

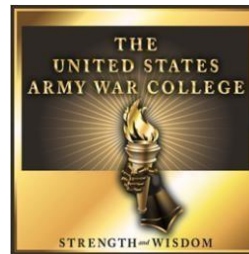
Strategy Research Project

Changing Army Culture to Enable Mission Command and Mission Accomplishment

by

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Class of 2016

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved--OMB No. 0704-0188		
The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 01-04-2016		2. REPORT TYPE STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Changing Army Culture to Enable Mission Command and Mission Accomplishment			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S) Colonel Robert W. Marshall United States Army			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Dr. Richard Meinhart			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College, 122 Forbes Avenue, Carlisle, PA 17013			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Distribution A: Approved for Public Release. Distribution is Unlimited. Please consider submitting to DTIC for worldwide availability? YES: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or NO: <input type="checkbox"/> (student check one) Project Adviser recommends DTIC submission? YES: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or NO: <input type="checkbox"/> (PA check one)					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES Word Count: 5,735					
14. ABSTRACT The Army has made mission command the cornerstone of its operations and leadership doctrine. Despite its inclusion in doctrine for more than 10 years, the Army still struggles to fully enact mission command. There are significant cultural barriers that drive this inability to realize the full potential of mission command. This paper uses Kotter's organizational change model and Schein's methods of cultural change to analyze current Army culture and its level of misalignment with the precepts of mission command. From this analysis, it identifies cultural embedding and reinforcing mechanisms to enable senior leaders to create and sustain needed change to fully embrace mission command. Army senior leaders, at multiple levels, must make mission command a focus area and provide role-modeling and coaching to their subordinates. The Army must incorporate mission command principles into its philosophies and creeds and continue to tell the story of why mission command is necessary for future success. Army systems, including performance evaluation, education, training and assignments must be modified to create culture change to better align leader development with mission command.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Leader Development					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 29	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT UU	b. ABSTRACT UU	c. THIS PAGE UU			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (w/ area code)

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(5,735 words)

Abstract

The Army has made mission command the cornerstone of its operations and leadership doctrine. Despite its inclusion in doctrine for more than 10 years, the Army still struggles to fully enact mission command. There are significant cultural barriers that drive this inability to realize the full potential of mission command. This paper uses Kotter's organizational change model and Schein's methods of cultural change to analyze current Army culture and its level of misalignment with the precepts of mission command. From this analysis, it identifies cultural embedding and reinforcing mechanisms to enable senior leaders to create and sustain needed change to fully embrace mission command. Army senior leaders, at multiple levels, must make mission command a focus area and provide role-modeling and coaching to their subordinates. The Army must incorporate mission command principles into its philosophies and creeds and continue to tell the story of why mission command is necessary for future success. Army systems, including performance evaluation, education, training and assignments must be modified to create culture change to better align leader development with mission command.

Changing Army Culture to Enable Mission Command and Mission Accomplishment

Our collective experience with mission command has evolved over the past decade of conflict, and mission command has emerged as one of the central tenets underpinning how our Army currently fights.

—Lieutenant General David G. Perkins¹

To what degree is Army culture aligned with the precepts of theory of mission command? How is the Army creating a culture supporting mission command in operational and institutional environments? Is there alignment between the institutional or enterprise-level Army and the operational Army in terms of preparation for and execution of mission command given the differences in perceived risk? If there is misalignment in policy and practice, what changes could foment positive change? What are the implications for the Army if leaders are unable to align policy and practice towards successful enacting of mission command? These questions are of strategic importance to the U.S. Army if it is to remain a preeminent military force and an integral component of the military instrument of national power.

The answers to these questions are found in first understanding the complexities of mission command and the operational environment. Understanding the methods leaders use to change culture, the declared and enacted culture in the Army, and the corresponding level of alignment are also pivotal to answering questions on the Army and mission command. Finally, one must look at the Army's on-going initiatives and their potential to re-align elements of culture along with the significant negative impacts of continued misalignment between what the Army says it believes and how it behaves.

