saying, here's the policy. Live with it.

Company Officer IIII stated that he relies on the first class to solve problems that the underclassmen are having:

I'm more involved with the first class, and getting information from the first class about how the under classes are doing in their squad. Eliciting the right comments from them. Talking about their performance, either academics, or professionally. Talking to the first class about what problems the lower classes are having, and then finding out what the first class has done about it. What have they said to them about what's deficient, and how to correct it...I've learned that I have to rely on the first class' point of view, and starting to make them feel, and know that eight months from now, they'll be officers, and they'll be making these decisions. There really won't be anybody above them. They won't have the same degree of oversight and review of things that they send up the chain as they have now. So, just trying to let them know that, and have them realize that a lot of what they say has a lot of influence.

LEAD graduate KKKK stated that he gets many individuals involved in decision making processes. In particular, he's allowing the midshipmen to have a say in how the Company Commander and Company Executive Officer (XO) for the next term are going to be selected:

To this point, the Company Officer, the Company Chief, the previous Company Commander, and the previous Company Executive Officer held like a

qualification board where the candidates came in and talked to them. And then they picked from one of the candidates. And then the Company Commander and the Company XO in turn picked their staff. The discussion I'm having with my troopers now is, how do they want to pick the Company Officer and the Company XO? Not to say that I'm going to go with this recommendation, but the conversation is proceeding like they will discuss it amongst themselves, and come up with a slating, or ranking, of people in the order of which they would like me to consider them. So it's almost like an election, but not quite. The only thing I'm going to get is an output that says what the seniors think the leadership should look like. My sense is that I've got four or five people in mind that I can have as my Company Commander next semester, and if one of those four or five people is number one on their list, then they get what they want, and I get something reasonable at the same time. My sense is that they will be more committed to that process than if I just pick a Company Commander, which has been the process in the past.

#### **4. Graduates Let Midshipmen Lead Their Companies**

Five of the 11 LEAD program graduates stated that they allow the midshipmen to be responsible and accountable for more than they would have had they not gone through the program. Graduate KKKK's motivation was to get the midshipmen to enforce their own rules, and in the example the researcher was given, the issue was accountability:

I want the mids to learn how to enforce their own accountability. So, in the conversation, I allow them to come up with their own accountability. We start out with like five people sitting in my office, and just talk about it. And as the first person had to leave, they'd have to grab the first person that they saw, and have them come in and

take their place. So we had kind of a rotating conversation going on. So the range of people I got was from the A-one guy to the guy who just got fried for something. I ended up with a quality spread. And what they came up with was a three strikes you're out policy. Basically, the first time a person was UA, the mids could handle it as they see fit, and I don't even know about it. All they were required to do was track it. The second time, they'd decide what the accountability was, but they had to put it on paper. I'd see it for my information. The third time, it comes to me. And then I would handle it, and the accountability would be harsh. But this is what they came up with. I didn't come up with this. I facilitated the conversation, and there were strong and differing opinions on all sides. But eventually, they came up with a policy that we can all live with.

This same officer then stated:

Facilitating a group discussion and moving the group toward coming up with their own decision on how they're going to enforce their own standards is something I would not have instinctively thought to do prior to going through the program. I probably would've come up with a policy that said, you get one chance, and then the next chance I'm gonna hold you accountable. I'm gonna do it, as opposed to delegating the first two steps to the mids.

Four other graduates, plus the officer quoted above, hold the view that midshipmen must be allowed to run their own companies in order to learn how to be leaders. This view suggests that the place to make mistakes is at the Academy where lives won't be lost or careers ruined by a poor fitness report. In other words, LEAD program graduates have learned that the "zero-defect" mentality that currently is pervasive at the USNA impedes the development of naval

leaders. With regards to this, officer KKKK now feels that making mistakes, and paying the price for those mistakes, are invaluable in training officers:

I mean, on day one, it's like everything's got to be done on time. Everything's got to be perfect. Like on the...inspection. I don't expect my company to do particularly well on that inspection. Because as we went through the training process, we talked about when we were going to have the dates. Like, when they were going to do their pre-inspections and stuff like that. The company leadership made decisions, which I think were bad decisions. In most cases, I told them about that. I always gave them the opportunities to make their own final decisions, in which their pre-inspection got pushed back further and further and further. So, from my standpoint, the developmental standpoint, I'm going to allow the consequences of those decisions to occur. So, if the company doesn't do well, we can sit down and have a conversation about why we didn't do well, and particularly if there's some sort of consequence associated with it. If it's not particularly desirable, they're going to learn the consequences of them failing an inspection. I think it's a lot better for them to learn it here, when we're still talking development, as opposed to learning it out in the real world where it's counting on their fitness reports. The difference being, my non-master's contemporaries would have a tendency to never allow the company to make that mistake.

Graduate AAAA had this to say about the "zero-defect" mentality:

With regards to the zero-defect thing--we're told that a lot. I guess that's what bothers me. The Commandant has said not to operate in that fashion, and I believe they're sincere about it. But, I think we have a hard time operationalizing that. Allowing that to happen. We say we want them to exercise leadership. We want them to make mistakes, and learn from them. But then, we harp

on the Company Officers when things aren't going smoothly, and things aren't always done on time, and I think there has to be some trust there...more hands off--then jumping in when you're needed, is the most beneficial thing for the mids. Because, I could run the company. I have experience working with divisions, but that's not my job. I told my company, you could win the color company competition. I could help you do it, but it's not my color company competition. It's your competition. It's your company. You run it. I'll help you run it. I'll give you feedback. I'll tell you what I think.

Graduate BBBB said:

There is a paradox between wanting to look good to your boss, but if you're always looking through that lens, you're not going to be training the midshipmen to do anything on their own as well as possible. In the fleet, you have to get the job done. Here, you've got to make room to make mistakes. There are some times, when my company chief will email me and say, "Boss, this report's due." That's when I say we're going to leave it up to the mids. They're going to mess it up. They're going to miss this deadline. We're going to sit back and watch. We'll let the boss know what we're doing. They'll pay the price, but they'll learn, instead of bailing them out of every problem that comes up.

Company Officer IIII stated that he's avoided the pitfall of doing the Company Commander's job in the interest of training the midshipmen to lead:

The easiest thing to do, and the wrong thing to do would be to come in as the Company Officer and take over as Company Commander, the first class' job. That would be very easy because all of us Company Officers have led this type of organization. We have so much experience, that it would be so much easier to use your Company Commander as your XO, and everybody under as your assistants. It would be so easy to get all of the admin stuff done, because we've done it before.

And where the tough part comes in is where the Company Officer is on the hook for not having the company run a certain program on time, or not having turned in whatever materials were to be turned in on time. So, a major problem we have is all the pressure we have from above as Company Officers. We have to hold off that pressure to allow to give--take the time to train the first class on how you should have done this last evolution, so that I, as Company Officer, don't get all this heat on me. That's what is difficult. Despite the effort and time constraints, we learned from this program that it's important to make sure that the first class do all these functions themselves. Have them make the mistakes. Have it take longer than it should, and make sure that they learn from it.

Graduate DDDD stated his views quite simply:

This is a four-year program to develop young adults into mature officers. You have four years to do it. Let them make mistakes. Let them learn a little bit.

##### **5. Graduates Understand Adult Development and Its Impact on Midshipmen**

Two LEAD program graduates felt that they have developed a greater understanding of what midshipmen experience during their time at USNA. It is a time of great change, physically, mentally, and emotionally, and this is something that they didn't realize prior to participating in the LEAD program. It has affected how they interact with, and adjudicate errors made by midshipmen. Officer DDDD empathizes with them:

It kind of made me recall what it was like to be an 18-year-old, and the folks we have here are 18-21 years old. I think it shows out in the fleet,

that they're expecting sailors, and that they're mature. They're not. They're kids. Normally when you say, I need this done, they're not balancing a hundred different things. These kids are just coming out of adolescence, and entering adulthood. That was probably the biggest change. If not being able to see their point of view, I can at least empathize with them.

Officer EEEE does the same:

Even now I hear people over there saying, when midshipmen do something wrong, they're like, "they're midshipmen, they should know better, blah blah blah. They should do everything perfectly." Well, you know what, they're kids. So many people here don't realize that. They're 18-22-year-old kids, and look at what's happening in their lives. Yes, they are midshipmen. But being midshipmen doesn't make them perfect. It's a very big conflict, and I try to tell them, hey, they're kids. They just don't get it.

