

CIVILIAN LEADER DEVELOPMENT: GETTING IT RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

CIVILIAN LEADER DEVELOPMENT: GETTING IT RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING

by

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ABSTRACT

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More than ever before, the Army needs interchangeable, diverse, adaptive, flexible and multi-skilled leaders, military and civilian. With 42 percent of its active-duty forces deployed continuously in 80 countries worldwide; it is absolutely critical that the Army have a “united team”, to deal with the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment of the 21st Century. The strategic issue is whether or not the Army is adequately addressing leadership development for those serving the Army in a civilian capacity. Civilians are now being called on to play a much more active role in the support of our military’s mission in defense of our Nation. As of October 2009, leadership programs fall short of forming a solid foundation on which civilians from the beginning of their careers can build future competencies required to prepare them for the leadership roles that the Army needs both presently and in the forthcoming future. The Army must make the investment upfront in leadership educational, training and developmental assignments that are supported up with adequate resources, to recruit and retain the “very best” civilians to meet the demands of the Army.

CIVILIAN LEADER DEVELOPMENT: GETTING IT RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING

As our Army performs its mission in this era of persistent conflict and engagement, the Army will continue to rely on the leadership and dedication of our civilian workforce – we will rely on you.

—Secretary of the Army, Pete Geren¹

The professionalism, effectiveness, preparedness, flexibility, and adaptability of the Army's civilians will unquestionable affect the performance of the Army as a whole in the future. More than ever before, it is critical that the Army have a “united team,” military and civilian, to deal with the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment of the 21st Century.² The strategic issue is whether or not the Army is adequately addressing initial and subsequent leadership development for those serving the Army in a civilian capacity who are now being called on to play a much more active role in the support of our military's mission in defense of our Nation while at war. As of October 2009, the Army civilian workforce still does not have a holistic leadership program that is part of Army doctrine. There is no collective “career map” or path across the Army for the nearly 250,000 civilians.³ Leadership programs fall short of forming a solid foundation on which civilians from the beginning of their careers can build future competencies required to prepare them for the leadership roles that the Army needs both presently and in the forthcoming future.

The premise of this paper is that each level of leader development is critical; however, particular attention needs to be focused directly on the beginning of careers, for it is then that a solid foundation needs to be created. The Army must capitalize on the “potential” early on, if it is to recruit and retain the very best civilian professionals required to fully support the ever increasing mission tempo of the Army. Present mission

requirements have already pushed the Army into an ever-increasing dependency on these professionals. The civilian leaders of tomorrow must have a broad career map that can be used to guide them in building/developing their leadership expertise. As they progress upward as leaders the skill sets they require to be successful are not static, but are continuously evolving and expanding into distinctive and supplementary skills sets. This research paper will examine what has and is being done to improve the overarching Army civilian leadership program. This will be accomplished by investigating what attention and effort is being provided to three specific areas: civilian education, training, and developmental assignments, early in careers, so that professionals have an opportunity to develop, refine and broaden their knowledge base from the beginning. As well, this paper will examine other areas impacting leader development and will provide recommendations on improvements critical to maximizing the Army's strategic efforts in developing its civilian workforce.

Setting the Stage

Without question, the military leadership must have complete confidence in their civilian counterparts or civilian subordinates. What better way than to build civilian leaders from a military model. The Army leadership framework reflects three levels of leadership: direct, organizational, and strategic (Table 1). In general terms direct leadership is basic leadership for lieutenants, captains, GS-9 thru GS-12. The skill set for this level is creating cohesion, administering procedures, and team motivation. This is typically where "tasks are monitoring and coordinating team efforts, providing clear and concise mission intent, and setting expectations for performance."⁴ The next level, organizational leadership, typically is majors and GS-13s, focused on organizational climate, establishing policies, and providing direction. This is where tasks "are setting

policy, managing multiple priorities and resources, or establishing long-term vision and empowering others to perform the mission.”⁵ Lastly, the third level refers to strategic leaders, lieutenant-colonels/GS-14 that “establish force structure, allocate resources, communicate strategic vision, and prepare their commands and the Army as a whole for their future roles.”⁶ These three levels are reflective of how the responsibilities of a leader evolve and transform. This is why the Army from the beginning and then at each subsequent leadership level, must holistically invest in the continuous development of its future leaders, civilian and military.