Mission Command Defined

Mission command is defined in U.S. Army doctrine as “the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander’s intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations.”² This definition has been distilled down in the Army to delegating authority and empowering subordinates to accomplish diverse missions. In Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 6.0, *Mission Command*, it is additionally described as a philosophy, a warfighting function, and a supporting system of people, networks and information systems. The mission command system also includes processes, procedures, facilities and equipment. Its purpose, according to the ADP, is to enable the balance of the art of command with the science of control.³

The ADP 6-0 identifies six principles that guide leaders and subordinates in executing mission command. They are: build cohesive teams through mutual trust; create shared understanding; provide a clear commander’s intent; exercise disciplined initiative; use mission orders; and accept prudent risk.⁴ There are tasks, attributes and responsibilities for both the leader and subordinate represented in the principles of mission command. The challenge becomes in balancing these principles during execution. Army doctrine recognizes that “An effective approach to mission command must be comprehensive, without being rigid, because military operations as a whole defy orderly, efficient, and precise control.”⁵ The complexities represented in the definition of mission command alone have created considerable confusion across the force, especially considering that the concept of mission command has been in Army Doctrine since at least 2003.

In the 2003 Field Manual (FM) 6.0, *Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces*, mission command is described as a concept of command and control (C2) and the preferred method of C2 for the Army.⁶ It is contrasted with detailed command, a concept based on the importance of creating and imposing order on the environment from above by using a centralized and powerful hierarchical system for command and control. Mission command and detailed command are further described in the 2003 version of FM 6.0 as polar opposites on the continuum of C2 theories; neither, it is noted, are practiced in their pure form. Commanders always use a mix of techniques from both concepts to accomplish their assigned missions. It is the expected complexity of the operating environment and future missions that drives the requirement for fully implementing mission command.

The Operational Environment

In his *2015 National Military Strategy*, Chairman Dempsey addresses his assessment of the current and future operational environment.

Today's global security environment is the most unpredictable I have seen in 40 years of service. Since the last National Military Strategy was published in 2011, global disorder has significantly increased while some of our comparative military advantage has begun to erode. We now face multiple, simultaneous security challenges from traditional state actors and transregional networks of sub-state groups- all taking advantage of rapid technological change. Future conflicts will come more rapidly, last longer, and take place on a much more technically challenging battlefield.⁷

In his remarks, General Dempsey identified an increasing rate of change as a significant component of the evolving operational environment. Recent operations and predictions of what the future may hold have placed a premium on the need to fully execute the principles of mission command. Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan involved complex and ill-structured problems. Sectarian, ethnic, and historical issues created complex

relationships between groups and individuals.⁸ Achieving results in this environment were rarely as easy as direct cause and effect. Non-standard missions, such as building government institutions and infrastructure development, stretched the bounds of military training and experience. Forays into these non-standard missions also exposed more Soldiers and junior Soldiers to the interagency and non-governmental organization world; this world was foreign to most and had a culture not based on rules and rank but on consensus and compromise.

As the Departments of Defense and the Army look forward, predictions point to an operating environment characterized by ill-structured complex problems that defy traditional military roles and experience. Joint and Army doctrine predict a constantly changing and adapting environment in which interagency and multinational partners will be more common and important.⁹ The Army reaction to this expected operating environment is making the theory of mission command the cornerstone of its operating concept to foster innovation, initiative and adaptability. The operational and institutional Army have significant equities in creating the force of the future and the culture that supports this force.¹⁰ Creating the attributes of innovation, initiative and adaptability and maintaining these across the force requires concerted effort in building an Army organizational culture supporting and developing the conditions under which those attributes thrive.