This same Company Officer handles individuality issues among the midshipmen differently than he would have had he not gone through the program:

They try to put up posters, stuff they're not supposed to have in their rooms--not bad material. You know, they're just trying to make it their room. I understand that. I don't totally hammer them. But we're here to try to make everybody the same. Everybody looks the same, dresses the same, acts the same, talks the same. And at this stage in their lives, they're just trying to establish their identities, make themselves different from everybody. And that's what they try to do in their rooms, so I try to give them a little bit of leeway in, you know, the things they can have in their rooms, and let their individuality come out. Before, I would've just said, you're not supposed to have this in your room. Get rid of it.

**D. PROGRAM CONTRIBUTES TO GRADUATES' LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Nine of the 11 LEAD Program graduates felt that the program has affected the way that they lead.

**1. Reflection and Its Impact on Leadership**

Four of the LEAD Program graduates specifically stated that they learned quite a bit about their own leadership styles by spending a year in the program and reflecting back on how they led their people. This reflection has caused them to change how they lead to varying degrees. Graduate CCCC said:

Really, I'm trying to look at what is my job? What am I supposed to be doing? Not necessarily just as a Company Officer, but as a naval officer. I never had time, when I was on the boat, to sit and go, what do I think about being a naval officer? It was always what do we have to get done today, when are we getting underway? I didn't have the reflection time. I would say that now I look ahead more. What are the repercussions of the actions that I may take?... There's actually, I think, a big difference.

Graduate EEEE saw the year in the program as somewhat of a philosophical time out:

The opportunity to sit, think, and kind of philosophize about these things that we try to talk about. You know, the Navy has its leadership continuum. Well, this is a year-long opportunity to talk about these things and relate them to our experiences and learn, not just practical things but theory.

Graduate GGGG said that the reflection time allowed him to look back, not just on how he behaved as a leader, but also his effectiveness as a follower:

I think the year in graduate school allowed me to do a lot of reflection on events that had happened over the last three or four years out in the fleet. Where I, as a J.O. [junior officer], I thought I knew what was going on. And it's like I couldn't believe that my bosses were doing things the way that they were doing them. Having stepped back for awhile, I realize that there is much more going on that I ever knew as a J.O., and you can't always give every little bit of information to the people below you. So, I think I have achieved a much greater understanding of what their jobs are all about. And, I think that has changed my expectations of what's going to happen when I become a department head. If I could go back and do it again, I realize that I was not at all times a very effective follower for them, and I think that's a result of having a year off to reflect on certain things that we did. And part of that discovery process was through going through the different case studies that we were forced to do during the course of the syllabus, where you had to look back at a situation that you were involved in.... So, I think that was a great learning tool, and I'm hoping that I will be able to take that back with me.

Officer GGGG also stated that through reflection he learned that he didn't know as much as he thought, and that he wanted to ensure that the midshipmen in his company were better prepared to be officers than he was:

I realize now that I wasn't as knowledgeable about certain things as I had thought. I should have paid more attention at various stages in my development, not only as a midshipman, but as a very junior J.O. in the squadron....I want to make the mids who are in my company better prepared to become either Ensigns or Second Lieutenants than I

was when I graduated. And that also goes for the underclassmen. I want them to be more prepared to be good midshipmen....That is my goal. I'm going to strive to make my mids better leaders than I was at their stage. And I think that [the program] has made me realize it, and has hopefully given me some of the tools that I lacked at their level. Hopefully, I can transfer my knowledge to them, which I guess is the whole concept of leadership.

This officer further said that reflection made him realize that he might be more effective as a leader if he exercised more patience with those he leads:

I think I am much more willing to exercise patience with the mids. It's because, having a year away from an operational command gives you the opportunity to look back and reflect on some of the things you've done, and then, here, a lot of the tasking we give to the mids, is artificial in nature. There is no real sense of urgency, other than the sense of urgency that we create. Whereas, in an operational command, there is a real sense of urgency. If you don't do the tasking, the mission doesn't get accomplished. So, what I've been trying to do is instead of doing the work for the mids, or micro-managing them doing work, I try and give them as much information as I think they need, give them specific deadlines, and then I just sit back and let them do it. If it's not necessarily the way that I would like it done, I try not to stop them and make them do it the way that would please me, as long as the work is being done in a manner that will get it completed. Whereas, when I was at the squadron, if it wasn't done the way I wanted it, I would stop them and have them do it the way I wanted it. I think I'm trying to exercise a little more patience.

Graduate KKKK said that although he felt that his leadership style had not changed from the reflection he did

in the program, he did notice that his attitudes and feelings toward his style have changed:

In the fleet, I was doing things to motivate individuals to perform at a higher level. And I noticed that what motivated my DC1 [Damage Controlman First Class] wasn't the same thing that motivated my Fireman. And while I was kicking myself...because I didn't understand why it wasn't my leadership style that had to change from one individual to another. I previously viewed that as a problem, and coming out of this program, I realized that you had to tailor your leadership style to the individual. And that your group leadership is not necessarily going to be the same as your one-on-one leadership. So, leaving that and going back into a little bit of an operational sense, it's not that my specific actions are going to change in relationship to that DC1 or that fireman, but now I at least understand why that's the case, and it's easier for me to articulate it where I may have not been able to articulate it before.

## **2. Graduates Have Noted Changes in the Way That They Teach**

In the purest sense, Company Officers are teachers in that they teach midshipmen to be leaders. But, most Company Officers also spend time on the podium, teaching leadership, navigation, or tactics and strategies courses. Six LEAD graduates believe that the program has improved the way they teach, either on the podium, or within their companies. Graduate DDDD said that prior to going through the program, he would not have felt comfortable teaching:

I stand up in front of the students and we go over management styles, and stuff like that. I'm very comfortable doing that, which we should be. That

would be a change. I don't think I could've sat down and taught a class a year ago and felt comfortable with what I was doing. That's because I don't think we had the knowledge, background, to be able to reference different things, just stuff that's in your head that you've read, people you've talked to. That's probably changed quite a bit.

Four of the graduates who said their teaching abilities have improved stated that it is because they have learned how to use methods other than lecture and the syllabus provided by the Academy. Interviewee BBBB said:

It gave me some stuff about being organized in the classroom. Try to mix up the drills that you do in the class. Keep people occupied. I tried to teach my freshmen that Gestalt theory, by creating cues for them to remember.

Graduate EEEE said:

I teach the class, and try to let out early. If anyone has questions, they can stick around, and I can either show them how to go through the methods again or show it in different graphs, pictures, or draw it on the board. Maybe that way they can swallow the concepts they're taught. I don't know if I would've done that before.

Graduate HHHH said:

I know that...taught a course about Active Teaching or Active Learning. I guess the stuff I did in the course definitely--I thought about those things while I was doing the course work. I tried to use more participatory activities, as opposed to just lectures. And next semester, we do leadership. I'm going to be teaching leadership to the second class. I know I'll be going back through the readings to find some interesting stuff. Specifically, if it's not in the course work we have already, I'll look for the type of stuff that I found valuable.

Graduate GGGG said that he solicits feedback from his students:

I think, having had exposure to a lot of different leadership ideas, obviously more advanced leadership ideas in this course, it allows us the opportunity to go a little bit beyond what's just in the textbook. And I know that my course, they like it. I get feedback from a bunch of plebes in my company that they hate NL 102 [the introductory USNA leadership course]. But the guys in my section, I basically get monthly feedback from them, as far as, what do we do in the course that you like? What don't you like? If you don't like it, what could we do differently to help you learn better? At first, people were hesitant to tell me things that they didn't like, but after we had established a trusting atmosphere, they were more willing to open up. I've been willing to look at their suggestions, and I think that they appreciate that.

Graduate KKKK expressed how his training goals have changed for his company:

I hosted my own class with my troopers on performance measurement, in terms of how are you going to evaluate your personnel? I had a conversation with my seniors in which we got together and talked about the things they were going to measure when they evaluate their subordinates. And the difference is, when I go into that type of session, I'm going in there thinking, not that I'm going to teach them everything I learned about performance measurement that I learned in the program, but when they walk out of the room, what are they going to remember? What are they going to take with them? ....Previously, I would've thought, hey, I'm going to do a performance measurement training session with my troopers. Now, what's everything in the world they need to know about performance measurement? I'd have this laundry list of objectives, some overhead slides, some handouts, ya know, standard officer training stuff. Whereas

now, coming out of the program and particularly my master's thesis, it's what are they going to retain after we have this conversation for an hour and 45 minutes? That process. If I could cause that process to stick in their heads, at least enough of it that they know where to go if they have additional questions, then I've accomplished my goal.

