

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

DEVELOPING STRATEGIC LEADERS FOR THE WAR AFTER NEXT

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ABSTRACT

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This paper seeks to determine the strategic leader development model for the “war after next”. One of the cohorts of second lieutenants commissioned in the summer of 2006 could very well be destined to serve as the commander of a Joint Task Force in the summer of 2036. The current leader development model, forged by the events of 9/11 and the Global War on Terrorism, may or may not produce the type of strategic leader that will be successful 30 years from now. This paper analyzes the impact of the rise of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China), technology, globalization, and makes recommendations for elements of a future strategic leader development model. Included in this study are an analysis of past and current strategic leaders and a review of the current officer personnel management system (OPMS). The paper concludes with recommendations for a future leader development model that will help meet the needs of the nation in the year 2036.

DEVELOPING STRATEGIC LEADERS FOR THE WAR AFTER NEXT

You gentlemen, therefore, have a most important responsibility, to recognize that your education is just beginning, and to be prepared, in the most difficult period in the life of our country, to play the role that the country hopes and needs and expects from you. You must understand not only this country but other countries. You must know something about strategy and tactics and logic-logistics, but also economics and politics and diplomacy and history. You must know everything you can know about military power, and you must also understand the limits of military power. You must understand that few of the important problems of our time have, in the final analysis, been finally solved by military power alone.¹

—President John F. Kennedy

Purpose and Process

The United States Army has made tremendous strides in enhancing and developing the officer personnel management system (OPMS) since the start of the Global War on Terror (GWOT). OPMS, the current strategic leader development model for the United States Army, is the outgrowth of two previously successful leader development models: OPMS XXI fielded in the late 1990's and OPMS 3 fielded in 2001. OPMS reflects changes based on the current contemporary operating environment (COE), the needs of transformation to a modular structure, active component/reserve component (AC/RC) rebalancing initiatives, and the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model.² The purpose of this research project is to examine the current strategic leader development model (OPMS); analyze the skills and experiences of past and present key strategic leaders; make predictions based on the predicted impact of the rise of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China), technology, and globalization; and finally conclude with recommendations for a future leader development model that will meet the needs of the nation in the year 2036.

Why is the Year 2036 of Relevance?

During the summer of 2006, newly minted Operations Career Field officers formed the cohort of officers that will very likely produce the strategic leaders that will command joint task forces in the year 2036. 2036 is the benchmark used for this analysis because it sets a definable target, adds structure to a basic leader development framework, and is a valid example of the number of years a senior leader could expect to serve before reaching the two or three star rank and command of a Joint Task Force. Officers serving in the operations career field for year group 2006 serve as the starting point for analysis.

Year group 2006 officers will serve the first seven years of their careers in a time tested junior leader development model specifically tailored for company grade officers. At the seven

year mark in their careers, they will undergo career field designation.³ The assumption is that the current company grade model will meet the needs of the Army for the foreseeable future and is thus beyond the scope of this paper. Instead, this paper focuses on the development of operations career field officers starting after the seventh year of service. These officers serve as the “pool” of leaders most likely to serve as strategic leaders after successful command at the Brigade Combat Team (BCT) level. The seventh year of service serves as a point of departure because those officers have successfully completed company command, have completed or are in the process of completing intermediate level military education, and are ready for “other than operational” training, education, and experiential opportunities.

Analysis of War Winners

The Second World War produced a bevy of superior strategic leaders. Names like MacArthur, Eisenhower, Bradley, and Marshall are testament to the quality of leaders shaped by the crucible of World War II. These leaders were developed in an age without OPMS, and graduate school was the exception rather than the rule for the education of the officer corps.⁴ In lieu of post graduate education, these key leaders were shaped by their skills and experiences.

Strategic leaders from World War II, like the strategic leaders of today, also lived in a state of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. The challenges they faced were as difficult, if not more so, than those faced by current strategic leaders. What can we learn from their specific pre-war shaping experiences? Should these experiences be part of a modern 21st century strategic leader development model? Examination of the “formative years”, from commissioning to assumption of general officer rank, should provide clues as to the making of a successful strategic leader.

Although each of the strategic leaders from this era possessed unique educational and developmental experiences, they also shared certain common experiences. Like most officers of the day, these leaders all served successfully at the company level following commissioning. Additionally, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, figured heavily in all of their developmental experiences. General MacArthur spent a four year tour as an instructor at Fort Leavenworth.⁵ Generals Eisenhower and Bradley attended the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. General Marshall spent four years combined as both student and instructor at the Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. While at Fort Leavenworth General Marshall stated that he learned “how to learn” and how to improve his analytical skills as a staff officer.⁶ More than just

learning how to learn, General Marshall noted that he benefited greatly from the opportunity to study, read, reflect, and have professional discussions with fellow officers.⁷

Of all these generals, only Eisenhower and Bradley graduated from the Army War College. Generals Marshall and MacArthur both seemed to have missed this educational opportunity due to war service and the associated developmental time being lost to other more pressing assignments.

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur

General Douglas MacArthur was commissioned as an engineer officer upon graduation from West Point in 1903. A scant 15 years elapsed between commissioning to pinning on his first star in June of 1918. Key developmental assignments included a two year tour as an aide to President Theodore Roosevelt and a four years as a member of the General Staff (precursor to the Department of the Army Staff). Unique to this experience was his exposure to the many elements of power in Washington, D.C., including working with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin Roosevelt.⁸

Clearly the wide variety of high level staff assignments early on in his career had a profound impact on his professional development. General MacArthur was exposed at length not only to the inner workings of the Army but also to the political nature of the government as Chief of the Army Information Bureau where he developed skills as a public relations officer.⁹

General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower

General Eisenhower, the future thirty-fourth President of the United States, was commissioned as an infantry officer upon graduation from West Point in 1915. Although he did not see combat, he was immersed in the initial transition to mechanized warfare, serving as commander of the Tank Corps and later as a Heavy Tank Brigade commander.¹⁰ It was not so much the experience of training soldiers for this new type of warfare that broadened General Eisenhower as an officer as it was his exposure to civilian leaders in the community and congressmen visiting the camp that gave him a better appreciation of the world outside the military.¹¹

Following World War I General Eisenhower served in the Panama Canal Zone where he was introduced to the true study of history. Through the efforts of his brigade commander and mentor, Brigadier General Fox Connor, General Eisenhower became a true student of military history. More than just simply reading about history, General Eisenhower spent long hours discussing what he had read with Brigadier General Fox, having in effect what he described as a “graduate school in military affairs”.¹²

General Eisenhower served on the staff of the Assistant Secretary of War. During this high level assignment General Eisenhower was tasked to survey American battlefields in Europe for the purpose of preparing a guidebook for the American Battle Monuments Commission.¹³ This provided General Eisenhower time for thoughtful reflection and detailed reconnaissance on what would soon become his theater of operations.