Identifying Culture

Organizational culture is the set of norms that establishes how a given organization interacts with its environment.¹¹ It includes how members interact with each other and what attributes and behaviors group members value. It also includes how the organization sees itself and how it interacts with other actors in the environment. Culture

develops and changes over time, often without writing the most important rules down or even acknowledging that certain rules exist.¹² Elements of culture often continue in an organization long after they are needed, and often organizations lose sight of why certain elements of culture evolved originally.¹³ Related to these persistent cultural elements is Edgar Schein's theory of organizational culture. Schein defines three levels or components of culture: artifacts, norms and values, and underlying assumptions.¹⁴ Artifacts are observable evidence of culture, norms and values are thoughts and attitudes that provide organizationally acceptable solutions for group members, and underlying assumptions are the basis and driver for the other two components of culture.¹⁵ When culture creates behavior, through artifacts or norms and values, that is unresponsive to changes in the environment, organizations often become less competitive and less able to adapt to changing conditions. It becomes imperative then for an organization operating in a complex, ill-structured and adaptive environment to fully understand its culture and how to change unhealthy or outdated elements in that culture.

Changing Culture

Because it is a multifaceted concept, organizational culture is difficult to change. Culture is itself a complex adaptive system with multiple influencing levers with many correlating relationships but very few causal ones. To create lasting change in an organization, a leader must correctly identify the elements of culture that are positive and those that no longer fit the organization and, more importantly, the environment. In his book *Leading Change*, John Kotter writes about an eight step process for organizational change. While not appropriate to detail the entire process in this paper, some of Kotter's ideas are valuable in this discussion of organizational change. Four of

his steps in particular are important to an organization as large and complex as the Army: creating a guiding coalition, developing a vision and strategy, empowering broad-based action, and anchoring new approaches in the culture.¹⁶

Creating a guiding coalition is enlisting power brokers in the organization to support change that the key leaders advocate.¹⁷ The Army often uses its general officer corps to create the guiding coalition when it identifies the need for change. A successful coalition is able to reach across and down in an organization and work as a team to accomplish change goals. The larger the organization the more difficult it is to create an effective guiding coalition. At approximately 490,000 active duty Soldiers, few organizations match the Army in size and organizational complexity; this challenge also clearly applies to changing Army culture. An additional challenge for building the guiding coalition is finding the right people that see the need for change; a leader that has been successful in a system may not see the need for change. Lastly, to be effective the coalition must have the trust of the organization. Trust impacts communication, and communication is critical to fomenting change.¹⁸ The Army recognizes the importance of trust as a key component of mission command. Recent events such as senior leader misconduct, loss of resources due to sequestration and the transition to a more garrison focused Army threatens to erode trust between junior and senior leaders that is required for change.¹⁹

Once established, the guiding coalition needs a variety of methods to bring about organizational change; one of these methods is developing a vision and strategy. Vision is defined in many ways, but in the context of organizational leadership, the most accepted definitions have several shared qualities: a picture of a desirable future, the

power to coalesce disparate parts of the whole, being simple and communicable.²⁰ In terms of Army leadership doctrine, vision can “provide a sense of direction, purpose and motivation,” which aligns nearly perfectly with the Army’s definition of leadership.²¹ The strategy follows from the vision; the strategy provides ways and means towards the ends expressed in the vision. The vision then provides the first half of the Army’s leadership definition, and the strategy works toward the second half, to “accomplish the mission and improve the organization.”²² The strategy should enable the next important step in Kotter’s organizational change process: empowering broad-based action.

Broad-based action is how change occurs at the lowest levels. This concept seems to be at the core of enabling the Army to embrace mission command. Well designed and communicated visions and strategies can fail if too few people in the organization can or will act to create change.²³ Empowering broad-based action is a leader task focused on removing barriers to action for subordinate organizations. Barriers may be structural, systematic, based on lack of skills, or poor management skills.²⁴ Subordinates often can identify barriers, but they have limited ability to affect their removal; leadership failure to remove barriers will sap the will of subordinates to act in accordance with the vision and strategy. Inaction or denial by leaders to remove barriers will eventually erode trust and negatively affect other elements in the organizational change process. As leaders remove barriers to broad-based action and empower subordinates, they must take steps to anchor new approaches in the culture.

