

# Strategy Research Project

## Finding Tomorrow's Strategic Intelligence Thinkers Today

by

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United States Army War College  
Class of 2014

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## **Abstract**

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America faces an uncertain and volatile future in the twenty-first century. Intelligence helps lift the veil of uncertainty by providing knowledge to commanders and decision makers. The intelligence officers selected today will be the strategic thinkers and leaders of tomorrow. America cannot afford to gamble its future by addressing twenty-first century challenges using twentieth century skills and thinking. To meet the national security challenges ahead, the U.S. military requires an innovative new approach to engaging with, assessing, and selecting tomorrow's strategic intelligence thinkers and leaders from today's generation of talented and diverse young minds.



## Finding Tomorrow's Strategic Intelligence Thinkers Today

The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.

—Albert Einstein

If current trends hold, the world's globalized security environment will become increasingly more volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) with the potential of causing an unprecedented level of global instability.<sup>1</sup> Engaged around the globe, the U.S. military serves to counter this precarious environment as the “cornerstone” of America's national security.<sup>2</sup> Meeting the security challenges ahead requires a truer understanding of the strategic environment; as it evolves, so must America's approach to strategic thinking.<sup>3</sup> Reaching this deeper understanding of the world requires intelligence, which, simply defined, is “knowledge and foreknowledge of the world around us – the prelude to decisions and action by U.S. policymakers.”<sup>4</sup> To meet the national security challenges of the twenty-first century, the U.S. military requires an innovative new approach to engaging with, assessing, and recruiting tomorrow's strategic intelligence thinkers from today's generation of talented and diverse young minds.

Currently, within the U.S. intelligence community (IC), there is an emphasis being placed on current and emerging technologies as a panacea for improving intelligence. Leveraging technology is essential but, in the end, technology does not do analysis and it does not produce intelligence – people produce intelligence.<sup>5</sup> In *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*, Richards Heuers points out the IC's focus for improving intelligence analysis often looks at aspects such as writing quality, customer relations, and organizational structure with little to no attention on how people actually think.<sup>6</sup>

The aim of this paper is not the pursuit of intelligence professionals who are simply smarter. Smarter doesn't always equal better. For the unique requirements placed on today's intelligence officer, the epistemology – the “why and how” she thinks and gains knowledge – is often more valuable than personal intelligence or education. Unlike private industry or other government organizations, the U.S. military cannot bring in outside talent to fill gaps in strategic leadership or expertise.<sup>7</sup> In other words, those officers selected today, good or bad, will be America's strategic thinkers and leaders twenty to thirty years from now. This paper will examine those attributes and dispositions most needed in today's intelligence officers and offer a new model for attracting and competing for those valuable twenty-first century skills and talents.

Though each of the services varies slightly in the way it selects officers to serve in the intelligence field, by and large, none apply a deliberate selection process aimed at identifying those individuals best suited for the work of intelligence. Almost every agency and organization in the IC has a method for screening applicants for specific position. As five of the seventeen organizations comprising the IC, it seems out of step that the military would not devise and apply such a method.

For the scope of this paper, the Marine Corps will be examined to evaluate how one of the services screens and selects entry-level intelligence officers. The Marine Corps provides an interesting case study. In 2014, it will be twenty years since the Marine Corps dramatically overhauled its intelligence enterprise with a particular emphasis on how it selects and trains intelligence officers. Many of those intelligence officers who entered service starting in 1994 are now rising to fill roles at the strategic

level. This offers a unique perspective by which to examine where the Marine Corps intelligence officer community currently stands and where it needs to go in the future.

Strategic thinking is defined as “the ability to make a creative and holistic synthesis of key factors affecting an organization and its environment in order to obtain sustainable competitive advantage and long-term success.”<sup>8</sup> Strategic thinkers are faced with complex and uncertain problems requiring purposeful thought and analysis.<sup>9</sup> The same could be said for intelligence officers, working at all levels, requiring these same skills and abilities. While strategic leaders are expected to develop these skills over the course of a career, intelligence officers are often faced with complex and uncertain problems much sooner. For this reason, certain dispositions and traits are critical to an intelligence officer’s effectiveness working in the VUCA environment.

