Facilitating Leadership in a Global Community: A Training Tool for Multicultural Team Leaders

C. Shawn Burke[1], Kathleen P. Hess[2], Heather A. Priest[1], Michael Rosen[1], Eduardo Salas[1], Michael Paley[3], & Sharon Riedel[4]
University of Central Florida[2], Aptima Inc.[2,3], Army Research Institute[4]
Orlando, FL[1], Woburn, MA[2], Washington, DC[3], & Ft Leavenworth, KS[4]
sburke@ist.ucf.edu, **khess@aptima.com**, **hpriest@ist.uf.edu**, **mrosen@ist.ucf.edu**, **esalas@ist.ucf.edu**, **paley@aptima.com**, sharon.riedel@leavenworth.army.mil

ABSTRACT

Recent events in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Bosnia highlight the role of US commanders leading multicultural coalition forces. Leaders of multicultural teams experience many diversity-based challenges such as communication barriers and trust. To facilitate effective team performance, the leader must understand how cultural differences affect team dynamics. Although these effects often lead to costly mistakes, current training methods are deficient (Pierce, 2002; Bennett, 1986). Training tools that will facilitate effective leadership within multicultural teams can greatly increase success for military and organizational teams. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is threefold. First, to provide a set of theoretical and operationally based principles that can assist in developing training programs for leaders of multicultural teams. In doing so a brief review of the relevant literature on team training, cultural diversity, and training is presented. Second, to provide a brief description of such a prototypic tool and, in doing so, illustrate how the state-of-the-art in training and human learning can be put into practice. This prototypic tool is grounded in the science of teams and human learning, experiential, practically based, and adaptable to different contexts. The approach used combines elements of self-learning (e.g., community links), awareness training, role play, guided facilitation, and SBT. The approach also incorporates existing Army Leader training while focusing on multicultural aspects of team leadership. Finally, we offer some initial validation evidence with regard to the training approach taken within the developed tool.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

C. Shawn Burke is a Research Scientist at the University of Central Florida, Institute for Simulation and Training. Her expertise includes teams and their leadership, team adaptability, team training, measurement, evaluation, and team effectiveness. Dr. Burke earned her doctorate in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from George Mason University.

Kathleen P. Hess is an Industrial-Organizational (I-O) Psychologist and Leader of Aptima, Inc.'s Organizational Training and Development Team. Her personal research has spanned many areas of I-O Psychology including employee selection, training, leadership, illegal discrimination, and job analysis. Dr. Hess received both her M.S. and Ph.D. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from the Pennsylvania State University.

Heather A. Priest received her M.S. in Experimental Psychology in 2001 from Mississippi State University. She is currently a PhD candidate in the Applied Experimental and Human Factors Psychology program at the University of Central Florida and has been employed as a graduate research assistant at the Institute for Simulation & Training since 2001. Research interests include teams, training, distributed teams, team cognition, and team performance under stress.

Michael Rosen is a second year Ph.D. student in the Applied Experimental and Human Factors Psychology program at the University of Central Florida. He is a graduate research assistant at the Institute for Simulation and Training. His research interests include individual and team decision-making, human-computer interaction, and team performance.

Eduardo Salas is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Central Florida where he was selected as a Trustee Chair Professor and holds an appointment as Program Director for Human Systems Integration Research Department at the Institute for Simulation and Training. His expertise includes assisting organizations in how to foster teamwork, design and implement team training strategies, facilitate training effectiveness, manage decision making under stress, and develop performance measurement tools.

Michael Paley is a Human Factors Psychologist and is Vice President of Government Programs at Aptima. Dr. Paley's research interests include methods to improve individual and team performance, design and implementation of training methods, and the application of human centered design principles to system development and the design of human-machine interfaces. He received a Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from the University of Connecticut.

Sharon Riedel is a Research Psychologist with the Army Research Institute. Dr. Riedel's research interests lie within the areas of multicultural teams and communication, training, leadership, critical thinking, and decision-making. She earned her M.A. from Swarthmore College and Ph.D. at Southern Illinois University in Experimental Psychology.