### **3. Graduates Have Changed the Way That They Make Decisions**

Three LEAD Program graduates communicated that they make decisions differently than they did prior to going through the program. Standardized punishment is stressed at the Academy, but LEAD graduates, in general, tend to look more at the individual's circumstances prior to making decisions regarding punishment. Graduate FFFF said:

Probably now, though, I look at the facts, but I also look at the situation a little more. You know, the circumstances. Let's say you've got three people with the same charge against them, not necessarily at the same time, but I look at the circumstances more before I make decisions. I mean, I look at the facts, the trends, at the past performance, as well as what are the facts regarding this particular incident. And one of the major gripes around here is that we all don't get treated the same. The first thing I told them when I got here was that I'm not going to treat all of you the same, because you're individuals. Everybody's different. Everybody's got something different that they need to be taken into account.

Officer IIII said:

I think the biggest thing, when I first planned on coming here was that I needed to be consistent and give the same punishment for the same offense. I think we tended to see that it's not that simple here. You have this thing of the learning

environment and the leadership institution. You have to teach the people how to do these things, and allow them to make mistakes. You really have to get involved and decide, and separate the two; where you can teach somebody something, and where somebody has to be punished for an action.

This same graduate went on to say:

There's a real push, and it comes even from the Battalion Officers, that the Commandant has stressed to them that he wants to make sure that they adjudicate everything fairly and in a standard manner, throughout the brigade...What we learned from the program is that standard punishment is not equitable. The biggest push here is to give the standard punishment...That's where I think we have the biggest problem. It's a challenge, trying to change that attitude.

Graduate GGGG reported that:

I think I am more aware of the fact that there are multiple solutions to every problem. And that the instantaneous solution that I come up with, while it may be an option, isn't necessarily the best option. I think I am much more willing to look beyond my initial reaction to a given problem, and search for an alternate solution. I think that is a direct result of being forced to think through multiple scenarios in the program.

#### **E. STUDENTS OBSERVE PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES**

All 11 of the LEAD program graduates had something to say regarding the program curriculum. The sub-themes below basically represent what the graduates felt were the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

# **1. Graduates Saw the Speaker Series As Being Beneficial**

Seven LEAD program graduates had strong opinions of the speaker's series. Of these seven, six were left with a favorable impression. Two of the graduates felt that the series was beneficial, but thought that the two-hour debrief following each speaker was excessive. One didn't think it was of much value.

Graduate CCCC was one of those who thought the speaker's series was a good program:

Overall, I think the program was very effective. There's something about having a small group and getting people that have written, seen, and done things, to come and talk about it frankly....I thought Bud McFarland was great. I liked him because he was pretty honest. Whether he did the right thing or the wrong thing, he was pretty honest about it....You need to hear both sides of the story. Getting good speakers like that lends a good amount of credibility to the program....I'd say, try and get Colin Powell. But, what does that do for the program--the credibility? When you know that, there's this little master's program here, that has a speaker's series, and they get Colin Powell or Jack Welch? You know, if they can get the next step up, I think that would lend an incredible amount of credibility to the program, as well as competition. If people know that they're going to get, basically one-on-one time with these guys, lots of good folks will want to come here. Again, it enhances credibility and practicality....I got a lot out of it.

Graduate IIII had similar views towards the speaker's series:

I think that toward the end of the year, that the program was a little more well-known, or had more

respect because of the people that were showing up. I think we felt that the program name was getting out, and must have a good reputation, and maintained that reputation at the ten-month mark because we were still getting quality people to come here and do it. I think that made me feel a little better. I think that what we all felt before, was that there was a lot of fanfare at the beginning, and there was a lot of publicity about it, so we'd get some well-known speakers in the beginning. But we thought that the program might just sort of get pushed to the side, and the speakers would come in, and it would be like a check in the block. I think we were all pretty impressed with the quality of the people that showed up, and their interest in the program.

Graduate JJJJ said:

At the beginning, guest speakers, or my thought on guest speakers was pretty much open-ended. I didn't think negatively, like it would be a waste of my time. But I didn't see that it was going to be of great benefit. But, at the end of the program--actually, after the first one, I thought, wow, this is definitely of benefit because of the experiences of these people, both military and civilian. And I thought they were very supportive of the program. They knew what the program was about. Whether they had been company officers before or not. Whether they had been in the military before or not...Most of them related what we were doing to something they had done. For instance, in several of the guest lecture series they passed on some ethical decisions that they had to make at one point in their careers. We related that to some difficult ethical decisions that we have to make in Bancroft Hall.

Graduate AAAA particularly enjoyed getting the civilian perspective on leadership:

Being able to be in a room with these people, and just glean their experiences, and how they apply to leadership. I think that, with regards to the speakers, a nonmilitary perspective is important. If you can get somebody that's a CEO of a company,

or somebody who's in the public sector, or whatever. Someone that was maybe at one time in the military, and now has had some significant other experiences on the outside as well. I think that's important...because after a while things start to get somewhat inbred. You need some other experiences, and I think there are a lot of companies out there that are taking the stuff we learned here, and are using it. We did a lot of case studies on them. There are concepts that we talked about, that are becoming more popular. The military is generally slower to adopt new concepts. That's why I think it's important to get the non-military perspective. There are companies out there, that when they have a problem, they have to fix it, and they do, because if they don't, they'll go bankrupt. We don't have that kind of pressure. That's why I think it's important to get other ideas in there.

The next two graduates thought that the program was overall quite good, but that the debriefing sessions were too long. Graduate GGGG stated:

Having her [Vice Admiral Tracey] here, and not having her filtered through anybody. You know, you ask her a question, and she gives you--she didn't always answer every question, but she made an honest attempt to tell you how she was formulating policy, and what her vision was. It was very interesting to contrast that with Admiral Edney and Admiral Zumwalt who were obviously making policy years ago. You could kind of see how things have changed over the course of time... So, that was kind of an interesting contrast. Aside from the speakers, the sessions that we had...[afterward], most of them were a complete waste of time. Especially because they were scheduled for two hours, and regardless--if you had 10 minutes worth of stuff to say, you'd stretch it into two hours. That just became--extremely painful.

Graduate FFFF said:

Overall, I would say the speaker's program is a great program, but they need to make sure that they have great people. People that are on the forefront, not people that were on the forefront. They need to be careful about that. And then we had a two-hour debrief for every speaker that we had. I could've done without that. I think that's something you could do in about thirty minutes.

Graduate KKKK thought only one of the speakers had something to say that was of value to him:

The most impressive one of all, I think, was Vice Admiral Tracey. She's an impressive individual in her own right, but she talked a lot about what the Navy and Marine Corps are doing, and her role, particularly when she was CO of NTC [Naval Training Center]. To train the recruits coming in and how significant that was for her, and the sense of responsibility she felt in terms of getting them where they needed to be by the time they came to us. I thought that linked very well from the perspective of, that is the same type of thing we're doing here. Getting mids together, and shipping them off to the fleet. That was literally the closest, of all the speakers, that came to something that we could actually link onto. Most of the speakers were so far outside of what we were actually talking about I didn't feel as though it had any value.

## **2. Graduates Believe That Coordination with Bancroft Hall is Beneficial**

Five LEAD graduates stated that the program's proximity to and coordination with Bancroft Hall are beneficial. Of the five who said this, four stated that the program could be improved by increasing the coordination. Graduate EEEE said:

One of the strengths is that I think it's really neat that it's [the program] right here at the Academy. There is an incredible resource right here in the Hall. Anytime you want to do some kind of project, like performance measurement, some kind of interviews, we were able to go right over to the Hall, where there were 4,000 midshipmen, and 30 Company Officers. We could do projects on that. I think it allowed us to connect what we learned more to what we were going to do as Company Officers. It got us focused on leading and developing mids.

Graduate GGGG thought that better long-range planning would increase the quality of involvement with Bancroft Hall, but that this may not be such a problem for future LEAD classes:

There wasn't enough long-range planning to get us involved with what was going on in the Hall. There were a couple of times when we got to interview mids, but when that happened, a lot of times it was short-fused. Sometimes, it wasn't feasible to...set things up, because obviously a mid's time is a very precious commodity. The Company Officer's time is a very precious commodity. And when you are given a very short timeline, and demand some of that from them, sometimes it was not well-received...The fact that there are 11 of us who have gone through the program, and we realize that there is a need for us to give up some of our time, even though we may not want to, to help the next classes. We need to be flexible to them. I think that now there is the opportunity for the classes to do more projects directly involving us over in the Hall. We know what they're doing, we know basically what the professors are looking for, and we will be better able to help out with access to the right mids, to get a good product.