#### Desired Traits of an Intelligence Officer

Before proceeding, it is essential to define those personality traits and attributes most needed in an intelligence officer. In his seminal work, *The Craft of Intelligence*, Allan W. Dulles describes an intelligence officer as someone who is perceptive, inquisitive, able to discern fact from fiction, creative, empathetic, open-minded, and motivated.<sup>10</sup> Dulles goes on to point out that in order to build a viable intelligence organization it needs to draw from a diverse group of individuals.<sup>11</sup> The legendary spy master’s twentieth century assessment holds true today. Restated, an effective intelligence officer needs to be open-minded, motivated, and able to think critically, creatively, and systematically. Also, when selecting an intelligence officer, a background of varied life and cultural experiences should be considered as well.

#### Critical Thinker

American psychologist, Diane F. Halpern, defines critical thinking as:

The use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desired outcome. It is used to describe thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal directed – the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions, when the thinker is using skills that are thoughtful and effective for the particular context and type of thinking task.<sup>12</sup>

In simpler terms, she describes critical thinking as “good thinking.”<sup>13</sup> However, good thinking is not the same thing as being smart. There are plenty of highly intelligent people who, either by choice or inclination, are not good thinkers. If the desired goal is knowledge, the right sort of thinking skills must be present, learned, and applied.<sup>14</sup> As a four-star general once pointed out, the strategic planners of the Iraq war were both highly educated and intelligent.<sup>15</sup> In the end though, they failed to understand the strategic environment, they failed to define the problem, and they failed to develop a viable strategic approach.

Thucydides pointed out thousands of years ago that it is far easier to accept information at face value than to apply the necessary mental rigor in search of the truth.<sup>16</sup> This is what cognitive theorists call “satisficing” or the mental heuristic of settling on the quickest explanation for an anomaly – often overlooking ensuing information even though it contradicts the initial explanation.<sup>17</sup> Whether lifting a heavy object, overcoming an addiction, or thinking about a complex problem – it’s merely human nature to avoid anything difficult. However, critical thinking isn’t just challenging because it requires work. For some people, it just comes easier.

Even experts who advocate the study and development of critical thinking skills admit a disposition toward certain traits serve as a foundation for critical thought.<sup>18</sup> So, this begs the question: are critical thinkers born or taught? The answer is both. A disposition is not just an innate talent or ability. A disposition is defined as “a tendency

to act or think a particular way.”<sup>19</sup> Natural ability may encourage a disposition but they are not the same thing. Individuals who excel in a given field are usually the product of both inclination and development. Take, for example, Samuel Reshevsky. Not only was he playing chess by age four, but early on he exhibited those personality traits necessary to become a chess great.<sup>20</sup> By age eight, he was soundly defeating prominent players around the world. On his way to becoming one of the world’s greatest chess grandmasters, Reshevsky spent countless hours playing, studying, and developing his own style of play. For natural talent and disposition to develop into something more, it must be recognized, applied and groomed.<sup>21</sup> This holds just as true for the mathematician, the violinist, or the strategic thinker.

A person with a disposition toward critical thinking is sometimes referred to as a “critical spirit” or someone who possesses “a probing inquisitiveness, a keenness of mind, a zealous dedication to reason, and a hunger or eagerness for reliable information.”<sup>22</sup> Given that some individuals have a disposition for critical thinking, then do other people exhibit traits which actually hinder critical thinking? *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking* identifies traits such as arrogance, intellectual cowardice, narrow-mindedness, conformity, hypocrisy, distrust, and intellectual laziness as qualities which inhibit critical thinking.<sup>23</sup>

The military is a rigidly hierarchical organization. While a necessary design for obvious reasons, the consequence is an environment which discourages open and equal discussion which undercuts creative thought and original analysis.<sup>24</sup> Add to this atmosphere a combination of inexperienced personnel and dysfunctional systems and the job of an intelligence officer becomes increasingly more difficult.<sup>25</sup> Critical thinking

provides a structure which helps to overcome these obstacles.<sup>26</sup> The ability to think critically is imperative for an intelligence officer. Without the analytical depth critical thinking provides, one wouldn't know where to begin framing a problem.<sup>27</sup>

### Creative Thinker

Creative thinking can be defined as:

Both the capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking.<sup>28</sup>

Creative and critical thinking are indispensable to one another. If creative thinking is "good thinking," then creativity opens up new possibilities for better thinking. Creativity allows for free-flow and brainstorming where critical thinking seeks to compare and contrast the good from the bad ideas. Creative thinking opens the mind's aperture to new thoughts and ideas where critical thinking brings this view back into focus, settling on those ideas which should be pursued further.<sup>29</sup>