As stated earlier, culture tends to develop and change slowly. Behavior, which is more related to organizational climate, can change more quickly and begin to show results. However, in the long term, culture may resist change and can reverse gains

realized by short term changes in behavior. The solution is to anchor new approaches in the culture. Anchors, much like barriers, can be structural, systematic, or based on the acquisition and maintenance of new skills. Kotter explains the importance of making changes permanent in the culture, but he does not provide a blue print for the process. Edgar Schein, however provides needed specificity to the culture change process using the concept of embedding and reinforcing mechanisms.²⁵

According to Schein, embedding mechanisms focus mainly at the assumption level of culture.²⁶ These new assumptions will drive new norms and possibly values, which will then create new artifacts that support the continued indoctrination of the organization's culture. Schein identifies six embedding mechanisms, of which four seem particularly relevant in building an Army culture that supports mission command.²⁷ The first two mechanisms: what leaders pay attention to, measure and control on a regular basis and the use of deliberate role-modeling, teaching and coaching, are related. These two mechanisms demonstrate what is important to the leaders in an organization and how much they value those attributes or values in the organization as a whole. The other two cultural embedding mechanisms are also related. How leaders allocate rewards and status, and how leaders recruit, select, promote, and attrite personnel demonstrate throughout the depth of an organization the acceptable threshold for norms and values.²⁸ An organization will make judgments on what are the most favored behaviors and attributes based on who is selected for prestigious positions, who is promoted, and who is separated from service. Cultural embedding mechanisms, that were just discussed, are not the only mechanisms Schein ties to organizational change. Cultural reinforcing mechanisms are closely aligned with embedding mechanisms and

anchor values and norms in a more concrete way because they are often more visible to the members of an organization.²⁹

Paralleling the six embedding mechanisms identified by Schein are six reinforcing mechanisms. They are: organizational design and structure; organizational systems and procedures; design of space, facades and buildings; use of formal statements of organizational philosophy, creeds and charters; organizational rites and rituals; and stories of important events and people.³⁰ Of these, three stand out as particularly relevant to Army organizational culture change. First, organizational systems and procedures are often the most concrete and observable elements of culture and thus more likely to be needed for change. However, because systems and procedures are observable and provide concrete examples for thought or action, they are quite durable and easily penetrate an organization. The Army is in many ways driven by procedures and processes. From decision making to procurement to selection and promotion, the Army has a procedure and process for almost everything. This reinforcing mechanism's two key parts are positive as long as they align with the desired culture of the organization. However, if misaligned or change is required, the durability and pervasiveness of the procedures and processes become counterproductive.

The second useful cultural reinforcing mechanism for the Army is the use of formal statements of organizational philosophy, creeds and charters. These are useful for establishing expectations and transmitting messages across large audiences. They provide reminders of acceptable behaviors and litmus tests by which to evaluate how the demonstrated or enacted culture is aligning with declaratory norms and values.

Unfortunately, often times there are significant differences in demonstrated and declared cultural norms. This is particularly damaging when senior leaders in the organization are demonstrating the rift between cultures. When leaders rationalize their behavior that is not in line with declaratory culture, subordinates are strongly influenced to follow the demonstrated behavior in lieu of that declared by the organization. This is especially true in organizations with hierarchical structures and high power distance.³¹

The last important cultural reinforcing mechanism is stories of important events and people. Through stories, leaders can transmit important messages on culture and provide concrete examples of leaders that did or did not follow their organization's cultural norms and values. Stories can transmit vision in culturally relevant ways and demonstrate the passion necessary for effective leadership and change.³² Army War College curricula, Army doctrine and academic research in leadership all underscore the importance of effective communication, and storytelling is a critical way for leaders to communicate with subordinates.³³ This mechanism could have particular value to the Army, which has a well-established and powerful story telling tradition. Whenever two Soldiers meet, it will not be long before one says, "there we were...;" this storytelling is not only an informal or oral tradition. It is formalized and extends externally through organizations like the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, the Center for Army Lessons Learned, and the Contemporary Operation Studies Team (COST) of the Combat Studies Institute at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The COST researches and writes histories of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq through firsthand accounts.³⁴

