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MASTER OF DEFENCE STUDIES

MANAGING CIVILIANS IN THE CANADIAN FORCES

By /par

Lieutenant Colonel Bernhard E. Van-Vianen

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ABSTRACT

Personnel reductions in the Department of National Defence (DND) since the early 1990s have caused senior military leadership to focus much of the Canadian Forces' (CF) military manpower in and on field units. This focus has caused a resurgence of questions regarding the significance of civilians to the accomplishment of the CF's mission. The Chief of Defence Staff has openly recognized civilians within DND as being vital to the success of the CF. The rise in the percentage of civilian employees within units has increased the need for military leaders to be aware of guidelines and policies for civilian employees. Furthermore, the existence of different sets of regulations covering term and contract personnel as opposed to those on indeterminate contracts have added to the complexity of management. It is, therefore, in the best interests of the military community to better understand the Public Service, its organization, and its culture.

This paper addresses general ongoing challenges that are constant influences on managing civilians in the Department of National Defence. It covers the more contemporary challenges of Public Service Modernization and CF Transformation which are confronting Commanding Officers (COs) while leading their civilian employees. The paper considers select areas within HR management theory and discusses how these areas impact COs' ability to manage their civilians. Based on this analysis, suggestions are made on how to improve the manner in which the CF manages its civilian employees at the unit level.

The challenges raised in this paper concerning the management of civilian employees may not be as prevalent in those units that have relatively low ratios of

civilians (i.e. field units with only a CO's secretary). Nonetheless, whether COs have one or one hundred civilians under their command, the responsibility to know their people and the policies and procedures governing their employment does not change.

The aim of this paper is to examine the challenges COs face when managing DND civilians at the unit level in relation to current management policies for DND civilians within the CF and HR management theories and policies existing in industry. HR management encompasses a number of activities: HR planning, recruitment, orientation, training and development, motivation, and performance measurement. It is important to understand that the analysis of civilian HR management must be undertaken in a holistic manner. An effective way of communicating ways to improve HR management of civilians in DND is to provide a list of some of the guiding principles or issues raised in this paper for consideration: know your people, know yourself, obey the law, educate, demand results from your advisors, and be fair, open, and transparent.

In an environment where there is no room for excess personnel in a unit, and in which those personnel employed are key to the success of the CF, COs cannot afford to neglect the importance of properly managing their civilian employees. HR management is one of the keys to the success of the CF and DND. Without it, the most important asset within defence is neglected. Traditional views of many COs that HR issues were strictly the preview of HR specialists and could be ignored are no longer valid. COs must ensure that their civilian employees are afforded the same dedication and commitment they give to the military component of their unit.

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

To protect our country, the Department of National Defence (DND) relies on the dedication and commitment of all its members, military and civilian. As the largest public sector employer, DND is comprised of 61,740 military (Regular Force) officials and 23,018 civilian staff.¹ Since National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) was established in 1972, the term *Defence Team* has been coined to describe an environment in which the military, public servants, and employees from non-governmental organizations work together towards the attainment of the department's mission. Since the early 1990s, the tempo within the Canadian Forces (CF) has increased substantially. This has caused senior military leadership to focus much of the CF's military manpower on field units. This focus has increased the significance of civilians to the CF's mission. Yet, military personnel and civilian employees are not the same. They are governed by different rules and must be treated differently if they are to be productive. The problem, however, is that many military supervisors do not fully understand the differences between military members and civilian personnel and lead both in a similar manner. This broad-brush approach towards leadership at the unit level can create personnel problems and reduce productivity. As such, military leaders need to be aware of management guidelines and policies for civilian employees. The challenges senior military leaders face today in managing civilian employees will continue to confront them as DND and the CF move further into the 21st century.

¹ Actual 2005-2006 Full Time Equivalent taken from the 2006-2007 Report on Plans and Priorities, Department of National Defence, *2006-2007 Report on Plans and Priorities* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2006), 8.