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sburke@ist.ucf.edu, khess@aptima.com, hpriest@ist.uf.edu, mrosen@ist.ucf.edu, esalas@ist.ucf.edu, paley@aptima.com, sharon.riedel@leavenworth.army.mil

"Can you find the opportunity within the chaos? Because you can't organize the chaos of the battlefield" (General Schoomaker, as cited in Shanker, 2004, p. A19).

The above quote is indicative of the fact that within military operations of the 21st century and beyond adaptability is essential. Within this environment military teams are required to adapt to many situational contingencies (asymmetric warfare, joint forces, multicultural teams, technological changes). Given the nature of current and predicted future military missions, one situational variable receiving increased attention is multi-cultural teams and their leadership. For example, Meadows (1995) argues that mission specific task forces composed of military personnel from different services and nations are becoming the norm. Additionally, the role of the United States military is changing from a traditional war-fighting role to one in which stability and support operations require soldiers to work with (and amongst) different cultures. Finally, Elron et al. (2003) states that, "the many ways in which cultural diversity influences the effectiveness of organizations has become a prominent issue for both researchers and those involved in peacekeeping missions" (p. 261).

Reports indicate that leaders of multicultural teams face additional challenges over those of culturally homogeneous teams that, when overcome, can lead to teams that perform more effectively than their homogeneous counterparts (Adler, 1997). For example, multicultural teams tend to initially result in: (a) process loss (Thomas, 1999), (b) lower levels of cohesion (Katz, Goldston, & Benjamin, 1958) and trust (Adler; Distefano & Maznevski, 2000; Triandis, 2000), (c) misinterpretation and loss of communication (e.g., speech less accurate, less information transmitted, and much that is transmitted is lost (Adler; Li, 1999)), and (d) an increased use of inappropriate stereotypes to assign attributions (Horenczyk & Berkerman, 1997). The above cited characteristics of multicultural teams pose challenges for team leaders as they facilitate the dynamic processes which comprise teamwork and facilitate adaptive team performance by communicating a clear direction, creating an enabling performance environment, and providing process coaching (Entin, Serfaty, & Deckert, 1994; Hackman, 2002; Hackman & Walton, 1986). Moreover, it is important to note that the leadership of teams is inherently different than the leadership of individuals. For example, Kozlowski (2002) suggests that unlike leadership, team leadership: (a) dynamically varies within the situation, (b) acknowledges tight interdependencies and subsequent coordination requirements of team members, and (c) produces an emphasis on structuring and regulating team processes to meet shifting internal and external contingencies.

Team leadership has been argued to be a critical component of team effectiveness and to increase in importance as task complexity increases (Jacobs & Jaques, 1987). Due to the complexities in the operational environments that multicultural teams often operate within, as well as within the team itself, effective team leadership and corresponding performance does not happen automatically. Despite the need for training there remains much room for improvement with regard to preparing our leaders to lead multicultural teams. For example, while many organizations, including the military, have invested greatly in team or leadership training, the predominant amount of this training focuses on behaviors and characteristics needed regardless of the cultural/national profile of the team or the environment within which the team is to perform. Additional evidence of the need for better preparation is evidenced by interviews and observations of U.S. forces transitioning from war-fighting to peacekeeping operations where a lack of skill in multinational teamwork was specifically identified as a weakness (Klein & Pierce, 2001; Pierce & Pomranky, 2001). This state of affairs is not acceptable for men and women who are increasingly being placed in environments where they are required to lead multicultural teams with mission critical tasks;

therefore, the purpose of this paper is threefold. First, to provide a set of theoretical and operationally based principles that can assist in developing training programs for leaders of multicultural teams. In doing so a brief review of the relevant literature on team training, cultural diversity, and training is presented. Second, to provide a brief description of such a prototypic tool and, in doing so, illustrate how the state-of-the-art in training and human learning can be put into practice. Finally, we offer some initial validation evidence with regard to the training approach taken within the developed tool.