Current Army Culture

The stated or declaratory culture in the Army supports mission command across both its institutional and operational components. The support for mission command is well

documented throughout the institutional Army, especially by Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). Army doctrine addresses mission command multiple times. Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 1.0, The Army, mentions mission command thirteen times in the thirty-five pages of this publication's four chapters. For example, Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22, Army Leadership, mentions mission command eighteen times and ADP 6-0 is titled and dedicated to describing Mission Command for the Army.³⁵ In 2013, the Army published its mission command strategy focused on fiscal years 2013-2019. In the strategy, the Army recognizes three strategic ends towards enabling mission command: all Army leaders understand and practice the mission command philosophy; commanders and staffs effectively execute mission command war-fighting function tasks; and a mission command system enabling commanders, staffs and units to effectively execute the mission command war-fighting function.³⁶ The strategy also identifies ways and means to accomplish the strategic ends. The ways are divided into three populations, Operating Force, Institutional Force and Individual Leader (see Figure 1)³⁷. This construct closely parallels the three domains of the Army Leader Development model from ADRP 7-0: operational, institutional and self-developmental.³⁸ The parallel nature of the mission command strategy and the Army Leader Development model demonstrates a positive strategic alignment between these two documents.

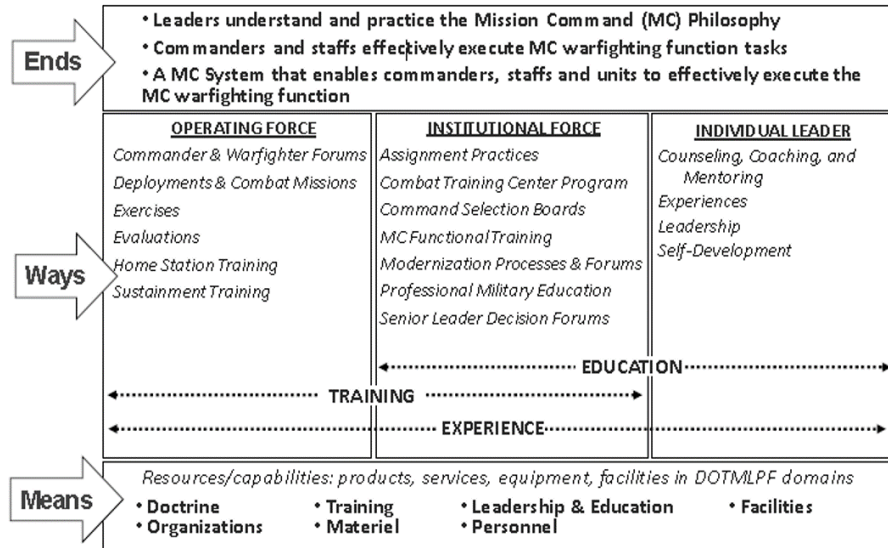


Figure 1. Army Mission Command Strategy Ends, Ways and Means³⁹

The Army is also heavily influenced by a pervasive command culture. By this I mean a culture that seems to value the commander’s contribution over all others, as commanders are vested with the authority and responsibility for everything their “command does or fails to do.”⁴⁰ Commanders may subdivide authority and responsibility among subordinates to accomplish missions, but they still retain overall responsibility.⁴¹ This latent responsibility tends to encourage commanders to delegate less and direct more. As all authority, unless specifically delegated, resides in the commander, subordinates may be discouraged from acting on initiative lest they overstep their bounds. Closely tied to the authority and responsibility of the commander is the ability to manage risk. The mission command philosophy specifically outlines the requirement to accept prudent risk to enable initiative in subordinates.⁴² It is the commander’s job to determine what is prudent and to underwrite risk accepted by subordinate commanders. The tension between authority, responsibility and risk as they apply to mission accomplishment drives some officers toward risk averse behavior and

the over centralization of authority. This behavior kills initiative, destroys trust between superiors and subordinates, and is antithetical to the execution of mission command.