This paper is based on both traditional research and on experience gained from over five years in command positions within the CF. The CF is riddled with leaders who are placed in positions of authority over civilians without the training required to manage them. For most Commanding Officers (COs), the training they receive throughout their career does not prepare them for the world of unions and collective agreements. Despite sincere interest in learning as much as they can about all their subordinates, they quickly realize that one of the biggest challenges facing them is civilian management: they do not know what they do not know. Although military officers receive a significant amount of leadership and trades training throughout their career, the majority of their Human Resource (HR) training is focused on managing military personnel. In essence, the CF prepares officers to command military personnel and has traditionally treated issues such as civilian HR management as a sidebar discussion in those classes provided on military personnel management. For many COs, after two or three years in command, they leave their unit arguably much more capable of managing civilians, but still aware that there is much more to learn about the idiosyncrasies of the public service.

Many factors influenced the focus and scope of this paper. First and foremost, although the topics covered here are general in nature, they allow for specific suggestions for improvement rather than just providing a cursory review of the problem without any concrete or constructive comments to improve the situation. Second, the focus of this paper is the CO of a unit and the challenges he or she faces while managing civilians. Due the size and complexity of CF, not all supervisors face similar HR challenges. DND civilians employed in a unit, for example, offer different challenges than those employed in staff headquarters, or at NDHQ. It is the CO, however, who ultimately has the

responsibility of implementing any new initiatives regarding HR management.² The unit has been chosen because it is at this level where civilian HR management becomes a cold reality. Moreover, the number of static units on bases that employ large numbers of civilians will continue to rise as CF personnel are re-directed to field units with more expeditionary roles (typically static units providing base services or a fleet maintenance unit on a coast).

Formal research for this paper included a review of strategic level documents concerning how the Public Service, DND, and the CF manage their civilian employees, as well as current texts on HR management and organizational behaviour. A number of books on leadership, management, motivation, and change were also reviewed. Furthermore, the Internet and the Intranet were invaluable for providing information for this paper. Websites for Treasury Board, DND, and the Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Resources Civilian (ADM (HR-Civ)) were quite useful in providing background information as well as the current civilian HR management policies used by DND and the CF. Discussions with colleagues who face civilian HR management challenges on a daily basis were also an invaluable source of information. Personnel within ADM (HR-Civ) who are responsible for the implementation of new initiatives, civilian HR Officers who support COs in managing civilians, and many of the stakeholders concerned with the management of DND civilians at the unit level (civilian employees, previous unit COs) provided a great deal of information about how things are done in the field and gave more credibility to the recommendations presented in this paper. Although not formally documented as interviews, each discussion touched on two identical areas to allow for

² Nonetheless, whether military managers have one or one hundred civilians under their command, the responsibility to know their people and the policies and procedures governing their employment does not change.

comparison: what are some of the major challenges the CF is currently facing when managing civilians and, if given the choice, what can be done to improve the management of civilians at the unit level.

The aim of this paper is to examine the challenges COs face when managing DND civilians at the unit level in relation to current management policies for DND civilians within the CF and HR management theories and policies existing in industry. In the past, COs could generally treat the management of their civilian employees as a secondary duty that could be attended to only after the management of the military personnel was deemed under the control. The research here demonstrates that this can no longer be the case. COs must ensure that their civilian employees are afforded the same dedication and commitment they give to the military component of their unit. Changes to any HR activity within DND and the CF cannot be implemented without considering their effect on all the other activities involved. The paper will address general ongoing challenges that are constant influences on managing civilians in DND including the governance structure in DND, differences in military and civilian cultures, and the competencies required of COs in order to properly manage civilian employees. It will then cover the more contemporary challenges of Public Service Modernization and CF Transformation, which are affecting how COs manage their civilian employees. Finally, the paper will cover select areas within HR management theory and discuss how these areas impact COs' ability to manage their civilians. Based on this analysis, a list of guiding principles will be proposed to improve the manner in which COs can manage their civilian employees at the unit level. They include: know your people, know yourself, obey the law, educate, demand results from your advisors, and be fair, open, and

transparent. This paper will show that leadership cannot discriminate within a unit. COs must understand all of their personnel if they want to be successful.

