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**Group Science and its Applicability for
Improving Human Resource Management in a Transforming Canadian Forces**

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ABSTRACT

The Canadian Forces is presently undergoing a transformation that will see it become a modern and joint armed force that will be equipped and capable of conducting full spectrum operations. Implicit in this mandate is the requirement to have a cohesive and tightly integrated defence team that can operate in the complex operational situations of the future and that has the unity of focus and cohesion to achieve national defence objectives. However, achieving this aim can only be achieved by focusing on its people and teams through a comprehensive and integrated human resource management system that is responsive and ready for the challenges ahead.

Group science is the study and body of knowledge associated with the dynamics of groups or teams. Generally, it includes the fields of study and research that is associated with how groups or teams come together, stay together and effectively perform. In this regard, it encompasses elements of behavioral science, organizational behavior, psychology, and the social sciences.

In its application to human resource management, group science provides insight and perspective into how teams and groups can be developed, maintained and improved. In a Canadian Force context, it therefore offers insight into how a modern military can be developed through improvements to its human resource management system. By applying these group science principles and best practices, the Canadian Forces can improve its leadership and the way it recruits, retains, trains, and manages its personnel. It is only by taking a more rigorous approach to how it manages its teams and groups that the Canadian Forces will be able to succeed in the future.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

TRANSFORMING THE CANADIAN FORCES

The Canadian Forces (CF) is presently undergoing a transformation that will see it become a modern and joint armed force that will be equipped and capable of conducting full spectrum operations.¹ As stated in the *Chief of the Defence Staff's 2005 Planning Guidance* for transformation, the CF's ultimate end-state is to be "... strategically relevant, operationally responsive and tactically decisive, supported by an effective, efficient and adaptable defence institution; capable of operating within a dynamic and evolving security spectrum."² The vision of a multi-dimensional and integrated force is also reiterated in the Defence component of Canada's *International Policy Statement* (more commonly known as the Defence Policy Statement - DPS). In the DPS it states that not only will the CF be required to protect Canadian sovereignty and North America, it will also contribute more to international stability where it

..... will focus their expeditionary capabilities on operations in these states, including in a leadership role when it is in Canada's interest and ability to do so. In these demanding and complex environments, where civilians mix with friendly, neutral and opposing forces, often in urban areas, our military must be prepared to perform different missions—humanitarian assistance, stabilization operations, combat—all at the same time. The Canadian Forces, with their modern capabilities and highly developed skills in dealing with people on the ground, can make a difference in this respect.³

¹ As defined in the International Policy Statement - Defence, "full spectrum operations" is the term for military-related activities associated with the development, defence, diplomacy or commerce (3D+C) aspects of Canada's foreign policy. It is more commonly known as the "3-Block War". Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Defence* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 26.

² General R.J. Hillier, *CDS Planning Guidance – CF Transformation* (National Defence Headquarters: file 1950-9 (CT), October 2005).

³ Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Defence* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 2-3.

This statement clearly underlines the Government of Canada's commitment to establishing a CF that is a dynamic and integrated team capable of operating in challenging and demanding environments. In support of this transformation, the CF is also making great strides to becoming a joint force where all three components, whether air, navy or army, will now be required to work closely together - as it is only by subordinating their own service-specific ways of conducting business that a joint force will truly be realized.

Implicit in the above mandate is the need to have a cohesive and tightly integrated defence team that can operate in the complex operational situations of the future and that has the unity of focus and cohesion to achieve operational objectives. Not only will this teamwork have to exist at the strategic level, it will have to also permeate to the operational and tactical levels as the CF will be called upon more and more to use independent and self-reliant teams in full-spectrum operations. Furthermore, this will become increasingly critical, as these teams will frequently be isolated from support and command. This requirement for more integrated and joint teamwork is markedly different from that expected of the pseudo-joint CF of the past, when the enemy's intentions and capabilities were better known and teamwork was less critical in achieving military objectives.⁴

However, to have a Force with effective teams, it will be necessary to improve the CF's Human Resource Management System (HRMS) to better provide a personnel

⁴ The CF has technically been a joint force since 1964 when the 3 three services were unified into the Canadian Armed Forces. However, with the recent implementation of the three operational commands - CANADACOM, CEFCOM and CANOSCOM – and the new strategic headquarters organizations, it is clear that the three components will now have to work more closely together and share resources like never before. General R.J. Hillier, *CDS Planning Guidance – CF Transformation* (National Defence Headquarters: file 1950-9 (CT), October 2005).

management and development framework that fosters a team-based approach. This requirement is clearly articulated in several of the CF's policy documents, most notably in *HR Strategy 2020*.⁵ In this capstone document, it is evident that the CF has a considerable challenge ahead as it tries to cope with transformation. This challenge is also recognized in the *2003-2004 Annual Report of the Chief of the Defence Staff*, which acknowledges that there are recruiting challenges arising from demographic changes, and the CF must now focus more on recruiting specific targeted groups to ensure the CF is ready for tomorrow.⁶ The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) also reports that, from a manpower perspective, the CF will have problems in reaching their goals. As indicated in the OAG's *2006 Report on Military Recruitment and Retention*, the CF has made some progress in HRM since the last OAG report in 2002.⁷ However, it also acknowledges that the CF is still having considerable difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified and competent personnel in the CF; and though it has been successfully recruiting the numbers required, there are still a considerable number of people leaving once they are trained.⁸ Moreover, though recruiting has recently been successful at achieving a

⁵ *HR Strategy 2020* is the CF's guidance on strategic HRM. It states that leadership is a significant component of building force cohesion. Department of National Defence, *Military HR Strategy 2020: Facing the People Challenges of the Future* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 4.

⁶ Department of National Defence, *Making Choices: 2003-2004 Annual Report of the Chief of the Defence Staff* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2004), 18.

⁷ The OAG has reviewed the CF's recruiting and retention problems twice: once in 2002 and recently in 2006. These reports are Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *May 2006 Report of the Auditor General of Canada: National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government of Services Canada, 2006); and Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *April 2002 Report of the Auditor General of Canada: National Defence – Recruitment and Retention of Military Personnel* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government of Services Canada, 2002).

⁸ Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *May 2006 Report of the Auditor General of Canada: National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government of Services Canada, 2006), 47-48.

manpower steady state – that is net recruiting minus releases - the near future requirement to surge by another 13,000 personnel will be difficult to meet “when faced with a changing Canadian demographic, a low interest among Canadian youth in joining the military, and increasing military operational demands.”⁹

In today’s modern Force, there is also a need to better train people to be able to operate in a new transformed military that can operate with our allies in failed states. Furthermore, despite the daunting challenge of recruiting and retaining personnel, the CF will be required to provide personnel and teams with cultural sensitivity and an understanding of what makes international interagency teams work. These teams must be capable of assisting and working within nations with peoples and cultures quite different than that of the average Canadian citizen. However, with this challenge also comes opportunity, as Canada is unique in the world and is well positioned because it has a large multicultural workforce. This workforce can be leveraged to enable the diversity and creativity that leads to innovative approaches to national defence – key elements of a transformed and modern military force.¹⁰ Furthermore, a multicultural force will mirror Canadian society and provide a force that better represents Canada at large. This is

⁹ Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *May 2006 Report of the Auditor General of Canada*. (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government of Services Canada, 2006), 47/48. The OAG report still indicates that the CF must surge by only 5,000 people while new targets are for 13,000 new recruits.

¹⁰ It is well-documented that diversity can provide greater overall benefits than that of a traditional homogeneous organization. See Vidu Soni, “A Twenty-First-Century Reception for Diversity in the Public Sector: A Case Study,” *Public Administration Review* 60, no. 5 (September 2000): 395-408; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 21 January 2007.

clearly a mandate as a CF that does not comprise typical Canadians will lose credibility and relevance in the changing Canadian demographic.¹¹

WHAT IS GROUP SCIENCE AND HOW CAN IT HELP?

Group science is the study and body of knowledge associated with the dynamics of groups or teams. Generally, group science includes the fields of study and research that is associated with how groups or teams come together, stay together and effectively perform. In the context of this research paper, group science therefore comprises the sociological and organizational study of how people form teams or groups that collectively achieve more than individuals. Though no formal definition is offered, it will include research and theory from the behavioural sciences, organizational behaviour, psychology, and the social sciences. As this research paper will demonstrate, group science presents an opportunity for improving teams in the CF through better human resource management; and the associated best practices and theory can also be used to better ensure the CF is ready for the future and transformation.

Several fields of group science have been developed over the years with the most recent developments in association with the business world and how to improve organizations and teams. From an overall view, Fambrough and Comerford provide an epistemological background on basic group science and theory in “The Changing Epistemological Assumptions of Group Theory.”¹² From a military perspective, Oliver *et*

¹¹ The challenge of recruiting from the changing Canadian demographic is also identified in the 2006 OAG Report. Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *May 2006 Report of the Auditor General of Canada*. (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government of Services Canada, 2006), 55-56.

¹² Fambrough and Comerford’s article, “The Changing Epistemological Assumptions of Group Theory” identifies the United States Office of Naval Research (ONR) as an early leader in the study of group dynamics. Mary J. Fambrough and Susan A. Comerford, “The Changing Epistemological

al from the US Army Research Institute examines the history of team cohesion. Others have focussed on the 20th Century history of “group theory” from a psychological viewpoint.¹³ Salas’ articles on military research also provides a review of how team science has been applied in a military context over the last few decades.¹⁴

In application to the military, the majority of the research efforts occurred after the Second World War. Research on topics such as the effect of group composition on military performance and cohesion has been substantial, with other fields such as the recruitment and retention of demographic groups seeming to predominate in the last decade.¹⁵ Other fields of study include the effective training of military teams and the leadership aspects of leading groups. In this context, most research has tended to focus on the psychological or organizational behaviour perspective and has not been holistic in its application to HRM in a military context.

Group science is a very practical field that can provide insight on why teams are effective and why individuals want to join groups and work well together. What has to be examined is how can it be best utilized to improve the CF’s HRMS to better prepare for the future.

Assumptions of Group Theory,” *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 42, no. 3 (September 2006), 332; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

¹³ Cohen, Ettin and Fidler’s “Group-As-a-Whole Theory Viewed In Its 20th Century Context” provides a very clinical perspective on the subject. Bertram D. Cohen, Mark F. Ettin, and Jay W. Fidler, “Group-as-a-Whole Theory Viewed in Its 20th-Century Context,” *Group Dynamic: Theory, Research and Practice* 1, no. 4 (December 1997), 329-340; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

¹⁴ Eduardo Salas is one of the pre-eminent group theorists on military team training. Several of his articles are referenced and included in this research paper.

¹⁵ See Oliver *et al*’s treatment of group cohesion in Laurel W. Oliver, *et al*, “A Quantitative Integration of the Military Cohesion Literature,” *Military Psychology* 11, no. 1 (1999): 57-83; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

RESEARCH PROJECT OBJECTIVE

As Greer emphasizes in his book, HRM is not a collection of disparate functions and activities but must be viewed as an integrated system that is a strategic enabler for any organization.¹⁶ It is therefore a key element of the CF's strategic management framework as its success determines whether we have quality personnel in the organization and can effectively operate as a cohesive force. From this viewpoint, it is critical that all efforts focus HRM towards establishing and maintaining an effective military force: and fundamental to this objective is the incorporation of teamwork in all that we do.

Based on the requirement to transform the CF into an integrated and modern force, it is submitted that the ability of a military to work as team is its most fundamental capability: For without basic teamwork, a military is just a collection of individuals without a desire or focus to achieve the mission. Based on this premise, a fundamental assertion underlying this research paper is that the ability of a military to work and function as an integrated team is its most important attribute. With this in mind, the management of its personnel - including recruiting, selection, retention, training, and performance management - should always emphasize a teamwork construct above all other requirements to ensure its personnel are able to participate and perform effectively in groups.

The necessity of fostering a team environment mandates a focus on recruiting and retaining teamplayers who will be able to operate effectively in military groups through

¹⁶ Charles R. Greer, *Strategic Human Resource Management* (New York: Prentice Hall, 2000), Chapter 1.

their natural attributes; and who will benefit from the provision of team training and appropriate performance feedback and improvement opportunities. The CF must then take advantage of and incorporate the best of available team and group science to establish the most effective military team.

Before an examination of group science and its applicability to improving HRM, it must be made clear that this paper does not propose that all existing HRM resources should be focussed on implementing a group science-based HRM system; or that the present inability to recruit and retain people in the CF is based on a neglect of a group-based approach. However, it does strive to point out that considerably more can be done to incorporate group science into existing HRM; and that in the end a military force that does not operate as a coherent and focussed group is not operating at peak performance. Furthermore, there is no intended implication in this paper that the CF's HRMS should only focus on group aspects at the expense of other characteristics: it is more focussed on conveying that the importance of teamwork in any military is so fundamental that it must take precedence if possible. And although it is recognized that other factors may dominate military HRM, there are undoubtedly other attributes – including the desire to be part of an exclusive group - that may ultimately influence why people join and remain contributing members of the CF. These factors will be explored throughout the paper.

In view of the requirement to foster teamwork, this research paper will present a review of team and group science with an aim of providing recommendations for improvement to the CF's HRMS in response to the challenges envisioned in transformation within the future defence environment. Although group science has many areas of study, this research paper will focus on those theories and concepts applicable to

a military environment. This paper therefore encompasses how the CF's HRMS can utilize group science to benefit the CF from an organizational perspective as well as how it can be used to examine the psychological attributes associated with an individual's propensity and response to a military group and team environment. Similarly, though there are several components of HRM, this research paper will only focus on four areas: personnel recruiting and selection, retention, training (both of individuals and teams), and the management of individual and military team performance. Though these aspects do not include all the HRM functions, they are selected as they pose the greatest challenge and opportunity for the applicability of group science within a transforming CF.¹⁷

Moreover, in assessing how HRM can apply group theory and science to better prepare the CF for the transformational challenges ahead, the research will be applied to the unique CF environment with its relatively small population for recruiting, very small force size, limited budget, and a requirement to meet the expectations of a very powerful and sophisticated American military ally.

Given the above context, the thesis put forward by this research paper is that the existing CF HRMS does not sufficiently incorporate group sciences to make it an effective component of the CF's strategic framework, and that improvements can be made to improve teamwork and overall HRM performance within the CF. With the present emphasis on individuality in HRM – for example recruiting personnel based on individual rather than group attributes – the CF HRMS is not focussing on delivering a team-based force that can better respond to the transformational challenges. Other CF

¹⁷ Recruiting, retention, and training are probably the most studied aspects of HRM in modern militaries. They are also the components of HRM that demand the most resources and focus to manage.