An intelligence officer can be smart, educated, and experienced, but he will always come up short if he is not able to process and analyze new information in creative and innovative ways.<sup>30</sup> Creativity allows him to view the environment in different ways which enables him to frame a problem from an entirely different direction.<sup>31</sup> The national security landscape in the coming decades will present unforeseen and even unimagined problems. Creative thinking allows someone to see what others don't or can't see. If someone can't envision all future possibilities (and impossibilities) then how will they be prepared for the unexpected? For all technology has to offer, none of it can replace human imagination and ingenuity.<sup>32</sup>

## Systems Thinker

Whether man-made or natural, it is difficult to imagine anything that doesn't belong to a larger system.<sup>33</sup> Systems can range from the seemingly simple to what are called Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS).” A CAS is a system with a “large number of components ... that interact and adapt or learn.”<sup>34</sup> A crime syndicate, indigenous tribes, or an insurgency could all be considered CASs. These multifaceted and ever-changing systems are what intelligence officers focus on.

Systems thinking is defined as “the discipline of understanding causal relationships in ... systems and identifying means either to alter the conditions within the system to achieve a new equilibrium, or to maintain an existing equilibrium.”<sup>35</sup> It uses the understanding gained from creative and critical thinking to develop a comprehensive view of a complex issue or problem.<sup>36</sup> The ability to visualize the greater picture and account for the interplay between various actors and entities is vitally important for an intelligence officer. It will become even more so in the coming decades. As the world becomes increasingly more VUCA, a systems thinking approach offsets the paralysis of overwhelming complexity and allows the thinker to deconstruct a given problem.<sup>37</sup>

## Open-mindedness

Open-mindedness is a tolerance of divergent views and sensitivity to the possibility of one's own bias.<sup>38</sup> In psychology, open-mindedness is considered one of the Big Five personality traits according to the Five Factor Model (FFM) developed by personality psychologists Robert R. McCrae and Paul T. Costa, Jr. The FFM was used to develop one of the world's most widely used personality tests, now called the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO PI-R). The NEO PI-R can pinpoint whether or

not a person is inclined toward open-mindedness and some psychologists consider it an essential requirement for critical thought.<sup>39</sup>

Perhaps of all the personality traits, open-mindedness is the most critical for an intelligence officer.<sup>40</sup> Dulles once wrote, “Rigidity and close-mindedness are qualities that do not spell a good future in intelligence.”<sup>41</sup> Intelligence officers lead groups not only producing intelligence but also applying intelligence in order to inform and advise commanders and decision-makers on matters of national security. Open-mindedness allows intelligence officers to guide their organizations in ways that account for alternate or divergent views while maintaining awareness about possible biases.

### Motivated

Motivation may seem a subjective criterion for an intelligence officer but there are ways to define and identify it. First of all, not everyone is drawn to the field of intelligence. Like any profession, some people are ambivalent if not outright opposed to this type of work. Regardless, the selection process the military uses places individuals in the intelligence field who are sometimes ill-suited or motivated for this type of work. Intelligence work is not glamorous. It can be frustrating, difficult, and often unrewarding. Dulles writes “Education, talent and the highest security clearances” won’t make someone an intelligence officer if they are not motivated for this type of work.<sup>42</sup> The intelligence profession needs individuals who are engaged with an understanding of the role and impact intelligence plays in the decision-making process.

The military personnel management system has been referred to as the “pale cousin” of talent management, and even that is only as good as the talent the military is able to attract and recruit<sup>43</sup>. Previously discussed dispositions towards certain traits feed into this idea of motivation. For example, using the NEO PI-R to test for open-

mindedness can indicate if someone tends to be intellectually curious, imaginative, or analytical.<sup>44</sup> People who score high in these areas tend to be drawn toward the field of intelligence. Dulles once referred to motivation as the “most necessary characteristic” of an intelligence officer.<sup>45</sup>

### Diversity

When Major General William J. Donovan stood up the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II, he envisioned the need to build a diverse organization. He once described the OSS as “an unusual experiment ... to determine whether a group of Americans constituting a cross section of racial origins, of abilities, temperaments, and talents” could meet the difficult challenges required of an intelligence organization.<sup>46</sup> The OSS later became the Central Intelligence Organization and that “experiment” continues today. According to the current CIA Director, John O. Brennan, “diversity is critical ... we need a workforce with a broad range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, language expertise, and educational and life experiences to ensure diversity of thought and to operate effectively worldwide” and emphasizes diversity as “the first requirement of a truly global intelligence service.”<sup>47</sup>