WHAT CAN BE LEVERAGED WITH REGARD TO TEAM LEADERSHIP?

While there has been much work conducted over the years on leadership, until recently very little work has been conducted on *team* leadership. Recent work on team leadership operates from a functional approach to leadership in which "the leader's job is to do or get done whatever is not being adequately handled for group needs" (McGrath, 1962 as cited in Hackman & Walton, 1986, p. 75). Team leaders must ensure that the functions needed for task accomplishment and group maintenance are being accomplished. In doing so, team leaders iteratively switch between task oriented and developmental roles (Kozlowski, Gully, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers, 1996). It is within the task role that team leaders structure and regulate team processes in order to meet shifting internal and external contingencies. Conversely, when adopting the "developmental" role, the leader ensures that the team develops and maintains the necessary shared knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes that enable interdependent coordinative action.

In enacting these two roles, team leadership is described as a series of steps which are accomplished through the leader's response to social problems: problem identification and diagnoses, generation of solutions, and implementation of a chosen solution. These responses are generic and can be captured in four broad categories: (1) information search and structuring, (2) information use in problem solving, (3) managing personnel resources, and (4) managing material resources (Fleishman, Mumford, Zaccaro, Kevin, Korotkin, & Hein, 1991). The first of these four dimensions, information search and structuring, highlights the leader's role as a boundary spanner in

his or her effort to seek out, acquire, evaluate and organize goal supporting information. The second dimension, information use in problem solving, describes a leader's application of a 'best-fitting' solution to the problem at hand. As the team leader applies a chosen solution to a social problem, both personnel and material resources are called upon and utilized in the process. Finally, team leaders dynamically manage both material (the third dimension) and personnel resources (the fourth dimension).

This multi-dimensionality of team leadership is further evidenced through the competencies delineated by the United States Army within their Field Grade Leader Competency Map. Specifically, the Army has identified a set of seven leader competencies (interpersonal, conceptual, technical, tactical, influencing, operating, and improving). These competencies are further broken into skills (e.g., decision-making, team building, critical reasoning, establishing intent), behavioral requirements (e.g., encourage initiative, anticipate requirements, develop teams), and supporting requirements (e.g., active listening, negotiating, gaining consensus). For a full breakdown and corresponding mapping the interested reader is referred to Army Field Manual 22-100: Army Leadership (Department of the Army, 1999).

In an effort to keep pace with the dynamic pace of the operational environment within today's US forces and look towards the future, Horey, Fallesen, Morath, Cronin, Cassella, Franks, and Smith (2004) have updated the set of competencies required by leaders in the US Army. This has culminated in the identification of eight leadership competencies (i.e., leading others to success, exemplifying shared understanding, reinforcing growth in others, arming self to lead, guiding successful operations, extending influence, exemplifying sound values/behaviors, and vitalizing a positive climate). These competencies are further broken down into components (e.g., listen actively, be sensitive to cultural factors in communication, coach, counsel, mentor, facilitate ongoing development, negotiate for understanding), and corresponding actions (e.g., use verbal and nonverbal means to reinforce with speaker that you are paying attention, reflect on new information before expressing views).

Examining the work that has been done on team leadership illustrates that, while there are some differences between the various conceptualizations, the predominant number of competencies that are argued for by Horey et al (2004) and the Army Field Manual can be placed under one of the functional categories determined by Fleishman et al. (1991). In thinking about the predominant team leadership functions and corresponding behaviors, examining military source documents, and literature on culture it was decided that

at a minimum three leadership skills are especially important within a culturally diverse team: interpersonal, decision-making, and team building (more later within guideline section).

WHAT CAN BE LEVERAGED WITH REGARD TO CULTURAL DIVERSITY?