Shortly after his tour of Europe, General Eisenhower went to the Philippine Islands as a military advisor under the tutelage of General MacArthur. For three years he toiled as he helped to build the fledgling Philippine Army.¹⁴ Working with the civilian leadership of another country and developing training plans and budgets all helped to shape and mold General Eisenhower.

General of the Army Omar Bradley

General Bradley successfully commanded the 12th Army Group in Europe during World War II and went on to serve as both the Chief of Staff, United States Army and the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.¹⁵ A 1915 graduate of the United States Military Academy, General Bradley was commissioned as an infantry officer.

During the 23 years between the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II, General Bradley spent a total of eight years teaching at West Point, one four year tour as a math instructor and a second four year tour as a tactics instructor.¹⁶ General Bradley did not receive a post graduate degree, but he noted in his autobiography that he underwent an intense course of refresher training that lasted three of his four years as a math instructor. Of this experience, General Bradley stated that the immersion in mathematics instruction helped to improve his power of reasoning, and he directly related this study and mastery of logic to his ability to think more clearly and logically when faced with complex problems.¹⁷

General of the Army George C. Marshall

General Marshall graduated from Virginia Military Institute in 1901 and was commissioned in the infantry. General Marshall's, like General MacArthur's, early development as an officer was shaped by the advent of the airplane, the coming of age of wireless communications, and the introduction of automobiles on a mass scale. After a series of troop and National Guard advisor assignments, General Marshall (then a colonel) served with the American Expeditionary Forces in France. For the duration of World War I General Marshall's principle duties were as a staff officer at the division, corps, and field army levels.¹⁸ Following the war, General Marshall served for five years as General Pershing's aide and personal chief of staff. Here General Marshall learned how to deal with the political side of high level military decision making, dealing with congressmen and congressional committees.¹⁹

Key Skills and Experiences of the War Winners

Certain trends are evident from the study of the pre-war experiences of these strategic leaders from World War II. None of the officers had obtained a traditional graduate degree prior to assuming high level command; however, all had an opportunity for study and reflection. In some cases this was semi-formal, as in the case of General Bradley's study of mathematics. In others it was less formal, as in the case of General Eisenhower's guided study of history under the tutelage of Brigadier General Fox. Both of these opportunities provided the chance for self development in other than traditional military tactical or operational skills.

All of the generals served on high level staffs, learning the intricacies of how the Army runs and, more importantly, how the military interacts with its civilian counterparts. This exposure to high level staffs, combined in many cases with duty as an advisor or aide de camp, provided an opportunity to observe and learn at close quarters the means and processes of high level command. This ability to serve a practicum at the highest levels of leadership seems to have served them well in preparation for strategic level command of their own.

Evident above all else is the fact that each of these officers, with the exception of General MacArthur, received some type of professional military education. General MacArthur's career pattern can be considered unique in that his close ties to the highest levels of the military establishment superseded the requirement to attend formal military schooling. Additionally, each of these officers served outside the mainstream of the military development model of the day as well as serving multiple tours of duty as either an instructor (in General Bradley's case a staggering eight years at West Point), or an advisor. While the classic graduate degree did not weigh heavily as a requirement for advancement, military higher education certainly did.

Surprisingly, combat experience was not a deciding factor in the development of these officers. While General Marshall and General MacArthur had extensive combat experience, General Bradley and General Eisenhower did not. The experience of trench warfare seems to have had little impact on the ability of these officers to serve with distinction as strategic leaders.

Analysis of the "War Fighters"

The Global War on Terrorism has produced numerous strategic leaders. Their overall success has yet to be determined, but by any definition they have done an admirable job combating the emerging threats of global terrorism. For the purposes of this research project, four leaders will be analyzed with respect to their skills and experiences attained prior to reaching general officer. General Tommy Franks, General John Abizaid, General George Casey, and General Peter Schoomaker serve as the focus for analysis because of their key

strategic leader positions in the Global War on Terror. General Franks led both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom as the commander of U.S. Central Command. General Abizaid replaced General Franks at Central Command, and General Casey serves as the commander of Multi-National Forces-Iraq and is the senior military leader for Operation Iraqi Freedom. General Schoomaker is the serving Chief of Staff of the United States Army and adds a new dimension because of his recall from retirement to replace the outgoing Chief of Staff, General Shinseki. With the exception of General Franks, none of these generals has published his life story, so for the purpose of analysis, great weight is placed on their official biographies as published by the U.S. Army General Officer Management Office (GOMO).

These officers share many of the same developmental experiences. Each served successfully at the company and battalion level, and all are graduates of basic and advanced branch schools, one form of the command and staff college (interestingly enough, General Franks, Abizaid, and Casey are graduates of the Armed Forces Staff College), and senior service college. Like General Franks and General Abizaid, General Casey is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College.

General Tommy Franks

General Franks was commissioned as an artillery officer upon graduation from Officer Candidate School (OCS) in 1967 before graduating from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1972. Following a tour of combat in Vietnam and command and staff assignments in Europe, General Franks served as an investigator for the Inspector General before serving on the Army Staff as Executive Officer to the Army Chief of Staff. During these assignments General Franks learned about higher level command and interaction with congress.²⁰ During his tour as a student at the Army War College, he concurrently earned a Master of Science degree in Public Administration from Shippensburg University.