The Army Leadership Framework



Table 1: ⁷

In July 2005 the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of the Army established an initiative to review the development of leaders in the Army. The initiative titled the Review of Education, Training and Assignments for Leaders (RETAL) examined operational and institutional limitations and capabilities of both civilian and military leaders. To accomplish this review the Director of the Army staff formed a task force to

review “policies and programs that govern the education, training, and assignments of Army leaders.”⁸ The task force subsequently identified: concerns, problems and redundancies in leader development programs; programs to retain; necessary program revisions; and resource requirements. Then in October 2006, the Army published the Army Leaders for the 21st Century (AL21) implementation guidance – the plan to implement the RETAL recommendations. The AL21 document directs the merger of the open tasks from the Army Training and Leader Development (ATLD) implementation plan for the military with the RETAL recommended tasks for military and civilians. The intent of the merging was to create an integrated and synchronized plan to improve the leader development process for both military and civilians.⁹ Here we are four years later from the origination of the initiative and though improvements have been made to civilian leader development, there is still much more work that needs to be done. This in itself should come as no surprise as the Army profession attempts to stay current in an ever-changing environment. However, the issue remains whether the Army is successfully moving in the right direction in developing its civilian leaders from the beginning and at all levels of leadership at the rate of change the VUCA environment demands.

Education

Education is a vital component to leadership development. It contributes to broadening leaders perspectives. Civilians above grade GS-9 should be required to have at a minimum a baccalaureate degree, just as the military requires a degree for officers above the grade of first lieutenant.¹⁰ To facilitate this requirement the Army must continue to offer opportunities to both civilian and military professionals, on a case by case basis, to provide funding for higher education degrees. Equally important is the

Army's emphasis and encouragement for graduate degrees as civilian leaders grow and refine their leadership skill sets.

Training

The Army senior leadership continues to acknowledge year in and year out they are relying more and more on civilians to accomplish the Army's military mission.¹¹ They realize the importance of developing strategic thinkers and that sustaining the civilian contribution is essential for the Army's continued success. Former Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff General made civilian career progression one of the top priorities to compliment the Army Total Force. Stating, "Our pledge to invest in the future of the Army Civilian Corps is a direct reflection of our continuing commitment of our Nation's future."¹² The Chief went so far as to include leader development in the Army's posture statement; stating the desire to "accelerate change in the leader-development programs to grow leaders for the future strategic environment."¹³

In 2008, with the leadership endorsement, in an effort to "repair a long-neglected system for those employees who don't wear uniforms to work"¹⁴ the Army Civilian University (ACU) was established with a mission to integrate competency-based programs for Army's civilians and "to assure the Army is fully engaged in making the President's Management Agenda and the Department of Defense Civilian Human Capital Strategic Plan (CHCSP) 2006-2010 become a reality."¹⁵ Then in January of 2009, ACU assumed oversight of the Army Management Staff College (AMSC), the Army's top school for civilian leadership courses that runs the Civilian Education System (CES) leadership development program.¹⁶ The proponent for the CES interim policy published back in November 2006 is the Deputy Chief of Staff G-3/5/7. The policy provides general guidance on the Army civilian leader development programs and

specific guidance for implementing the four core CES leader development courses: the Foundation Course (FC), Basic Course (BC), Intermediate Course (IC), and Advanced Courses (AC). The CES courses are part of Civilian Leader Development a progressive and sequential programs of study that provide enhanced leader development and education opportunities for Army civilians throughout their careers (Table 2).¹⁷



Table 2¹⁸

Here it is October 2009 and the interim guidance, as originally intended, has not been updated, prompting several concerns with the existing CES policy. First, the CES policy has yet to be updated or incorporated into AR 350-1 (Army Training and Leader Development). This regulation is the nucleus of Army leadership doctrine. An opportunity was missed when AR-350-1 was published in August 2007, that “prescribes policies, procedures, and responsibilities for developing, managing, and conducting Army training and leader development” for both military and civilians.¹⁹ Per interviews with the CES Director, the CES policy will be incorporated into the Army regulation in November 2009.²⁰ Secondly, at the beginning of a civilian’s career, the foundation course, which is the underpinning of the other core course, is in fact accomplished