Once a broad set of leadership functions and corresponding behaviors had been identified, attention next turned to the literature on cultural diversity. Culture has been defined as the shared norms, values, and practices of a nation (Helmreich, 2000). It has also been argued to be the shared perception of the self and others, consisting not only of norms and behaviors, but also beliefs that serve to provide structure for member action (Dodd, 1991). The definitions of culture presented above are fairly broad in that they could refer to national, professional, or military culture (to name a few). Therefore, it is important to note at this point that the current focus is with respect to national culture and how it may impact the manner in which team leadership functions and corresponding behaviors are implemented.

An initial review of the cross-cultural literature revealed approximately 45 conceptualizations of cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, and cognitions (see Salas, Burke, Fowlkes, & Wilson, 2004). The identified dimensions can be argued to predominantly fall within categories dealing with values, attitudes, or behaviors concerning: human relations, power distribution, rules of behavior, orientation to time, rules for status ascription, expression of affect, orientation to nature, cognitive style, and norms regarding communication.

While many have argued and shown that national cultures differ in terms of their values and preferences for action and cognition. It is important to note that researchers have argued that each cultural dimension is not an all or none situation, but that individuals have primary and secondary frames of reference (Trompenaars, 2002). These primary and secondary frames of reference can be used to argue that cultural dimensions are not absolutes. For example, individualists may not always act purely as individualists, but may have a secondary frame of reference as a collectivist depending on the situation. Therefore, the cross-cultural dimensions that appear in the literature should only serve as a starting point in understanding cross-cultural interactions (i.e., they are broad categorizations). Furthermore, any resulting training programs for multicultural team leaders or members should be cognizant of this.

From the identified categories, relevant dimensions were chosen according to two guidelines. Dimensions were initially narrowed based on the amount of empirical work that has been conducted to verify that cultures possess 'real' differences with regard to the dimension. With respect to the first criterion, the cultural dimensions were narrowed to those which predominantly originated within the work of Gert Hofstede as these have been the most studied dimensions. The second criterion for inclusion was to ensure that the chosen dimensions would be operationally relevant and characterized issues where soldiers were reporting challenges or frustrations in dealing with team members from other cultures. Information pertaining to the second criterion was gathered through examination of military websites that contained either articles pertaining to the topic of operating within a multicultural environment or operational accounts (e.g., CALL, companycommand.army.mil). In addition, interviews with subject matter experts and past experiences of co-authors in Bosnia served as input at this stage.

This resulted in an identification of seven cultural dimensions that were felt to have a substantial impact on the leadership of teams within multicultural environments (see Table 1).

Table 1. Cultural Dimensions Thought to Impact Team Leadership.

Cultural Dimensions	Definition
Power Distance	Extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions is distributed unequally; social exchanges are based on this (Hofstede, 1980)
Uncertainty Avoidance	Extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain situations and tries to avoid these situations (Hofstede, 1980)
Individualism/Collectivism	Extent to which society is characterized by a loosely knit social framework in which people are supposed to take care of themselves and immediate family only (Hofstede, 1980)
Context	Extent to which communication involves

	messages in which most of the information is already in the person; very little is in the explicit message (Hall & Hall, 1990)
Cognitive Style	Extent to which attention is paid primarily to the object and categories to which it belongs; extent to which formal rules and logic prevail. Cognitive style can be either holistic or analytic.
Time Orientation	Extent to which virtues orientated towards future rewards are promoted versus virtues orientated towards past and present (Hall & Hall, 1990)
Masculinity/Femininity	Extent to which dominant values are masculine (Hofstede, 1980)

SO HOW DOES TEAM LEADERSHIP INTERSECT WITH CULTURE?

The next step was to begin to identify exactly how the leadership functions and corresponding behaviors identified earlier would be impacted by the identified cultural dimensions. It was thought that by identifying this intersection, leverage points for training could be identified. This process resulted in a series of principles concerning areas to be targeted for training. These principles are organized in terms of the three leadership skills that have been deemed to be the foundation for leader interaction with multicultural team members: interpersonal skills, decision-making, and team building.

Interpersonal Skills

Within the current context interpersonal skill is defined as those skills which impact leader interaction with team members. Behaviors subsumed under this skill represent things such as active listening, negotiation, conflict resolution, communication skills, and empathy. A subset of principles learned that pertain to areas that training should tap with regard to the intersection of interpersonal skill and culture are depicted below.