In the summer of 1992 General Franks had the unique opportunity to serve as the director of the Louisiana Maneuvers Task Force, studying the future construct of the Army to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. This two year assignment focused General Franks on all aspects of developing a force to harness all of the emerging high technology. General Franks recalls that this was a period where he had “a window into the way war would be fought in the battlespace of centuries to come”.²¹

General John Abizaid

According to his official resume, General Abizaid was commissioned as an infantry officer upon graduation from West Point in 1973. Unique among officers of his day, General Abizaid

spent four of his first seven years as an officer in school. After successful command of a Ranger Company, General Abizaid was a student at the Defense Language Institute at the Presidio of Monterey where he studied Arabic language and culture, was an Olmsted Scholar attending the University of Jordan, and was a student at Harvard University where he earned a Master of Arts in Middle Eastern Area Studies. Following another tour of duty with the Ranger Regiment and service in Operation Urgent Fury, General Abizaid spent a year on the Army Studies Group, Office of the Chief of Staff, and a year as an operations officer with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Lebanon

General Abizaid served as both Aide de Camp to the Commander in Chief, United States Army Europe and later as the executive assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These four years gave him an unprecedented view into the upper level works of the Army and the joint community as well as interaction with the policy makers on Capitol Hill. In addition to these experiences, General Abizaid speaks Arabic, German, and Italian.

General George Casey

According to his official resume General Casey was commissioned as an infantry officer upon graduation from Georgetown University in 1970. Following eight years of command and staff assignments, General Casey spent two years at the University of Denver earning a Master of Arts in International Relations. Much like General Abizaid, General Casey spent a year as an observer for the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Jerusalem. Following senior service college, General Casey served a two year tour as the Congressional Program Coordinator for the Office of the Chief of Legislative Liaison. Here General Casey had the opportunity to observe, at close quarters, the inner workings of the government.

General Peter Schoomaker

Unique among the “war fighters”, General Schoomaker is the only officer who has an extensive background in the special operations forces. Commissioned as an armor officer upon graduation from the University of Wyoming in 1969, General Schoomaker served in a series of command and staff positions before attending the Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School. He earned a Master of Arts degree from Central Michigan University while serving as an assignment officer at the Army Military Personnel Center.

The bulk of his career was spent in the special operations forces (SOF), specifically as commander of the 1st Special Forces Operations Detachment-D and the U.S. Special Operations Command.²² Such was the quality of General Schoomaker’s strategic leadership

that he was called back from retirement to serve as the Army Chief of Staff. This is even more notable since it occurred after the attacks of 9-11.

Key Skills and Experiences of the “War Fighters”

The “war fighters” reflect a wide range of non-traditional skills and experiences. Each of these strategic leaders had assignments that offered time for study and reflection. Generals Casey and Abizaid had the unique opportunity to spend a year in the United Nations environment. General Abizaid had the greatest opportunity for study and reflection considering his time as an Olmsted Scholar. While all of the officers had graduate degrees of one type or another, none served as an instructor or an advisor.

Lessons Learned from the Study of the Generals

The Army has changed dramatically since the early 1900’s, and the skills and experiences of the Army’s current strategic leaders have also changed significantly. The “war winners” spent, on average, less time in the tactical Army and more time as instructors and advisors than the “war fighters”. “War fighters” and “war winners” both had the opportunity for self study and reflection, although General Schoomaker less so because of his vast amount of time in SOF. All of the generals had the experience of seeing the inner workings of high level Army staffs and congress prior to reaching general officer rank. Interestingly, none of them had any experience working closely with the National Guard.

Although not conclusive, the “war winners” were more likely to serve extended periods of time on detached service from the “tactical Army”. General Eisenhower spent three years “seconded” to the Philippine Army, as did General MacArthur. General Bradley’s eight years of teaching experience at West Point certainly sets his developmental experience apart from that of today’s “war fighters”. From the available information it appears that “war winners” had a much greater opportunity for thoughtful reflection and a much broader contact with non-military members of society.

Predictions for the Future

Very few visionaries imagined in 1939 that a scant 30 years later a man would step foot on the moon. The intervening years saw the Second World War, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War. Those thirty years also saw the rise of the United States to Super Power status and a host of technological advances. Year Group 2006 will very likely be assuming the mantle of strategic leadership in 2036; what changes will they face, and what steps can a strategic leader development model incorporate to address these challenges?

Globalization and Trans-Nationalism

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) defines “globalization” as “the increasing integration of economies around the world through trade and financial flows”.²³ For the strategic leader this translates to less of a traditional relationship between cultures based on borders and historic norms, rather to a broader more fluid definition of culture. This ability to identify and understand other cultures, both allied and potential adversaries, is of increased importance because of the speed of modern communication. Vladimir Korobov, in his essay “Models of Global Culture”, observes that understanding cultures translates to the ability to compare a target culture with the observer’s own culture in terms of values, symbols, and behavior.²⁴ The capability to make a comprehensive comparison must be mastered. This level of mastery cannot be acquired through informal means; it must be a targeted, professional, and sustained as the strategic leader is developed. While the necessity to understand cultures has always been important, it has gained an increased emphasis because of globalization and the speed of communications, via internet and other means, that can cause miscalculations (or “on target” calculations) in the strategic arena. A recent and relevant example is the impact of the Abu Ghraib debacle and the ineffectiveness of U.S. damage control.

By almost any definition the future will be more volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous than it is today. Strategic leaders of the future must be prepared to deal with those challenges. A key difference between the world we live in today and the world that strategic leaders will face in 2036 is that it will have seen three decades worth of rise of the trans-national threats that we first faced on 9-11. The trans-national nature of the enemy is a bi-product of globalization. Riva Kastoryano, in her essay “The Reach of Trans-nationalism”, states that trans-nationalism is a condition that creates a situation where increasing mobility and the development of communication (via the internet) have intensified trans-border relations, leading to social and political mobilizations beyond traditional geographical and national boundaries.²⁵ It is very likely that the “threats” strategic leaders of 2036 will face are the foot soldiers of the current day terrorist movements.

To be effective, future strategic leaders must have a working knowledge of globalization and trans-nationalism. Understanding why the West, and the United States in particular, is viewed as an oppressor in the new global arena will be key to understanding how potential adversaries think and act. This type of experience can best be learned by focused study, actual experience in a global environment (governmental, social, or economic), or a combination of both. Having a working knowledge of the effects of globalization and trans-nationalism and an

understanding of perceived victimization by the “have nots” is a critical trait for future strategic leaders.

