

Driving Change Through a Campaign of Learning

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We continue to learn important lessons from our ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Every once in a while, however, an incident outside the Army can help us understand the challenges we will con-

tinue to face in the future. In that spirit, I'll briefly use the recent oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico to illustrate how we're working in U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) to prepare for the future.

The once unimaginable scenes of oil streaming from the broken well at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico are still real to us. For months, the powerful images of the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon platform and the oil-covered wildlife were part of our everyday life. It will likely take many years to calculate the full costs of this tragedy. One marine science professor



Dennis Steele/ARMY Magazine

Soldiers from the Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Fort Rucker, Ala., participate in a Leadership Reaction Course obstacle course, which tests NCOs' leadership abilities, teamwork and communication skills.

noted, "It could take years, possibly decades, for the system to recover from an infusion of this quantity of oil and gas. ... We've never seen anything like this before. ... It's impossible to fathom the impact." Yet these seemingly unimaginable events do occur, whether they're generated by Mother Nature or human nature. In TRADOC, we are working to avoid a "failure of imagination."

Of course, we have always lived with uncertainty and the specter of the unimaginable. We believe, however, the character of uncertainty is fundamentally different today. Today's uncertainty is the result of persistent conflict with hybrid threats, enabled by technology, that decentralize, network and syndicate. We live in a far more competitive security environment than we did just 10 years ago. In such an environment, we should expect to be surprised more frequently and with potentially greater impact. Our profession, therefore, demands leaders with greater imagination and increased awareness of the "weak signals" of impending change. We see it as our responsibility to think differently about institutional adaptation—shifting from a reactive to a proactive stance to recognize and influence change before "strong signals" force us to adapt on others' terms.

A Campaign of Learning

Here at TRADOC we are reaching out across the Army and to others outside of our profession to discuss how we might address the challenges of the 21st-century security environment. We are characterizing this effort within TRADOC as a campaign of learning, and as part of this effort, I think it's important to describe some of the initiatives under way to support this campaign. This article is by no means a complete catalogue of the many adaptations we are undergoing within TRADOC. We hope to set the conditions for a continuum of learning across our Army that will result in a paradigm shift in our approach to institutional adaptation.

The competitive security environment demands that we



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which deployed to Iraq. After completing 14 months in Iraq, he redeployed the division to Germany to complete his command tour. Upon graduation from the U.S. Military Academy, he was commissioned as an armor officer. He holds master's degrees from Duke University, the Command and General Staff College, and the National War College.



prevail in the competitive learning environment. We've suggested that combat power in the 21st century will be less about throw weight and numbers of combat systems—though they will be important—and more about our ability to adapt. We've said that we must think about the future differently and transform systems, processes and concepts more frequently. All of this is achievable if—and only if—we make a campaign of learning our centerpiece for institutional adaptation. It must be more than a bumper sticker.

Within TRADOC, the campaign of learning is a set of initiatives built on the expectation of persistent conflict, grounded in the lessons learned from nine years of war and balanced against the emerging trends of the future operational environment. The campaign expects change, whether changes in training resulting from the proliferation of increasingly high-tech military capabilities falling into the hands of decentralized nonstate actors, or changes in basic combat training (BCT) resulting from the different skills and attributes of young men and women entering our Army today. The campaign of learning includes adapting to our doctrine, to our training, to how we develop our leaders and to how we build versatility for full spectrum capability in our organizational structures and equipment. Importantly, the campaign of learning isn't simply reaction to change—it drives change.

Conceptual Framework

Over the past 18 months, we've been building a conceptual foundation to ensure that we clearly define what our Army must be able to do for the nation. We must be an Army capable of full spectrum operations in any environment. The Army's conceptual framework provides the intellectual underpinnings necessary to make institutional

and operational full spectrum operations for our Army and to integrate our efforts among doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel and facilities domains and warfighting functions.

One important change we've made to our conceptual framework is that we have stopped defining ourselves in terms of what the enemy might do to us—"irregular" or "regular" threats. We assert that the competitiveness of the operating environment has made that distinction almost meaningless. The conceptual framework also allows us to re-examine our "fundamentals" in training, education and leader development in order to provide a force that can achieve a standard of operational adaptability for the nation.

The *Army Capstone Concept* (TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-0) is the foundational document of the concept framework.