Principle #1: Team leaders must be aware that active listening may be more difficult to do when the team is culturally diverse with regards to the cultural dimension "context."

Active listening can be defined as a behavior whereby the team leader acknowledges that he/she has received a message sent by a team member. This can be done through verbal or non-verbal communication. As context refers to the way that team members interpret verbal and nonverbal communication, this will impact how the leader approaches active listening. People in high context cultures tend to be more implicit in verbal codes, tend to be more reliant on and tuned into non-verbal communication. People possessing a preference for low context, in contrast, look for meaning within messages to be explicitly stated. Therefore, when performing active listening with cultures characterized by high context, non-verbal communication might work fine; however, with low context cultures, this form of communication may be more difficult (i.e., they may not pick up on leader's intent that the message has been received).

Principle #2: Negotiation by the team leader will be impacted by the cultural dimension of masculinity/femininity.

Negotiation is a problem-solving process whereby team members voluntarily discuss differences and attempt to reach a joint decision. As this process requires the identification of issues upon which there are differences, education pertaining to the needs of each team member, and the generation of possible settlement options it would be expected that cultural diversity within the team may impact how negotiation is handled by the leader. As masculine cultures prefer and respect behaviors such as assertiveness, competition, and toughness, feminine cultures prefer just the opposite. Therefore, dependent on the cultural tendencies of the members involved in the negotiation, communication and behaviors involved in the negotiation process may need to be modified.

Principle #3: The team leader needs to recognize that the team members with whom they communicate will be dictated not only by their needs, but by the cultural dimension of power distance.

Effective communication requires that leaders commit to a few common, powerful, and consistent messages and repeat them over and over in different forms and settings team leaders must determine the best way to measure the message's effectiveness and continually scan and assess the environment to make sure the message is going to the right members. Related to the idea of ensuring that the message is getting to the right team members is the notion of how power distance may impact team communication. Power distance refers to the idea that in some cultures social interaction is

dictated by differences in status. Members high in power distance are unlikely to question those of higher status than themselves. This becomes very important as part of effective communication is ensuring that members understand the message as it was intended.

Principle #4: The manner in which empathy is displayed will need to vary dependent on team members' standing on the cultural dimension of masculinity/femininity in order for it to be accepted and valued.

Empathy refers to the capacity to share others' experiences, feelings, and ideas. The display of empathy is a common practice in cultures that prefer feminine-orientated behavior (i.e., tenderness, orientation to home, children, others). Conversely, team members with a masculine orientation may balk at the team leader displaying empathy in a 'touchy-feely' manner. Within this frame, team leaders might need to be more indirect in their displays or else might suffer a loss of respect.

Decision-Making Skills

Within the current context, decision-making can be defined as the ability to gather and integrate information, use sound judgment, identify alternatives, select a solution and evaluate the consequences (Cannon-Bowers et al., 1995). Displaying this leadership skill involves such behaviors as envisioning the problem, shaping the environment, and determining what and who needs to be influenced for the team to be successful in its mission or tasking. A subset of principles learned pertaining to areas that training should tap with regard to the intersection of decision-making skill and culture are depicted below.

Principle #5: When there is a mismatch between team members' time orientation and that of the leader's it may be more difficult for a leader's vision to become internalized.

Envisioning is the process of designing a vision for the organization and inspiring collaborative efforts to articulate the vision. Team leaders must be able to clearly communicate their vision, create a plan, gain support, and focus team members' work according to the espoused vision. When the time orientations of team leaders and members are mismatched it might be harder to gain support for the vision. Time orientation refers to the values pertaining to time that are fostered by different national cultures. For example, cultures with a short-term time orientation tend to foster values related to the present. As such, values promoted here are immediate gratification and a focus on the here and now. This is in contrast to those with a long-term orientation. These cultures promote values that reflect deferred gratification of needs, and a view that traditions are adaptable based on changing circumstances. If the team leader is attempting to promote a long term vision, members with a short term orientation may not accept it. One strategy might be to break the vision into incremental steps such that these members can receive more immediate gratification along the way.