Mission command requires very capable, innovative and adaptive leaders.⁴³ Critical to encouraging these attributes are performance evaluation and self-awareness. The Army continues to make incremental changes aimed at improving leaders' self-awareness of their leadership attributes. Within the last two years, the Army has changed the Officer Evaluation Report (OER) and the non-commissioned officer Evaluation Report (NCOER). The new OER is stratified into company grade, field grade, strategic leader (Colonels) and Brigadier General versions.⁴⁴ Each version is specifically focused on demonstrated leader competencies aligned with Army leadership doctrine supporting mission command. For example, the company grade form requires the rating officer to comment on the level of innovation, the ability to build trust and to communicate, all of which are aligned with the principles of mission command. Two other changes are focused on aligning Army culture with mission command. The new form requires an entry for the date of most recent Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF). The MSAF provides peer and subordinate assessments of enacted leadership in concert with superior evaluations.⁴⁵ The MSAF reinforces the role of the subordinate in how a leader executes his duties. The new OER also institutes a more specific and accountable rating profile. A rating officer must stratify his rated population by performance and is held accountable for keeping the percentage of officers receiving the highest rating under fifty percent. This measure is meant to help identify, over time, the highest level performers needed to lead the Army in the future.⁴⁶

The NCOER is also changing to parallel the OER. It is stratified by leadership levels, focused on the same leadership attributes and holds senior raters accountable for managing a performance profile.⁴⁷ These changes reflect the emphasis placed on non-commissioned officer (NCOs) in the execution of mission command by Army Chief of Staff General Odierno and Sergeant Major of the Army Dailey. The Army hopes to capitalize on more precise NCO evaluations to promote and retain the most innovative and adaptive NCOs capable of working inside the commander's intent and with disciplined initiative.

The operational side of the Army is represented by Brigade Combat Teams, Divisions, and Corps and their separate functional brigades, largely under the supervision of Forces Command (FORSCOM). Mission command is well represented in the declared culture of FORSCOM as well. Components of mission command, such as initiative and adaptiveness, play prominently in many Division Commander's vision or commander's intent statements.⁴⁸ All of the Corps Commanders have statements, policies or visions supporting mission command as the foundation of successful land operations. Both the National Training Center and Joint Readiness Training Center, or Combat Training Centers (CTC), discuss elements of mission command in their command statements as well. Units train at the CTCs to gauge readiness and mission proficiency. The feedback from the training at the CTC is a critical component of Soldiers and leader development for the units that deploy through the rigorous programs at the CTCs. This feedback mechanism is another way the operational Army supports Mission Command.

Institutional Army Challenges

However, senior leaders at the enterprise level in the Army believe there is still a gap between what is required for the Army to enact mission command and the current culture of the Army. In the forward of the mission command strategy, General Odierno, then Chief of Staff of the Army, writes “Mission Command is an intellectual and cultural shift for the Army that must be driven through education and training to yield the desired Mission Command outcomes.”⁴⁹ General Odierno also underscored the importance of the NCOs, acknowledging the importance of their inclusion into education and implementation efforts.⁵⁰ The 2014 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL) provides some data points and indicators that demonstrate General Odierno may be correct in his views.⁵¹ For example, just over half of junior NCOs are familiar with the ADP describing mission command. This lags behind other cohorts by ten or more percent. It is important to note that junior NCOs reported knowledge of ADP 6-0 increased twelve percent from 2013 to 2014, with a nineteen percent increase in the warrant officer population and a thirteen percent increase in the company grade commissioned officer knowledge of mission command doctrine. Indications are that education and training may not be yielding the results desired by senior leaders towards enabling mission command. For example, only fifty-two percent of active component professional military education (PME) graduates rate their most recent course as improving their leadership capability, and only sixty-one percent agreed course content was relevant to their next job.

Schools and courses are not the only component of the institutional Army that impacts the culture of the Army. Policies and processes, akin to the systems and procedures reinforcing mechanism, implemented by the enterprise-level Army also

impact culture. Many writers on culture and change cite personal management practices as key to maintaining or changing organizational culture.⁵² Performance evaluation, promotions and assignments are three key areas of personal management. The 2014 CASAL survey found only fifty-two percent of active duty leaders believe performance evaluations are accurate.⁵³ The reasons associated with this lack of accuracy are not part of the findings; however, this belief seems to imply a lack of trust between leaders and subordinates and could show differing values between Soldiers from different generations. Additionally, only forty-six percent of those surveyed in 2014 believe that the Army's personnel management practices support their professional development. Perhaps most concerning is the perception by only thirty-eight percent of the Soldiers surveyed that the most capable personnel are promoted by the current personnel system.⁵⁴ These facts and figures imply a significant measure of distrust by Army personnel with respect to some institutional Army procedures and systems; this distrust would be harmful to maintaining the conditions for mission command to flourish.