CHAPTER II – GOVERNANCE, COMPETENCIES, CULTURE, AND VISION

If language is not correct, then what is said is not meant; if what is said is not what is meant, then what must be done remains undone; if this remains undone, morals and art will deteriorate; if justice goes astray, the people will stand about in helpless confusion. Hence there must be no arbitrariness in what is said. This matters above everything.³

In order to properly assess how COs can better manage civilians working in a unit, one must first understand what makes up the Department (DND) and the ongoing and ever-present challenges that face it in balancing two professions, namely the profession of the Public Service and the profession of Arms.⁴ What happens in DND, for instance, when the responsibilities of the profession that is the Public Service seem to be inconsistent with the profession of Arms, and how do COs create a balance between the two? This information is vital for COs to understand if they are to effectively lead military and civilian personnel.

GOVERNANCE

Leadership within DND is exercised through civilian over-watch, parliamentary accountability, and legislative authority and responsibility.⁵ It is made up of political, military, and Public Service members, all trying to serve the interests of Canada. The

³ Confucius, quoted in Richard D. Downie, “Defining Integrated Operations,” *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 38 (2005): 10-13.

⁴ Although there are a myriad of papers written on what constitutes a profession, for the purposes of this paper, both the military and the Public Service are considered professions in their own right. Both view themselves as providing a unique and valuable service to Canada.

⁵ LCol S.J. Gregory, “Change is the Mother of Invention: Changes in Canadian Forces Leadership Doctrine Will Facilitate Leadership in Mixed Civilian/Military Settings” (Toronto: Canadian Forces College Command and Staff Course New Horizons Paper, 2004), 7.

governance structure within National Defence has undergone significant changes in recent decades that have significantly impacted how military and civilians work together. In the early 1960s, the Government of Canada ordered a review of its departments and agencies. The resulting report (Glassco report) recommended administrative and structural changes to the Armed Forces, including the idea that civilians and military officers should work together at all levels of administration to improve performance. It saw the combining of military and civilian staffs as a particular benefit to the civilians in the department who often regarded “military affairs as professional mysteries comprehensible only to the military mind.”⁶ The recommendations made in the Glassco report attempted to remove barriers between military and civilian cultures with hopes of improving efficiency within the department. Many of the recommendations from the Glassco report did not come to fruition until almost a decade later.

In 1972, partly as a result of a ministerial study called the Management Review Group, Canadian Forces Headquarters (CFHQ) was disbanded and the military staff was rolled into a unified Department of National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) under the control of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and a Deputy Minister (DM).⁷ Service heads of branches at NDHQ were re-titled Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) and, in many cases, replaced by civil servants.⁸ The CDS and DM, supported by ADMs and Environmental Chiefs of Staff (ECSs), exercise authority over DND and the CF. The

⁶ Royal Commission on Government Organization, *Glassco Commission Report*, Vol. 4 (Ottawa: Queens Printer, 1963), 78 - 79.

⁷ Within DND the term *Defence Team* has been coined to describe an environment where the military, public servants, and employees from non-public organizations work together as a team towards the attainment of the department’s mission.

⁸ Desmond Morton, *Military History of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1999), 259.

creation of NDHQ did not overcome the differences between military and civilian staff. J.L. Granatstein, a professor emeritus of history at York University and the chair of the Advisory Council of the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, has argued that the consensus-based policy of NDHQ still impedes military advice in an organization that is too civilianized today.⁹ Sarah Hill, a defence scientist working for Defence Research and Development Canada and attached to the Chief of Military Personnel, states in a draft report on the corporate culture in the CF and DND:

The predominant style of leadership on the part of military participants is the command style taught to all military personnel over the course of their career. Reliant upon a formal chain of command, predicated on an expectation of compliance once a decision has been made, and codified in such things as the use of language (acronyms) and writing styles (official formats of all kinds), leadership as practiced by senior military personnel has a highly directive quality well suited to the operational needs of the CF. Civilians, on the other hand, often bring with them a more political, indirect, and consensually determined style of leadership that is presumably common across many government departments.¹⁰

Many officers within the CF, who have spent all of their careers on bases, find it difficult to comprehend the more civilian oriented and bureaucratic culture of NDHQ. These feelings run parallel to those of civilians who try to comprehend the culture on a military base.