HRMS aspects, like performance measurement incorporated through appraisal systems, also take a very rudimentary approach to “teamwork” and do not necessarily meet the mark. Other examples are available that will be discussed in this paper.

CHAPTER 2 - RECRUITING TEAMPLAYERS

The successful recruitment of personnel from the Canadian population is perhaps the greatest challenge facing the CF. This is especially relevant given that there is an immediate requirement to increase the size of the CF by 13,000 people in the near future.¹⁸ As identified by several reports – most notably the 2002 report from the OAG – Canadian population demographics are quickly changing, and the average recruit can no longer be expected to be a Caucasian male between the age of 17 and 24.¹⁹ With this reality comes the acknowledgement that recruiters will have to focus on attracting more visible minorities and women to the forces to maintain troop levels and ensure the CF truly represents the diverse Canadian population while meeting the goals established under the Employment Equity Act.²⁰

Recruiting essentially comprises two aspects: enticing people to become interested in a career in the CF and then ultimately visiting a recruiting center and enrolling; and the actual selection of personnel for service based on established criteria. Achieving success with both of these processes will require an HRMS that must react to changing Canadian demographics. As to the process of attracting potential recruits,

¹⁸ As identified in the Defence Policy Statement, the CF needs to enrol up to 8,000 more people. Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Defence* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 3. This target has, however, recently been increased in 2006 to 13,000. CF Recruiting Group Backgrounder Memorandum available at <http://www.recruiting.forces.gc.ca/v3/media/news/backgrounders/BG-2005.01%20CFRG%20Final-en.pdf>

¹⁹ The actual target age for recruits seems to vary depending on the source. Tasserion indicates that the target age is 17 to 24, though the upper age limit will have to increase with Canada's aging population. Major Jeff Tasserion, "Military Manning and the Revolution in Social Affairs," *Canadian Military Journal* (Autumn 2001), 56. The OAG indicates that the target age is more in the range of 16 to 34. Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *May 2006 Report of the Auditor General of Canada*. (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government of Services Canada, 2006), 55.

²⁰ The Canadian Government's Employment Equity Act legislates the employment of four designated groups: visible minorities, women, disabled persons, and aboriginals.

group science is more interested in what makes specific groups want to join the CF. From this perspective, it might advocate two fundamental approaches to attracting target groups in Canadian society. The first approach would be to focus on the perceived “affiliation” attributes of that group- whether based on cultures, age, geographic location, or sex – and market the CF as an organization that espouses those attributes as organizational characteristics. The second approach would be to disregard attributes and entice individuals to join a CF that ostensibly reflects pan-Canadian values and that is regarded as an exclusive group in itself that offers employment and a rewarding career.

Additionally, group science might be useful in determining the most effective recruiting strategy and personnel selection criteria that would ensure potential recruits are good teamplayers; as well as offering some insight into how personnel selection tests might be improved to ensure only teamplayers are selected for service in the CF.

CANADIAN DEMOGRAPHIC REALITY

The Canadian demographic is rapidly changing with an increasing proportion of visible minorities and a large percentage of the current population born in another country.²¹ According to Statistics Canada, and as presented at Figure 1, the country presently comprises over 15 percent of visible minorities with this proportion likely to increase to over 20 percent in the next decade and to over 50 percent by 2050.²² This means that the traditional CF recruiting demographic will have changed considerably from that of the past.

²¹ Statistics Canada; <http://www.statcan.ca>; Internet; accessed 12 October 2006.

²² Statistics Canada; <http://www.statcan.ca>; Internet; accessed 12 October 2006.

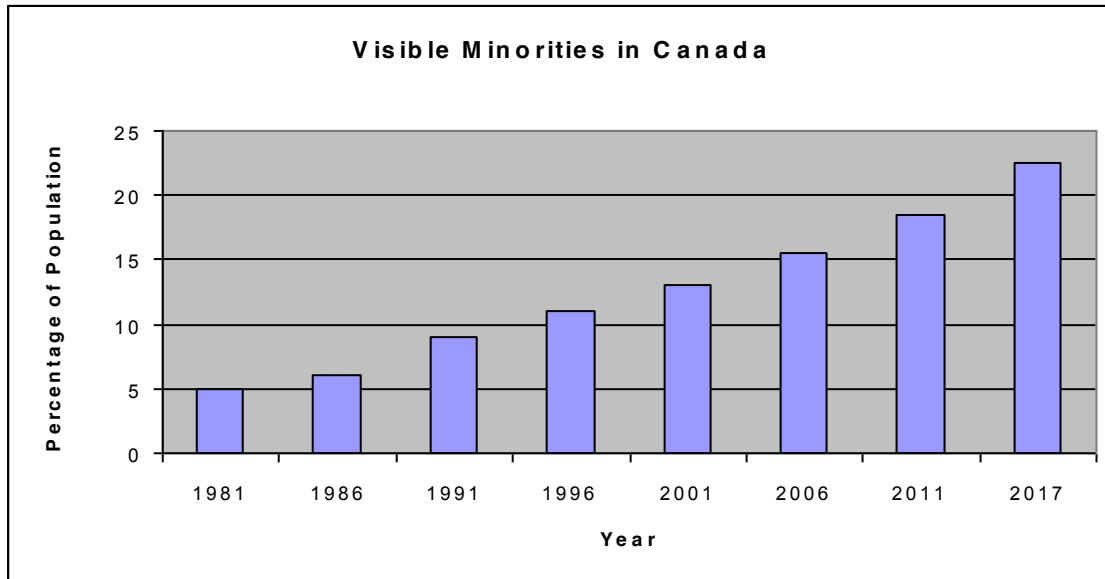


Figure 1 – Visible Minorities in Canada

Source: Statistics Canada; <http://www.statcan.ca>; Internet; accessed 12 October 2006.

The influx and increasing birth rate of visible minorities implies a future country that will continue to comprise a myriad of diverse and multi-faceted cultural groups that have unique perspectives on a career in the military as well as what it means to be Canadian. These changing demographics will obviously pose a recruiting challenge to the CF. However, with this challenge comes the opportunity to improve the CF, as a multicultural force can also provide opportunities for diverse perspectives and skill-sets. These skill-sets will become even more important as the CF operates more and more in multicultural environments within nations that require cultural sensitivity and an understanding of the people and how to foster trust and compassion while still maintaining a war-fighter focus.

ATTRACTING TARGETED GROUPS

With respect to attracting specific target groups to the CF, the fundamental question is whether the CF should recruit the different “groups” by attempting to convince them that the attributes considered important to their culture are fostered in the CF. Or conversely, should the CF admit that it cannot cater to all groups and focus on convincing recruits - regardless of their “group” affiliation - that the CF is a unique and exclusive group in itself that represents what is truly Canadian.

The first approach, that of focussing recruiting efforts on target groups, is considered very feasible in the present HRM environment, as there are reasonable and simple (though not necessarily effective) methodologies for attracting different groups to the CF. These would include staffing recruiting centers with representatives from these groups and promoting specific benefits that are desirable to that particular group. As indicated by Schreurs *et al*, simple initiatives such as improving the first face-to-face encounters in recruiting centers can be critical to successful enrolment.²³ When encountering a CF representative in a recruitment center with similar characteristics, it is submitted that a person is likely to leave with a more favourable impression of the organization. Furthermore, recruiting drives and marketing can be modified in specific areas to cater to these different groups especially amongst the diverse cultural communities found in the majority of large Canadian cities. These approaches are

²³ Bert Schreurs, *et al*, “Attracting Potential Applicants to the Military: The Effects of Initial Face-to-Face Contacts,” *Human Performance* 18, no. 2 (2005): 105-122; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 11 January 2007.

obviously not new to the CF recruiting system and have been examined by several authors.²⁴

As identified by Reuben and other authors, when it comes to military recruiting, there are specific attributes that can be associated with some groups.²⁵ Issues like a fear of racial discrimination, the relatively low earning power of the military, mistrust of militaries based on original homeland experiences, and language barriers are just some of the deterrents for visible minorities to join the CF.²⁶ Additionally, there are impediments for other groups, like women and disabled persons, that also undermine any efforts by the CF to attract and retain the nation's best and brightest. But Canada is not alone, as other militaries are also experiencing similar problems in recruiting visible minorities. They also suffer from the same inability to find a solution beyond that of the usual recommendations to focus marketing on target group expectations during the recruiting drive.²⁷

²⁴ See, for example, Rouleau's "Revolution in Recruiting Affairs" for recommendations on where the CF should focus. Captain(N) Denis Rouleau, "Revolution in Recruiting Affairs: A Necessity" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College National Security Studies Course Paper, 2002).

²⁵ There has been considerable interest amongst students of the Canadian Forces College on recruiting and HRM issues. Besides Captain(N) Rouleau's paper, see Major Z.D. Myshkevich, "Canadian Forces Human Resource Management – Time for a Change in Approach" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Masters of Defence Studies Research Project Paper, 2004) and Lieutenant Commander Robert Ferguson, "Future Human Resource Management Methods for the Canadian Forces" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Joint Command and Staff Programme New Horizons Paper, 2005).

²⁶ Reuben's article identifies several aspects of why visible minorities are not joining the CF. Captain(N) A.F. Rueben, "Recruiting Visible Minorities: A Matter of Survival" (Toronto: Canadian Forces College National Security Studies Course Paper, 2004).

²⁷ See Hussain's article in *Human Resource Management in the British Armed Forces* for the challenges facing the British Armed Forces in recruiting visible minorities. Asifa Hussain, "Managing Ethnic Minority Recruitment in the Uniformed Services: A Scottish Perspective," in *Human Resource Management in the British Armed Forces*, ed. Alex Alexandrou *et al*, 113-136 (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001), 113-136.

Given the above, this research paper does not intend to extensively examine the specific problems facing recruiters for these groups nor provide detailed recommendations on what the CF should do to attract specific target groups in Canada. Several authors have studied this topic, and sound recommendations have been provided, especially with respect to specific cultural groups within the Canadian social fabric.²⁸ The brevity of this report also precludes a study of the recruitment of other targeted groups like women and the disabled.

Research has shown that employees who join companies with unreasonable career expectations can quickly become disenchanted and leave an organization quicker than a person who joins with a complete understanding of what the job entails.²⁹ This implies that the idea of representing the CF as an organization that provides the specific attributes envisioned by demographic groups is appealing but likely to achieve only short-term gains. For a military force to be cohesive, the fundamental organizational attribute must be homogeneity (at least from a leader and follower perspective), and any initiatives that would diminish this attribute would be detrimental to a consolidated and integrated force. Additionally, incorporating the above approach in the recruiting process might also be misconstrued as favouritism and a culture-specific initiative that is counterproductive to force requirements. Based on this reasoning, a CF that represents itself as an organization that caters to specific groups might entice recruits from different cultural groups but may suffer from diminished retention if the perception of the organization

²⁸ See Rouleau and Reuben.

²⁹ F. Carson Mencken and Idee Winfield, "In Search of the 'Right Stuff:' The Advantages and Disadvantages of Informal and Formal Recruiting Practices in External Labour Markets," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 57, no. 2 (April 1998): 137; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

dwindles in the eyes of the recruit. Therefore, an argument can be made that catering to group attributes may achieve recruit attraction goals but may ultimately result in increased release rates of these groups once they realize the realities of working in a homogeneous CF that emphasizes an integrated team over any other group or individual. Recruiting members to only have them release in the near future is obviously very counter-productive and expensive, as long-term retention (the ultimate goal of the CF) would be compromised.³⁰

With respect to group sciences and recruitment in the CF, there is some relevant research that pertains to groups in general. Breugh has highlighted that different recruiting methodologies often result in varying degrees of success when measuring the ultimate performance of that employee once hired and working in the organization.³¹ This would suggest that the CF recruiting system must consider all methodologies when recruiting target groups, whether that be focussing on innovative advertising or increasing the number of recruiting centers. Additionally, Barron, Bishop and Dunkelberg have also linked job search techniques to ultimate employee performance and retention in a company. In this study, employees who were recruited by peers and friends turned out to be more productive and loyal employees than those who were informed of a job through

³⁰ According to *Human Resource Management in the British Armed Forces*, the cost of training and developing a new military recruit can be up to six times more than that of retaining an existing member. Graham Complin, "A Wasted Investment? The Career Management of Royal Signal Young Officers," in *Human Resource Management in the British Armed Forces*, ed. Alex Alexandrou, *et al*, 29 - 66 (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001), 30.

³¹ James A. Breugh, "Relationships between Recruiting Sources and Employee Performance, Absenteeism, and Work Attitudes," *The Academy of Management Journal* 24, no. 1 (March 1981): 145; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

traditional advertising.³² Furthermore, studies have shown - not surprisingly - that groups are better developed when there is an element of friendliness and familial bonding amongst group members. This appears to be particularly important when considering groups with religious affiliations.³³

Given the above research on how people respond to initial encounter situations, it would seem that one approach that might improve the CF's recruiting of targeted groups is the outsourcing of some of the initial advertising and interviewing processes that require more sensitivity to targeted groups. This approach is not advocated as a means to lower costs but rather to establish a recruiting system that would be more effective, especially in the case of the recruitment of visible minorities. Some changes might include the hiring of private headhunting agencies to establish "informal recruiting centers" in specific city areas and staff those centers with individuals from those particular neighbourhoods. This might provide an initial environment where potential CF applicants might be exposed to a career in the CF by a system that is more familial and less imposing; as being introduced to a career by someone who is very conscious of your culture and aspirations, would be less intimidating and might establish a more "open door" atmosphere where potential applicants would feel very comfortable in visiting a recruiting center. This is not advocating that the CF's recruiting system become civilianized, as there will always be a need to have military members with experience in

³² F. Carson Mencken and Idee Winfield, "In Search of the 'Right Stuff': The Advantages and Disadvantages of Informal and Formal Recruiting Practices in External Labour Markets," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 57, no. 2 (April 1998): 138. <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

³³ Helen Rose Fuchs Ebaugh, and Sharron Lee Vaughn, "Ideology and Recruitment in Religious Groups," *Review of Religious Research* 26, no. 2 (December 1984): 151-152; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 15 November 2006.

the ultimate selection process. However, it is argued that the traditional “military” processes should occur later in the recruiting stage as a final quality control measure to ensure potential applicants are informed of the realities of a career in the CF and that they pass an interview test. The checks that could only be administered by a military recruiter would continue.