The need to understand globalization and trans-nationalism are traits that the historical “war winners” did not need to possess because they did not exist. The end of the Second World War introduced the start of the true shift to globalization. Since 1945, the differences in wealth and prosperity between “first world” nations and “third world” nations has broadened and grown wider.²⁶ This gap, compounded by exponential increases in the speed of communications and the rapid growth of technological capability of the “first world” feed the perception of prosecution and victimization by the “third world”. These challenges face today’s strategic leaders (the “war fighters”), and will certainly grow in importance to the strategic leaders of 2036.

The Rise of “BRIC” and the Impact on Strategic Leaders

It is estimated that globalization and growth will lead to drastic redistribution of wealth in the first half of the 21st Century. For the strategist this also means that there may be a corresponding shift in strategic alliances as the United States grows new partnerships and interests. Chief among these are the so-called “BRIC” nations: Brazil, Russia, India and China. These nations are important from a strategic sense because the assumption is that their militaries will grow in importance as they move to protect their own interests. Will the coalitions of the U.S., Britain, and Australia be replaced by the “BRIC”? Goldman-Sachs estimates that India’s economy could actually be larger than Japan’s by the year 2032.²⁷ Estimates for the other elements of “BRIC” are similar. The same report suggests that by 2025 BRIC nations could account for over half the size of the six major industrialized democracies (referred to as the G6) and in less than 40 years, the combined BRIC economies could be larger than the G6.²⁸ How this will shift the balance of power in the Indian Ocean, and in other arenas, is anyone’s guess. The chances are that from a strategic view, India, like the rest of “BRIC” will play a much larger role on the international stage.

In order to prepare strategic leaders for success in 2036, we must look now at innovative ways to prepare them for the cultural landscape they will encounter. Innovation in this sense refers to focused, professional, and sustained language, cultural, and geographic immersion for select Operations Career Field (OPCF) leaders. Such a program already exists for Foreign Area Officers, but there is currently no equivalent for the future strategic leaders that will be drawn from the OPCF.

What if, for example, we could have predicted the rise of the Middle East as a dominant strategic arena in 1970? If just some of the lieutenants commissioned in 1970 had been on a

path of immersion and exposure in Arabic culture, we would have reaped the benefits of a significant number of general officers who were armed with intimate knowledge of both Islam and the greater Middle East. Even if we had waited as late as 1973, coincidental with the oil embargo, we would now have commanders with some of these skills. More important than the skills and experiences, we could possibly have officers who had forged personal relationships with their counterparts in strategic areas of interest.

A brief look at the languages associated with BRIC nations poses some very difficult challenges as we seek to develop our future strategic leaders. While Brazil speaks primarily Portuguese and Russia traditional Russian, the same is not true for India and China. In India, for example the following languages are found in the major sub-regions of the country: Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Punjabi, and Bengali. It is much the same for China with four major sub-languages: Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, and Guoyu.

The following figure depicts the number of officers that are reported by the U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC) as having some level of fluency in the various languages found in BRIC countries. Both year group 2006 and 1996 are shown to demonstrate the impact of the current career field designation (CFD) process as directed by OPMS. By the time year group 2006 undergoes the career field designation process, the numbers of OPCF officers will be reduced significantly. As this figure shows, the OPCF is experiencing a dearth of officers with the required language skills.²⁹ This shortfall can be addressed in a number of ways: pre-commissioning, post commissioning, or a combination of both.

Army Transformation and the Future Combat System

As the Army continues to transform and lean towards the future shaped by the introduction of the Future Combat System (FCS) it is prudent to analyze the changes this technology will have on the future of warfare and the impact it will have on the development of future strategic leaders. The FCS promises to be a quantum leap in technology. A key element of this technology is Battle Command architecture of networked communications, network operations, sensors, and manned and unmanned (MUM) sensors all designed to provide the commander with unprecedented information dominance.³⁰

Year Group	2006	1996
OPCF Officers	5584	2598
Indian		
Hindi	1	2
Urdu		
Tamil		
Telugu		
Punjabi		
Bengali		
Chinese		
Mandarin	3	2
Cantonese	2	1
Hakka		
Guoyu		
Portugese		1
Russian	8	33
Total	14	39

Figure 1. Language Proficiency (Major Sub-Sets), Year Groups 96 and 06, OPCF.

Understanding this information, in effect a “system of systems engineering”, will be as critical to future strategic leaders as understanding the synchronization of the tank, airplane, and artillery was to the strategic leaders of World War II. Where strategic leaders of the Second World War had to adapt to relatively modest improvements in technology (not counting the introduction of atomic weapons in the closing hours of the war), the weapons systems were essentially improvements of the systems introduced in the beginning of the war. The same will not hold true for the strategic leaders of 2036. Lieutenants in year group 2006 will fight with cold war era equipment, aided in some cases by improved MUM sensors. By the time the first FCS BCT is fielded in 2016, the strategic leaders of 2036 will likely be in the Command and General Staff College.³¹ After graduation a very small percentage of these future leaders will in fact experience the FCS first hand before they depart the “tactical Army” for more broadening developmental experiences.

It is imperative that future senior leaders remain abreast of the technological developments FCS will bring to the land forces commander. The obvious requirement is a combination of experience, education, and exposure to ensure full synthesis of FCS impacts at the strategic level. This is best accomplished by a dedicated system of continuous learning during the full career of the officer corps. The objective is to ensure that year group 2006 officers do not suffer the same fate as year group 1888 officers did in 1918 when they learned first hand, on the battlefield, the effects of the machinegun, tank, and airplane at the cost of many thousands of lives.

Considerations from “Lessons Predicted”

The future poses many challenges for strategic leaders. While some of these challenges can be adequately addressed through distance learning and enhanced through self study and reflection, others can not. Each of the challenges- Globalization and trans-nationalism, language and culture due to BRIC and technology due to FCS- merits a different approach. Not every officer can receive the same level of education and exposure to address these challenges; however, a proposed solution to selecting the right officer for the appropriate level of effort will be addressed in the conclusion of this essay.

Globalization and trans-nationalism have no relevant vehicle for experiential learning in the military profession. To gain these skills requires dedicated study in an academic environment. These skills could be enhanced by exposure at select academic institutions, but the numbers of officers who could participate in this endeavor would be very limited. One option could be to introduce common core modules at the various intermediate level and senior service schools, focused electives, or a combination of the two.

