

of the unconventional battlefield. This does not come from a casual exposure to unconventional warfare; it can only come from being professionally immersed in unconventional warfare throughout a career.

This structure, too, would form the basis for personnel across the Army who would have the background to understand, analyze and develop coherent strategies and campaign plans for dealing with counterinsurgencies. Among other benefits, this informed and educated leadership should be able to better guide national efforts from the start of any involvement.

So, who will lead our next counterinsurgency war? If planning starts now for the force going to a coun-

terinsurgency fight in 20–30 years, how does the Army create the best possible units and commanders?

As critical as they are, the units designed for conventional war are not what the Army wants to try to convert at the time they need to be used for an unconventional war. The Army likewise doesn't want to depend on the hope that conventional leaders can somehow acquire the skills, knowledge and experience to provide the best service in an unconventional environment.

The Army can do better, and it can better prepare leaders than current systems do now. Leaders with the training and skills to truly know the unconventional battlefield are

needed. Maybe with such a force, the Army could win the next unconventional war the U.S. is certain to fight. ★

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Take the Lead, and Mean It

By Col. Joe LeBoeuf
U.S. Army retired

As a newly commissioned officer, standing in front of my first platoon in a combat engineer battalion in West Germany in 1975, I did not know what kind of leader I wanted to be. My leadership and military skills training to that point was about "knowing" and "doing" appropriate to my rank and experience, the transactional aspect of leading. And, yes, the Army's training and educational system is the best for enabling the knowing and doing.

What was missing for me was the more transformational nature of leadership, the "being," and the ability to answer the question: Who am I as a leader?

What has become clear in my life's rearview mirror is that leaders must be firm about who they are, the good they are trying to achieve, and their purpose as leaders. And leaders must be more intentional throughout their careers in sharpening their leadership perspective,

their sense of being, as they grow in rank and experience. Accidental leadership has no place in the military; it is inefficient and ineffective. Leaders must lead with intention.

Uncertain Environment

The operational context in the Army today, as compared to 1975, is a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment, and it requires a different notion of good, effective leadership. Bob Johansen, a futurist, in his book *The New Leadership Literacies: Thriving in a Future of Extreme Disruption and Distributed Everything*, suggests that the VUCA world (and he uses this term) creates a disruptive force, a galelike headwind that does not allow leaders the luxury of experimentation

around leadership but requires that leaders have "deep roots" around who they are and how they lead in order to hold up in the face of this VUCA gale.

This notion of deep roots is ably reflected as a military notion in noted organizational theorist Karl Weick's

metaphor of a map versus a compass within the context of environmental uncertainty. Maps are useful guides when there is certainty in the terrain (or operational environment), and one can navigate directly and successfully from point A to point B.

The VUCA operational terrain, on the other hand, is quite different in that the context is unknown, and changing in a way that current maps are not useful for accurate navigation. In this context, compasses are more useful when you are unsure of where you are and have only a general sense of direction. Compasses enable one to orient on true north even when the terrain is unknown. The compass required for effective leadership is a well-thought-out and mindful leadership point of view that enables the leader to behave with clarity, not maplike certainty, yet know in which cardinal direction to move.

Understand Yourself

So, how do you build your compass, your leadership point of view, that will enable effective navigation in the VUCA world? The cornerstone of effective leadership, and where the leader's point of view emerges, is a deep understanding of self, understanding

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how to “be” as a leader, and not just the “knowing” and the “doing.”

This notion of being, knowing and doing emerged as the core of the Army’s leadership doctrine with the publication of Field Manual 22-100: Military Leadership and remains a cornerstone in the current FM 6-22: Leader Development. Noted leadership scholar Warren Bennis—one of the youngest platoon leaders in the European Theater of World War II—in his book *On Becoming a Leader* goes a step further, stating, “People begin to become leaders at that moment when they decide for themselves how to be.”

This knowing how to be, the critical activity of becoming self aware, is at the core of your compass and the point of view that emerges based on several intentional constructive actions leaders need to take: Leaders must prepare for their leadership role (the be, know and do); construct their compass; and be able to project that preparedness and effectively

use the compass as a navigation tool for others in uncertainty through a clear, well-developed leadership point of view, the source of the leader’s credibility.

Elements of Self-Awareness

Preparing to be a leader requires a significant amount of intentionality, intellectual effort and deep reflection, spent in understanding who you are and what you stand for. While there are many ways to achieve this sense of self awareness, there are several common elements:

- Leaders must understand the good they are working to achieve.
- Leaders must have clarity of purpose.
- Leaders must clearly discern their values and guiding principles, and ensure their behavior is aligned with and reflects these values and principles 24/7.