The other approach of not focussing on targeted groups and marketing the CF as an equal opportunity employer is also viable. It would likely be the most cost-effective and easiest approach as recruiting resources could be minimized. The cost of specialized marketing campaigns would be eliminated; there would no requirement to staff recruiting centers with CF members representing specific target groups; and there would not be a myriad of recruiting policies and procedures that would change depending on who was being recruited. Furthermore, enticing applicants by promoting the CF as a good career opportunity that fosters the Canadian culture and values should encourage more new Canadians to visit a recruiting center - though the statistics might indicate otherwise.³⁴ An approach that focuses on attracting citizens that truly believe in the CF as a pan-Canadian institution, and who are sincerely attracted to the military life, would definitely be more beneficial as it would attract applicants who are joining the CF for the right reasons.

ONLY TEAMPLAYERS WANTED

A fundamental question for the CF continues to be what recruiting strategy would ensure that only potential teamplayers enter a recruiting center and ultimately decide to enrol? Though there are selection methodologies that better predict the propensity of an

³⁴ There does not appear to be any empirical data collected in the literature on this measure.

individual to be a good teamplayer (to be covered in the next chapter), predicting what marketing and advertising schemes would attract teamplayers is difficult at best.

Traditionally, most military advertising shows military teams in action, which obviously projects an image of a cohesive and tight organization where the value of the team is paramount. However, studies may reveal that individuals who are quick to join military and paramilitary organizations are often more individualistic than expected. This possibility emphasizes the challenge in formulating a recruiting strategy that attracts good teamplayers while weeding out those who join for the wrong reasons; as a large group of individuals will never be better than a small but cohesive team, and employing individuals over team players would obviously be counter-productive to building a sustainable and effective team. Though exposing personnel to a group environment and providing team training can improve their propensity for teamwork, it would be beneficial if the starting baseline was not individualistic.

Studies have shown that specific organizational attributes appeal more to teamplayers.³⁵ As previously mentioned, advertising campaigns showing vigorous physical activity – such as a military team in action – might appeal more to those who are motivated to be good teamplayers. This is very evident in sports teams in which this primal instinct is mandatory in the men and women making up the team. Though the present CF advertising campaigns could be modified to perhaps cater to specific target

³⁵ Organizational culture and professional development opportunities are some of these factors. John N. Barron, John Bishop and William C. Dunkelberg, “Employer Search: The Interviewing and Hiring of New Employees,” *The Review of Economics and Statistics* 67, no. 1 (February 1985): 47; <http://www.jstor.org>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

groups, it seems that the traditional portrayal of the Force participating in an adrenaline-packed operation is the most reasonable approach to entice teamplayers.³⁶

SELECTING TEAMPLAYERS

The typical recruitment of a potential CF member is a lengthy process that culminates with a recruiting officer ultimately deciding on whether the candidate should be offered enrolment. This final decision is based on several factors, including a review of the candidate's health, education, suitability and results from an aptitude test and interview. Though this process is rigorous and generally maintains good quality control, the selection process generally focuses on the candidate's individual attributes, or more specifically, how that candidate is as an individual.³⁷ However, what is missing – and arguably most important – is a quantitative and thorough assessment of how well a member might fit into and become a contributing member of a military team or their propensity for teamwork: presently this assessment is only based on a recruiting officer's personal interview and their opinion of the candidate.

Some might argue that team-based selection criteria are not appropriate or that the recruiting officer's personal assessment is enough to determine if a person will “fit” in the organization. Presently, the CF recruiting system utilizes the CF Aptitude Test (CFAT) as the cognitive component of a recruit's assessment. This test focuses on three main areas: verbal skills, spatial ability, and problem solving.³⁸ The CFAT, however,

³⁶ The present CF advertising campaign and operations in Afghanistan appears to be enticing a record number of potential recruits to visit recruiting centers. This “revolution” might be because the operations in Afghanistan are fostering a renewed Canadian nationalism in today's youth. Canadian Forces recruiting officer, interview with author, 12 January 2007.

³⁷ Canadian Forces recruiting officer, interview with author, 12 January 2007.

³⁸ Canadian Forces Recruiting Website, <http://www.recruiting.forces.gc.ca>.

does not include such areas as personality traits and other psychometric measures; and it is often these individual traits and measures which ultimately may determine how well a recruit fits into the demanding environment of a CF military team. However, Canada is not alone in this regard as the United States military also uses only a cognitive system that assesses ability rather than personality traits.³⁹

There has been considerable research on personality traits and their association with team performance. The “Big Five” personality trait model, which was developed and refined by research over the years, is considered by many researchers as the pre-eminent starting point for assessing an individual’s propensity and potential to be a team player.⁴⁰ This model reveals that an individual with the personality traits of emotional stability, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness tend to make better team players than those without these traits.⁴¹ These correlations hardly seem surprising given that a good teamplayer should be a well-balanced individual who is comfortable around people and who considers others and values their opinions. Moreover, there has been considerable research that indicates that specific individual personality attributes also bodes well for that person’s propensity to work in a specialized

³⁹ The US Military utilizes a cognitive Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) to assess various abilities and other psychometric characteristics.

⁴⁰ See Driskell *et al* for an excellent overview of the “Big Five” personality trait model. James E. Driskell, *et al*, “What Makes a Good Teamplayer? Personality and Team Effectiveness,” *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 10, no. 4 (December 2006): 249-250; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

⁴¹ James E. Driskell *et al*, “What Makes a Good Teamplayer? Personality and Team Effectiveness,” *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 10, no. 4 (December 2006): 250; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

team that requires unique skill-sets and team characteristics.⁴² A good example of this might be a person's unique potential to contribute to a soccer team or business executive group.

Driskell *et al* in their 2006 article, "What makes a Good Teamplayer? Personality and Team Effectiveness" examined the role of specific team member personality 'facets' and their association to team effectiveness. Based on the Big Five Model, the study further divided the five model traits into specific personality facets and theoretically examined each of these facets and their relevance to team performance. In this case, team performance was clearly defined by a system of core teamwork dimensions that were critical to the success of a team. Though the authors acknowledged that there is not significant empirical evidence to affirm their hypothesis, their findings indicated that there should definitely be a positive correlation between specific individual traits and the teamwork dimensions. Examples of their findings include evidence that individual personality traits, such as an ability to adjust and flexibility, are key to successful teams.⁴³ These findings bode well for recruiters who may want to identify and select teamplayers, as there are several individual personality inventory "tests" that assess the Big Five personality traits. Tests like the NEO Personality-Inventory Revised (NEO-PI-R) and

⁴² See Christopher O.L.H. Porter *et al* for a good analysis of what team composition personalities are critical to achieving teamwork. Christopher O.L.H. Porter, *et al*, "Backing Up Behaviours in Teams: The Role of Personality and Legitimacy of Need," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88, no.3 (2003): 391-403; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 18 December 2007.

⁴³ James E. Driskell, *et al*, "What Makes a Good Teamplayer? Personality and Team Effectiveness," *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 10, no. 4 (December 2006): 250; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI) are good frameworks for determining a person's propensity to be a team player.⁴⁴

However, despite the availability and utility of these systems, they are not generally used in military recruiting. As Irvine indicates in his article, the use of "psychological" profiling in military recruiting often does not pass human rights scrutiny; and recruiters still generally rely on tests like the CF Aptitude Test and U.S. Armed Forces Qualifying Test (AFQT) to assess an individual's ability. These types of tests are generally the only tests used as an indicator for military suitability.⁴⁵ Though some studies have shown that teams composed of individuals with higher scores on AFQT may perform better, it would seem that individual personality tests would be better tests to utilize.⁴⁶ Based on the above reasoning, one can then only assume that these personality tests are not administered due to concerns that they might not be valid indicators of a

⁴⁴ The NEO-PI-R test comprises "a concise measure of the five major domains of personality, as well as the six traits or facets that define each domain. Taken together, the five domain scales and 30 facet scales of the NEO PI-R, including the scales for the Agreeableness and the Conscientiousness domains, facilitate a comprehensive and detailed assessment of normal adult personality. It has useful applications in counselling, clinical psychology, psychiatry, behavioural medicine and health psychology, vocational counselling and industrial/organizational psychology, and educational and personality research." Psychological Assessment Resources Inc. Website, <http://www3.parinc.com/products/product.aspx?Productid=NEO-PI-R>; Internet; accessed 1 March 2007. The PCI Test The Hogan Personality Inventory contains seven primary scales, one validity scale, and six occupational scales. Hogan Assessment Systems provides a computer generated

interpretive report for the HPI. This carefully developed and validated 10-page document contains an easy-to-read graph and a scale by scale interpretation of the test results. The report provides a detailed examination of a person's strengths and shortcomings in the pursuit of his or her social and occupational goals. Hogan Assessment Systems Website, http://www.performanceprograms.com/pdf/Hogan_Personality_Inventory.pdf; Internet; accessed 1 March 2007.

⁴⁵ Sidney H. Irvine, "The Unhappy Recruit: Prevention is Preferable to Cure," Paper delivered at *The 9th Annual Conference of the International Military Mental Health Association* (Gosport, UK, 2006), 2; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

⁴⁶ For insight into the association of team member AFQT scores and team performance, see John D. Winkler, "Are Smart Communicators Better? Soldiers Aptitude and Team Performance," *Military Psychology* 11, no.4 (1999): 405-422; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

recruit's suitability for the specific challenges of military life, or perhaps because the costs of these tests are not worth the value of profiling an individual.

Besides the studies confirming an individual's potential as a teamplayer based on their personality profiles, additional studies have also revealed that there are certain combinations of individual personality traits that combine to create an even more effective teamplayer. Halfhill *et al* demonstrated that when personality traits like agreeableness and conscientiousness are combined in an individual they create an almost synergistic and complementary effect which results in more enhanced teamwork than that of an individual who may possess just one or another of these traits.⁴⁷ This would seem to substantiate that the testing for the "uber" teamplayer (based on a psychometric assessment) would not be too far-fetched. This possibility may be critical for building future high-performance teams, like special operations forces, that may require extensive teamwork for their success. With transformation and future CF operations likely requiring these teams, a move towards this type of recruiting may have to be pursued.⁴⁸

Additionally, as previously indicated, the structure of an organization and its teams will drive the type of teamplayer required by an organization and shape any selection methodologies. As Driskell *et al* advocate, the composition of teams is critical,

⁴⁷ Terry Halfhill, *et al*, "Group Personality Composition and Performance in Military Service Teams," *Military Psychology*, 17, no 1 (February 2005): 51; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

⁴⁸ With transformation comes the requirement to enhance teams like the Joint Task Force 2. Testing individuals in these teams for their propensity for teamwork should be an integral aspect of team selection.

and it is important to have the right balance of individuals.⁴⁹ In this regard, various types of individuals – rather than generic teamplayers – should be selected to ensure a top-notch team. Lepine’s research would further support that groups composed of similar individuals – regardless of how team-oriented their traits may be – do not necessarily result in success, especially if that team has to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances.⁵⁰ This would reinforce the supposition that the composition of military teams must be considered for success, and that any team selection processes must consider the homogeneity of its members. In a transforming CF, where teams must be more self-reliant and adapt quickly to external situations, this premise seems even more salient.

With respect to selecting personnel for integration into CF teams, there must also be some form of screening for those individuals with such strong (but not necessarily negative) personality traits that they would not be good in a team environment. In a typical personality test, this latent trait may not be detectable, though Totterdell *et al* indicate that the failure to identify this one negative individual may be very damaging to a team regardless of how good its other members may be.⁵¹ This is probably very germane for the future when CF teams become smaller. In these teams they will have to rely more on the skill-sets of each individual with limited opportunities to replace

⁴⁹ James E. Driskell, *et al*, “What Makes a Good Teamplayer? Personality and Team Effectiveness,” *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 10, no. 4 (December 2006): 265; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

⁵⁰ Jeffrey A. Lepine, “Team Composition and Post-change Performance: Effects of Team Composition in Terms of Members’ Cognitive Ability and Personality,” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88, no. 1 (February 2003): 27-39; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

⁵¹ P. Totterdell, *et al*, “Evidence of Mood Linkage in Work Groups,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 77, no. 6 (June 1998): 1504; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

dysfunctional team members on short notice. As teams become smaller the ability of a team to absorb the effects of a poor team member diminishes.

SUMMARY

The utility of group science to the recruiting and selection of CF members is predominantly in the design of HRM policy and systems that involve the attraction and selection of targeted groups and teamplayers. In this regard, it has applicability in transforming the CF HRMS to ensure the CF can take advantage of a changing Canadian demographic to maintain required personnel levels as well as adapting recruit selection methodologies to ensure teamplayers ultimately become members of the CF.

Moreover, the first step in successful recruiting within the changing Canadian fabric is to ensure specific target groups within Canadian society are not intimidated when first entering a recruiting center. With this view in mind, group science would advocate that advertising methodologies are crucial in marketing the CF, and that first encounters are critical in determining if new recruits will have an initial favourable impression of the CF. Utilizing local community members in CF recruiting center staffing positions and outsourcing “group sensitive” HRM services was offered as one approach to making improvements in these areas.

With respect to the selection of teamplayers, there are arguments for instituting changes in selection methodologies and tests to ensure recruits with a propensity for teamwork are enrolled. This would involve a move towards a more personality-driven appraisal of applicants and more rigorous testing of their potential to function in teams. With the wide availability of these types of tests, it does not seem unreasonable – if

human rights legislation does not become an impediment – to start to implement these selection methodologies in the CF.

In order for a recruit to become and remain an effective member of the CF team, it is critical to retain their services over a productive and rewarding career. Additionally, it is just as important to ensure the teams they are working in are cohesive and integrated for enhanced performance. As a next logical step in this research paper, how the CF can retain members (especially specific target groups), as well as ensure that the myriad of defence teams are working well together and are obtaining the best from their members, will be addressed.

CHAPTER 3 - HOLDING THE CF TOGETHER

Successful recruitment of personnel to the CF is only one component of HRM. Attracting and enrolling a recruit generally occurs in a very short timeframe. However, retaining that member's commitment and motivation over a rewarding and successful career is more difficult and a continuous and never ending process: Retention is therefore arguably the most critical and focussed component of successful HRM.

