

LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership has been defined by many different disciplines in the past. There are psychological, interpersonal, and sociological concepts of leadership in the behavioral sciences; there are historical, allegorical, and fictional examples in the humanities; and there are obvious assumptions in microeconomics, operations research, and quantitative finance.

A DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP FROM THE CIVILIAN ORGANISATION

To develop a useful definition of leadership, we must first understand three related concepts: power, influence, and authority. *Power* is the potential ability to affect the behavior of others. Power is generally related to the control of valued or scarce resources. *Influence* exists when a person consciously or unconsciously exercises power to affect the behavior or attitudes of someone else. *Authority* is power created and granted by an organization.

The most management writers agree that leadership is *the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation*. From this definition of leadership, it follows that the leadership process is a function of the *leader*, the *follower*, and other *situational* variables — $L=f(l,f,s)$. It is important to note that this definition makes no mention of any particular type of organization. In any situation where someone is trying to influence the behavior of another individual or group, leadership is occurring. Thus, everyone attempts leadership at one time or another, whether his or her activities are centered around a business, educational institution, hospital, political organization, or family.

It should also be remembered that when this definition mentions leader and follower, one should not assume that we are talking only about a hierarchical relationship such as suggested by superior (boss) /subordinate. Any time an individual is attempting to influence the behavior of someone else, that individual is the *potential leader* and the person he or she is attempting to influence is the *potential follower*, no matter whether that person is your “boss,” a colleague (associate), a subordinate, a friend, or a relative. It is reality in the Army too.

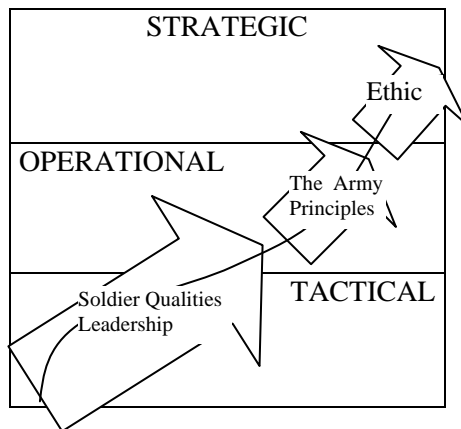
DEFINITIONS FROM THE USA ARMY

- a.) Leadership is the process of influencing others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction, and motivation. Effective leadership transforms human potential into effective performance.
- b.) Management is the process of acquiring, assigning priorities to, allocating, and using resources (people, money, materiel, facilities, information time, etc.) in an effective and efficient manner.
- c.) Leader development is a process. It is the preparation of military and civilian leaders, through a progressive and sequential system of institutional training, operational assignments, and self development, to assume leader positions and exploit the full potential of present and future doctrine.
- d.) Command is the legal authority vested in an individual appointed to a position in the chain of command. Command carries with it special powers of responsibility and accountability which are associated with the position.

Some important notice

Our leaders today must meet the challenges of an increasingly turbulent and complex environment, particularly as this complexity changes the nature of warfare. Some leaders in the past, as well as a number of contemporary ones, have adopted and applied successfully a systems approach to leadership. This chapter intends to codify this concept, in the hope of increasing the competence of leaders who will be exercising their responsibilities in the future. The greatest significance of the systems concept is its reinforcement of an important but often misunderstood construct: leadership skills vary by organizational. level This is illustrated in the next figure:

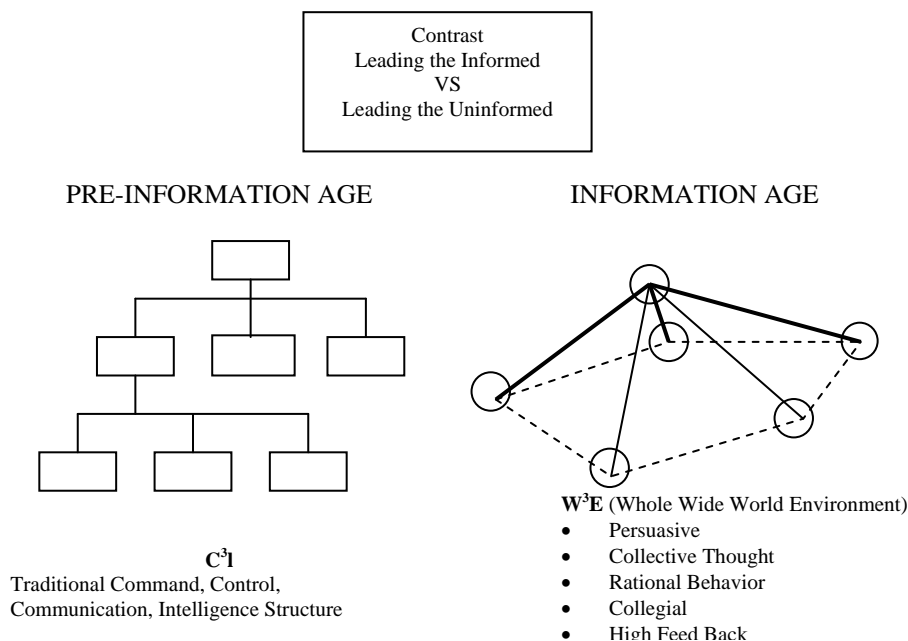
Leadership skills



The Peters and Waterman study, *In search of Excellence* (1982), identifies eight attributes of excellent organizations. Restated for the military, these eight attributes are:

- 1.) *Active participation.* Do it yourself until it works.
- 2.) *Responsiveness to the commander.* Do whatever the commander needs done.
- 3.) *Power down.* Cultivate initiative and the freedom to try.
- 4.) *Achievement through the efforts of others.* The rank and file are the source of quality; reward it.
- 5.) *Performance, excellence.* Be the best that you can be.
- 6.) *Adherence to the mission.* Define the individual's mission in relation to the organization's mission.
- 7.) *Simple form, lean staff.* Communicate to solve the problem without letting layers of staff or organizational charts confuse that communication.
- 8.) *Centralized planning, decentralized execution.* Solve problems at the lowest possible level; planning originates at the top, but permeates all levels.

Our leaders must now lead an informed soldier rather than an uninformed one. This challenge is greatest at the Army. Here, traditional hierarchical structures and command and control techniques (e.g., C³I: Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence) give way to more organic structures with control based upon consensus and distributed data bases. Figure displays a prototype of possible future structures. Next:



Levels of leadership at the Army

Total Army leadership policy recognizes three interrelated levels of leadership requirements: direct, senior and strategic. These levels vary in scope and character, and require differing mixes of leadership skills.

- The direct level is the front-line or first level of leadership. This level includes leaders from the squad through battalion levels of tactical units, and from branch through division level in Table of Distribution and Allowances(TDA) organizations. Leadership at this level consists of the skills, knowledge and attitudes which relate to face-to-face, interpersonal leadership that influences human behavior and values. Direct leaders build cohesive teams and empower subordinates. Skills required for effective leadership at this level include technical and tactical competence on individual soldier and leader tasks, problem solving, interpersonal skills, performance counseling, team building, and developing and executing plans that implement policies and accomplish missions. Direct leaders focus on short-range planning and mission accomplishment ranging from three months to one year, or more.
- Senior level leadership exists in more complex organizations. This level includes military and civilian leaders at the brigade through corps levels in tactical units, and directorate through installation level in TDA organizations. Senior leaders tailor resources to organizations and programs and set command climate. Skills required for effective leadership at this level include technical and tactical competence on synchronizing systems and organizations, sophisticated problem solving, interpersonal skills (emphasizing listening, reading, and influencing others indirectly through writing and speaking), shaping organizational structure and directing operations of complex systems, tailoring resources to organizations or programs, and establishing policies that foster a healthy command climate. Senior leaders focus on mid-range planning and mission accomplishment ranging from one to five years, or more.
- The strategic level of leadership exists at the highest levels throughout the Army. This level includes military and civilian leaders at Field Army through national levels. Strategic leaders establish structure, allocate resources and articulate strategic vision. Skills required for effective leadership at this level include technical competence on force structure and integration, unified, joint, combined, and interagency operations, resource allocation and management of complex systems; conceptual competence in creating policy and vision; and interpersonal skills emphasizing consensus building and influencing peers and other policy makers — both internal and external to the organization. Strategic leaders focus on the long-range vision for their organization ranging from 5 to 20 years, or more.

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