When most people think about diversity they usually think in terms of race or gender. True diversity encompasses much more. Diversity also includes differences in beliefs, knowledge, skills, organizational background, and personality.<sup>48</sup> Multiple studies show evidence that diversity, when harnessed correctly, sparks creativity and innovativeness.<sup>49</sup>

### How the Marine Corps Selects Intelligence Officers

The Marine Corps is the nation’s crisis-response capability and strategic decision-makers rely on its readiness and ability to effectively intervene when national

interests are at stake. When Marines are employed around the globe, their actions have direct strategic implications affecting national prestige. These actions are tied to decisions based on knowledge, most of which is gained through the intelligence.<sup>50</sup>

In 1994, Marine Corps intelligence enterprise went through a massive overhaul commonly referred to as the “Van Riper Plan.” Following Operation DESERT STORM, then-Brigadier General Paul Van Riper, wrote a scathing yet accurate indictment of Marine Corps intelligence during the war. He stated many of these problems could be traced back to the way the Marine Corps selects and trains their intelligence officers.<sup>51</sup> At the time, most Marine intelligence officers were sourced primarily from “lateral-moves” or transfers from other occupational specialties. The consequence was many of those individuals assigned to be intelligence officers tended to be below-average performers in their original military occupations. Once assigned, these officers were given a “crash course” in intelligence and re-designated as intelligence officers. This created a house of cards for the Marine Corps intelligence community.

Although there were a number of deficiencies the Van Riper Plan sought to address, the overriding shortfall was selection and training of intelligence officers. The new plan created four occupational disciplines for incoming intelligence officer: signals intelligence, air intelligence, human intelligence, and ground intelligence. Each new intelligence officer would specialize in one of these four disciplines and after their first or second tour they would receive formal training at what is now called the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Intelligence Course (MIOC). This course was designed to make each intelligence officer more familiar with the other disciplines and, in turn, make them more of an intelligence “generalist” and preparing them to serve on higher level staffs.

After twenty years, as with any system, improvements and adjustments have been made along the way. For the most part, the system has stood the test of time and proven to be quite successful as evidenced in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, since the Van Riper plan has been implemented, there has been no significant change in how officers are screened and selected to train in one of the four intelligence disciplines.

All new lieutenants in the Marine Corps attend The Basic School (TBS), a six-month course with an emphasis on training officers to be basic rifle platoon commanders. The lieutenants get a number of classes on everything from weapons handling to legal responsibilities. The bulk of the course and evaluated events focus on infantry field skills such as land navigation, conditioning hikes, and small unit leadership evaluations. This provides instructors with a valuable way to gauge whether an officer will succeed in a combat-arms occupational field but does little to assess their potential as future intelligence officers.

In 1977, the Commandant of the Marine Corps instituted what is known as a “quality spread.”<sup>52</sup> As officers graduate TBS, they are broken into three groups, a top, middle, and bottom, based on their lineal or final grade standing in the areas of Leadership, Academics, and Military Skills.<sup>53</sup> An allocation of available military occupational specialties (MOS) is divided among the three groups. Then the officers provide their desired choices for job selection. The TBS staff goes down the lineal list, sorting individuals by their standing and ensuring officers from each of the thirds are distributed across all the occupational specialties. Once the list is complete, the staff reviews it, making changes if they believe an officer would be better suited in another

MOS.<sup>54</sup> This process is highly subjective and lacks a deliberate approach to matching actual requirements to talents and traits.

For almost forty years, this system has remained in effect.<sup>55</sup> The reason the system is still used today is because, for the most part, it works. All officers going through TBS are assigned their occupational specialty using the quality spread – that is, all except those with a “guaranteed contract.”

There are two types of guaranteed contracts in the Marine Corps: law contracts and air contracts. Law contracts are offered to qualified candidates who enter the Marine Corps with a law degree. Aviation contracts, on the other hand, involve a more in-depth selection process.

In order to qualify for an aviation contract, the candidate must take the Aviation Selection Test Battery (ASTB-E). This is the primary test used by the Marine Corps, U.S. Navy, and Coast Guard to assess personal characteristics and aptitudes along multiple cognitive abilities.<sup>56</sup> The ASTB-E assesses eye-hand coordination, physical dexterity, and the ability to multi-task and think three dimensionally.<sup>57</sup> Two of the tests used by the ASTB-E are the Naval Aviation Trait Facet Inventory (NATFI) which determines personality traits and the Biographical Inventory with Response Verification (BI-RV) which evaluates background experiences like education, interests, and self professed skills.<sup>58</sup> The ASTB-E was developed using scientific methods as a way of predicting a candidate’s success in an aviation training program.<sup>59</sup>

#### Personality Tests

A 2011 survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management showed almost twenty percent of U.S. businesses and organizations utilize some sort of personality tests for hiring and promoting employees and over seventy percent of

Human Resource professionals considered it a valuable predictor of job-related success.<sup>60</sup> In fact, the use of personality tests for hiring and placement in the private sector has reached a point where it's not uncommon to see "personality type" included on a prospective employee's resume.