solely through distance learning. The other three core courses are combination of distance learning and residence instruction for a total of nine weeks over a civilian's career. None of which are required for civilian promotions. It would be good for the Army to keep in mind as private industry has found, "employees who are given the opportunity to develop leadership skills are more inclined to take responsibility and feel pride in their work."²¹ Also, the learning experience would be better served if the distance learning phase is linked to the residential phase. Currently, this is not the case. A professional can take the distance learning phase and wait months before taking the residential phase, just as long as it is within a year. Both phases should be linked; the residential phase should complement the distance learning phase for the CES core courses. Thirdly, the CES policy makes no mention of how the core courses interlock with the training, education and development opportunities associated with the Army's 22 civilian career programs. The career program courses should build on these core courses. The basic civilian education documentation lacks a holistic plan that incorporates a career map for civilians.

When we examine changes in training, education and assignments from 2005 for civilians we still find that senior civilian leader development still fall short in 2009. In August 2008, the Director of the Civilian Development office at Army headquarters stated that, "a large percentage of the Army's approximately 250,000 civilian employees have no established career path."²² These civilian professionals today still have no career map similar to their military counterparts. This is due in part to the decentralized career structure for civilian employees, which means to a large degree civilians are on their own for investigating, seeking and finding education or training and developmental

opportunities.²³ It is true that both civilian and military professionals have a responsibility for their own self development, but the Army has a responsibility as well to develop these future leaders to meet the demands that are being placed on them. If a civilian professional is fortunate to have a leader who mentors and guides them or an organization that is fully committed to education, training, development, and has in place an adequately funded career management program they are most fortunate. And yet, most would agree, this is not the smart way to do business. The fact is that the Army cannot afford to develop their civilian leaders by chance, just as they would not and do not develop their military leaders by chance. There must be an overarching, deliberate, and complimentary plan for both civilian and military professionals. The Director further stated that, “The three major stakeholders in this are the Army, so we can shape our workforce; the commander who will get a better prepared employee and then the employee who will be able to manage their [sic] career based on their [sic] desire or potential.”²⁴ He acknowledges that a new way for managing civilians is required so that both civilians and the Army as a whole benefit. Ultimately, one problem is the cost associated with implementing a new way to manage civilian development. A big obstacle is an increase in cost for a variety of reasons, one of which is the education and development opportunities that will need to be made available to more people to fulfill the Army’s commitment.²⁵ Again this means the Army senior leaders must be fully committed and make leadership development for civilians a top priority.

“The Army Civilian Training, Education and Development System (ACTEDS) is a Department of the Army system, whose main purpose is to provide Army managers and careerists with policy and supporting guidance for systematic competency-based career

planning and development. This system blends on-the-job training (OJT), with formal education and classroom training, collaborative distance learning, developmental assignments, self-development, activities, etc.”²⁶ ACTEDS has the same problem as CES, the training and educational requirements are developed for each career field and managed with no collective oversight at this time. The career management proponent is the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASA[M&RA]) for Army regulation 690-950 (Career Management). However, in 2008 ACU as the “governing headquarters...aims to better coordinate education programs” and is charged with developing a “departmental system that analyzes the entire workforce and provides a level of standards and oversight for all...” across the various career paths.²⁷ The Army must ask itself if it is proactively investing in civilians, a key asset that they are coming to rely on more and more. There has been much talk about what needs to be done and many improvements have been made over the years, but the fact remains, leadership development for civilians remains in transition. Clearly, as every year goes by, the end result will be that the Army will not be able to retain the best civilians considered necessary as counterparts to the best military personnel.

In addition to ensuring leader development be initiated at the beginning of careers, coupled with a career map that clearly defines “a way ahead”, and a concerted effort to intermingle military and civilians as they develop. To form an interconnected team this means the Army must look for and take advantage of opportunities for interaction between the military and civilians early on and throughout their respective careers. It is well known that “people tend to gravitate toward people like themselves; they also tend to become more cohesive with people they interact with more often.”²⁸