How does the structure of NDHQ affect COs who manage civilians? At the very core of any HR management process is leadership. Without leadership from the most senior levels within DND, any initiatives to change HR management processes are doomed to fail. Retired US General Perry M. Smith argued in a recent book that leaders

⁹ J. L. Granatstein, "For Efficient and Effective Military Forces," <http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/minister/eng/Granatstein/gra2engsece.html>; Internet; accessed 2 December 2006.

¹⁰ Defence Research and Development Canada, *Corporate Culture in the CF and DND: Descriptive Themes and Emergent Models* (Ottawa: DRDC Canada, February 2007), draft, cited with permission, 12-13.

must not only set standards, they must also ensure that both they and their subordinates follow the standards unwaveringly.¹¹ The responsibility for developing HR management processes within DND resides with ADM (HR-Civ), one of many ADMs or Level 1 (L1) advisors to the Deputy Minister. As such, COs must have a good understanding of the governance structure within NDHQ so as to better understand how HR processes are developed and where support can be obtained when challenges or questions arise.

COMPETENCIES

As discussed at the beginning of this paper, many COs are inadequately prepared for the challenges of managing civilian employees. In addition to a good understanding of the strategic level processes affecting civilian HR management, COs must also be competent in managing civilian personnel and must be aware of what competencies are expected of managers in the Public Service. One way of describing leadership attributes that has received a considerable amount of attention the past few years is the competency model. Competencies help align employees with the strategic direction of an organization and can be learned and developed. As such, when integrated into HR management practices, they can distinguish and differentiate an organization.¹²

There has been a significant amount of work completed both in the CF and in the Public Service on competencies required of its leaders. In a 2002 article titled “Re-Conceptualizing Command and Control,” defence scientists Drs. Ross Pigeau and Carol

¹¹ MGen Perry M. Smith, *Rules & Tools for Leaders: A Down-to-Earth Guide to Effective Managing* (New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 2002), 8.

¹² D. Ulrich quoted in Stephanie Paquet, Laura Hambley, and Theresa Kline, *Strategic Leadership Competencies in the Canadian Forces* (Kingston: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, March 2003), 15.

McCann developed a model that identified competency as one of the three components that made up command (competency, authority, and responsibility (CAR)).¹³ Pigeau and McCann argued that the intellectual competency of a leader was critical to planning missions, monitoring the situation, using reasoning, making inferences, visualizing the problem space, assessing risks and making judgments. In 2003, a research paper written for the Canadian Forces Leadership Institute (CFLI) defined competencies as “measurable attributes that distinguish outstanding performers from others in a defined job context.”¹⁴ The report argued that military leaders needed to be visionaries and agents of change. They needed to be coaches and mentors, and to support their employees at every opportunity.¹⁵ The paper acknowledged the challenges of implementing a competency model within the CF, but concluded that there was a need to integrate competencies into HR processes for current and potential leaders for organizational effectiveness. In essence, COs needed to be taught how to manage civilians if they were expected to become competent in managing them.

To date, there has been no conclusive definition of the competencies that are expected of leaders in the CF. Indeed, a 2006 CFLI report titled *The Professional Development Framework: Generating Effectiveness in Canadian Forces Leadership*, suggested that competencies in the CF were creating great confusion.¹⁶ It did, however,

¹³ Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann, “Re-Conceptualizing Command and Control,” *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol. 3 no.1 (Spring 2002): 53-63.