Graduate HHHH said:

The other weakness is the connection between the schoolhouse and actually being in the course, and

then with the next two years of the job you're going to do. I think the curriculum could be set up to take more advantage of that. It would probably take more work in that you'd probably have to have a better physical point of contact for the course at the Naval Academy. Someone who says, this can be integrated into their program so we can make changes at the Naval Academy. We've already started, I think, making changes to the mental pictures that Company Officers probably come in to. Yet, there are a whole lot more aspects to the Naval Academy that Company Officers have influence on. Next year, we'll be up to 27 out of 30 Company Officers, and that'll mark a significant mind set...You have a potential to impact positively upon what we're doing. And, if you don't look at the problems, and teach them into the course work, so the mind set looks at where we really want to go, as opposed to, here's some really good stuff that we can do. Go with it where you please. I don't know. Maybe we're not getting the most out of it, in that way. We did some cross work when we were in the course, and I know the guys now are doing it too--going to interview some people in the Hall, or whatever.

Graduate IIII stated:

Classwise, I think that they could come up with, more of--we did a lot of case study work, but I think that there are a lot of case studies that we could draw from the Academy itself. The biggest thing I'd improve is just to continue to improve the integration between the class that we have here, what we're studying here, and what--use more examples of things that are really going on in the Hall. I think during the first year, they were very concerned that we had enough time to get our studies done as it were, so there wasn't a lot of interaction. The biggest improvement would be to improve the integration so that much of what they're studying uses examples from here in the Hall. We did a lot of leadership cases with different businesses, corporations--and how did this work? And then we would have to use the same parallels, like what principles would I be using in dealing with the midshipmen? What similarities would there be? I think that there are enough

case studies here in the Hall to just go ahead and study that to begin with, then apply a lot of the theories about leadership, motivation--that stuff, and apply them directly to the mids.

Graduate DDDD said that if you really want to know what is going on...:

Get into Bancroft, and not only on a formal basis, but just do more interviews and sit there and chat with them. Sit down and have a meal with them. There, it's no holds barred. The dinner table is like their home. They'll talk your ears off. It's a lot of fun.

### **3. Graduates Noted Redundancies in the LEAD Program Curriculum**

Four LEAD graduates reported that there were times when multiple courses covered the same material, and that they saw this as a weakness. Graduate HHHH had this to say:

In integrating some of the courses, we had quite a bit of overlap in some of the courses. We actually used some of the same readings. So, some of the same ideas were reused, or whatever. So, I think in that respect, maybe if the teachers out there, connected a little sooner with each other, then came out, that might've been avoided.

LEAD program graduate DDDD said that he was able to essentially use one paper to fulfill requirements for several classes:

I would use the same paper for several classes...If you're just doing the same thing over and over--I'm not wasting my time. In several different classes I used the same paper. Change the date, change the title, and there you go...They were just so similar, so why waste the time and reinvent the wheel?

Graduate GGGG had similar views:

The papers--I thought some of them were just--and some of the instructors told us that--"I have to have something to grade." When they express that opinion, it's like I'm going to write just so you have something to grade. I'm not going to put much thought into it. I'm just going to regurgitate some ideas that I had in this paper. I think that there was a lot of recycling of ideas to meet the course requirements.

Graduate KKKK expressed a similar concern, and made a recommendation to correct this perceived problem:

I did notice was there were a lot of times when the course material became a bit redundant, where the things we were learning in one course, we were learning in another course. While reinforcing it wasn't necessarily a bad thing from a learning theory perspective, when you get into the Nadler and Tushman model, or the modified Harvard model, the McCaskey Model--It's all basically the same thing. Then you're left asking the question, how much is too much?...how many times do I need to hear about Nadler and Tushman, or McCaskey, before I've got it?...we had the Group Dynamics and Team Building course and a Conflict Management course. In my mind, because those two courses occurred sequentially, one right after the other, with like maybe one or two days prep time between the two. My idea is to teach the two courses, have one course requirement--one course project that encompasses both courses. I'm getting more in terms of reflection time, I think, and more integration between the two courses, and I think you end up with a better product. What I ended up doing was, basically writing the same paper for both courses. And the only thing that was different was my application of the McCaskey model.

#### **4. Graduates Noted Overlap in Course Requirements**

Three LEAD program graduates felt that a program weakness was that, primarily due to the modular format in

which the Professor is only in the area for a limited amount of time, course requirements tended to overlap one another.

Graduate EEEE said:

Class would start on Monday, there's a paper due on Friday. On Thursday, we were still learning and discussing new stuff. So would have to incorporate this new stuff into the paper, and hopefully hand it in on Friday. It just got ridiculous. It's hard to write a paper as you're learning things. You need to write the paper after you've learned so you have time to think about it, see how things connect together, try to get an idea of overall what you're writing....So then we kind of tried to say, the class is over on Friday, the paper's due either the following Monday or at the end of the following week. So the following week, you're doing another class, and you're writing the paper for the previous class, while studying for your current class....So things kept getting carried forward, and I know at one point we had three or four papers due from previous classes.

Graduate IIII liked that modular format of the program, yet expressed similar views regarding course requirement overlap:

It becomes very difficult for the classes that have projects or papers to get done. We consistently ran into--particularly second semester when we seemed to have more of these classes. You consistently run into an overlap schedule that you're in a class and you're working on papers or projects for two classes prior. It just gets more difficult. Here, what would happen is, we would oftentimes get an assignment or a paper the first or second day of the class, when in actuality, we wouldn't actually receive all the instruction, understand everything, and have everything taught to us until a couple of days later. So, the instructor either had the choice of making the paper due at the end of their week, so you'd have a night to do it, or he'd push it

off into someone else's time. It's much harder to allocate time for the classes. It's tough, but I think it's still beneficial. I think it's just something that people will have to live with.

Graduate KKKK said:

Like in a lot of cases, where instructors wanted course requirements by the time they left. So, I'm not faulting them for that. What happened was, we had course requirements that overlapped, and it all hit the point of critical mass where we had--we were in Group Dynamics, three courses after Military Sociology, and we still had outstanding Military Sociology requirements. So, you had some profs that wanted the requirements during the course and some profs that wanted requirements after the course, and, like I said, it got uglier and uglier as the semester went on.

He again offered a solution to this perceived problem:

Make sure that the due dates for the materials are all in the same direction. If everything's going to be after the course is over, then make sure that everything is due after the course is over. Because,...we had three things happen at the same time.

**F. LEAD GRADUATES DEAL WITH INCONSISTENCIES WITH THE LARGER ACADEMY SYSTEM**

Ten out of the 11 graduates held the belief that what they were taught in the program is inconsistent with current operations at USNA.

**1. LEAD Program Graduates Look for the Positive in Midshipmen**

Interviewees were questioned whether they believe that they do things differently than Company Officers who had not been through the LEAD program. Four of these officers said

that they try to find the positive aspects of the midshipmen instead of concentrating on finding the negatives. Graduate

BBBB commented:

While I was in the program, but hanging around the mids, like in the weight room, I would have a tendency to see a mid and say, that guy's hair's too long, or this girl's got the wrong shirt on. That's the fleet way...I do lapse off mentally into that. I try to focus on proficiency-orientation. Look for the good things first. I think, overall, most of the mids, except for two or three, they're here because they want to do good things. The stress they have, or the gnashing of teeth that they do, is because they want to do well. So, I feel good about mids. More so than I would have if I had come straight from the fleet.

Officer FFFF, who is not a Naval Academy graduate, stated that prior to entering the program, he believed his job to be that of "weeding out" the bad midshipmen, not to try to train and keep them there:

And this kid, his whole world is crushing down around him, he's doing really bad in grades, he's on restriction, loss of leave, and all this stuff is piling up on top of him. Basically, he thinks the world's against him. He wants to go home. He wants to resign. Before I'd gone through this program, I probably would've shown him the door. See ya, we've got 15 people who would love to take your spot. Now, I don't see that. I see him as an asset. I see him as someone who maybe can give the Navy something, even with all the problems he's got. I see him as someone we can use in the Navy. I told him that I see his solution to the problems he's having as a long-term solution to a short-term problem.

This same officer said that even though Bancroft Hall tends to be a negative place, he tries to make a positive out of whatever negative situation is at hand:

It's hard to maintain positive motivation, because Bancroft Hall is filled with negative leadership. You could take a snapshot of Bancroft Hall, look negative leadership up in the dictionary, and that's what you'll see. Because it's truly a quarantine kind of, let's fry them until they submit environment. It's hard to be a positive leader.... I try to make a positive out of it. I try to turn it around. Even if I do have to end up frying somebody, as far as I'm concerned, I make a positive out of it. Because I look at the individual in the room. I look at the chain of command, and tell them that they're the ones who are failing, because it's not just them. It's the system. We're not taking good enough care of them. I try to instill in them that it's not them. It's not all their fault.

Officer HHHH, a USNA graduate, stated that he has learned to look on the positive side of things, and tries not to harp on known inequities:

I say, hey, you're good at this. So how can you, from what you're good at now, bring that over into some of the things that you're not so good at? So, don't look at the negative. Look at the positive. Everybody has some positive aspects. It's a matter on latching onto the positive, and see if that positive can support some of the other challenges a person has.