Leaders need to be a force for good, and practice good leadership that enables good consequences—the con-

nection between good means and good ends. Good leadership must be technically good; leaders must be competent (the “know” and “do”) in the knowledge, skills and abilities required at each level they are leading. And good leadership must be morally and ethically good (the “be”); leaders must be people of character who understand the nature of their ethical and moral decisions and can build an ethical and moral ecology that enables effective behavior in others.

Next, leaders must have a clear vision for how they intend to lead, in other words, they need to know their purpose. A leader’s purpose is knowing who you are and what makes you unique; it is about understanding your authentic self. As Nick Craig and retired Col. Scott Snook suggest in their May 2014 *Harvard Business Review* article, “From Purpose to Impact,” finding one’s purpose “is the single most important developmental task you can undertake as a leader.”

The best leaders, from my experi-



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ence, are consistently purposeful in their vision of how they are directly leading and have sight-picture clarity in the transformational, long-term effects of their leadership as it relates to the development of their soldiers and the health of their units.

LDRSHIP Values

The next core element of preparing to lead is achieving clarity in values and an understanding of the behaviors, or principles, that describe how the leader lives these values. As leaders, we improve our character by thinking critically about our values and how they are operationalized through principles that describe our behaviors and define our professional identity. These values, known by the acronym LDRSHIP, are loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage, are the script that define a leader's way of being.

Values create the ethical and moral ecology that enable soldiers to work together effectively in team based activities and enable them to place the needs of others and the mission ahead of self. A sense of shared purpose and values matters in all Army operations and enables the conditions of cooperation and collaboration essential for high performance.

Communicating Intent

Once leaders have prepared, they are clear on the good and their purpose,

have discerned their values and operationalized them into specific behaviors, they must give voice to this process and project their leadership through the capacity to tell others how they intend to lead. This leadership point of view does several important things:

- Provides insight into who leaders are, what they stand for.
- Identifies central values and beliefs.
- Establishes the leader's view of a healthy organizational climate, culture and community.
- Establishes a framework for consistency, predictability and accountability.

Leaders must be able to describe to others how they lead, what others can expect of them and what they expect of others. In effect, leaders must put their point of view into practice share it, live it and be accountable to it. It is an expression of the most common understanding of effective leadership—leading by example.

Your leadership point of view is really expressed in behavior as a promise to those you lead. *New York Times* columnist David Brooks, author of *The Road to Character*, suggested in a 2015 graduation speech at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, that a promise is really about making a deep and abiding commitment to others and is fundamentally a moral act. This commitment is much the same as

falling in love with something: leading others, doing good, mattering, then building a coherent point of view around that commitment, which becomes the foundational guide for behavior. Your leadership point of view is your leader behavior expressed as a promise to those you lead.

Leaders must be clear on the good they are trying to achieve and their purpose, and behave in a way completely aligned with their core values. It is the essence of what it means to be a leader of character in the profession of arms. It is the promise military leaders make to American soldiers that they have the privilege of leading. Keeping this promise takes intentional effort, reflects the essence of who you are as a person and is the core of your leadership compass, the essential tool for navigating in the VUCA world of the U.S. Army. ★

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Allow for Continuous Change

By Maj. Jamie Schwandt
U.S. Army Reserve

Starting with the end in mind does not work. It binds you to one definitive end. What happens when the goal or even the enemy is no longer located at or near that end? Worse yet, what happens when the enemy has shifted or changed, and your ways and means are incapable of change? This is what we have witnessed in so many of the U.S. Army's recent conflicts, from Vietnam to Afghanistan.

The ends will never justify the means. This leads to a finite mindset in strategy and in war. Starting from an intention, and understanding that war is infinite, is a better approach. In the Army, we must start basing decisions on intentions, not ends. Although we use the term "ends," we fail to use it in its plural form. Instead, we use "end." Our strategy is based on a finite end. The Army must move away from this flawed strategy and move to a probabilistic and contextual approach that allows

for continuous change: probabilistic meaning that any probable course may be followed even though an opposed course is or appears more probable.

Intentions develop into decisions. Decisions lead to some form of action, which engenders the need for new intentions. There is no end for the U.S. or the U.S. Army. Not in Afghanistan, nor Iraq. Yet, we can make smarter decisions by removing the idea of "ends." I propose that the Army use a contextual and probabi-