¹⁴ V.M Cantano, quoted in Stephanie Paquet, *et al* , *Strategic Leadership Competencies in the Canadian Forces*, 15.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁶ Department of National Defence, *The Professional Development Framework: Generating Effectiveness in Canadian Forces Leadership* (Ottawa: DND Canada, September 2006) 51.

offer five elements of leadership that may be interpreted as competencies for military leaders: expertise, cognitive capacities, social capacities, change capacities, and professional ideology. The report also recommended addressing these competencies differently depending on the rank of the leader: junior, intermediate, advanced, or senior.¹⁷

The Public Service has also struggled over the years to define the characteristics required for effective performance at various levels of management. In 1990, the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Public Service Commission published the *Profile of the Public Service Leaders and Managers*. The profile described thirteen characteristics that were required for effective performance and how they were expressed within five levels of management.¹⁸ It identified fifteen competencies with definitions that were to be used by Public Service managers. These competencies were blocked into six areas: intellectual competencies, future building competencies, management competencies, relationship competencies, personal competencies, and knowledge competencies. In February 2004, the Public Service Human Resource Management Agency of Canada, in partnership with the Public Service Commission of Canada, reviewed leadership competencies in the Public Service. The intent of the review was to update and simplify the leadership competencies and to define them at all levels of the leadership continuum.¹⁹ The result of the review was a model consisting of four competencies

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁸ Public Service Commission of Canada, *Profile of Public Service Leadership Competencies*, (Ottawa: Public Service Commission of Canada, Canada, June 2003)1.[document on-line]; http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/ppc/profile_of_public_service_leadership_competencies_e.pdf; Internet; accessed 13 December 2006.

¹⁹ Human Resource Management Agency of Canada, “Key Leadership Competencies,” http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/leadership/klc-ccl/intro_e.asp; Internet; accessed 11 January 2007.

defining effective behaviours for each competency for each of the six levels of the continuum of leadership defined by the Public Service: Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister, Director General, Director, Manager, and Supervisor. The competencies identified were management excellence, engagement, strategic thinking, and values and ethics.²⁰

As Table 1.2 shows, there are significant similarities between the competency models used by the CF and the Public Service. First, each sees the need for specialized skill sets required to perform the roles given to them (expertise versus management excellence). Without the skill sets needed to perform a job, COs cannot perform effectively and lose credibility when dealing with subordinates, peers, and superiors. It is important for COs to understand that in addition to the training and development of their subordinates, they also have a responsibility to invest in their own training and development.

Second, both the Public Service and the CF agree that an effective leader must have the cognitive ability to analyze issues and make creative and well-informed decisions (cognitive capacities versus strategic thinking). COs who cannot deal with the constant changes impacting government today and change plans, processes, and outcomes accordingly are doomed to failure. To be successful, COs need to be aware of changes not only in DND, but also in the Public Service and government as a whole. COs need to think outside of their limited areas of responsibility when addressing civilian HR matters.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Third, the two agree on the importance of people skills to effect changes, and of the need to learn and deal with colleagues (social capacities/change capacities versus engagement). Leadership is a human endeavour. Without an understanding of the human dimension of leading, a comprehension of organizational behaviour, and good communication skills, COs cannot be successful. Too often, COs progress within the CF based on assessments of their technical skills; little attention is paid to their people skills until they are more senior in rank. The ability to deal with people and communicate effectively is of the utmost importance when assessing a CO's competency.

Finally both the Public Service and the CF see values and ethics as the glue that binds all the other competencies together (professional ideology versus values and ethics). While the other competencies identified by the CF and Public Service deal with technical abilities (the what), values and ethics deal with how leaders are to apply their craft (the how).

Table 1.2 – CF/Public Service Competency Comparison

CF	Expertise	Social Capacities	Change Capacities	Cognitive Capacities	Professional Ideology
Public Service	Management Excellence	Engagement		Strategic Thinking	Values & Ethics

Sources: DND, *The Professional Development Framework: Generating Effectiveness in Canadian Forces Leadership*, 28; and Human Resource Management Agency of Canada, "Key Leadership Competencies."