Graduate GGGG said that negativity toward midshipmen is pervasive among the staff of USNA:

It's like, all the stuff the mids do is bad. I think what a lot of us have been trying to do is focus more on the positive, which was what one of

the modules we took, was hey, don't look for the negative, look for the positive. But, the system in Bancroft Hall is set up in such a way that it almost channels you into being negative. It's, you know, we're looking for the defects, and the 10 percent of the guys who are the defects take up 90 percent of your time. It almost becomes a pit that you can't avoid. So, it's one of the things that we talk about as a group, and we're trying to be more positive toward our guys. But it's hard to do, given the system.

## **2. LEAD Graduates Try to Break Down the Us vs. Them Attitude Pervasive at USNA**

When the interviewees were asked whether they did things differently than their non-LEAD program peers, some replied that it was not necessarily that all the non-LEAD Company Officers treated the midshipmen in a negative fashion, but that the Naval Academy has traditionally been a negative environment for the midshipmen, and the graduates are trying to remain positive. One of the USNA alumni, LEAD graduate GGGG stated it in this manner:

We're trying to not get sucked into the us vs. them thing, concentrating on the negative, and all that. But the system is designed to do exactly just that. I get email from everyone that asks, "Who are the mids who haven't done this? Who are the mids that haven't done this? Why haven't they done it? You need to take care of them...Here's a list of seven guys. What action have you taken against these seven guys because of what they've done?"

This same graduate gives an example of this issue:

A big thing going on right now is about first class parking. They've lost a bunch of their parking. So, the DoD police are out writing a

bunch of parking tickets. So, the individual gets a parking ticket, and eventually it gets routed to you [the Company Officer], and a bunch of people expect you to take conduct action against the mid for parking in a space that he wasn't allowed to. Well, I see that as double jeopardy because the second ticket they get, they lose their base parking privileges. And so not only do they have that hanging over them, plus the thought of conduct action. I'm thinking that we are not relating to the plight of what the mids are facing. It's us vs. them. And that's what I hear from my mids. "Sir, the administration doesn't listen. We don't feel they are listening to what we have to say, or they don't care." That is the attitude that I run into from below, and from above. "We don't want to hear what they have to say."

Graduate HHHH attributed the difference to the fact that the non-LEAD program graduates assume the Company Officer job directly from the fleet, without the benefit of indoctrination:

They're coming right out of the fleet. Maybe not indoctrinating themselves to the Academy, and not understanding that it's the mid's life there [in Bancroft Hall], and not just-- I don't know. I wonder if they know that we're supposed to be developing leadership there, as opposed to just setting requirements and making sure that people meet them. So, when you do those two things-- if you just set requirements, and make people meet them, then that's kind of, it's that micro-management thing. But, if I set requirements and make sure people work towards them, and get some leadership out of it, well, that's a different story. I've seen that from some of the other Company Officers. You know, they'll characterize all the mids, mids have this attitude. Mids will do this to you. To me, even just using language like that undermines what we're really trying to do.

Graduate AAAA sees this concept as being one of trust between the midshipmen and their superior staff officers:

It's about regaining the mids' trust. To me, a mid, if he sees an officer whom he doesn't have a whole lot of trust in, or feels like it's an us vs. them environment, why would he want to be like you? Do we want to provide them with role models --with people that can act as mentors and teachers? Well, if they feel like you're someone they need to avoid, they're not going to get anything from you, and they won't want to be like you.

This same officer said that the program has had an effect in this area:

So I think one of the things the program's done is allowed us to break that us vs. them concept down to, instead of me being over there as the sheriff, warden, or whatever, I can be a teacher....

### **3. LEAD Program Graduates Operate From a Developmental, not an Operational Perspective**

Teaching implies development, and developing midshipmen, that is, future officers, is what the LEAD program trains Company Officers to do. Yet, it is the opinion of all of its first class of graduates that the Academy handles midshipmen in an operational manner. That is, making sure that they complete tasks correctly and on time, instead of developmentally, which stresses growth and improvement, allowing for mistakes along the way. The graduates found a conflict between the way they had conducted business in the fleet, and the way they now

believe that midshipmen should be developed. This change in their manner of thinking is highlighted here. Graduate AAAA said:

In general, I guess I look at things more from the developmental perspective vice an operational paradigm, where it may be at home, just getting things done, or at work with the mids or whatever. I think there's the developmental paradigm that you at least need to recognize. It's not just a matter of getting it done, or getting someone to do it. It's getting someone to learn from it along the way. One of the interesting things I've learned is that there are a lot of parallel skills when you compare parenting and leadership, whether it be a division of sailors or trying to mentor mids. So, I think my thinking has changed in terms of how I look at accomplishing tasks. Is it just the end thing we're worried about, or how we get it done, or what we learn from the process? That's probably the way my thinking has changed the most.

Graduate KKKK elaborated on this point:

This is interesting, because the group, I think, shifted from viewing our job now, our job of Company Officer--I think our thoughts collectively about that particular function changed over the year. I think that coming in, most of us had a tendency to think of it in an operational paradigm, where we supervise the mids in completing tasks. And for every act, there's accountability. We need to teach them those things, because that's what we experienced in the fleet. I think coming out of the program, that as a group we have a tendency to think of our jobs as facilitating development. So the thing that is important is not if the person is getting everything done on time, not that a person is necessarily getting good grades, or has excellent physical fitness scores, but that from point A to point B, they're improving. They're getting better. And just how we think about the job we're

doing with regards to mid development is a big change.

**4. LEAD Program Graduates Feel That There Is A Lack of Support From Portions of USNA Leadership**

When asked whether the battalion staff and other seniors are receptive to their way of doing business, the answers were mixed. Some Battalion Officers were quite supportive, while others were not. Officer AAAA summed up what he believed to be the prevailing attitude among Battalion Officers:

Yes, we've all been through this program, but the Battalion Officers haven't. You may have heard this before. I don't know. But, I'll tell you, my Battalion Officer almost, sometimes, he seems like he's sneering at the program. "We haven't had the need to have Company Officers with master's degrees for how many years? What makes them better?" Not that we're better. It's just that we have a different perspective.

Three of the Company Officers expressed that without the support of the chain of command, the program has little chance of making a difference in Bancroft Hall. Regarding this issue of support, the same officer quoted above said:

You know, one of the things that Deming said about instituting something like this, that if the head guy isn't buying it, nobody else is going to buy it. We were the only ones that went through the program. They don't know anything about it. The Commandant knows, but the Batt [Battalion] Officers have no clue about the concepts that we studied.... Again, I think they're thinking more operational rather than developmental. Maybe it's the off-hand comments here. We were doing a striper selection board, and we were talking about

several midshipmen, and we were just kind of putting out our opinions or whatever. We were at kind of a deadlock, so my Battalion Officer turned to me and said, "Well, you're the guy with the master's in leadership, so why don't you tell us what's going on?" I didn't make a big deal out of it, but it seemed like there was something in there about what he said that said, "Well, I'm a...with a bachelor's degree. Been in the Navy for 25 years." That comment just kind of seemed to me to come from a place that said I don't really buy into what this program's all about. Again, if people above us aren't buying into the program, I don't see it surviving.

Graduate KKKK, who stated that his Battalion Officer was supportive of the program, had similar views on this:

Most of the Battalion Officers, I believe, are still trapped in an operational paradigm. They view the job, and I believe it goes all the way to the top, they view the job as mid completion tasks. And if they're not completing tasks, they need to be held accountable for that. Whereas, those of us who came from the program look at it as mid development. It's, are they getting better...? And, if we understand that, and look to facilitate development, instead of looking for the reward/punishment thing all the time, then I think we're a lot closer to doing what we say we're doing, which is developing midshipmen mentally, physically, blah blah blah. But yes, until the Battalion Officers, the Deputy Commandant, and the Commandant have enough of this training so that the entire organization has shifted to a developmental paradigm, it doesn't matter what we do. It's only going to be surface stuff.

This same officer, in a conversation with his Battalion Officer, discussed the program and how the Company Officers are supposed to conduct themselves:

The question I posed to him was, what am I supposed to do different as a Company Officer that came out of the LEAD program, as opposed to one

who didn't? He couldn't answer that question. And that's a question that I don't think anyone's answered up to this point. Until we can get an answer to that question, then we're going to continue to have problems.

Graduate DDDD, who stated that his Battalion Officer is very supportive of the program, enlightened the researcher about how difficult it would be to be a LEAD program graduate in a battalion led by a non-supportive Battalion Officer:

We all know that we assimilate to what our boss-- we have to, or we just fight the whole time. Nothing gets done. So you adjust, and kind of take on your department head's personality. It would be difficult. The Battalion Officers here play a key role in the attitudes of their Company Officers....His or her attitude does get to the midshipmen. If the Battalion Officers are not on board with it [the program], have jealousy towards the master's folks, or don't like the midshipmen, it's a long road.