Intelligence organizations around the world use a number of various tests to screen and assess the personalities of entry-level candidates. In recent years, experts in the fields of intelligence and psychology have advocated for an even greater focus on assessing personality traits when selecting intelligence professionals.<sup>61</sup>

A number of psychological and personality tests already exist which could be applied to determine which individuals are best suited for intelligence work.<sup>62</sup> The NEO PI-R, as previously discussed, is one of the most widely used throughout the world. Another well established test is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality inventory. It was developed by Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Briggs using psychologist Carl Jung's research on personality behavior.<sup>63</sup> The MBTI has been used internationally for over six decades and is currently used by various organizations within the U.S. military. A third test, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2) delves more into an individual's state of mental health but is considered a standard assessment tool for both law-enforcement and intelligence agencies alike.<sup>64</sup>

### A New Model

So, how would the Marine Corps go about finding the ideal individuals to serve as intelligence officers – those talented young thinkers who, twenty to thirty years from now, will serve as strategic intelligence leaders? How would they determine if someone was open-minded, motivated, able to think critically, creatively, and systematically – also taking cultural and life experiences into account? One way would be to create a

standardized screening and selection process, much like that used by the aviation community, coupled with an “intelligence contract”.

The intelligence contract does two things which are critical. First, it goes right to the heart of the motivation aspect of the screening process. The contract is a guarantee to an individual to train as an intelligence officer following graduation from TBS. It would attract individuals with a strong desire to work in the field of intelligence. Secondly, it allows the Marine Corps to reach into an untapped source of talented young thinkers. Consider for example, a young college student who is majoring in international relations. She is fascinated by different cultures and enjoys thinking about complex problems. She has taken four years of Mandarin Chinese and spent a year studying abroad in Beijing. The thought of military service appeals to her and she would love to work in the intelligence field. Nevertheless, why would she join the Marine Corps if there was no guarantee and, in fact, the odds were slim she would be selected for intelligence?

In order to obtain an intelligence contract, a candidate would need to compete using a standardized screening evaluation. Similar to the test used by the aviation community, an “Intelligence Selection Test Battery” (ISTB) could be developed in order to assess a disposition toward open-mindedness, critical, creative, and systems thinking. The ISTB would also take into account personal life and cultural experiences.

In order to assess personality traits or dispositions, the ISTB would need to use well-established testing criteria. As mentioned earlier, the NEO PI-R, Myers-Briggs Type inventory, and the MMPI-2 are all widely accepted personality tests but each examines personality from slightly different aspects. There is another option – a hybrid option that is also well established and draws directly from some of these aforementioned tests.

As part of the U.S. Army War College's Senior Leader Development and Resiliency (SLDR) program, students are offered an opportunity to participate in the Strategic Leadership Feedback Program. Part of the program's final assessment is to provide the students with a Strategic Leader Personality Resource which assesses: openness, interpersonal skills, problems solving skills, mediating/negotiating skills, innovative leadership, leadership motivation, and leadership temperament.<sup>65</sup> The test is administered securely online and could easily be tailored for use in the ISTB.

The ISTB would also include a biographical inventory section much like the one given to potential aviators. Here, the candidate would be given an opportunity to detail personal life experiences, interests, education, special skills, and cultural background. This would capture vital information allowing for a more complete picture of the candidate and why they desire to work in the intelligence field.

### Challenges

For the Marine Corps to adopt this new model is not without challenges. All military cultures can be resistant and slow to change. "Every Marine a rifleman" is deeply instilled into the minds of all Marines. Young lieutenants at TBS are often told during MOS selection, "It's not about the job – it's about leading Marines." While there is truth to that statement, it doesn't negate the fact that there are specific jobs that require special skills or traits. The military would not want someone who didn't have exceptional eye-hand coordination flying their fighter jets. Neither should it want intelligence officers who don't have the right thinking skills focusing on complex problems. All the services are currently wrestling with this dilemma as they try to carve out a viable military cyber force for the future. What they are finding is the current military personnel system may not offer the best solution.