VALUES AND ETHICS

In 1995, a task force was formed by the Clerk of the Privy Council to examine the relationship between existing and evolving values and ethics in the Public Service and to consider ways to align them with current challenges. The result of this task force was a report titled *A Strong Foundation: Report of the Task Force on Public Service Values and Ethics*.²¹ The report, referred to as the Tait report (named after John Tait who led the task force), saw values and ethics within the Public Service as the fundamental unifying elements which bound the profession together. The Tait report further acknowledged that the application of Public Service values could differ between departments and, at times, Public Service values could become subordinate to the over-riding culture within each respective department (sub-cultures).²²

In October 2000, the Auditor General issued a report which dealt with values and ethics in the federal public sector. The report concluded that not only did Canadians expect that the federal public sector would be a world leader in promoting sound values and ethics in government, but that action would be taken to ensure senior line managers promoted sound values and ethics within the government.²³ The result was a document titled *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service*, issued in 2003. *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service* defined the role of the Public Service, articulated Public Service values, and identified responsibilities, authorities, and accountabilities for the

²¹ Canadian Centre for Management and Development, *A Strong Foundation: Report of the Task Force on Public Service Values and Ethics* (Ottawa: Canadian Center for Management and Development, Canada, 1996)[report on line]; available from <http://www.myschool-monecole.gc.ca/Research/publications/pdfs/tait.pdf>; Internet; accessed 10 January 2007.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Auditor General of Canada, "Values and Ethics in the Federal Public Sector," in *Report of the Auditor General of Canada*, (Ottawa: Auditor General of Canada, October 2000)[chapter on-line]; available from [http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/0012ce.html/\\$file/0012ce.pdf](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/0012ce.html/$file/0012ce.pdf); Internet; accessed 10 January 2007.

application of values and ethics within the Public Service. Specifically, the code identified four values to guide public servants in their work: democratic, professional, ethical, and people values. Democratic values help to serve the public interest. Professional values guide public servants to serve with competence, excellence, efficiency, objectivity and impartiality. Ethical values demand that public servants act at all times in such a way as to uphold the public trust. Finally, people values require respect, fairness and courtesy in all dealing with citizens and fellow public servants.²⁴

In 2001, DND instituted a *Defence Ethics Program* (DEP) to “ensure better ethical decision-making and integrity; and to provide a visible and expressed ethical focus for the DND and the CF.”²⁵ Amended in September 2003, the DEP confirmed that the values represented in the *Statement of Defence Ethics* were consistent with both the *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service* and *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada Manual*.²⁶ The DEP was clear to indicate that the *Statement of Defence Ethics* was applicable to both civilian and military members of National Defence. The *Statement* is based on three dictums: respect the dignity of all persons; serve Canada before self; and obey and support lawful authority. It identifies six obligations: integrity, loyalty, courage, honesty, fairness, and responsibility.²⁷ It is important for COs to

²⁴ Treasury Board of Canada, *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service* (Ottawa: Treasury Board, Canada, 2003)[document on-line]; available from http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/veo-bve/vec-cve/vec-cve_e.asp; Internet; accessed 13 December 2006.

²⁵ Department of National Defence, *DAOD 7032-1: Defence Ethics Program* (Ottawa: DND, Canada, 2001) [DAOD on-line]; available from http://www.admfincs.forces.gc.ca/admfincs/subjects/daod/7023/1_e.asp; Internet; accessed 20 November 2006.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

understand both the DEP and the *Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service*. They serve as complementary guides to how civilian employees are expected to conduct themselves and also serve as moral guides for leading them.

By comparing competency models in the Public Service and the CF, COs can better understand that despite their differing roles, similar constructs can be applied in assessing the competency of military and civilian leaders. This information is important when assessing the competency of subordinate managers within a unit who directly supervise civilians. However, if competencies within the CF and the Public Service are so similar, then what is it that makes the military and civilian components of DND so different? For COs to properly lead units comprised of military and civilian personnel, they must understand the differences between their cultures.

CULTURE

A newly promoted sergeant arrives at a unit and in his first week in the job he is tasked with acquiring a desperately needed piece of equipment. After talking to his fellow supervisors, he learns that the person who can assist him in procuring the piece of equipment is a civilian working in a neighbouring section. During their initial meeting the sergeant is told that he must complete an extensive checklist in order to procure the piece of equipment. He goes away feeling that this is just another example of how civilians do not understand the meaning of support to the military or of the importance of getting the job done. Furthermore, the civilian who gave the advice to the sergeant is left with the feeling that this is another fine example of how the military has little understanding of the processes that must be followed in order to procure equipment.