As identified in the 2002 and 2006 OAG reports on military recruiting and retention, keeping people in the CF is very difficult to achieve for a variety of factors.⁵² Military personnel, especially at the middle and senior leadership levels, have skill-sets that are very transferable and valuable to the civilian sector. Furthermore, military technicians often have the opportunity to acquire expensive and unique technical abilities that are not readily available in the civilian sector, and that are especially attractive to industries associated with the provision of defence equipment.⁵³ Moreover, military personnel are desirable for their basic ability to work in integrated and dynamic teams, which is often a sought-after attribute in the majority of civilian sectors. However, this situation creates a paradox: while building teamplayers is critical to a successful force, in providing personnel with the exceptional experience and opportunity to work in teams,

⁵² Besides providing reasons why the CF is having difficulties retaining personnel, the OAG also anticipates attrition will continue to increase despite the CF's efforts to recruit more people. Office of the Auditor General of Canada, *May 2006 Report of the Auditor General of Canada: National Defence – Military Recruiting and Retention* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government of Services Canada, 2006): 53.

⁵³ See Strawn's article in *Filling the Ranks: Transforming the U.S. Military Personnel System* for the challenges the United States are facing. Thomas M. Strawn, "The War for Talent in the Private Sector," in *Filling the Ranks: Transforming the U.S. Military Personnel System*, ed. Cindy Williams, 61-91 (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2004), 61-91.

the CF is also better preparing those members to readily exit the CF with the teamwork skills that are widely sought in civilian industry.

Besides retention, the CF is also greatly concerned with maintaining integrated and cohesive teams within the organization. This must occur despite a rapidly changing force structure and an environment where the boundaries between teams and groups is constantly shifting and crossing into that of others. Within this multi-faceted and amorphous organization also comes the complexity of the diverse and dynamic individuals that comprise the CF. As will be discussed in this chapter their perception of the CF - and society in general - will greatly influence the cohesion and effectiveness of the future CF teams.

With respect to retention and team cohesion, group science can be used to provide some insight into how to retain specific groups in the CF; as from a sociological application, it can provide perspective on what motivates and influences “groups” to remain in organizations. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this is particularly relevant to the CF as it struggles with the demographic realities now and in the future.

Additionally, from an organizational viewpoint, group sciences can provide some theory on what motivates the average individual to remain in a generic organization and form integrated teams. Furthermore, it can be used to examine the appropriate management and leadership framework that best results in the establishment and sustainment of team cohesion. Although it is acknowledged that these theories have predominantly been focussed on a business construct, they also have applicability for military organizations.

RETAINING “GROUPS” IN THE FORCES

The CF comprises many different layers of teams and groups. From the three service components of Air Force, Navy and Army, to the different ethnic, gender and operational groups that make up its ranks, the CF is a very diverse system whose Venn diagram is a very complex and multi-dimensional entity. Therefore, in creating and maintaining a transformed CF, the challenges of integrating these groups at various levels is enormous.

Theoretically, each individual who enrolls in the CF has common attributes that make him or her ideally suitable for the challenging military environment. Though there will obviously be unique attributes associated with individuals working in specific occupations, there should not be much difference in the individual's basic attitude, motivation, commitment, and belief in their profession. However, despite the search for this ideal, it is obvious that utopia cannot be achieved, and there are undoubtedly differences in the individual personalities, beliefs, and cultures that ultimately result in some organizational heterogeneity. This is best seen in the way different groups and people relate to their units and profession in the CF, whether through regimental, ship, or other “group” affiliation.

Despite the enormous challenge of maintaining homogeneity amongst members, it is submitted that one of the largest challenges the CF faces is an inability to convince people to stay and make the CF a long and lasting career. Though the majority of this challenge can be attributed to the inevitable realities of competition from outside the organization, there are other CF organizational deficiencies that exacerbate the problem. As identified in *Military HR Strategy 2020*, and reiterated in several Canadian Forces

College research papers, the CF is having difficulties in sustaining certain military occupation personnel levels as well as retaining specific target groups.⁵⁴

As discussed in the first chapter of this research paper, it is in the best interest of the CF to focus more on recruiting specific target groups, including women and visible minorities. However, recruitment is only a small part of the battle as significant levels of these groups leave the military earlier when compared to the CF average; and this early departure results in an expensive loss of valuable resources to the organization. Given this fact, what is the triggering point that results in their voluntary release, and what are the group aspects associated with this inability to convince them to stay – if any?

Perhaps the disillusionment starts from the beginning. Though recruiters may convincingly articulate and persuade individuals that the CF they are joining meets their aspirations, the cold reality is that the CF often does not pan out to be what they envisioned. Frequently that disappointment can theoretically be linked back to an aspect associated with their “group” and their initial expectations of the CF. In this situation, the attribute may be associated with perceptions based on gender, culture or perhaps even origin of birth.

Based on the above argument, it is perhaps a logical assertion that the key to retaining people resides in focussing and fostering some of these desirable attributes in the CF – which is often a tall order given the realities of a homogeneous and large

⁵⁴ HR Strategy 2020 identifies retention as a key objective of CF HRM. Department of National Defence, *Military HR Strategy 2020: Facing the People Challenges of the Future* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 16.

Additionally, see Lieutenant Colonel Vermeersh’s research on military recruiting and retention for a review of Operation CONNECTION and its focus on recruiting and retention. LCol Daniel Vermeersch, “Military Recruiting and Retention Strategies and the Challenges Associated With Young Recruit” (Toronto: Canada Forces College Command and Staff Course New Horizons Paper, 1997), 3.

federal organization like the CF. However, the challenge does not end there, as how can it be determined whether a person's release is associated with a "group" attribute or simply the whim and prerogative of an individual?

There have been several studies on why specific groups and individuals leave the CF. Most recently, the 2002 report *Quantitative Analysis of Regular Force Attrition from the Canadian Forces, 1997/98 through 2001/02*, provides data on why people are leaving the CF.⁵⁵ This report is predominantly focussed on specific occupational groups but provides some generic reasons why people leave the CF. Other reports are also available which provide more clarity on age groups and other factors.⁵⁶ Though these reports link certain demographics and occupational factors to retention, there were common retention themes that were also identified throughout the CF. A lack of promotions, a diminishing quality of life, and an inability to obtain further education were just some of the issues identified; and though these factors are pan-CF, they are not necessarily associated with any "group".⁵⁷ There are, however, some studies that have concluded that there are correlations between groups and retention (for example women and visible minorities), and they provide some insight into why these groups leave or want to remain in the CF.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ See a summary of findings in Department of National Defence, *DMEP-A/RT Report 2002-001: Quantitative Analysis of Regular Force Attrition from the Canadian Forces 1997/98 Through 2001/02* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 1.

⁵⁶ See Department of National Defence, *DMEP-A/RT Report 2000-002: Attrition and Retention in the Canadian Forces: A Demographic Study of the 10 to 22 YOS Cohort, Consolidated Survey Results, and Some Suggestions for Retention Strategies* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002).

⁵⁷ Department of National Defence, *DMEP-A/RT Report 2000-002: Attrition and Retention in the Canadian Forces: A Demographic Study of the 10 to 22 YOS Cohort, Consolidated Survey Results, and Some Suggestions for Retention Strategies* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 19.

⁵⁸ See Department of National Defence, *DMEP-A/RT Report 2002-001: Quantitative Analysis of Regular Force Attrition from the Canadian Forces 1997/98 Through 2001/02* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002).

It should be noted that, while these studies may provide some empirical linkages between target groups and retention in the CF, it is difficult to link these associations with any group-based psychological or psychometric parameter that can be isolated from the myriad of characteristics that make up the complex system of wanting to remain or leave an organization of group. This simply means that, while it may appear to be easy to fix retention problems by isolating a factor in a certain situation, the reality is that there is likely a complex combination of situational factors that ultimately influences whether an individual from a target group remains in the CF.

In taking a different approach, Gibson and Zellmer-Gruhn will argue that cultural background and the type of organization is a major determinant in how people view the concept of teamwork and how they integrate and perceive teams.⁵⁹ In their analysis, they posit that naturally-occurring collectivistic teams “have a concept of teamwork that is broader and less-task focussed than that of individualists, one that assumes social motivations for membership.”⁶⁰ From a CF perspective, this might imply that groups from “naturally occurring” liberal democratic societies like Canada might be less inclined to work in task-tailored organizations; and that their cultural background will greatly affect how they see themselves integrating into a team and the actual concept of what a team entails. This should not be a surprise as the average person would likely consider

⁵⁹ According to Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn, national culture can explain up to 50 percent of variation in attitudes about the work environment. Christina B. Gibson and Mary E. Zellmer-Bruhn, “Metaphors and Meaning: An Intercultural Analysis of the Concept of Teamwork” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (June 2001): 277.

⁶⁰ Christina B. Gibson and Mary E. Zellmer-Bruhn, “Metaphors and Meaning: An Intercultural Analysis of the Concept of Teamwork,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (June 2001): 275; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

background and how a person was raised as factors in how they view a work environment and how they would be expected to operate with co-workers.

On one hand, the reluctance of future groups to join the military - as perhaps predicted by cultural affiliations - might be construed as a positive point for a CF that will ultimately have to adjust its organizational structure and culture to better reflect the general Canadian society. This would ostensibly present greater opportunities to transform a traditional CF to one that will perhaps not have to rely on a standard hierarchal and bureaucratic structure for success. Furthermore, this construct would come with the additional bonus that the CF would now comprise multi-dimensional teams of diverse individuals with a myriad of skill-sets and unique problem solving abilities. In this case, the negation of homogeneity does not necessarily imply the absence of structure and a unified approach.

From the overall perspective of the CF as an organization that exists within a Canadian societal construct, Segal and Segal's insight into the inevitable need to change military organizations in response to a shift in societal norms is particularly interesting. In their article, they submit that future societies will not necessarily be the ideal generators of military recruits; and that military organizations will not only be faced with unusual demographics, but will also have to adapt to a revolutionary change in societal perceptions of the military. According to them, this situation will emerge from an increasing "rationalization" of societies that will eventually be significantly out of step with the anachronistic and bureaucratic structures of militaries.⁶¹ It is not difficult to

⁶¹ David R. Segal and Mady Weschler Segal, "Change in Military Organization," *Annual Review of Sociology* 9, (1983): 154; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2007.

make the obvious conclusion that this may have a significant impact on the CF, as potential recruits within Canadian society will tend to seek the self-actualization that may not be available from military organizations. This idea is also very much in line with Maslow and his theory of hierarchal needs, with the belief that as societies and people evolve they eventually need to achieve self-actualization (rather than basic needs) as they progress on the evolutionary scale.⁶² This quest for self-fulfillment will probably impact perceptions of traditionally structured organizations like the CF; and though “belongingness” may be deemed a necessary attribute of all military members, the reality is that future military members – as a natural reflection of their society - will likely be more self-reliant. They may therefore be more compelled to remain in more rational professions that espouse more pragmatic benefits and challenges than those found in the military. Though the quest for self-fulfillment has undoubtedly existed in the past, this new reality may just reflect the evolution of society to a higher level.

MAINTAINING A TEAM ENVIRONMENT

With the increasing emphasis on teams and their criticality in the business and sports world, the literature abounds on what keeps teams together and how critical they are to success. A simple search of the World Wide Web would provide millions of articles and postulations on how to maintain team cohesion and the leadership and management framework associated with this success.

Understandably, group and team cohesion is of utmost importance to a military that relies on the efficient operation of innumerable teams and groups each day. This is

⁶² Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs has permeated the organizational behaviour literature and is used as a basic model in determining motivational behaviour.

important due to the synergistic and hierarchal nature of groups and teams in the CF, where the unravelling of one team may ultimately result in the demise of a larger organizational component or aspect. But what ultimately drives cohesion in a group and its ability to function effectively?

Cohesion or the “force” that keeps groups together is a complex subject that has received considerable attention over the years. Bollen and Hoyle acknowledge that cohesion and what it entails has taken on many forms over the years with a “true” definition still perhaps eluding researchers.⁶³ Despite this reality, they go on to point out that group cohesion is really based on two distinct but interrelated factors. The first factor is an actual attribute of the group as an entity and is based on inter-member comparison and ranking. The second factor is individualistic and concerns each group member’s perceptions of his or her standing in the group.⁶⁴ These two factors are intriguing as they imply that group cohesion is a combination of the inherent attributes of the group – taken as a system - as well as that of the individuals comprising that group. If this approach is logically extended to the CF, it would indicate that the CF must both change as an organization to retain members and foster group cohesion; while still extolling that the CF HRMS must also ensure (as previously stated) the retention of individuals who are predisposed towards teamwork.

⁶³ Kenneth A Bollen and Rick H. Hoyle, “Perceived Cohesion: A Conceptual and Empirical Examination,” *Social Forces* 69, no. 2 (December 1990): 480; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 16 December 2006.

⁶⁴ Kenneth A Bollen and Rick H. Hoyle, “Perceived Cohesion: A Conceptual and Empirical Examination,” *Social Forces* 69, no. 2 (December 1990): 480; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 16 December 2006.

From a social science perspective, Gupta in his research on group cohesion theory and its application to the CF states that the CF has not gone far enough to utilize group cohesion theory in the application of behavioural science to its HRM practices. He laments that this state exists despite considerable policy and emphasis on how important teamwork and group cohesion is to the success of the CF. In “Getting It Together: Group Cohesion Theory and Practice in the Canadian Forces,” he provides a correlation between sports teams and the CF. He then looks at two different group cohesion models and examines their applicability to the Forces, while dismissing what he considers to be misconceptions about what drives cohesion in the CF: the importance placed on personnel stability in teams and strong social bonding. He proposes that teams can function and stay together quite well even if the “bonds” between the individuals in the team are not strong.⁶⁵ This would lead to the assertion that complex groups can function and remain together even if the organization as a whole comprises individuals who attribute less significance to being part of a team than that of other non-traditional “team-focussed” factors. In this case, there are other areas that the CF can focus on to ensure it retains cohesive teams and groups.

Besides the impact of group structure in building group cohesion, the transition between generations will also likely play a part in attitudes towards the military and how the CF manages retention and team building. With the inevitable aging and post-war Canadian demographics, the CF now comprises more Generation X and Y members than the traditional baby-boomers. According to some studies, this will have a major impact

⁶⁵ Major R.K. Gupta, “Getting It Together: Group Cohesion Theory and Practice in the Canadian Forces,” (Toronto: Canada Forces College Command and Staff Course New Horizons Paper, 1997), 4-5.

on a future CF as societies transform. But can the change in one generation really result in a significant alteration in how a cohort might perceive of organizations like the military? Yrle *et al's* report provides perspective on how Generation X might view the military and ultimately what affects their perception of authority and bureaucracy – some obvious attributes of any military. In their analysis, they report that “Gen Xers” (and by extrapolation probably future generations) are less likely to seek work in groups; but are willing to work in teams if certain factors – like communication and information– are strong enablers of teamwork and can keep a team together.⁶⁶ This fact is encouraging given the greater proportion of the future self-fulfilling generations who will populate the CF, and the growth in teams that are based on non-traditional linkages between the members. Though Gen Xers are now already entrenched in the CF, and are not the targeted demographic of future recruiting, their perspective will certainly drive the CF's culture and the HRM strategies of the future.