##### **5. LEAD Program Graduates Network as a Means of Sharing Ideas and Solving Problems**

Interviewees were questioned as to how their ways of thinking, or their reactions toward their peers changed as a result of their graduate education experience. More than half (six of 11) specifically answered that they network to share ideas. Three graduates mentioned that the Officer's Club (O-Club) was the place of choice for networking. Happy Hour on Fridays has become somewhat of a ritual for the LEAD

program graduates, and they invite other Company Officers and those in training to join them. Graduate BBBB stated:

The O-Club on Fridays is what we like to call the Company Officer Counseling Center. He [a LEAD program graduate] puts it out on email to all Company Officers, that if they want to come to the O-Club and talk about stuff, it would be cool. That's one thing about this place. There's no wardroom [place where officers congregate onboard a ship]. There's no ready room [place where officers congregate in an aircraft squadron]. There's no common place for everyone to make contact with fellow Company Officers as there would be in wardroom or ready room.

LEAD program graduate EEEE made this point:

On Fridays at 1600, a lot of us get together at the O-Club and just talk shop. And that way we're able to say, hey, I have this problem with my company, or there's this thing that I'm wondering about. What do you think I should do about it? Or, I don't like this policy, I'm thinking about doing this. It's kind of like an open forum where we just hang out, have a drink, and talk about these kind of things. I think that I'm more apt to do something like that than before.

Beyond the O-Club get-togethers, some of the graduates stated that the year that they spent together in the LEAD program was a bonding experience that increased their propensity to network and become part of a group. Officer GGGG voiced his opinion by saying:

I think that having the group together, the 11 of us ... having a year together is a very good bonding experience. So, when we go over to the Hall [Bancroft] we are not alone. You're not competing against 29 other guys, and afraid to ask them a question because they have a vested interest in making sure they do better than you. We're all friends. That is definitely a benefit.

Graduate EEEE stated:

Now I have a large number of people that I know and can go to for help, opinions, and stuff like that. Whereas, I could see if it was like before, I get here, know nobody. I would've felt like a stranger in a strange land. I have comrades that I can turn to.

LEAD graduate IIII said that he is now more likely to venture outside of his battalion to seek advice or guidance:

It's that most of the other Company Officers here are all just loyal within their battalion. They do things in their battalion. They look out for each other, but there's not a lot of interaction between Company Officers of different battalions. You really don't ever see them. You don't do things as Company Officers. You do things by battalion. But, in our class, I think we have more loyalty with our own group than we do in our battalions. I think that's good because it allows us to be able to call each other in different battalions, talk about the mids that we have.

Three of the LEAD program graduates feel that the bonding experience and the resultant networking will lead to improvements for the midshipmen and the administration.

Officer GGGG said:

It'll be an improvement for the mids, because they get a more consistent product. I also think it's better for the administration, because I think it will be long-term consistency. You don't have guys who will be just coming in and basically doing things as rogue warriors, the way they kind of have it right now, and the way they've had it in the past.

Graduate CCCC said:

We call each other all the time. We talk all the time about--How are you handling this? Or, what do

you think about this? We bounce ideas off each other. We would have had a much greater disparity in how we handle things had we not been together.

Graduate IIII said:

By the time we're done here, all of the Company Officers will have gone through this. I think what they'll see here is that there will be a big culture change. They'll have company officers that all know each other. They will venture beyond their respective battalions. I think they'll see a lot of change in how business is done.

#### **G. PROGRAM'S IMPACT ON FUTURE JOBS**

LEAD Program graduates were asked whether they thought that the Program would be beneficial to them when they leave their Company Officer jobs and return to the fleet. Six reported that they learned skills that will be of value, and one said that he was skeptical that he will be able to use the methods he learned due to the fleet's operational mission. The responses to this question were so varied that the researcher was unable to group them into well-defined categories; therefore, they are simply listed below.

Graduate AAAA felt that the Program made him more self-aware, and that knowing his strengths and weaknesses has prepared him to be a better leader:

I think the important thing is to be self-aware. To be a good leader, you have to be aware of who you are, and how you react to certain things....Personality inventory, and just in the discussions we had, I found how important it is to

be a good listener, and to understand who you are and how you react. These are things I can take to any other job. The ability to stop and say, what is it about me that can affect the outcome. I mean, I tend to go soft in certain situations, on certain issues. So now I know what my strengths and weaknesses are, therefore I'm better prepared to handle a wide variety of situations.

Graduate DDDD stated that he will be more likely to follow his instincts and face adversity for his actions than he was in the past:

It's easy to get into the career, where feelings don't matter. It's all about fitreps....I feel a lot less concerned with that now. I mean, here's our job, and a lot of Company Officers feel that our job is to weed out the mids. To me, it's to make officers. Sometimes I feel that way in the fleet. You spend 90 percent of your time on 10 percent of the people. I think I'll approach it differently now. I think I'll be a lot...less career-oriented. Here's my job. I'll do my best, and that's the way I'm going to do it....I mean, if all you're worried about is your career, you're going to handle things differently. We all want the early promote fitrep, and I'd be a liar if I said I didn't want that. But, when that becomes your only goal, then how you handle things, how you handle people, becomes different then. The goal here is to lead folks. It's leadership. And if that's your goal and you have to take some hits along the way, then feel good about doing that. If you're getting yelled at because of the way you think things should be done, stand by what you're doing. Be prepared to take the hit for it if you think your folks are going to appreciate it, and are going to learn from it.

Graduate FFFF told the researcher of a few ways in which he thought it might help:

Some of the quantitative tools, ya know, looking at trends that maybe people aren't looking at the right way. Like when people look at a bar graph

and it doesn't give them the information that they really need to know. Whereas regression analysis, that shows a lot more. I think that'll help. I think the general education process itself just broadened my horizons a bit. Maybe I won't be as forthright as a J.O. as I had been. Maybe I'll think about what I'm trying to say before--I've been like a bull in a china cabinet.

Graduate GGGG said that he will be less likely to micro-manage back in the fleet:

I'm hoping that through the course I will have come up with some new tools in the toolbox which I will use with the mids, and that will change my behavior as a leader. And that once I leave here and go back and deal with the sailors and Marines, that I will continue to utilize those tools instead of going back...to being a micro-manager. It worked for me the first time in the squadron, because I was only in charge of a very small group of people. I was able to keep tabs on what all eight were doing. Whereas now, I'm dealing with 135, and there's no way I could keep tabs on what's going on with everybody without having to use more delegation, and use more trust. I'm thinking that those skills and habits will benefit me in my next job, regardless of what it is.

LEAD Program Graduate JJJJ said that learning how the federal budget is determined will help him in the fleet:

Knowing a little bit more about how the budget system works. Not just the military budget, but the total fiscal budget, and how that works. The PPBS[Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System]. How that all ties together, and how complex the system is, and how we go from having an idea about making an airplane to putting an airplane on the carrier deck. That's probably the biggest one that I don't see using much here, but I'll use it definitely out in the fleet. Not just necessarily at the Pentagon level either, but just being on a submarine. Knowing why it takes so long to get

something approved. I can relay that to my troops.

Graduate JJJJ also stated that he learned some quantitative tools that will be useful:

Looking at the Methods of Inquiry, that class, and the way to look at statistics. For instance, I see a message that says this percentage of Junior Officers are getting out. If you look at that message and know what's behind those numbers, you can make those numbers say anything you want. And I can explain that to those under me.

Similar to Graduate JJJJ, Graduate HHHH felt that he may use some of the quantitative tools he learned:

It definitely will be helpful. It was enlightening when it came down to DoD policy, the purchasing type stuff that goes on at the Pentagon. Statistical analysis, like the stuff that I did in my thesis, I think has value in personnel management.

Graduate KKKK displayed skepticism that was based on the fleet's operational environment:

The bottom line at the end of the day is, it's what the boss wants. The boss being my XO, my CO on my next ship, and ultimately the Navy's policy on whatever the topic may be. So, while, in the naval academy environment, I may be able to teach my troopers the proper way to do performance measurement. The bottom line, when I go back to the fleet is, I'm going to have evaluations that are due on a particular day at a particular time. And if I don't have that block of time that allows me to teach the people in the fleet performance measurement, the true sense, the Chang and Young model, then it doesn't matter whether or not I learned it. Because the ultimate thing at the end of the day is that those fitreps get done, they get to the XO, they get signed, they get put in the performance record, and a copy gets to BUPERS [Bureau of Naval Personnel]. And while I think there's a general reluctance to use all-around

education in Bancroft Hall, because it's an educational environment, and our mission is to develop midshipmen, it is still easier to do these types of things here, where we don't have an operational mission than when I go back out to the world, and I do have an operational mission.