Despite the desires of senior leadership within National Defence to have an integrated Defence Team, differences in the cultures of public servants and the military always seems to create friction between the two. It is important for COs to understand the differences in the two cultures if they are to improve the way they manage civilians.

Every organization has a culture that defines its personality.²⁸ Culture was first defined in the social sciences over 125 years ago, and today as many as 250 definitions exist.²⁹ Basically, it represents the values, attitudes, and norms that exist within the organization. The culture present within the military is distinct from typical civilian organizations. As such, there have been those who have supported keeping military and civilian cultures separate, and have advocated allowing each to develop in its own sphere.³⁰ Defence scientist Sarah Hill argues that the CF and DND civilians define their respective cultures in terms of their differences (civilian-military, formal-informal, policy-implementation, command-consensus, operations-bureaucracy).³¹ Indeed, for those who newly arrive at DND, the military culture can be very imposing. The use of rank instead of names, the wearing of uniforms, the extensive use of acronyms when referring to military appointments/equipment/processes, and other ceremonial aspects of the military make military culture distinct. New civilian employees with little prior

²⁸ James Q. Wilson, quoted in Richard M. Wrona Jr., "A Dangerous Separation," *World Affairs*, Vol. 69, Iss. 1 (Summer 2006): 25; <http://proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 21 November 2006.

²⁹ Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Kingston: KMG Associates, 2001), 10.

³⁰ Richard M. Wrona Jr., "A Dangerous Separation."

³¹ Defence Research and Development Canada, *Corporate Culture in the CF and DND: Descriptive Themes and Emergent Models*, 27-28.

military experience often find that they suffer severe culture shock during their introductory period of employment.

The period from 1964 to the present has been described by political scientist Douglas Bland as the ‘management era’ in which the culture of the CF has been replaced by a more civilian, business-oriented culture based on “concepts of functional unity.”³² It has, however, been recognized that there are distinct advantages in having military and civilians working together. Having a Defence Team infers the sharing of common values, attitudes, and norms by civilians and the military. Reality, however, does not always align itself with theory: although arguments can be made that DND civilians and CF members share many of the same attitudes towards national defence and the same commitment and dedication towards their country, COs faced with supervising civilians and military concurrently quickly realize that military personnel and DND civilians are not interchangeable. Attempting to apply identical leadership and motivational techniques to both civilian and military personnel can have varied and sometimes disastrous results.

As Figure 1.1 shows, both military and civilian personnel bring their own culture to DND. As time progresses, the two can converge and overlap. The resulting blend of the two cultures is the core of the Defence Team. Defence scientist Sarah Hill contends that prolonged exposure to the culture within DND causes many civilians to move towards a more military-like approach towards issues.³³ Similar inferences can be made

³² BGen (retired) G.E. Sharpe and Allan D. English, *Principles For Change in the Post-Cold War: Command and Control of the Canadian Forces* (Winnipeg: Canadian Forces Training Material Production Centre, 2002), xi.

³³ Defence Research and Development Canada, *Corporate Culture in the CF and DND: Descriptive Themes and Emergent Models*, 13.

for military personnel who are employed for extended periods in units with high percentages of civilians. It is the responsibility of COs to create an atmosphere where these two cultures can come together and complement each other. It is also the responsibility of COs to recognize and support the cultural elements which are unique to military and civilians and adapt their leadership style appropriately.

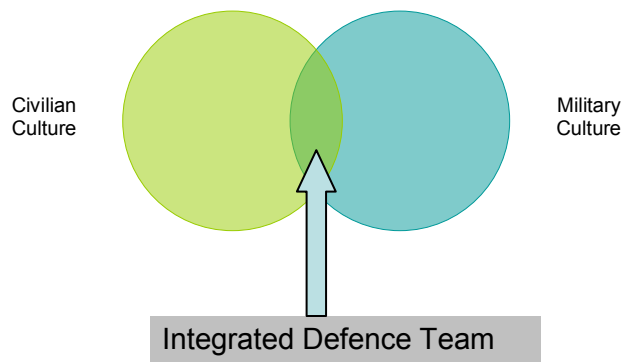


Figure 1.1 Civil/Military Cultures in DND

The culture of DND is different from any other organization within the Canadian government that employs public servants. Within DND, everyone must focus on supporting CF operations. This focus can cause problems in implementing new initiatives designed for the entire Public Service and makes it difficult to move civilian personnel in and out of the Department. As such, a balance must be struck not only when dealing with the sometimes conflicting cultures of the military and civilian personnel within DND, but also when dealing with the conflicting cultures of DND civilians and those cultures present in other departments.