Doctrine can also limit the development of mission command culture. The Army model to guide training is to establish task, conditions and standards for individual and collective tasks.⁵⁵ Collective tasks are catalogued in the Army Universal Task List (AUTL) and, along with individual tasks, in training and evaluation outlines (TE&O). Most, if not all, tasks the Army believes a Soldier or unit will execute in combat are clearly defined to create a standard and baseline level of performance across the Army. This model then becomes the basis for the measurement of operational readiness. The challenge is twofold. The first challenge is matching training with the expected conditions of a combat environment. Conditions may include the type of terrain and

weather, the enemy and his tactics, and the presence of allies and partners. To meet the challenge of executing in a changing and volatile future, a unit must continually train the same tasks against a wide variety of conditions. This is resource intensive and can become time consuming. The second challenge is how to inspire individuals in training to innovate when so much work has already been done to create the AUTL and the TE&Os. An additional element of this challenge is capturing and placing into doctrine new tasks developed at subordinate levels; in other words, codifying innovating into doctrine and disseminating that information across the Army.

Operational Army Challenges

The operational Army has challenges as well in embedding mission command attributes into its forces. There are two primary challenge to building the adaptive and innovative force required under the theory of mission command. The first challenge is managing time available to the number of tasks required for training. The Chief of Staff of the Army, General Mark Milley, stated in his first message to the Army that readiness is the Army's first priority. "...there are no other #1."⁵⁶ Readiness and deployment timeline requirements often truncate unit training plans. Essential or required non-combat skill training and education also consume a significant amount of training time. The problem of matching the number of tasks to the amount of training time has become so severe that the Army has made reducing training requirements and empowering subordinates to make decisions and accept prudent risk a priority.⁵⁷ One partial solution is multi-echelon training during which collective and individual tasks on several levels are simultaneously trained. The limiting factor in multi-echelon training is often the leaders who must simultaneously train subordinates, to include certifying proficiency and also train themselves. Even when the expected conditions are relatively

clear, for example, a deployment to a long duration contingency like Iraq or Afghanistan, the repeated experience in similar conditions can dull leaders to changing conditions that impact how leaders solve problems and accomplish missions.⁵⁸

The second challenge facing the operational force is related to the specificity in the AUTL and TE&Os and the time available for training. The combination of having an Army solution for a host of tasks and the requirement to maintain training and readiness standards creates an environment where there is little to no time for experimentation and innovation. Since readiness is tied to specific actions in the TE&Os, in some instances innovation could be seen as a threat to unit readiness. Loss of or failure to achieve readiness standards has monetary and time resource costs as well, which further discourages innovation and experimentation.

Summary of Challenges and Recommendations

There clearly exists some misalignment of Army culture with respect to mission command, which requires change generated across both the operational and institutional Army. As discussed, Soldiers do not have trust in their personnel management systems and procedures to select and promote the right individuals. Leaders do not have confidence that the schools and courses provided by the Army to build future leaders are effective or relevant to future positions. The Army states it has an unknown and changing future environment but codifies readiness in terms of tasks, conditions and standards that reinforce a limited number of solutions to problems. Units have difficulty managing required training task in the given time and miss or cannot take advantage of opportunities to experiment and consequently innovate at the most junior level. Leader development with respect to mission command has primarily focused on

the command aspect and largely ignored the staff officer and NCO's responsibilities in enabling mission command.