The challenge of preparing senior leaders to operate in a strategic environment dominated by BRIC nations cannot be solved without dedicated, focused, professional education. One option is to provide education in the form of language training and cultural education. There are a myriad of ways to accomplish this task, options ranging a spectrum from after hours instruction at home station to dedicated education (both language and cultural) at one of the various professional institutions dedicated to this field.

Contributions from the Current Model: OPMS

The Officer Personnel Management System is the current leader development model for the U.S. Army. As such, it serves as the basis for the current model for the development of strategic leaders, specifically for year group 2006 officers who are the focus of this research paper. OPMS has evolved over the years and most recently under the leadership of General Schoomaker has been specifically redesigned to help produce a broader, more joint and expeditionary minded officer corps.³²

Recent Changes and their Predicted Impact

Major changes to OPMS that affect strategic leader development include moving away from a prescriptive career path, enhancing officer education, and expanding Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental opportunities. These changes are designed to produce agile, multi-skilled leaders capable of creative thought at the strategic level. Additionally, OPMS seeks to develop officers that are skilled in governance, statesmanship, and diplomacy.³³

By endorsing a less prescriptive career path, OPMS opens the window of opportunity similar to those experienced by the “war winners”. Having the ability to deviate from the so called “yellow brick road” path to success enhances the chances of developing an officer with diverse skill sets. Analysis of the battle-proven strategic leaders from the Second World War shows proof that this concept has merit. General Bradley, the poster child of a non-prescriptive career path, would likely be hard pressed to survive in the days of the prescriptive career path as outlined in the pre-December 2005 versions of DA PAM 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*.

Enhanced education is a corner stone of the current OPMS. In addition to traditional advanced civil schooling (ACS) opportunities, the Army has recently begun to offer expanded graduate school opportunities (Expanded Graduate School Program- EGSP). EGSP offers graduate school opportunities to outstanding officers in order to enhance development of the broader intellectual capital required in a Joint and Expeditionary Army.³⁴ Under EGSP, officers will have the opportunity to attend graduate school between their 8th and 12th years of service. What is uniquely different from the existing ACS program is that following graduation, officers return to the field for a follow-on key developmental assignment and not to a “pay back” tour outside the Operations Career Field. EGSP requires officers to study in an approved discipline such as cultural awareness, regional knowledge, foreign language, governance, diplomacy, national security, or social sciences.³⁵ If selected, year group 2006 officers should expect to attend EGSP between 2014 and 2018 for a period of 12-18 months.

Following on the theory that there is no single path for career management and professional development, OPMS offers opportunities to help develop multi-skilled leaders by assigning them to tours of duty in joint, inter-agency, inter-governmental, or multi-national (JIIM) arena. These opportunities, not necessarily a traditional 24 or 36 month tour, may in fact be 90, 180, or 365 days in length. Additionally, where in the past joint duty was strictly controlled, in the future the possibility exists whereby officers can do “focused tours” of short duration to gain specific skills and experiences that lead to an overall broadening of their experience base.³⁶ The objective is to have the officer garner the experience, gain a breadth of development, and return with that knowledge to the operational Army.³⁷

Review of Education, Training, and Assignments for Leaders Task Force (RETAL TF)

The RETAL TF, established by Headquarters, Department of the Army on 6 July 2005, was instrumental in helping to define how the Army should develop its military and civilian leaders to “...become pentathletes needed to operate and win in the 21st Century national

security environment”.³⁸ Building on OPMS, the RETAL TF developed the Army pentathlete leader model. This model provides structure and form to the concepts outlined in OPMS, specifically that leaders should possess additional skills that enable them to become strategic and creative thinkers, skilled in governance, statesmanship, and diplomacy, and understand the cultural context of the operational environment.³⁹

The RETAL TF determined that the current Leadership Development Model, though effective, has not kept pace with change.⁴⁰ By defining the pentathlete leader model, and identifying accompanying skill set requirements, the RETAL TF provides a “way ahead” to implement the vision of OPMS. Both characteristics and competencies must be gained, and a review of OPMS shows that there are plans in place (moving away from a prescriptive career path, EGSP, and JIIM assignment opportunities) to address these gaps in leader development.

Not addressed in the RETAL TF report is the process by which an already very busy officer corps can afford the opportunities to gain the pentathlete-like skill sets. The report does indicate that the leader development process requires a paradigm shift to address current shortfalls. That shift already underway is evidenced by the recent and continuing changes to OPMS.

Recommendations: The Need for a Paradigm Shift

The Army is making significant strides in improving and enhancing an already very capable leader development program. That OPMS is classified as an “evolving system” by General Schoomaker is a testament to the fact that we live in an era of increasing volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.⁴¹ To enhance the development of the future strategic leaders it is important to recognize the positive steps taken by the continued revision of OPMS and the recommendations of the RETAL TF especially with regard to the pentathlete model. Beyond these steps, exists a requirement for a very real paradigm shift in the way we look at senior leader development if we are to prepare for the strategic environment of 2036. This shift is in the areas of accessions, field grade officer management, and program of continuous education of the officer corps throughout the entire duration of an officer’s career using distance and web-based learning assets.

Accessions

Realizing that the strategic environment of the future will be more globalized and that U.S. interests will be dominated by both the rise of BRIC nations and our unrelenting need to stay engaged in the Middle East, we must seek the cultural high ground in the area of language and cultural skills. A brief look at BRIC language skills for year group 2006 shows that the Army’s

future crop of strategic leaders, if not remedied, will be wholly unprepared to deal on a personal level with the leaders from these countries without the use of interpreters. The paradigm shift necessary to address this issue is to require and fund pre-commissioning language study.

Army Regulation 611-6, Army Linguist Management, establishes standards for varying levels of language proficiency ranging from a “0” (indicating no proficiency) to a “5” (indicating functional native proficiency). Using this standard as a guideline, requirements for each commissioning source could be determined in order to establish a baseline of language proficiency. Each of the three primary commissioning sources, the United States Military Academy (USMA), the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), and the Officer Candidate School (OCS), should have a slightly different approach to addressing language proficiency.