Tasseron also provides some insight into future generations and how Generation Y may perceive and view the CF and military organizations. According to him, the increasing “structure” of future societies will lead to problems in military recruiting and retention as Generation Y “will expect continual change [in an organization] and is used to a fragmented and piecemeal” construct.”⁶⁷ He indicates that Generation Y is generally characterized by cynicism and a primitive and detached emotional make-up that would not be conducive to teambuilding. He also argues that their acclimatization to a short-

⁶⁶ Augusta C. Yrle, Sandra J. Hartman, and Dinah M. Payne, “Generation X: Acceptance of Others and Teamwork Implication,” *Team Performance Management* 11, no. 5/6 (2005): 189; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 24 January 2007.

⁶⁷ Major Jeff Tasseron, “Military Manning and the Revolution in Social Affairs,” *Canadian Military Journal* (Autumn 2001): 53; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2007.

term focus – due to living within the technological revolution and a sound-byte media – will make dedication to the CF very difficult to achieve over a long career.⁶⁸ This might require a change in how the CF structures its reengagement contracts if it wants to retain the best.

He also provides some interesting insight – based on the findings of Michael Adams - into the aspect of “value tribe affiliation” within Canadian society.⁶⁹ His contrast of a 34 to 50-year old senior officer cohort meeting the pierced and aloof Generation Y soldiers of the future is indicative of the intermingling of group tribes that will occur in the CF in the future. This is only one example of the inevitable and impending requirement to manage a diverse and multi-dimensional team construct as the CF evolves.

However, Tasseron also indicates that perhaps society is reaching a form of steady state after the tumultuous period of transition of the Baby Boomers to Generation Y.⁷⁰ This might mean the CF will be able to reach a culminating point in the near future in its approach to retaining CF members. On the other hand, this theory also implies that we are at a crossroads and must get the HRM construct right today. If not, we might have to live with a system that will hold us hostage in the future and that is not up to the task of what the CF must achieve.

⁶⁸ Major Jeff Tasseron, “Military Manning and the Revolution in Social Affairs,” *Canadian Military Journal* (Autumn 2001): 58; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2007.

⁶⁹ Major Jeff Tasseron, “Military Manning and the Revolution in Social Affairs,” *Canadian Military Journal* (Autumn 2001): 59; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2007.

⁷⁰ Major Jeff Tasseron, “Military Manning and the Revolution in Social Affairs,” *Canadian Military Journal* (Autumn 2001): 57; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2007.

Studies have also shown that culture and the management of meaning is a significant aspect of any organization, as it greatly influences how people view and ultimately remain in an organization. As Fine reveals in his analysis of the association of culture and team cohesion, the impact of organizational culture goes deep into how participants view and interact in groups. His examination of cohesion in little league baseball teams provided an opportunity to view small groups and how their ideocultures affect their ability to function and remain within a team environment.⁷¹ He goes on to provide an appreciation of several factors that ultimately result in an organization's culture creation and how they influence communication in groups. He argues that items that are well known by group members, and how that item supports group hierarchy, will ultimately determine if it becomes an entrenched component of culture.⁷² In this regard, there is an indication that how the CF selects and portrays the cornerstone of its culture - and how it transmits that culture to members - is paramount in maintaining a cohesive team where members want to stay and perform. Moreover, it is very important to foster and establish a sense of culture that is unique and integral to that organization. This is particularly important to a military organization that often compels people to remain based on their perception of remaining a member of an exclusive club that is based on very unique symbols and culture. As Harrison and Carroll also indicate, it is very important for group cohesion to transmit an organization's culture in order to convince

⁷¹ Gary Allen Fine, "Small Groups and Cultural Creation: The Idioculture of Little League Baseball Teams," *American Sociological Review* 44, no. 5 (October 1979): 734; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

⁷² Gary Allen Fine, "Small Groups and Cultural Creation: The Idioculture of Little League Baseball Teams," *American Sociological Review* 44, no. 5 (October 1979): 733; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

people that the organization is relevant and worthwhile. According to their research, this is even more important and relevant in organizations like the CF that have consistently large turnover of personnel. However, based on their findings, an organization's culture appears to paradoxically reach and maintain a steady-state even though there may be large influxes and outflows of people.⁷³ In a CF context, this would indicate that a culture base has perhaps already been established even though there is a constant flux of people and demographics; and that this culture should not be taken for granted, but understood and emphasized to all personnel to ensure they maintain a strong belief in this organization and want to continue fulfilling careers.

SUMMARY

The retention of skilled and motivated personnel in the CF is considered the most critical component of a successful HRM system: for it is no good to recruit and train personnel to have them leave before they have given their best to the Forces. However, when faced with challenging demographics and the basic societal and psychological factors that convince people to stay in organizations, group theory can perhaps only offer limited insight into why people ultimately stay in the CF. Though there is research that provides indications on why specific demographic groups want to stay in the CF, a basic link to psychological factors may be difficult to ascertain.

However, it is clear that culture forms a large part of the attraction to an organization, and perhaps the CF can leverage upon its uniqueness as an entity to entice people to remain. With this in mind, successful retention – like recruiting – is not

⁷³ J. Richard Harrison and Glen R. Carroll, "Keeping the Faith: A Model of Cultural Transmission in Formal Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (December 1991): 552; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 24 November 2006.

contingent on marketing the CF as an organization that caters to specific target groups but more as an organization that offers a unique experience and culture that would appeal to the average Canadian. But this approach must be tempered with caution, as although this fact may seem encouraging, there are indications that future societies may abandon the military as a desirable occupation: for the average citizen may not consider the military as an opportunity to support one's nation. This might not bode well as Canadian demographics will make it difficult to recruit and retain personnel in competition with other professions. Only time will tell.

With the recruitment and retention of teamplayers comes the next step in the generation and sustainment of a competent and cohesive force – training. Both at the team and individual level, training is a key component of teambuilding and cohesion development. In this respect, personnel must first receive the individual training necessary to make them aware of and receptive to the merit of teambuilding; with follow-on team training to transform an individual's experience and attributes into that of a true teamplayer and member of the group. The next chapter will examine the association of training and its importance in an HRM system that needs to develop military forces. Group science and its application to these areas will be examined.

CHAPTER 4 - TRAINING AND LEADING THE PERFECT TEAM

As a CF member progresses throughout their career they receive considerable training. This training occurs both at the individual level, where the member undergoes courses and exercises to develop their individual skill-sets; and at the team level, where an individual receives experience and instruction on how that member is expected to function in an integrated team. With a goal of developing and producing teamplayers, training becomes very important as it takes an individual with an inherent psychological make-up and transforms them into an effective and integrated member of a team. Without training, the member can only rely on their inherent propensity for teamwork and experience to prepare them for a team environment.

From a developmental perspective, team training differs significantly from individual training in that its goal is to produce an integrated team without focussing too much on the individuals comprising that team. Group science provides some insight into how individual and team training can be optimized to produce better teamplayers. With respect to individual training, it advocates the use of specific techniques to enhance a person's team attributes and make them aware of the group aspects deemed important by the organization. Theory also provides an opportunity to improve team training by designing that training to utilize the latest techniques in team development. This might include team training based on outcome management or by emphasizing cognitive development or simple environment improvement. Regardless of the goal, there has been some solid research in these fields.

With transformation rapidly occurring in the CF, the need to develop and integrate teams is increasing. An emphasis on smaller and more task-tailored teams will

require significant and focussed training to ensure these teams can operate effectively in various operational environments. Furthermore, the growing emphasis on combined and joint operations necessitates more focussed individual training. This will help to ensure that CF members can integrate into and work in the environments that require more cultural sensitivity and an awareness of the nuances associated with different nations.

Finally, leadership is a critical component of the effectiveness of any military group or team. In this regard, training and developing strong leaders is undoubtedly a very important component in the success of the CF; for without leaders who understand what makes and motivates our teams, a motivated and integrated force is probably beyond our grasp. Once again, group science offers some perspective on how to develop effective leaders and their impact on the teams they lead.

TRAINING INDIVIDUALS TO BE BETTER TEAMPLAYERS

The old adage that a team is only as good as its members especially applies in a military context. Despite the emphasis on a “team” as the recognition of an individual’s affiliation to the CF - whether by regiment, ship, or air wing – it is really the individuals who provide the core capabilities and weaknesses of that group. Salas, Bowers and Bowers article, “Military Team Research: 10 Years of Progress,” provides a sound launching point for a study of military teams and the research that occurred until 1995. Though the article predominantly focuses on team training advances over these years, it

also offers insight into team development in general. It is an excellent source of information on possible future research in this area.⁷⁴

According to most research on teams, it is generally recognized that there are two general “components” to an effective team: a teamwork track and a taskwork track. The taskwork track is associated with an individual and the skill-sets and attributes they bring to the team; while the teamwork component comprises the behaviours associated with how those individuals interact amongst themselves in the process of functioning as a team.⁷⁵ This approach does not seem revolutionary as there should obviously be both aspects associated with any team.

In Stout, Salas, and Carson’s research on individual task proficiency and team functioning, they come to a conclusion that a team’s mission performance was improved if coordination between team members was increased while maintaining each member’s task proficiency.⁷⁶ But how do these perceptions of teamwork and performance relate to improvements in the individual training system? Salas, Milham, and Bowers provide an outstanding evaluation of military training and its challenges and opportunities. Though their research predominantly focuses on training evaluation – from a quality assurance perspective – they do examine some of the outcomes that should be expected from a

⁷⁴ See the section on theoretical development for a brief snapshot of where research has progressed. Eduardo Salas, Laura M. Milham, and Clint A. Bowers, “Military Team Research: 10 Years of Progress,” *Military Psychology* 7, no.2 (1995): 57-58; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 11 January 2007.

⁷⁵ David P. Baker and Eduardo Salas, “Analyzing Team Performance: In the Eye of the Beholder?,” *Military Psychology* 8, no. 3 (1996): 236; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

⁷⁶ René J. Stout, Eduardo Salas, and Rhonwyn Carson, “Individual Task Proficiency and Team Process Behaviour: What’s Important for Team Functioning?,” *Military Psychology* 6, no.3 (1994): 177; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

training system. In dividing these outcomes into reaction, cognitive, behavioural, and organizational outcomes, they examine the challenges associated with understanding some of the attributes desired from individuals in a team environment.⁷⁷ They look at attributes like verbal knowledge, knowledge management, and cognitive strategy-making as indicators of how well that person may operate in a team. They then identify those attributes that should be measured by all training systems.⁷⁸

In designing an individual training system to prepare individuals to be team members, there are difficulties in deciding what instructional strategies should be incorporated into the system. This challenge is further complicated by the fact that most research has focussed on how to improve individuals operating in a team rather than individuals outside of a team environment.⁷⁹ Litteral and Salas have identified cross-cultural training (CCT) as an important component of any individual training system as these attributes will undoubtedly be required by future, global organizations. They posit that the need to focus on CCT components like cultural awareness, interaction, language, didactic, and experiential training will be necessary.⁸⁰ In a military context, this type of

⁷⁷ Eduardo Salas, Laura M. Milham, and Clint A. Bowers, "Training Evaluation in the Military: Misconceptions, Opportunities, and Challenges," *Military Psychology* 15, no.1 (January 2003): 8-9; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2007.

⁷⁸ Eduardo Salas, Laura M. Milham, and Clint A. Bowers, "Training Evaluation in the Military: Misconceptions, Opportunities, and Challenges," *Military Psychology* 15, no.1 (January 2003): 8-9; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2007.

⁷⁹ Eduardo Salas, Laura M. Milham, and Clint A. Bowers, "Military Team Research: 10 Years of Progress," *Military Psychology* 7, no.2 (1995): 65; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 11 January 2007.

⁸⁰ Lisa N. Litteral and Eduardo Salas, "A Review of Cross-Cultural Training: Best Practices, Guidelines, and Research Needs," *Human Resources Development Review* 4, no. 3 (September 2005): 309-312; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

training will also become more important as Western militaries will be more involved in overseas operations requiring cultural awareness and sensitivities to other peoples.

With the above in mind, how far does the CF individual training system go in preparing individuals to operate in teams? CF individual training is extensive but tends to focus on technical training or the specific training required to perform one's function in a particular occupation. Though there is some base training that is provided to an individual to prepare them for a team environment, this training is generally limited to more safety-oriented functions such as shipboard damage control or casualty evacuation.

Besides the general training a typical member might receive to better prepare them to function as an effective team member, are there generic attributes that are associated with team players that could be enhanced in individual training? Campbell and Catano's research asserts that non-traditional training should perhaps be provided to individuals to better prepare them for future teams. They researched the effect of information processing skills and teamwork and concluded that sub-sets of this skill-set are important to the success of most teams. Similarly, as discussed in Chapter 2, there are other team attributes that could be better enhanced in individual training system. This training, however, is generally not available unless offered as an occupational specialty or in the team training associated with that occupation.

Besides focussing on providing training that enhances team aspects, individual training can also provide more psychological effects like motivation. There are several theories associated with motivation and aspects of human resource management, including training. As explained in "Linking HRM to Behaviour – Theory, Evidence, and Implications", expectancy theory can explain why training can be used to convince

individuals to want to remain part of the CF team. Expectancy Theory – which is just one of many motivational theories – holds that “motivation can be enhanced by strengthening two expectancies through which rewards are associated with performance and by increasing the valence (strength or attractiveness of rewards)”.⁸¹ In accordance with this theory, training in the form of education can be used to motivate an individual to remain in a group or team as the promise of further education can be a motivator in itself. Though this effect tends to apply more in the domain of personnel retention, it does demonstrate that individual training does have some impact on how CF members want to remain and perform within the CF group construct. In this regard, the enhanced educational programs of the CF are a step in the right direction.