The Army continues to make incremental changes to its systems, procedures and doctrine to support mission command, but the Army needs to take additional steps to increase alignment between the Army culture and the requirements of mission command. These steps should come in the form of the cultural embedding and reinforcing mechanisms introduced by Schein. In terms of embedding mechanisms, senior leaders should add attributes aligned with mission command to the list of those things to which they pay attention and measure on a regular basis. The annual survey on Army leadership is not enough nor does it provide the required granularity to provide an accurate picture to senior leaders on how the force is adopting mission command. Senior Army leaders should use deliberate role-modeling, teaching and coaching to demonstrate the principles of mission command. The Army's counseling requirement provides opportunity for senior leaders to show what right looks like and help develop subordinates that are not in line with the principles of mission command. These two actions would help replace lost trust that is foundational to mission command.⁵⁹ The guiding coalition, particularly at the Chief of Staff of the Army level, should look at how the Army selects and promotes its leaders and how it allocates rewards and status. The ability to manage the principles of mission command should be at the top of the list for selection and promotion criteria. That same metric could be used to determine who receives career enhancing broadening assignments.

Cultural reinforcing mechanisms are driven by and strengthen messages sent by the embedding mechanisms. The Army must continue to include mission command in

its formal organizational philosophies and consider reflecting mission command principles in the Officers and Soldiers' Creeds. Senior leaders, particularly corps, division and brigade commanders should include mission command in their organizational vision statements. The Training and Doctrine Command should highlight positive historical examples of demonstrating mission command in doctrinal manuals to promulgate stories of important people.

The Army should align key organizational systems and procedures with enabling mission command. The performance evaluation and education systems are two that immediately come to mind. The Army could implement subordinate evaluations of leaders in the performance evaluation process. This would provide balance to the current system that measures output only from the point of view of the superior. It needs to improve institutional training to foment creative and not just critical thinking in staff officers and commanders to improve understanding and adaptation to the environment. The Army should balance, especially in the NCO education system, the requirement for knowledge acquisition, task proficiency and critical thinking. The Army needs to use additional tools to help leaders from the most junior level to be more self-aware. The focus on self-awareness and resourced dedicated at the Army War College should be replicated and tracked through the PME lifecycle of a Soldier. To put teeth into the counseling program that starts with our senior leaders, The Army needs to develop an online accountability system for raters and senior raters. This reinforces the coaching and role-modeling occurring at the senior level and encourages duplication to reinforce leader development at the lowest levels. Insure the system allows individual and group

interaction so junior leaders can benefit from targeting and generalized counseling from more senior leaders.

Forces Command should direct time and resources towards experimentation at the squad and above. This would include using live, virtual and constructive simulations to vary conditions and provide junior leaders the opportunity to innovate in a cost effective and risk free environment. Human Resource Command should redefine and increase access to broadening assignments to include assigning junior leaders to higher headquarters sooner and leave them in the broadening environment longer. Further, FORSCOM should allocate opportunities to battalion, brigade or division commanders and allow them to choose officers for broadening.

The implications for the Army if unable to align enacted culture with mission command are significant. Quality Soldiers are less likely to enlist and re-enlist in the Army if they perceive a difference in what the Army says its culture is and what they observe on a daily basis. Talented junior officers will separate early or lose their ability to adapt and innovate if cultural misalignment continues. Without talented officers to develop, it is unlikely that the Army will continue to improve and maintain the trust of its political leaders and the public at large. Without a culture supporting mission command, the Army will be less able to adapt to changing environments and fully execute its key missions in the volatile and uncertain future.

Conclusion

The requirement for the Army to identify and implement change is not new as it has adapted since its inception in 1775. An understanding of the stated and actual culture in an organization helps uncover some of the forces that can encourage or stifle organizational change. The rate of change has increased with globalization and with an

increased rate of change comes a greater impact of the unwillingness or inability to adapt and change to additional future challenges. This paper has identified many challenges that could be an impediment to the full implementation of mission command. Through enacting cultural embedding and reinforcing mechanisms, such as changes to performance evaluation, leader focus areas, professional military education, execution of experimentation, and training doctrine, the Army can respond to current challenges and ensure it retains the capacity to continue to change inside a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous future environment.⁶⁰

Endnotes

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²⁶ *Ibid.*, 246.

²⁷ The other two embedding mechanisms are: what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis and how leaders allocate resources. *Ibid.*

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