For USMA the current requirement for language could be enhanced and expanded. USMA currently offers instruction in all of the BRIC languages, save the Indian dialects. Additionally, USMA offers modern Arabic, French, and German. Requiring four years of foreign language and cultural education as a graduation requirement with a target of “2+” (limited working proficiency plus⁴²) for listening, speaking, and reading proficiency (using the Federal Interagency Language Roundtable scoring system) would help close the language and cultural awareness gap. For ROTC cadets on scholarship, the standard could be a minimum of two years foreign language and cultural education with a goal of a minimum of “1+” (elementary proficiency, plus) for listening, speaking, and reading. For selection to attend OCS, consideration should be given to selecting candidates with that achieve a Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) score of at least 85 points (qualifying score for category 1 languages, which includes Portuguese/Brazilian⁴³).

By adding a language requirement to the accessions process, albeit not equal across all commissioning sources, the Army can start to build a bench of language and cultural proficiency. Currently there is no base. The actual languages targeted for study should not necessarily be restricted to BRIC countries and the Middle East. The needs of the Army, through the Department of the Army G3 (DA G3), could be used to establish appropriate goals for pre-commissioning language skills.

Field Grade Officer Management

Both OPMS and the RETAL TF outline a very aggressive and forward thinking set of ideals for officer development. The non-prescriptive career path and the requirement for officers to achieve pentathlete-like skills build on the lessons learned from both the current conflict and a prediction of what the contemporary operating environment will likely look like in the next 30

years. The difficulty lies in determining how to select the right officers for the appropriate education and training opportunities, specifically who will have one of the limited opportunities for a JIIM assignment. The study of both the “war winners” and the “war fighters” did not illuminate any clear education or skill development path. Each officer had a unique, and often very non-traditional, assignment and education history. The “take away” from studying these officer’s careers was that, as firmly stated in OPMS, there is no prescribed path to promotion and higher command.

Although there is no scripted path to success, and timelines are out of vogue when discussing professional development, the fact is that each officer has certain decision points in his or her career that are inflexible and must be addressed. Chief among these decision points are promotion boards. Promotion boards offer an opportunity to add structure and credibility to the JIIM selection process. Additionally, promotion boards also serve to help identify those officers who should be singled out for special education and career management. The field grade promotion process lends itself to the establishment of a focused strategic leader development program by identifying officers selected for below the zone promotion.

The following figures detail an enhanced strategic leader development model for field grade officers. The purpose of this program is to manage advanced language and culture education opportunities as well as limited JIIM assignments. Advanced cultural and language education is tied directly to selection for below the zone promotion. Once an officer is selected for below the zone promotion (at any field grade, but for the purposes of this example, to the rank of major), he or she is placed into a phased program that provides an educational opportunity (language and culture) as well as a focused JIIM assignment. This focused education experience is designed to empower the officer with a better understanding of the culture, language and issues at the strategic level from an “other than Army” perspective. It serves as a forcing function to broaden the officer’s experience.

Although the entire program consists of three phases, an officer enters and exits the program based on the results of the various field grade promotion boards. For example, an officer selected for below the zone promotion to major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel would complete the entire program (a total of 21 months of language and cultural training combined with a minimum of 9 months in JIIM assignments). An officer selected below the zone for major, and then selected in due course to lieutenant colonel and colonel would only complete phase 1 of the program (12 months of language and cultural education, 6 months in a JIIM assignment). Figure 2 is an overview of the program, detailing the career of a year group 2006 Operations Career Field Officer.

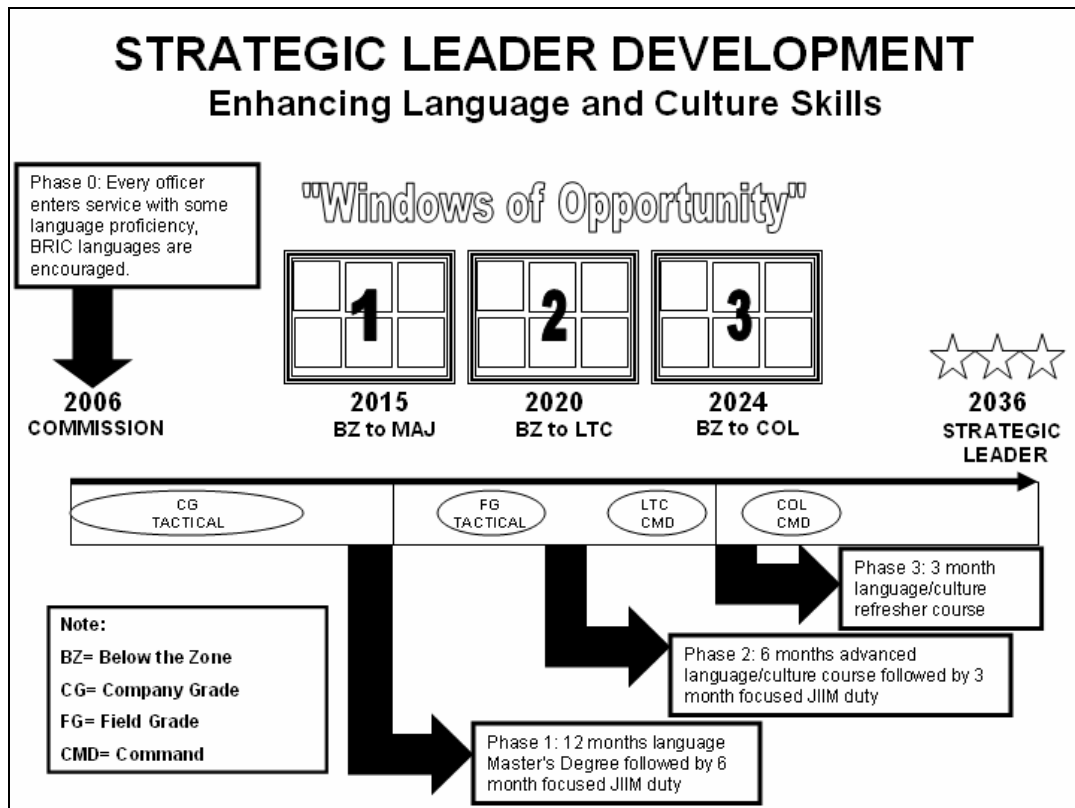


Figure 2. Strategic Leader Development Model.

Figure 3 details this program for an officer selected for below the zone promotion to major. It is important to point out that there are certain “non-negotiable” elements of professional development for Operations Career Field officers; this program in no way takes away the crucible training, education, and key and developmental assignment opportunities for these officers. This example officer would have already completed his company grade key and developmental assignments (platoon leader and company level command) plus all appropriate officer education gates.