As it currently stands, the Marine Corps applies more of a screening and selection criteria for an officer designated to teach physics at the Naval Academy than for incoming intelligence officers whose job it is to provide knowledge to commanders and decision-makers regarding America's adversaries. The twenty-first century requires a new way of thinking about thinking.

According to a 2011 study by the RAND National Defense Research Institute, the Marine Corps intelligence enterprise has made drastic strides since the implementation of the Van Riper Plan two decades ago.<sup>66</sup> In fact, many would argue the Marine Corps intelligence enterprise has never been better. However, past success can breed complacency which leads organizations to resist the need to change and adapt."<sup>67</sup>

In Peter Seng's *The Fifth Discipline*, he warns organizations of the dangers they face falling prey to "maladaptation" due to gradual changes in the environment.<sup>68</sup> To drive his point home, he uses the parable of the boiled frog. Thrown into a pot of boiling water, the frog will claw and scratch to escape. However, placed in lukewarm water as the temperature is gradually turned up, the frog will eventually boil because he becomes numb to the incremental change in the environment.

The Marine Corps Intelligence Department's current statement of strategic intent begins with, "We stand at the doorstep of opportunity" and ends with, "Tomorrow's enterprise must be better than today's."<sup>69</sup> Both these statements are true. When most organizations fall victim to their own success it isn't because they failed to seize opportunity, but rather they were unable recognize it. The Marine Corps intelligence enterprise stands on solid foundation today because of self-awareness and innovation.

## Opportunities

America faces an uncertain future filled with challenges, but those challenges also offer opportunities for those who can identify them.<sup>70</sup> Not only will this novel approach for selecting intelligence officers attract and retain talented thinkers, but it is an investment in America's future. Within the intelligence community, as in other specialized fields, it is not enough to expect individuals to apply for this type of work.<sup>71</sup> In order to attract real talent, there must be meaningful engagement which draws from a larger pool of individuals. The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) is making a concerted effort to engage with America's multicultural society and to attract the thinkers who will be tomorrow's leaders within the intelligence community.<sup>72</sup>

Resistance to change can be overcome; like many other large successful organizations, the Marine Corps has shown a history and culture willing to invest and capitalize in that aspect with make the institution great – the individual Marine.<sup>73</sup> As the military faces the realities of an austere budget, it will need innovative approaches to maximize the force it has. This new model is not about purchasing new systems or hiring a larger force; this is about investing in people. When individuals are selected through a process such as this, they see an organization invested in their people. Recruiting the right talent now is a small investment which could pay huge returns later.

Hiring individuals who are best suited to succeed in their given field also yields a greater retention of talented individuals. This is what Dulles referred to as recruiting for people for the "long pull" – thoroughly screening and selecting people apt to succeed in the work of intelligence.<sup>74</sup> Hiring the right individuals leads to greater job satisfaction which, in turn, leads to increased retention. A recent study on retaining corporate talent

concluded that finding the right “fit” between employee and organization is one of the top reasons why organizations are able to retain the best talent.<sup>75</sup>

The model offered in this paper is not just theoretical. “Thinking about thinking” is important, but it has to be turned into something tangible. Although this paper focused on one service to develop this new model, an extensively broader application is possible. This type of “holistic” personality testing could be tailored and used for other occupational specialties, both officer and enlisted in all the services. Whether a Department of Defense entity or an entirely new intelligence organization, a test similar to this could also be applied in order to build America’s cyber force for the twenty-first century.

### Conclusion

Intelligence is often viewed as an “activity, process, or organization,” discounting the most important element – thought.<sup>76</sup> In the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, “intelligence” is cited eleven times and almost every reference in the context of systems, technology, and tools.<sup>77</sup> Technology won’t solve the problems of the twenty-first century – people will. If intelligence is indeed the pursuit of knowledge there needs to be a deeper consideration of epistemology or the nature of knowledge itself.<sup>78</sup> The U.S. military intelligence community is a closed-entry system. The intelligence officers selected today will be the strategic thinkers, leaders, and advisors of tomorrow. America cannot afford to gamble its future by addressing twenty-first century challenges using twentieth century skills and thinking. In order to reshape the twenty-first century security environment, the U.S. military needs a pioneering new approach for finding today’s talented and diverse young thinkers who will one day be America’s strategic intelligence thinkers and leaders.

## Endnotes

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