Principle #6: Shaping the environment is impacted by cultural contingencies.

Team leaders must ensure that each component of their unit and corresponding team members are properly resourced, structured, and assigned missions to support the military's strategy. Shaping the environment is a broad behavioral action that is presumably impacted by all the cultural dimensions identified in Table 1.

Principle #7: Team leaders must realize that cognitive style of team members will impact the process or manner in which decision-making is enacted.

Planning and decision-making is an important part of a military leader's task. Emerging is a recognition that in many circumstances the decision model that is being implemented effectively by team leaders is one in which a leader's knowledge, training, and experience greatly assists in correctly assessing the situation, developing and wargaming a possible COA. This is opposed to a rational view of decision-making where every option is methodically considered and weighed. Team members that are holistic in their cognitive style are likely to be very comfortable with using their experience and heuristics to assist in the decision-making process. In contrast, members with an analytic cognitive style are more likely to rely on rational models of decision-making, consisting of abstract logic and the belief that there is one right way to do things. This has implications for the leader when deciding on whom to rely dependent on time and other situational constraints. It also has implications for the leader in that he/she must realize that people are often operating from different cognitive vantage points and look to different information in making their decisions.

Team Building Skills

Within the current context, team building may be defined as the development of subordinates and formation of a cohesive team. The goal within team building is to build a solid and effective team through

team member development and training. This involves such behaviors as providing feedback, mentoring, motivating, assigning roles appropriately, and enacting the appropriate leadership style. A subset of "principles learned" pertaining to areas that training should tap with regard to the intersection of team building skill and culture are depicted below.

Principle #8: The meaning assigned to feedback provided by the team leader will be impacted by the cultural dimension of high/low context.

Developing team members often requires a leader to share the benefit of their perspective and experience. Part of this development may be the provision of ongoing feedback and correction of team behavior. The manner in which this is done as well as who should provide the feedback is likely to be impacted by culture. Within cross-cultural teams, where the possibility of miscommunication is tremendous, a key challenge for the leader is to ensure that feedback is interpreted in the manner in which it was intended. For example, it has been argued that members from high-context cultures tend not to separate the person from the issue under consideration (Ting-Toomey, 1988) while low-context cultures encourage this type of separation in their communication. The implication for delivering feedback is that members of high-context cultures will be more likely to take the feedback personally even if it is focused on the task and not the person.

Principle #9: The degree of uncertainty avoidance within the team will impact what team leader actions are deemed motivating.

Team leaders are charged with keeping team members motivated to continue progression towards mission goals even in the face of adversity. Motivating team members has been argued to require the cultivation of a challenging, supporting, and respective environment within which team members can operate. Differences with respect to uncertainty avoidance or the degree to which members are comfortable with ambiguity will impact what is deemed motivating. For example, often the way in which team leaders engage the team and keep them progressing is to set goals. As much of the work on goal setting has been conducted within the United States, the rule of thumb is that goals should be: (a) quantifiable, (b) specific, and (c) challenging yet attainable (Locke & Latham, 1994). As cultures differ in terms of the degree to which they tolerate ambiguity and risk taking, it may be that goals need to be set differently dependent upon the level of uncertainty avoidance with which a culture is comfortable. For example, while high uncertainty avoidance cultures are not comfortable with risk, the opposite is true of low uncertainty avoidance cultures. Therefore, challenging goals may not be motivating or engaging for those in low uncertainty avoidance cultures but rather might be perceived as threatening.

Principle #10: The acceptance of leadership styles will vary across cultures.