It describes the future and sets the conditions for the Army's campaign of learning. The *Army Capstone Concept* and the war-fighting challenges it describes directly inform *The United States Army Operating Concept for Operational Maneuver 2015–2024* (TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1). The operating concept describes the employment of Army forces. It guides Army force development and identifies discrete capabilities required for success in current and future operational environments. The operating concept further refines the idea of full spectrum operations laid out in the *Army Capstone Concept* and *Field Manual (FM) 3-0 Operations*. It asserts that the Army must provide the nation with land forces capable in two distinct roles—wide area security and combined arms maneuver.

From the *Army Operating Concept*, we are deriving six warfighting functional concepts. These concepts will identify specific capability shortfalls, interdependencies and redundancies among warfighting functions. We will then be able to integrate organizational design, modernization programs, doctrinal changes, and improvements to training, education and leader development.

Critical to the campaign of learning, TRADOC recently introduced the Army's training and learning concepts. Both of these documents champion a rigorous and relevant learning environment that allows our 21st-century Army to train and learn better under variable conditions.

The *Army Training Concept* defines training requirements and capabilities required to generate and sustain units capable of full spectrum operations in the 2012–2020 time frame. The concept of our concurrent integrated training environment is designed to make our training more rigorous and relevant in the schoolhouse, at home station and at the combat training centers. In support of our integrated training environment initiative, we are establishing an enterprise among

the Joint Training Counter-IED Operations Integration Center, Combined Arms Center-Training's National Simulation Center and the battle command training program to generate live, virtual, constructive, and gaming capabilities to deliver the specific and relevant outcomes we expect.

The *Army Learning Concept* addresses the learning environment we envision in 2015. Its objective is to improve our learning models by employing technology without sacrificing standards. It calls for implementing advanced teaching techniques requiring self-discovery and teamwork. Acknowledging the changing nature of today's recruits, the learning concept calls for making the Army's educational experiences relevant to the future. It describes a continuum of learning that extends from the time soldiers are accessed until the time they separate. Continuous lifelong learning will



SSG Kyle Drube, 95th Reserve Division, reminds a soldier to keep the safety on while inspecting arms during the 2010 Drill Sergeant of the Year competition at Fort Eustis, Va., in June.

require a blend of schoolhouse-delivered instruction with instruction delivered at the point of need. Clearly, learning is a shared responsibility between the individual and the operating and generating forces. Technology, properly utilized, will allow us to share the responsibility for learning over the course of a career.

Doctrine

Our conceptual foundations are already being integrated into our doctrine. The latest edition of *FM 3-0 Operations* introduced full spectrum operations. In *FM 3-0*, we emphasize the need to be able to simultaneously conduct offense, defense and stability operations, and to be able to react to all forms of contact. We will soon publish another update that will redefine our command-and-control warfighting function to take advantage more fully of the potential for decentralized operations and reintroduce it to the force as mission command.



SPC Qadree Smith, 217th Military Police Detachment, answers questions about improvised explosive devices during the 2010 U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) NCO and Soldier of the Year competition at Fort Eustis in July.

Mission Command

Our doctrine currently speaks of *command and control* and *battle command*. These terms will be subsumed by the single term *mission command*. *Mission command* implies decentralization of capability and authority. It denotes that success is the result of understanding the context of operations and recognizing that information coming from the lowest tactical echelon is as important as that which comes from the highest strategic echelon. We describe the central idea behind mission command this way—in today’s operational environment, leaders at every echelon are cocreators of context.

The mission command warfighting function is supported by the introduction of design into leader development as an important companion piece to our traditional military decision-making process (MDMP). The MDMP is still critical for staff integration and orders production. After almost a decade of war, however, we have found this single process inadequate to account for the complexity of the operational environment. With the release of FM 5-0 *The Operations Process*, we have charted a major shift in how to develop adaptive leaders through the introduction of design. Design is a leader-centric cognitive tool that devel-

This year’s Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) class of 482 students stand at parade rest during the graduation ceremony in July.



ops leaders who understand problems before seeking to solve them. As we know, commanders “understand, visualize, decide, direct and assess.” The traditional MDMP provides the commander with the tools to decide, direct and assess. With the introduction of design, leaders will also have the tools to understand and visualize.