Another aspect of training individuals to effectively function in high performance teams is to ensure individuals have the right attitudes toward the CF and any team they may belong to. According to Eggenesperger, “[high performance] teams in business and the military are focussed on goals that require in-depth training, high personal investment by team members, deep commitment to the team, complementary skills, and high performance under pressure.”⁸² Here the emphasis is on providing training to ensure proper attitudes and commitment are entrenched towards the team. The CF non-commissioned member and officer professional development programs are excellent frameworks to foster commitment and the right attitude towards the CF.

⁸¹ Charles R. Greer, *Strategic Human Resource Management* (New York: Prentice Hall, 2000), 12.

⁸² James D. Eggenesperger, “How Far is Too Far: Lessons From Ultra-High-Performing Military Teams,” *Team Performance Management* 10, no. 3/4 (2004): 53; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

Individual training is only one step in the career-long development of a CF member. As they become members of the teams and groups that will form the major part of their unit affiliations, individuals are then ready to undergo team training and exercises with their peers. It is this component of their career that is usually their greatest challenge, and success or failure at this level will undoubtedly determine whether they can meet the challenges of a career in the CF.

MORE EFFECTIVE TEAM-TRAINING

Team training occurs at several levels in the CF. Whether it is intended to improve the reaction of a tank crew to enemy attack or the ability of a ship's company to defeat an inbound missile, training must be extensive and integrated a unit's daily operations. Despite the necessity and utmost importance of this endeavour, it must always be questioned whether the training and exercises units undergo are actually achieving the aim and preparing CF teams to achieve their missions. It is one thing to undergo training, but quite another to truly understand and comprehend the intentions of that training.

In returning to Salas, Milham and Bowers' research into this topic, there are indications that military team training is not necessarily as focussed or on track as it could be. As they are quick to point out, training methodologies – at least in the United States military - are frequently not evaluated nor is the ultimate outcome of the training truly understood by its developers and implementers.⁸³ If this is the case, and there is no reason to believe the CF is any further advanced in their team training system than the

⁸³ Eduardo Salas, Laura M. Milham, and Clint A. Bowers, "Training Evaluation in the Military: Misconceptions, Opportunities, and Challenges," *Military Psychology* 15, no. 1 (January 2003): 4; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2007.

U.S., are militaries truly obtaining the best bang for their buck and preparing their teams for battle?

Notwithstanding the challenges of improving and refining team-training systems, there is still the fundamental issue (much like in individual training) of how and what is best to develop teamwork and build the right team from the individuals comprising those teams. Galagan's article "Helping Groups Learn" looks at some of the techniques of David Sibbett, a group facilitation consultant who uses pictorial representations of situation to help teams and groups to better understand the learning process. According to Sibbett, a major (almost subconscious) problem with the way organizations and groups learn are the built-in archetypes and metaphors in the way teams learn.⁸⁴ Overcoming these boundaries are a key step in advancing any training or the comprehension of concepts within an organization, as the fear of change will always linger until a unit or group can be self-introspective. This construct is especially applicable to military teams who must frequently overcome years of tradition and group-think to advance the comprehension and means to react to situations. However, in these transformational times of asymmetric warfare and challenging operational environments, it is often this rigidity that can mean defeat. Clearly, CF teams, and the organizations charged with training these teams, must be cognizant of the need to remain flexible and adapt to situations while still retaining the discipline and standard operating procedures that are crucial to operational success. Moreover, in an environment where joint forces are becoming more and more a reality, the need to adapt remains even more relevant.

⁸⁴ Patricia A. Galagan, "Helping Groups Learn," *Training and Development* 47, no. 10 (October 1993): 58; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

In Fowlkes *et al's* research into team performance, their methodologies for performance improvements are appropriate for implementation in team training. Much like other experts in this field, they acknowledge that the design and implementation of team training has historically been based on a “common sense” approach rather than a rigorous theoretical foundation.⁸⁵ Though their focus is on team performance, their division of training into its constituent components provides some insight into how to best design training for success. In their TARGETS framework, they link “task events” to expected “task behaviours” to ensure there is a logical flow between what is anticipated for an outcome and what teams are attempting to accomplish.⁸⁶ Though this methodology is just one example of a training methodology, it does demonstrate that training is often irrelevant if there is no logical and appropriate means of structuring and evaluating the outcome of that training. In a CF context, this is quite pertinent as often the focus can be on conducting team training for training sake rather than focussing on what that training is intending to achieve. Continuing this approach would result in teams that know how to train but not necessarily how to achieve results when it really counts.

From the viewpoint of Stout, Salas and Fowlkes, there is certainly more improvements that can be made to team training. In their studies they emphatically understand the requirement to implement team training in organizations that include

⁸⁵ Jennifer E. Fowlkes, *et al*, “Improving the Measurement of Team Performance: The TARGETS Methodology,” *Military Psychology* 6, no. 1 (1994): 48; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

⁸⁶ Jennifer E. Fowlkes, *et al*, “Improving the Measurement of Team Performance: The TARGETS Methodology,” *Military Psychology* 6, no. 1 (1994): 58; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

“work environments that place workers in dynamic, rapidly changing conditions, which impose the need for effective teamwork among team members to achieve task success.”⁸⁷ Leveraging off the research of Cannon-Bowers *et al*, they emphasize the need to examine the knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) of individuals and the collective team to truly measure how well a team performs. They further refine these competencies into sub-competencies that include skills dimensions like situational awareness and team management; as well as attitude competencies associated with collective orientation and other attributes. In the application of these KSAs in a military operational environment, they gleaned some insight into how team training improves overall team performance. Furthermore, they came to the conclusion – as did Cannon-Bowers *et al* – that the type and training structure must be contingent on the context, type of tasks, and ultimate team composition.⁸⁸ Moreover, they also sought insight into what type of training methodologies were appropriate to effective team training. This approach is relevant in a CF training environment where the message is clear that the team training format and structure must carefully match the team environment to be effective.

A final word on team training is offered in the area of standardization. Baker and Salas discovered in their studies into the value and effectiveness of team training that team training can be perceived differently by different people. According to them, expectations of team behaviour and performance will vary depending on participants’

⁸⁷ René J. Stout, Eduardo Salas, and Jennifer E. Fowlkes, “Enhancing Teamwork in Complex Environments Through Team Training,” *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1997): 169; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

⁸⁸ René J. Stout, Eduardo Salas, and Jennifer E. Fowlkes, “Enhancing Teamwork in Complex Environments Through Team Training,” *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1997): 171; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

experience and attitudes.⁸⁹ This has far-reaching implications for the monitoring and execution of team training in the CF as training instruction is provided by individuals who have various degrees of education and experience. It is therefore critical that only the best and motivated are placed in training instructor positions so that the right experience and professionalism can be imparted to the various teams that are included in the CF family.

As can be seen by the previous two sections, both individual and team training are extremely important to the effectiveness of teams in the CF. The next section, however, steps back and looks from the top down. Without effective leaders leading these teams, how can a team ultimately be successful? The importance of developing team-focused leaders is examined next.

DEVELOPING TEAM LEADERS

Leadership has always been the cornerstone of any successful military. In Canada, its importance to the CF has been stated in every major capstone document with its doctrine entrenched in the manual *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*. In this manual, the leadership of groups is emphasized with some words on teamwork:

“One of the key functions of collective training and exercises is to allow crews, teams, units, and formations – whether they are engaged in combined or joint operations – to work through and hone the communications protocols and operating procedures required for a co-ordinated effort. Leaders must be sensitive

⁸⁹ David P. Baker and Eduardo Salas, “Analyzing Team Performance: In the Eye of the Beholder?,” *Military Psychology* 8, no. 3 (1996): 242; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

to task interdependencies at all levels of operations and generally strive to strengthen functional linkages.”⁹⁰

This statement provides some focus on two aspects of leadership and teams. First it emphasizes the requirement for the development of effective leaders who understand the dynamics of groups; second it underscores the necessity for CF groups and teams to train as one cohesive unit (including the leader) to become effective at operations.

To achieve this mandate, the underlying issue is what is required to develop effective leaders of teams and groups and what type of leadership training would best achieve this aim? Studies have demonstrated that the type and strength of group leadership plays a significant part in team cohesiveness and motivation. Siebold and Lindsay’s research concludes that small unit performance is dependent on leadership aspects like looking out for their soldiers and the ability to work with other team leaders.⁹¹ Shirom also concludes in his studies on combat performance in the Israeli Defense Force that a soldier’s perception of their leader’s competence and combat proficiency is a significant factor in a unit’s combat effectiveness and preparedness.⁹² The conclusions of these two areas of research should not be surprising as they posit that for a commander to be effective at leading teams, two conditions must be in place: the commander must be good at what he/she does and understand group dynamics; and his or

⁹⁰ Department of National Defence, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 79.

⁹¹ Guy L. Siebold and Twila J. Lindsay, “The Relation Between Demographic Descriptors and Soldier-Perceived Cohesion and Motivation,” *Military Psychology* 8, no. 1 (2000): 125; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

⁹² Arie Shirom, “On Some Correlates of Combat Performance,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (September 1996): 425; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2007.

her followers in the group must have a positive perception of that commander's competence and abilities.

Walsh in his article on emotional intelligence (EI) concludes that a team's ability to be successful depends on soft skills that must be resident in all the team players – including the commander. Some of the salient points he attributes to EI include self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. According to him, success in these EI areas can account for up to 85 percent of an executive's success.⁹³ His findings would therefore indicate that a commander's ability to lead troops is more dependent on soft leadership skills than mere competence and brawn.

Carter, in her post-World War II findings on leadership in small groups, sticks to the basics that have probably stood the test of time. In her criteria for judging leadership ability, she advocates five “commonly recognized” methodologies: situational tests, leader nominations, faculty ratings, friend's ratings, and activity ratings.⁹⁴ Though these methodologies are not necessarily directly applicable to a training environment, they do reinforce the basics of how to identify when natural leaders emerge from a group of followers. Despite the date of their inception in research, these methodologies still tend to be used in military leadership assessment today.

Based on the above, it is evident that successful team leadership and management involves a very complex set of both interpersonal and team dynamics. A leader who

⁹³ Thomas Walsh, “Leveraging the Best in Everyone Takes Teamwork,” *The Central New York Business Journal* October 20, 2006: 23; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

⁹⁴ Launor Carter, “Some Research on Leadership in Small Groups.” in *Groups, Leadership and Men: Research in Human Relations*, edited by Harold Guetzkow, 146-157 (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1963), 147.

focuses on only one aspect of group leadership at the expense of another is likely to achieve marginal success with his or her team.

As an integral component of the CF's HRMS, leadership development and training is considered a top priority.⁹⁵ In a transforming CF where leaders must be very dynamic and adaptive, how can a training system ensure that the team leaders it produces are top-notch? Bartone, Scott and Tremble criteria for successful group leadership were examined in an assessment of West Point cadets. If their research is an indication of where to focus leadership training, then cognitive abilities such as logical reasoning, social judgement and self-awareness are key areas that could be developed in future leaders.⁹⁶ However, it is submitted that this type of cognitive ability development would be difficult to institute in traditional leadership training venues.

Densten and Gray also provide an interesting perspective on the challenges team leaders will face in the dynamic and complex military organizations of the future. They argue that it will be difficult for leaders to "maintain the integrity and reliability of internal [organizational] systems while adapting to the external environment" as "internal maintenance and external adaptability are incompatible functions."⁹⁷ This would seem to indicate that leadership training might be more advantageous if it was focussed on organizational behaviour and systems management. With the complexity of modern

⁹⁵ Department of National Defence, *Military HR Strategy 2020: Facing the People Challenges of the Future* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 20.

⁹⁶ Paul T. Bartone, Scott A. Snook, and Trueman R. Tremble, Jr., "Cognitive and Personality Predictors of Leader Performance in West Point Cadets," *Military Psychology* 14, no. 4 (October 2002): 332-333; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

⁹⁷ Ian L. Densten and Judy H. Gray, "Leadership Applications – Organizational Effectiveness," <http://www.cda-acd.forces.gc.ca/CFLI/engraph/research/pdf/50.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 March 2007.

organizations, a systems approach to leadership and management might better position a leader for success. Though it might be difficult to convince a military organization to take such a “sterile” approach to leadership training, the CF might be better served if senior leaders had a more holistic view of the CF as a complex “group” or system operating within the external influence of a unique Canadian society and government.

Notwithstanding the above arguments - and despite the move towards progressive HRM and a focus on innovative leadership concepts - Segal and Segal provided a unique perspective in their 1983 article on leadership and its association with changing military organizations. According to their research, the leading think-thanks in the American Department of Defense (including the operations research organizations) have taken a dispassionate approach to leadership and have “omitted any consideration of leadership as an affective relationship between commanders and their soldiers, a relationship that contributes to morale, esprit de corps, and other crucial intangibles as difficult to measure as leadership itself,”⁹⁸ One would hope that this approach would not hold true in today’s world of progressive human resource management of armed forces; and that team leadership is still considered an innovative art that must not be too technical in its application in a modern world.

SUMMARY

Training – both at the individual and team level – is a very important component of HRM; and nowhere more importantly than the CF where the small size of its Force necessitates getting the most from all its members. In the development of teamplayers

⁹⁸ David R. Segal and Mady Weschler Segal, “Change in Military Organization, “*Annual Review of Sociology*” 9, (1983): 164; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2007.

and effective teams, there are several approaches that can be taken as previously reviewed in this chapter. In preparing an individual to join an integrated group, there is certainly individual training that can be delivered that will enhance an individual and make them more receptive to working in a team environment. By focussing on honing cognitive skills and providing other more basic training and education, an individual can theoretically transform themselves into a better teamplayer before joining the complex team environment where performance is critical to a successful military career.

With respect to team training, considerable research has identified innumerable methodologies and techniques for maximizing team-training benefits. However, this research has also uncovered inconsistencies in the understanding of what constitutes effective team training and what should be achieved. This challenge appears to be further confounded by less rigorous training system standardization and an unwillingness of organizations to commit resources to this endeavour. Furthermore, whether focussing on a KSA approach or attempting to overcome team learning through the removal of archetypal obstacles, team training still remains somewhat nebulous in a military context and undoubtedly merits further research to ensure it progresses in a transforming and dynamic war-fighting environment.

The association of leadership to effective teams and groups was also discussed. Leadership development, from a professional perspective, appears to be caught between antiquated theory and the innovation required to propel its art into the 21st century. Only with continuous improvement will it be ready to extract the most from the modern forces and teams of the future.

With the completion of the chapter on training and leadership comes the final step into the world of performance management. Performance management is the last pillar of successful HRM. The next and concluding chapter of this research paper concerns group science and its application to performance management in a military and CF context.