This reinforces the importance of military and civilian leaders not only working together, but also training together, where possible. And yet, although inextricably linked and complimentary to each other, the Army's civilians and military officers, the Army's future leaders, generally spend the majority of their careers working and developing separately. From the day a military officer enters the Army he/she is being developed for leadership roles. Military officers are considered leaders from the beginning and developed accordingly. In contrast, current civilian initial training and subsequent leader training to a large degree is achieved through distance learning courses that are taken "online" for such AMSC as the Foundation Course, Action Officer Development Course, Supervisor Development Course, and Manager Development Course (Table 2).²⁹ All of these courses are available to the military but given they are taken online there is no opportunity for interaction between the military and civilians. The same is true with basic military leadership training which is not open to civilians. It is very important that military and civilians are integrated where and whenever possible, early in their respective careers. Clearly when both the military and civilians are exposed to working and training together at the beginning of their careers the more likelihood they will naturally partner as they move up the ranks. A fine example of this is George C. Marshall, who early on in his career worked closely with civilians and his exposure early on served him well in his career dealing with civil-military issues.³⁰ Over the years the Army has become increasingly reliant upon services provided by civilians. Their contributions, like those of uniform military members, are vital to the Army's successes. The current VUCA environment requires increased collaboration and consensus building between military and civilian leaders who are accomplished in part by developing solid leaders through

education, training, as well as complimentary developmental assignments. To ensure the Army is going in the right direction senior leaders must identify what is the role of civilians in the Army today and in the future. A representative, from the Office of the Administrative Assistant, Secretary of the Army stated at the Army War College Civilian Orientation for the class of 2010 that there currently is a “philosophical discussion or debate on what the role of civilians should be”.³¹ Within the Army, civilians have and currently support, manage and lead increasingly diverse organizations, have interchangeable roles and positions with their military counterparts at all levels, sustain operations, counsel both civilians and military leaders, serve in administrative positions, provide oversight responsibilities for a multitude of programs, manage billions of dollars, serve as confidants, act as logistics program managers, perform as resource managers, and deploy alongside their military partners, and yet there is still a need for clarity. Currently Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is working this very issue. There are on-going meetings and discussions of moving the civilian workforce into the institutional Army versus the operational Army. “The operational Army consists of numbered armies, corps, divisions, brigades, and battalions that conduct full spectrum operations around the world. The institutional Army supports the operational Army...provides the infrastructure necessary to raise, train, equip, deploy, and ensure the readiness of all Army forces.”³² At this time, TRADOC, and Installation Management Command (IMCOM), are almost there, with Forces Command (FORSCOM) working on it.³³

One issue in determining the role of civilians centers on mobility or the lack of mobility on the part of civilians. The issue is there are those senior leaders that believe

that civilians must be mobile just as their counterparts in the military. And yet there are those senior leaders that passionately believe the civilian workforce offers organizations continuity and stability, therefore, mobility should not be part of the equation. Then there are those that fall between these two opposing beliefs that believe that within the civilian corps there should be opportunities for career development and progression for both those civilians who are mobile and are needed in that capacity and those civilians who offer organizations continuity because of the more fluid transitionally nature of their military counterparts that come and go within certain types of organizations. The only way to resolve this issue is for the Army to examine the roles of civilians and determine their capability and limitations. If this isn't done, the Army is still not addressing exactly what they are hoping to achieve by developing civilian leaders who serve in complimentary or advisory roles to their military counterparts. There needs to be "unity of effort." According to the Office of the Administrative Assistant, Secretary of the Army, given the importance of this issue, "the Secretary of Defense may have to champion this issue!"³⁴

Past "experience shows that training requirements (needs) usually exceed the availability of training funds."³⁵ Understandably, resources are a major obstacle to making improvements to the civilian leadership program. Given this fact, the Army senior leaders must make leadership development for civilians a top priority, not just a high priority, but a top priority. Senior leaders across the Army have voiced their commitment for the past few years; now is the time to resource what is important to the Army. It is only with the most senior leader emphasis that this requirement will be able to compete for scarce resources. As the Army Chief of Staff stated in 2009, "The Army

has sufficient resources...the funds just need to be realigned.”³⁶ Senior leaders must make funding for civilian leadership development a top priority, for only then will this requirement be able to compete for resources. As history reflects funding for civilian educational programs have in fact not been a top priority and the opportunities for civilian developmental and placement programs have fallen short. To the Army’s credit in recent years additional funding was identified to increase civilian developmental programs only to have it “marked” by congressional staffers, who were not convinced that this was indeed a top priority. This means that not only must the Army internally change the culture so that the decision makers truly buy into the requirement, but at the same time this requirement must be “sold” to the Hill as a vital need. The congressional staffers must understand the significance of the Army investing in its future leaders, otherwise, the increase in funding for this initiative will be marked as an arbitrary increase to the Army’s budget. There must be a true commitment from the Army leadership...the higher the better.