Our new FM 7-0 *Training for Full Spectrum Operations* defines our full spectrum mission essential task list. This establishes a baseline for proficiency. FM 7-0 asserts that “good leaders understand that they cannot train on everything. Therefore, they focus on training the most important tasks. Leaders do not accept substandard performance in order to complete all the tasks on the training schedule. Training a few tasks to standard is preferable to training more tasks below the standard.” Quality must override quantity.

Leader Development and the Army Profession

In order to fulfill the commitments we make to the nation in the Army concepts, we must develop our leaders. This summer I read a *New York Times* editorial by David Brooks titled “Drilling for Certainty” that described the events leading to the well explosion in the Gulf. He claims that a combination of failures led to the incident. On one level, it was a failure of processes and a failure of systems. He also implies, however, that on another level it was a failure of leader development. As he reports, corporate executives failed to recognize the conditions of increasing complexity in which their subordinates were operating. The act of drilling at 5,000 feet is exponentially more diffi-

GEN Martin E. Dempsey (left) talks with soldiers in the BOLC Phase II in April at Fort Sill, Okla. TRADOC has replaced BOLC II and III with BOLC B, which begins in February and March.



cult than drilling at 1,000 feet. Yet as complexity was building, risk was pushed to the platform.

There is a lesson here for us. We have said that the operating environment in which we ask our leaders to perform is complex, but some of our assumptions about how risk is managed are linear. We have learned and continue to learn that risk and complexity are exponentially growing over time. This notion must inform our leader development strategies.

After almost a decade of war and in an era of persistent conflict, we also think it is important for us to reexamine what it means to be a profession. The Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, in collaboration with the Center for Army Leadership, will drive this discussion across the Army. Ultimately, we will want this effort to inform a new Chapter 1 of FM 1-0.

Initial Military Training

I cannot overstate the importance of our officer and enlisted initial entry training programs. Victory really does start here!

We have made more adaptations in initial military training (IMT) than anywhere else in TRADOC. Every soldier's and leader's personal campaign of learning begins in IMT. The rigor and relevance of both basic combat training and the Basic Officer Leadership Course are much improved. The recent adaptation to the BCT program of instruction is the full embodiment of what we seek to achieve with the campaign of learning. Standards for task achievement in every area are rising, and core tasks such as basic rifle marksmanship, combatives, first aid and other soldier skills now receive more time and are taught using advanced techniques.

All of these initiatives began with the revision of warrior tasks and battle drills. The changes in this area focus on the fundamental combat skills required by all soldiers regardless of rank, component, branch, or MOS and serve as the cornerstone for all training, education and leader development.

We have also improved physical readiness training and

education for all soldiers, replacing FM 21-20 *Army Physical Fitness Training* with Training Circular 3.22-20 *Army Physical Readiness Training*. We're focused on the "soldier as an athlete" initiative and as such have begun a complementary "fuel the soldier" initiative to instill good nutritional habits in our young soldiers during basic training.

Combatives are also much tougher and more relevant. Values are formally introduced and reinforced, as is training on culture. The foundations of resilience are provided. Across the board, training is both tougher and more sensible. Our goal is to provide soldiers and leaders to the operational force who are grounded in our values, who have the foundational skills of our profession, and who have a basic understanding of fitness, nutrition and resilience.

These latest adaptations to initial military training emphasize the shared responsibility between the operating and generating forces in training soldiers and leaders as well as building capable units and formations.

We will never be able to predict with any certainty the next unimaginable event that will occur in the 21st-century security environment. Thus we must build a resilient and adaptive Army that is better prepared to anticipate and overcome the unimaginable. In the coming year, we will continue to build upon this campaign by completing work on our conceptual foundation, implementing the Army leader development strategy, continuing to revise doctrine, and remaining alert for ways to improve training and learning both in the institutional schoolhouse and across the Army. Most important, our discourse on the profession will allow us to weave together our programs and converge on our fundamentals, to reexamine and recommit to the professional military ethic, to review how we are doing in developing leaders, and to enter into discourse about our roles and responsibilities. Being mindful of the challenges presented by the 21st-century security environment, we will make institutional adaptation a part of our fabric and begin to set a foundation for a campaign of learning that is enduring.

TRADOC is in the fight. Victory starts here!