This principle arises primarily out of work from the GLOBE project. Findings within this project have indicated that leadership styles and attributes are differentially valued and accepted dependent on cultural values and preferences. For example researchers have identified the following: (a) 21 leader attributes and behaviors that are universally viewed as contributing to effective team leadership, many of them falling under the global dimension of charismatic leadership (see Den Hartog, House, Hanges, & Ruiz-Quintella, 1999), (b) eight attributes viewed as negative (e.g., loner, noncooperative, nonexplicit, dictatorial), and (c) 35 that were culturally contingent (e.g., cautious, risk-taker, independent, formal, sensitive). Others have also found evidence for the idea that different cultures have various "prototypes" of what constitutes effective leadership (e.g., Bass, 1997).

These findings have obvious implications for team leadership in that if a leader uses a style that is not endorsed by the cultural make-up of the team he is leading he may not be viewed as credible or effective.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN TERMS OF TRAINING?

Once training targets had been identified, the literatures on cross-cultural and team training were reviewed to identify 'best practices'. From this review several principles were learned that served to inform the development of instructional guidelines. The two deemed most important are presented below.

Principle 11: Skill-based training programs for training leaders of multicultural teams are minimal.

A review of the literature revealed that when multicultural training is provided it has a variety of goals and forms (e.g., cultural awareness, positive attitudes towards cultural differences, understanding one's own culture and biases, Elmuti, 2001), but few offer skill-based training. Most of the identified training strategies identified (Littrell & Salas, 2005) primarily focused on increasing multi-cultural awareness, with few offering strategies by which to

combat the challenges and potential misinterpretations that occur within a multi-cultural environment. These programs tend to vary in the degree to which they are experientially based, but few were found that focused on the more specific topic of preparation for inclusion in multi-cultural teams, and almost none on preparing leaders to deal with the potential process difficulties within these types of teams. It does not seem that training with regard to multicultural teams and their leaders are taking advantage of the wide variety of proven instructional strategies within the team domain (see Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2000).

While programs that teach cultural awareness are beneficial and necessary it is doubtful that meaningful behavioral changes in team leader functioning will occur solely as a result of such interventions. We base this conclusion on what is known about the nature of effective team leadership, teamwork, and human learning.

Principle 12. Experiential, scenario-based training can be a powerful tool.

Given the characteristics of team leadership within the domain of multicultural teams we argue that training tools for multicultural team leaders should be experiential. Smith (2001) argues that experiential learning has been conceptualized in two primary ways. First, it describes the sort of learning methods where participants are given a chance to acquire and apply knowledge, skills, and feelings in an immediate and relevant setting. Second, it has been used to refer to learning that is achieved through reflection upon everyday experience. Experiential learning is learning by doing. It involves the direct application of behavior rather than merely thinking about the phenomena (Borzak, 1981).

The functional approach to leadership acknowledges a set of generic leadership functions the manner in which these functions are applied is context dependent. Therefore, training methodologies should be grounded in the operational context of interest and allow the practicing of skill-based behavior in a relatively safe context where constructive feedback is possible. In addition, within complex environments teams and their leaders must treat every opportunity as a learning experience incorporating experiential learning into training tools can facilitate team reflection in actual operational contexts.

One such instructional method that relies on such an experiential approach is scenario-based training. The cycle begins by determining what competencies will be the focus of the training. During this process techniques such as training needs analysis are used (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Next, to guide a particular training event, a subset of the competencies is selected to form the basis of training objectives. These objectives guide the development of events to embed in the scenario. The events provide known opportunities to observe the competencies of interest. In this way, training and measurement opportunities are not left to chance. Using this technique, measures are then developed to assess trainees' responses to the events. Thus, feedback provided to trainees has direct relevance to the training objectives, thus maintaining the links from competencies to feedback.

This approach to training development is highly applicable to developing training for multicultural team leaders for the technique is very flexible, is context dependent, has been used in highly complex environments, and represents a systematic approach to training development that results in programs that are theoretically sound and able to be evaluated. Moreover, instructors find the measurement tools that flow out of this technique simple to use as a method for providing highly specific feedback.