It is clear that “only the strategic leaders of the Army can transform” leader development.³⁷ The “Army can never be more successful in its external jurisdictions than it is in developing its expert knowledge and its own professionals who put that knowledge into practice.”³⁸ The Army must find ways to accelerate its responsiveness to leader developmental program demands for civilians. It cannot afford to take years to make the desired changes required by the ever-changing world. “The only constant in the strategic environment is the continuous acceleration of the rate of change, which gives rise to greater uncertainties.”³⁹ Now is the time as the Army examines and

revamps its civilian leadership development programs to get it right from the time they recruit high performers.

Developmental Assignments

The Army does not adequately promote developmental assignments at all stages of a career. Currently, a civilian may or may not have a supervisor, organization, command that supports developmental assignments, leaving it to chance whether or not an employee can take advantage of such opportunities. Organizations at various levels must be set up to facilitate the rotations of civilians entering an organization on a temporary basis. This is something that can't be left to chance or to a supervisor that is more concerned with satisfying immediate mission requirements versus long-term benefits to the big Army.

Much can be learned from the Army Career Intern Program when it comes to the importance of developmental assignments early in a career. Candidates enter the program at GS-5 or GS-7 levels as permanent full time employees. Interns initially receive career conditional appointments in the competitive service. Upon graduation from the program, interns are placed in GS-9 or GS-11 positions, according to the specific career program intern target grade and availability of placement positions at the time of graduation. Guidelines vary by career program but in general interns must participate in a minimum of two developmental assignments for a minimum of 6 months within their two-year commitment to graduate from the program. The development assignments are absolutely critical part of building competencies.⁴⁰ The combination of educational requirements and training opportunities, coupled with the developmental assignments make interns highly desirable to hire. A recruiting official realizes that the

civilian intern program format for overall development produces professionals that have a solid foundation on which to build future competencies.

Another program that stresses the importance of developmental assignments is Defense Senior Leader Development Program (DSLDP) that replaces Defense Leadership and Management Program (DLAMP) in 2010. This program is for senior grades, but just as the intern program stresses the importance of developmental assignments, so does DSLDP. The concern is the Army needs a program that facilitates developmental assignments throughout a civilian's career, not only at senior levels. The same is true for Army Senior Fellows program which is also focused on senior leader development. The concept of the Army Senior Fellows program originated with former Secretary of the Army Harvey. Based on the recommendations of the RETAL study, the "quick win" initiative this program is designed to identify high-potential senior civilian leaders and then subsequently provide them with developmental opportunities, ranging from training to executive development assignments, that strengthen their executive competencies, equipping them to function as experts in senior Army positions.⁴¹ The Army Senior Fellows Program supports life-long learning, talent management and succession planning for senior executives.⁴² Not only does the Army have a Fellows program, so do a number of commands, such as, Army Materiel Command (AMC), TRADOC, and IMCOM.⁴³ These are truly great programs, but inadvertently, this is creating an environment of "have and have-nots" across the Army. These programs are promoting "stove-pipe" career development. One of the very problems that civilians have when competing for senior positions against their military counterparts who have generally a much more diversified career background.

Many of the Army's efforts to address civilian leadership development shortcomings do not deal with the long-term investment necessary to fix the root causes of the problem. Rather, the Army goes after the short-term fix and ends up in a cycle of band-aid fixes that do not address the real problems when it comes to the lack of developmental assignments early in a professional's career. Broad exposure to how the Army runs and diverse first hand experiences at the beginning of careers have the potential to pay big dividends.

Other Areas Impacting Civilian Leader Development

A key element to a career map should be the Individual Development Plans (IDP) that is a written plan for developing and capturing Education, Training, and Development Assignment competencies.⁴⁴ It is critical that the IDP be tied to the overarching civilian leader development program. Currently, there is not a standard IDP used across the Army. Often times various Army commands, develop their own formats and policy guidance on IDPs or allow professionals to use any format. Another option most commonly taken is a number of career programs have their own IDP formats that document career program specifics versus a standard Army developmental plan format modified to incorporate career program specifics. This contributes to "stove-pipe" development in career programs that ultimately has the opposite effect of developing flexible and adaptive leaders with a broad knowledge base of Army programs. Again, it would be better to have a standard plan that accommodates any career program unique specifics. Thus, an IDP that does not arbitrarily restrict career development requirements to one specific career program.