The preceding themes address interview questions 1-7 and 9-14 (see Appendix B). Questions 8 and 15 are not addressed. Question 8 (Is there anything in the way of graduate education that you find that you need, but didn't get from the program?) was determined to be a poor question in that the entire benefit of a graduate education is unlikely to be reaped for years after graduation, and none of the interviewees had experience with any other graduate education program, and therefore had no basis on which to answer the question. Question 15 (Has, and if so, how has the LEAD program/graduate education affected your decision to remain in/leave the Navy?) yielded answers that were so widespread that a theme could not be developed. Generally speaking though, most stated that the program had no effect on their decisions.

#### **IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **A. SUMMARY**

The first graduating class of the LEAD program believes that the program is beneficial because it has prepared them to assume the duties of a Company Officer and exposed them to ideas and techniques that will benefit them when they return to the fleet. This section summarizes the findings for the first three research questions, which include program strengths, weaknesses, and perceived changes in the graduates' behavior. The final research question, regarding program modifications, is addressed in the recommendations section.

##### **1. Program Strengths**

The LEAD program graduates have acquired knowledge and skills that contribute to midshipman development, such as counseling, motivating, and rewarding. Also, these graduates have learned the value of allowing midshipmen to make their own decisions, solve their own problems, and accept accountability for their actions. Further, the LEAD graduates believe that midshipmen should be allowed to lead

their own companies as much as possible, instead of doing it for them.

Graduates reported that among the most valuable aspects of the program was that it allowed for a year of reflection on their own experiences and interaction with their peers, away from the operational demands of the fleet. It allowed them the time, in concert with what they learned in the program, to discover their own strengths and weaknesses as leaders. They learned that midshipmen will likely develop better in a developmental, or learning atmosphere, instead of the operational, or fleet atmosphere.

Graduates reported that they now understand, that despite the fact that midshipmen are officers-in-training, they are also adolescents on the threshold of adulthood, and that a certain amount of consideration of individual differences should be taken into account when adjudicating their errors. In other words, consistent punishment is not always fair and equitable. Punishment should be situational and personal.

Among the other program strengths as perceived by the graduates was the speaker series. By and large, the graduates believe that the speaker series was beneficial. Many graduates cited the quality of the speakers as crucial to the series' success. Additionally, this first class

reported that they learned from interacting with the influential civilian and military leaders who spoke to them, and that the small size of the audience (the series was not open to anyone other than the 11 students) was especially beneficial. They expressed that it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to get the speakers' individual perspectives on their leadership experiences in any other venue.

Another program strength, not specifically stated by the interviewees, but inferred by the author, is that NPS continually requested curriculum-related feedback from the students during the course of the program; therefore, the curriculum has been somewhat formatively evaluated since it was first implemented. For this reason, the author did not note in this thesis the perceived problems that were brought up by the graduates that have already been addressed for the second LEAD program cohort. An example of this is a course in Stress Management that was taught for the first class. Student feedback during the course of the program revealed that the students found that course of little or no value. In response to that feedback, Stress Management was deleted for the second cohort. In this case, where the Stress Management course's lack of value would have been considered a weakness, here the author deems NPS's request for,

acceptance of, and responsiveness to feedback, an important strength.

## **2. Program Weaknesses**

LEAD program curriculum weaknesses were relatively few. Aside from the Stress Management course, no other course stood out among the graduates as being either completely good or bad. Course concerns were more closely linked to how the courses related to one another in terms of content, and what was required for each course. The graduates expressed that there was, perhaps, too much overlap of class material, possibly due to a lack of communication between professors regarding the material they planned to teach. Further, the consensus was that course requirements, in terms of content and timing, overlapped each other too much.

Also, it was stated that the program did not take full advantage of its proximity to Bancroft Hall. Some believed that the program's value and applicability in Bancroft Hall could be enhanced by increased cooperation and coordination between LEAD program administrators and Bancroft Hall staff. An example of this provided by the interviewees was increased use of Bancroft Hall and midshipmen for projects and papers. They believe that this would help the LEAD students get a better grasp on how they could implement the

program's concepts once they graduate and become Company Officers.

A few LEAD program graduates expect to experience problems when implementing their leadership development education. They stated that there is a lack of understanding of what the program is supposed to accomplish among the staff, or of what differences the LEAD program graduates are expected to make in Bancroft Hall, or even a general jealousy among those who have not been through the program.

### **3. Perceived Changes in Graduates' Behavior**

As was presented in Chapter III, not only do the LEAD graduates believe that they have cognitively gained knowledge, they have changed their behaviors. They provided examples of how they counsel, motivate, and make decisions differently. Some said that they teach differently. They use methods other than the traditional podium lecture to deliver instruction, are more in tune with their classes, and solicit feedback from their students as was done in the LEAD curriculum.

The change reported by the graduates that the author considers most interesting is that they now approach their jobs as Company Officers from a developmental perspective,

instead of the operational perspective that they would have had they not gone through the program. They see their jobs as more of providing guidance than of ensuring that the midshipmen complete tasks on time, and without error. They understand and live by the premise that mistakes should be allowed, as long as they enhance learning and development.

As was stated above, the interviewees learned that midshipmen are adolescents who, for the most part, tend to be rebellious, and make judgment errors along the way. This learning has led to changes in the way that the graduates train midshipmen. This is not to imply that they are more lenient than they would have been had they not gone through the program; quite the contrary in some instances. The difference is that now they don't make sure that the punishment just fits the crime; they make sure the punishment fits the crime, the individual, and the circumstances surrounding it.

The LEAD program graduates expressed that they had noted additional changes in themselves, but that those changes were not a result of their participation in the program. For instance, graduates stated that they look at their uniforms and haircuts more closely than they did in the fleet. They attribute this type of change as being due

to the nature of the Company Officer job and "there are 4,000 sets of eyes looking at me as a role model."

## **B. CONCLUSIONS**

The researcher concludes that, because feedback from the students was requested frequently, and was accepted and addressed immediately, the first graduating LEAD class is overwhelmingly pleased with the content of the curriculum. It has given them the tools they need to perform their jobs in a more effective manner. The mixture of classroom instruction and discussion, reflection, and contact with military and civilian leaders through the speaker series provided the graduates with an excellent basis on which to begin their Company Officer tours.

Program weaknesses are few, and could likely be attributed to the newness of the program. It is difficult for the author to determine whether the overlap of class material and requirements was necessary because concepts build upon each other, thus requiring repetition in assignments to demonstrate learning, or whether there was indeed a lack of communication between the instructors regarding individual course content. Recommendations for addressing this issue are detailed in the final section of this thesis.

The interview results revealed that not only did the graduates learn new methods of developing midshipmen and subordinates, they perceive that their leadership styles and methods have actually changed. Interviews were conducted only four months following graduation and assumption of their Company Officer duties; therefore, it is too early to determine whether the perceived changes will "stick," or whether the program will make a difference in Bancroft Hall. These determinations should be made later, when a summative evaluation is conducted.

The changes that the graduates did not attribute to the program, particularly how they view themselves as role models, could be attributed to the high standards of the Naval Academy. But, being a role model also entails communicating knowledge about military policy and operations, and these are things that the graduates stated they learned in the program that they will be able to use in future jobs. So, in part, maybe they are better role models because of the program.

### **C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The issue of overlap in course material and course requirements could be resolved by increased coordination among professors prior to travel to USNA. It is recommended

that the professors discuss their respective syllabi to avoid unnecessary redundancy, with the understanding that a certain amount of repetitiveness is helpful according to learning theory. It would also be helpful if the curriculum syllabi, including course readings, were posted on the internet, on the NPS web page. If this were to occur, there would be no doubt as to what concepts were being covered in which classes. This would also help inform potential candidates about the program, thus increasing interest.

Coordination and cooperation imply support, and command support for this educational program is a crucial element to its success. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the LEAD program students get the maximum benefit practicable from their proximity to Bancroft Hall. Bancroft Hall and the midshipmen should be more accessible to them. They should be assigned more projects using data obtained in the Hall.

If there was one resident LEAD point of contact who was informed of future project assignments, he or she could liaison with other USNA staff to ensure the LEAD students access to midshipmen, Company Officers, etc. This should become increasingly easy as there are now LEAD program graduates in Bancroft who understand the concepts that the students are studying. These officers will be able to

provide the support or interviewees, in terms of midshipmen, to assist the students in the completion of their projects. Within two years, all Company Officers will be LEAD graduates, making the process even easier.