For the purposes of this example and to point out the flexibility of this approach, this particular officer could be in EGSP at the time of his below the zone selection for major. It is envisioned that the officer would complete graduate school, and then immediately attend another 12 month degree producing language course at a designated university, followed by an appropriate JIIM assignment. The goal would be to link the language and culture education to the JIIM assignment (Chinese to Pacific Command, Brazilian to Southern Command, etc.). Note that after 18 months, the officer is programmed into Intermediate Level Education (ILE) and therefore not disadvantaged from re-joining his cohort year group in their continued professional development.

The paradigm shift required for the success of this program is realizing that officers selected for enhanced strategic leader development must not be subjected to the ponderous and inflexible assignment policies that currently exist. This must be a Chief of Staff, Army (CSA) program where the losing command, with the exception of those deployed to combat, cannot block an officer from attending this essential educational experience.

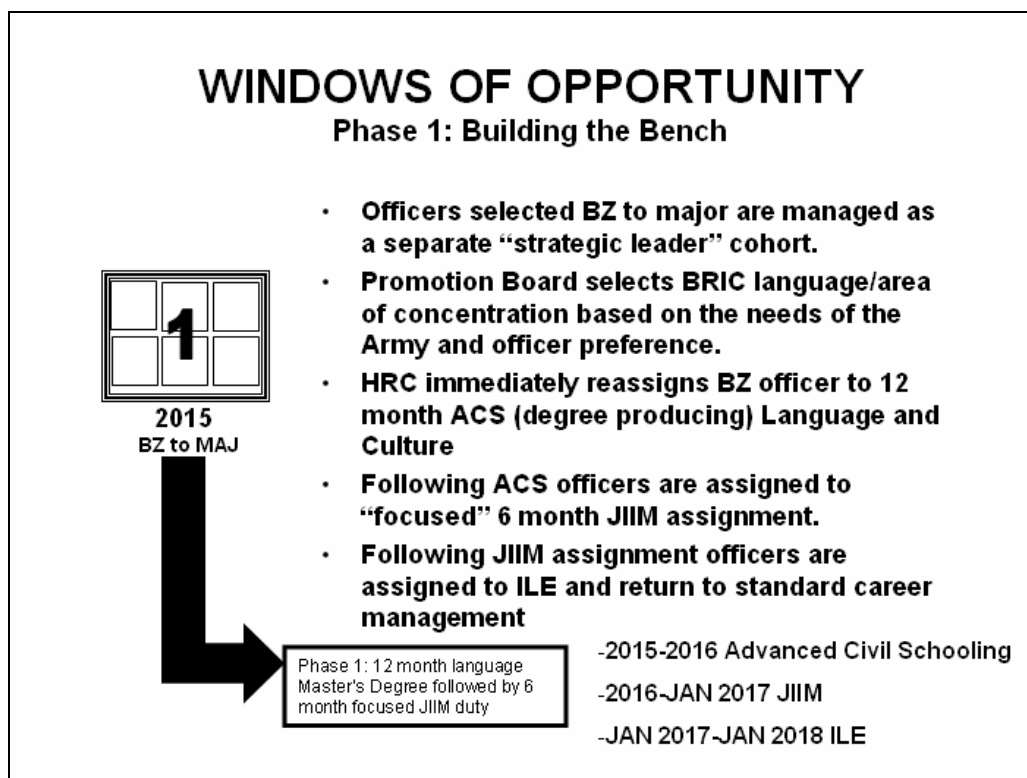


Figure 3. Phase 1: Initial Language and Cultural Immersion for Field Grade Officers.

Figures 4 and 5 describe phases 2 and 3 of this program. The key to the success of these phases is high quality language refresher training, ideally conducted in the target country, and a follow-on opportunity to serve in the region in an accompanying operational assignment. By using this approach we can establish professional contacts in the targeted countries, gain expert knowledge and experience, and broaden the education and cultural exposure of top performing officers of the Operations Career Field. The intent is not to create a second Foreign Area Officer program, rather to build a bench of culturally savvy officers who have developed personal professional contacts and a mastery of the language and culture so they might one day make an impact at the strategic level. This may be as a colonel on a Combatant Commander's staff, or as a Joint Task Force commander as a general officer.

This program would be restricted to a relatively small number of officers. For example, year group 1996 Operations Career Field officers were selected for below the zone promotion to

major at a rate of 6.8%, or a total of 122 officers.⁴⁴ It is important to note this program would not exclude these officers from pursuing other degree producing programs, USMA instructor for example.

The impact on the lieutenant colonel and colonel population is likewise relatively minor. For the FY 2006 lieutenant colonel promotion board, 79 OPCF officers were selected for below the zone promotion. For the FY 2006 colonel promotion board the numbers are even smaller; 29 OPCF officers were selected for below the zone promotion.⁴⁵

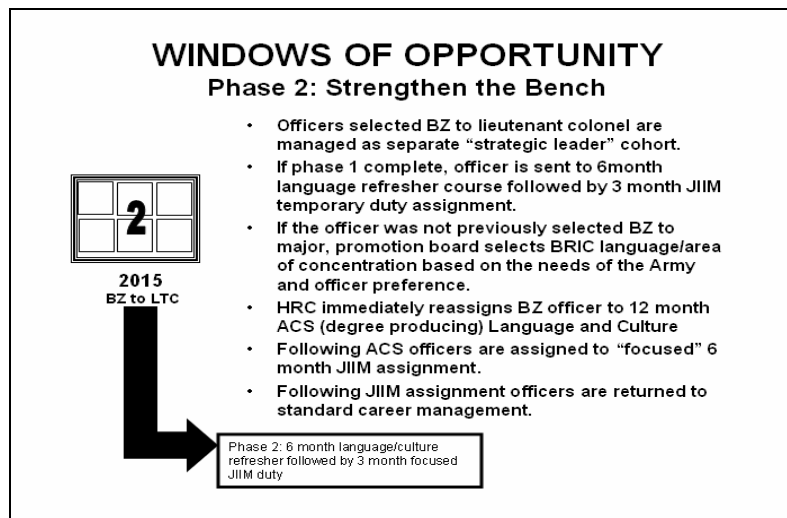


Figure 4. Phase 2: Language and Cultural Refresher.