Another improvement to overall civilian development would be to expand Army wide a TRADOC program called the "greening course" that is part of TRADOC's

mandatory training for all civilians. This initiative originated in 2006 “intended to enable civilians to better understand how the field Army works”.⁴⁵ This program would be an excellent idea for the Army as a whole, especially at the beginning of careers. The course consists of such elements as experiences in an operational setting, such as a field exercise. The intent is to help civilians understand the Army’s basic mission. Obviously, the earlier this is done the greater the potential payback.

Also, what the Army is attempting to do with placement programs is commendable. However, once again the primary focus is currently on senior grades which is short sighted. As with education, training, and developmental assignments these are life-long endeavors, the Army again needs to focus on the beginning of careers. Unfortunately, current efforts appear to be more focused on the senior grades fueled in part because of the high rate of SES retirements and the fact that the Army is finding they have not developed a sufficient number of qualified replacements. If attention is not given to initial recruitments and subsequent placements, the Army is simply applying a “band-aid” to a problem that will continue to fester, not getting any better over time.

DoD Civilian Development Programs

“The Secretary of the Army’s and Chief of Staff’s vision for civilian leaders calls for strategic and innovative thinkers who are effective in management, leading and changing large organizations. These civilian leaders must be confident, competent decision makers, prudent risk takers, and effective communicators, adaptive and dedicated to lifelong learning.”⁴⁶ As the strategic environment is changing at an exponential rate, so must strategic leaders, regardless whether they are civilian or military. These leaders will be thrust into situations requiring interaction within the Army;

within DoD at senior levels; dealings with interagency personnel; exchanges with Congress; civilian led organizations; and foreign country representatives. The Army civilian leadership, as true for the military leadership, must be prepared to deal with cultures and thought processes that are different from their own.

A course that DoD has developed is the Executive Leadership Development Program (ELDP) that provides senior leader participants with an extensive exposure to the roles and mission of DoD, through intense hands-on field experiences.⁴⁷ Participants graduate with an increased awareness and appreciation for today's warfighter.⁴⁸ Here again, the focus is on senior leaders.

The Way Ahead

First and foremost, the Army must find ways to accelerate its responsiveness to leader developmental program demands for both the military and civilians. The Army cannot afford to take years to make the desired changes required by the ever-changing world. "The only constant in the strategic environment is the continuous acceleration of the rate of change, which gives rise to greater uncertainties."⁴⁹ Now is the time as the Army examines and revamps its leadership development programs for military and civilians to get it right from the beginning.

Secondly, to make needed improvements to civilian development will require a cultural change supported with adequate resources to develop and subsequently sustain advances in civilian leader development. Civilians will need to be recognized for their solid contributions and valued accordingly. "Human beings hold two kinds of theories of action. The first is their espoused theory, which is comprised of beliefs, values, and attitudes. The second is their theory-in-use, which is the one they actually

use when they act.”⁵⁰ If the senior leadership actions do not support their words then any improvements to civilian leader development are doomed.

The Army needs to refine its culture and incorporate civilians at all levels as valued team contributors to the overall Army mission. There must be changes in the organizational culture that “refers to the taken-for-granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations, collective memories, and definitions present in an organization.”⁵¹ “These values and assumptions are learned as people in an organization deal successfully with problems of external adaption and internal integration (i.e., how the organization responds to the environment and organizes internally to accomplish its goals). As new members enter the organization, the assumptions and values are taught as ‘the correct ways to perceive, think, and feel’ in relation to the problems the organization may face.”⁵² A change in culture is not just a matter of words but rather comes from the leadership setting the examples and reinforcing beliefs and values. This is the only way for the Army to build a truly united and cohesive team effort to deal with today’s VUCA environment.

Thirdly, what is required is a resourced commitment to develop civilian leaders that is endorsed and enforced from Department of the Army Staff, in particular the G-3/5/7, as well as a commitment from the proponents for the 22 career programs, TRADOC who is responsible for leader development, all Army Commands (ACOMs), all Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs), all Direct Reporting Units (DRUs), and ACU. An example of this commitment is the Commanding General of U.S. Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is fully aware of the criticality of investing in leadership development. He acknowledges in September of 2009 that, “It is less well known but

increasingly evident that we are out of balance in developing our leaders.”⁵³ To restore balance TRADOC will publish the Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS).