CHAPTER 5 - MANAGING GROUP AND TEAM PERFORMANCE

Performance management is the culmination of an effective HRMS as its function is to essentially transform the other HRM inputs into the final product – operational success or failure. For no matter how effective the other components of an HRMS may be, if an organization does not perform then the effectiveness of its other HRM systems are irrelevant. Considered to be a critical component of the CF's HRMS, *Military HR Strategy 2020* states “the HR system of 2020 will be fully integrated across the organisation, certainly co-ordinated and continuously monitored through a comprehensive performance measurement framework.”⁹⁹ Moreover, the DPS highlights the need to achieve results by

establishing fully integrated units capable of a timely, focused and effective response to a foreign or domestic threats to Canadian security. Maritime, land, air and special operations forces will emphasize cooperation and teamwork at all levels to achieve a total effect greater than the sum of the individual parts.¹⁰⁰

This statement clearly underscores the need for teams and groups to perform to the best of their ability in what will undoubtedly be difficult operational situations undertaken by a transformed CF. Given the importance of performance management to an organization and military, it is therefore prudent to provide some comments on performance management and examine how group science may be utilized in improving this function in a CF HRMS environment.

⁹⁹ Department of National Defence, *Military HR Strategy 2020: Facing the People Challenges of the Future* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 18.

¹⁰⁰ Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Defence* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005): 11-12.

Performance management is all encompassing, as it not only includes an assessment of achievement but also the periodic feedback, monitoring, and improvement of individual and team's performance. In this regard, an effective performance management system must be structured such that these elements are integrated and effectively coordinated to ensure the best output from a team. However, in managing the performance of teams and groups, there are requirements that are different from that of managing individuals. Though an individual's performance is influenced and shaped by many factors, at least the ability or failure to succeed can ultimately be linked to that person. The performance of a team, however, is based on a myriad of parameters and factors that often cannot be isolated from the environment or even measured. This makes the management of a group's performance difficult at best; as performance assessment, monitoring, feedback, and improvement must be applied across a complex system (team), whose interaction with and influence by its external environment is not straightforward.

This chapter will review performance management in the context of developing effective teams and groups within the CF. In this regard, it will examine group science and how it might be used to improve team performance as well as the performance of the individuals comprising those teams. Moreover, as performance management provides an ultimate indication of the effectiveness and synergy between the other HRM components previously discussed in this paper, this chapter will serve as a logical focal point to augment and integrate the findings from the previous chapters on recruiting, selection, retention, and training. In forming a concluding chapter to this research paper, it will provide some perspective on how performance management is relevant to the HRMS in a transforming CF.

DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING THE PERFORMING TEAM

As previously discussed, team and group effectiveness is dependent upon many variables. Whether it is the personalities and abilities of the individuals in the team; intra-group synergy and communication; or a leader's skilful assignment of tasks appropriate to the team or group, obtaining effective performance from a team is no small undertaking. According to Blanchard, Carew, and Parisi-Carew, all high-performance teams have seven common characteristics: purpose and values, empowerment, relationship and communication, flexibility, optimal productivity, recognition and appreciation, and morale – or PERFORM.¹⁰¹ These characteristics seem reasonable given that a team must perform at many levels and accomplish a myriad of tasks while still maintaining harmony. From their research, they posit that all these PERFORM characteristics are essential to a team if it is to perform well. Katzenbach and Smith also indicate four elements are required for a successful team. These four elements - common commitment and purpose, performance goals, complementary skills, and mutual accountability - are what they consider is required to make teams function well.¹⁰² Furthermore, they further classify teams into three types: teams that recommend things, teams that make or do things, and teams that run things.¹⁰³ When building these teams, they also caution that appropriate performance goals must be matched to the type of team

¹⁰¹ Ken Blanchard, Don Carew, and Eunice Parisi-Carew, "How to Get Your Group to Perform Like a Team," *Training and Development* 50, no. 9 (September, 1996): 36; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 2 December 2006.

¹⁰² Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, "The Discipline of Teams," *Harvard Business Review* (July/August 2005): 161; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2007.

¹⁰³ Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, "The Discipline of Teams," *Harvard Business Review* (July/August 2005): 169-170; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2007.

or success will not be achieved.¹⁰⁴ Remarkably, this team categorization scheme (and the challenges of leading each type of team) is very appropriate for the team framework found in the CF. From these findings, it is clear that a critical aspect of leading and managing a team or group is to be able to identify the attributes and elements of a high performance team and adjust the team's course if there are outward indications of problems. This aspect is particularly relevant in a CF environment where team and group leaders are frequently the sole observers in a position to assess their team's overall health.

It was also previously discussed how the personality and cognitive ability of team members play a significant part in achieving team performance.¹⁰⁵ From this perspective, the selection, retention, and training of good teamplayers is critical in developing successful teams. Furthermore, in managing team performance, it is therefore important to focus on individual attributes and foster an environment where these attributes can be exerted and utilized to their fullest potential. This also acknowledges that individuals and teams will respond differently to their environment; and that operating conditions and how interactions with exterior agencies are established, can often result in either success or failure for the group. Leaders must therefore be cognizant of the requirement to set the stage to ensure teams and groups are achieving optimum performance.

¹⁰⁴ Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, "The Discipline of Teams," *Harvard Business Review* (July/August 2005): 167; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2007.

¹⁰⁵ James E. Driskell, *et al*, "What Makes a Good Teamplayer? Personality and Team Effectiveness," *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 10, no. 4 (December 2006): 263-264; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

Besides the attributes of each individual in a team, the composition of the team is also important.¹⁰⁶ When faced with a challenge, a team must therefore be comprised of the right mix of individuals to be effective, and team leaders must go beyond simply choosing individual teamplayers: they must also consider removing or adding individual personality traits and cognitive abilities in managing the team. However, it is also understood that this might be a formidable challenge and difficult to achieve for the average leader of a CF team - as they usually do not have the latitude to select their team members due to the small size of the Force and the availability of personnel due to posting cycles.

Moreover, there are other less obvious factors that should be considered in developing and sustaining effective teams and groups. Shirom, in her research on combat performance, identified factors like social support within a group as a fundamental attribute that has an impact on combat performance.¹⁰⁷ According to her, the social support aspect may have even more significance than other factors like warrior attitude and perceptions of unit morale.¹⁰⁸ Griffith and Vaitkus in their studies also identified other group factors like groupthink and inconsistencies between group goals and the goals established by the parent organizations as factors that ultimately influence

¹⁰⁶ Terry Halfhill, *et al*, "Group Personality Composition and Performance in Military Service Teams," *Military Psychology* 17, no 1 (February 2005): 51; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

¹⁰⁷ Arie Shirom, "On Some Correlates of Combat Performance," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (September 1996): 428-429; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2007.

¹⁰⁸ Arie Shirom, "On Some Correlates of Combat Performance," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (September 1996): 426-427; <http://www.JSTOR.org>; Internet; accessed 20 January 2007.

performance.¹⁰⁹ Other possible impacts on of performance include a group member's commitment to the organization, with the concomitant realization that a member's commitment is not only based on their perception of the group and its ability to provide support, but also influences from their spouse and his/her perception of the organization.¹¹⁰ These factors are not revolutionary, and the CF strives to create an environment where individuals and teams are empowered and instilled with a sense of belonging to a special team. However, it is very difficult to always provide an all encompassing social support framework and an organization that fosters total commitment from its members. Despite this, it is submitted that the CF goes a long way in ensuring its members are satisfied with their career choice and quality of life, and that professional expectations are clarified and communicated.

As the CF moves more towards a multicultural organization, there are other attributes of performance management that must be considered. As Matveev and Milter discovered in their research, high performance multicultural teams can only function effectively if the team members have "intercultural competence" and understand how their other team members work.¹¹¹ They also identify that having a meaningful purpose and a high degree of accountability to each other are important attributes in a team

¹⁰⁹ James Griffith and Mark Vaitkus, "Relating Cohesion to Stress, Strain, Disintegration, and Performance: An Organizing Framework," *Military Psychology* 11, no.1 (1999): 42-43; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 21 November 2006.

¹¹⁰ Paul A. Gade, Ronald B. Tiggel, and Walter R. Schumm, "The Military and Consequences of Military Organizational Commitment in Soldiers and Spouses," *Military Psychology* 15, no.3 (July 2003): 206; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 December 2006.

¹¹¹ Alexei V. Matveev and Richard G. Milter, "The Value of Intercultural Competence for Performance of Multicultural Teams," *Top Performance Management* 10, no. 5/6 (2004): 105; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 March 2007.

environment.¹¹² Certainly, Matveev and Milter's thoughts on performance management are in line with what the CF tries to incorporate in their team and group environment.

Based on the above, it is clear that a team or group's performance is based on several factors that are interdependent and difficult to isolate. When faced with a small force that must accomplish a myriad of tasks with minimal resources, CF teams are continuously facing challenges in achieving high performance. These factors are also frequently exacerbated when the selection and retention of teamplayers is difficult to accomplish within demographic roadblocks and a resource-constrained recruiting organization. Furthermore, some teams are bound for failure when faced with a large turnover of people and an inability to empower those who remain. Notwithstanding these challenges, the CF continues to search for the best and brightest, though it often struggles to produce and sustain effective teams.

ASSESSING AND MONITORING PERFORMANCE

The continuous assessment and monitoring of an organization's performance must be a fundamental component of any basic strategic HRM strategy. Though performance measurement has often been considered a bureaucratic imposition by some organization's employees, recent improvements in performance measurement frameworks have gathered steam in a considerable number of Fortune 500 companies and modern militaries, including the CF. However, even with the advent of these models, measuring the performance of human resource functions has been challenging due to the often intangible criteria for measuring that performance. This is understandable given

¹¹² Alexei V. Matveev and Richard G. Milter, "The Value of Intercultural Competence for Performance of Multicultural Teams," *Top Performance Management* 10 no. 5/6 (2004): 105; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 March 2007.

that teams are complex entities and are comprised of individuals with varying degrees of skill-sets and attributes as previously discussed. Furthermore, it is not always clear how to define the outcome of a particular task or function – which makes it particularly difficult to quantitatively measure a person or team’s output.

To measure personnel performance, the CF utilizes several performance measurement systems established at various levels within the institution. At the strategic level, the Vice Chief of Defence Staff manages a performance measurement system with an HRM component that is used to measure how well the CF is managing its people at the strategic level. This requirement is reinforced in *HR Strategy 2020*, where performance measurement is a “very effective form of assessment for the CF, and a key to ensuring the success of achieving our strategic HR objectives.”¹¹³ However, despite the emphasis placed on performance measurement writ large, there is no indication at the strategic level or within the framework that assessing the CF’s ability to foster teamwork is something that must be measured.

Despite the lack of emphasis at the team level, individual performance measurement is well managed and seems to dominate all other aspects of HRM within the CF. Whether receiving an annual performance assessment report (PER), being assessed during training, or receiving feedback after operational exercises, the CF really focuses on evaluating an individual’s performance throughout their career. The CF Performance Appraisal System (CFPAS) is a well-established system that is continuously

¹¹³ Department of National Defence, *Military HR Strategy 2020: Facing the People Challenges of the Future* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2002), 26.

used and recognized amongst supervisors at all levels of the CF.¹¹⁴ It is used as a tool, not only for assessing an individual's performance, but also as the means of communicating job expectations at the beginning of the reporting period and providing periodic feedback prior to the year-end formal assessment. In this regard, it has served as an effective means of implementing several components of performance management.

However, when it comes to assessing an individual's performance as a team participant, there is only one simple "performance factor" (PF) in the CFPAS where this measure is accomplished.¹¹⁵ And though there is guidance on how to measure this teamwork component, it is submitted that the assessment criteria are very subjective and really based on the "eye of the beholder."¹¹⁶ In taking this basic approach to assessing a person's contribution to a team, the question is whether a single performance factor is adequate to assess this important attribute of a CF member, that of teamwork. In response to this challenge, critics would perhaps resort to the fundamental argument that teamwork is only one component of performance; and that it deserves no more attention than any other performance aspects (like "communication" or "supervisory ability"), which also have only one PF within the CFPAS framework. There is of course no totally convincing counter-argument to this position besides the old adage that an individual's failure to communicate or supervise may have substantially less impact than if they cannot function within a team – for a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

¹¹⁴ An explanation of the CFPAS is available at www.dnd.ca/cfpas.

¹¹⁵ The CFPAS uses a combination of both performance Assessment Factors (AFs) and Potential Factors (PFs) to assess its members. One of the 16 AFs is the "ability to work with others," www.dnd.ca/cfpas; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

¹¹⁶ See David P. Baker and Eduardo Salas, "Analyzing Team Performance: In the Eye of the Beholder?," *Military Psychology* 8, no. 3 (1996): 236; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 29 January 2007.

Despite a lack of attention, measuring “team” performance in the CF is another important aspect to ensuring the defence team is set-up to achieve success. Generally only conducted on larger teams, team performance assessments are predominantly focussed on teams and groups during exercises and team training. Furthermore, these assessments are also frequently used as morale boosters to struggling teams. This necessity is reinforced by Hecht *et al*, who indicate in their article that the need to convince teams that they have the ability to achieve success is just as critical in fostering performance as other more obvious factors.¹¹⁷ The conviction of “thinking we can” is therefore a factor that may influence team performance; and in this respect, assessing performance during team or group activities has a double effect, as not only will it identify teamwork deficiencies, but perhaps more importantly, it can be used to reaffirm the strengths of the team and how well they can do if they work together.

Notwithstanding this ability to examine a teams’ response in exercises and a training environment, effective performance assessment also requires a systematic approach as Fowlkes *et al* emphasize. According to them, without a well-structured measurement framework in place, it can be very difficult to accurately assess team performance.¹¹⁸ In this regard, they posit that it is very important to identify specific and

¹¹⁷ See comments in Tracey D. Hecht, *et al*, “Group Beliefs, Ability, and Performance: The Potency of Group Potency,” *Group Dynamics, Theory, Research, and Practice*, 6, no. 2 (June 2002): 149-150; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007. Furthermore, Shamir *et al*’s’ article also supports this hypothesis. Boas Shamir, *et al*, “Perceived Combat Readiness as Collective Efficacy: Individual – and Group-Level Analysis,” *Military Psychology* 12 no. 2 (April 2000): 112-113; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

¹¹⁸ Jennifer E. Fowlkes, *et al*, “Improving the Measurement of Team Performance: The TARGETS Methodology,” *Military Psychology* 6, no. 1 (1994): 48; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2007.

observable team behaviours that can be observed and measured: if this is not achieved, then any assessment is once again left to the “eye of the beholder.” With this in mind, there are probably opportunities to enforce more structure in the CF’s methodologies and frameworks for assessing team or group performance during team training and exercises. Perhaps it is time to implement a CFPAS approach to the management of groups and teams within the CF?