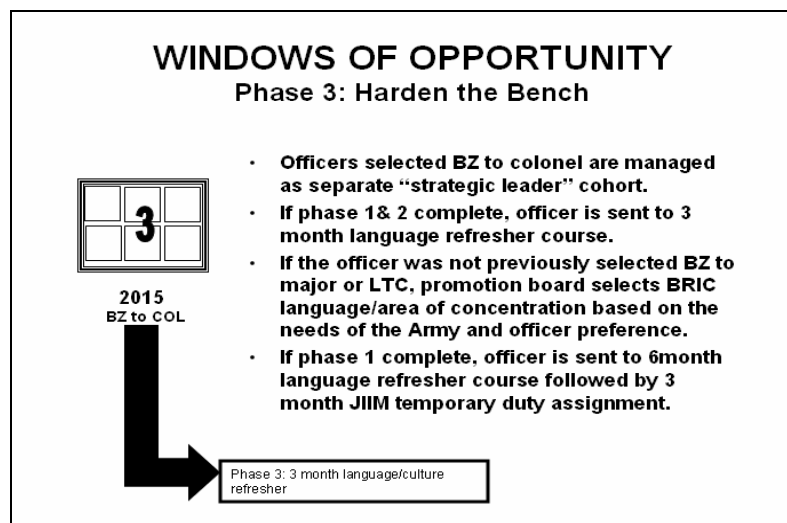


Figure 5. Phase 3: Senior Field Grade Language and Cultural Refresher.

Management of field grade officers must go beyond language and cultural education and JIIM experience. Review of the career experiences of the great strategic leaders of the 20th Century highlighted the fact that many had established very personal relationships with very competent and experienced mentors. The presence of this officer-to-mentor relationship often

provided guidance, advice, and professional education at critical periods, particularly during the formative field grade years.

Most officers cultivate mentors during their career; however, no formal mentor program exists. Army Regulation 600-1 defines mentoring as the voluntary developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect. Field Manual (FM) 6-22, Army Leadership, details the aspects of mentorship and its importance, but it does not outline a specific mentor program for officers.⁴⁶ Because of the importance of mentorship to the profession of arms, it merits a program with structure and depth. Figure 6 shows an example mentor program.

A professional mentorship program for field grade officers should begin when an officer is selected for major. This process could be formalized by a petitioning and registration process whereby a senior and subordinate agree to a formal mentorship relationship. This registration could be placed in an officer's on-line Army Knowledge On-line (AKO) profile, listed on the Officer Evaluation Report and associated supporting documents. In this way senior leaders could access the information if required and contact the mentor to enhance the development of the junior officer. By formalizing this process the mentor takes professional "ownership" of the responsibility to both develop the young officer and acknowledge to the senior leadership of the Army that he or she is available to intervene and assist if the situation dictates.

The importance of mentorship cannot be underestimated and should have a more in-depth treatment in FM 6-22. Specific duties and responsibilities of both the mentor and mentored should be listed, as well as suggested readings for further professional development.

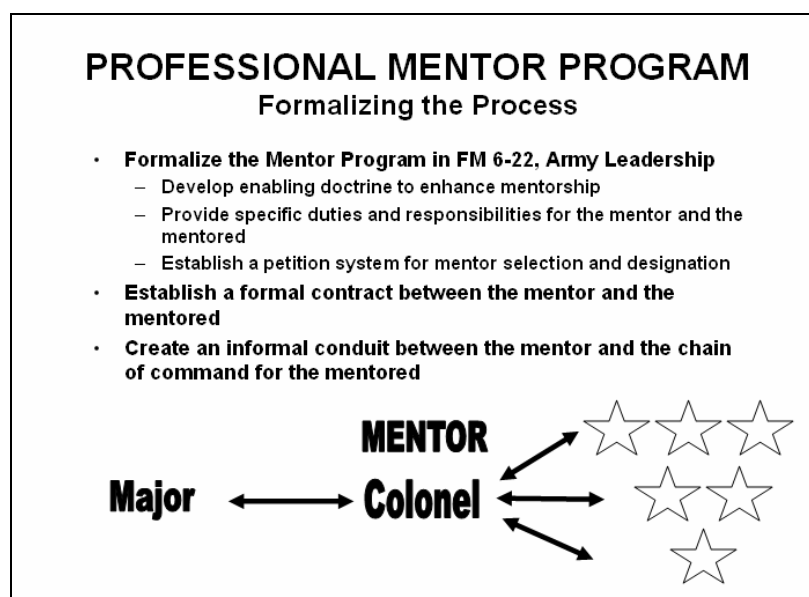


Figure 6. Professional Mentor Program.

Continuing Education of the Field Grade Officer Corps

Known impacts of technology are best addressed through a program of lifetime learning and exposure. This could be accomplished by harnessing the ability of the internet to deliver first class instruction via distance learning. Self learning through the use of world class interactive learning modules could keep leaders abreast of technological developments.

These need not be lengthy and cumbersome classes, rather professionally produced multi-media which focused one hour of content quarterly toward “senior leader technological updates”. The purpose of these updates would be to bring leaders on line with relevant technological developments including FCS and other emerging programs. For example, it would be unconscionable if only the participants in the Evaluation Brigade Combat Team (EBCT) and the Acquisition Corps officers associated with the FCS program were “in the know”. This type of information, “pushed” via AKO with links to additional information, would go a long way toward maintaining situational awareness.

Conclusion

The challenges the strategic leaders of the United States Army face today will only increase in the years ahead. The current leader development program, OPMS, is robust and based on the challenges we currently face in the Global War on Terror. OPMS is definitely a step in the right direction, and accurately reflects the emerging needs of the officer corps to meet the demands posed by the Global War on Terror. However, like any professional organization, we must look out to the challenges the future holds. Analysis of OPMS, the skills and experiences of past and present key strategic leaders, and the predicted impact of the rise of BRIC, technology, and globalization all point to an immediate need to continue to improve and enhance our strategic leader development model.

A relatively small investment in time and money in focused field grade career management can tackle the challenges of the language and culture gap that already exists with regard to BRIC nations and other countries of interest. A professional mentorship program could formalize and enhance a fledgling program that, to date, has only been informally described in existing manuals. Together these initiatives, combined with current OPMS doctrine, should better prepare the strategic leaders of 2036 for the environment and challenges they will likely encounter.

Endnotes

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