According to the Deputy Commandant of the Command and General Staff College, at the AUSA Convention in October 2009, “ALDS seeks to develop leaders within a flexible, relevant and enduring framework that balances training, education and experience. It also emphasizes leader development as a career-long process.”⁵⁴ Once again the senior leaders are acknowledging the need to invest in Army personnel. We can only hope ALDS builds on a solid foundation and that the Army commits in a timely manner the required resources to both military and civilian education, training, and developmental assignments.

It remains to be seen what success ALDS will bring. And yet is it clear that “only the strategic leaders of the Army can transform” leader development.⁵⁵ The “Army can never be more successful in its external jurisdictions than it is in developing its expert knowledge and its own professionals who put that knowledge into practice.”⁵⁶

Lastly, the goal must be right from the beginning “to create an education and training system operationally relevant to the current force, but structured to support the Future Force by producing more capable, adaptable and confident leaders through continuous investment in personal growth and professional development.”⁵⁷ After cultural change and senior leader commitment and enforcement, the most important change that needs to be taken is a career map must be developed to guide civilian leaders from the beginning. The civilian career map must consist of education, training, and developmental assignments that center around the four core CES competencies that are interlocked with the 22 career program specific requirements to form a holistic

plan that is compatible with the DoD development program. All of which are documented in an IDP that is reviewed and revised annually as part of a civilian performance rating. Civilians must know the way ahead and be able to chart their own course just as their military counterparts. To round out the holistic education, training and developmental assignment plan would be a placement program that is initiated from the beginning of careers, not years after a professional has formed their initial competency base. We must not forget that as the Army builds a plan, they must make sure that it complements the Department of Defense (DoD) leader development program that focuses on the future and the joint environment.

Additionally, another significant contributor to leader development would be to make the CES FC residential. There is something to be said for the invaluable experience that both civilian and military leaders garner from sharing ideas and past experiences. This type of interaction goes a long ways to foster and secure a network on which these professionals can draw from as they develop. Even AR 350-1 supports this fact.⁵⁸ Other important steps: 1) The Army's commitment to civilian leader development must be documented in AR 350-1 as planned. 2) All core courses should be required or at a minimum highly encouraged for progressive promotions regardless of whether or not a professional is an intern or a supervisor. 3) Absolutely vital to building civilian careerists is the interaction and dialogue they are exposed to at residential training vice distance learning. The long-term benefits out-weigh the additional cost. 4) Taking it even further, examine the practicality of expanding the TRADOC "greening course" across the Army.

In conclusion, it is critical that the Army strategically sustain civilian contributions while preparing for tomorrow's contributions. "Leadership at every level is the only way to infuse an organization with the values and morale to maintain productivity."⁵⁹

Decision makers would be well served if they remember and take to heart,

Leader development is the deliberate, continuous, sequential, and progressive process; grounded in Army values that develop civilians into competent and confident leaders capable of decisive action. Leader development is achieved through the lifelong synthesis of the knowledge, skills, and experiences gained through institutional training and education, organizing training, operation (on-the-job) experiences, and self development.⁶⁰

The investment in holistic leader development from the beginning will promote a solid foundation on which to build future leaders knowledge base, skill sets and competencies to deal with the VUCA environment in which we live.⁶¹ This is particularly important for those civilian professionals in or supporting strategic leadership roles. Investing in civilian leaders from the beginning of their careers with a strong emphasis on developing a career map that will guide them in their development, much like their military counterparts will promote a "united effort." Equally important is ensuring the foundation training capitalizes from the very start in providing a solid foundation on which to grow leaders. Time is of the essence. Unfortunately, the bureaucracy is weighing down timely progress. The transformation of civilian leadership development has been in progress since 2006 and much has been accomplished, however, the pace needs to be expedited.

The fact remains, the Army needs interchangeable, diverse, adaptive, flexible and multi-skilled leaders to defend this Nation, and therefore, must make the strategic investment upfront in leadership educational, training and developmental assignments that are backed up with adequate resources, to recruit and retain from the beginning the

“very best” civilians to meet the demands of the Army in the VUCA, highly competitive and fast pace environment of the 21st Century.

Endnotes

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