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Building the right team, assessing their performance, and providing feedback are of course only means to an end: for a team is ultimately not working well unless it is achieving its aim.¹¹⁹ In a transforming CF, where effects-based approach to operations (EBAO) are becoming more prevalent, there is a growing emphasis on the requirement to form teams that are focussed on achieving specific mission-critical objectives.¹²⁰ With the creation and development of these teams, also comes the necessity to institute a systematic approach for continuous improvement through the adoption of lessons learned and changes to doctrine and procedures. However, understanding what is important to, and ultimately results in, team performance improvement is not necessarily straightforward.

¹¹⁹ See “When Failure Isn’t an Option” for some good examples of a “do or die” situation and its outcomes. Hillman, *et al*, “When Failure Isn’t an Option,” *Harvard Business Review* 83, no. 7/8 (July/August 2005): 41; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 1 March 2007.

¹²⁰ EBAO attributes operational success to understanding the objectives that must be achieved in an operation. Department of Defense, *Commander’s Handbook for an Effects-Based Approach to Joint Operations* (Washington: Joint Warfighting Center, 2006): ix; <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

Stout, Salas, and Fowlkes advocate that the key to performance improvements resides in team training.¹²¹ The importance of this component has already been discussed in the previous chapter and will not be further pursued further. According to Stiffler, the fundamental problem with achieving performance in organizations is generally a “lack [of] a single, consistent vision that ties together every component of the organization and its operation.”¹²² Though this statement may be construed as a sweeping generality, it does reinforce that there is no single approach or system that is the panacea for success. This revelation may be particularly relevant to a CF (and most government organizations) that perhaps is overly reliant on a “systematic” - rather than comprehensive approach - to resolving HRM challenges. As Whitaker professes, a failure to design and implement effective HRM practices often underscores “a lack of HR intellect” in organizations. This can unfortunately cause them to focus on the wrong areas.¹²³

Roland *et al* also have found that there are specific team characteristics that must be in place to ensure teams can adapt and improve over time. In their “culture before structure” approach they advocate that special attention must be paid to an organization’s culture in order for an organization to progress.¹²⁴ Hitchcock takes another similar but opposite approach. He identifies team “stoppers” or barriers that must be overcome for a

¹²¹ Reneé J. Stout, Eduardo Salas, and Jennifer E. Fowlkes, “Enhancing Teamwork in Complex Environments Through Team Training,” *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1997): 169; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

¹²² Mark A. Stiffler, “Move from Managing to Driving Performance,” *Performance Improvement* 45, no. 9 (October 2006): 17; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 March 2007.

¹²³ Debbie Whitaker, “Human Capital: Management or Measurement,” *Personneltoday.com* (February 13, 2007); <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 March 2007.

¹²⁴ Christopher Roland and Kate Cronin, “Insights Into Improving Organizational Performance,” *Quality Progress* 30, no. 3 (March 1997): 83; <http://www.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2006.

team to excel. These include removing any confusion as to what the team must achieve to be successful and removing any leaders or management who are not committed to the mission.¹²⁵ In a CF context, where transformation will undoubtedly require a clear understanding of what institutional “culture” must be implemented for continuing success, Roland *et al* are on mark. Furthermore, as firm resolution at all levels of the leadership chain is required, Hitchcock’s emphasis on the necessity of leadership commitment in implementing change also rings true. This will become more relevant as the CF continues on its journey of improvement to become more professional and ready to respond to the needs of Canadians and the world.

A final note on the challenge on improving teams and groups is the importance of establishing intra-group relational links. Beranek and Martz in their research on virtual teams identify the importance of the closeness amongst team members.¹²⁶ More substantive than cohesion, this closeness implies an enhanced degree of communication and satisfaction that can only be found in teams that associate and work very well together at an individual level. As Beranek and Martz found, these enhanced relational links can truly only be established if “relational development” training and effective management are provided.¹²⁷ As the CF further undergoes transformation and moves more towards virtual operational teams - that is teams that are frequently separated by

¹²⁵ Darcy Hitchcock, “Overcoming the Top Ten Self-Directed Team Stoppers,” *The Journal for Quality and Participation* 15, no. 7 (December 1992): 42-47; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 17 March 2007.

¹²⁶ Peggy M. Beranek and Ben Martz, “Making Virtual Teams More Effective: Improving Relational Links,” *Team Performance Management* 11, no. 5/6 (2005): 201; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

¹²⁷ Peggy M. Beranek and Ben Martz, “Making Virtual Teams More Effective: Improving Relational Links,” *Team Performance Management* 11, no. 5/6 (2005): 210; <http://www.proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2007.

time and geography - the need to understand the communicative and inter-relational aspects of teams and groups will take on more importance if the CF is to get better at what it does.

SUMMARY

Performance management is clearly a critical part of personnel management. As an indicator of the success of the other components of HRM, it must be the ultimate objective of any organization that wants to excel. As the CF strives to develop more effective teams and groups through a concentration on recruiting, retention, and training, it must also consider and remain focussed on implementing an effective and pragmatic performance management system. Whether creating teams for success, measuring performance, or working on means to constantly improve organizational achievement, The CF must ensure all pillars of performance management have strong foundations and are entrenched in any its HRMS.

There are many aspects to managing team performance. To begin, it is important to first understand how individual personalities and team composition – as well as some non-traditional factors - can contribute to or detract from team cohesion and functionality. This factor would seem very critical as leaders assemble CF teams to operate in the challenging full-spectrum environment of today. Secondly, the provision of feedback and accurate assessment of performance can mean success or failure of any team or group; and without an honest and empirical understanding of their performance, how can teams expect to focus on those areas that require improvement? Furthermore, as a complementary component of performance assessment, it is only through continuous feedback and encouragement that team morale and excellence can be sustained.

Finally, improving team performance is not straightforward. There are many aspects that contribute to an effective team, and understanding the nuances of intra-team relationships and other cohesive factors are crucial. Organizational culture, leadership commitment, and relationships between team members are all contributing factors that will influence whether teams can learn and develop into the high-performance organizations required of a transforming Canadian Forces.

CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUSION

TOWARDS EFFECTIVE TEAMS AND GROUPS

The transformation of the CF into a more integrated and effective force will require considerable focus and leadership at all levels of the organization. Not only will transformation change the way the Forces conduct operations and manage resources, it will also involve a significant shift in the mindset of each CF member. With these changes will come a future CF that will be more “compartmentalized” towards specific lines of operation, and within this framework will emerge the requirement for more dynamic and integrated CF teams and groups that will have to not only work independently but also within a more larger and complex Force. However, with this transformation and these challenges will also come the opportunity to discard anachronistic thinking for the creativity required of the future force; and nowhere will this be more relevant than in the area of human resource management.

Teamwork, and the working relationships between the various groups in the CF, is the cornerstone of an effective force; for without effective teams that can meet the demands and achieve the objectives of future operations, the CF will languish in irrelevance. In this regard, the CF’s HRMS must seize the opportunity afforded by transformation to change its framework and improve the way it develops and manages its teams and groups. However, as the Canadian demographics of the next decade will undoubtedly make the recruitment and retention of skilled and CF members more challenging, the CF HRMS will have difficulties in even finding these recruits – let alone recruit effective teamplayers. When faced with this demographic inevitability, the first reaction might be to sacrifice quality for quantity; and there will be those who will argue

that even meeting basic force strength will require considerable compromise. If this is the case, then the CF will have to become even smarter in the way it manages its human resources, as each individual and team will become a scarce commodity and precious resource that cannot be squandered.

This paper demonstrated how group science offers some insight into how the CF could respond to this future challenge. Not only are there behavioural and psychological aspects to why groups come together, there are also organizational management frameworks and strategies to ensure groups and teams stay and work well together. In the application of group science to these areas, it is therefore evident that there are certainly opportunities for improving how the CF manages its human resources to ensure its teams and operational units are well positioned for the challenges associated with transformation.

Attracting people to the CF is a huge challenge considering the competition from other professions. It is therefore important to understand how specific individuals and targeted groups perceive the military and the CF as a potential employer. Though there are various approaches in how to attract people to the CF, group science offered insight into the way people view organizations and how their “group” affiliations are critical in understanding how to entice potential recruits to approach a recruiting center. In this respect, the paper identified deficiencies in how the CF presently recruits its members and provided some methodologies for improvement, including outsourcing the “non-military” aspects of the process.

However, once people are in the door, the way recruiters deal with and market the CF must be carefully orchestrated - as individuals are generally only comfortable in

familiar environments. Group science identified some challenges in establishing this environment in CF recruiting centers, and provided some considerations for how the CF should initially conduct interviews and process applicants. This is important as seemingly simple events like face-to-face interviews could mean the difference between a new CF member and a disillusioned and confused Canadian citizen walking out the door. However, it was also noted that it is equally important to be honest and frank with an applicant given that the CF may not turn out to be what was envisioned if recruiting is focussed on purely getting numbers through the door: the CF cannot be marketed as a utopian organization that caters to all.

The actual selection of personnel is also very important. This is especially relevant given the expense and opportunity costs associated with enrolling individuals in the CF who may ultimately end up being incapable of and ineffective at working in a team environment. Moreover, with a greater emphasis on teams in a transformed CF, group science substantiated the implementation of more rigorous and proven methodologies for actually determining if recruits have the personality and aptitude for working in the demanding CF operational teams of the future. Some recommendations included the implementation of personality-based tests and structured interviews by qualified recruiting officers as a means of improving quality assurance. However, given the human rights aspects of some testing procedures, it also highlighted that there are challenges in incorporating these frameworks.

Once a recruit is enrolled in the CF, the challenge of retaining that member becomes the key focus. In this regard, group science provided some perspective on how to ensure that member remains a dedicated and contributing member of the defence team.

Much like in the case of recruiting, it was underscored that are also “group” attributes that may ultimately decide if a member remains in the CF; and that there are cultural perceptions of the military and other group affiliations that may influence if a person stays or goes. While earning potential and alternate career options are obvious considerations for individuals in deciding if the CF is a viable career, group affiliation must be a consideration in any CF retention strategy.

However, besides retaining members based on their perception of the CF, group science identified other institutional elements that must be implemented in maintaining a cohesive and viable CF. Organizational culture and vision, and the ways these attributes are communicated to members, significantly influence how groups remain intact and effective. Furthermore, there are other “generational” factors that will undoubtedly influence how the CF keeps a force together in the future. As Generation Y becomes the force of the future, there are unique characteristics associated with these individuals that will influence whether CF groups are fully functioning and whether these individuals choose long careers in the service of Canada. However, despite these generational nuances, it was also emphasized that there may be a limit to how far the CF can go to retain members; for perhaps military organizations are reaching their zenith, and belonging to a military may be anathema for future generations. Notwithstanding this possibility, group science offered some optimism for retaining a future force through the communication and modernization of “military” culture and organizational frameworks.

A key element of developing and sustaining effective teams and groups is training. While recruiting and retaining individuals with a propensity for teamwork is important, group science underlined that it is only through individual and team training

that effective teams can truly be formed. In preparing an individual to assume a team role, there are certain aspects that must be considered. Developing the right mind-set and cognitive abilities seem critical to enhancing a person's potential to work in a group; and a CF that places more emphasis on cognitive abilities – for example information processing and cultural sensitivity - might be more successful than simply focussing on the traditional skills normally associated with teamwork. Furthermore, the importance of establishing the right motivational framework and empowerment in individuals through training is very germane to effective teams: this is something that every military force could improve on.

Team training is also an enabler that better prepares teams to succeed. However, developing and implementing an effective team training system is challenging. It was submitted that current systems often are not well-understood or based on scientific principles, and therefore not focussed on providing what is really needed by a team to succeed. Additionally, group science indicated that team-training systems must link key expectant results back to fundamental attributes in order to be effective.

It was also demonstrated that leadership plays a significant part in developing and sustaining teams: for without effective leadership, a team has no bearing or critical mass from which to operate. Leadership, however, is not always concerned with the best interests of the group. Frequently, it is focussed on more bureaucratic issues rather than what truly makes a team function well. This impediment can be further exacerbated by rigid archetypal leadership attitudes and a non-willingness to adapt to better approaches to management. The CF must always strive to improve this aspect of its defence team.

Finally, performance management is the HRM function that links all the others together, as a team without performance goals is adrift and does a great disservice to those who seek excellence in themselves and others. But as was determined from the research, performance management must be based on strong pillars that represent the triad of performance assessment, feedback, and improvement: if any of these are missing, the system will only be as strong as its weakest chain. The application of group science therefore identified areas for improvement in the CF, especially in how teams are presently assessed and monitored.

In developing a high performance team, the fundamental HRM components that were discussed throughout this research paper once again became apparent. Finding the right people, keeping them motivated and part of a cohesive team, training to be the best, and applying firm leadership are all aspects that must be achieved. But as previously discussed, there are challenges with every one of these functions; and the interrelationship between these components and their impact on developing and sustaining effective teams can often be unclear. However, it is paramount that performance management must assume a predominant position in any HRMS to ensure success and that the mission is achieved.

WHAT FOR THE FUTURE?

This research paper provided some perspective on how group science could be applied in improving the Canadian Forces Human Resources Management System. In doing this, it touched on some behavioural science, sociological factors, and organizational management theory that might be applied in creating, developing, and sustaining effective teams in a CF context.

The CF is transforming into a more integrated and focussed force that will need better teams and group work in the future. Not only will operational teams be expected to work in isolation in a very complex and dangerous situations, they will also be required to be more dynamic, flexible, and have a better understanding of their environment. Moreover, with the integration of the three CF components - Air Force, Navy, and Army – into a joint force, the fundamental CF culture and ways of doing business will undoubtedly shift. This will present significant hurdles, but also opportunities that must be seized. The CF's HRMS stands in good position to also transform its frameworks and better look towards the future that is quickly approaching. By better focussing on how to best utilize best practices and group science, it can apply more innovative approaches to how it builds, develops and sustains the CF's groups and teams. Whether through better marketing of targeted demographic groups, smarter recruit selection methodologies, or improved team training, it will have the opportunity and challenge of creating the ultimate Canadian Forces Team of the future.

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