Functional Learning Levers – The Team Leader Toolkit (FuLL TiLT)

Using the principles presented above, a training program is being created. The target audience is mid-level officers who are getting ready to deploy into a multi-national environment. The training program does not teach leadership skills, but focuses on the intersection of the cultural variables with team leadership skills. The training tool incorporates a combination of instructional features to allow flexibility. FuLL TiLT provides elements of self-learning (e.g., community links), skill training, role play, guided facilitation, and scenario-based training where scenarios are scripted based on actual operational experiences. To ensure practicality and ease of use FuLLTiLT is designed to be SCORM (Sharable Content Object Reference Model) complaint and take no longer than 2 ¼ hours to complete. Following this structure, multimedia, diagnostic feedback, and practice guide participants through a series of scenarios designed to target the specific skills and behaviors discussed above. A brief description of the training follows.

The scenarios are embedded within 9 separate modules (3 modules per skill). Each module is structured to contain three scenarios which follow one overarching storyline. Within each scenario the relationship between a subset of the identified cultural dimensions and one or two of the team leadership behaviors (i.e.,

empathy, negotiation) which are housed under each identified team leadership skill are targeted. Each module is structured such that the first scenario illustrates a situation in which current training on the targeted skill is effective. This "good" example shows a leader within a nationally homogeneous team dealing with a situation and having to direct team members. At the conclusion of the first scenario participants hear a narrator describe in general terms what happened and what behaviors the leader used to accomplish his/her goal – this is done to strengthen and corroborate their current training..

Participants then see a second scenario that illustrates current training on the targeted leadership behaviors not working. This "bad" example illustrates a leader within a nationally heterogeneous team faced with the same situation shown in the "good" example, applying the same strategies, and targeting the same behaviors. Following this example, participants receive "lessons learned" from the first two examples.

Following the lessons learned, the participants are shown a final scenario. This final scenario is designed to illustrate a different situation than the first two. Participants are then asked to "choose your own" ending from a list of multiple choice answers. Answers to the scenario containing the "choose your own ending" are based on interviews with subject matter experts and researcher knowledge of the impact of culture on the targeted skill behavior. Answers are designed such that no one answer is completely correct or incorrect, but differ by sophistication of understanding of multicultural effects. Constructive feedback is given for each chosen response (e.g., this was good because…, this was bad because…), followed by more "lessons learned", and recommendations for further training needs.

Experiential training is based on the concept of learning by doing, allowing trainees to get experience by directly applying behavior in a safe setting where constructive feedback can be given, rather than just thinking about the behaviors (Borzak, 1981).

In addition to the training content, FuLL TiLT is being designed to contain "community" links, including message boards, chat rooms, and external links for military and country-specific information.

Tool format as well as the structure and content of developed modules has begun to be validated through visiting five Army bases to conduct interviews and demonstrate the product to approximately 122 subject matter experts with operational experience in multicultural leadership. Initial validation of the utility, format, and content of the tool has been promising with approximately 90-99% agreeing that the tool is a needed addition to the current training regime, the identified leadership skills and cultural dimensions contained are important and pose challenges during deployment, and the structure and embedded content will be useful and have face validity to mid-level officers. Development has been an iterative process with revisions in the tool being conducted based on feedback received and then new additions being reevaluated. A formal validation effort for the entire tool is planned for early in 2006.

CONCLUSION

Team leadership and the impact of culture will continue to be an issue in the foreseeable future in the military, as well as civilian organizations. However, the current tool and similar training interventions are a good step in leveraging benefits and minimizing the costs of nationally heterogeneous teams.

The principles learned provided can be utilized to develop training interventions that will enable leaders to 1) obtain the necessary knowledge to effectively lead multinational teams and interact with individuals from different cultures, 2) practice leadership behaviors within a safe, multinational context, and 3) receive feedback on their performance. By incorporating empirically tested, theoretically-based training methodology, interventions like this one can better prepare leaders for the increasingly global world of the military and industry. With adequate training and preparation, leaders can better anticipate needed behaviors and adapt their strategies to interact effectively with team members of all cultures, while decreasing dangerous or unproductive situations that result from cultural misunderstandings.

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