Another benefit of this recommendation is that if the LEAD program students' faces are seen frequently in Bancroft Hall, they will become known prior to their arrival as Company Officers, thereby increasing the visibility and command support of the program. Additionally, the students would get additional, advanced indoctrination into the issues and problems that Company Officers deal with on a daily basis. This can do nothing but help them once they assume their duties.

The perceived implementation problems could be resolved through dialog between Company Officers, the Commandant, his staff, and the LEAD program manager. This would clear up whatever differences exist between what the Commandant expects from the LEAD program and its graduates, and what the program is producing. This would also allow the Battalion Officers an opportunity to provide input regarding what skills they feel that Company Officers should gain prior to assuming their duties. If there is a gap between what the staff expects the LEAD graduates to do differently as a result of the program, and what the graduates are

learning, those differences need to be raised and addressed. Perhaps the Educational Skill Requirements need to be modified in order to obtain agreement. This issue needs to be explored in depth to ensure consistency among the expectations of all individuals or components of the Naval Academy system. Obtaining this information is crucial to a common understanding of the criteria on which program effectiveness will be judged, and to obtaining the full benefit of the program.

The LEAD program is new, and this is its first evaluation. The data were collected at the four-month point in the graduates' Company Officer tours. It would be interesting to find out what they have to say at the one-year point, and even at the two-year point. Therefore, it may be necessary after the recommendations of this study are considered, to conduct another formative evaluation. The author recommends that the second formative evaluation use data collected from the program graduates, as well as midshipmen, Battalion staff, the Commandant, and the Superintendent to determine whether additional modifications to the program need to be made. Then, a summative evaluation to determine overall "value added" by the program should be conducted. This would address the broader question of program validity and reliability.

This study answered two questions regarding the validity of the LEAD program. It was found that a change had indeed occurred, or at least the graduates believe that a change occurred. Further, the graduates attribute the change to the program. The key questions that remain unanswered are, will similar changes occur for new program students, to what extent are changes really attributable to the program, and to what degree does the program contribute to Company Officer effectiveness in developing leadership?

## **APPENDIX A. EDUCATIONAL SKILL REQUIREMENTS**

**1. Management Fundamentals: Leadership, Management, and Organization.** Officers will have the ability to apply basic management and leadership practices to organizational operations. Officers will understand the fundamental principles of leadership and management in military organizations. They will be able to implement appropriate structures for organizations and tasks; they will understand state-of-the-art information technologies; they will become skilled in spoken and written communications; they will understand budgeting from the beginning of the DoD planning cycle to the management of resources at military organizations such as USNA; and they will understand the systems perspective of organizations in which day-to-day operations and strategy formulation occur.

**2. Evaluating and Improving Group Performance.** Officers will become skilled at analyzing and improving group morale, cohesion, and performance. Graduates of the program will have the ability to analyze and improve group effectiveness through leadership practices that also develop the leadership abilities of subordinates. This ability will be based on knowledge of managing people from diverse backgrounds, teambuilding, conflict management, group dynamics, and management of change. Officers will be exposed to varied approaches for building strong, shared values within the military.

**3. Motivating subordinates.** Officers will effectively motivate subordinates to achieve high standards in military endeavors. Program graduates will have the ability to motivate subordinates in order to provide focus and encouragement as they face the rigorous requirements and goals of the military. This ability requires an understanding of how effective leaders use goal setting, equitable discipline, reward systems, analysis of individual needs, empowerment, coaching, and high expectations to achieve peak performance from individuals.

**4. Evaluating and Improving Individual Performance.** Officers will become skilled in analyzing and improving the performance of individuals. Officers will have the ability to evaluate the performance of subordinates and provide appropriate feedback and counseling. This includes activities that range from formal performance appraisal to informal assessment on an ongoing basis. These skills

require knowledge of basic performance measurement and giving feedback, as well as knowledge of how to deal with performance outside of the norms that may lead to violations of military rules and values.

**5. Being a Role Model for Subordinates.** Officers will model and otherwise communicate the information about the military that subordinates will need to know to become successful Naval and Marine Corps leaders. Officers will utilize the operational experience they bring to the job, in addition to a broader base of knowledge created through the program, to visibly embody the high standards and values of Naval and Marine Corps officers. Officers will communicate knowledge of the military culture, current policy and operations, and future plans for the Navy and joint operations in the Department of Defense. These abilities are based on a knowledge of the military in a democratic society, managing organizational cultures, DoD policy, and the behaviors of good role models and mentors.

**6. Managing Educational Processes.** Officers will have a foundation of knowledge about educational processes that will enable them to effectively teach and develop their subordinates. The program graduate will have the ability to formulate and answer research questions about educational experiences within the Navy and Marine Corps. Through the thesis process, the officer will explore important issues while concurrently broadening his/her knowledge of training and education in the military.

## APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

I'm interested in how your thinking and performance have changed as a result of the master's program. Try to answer the questions with respect to the quality of the program and how it has changed you as compared to the knowledge, skills, and abilities you had when you entered the program.

1. In what ways have your ways of thinking changed as a result of your graduate education experience:

Probes: Reactions to faculty?  
Reactions to peers?  
Reactions to guest speakers?  
Reactions to course materials?  
Reactions to course requirements?

2. In what ways has your leadership style changed? (With regard to the various people you work with)

3. How have your thinking, attitudes, and behavior changed, in other words, what do you do differently, with regard to:

- a. Managing and organizing?
- b. Analyzing and improving group cohesion, morale, and performance?
- c. Analyzing and improving individual performance including counseling and giving feedback?
- d. Motivating?
- e. Being a role model?
- f. Teaching and developing subordinates?
- g. Problem solving and decision making?

4. How has the program been helpful to you for your other duties, meaning duties not involving the training of midshipmen? Your collateral duties?

5. Do you think the program will be helpful to you when you leave the Academy, and are transferred to another military job? How?

6. What were the most important courses to you for the work that you do here? For the future? Why?

7. Were there any courses that did not contribute to your professional development?

8. Is there anything in the way of graduate education that you find that you need, but didn't get from the program?
9. What do you see as being the program strengths, weaknesses, and improvements needed?
10. Have you had any problems implementing the knowledge, skills, and abilities that you gained in the program? What are they?
11. Are the Battalion staff and other seniors receptive to your way of doing business? Are there any differences in thinking between you and them? You and other company officers? (What do they expect of you?)
12. What, if any, suggestions for improvement to course format do you have?
13. What comments do you have on how courses are tailored to Navy leadership development?
  - a. Military examples in courses?
  - b. Projects using USNA resources?
  - c. Military examples and case studies?
  - d. Thesis content?
  - e. Thesis advisors?
  - f. Instructors?
14. Tell me what you learned or didn't learn from these sources of learning:
  - a. Course Readings?
  - b. Exercises?
  - c. Projects and Papers?
  - d. Faculty?
  - e. Peers?
  - f. Your own reflection?
  - g. Thesis?
  - h. Others?
15. Has, and if so, how has the LEAD Program/graduate education affected your decision to remain in/leave the Navy?
16. Final Comments?

## **APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW THEMES**

- A. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES CONTRIBUTE TO MIDSHIPMAN DEVELOPMENT
  - 1. Graduates Improved Their Counseling Skills
  - 2. Graduates Have Improved Their Motivating and Rewarding Skills
  - 3. Graduates Let Midshipmen Make Decisions and Solve Problems
  - 4. Graduates Let Midshipmen Lead Their Companies
  - 5. Graduates Understand Adult Development and Its Impact on Midshipmen
- B. PROGRAM CONTRIBUTES TO GRADUATES' LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
  - 1. Reflection and Its Impact on Leadership
  - 2. Graduates Have Noted Changes in the Way That They Teach
  - 3. Graduates Have Changed the Way That They Make Decisions
- C. STUDENTS OBSERVE PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES
  - 1. Graduates Saw the Speaker's Series As Being Beneficial
  - 2. Graduates Believe That Coordination With Bancroft Hall is Beneficial
  - 3. Graduates Noted Redundancies in the LEAD Program Curriculum
  - 4. Graduates Noted Overlap in Course Requirements
- D. LEAD GRADUATES DEAL WITH INCONSISTENCIES WITH THE LARGER ACADEMY SYSTEM
  - 1. LEAD Program Graduates Look for the Positive in Midshipmen
  - 2. LEAD Graduates Try to Break Down the Us vs. Them Attitude Pervasive at USNA
  - 3. LEAD Program Graduates Operate From a Developmental, Not an Operational Perspective
  - 4. LEAD Program Graduates Feel That There Is A Lack of Support From Portions of USNA Leadership
  - 5. LEAD Program Graduates Network as a Means of Sharing Ideas and Solving Problems
- E. PROGRAM'S IMPACT ON FUTURE JOBS



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