The culture of an organization is driven by its leaders. Indeed, *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* identifies aligning culture with ethos and establishing an ethical culture as a key leadership function for senior leaders leading the Defence Institution.³⁴ COs sometimes fail to recognize the value of diversity that is inherent in a unit comprised of military and civilian personnel. Long-term continuity, differing perspectives on issues, and expertise on specific systems are only a few advantages civilians bring to the Defence Team. However, COs have to recognize that the difference between military personnel and DND civilians goes well beyond the clothes they wear. COs cannot simply ignore the civilian element of a unit when making decisions. Conversely, they cannot apply identical methodologies when leading military and civilian personnel: military and civilians must be viewed as complementary as opposed to interchangeable. For civilian managers in charge of military personnel, they must understand that they have an added responsibility that includes recognizing the elements of military life that are outside the regular duties of the military member. To be credible, COs must find a common ground for agreement on which everyone can stand. Nobody comes to a unit understanding all of its problems. New COs need to take the time to recognize the differences that make up the military and civilian cultures and balance the two. Only through understanding, trust, and open communication can COs hope to balance these sometimes-opposing cultures and move towards a true Defence Team.

Understanding the similarities and differences between the military and civilians is only the first step towards overcoming the ongoing challenges facing COs in managing

³⁴ Department of National Defence, A-PA-005-000/AP-004 *Leadership in the Canadian Forces – Conceptual Foundations* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 49.

civilians. Orienting themselves to the environment in which they work will only reap dividends if COs can take this information, identify a vision for their unit, and communicate it to their subordinates.

VISION AND INTENT

It is meaningless to talk about leadership unless one believes that individuals can make a difference in the lives of others. Understanding the structure of civilian HR governance within DND, the competencies leaders must have, and the similarities and differences between civilians and military cultures form only a small part of the puzzle that makes up the ongoing challenges COs must face. For example, COs must also determine how to motivate their employees to give a little more of their time, talent, energy, and support to the team. They cannot simply rely on giving orders and expecting that civilians will sheepishly follow them. Rather, they need to identify and communicate their vision to their subordinates to ensure a common purpose.

Vision within an organization provides a sense of purpose and coherence. Robert Staub, Chairman and CEO of Staub Leadership Consultants, specializes in coaching leadership development. He likens a vision in an organization to a torch: lighting the way, illuminating the desired future. A lack of vision leaves the organization, the team, and the individual in darkness.³⁵ A common vision influences employees by aligning behaviour and allowing for a common understanding of where the organization wants to go. Inherent within any military organization and directly linked with the understanding of vision is the concept of common intent. Dr. Pigeau and Dr. McCann, in “Establishing

³⁵ Robert E. Staub, *The Heart of Leadership* (Provo: Executive Excellence Publishing, 1996), 50.

Common Intent – The Key to Co-ordinated Military Action,” define intent as “an aim or purpose with all its associated connotations.” “Correctly inferring intent,” they argue, “is a fundamental concept in military thought.” Common intent is the military’s primary means for achieving co-ordinated action and is of paramount importance to the philosophy of mission command.³⁶ Common intent, whether explicitly stated or implied after extended socialization, is therefore the cornerstone for ensuring synchronization within DND. It allows the department to co-ordinate activities and aligns resources to meet operational requirements. It also allows COs to react to unforeseen circumstances and act in the best interests of the department with little further guidance (mission command). Effective communication of vision and intent is vitally important within a unit. Focusing the purpose of an organization and keeping the attention of all involved on what matters is the foundation of leadership.³⁷ If common intent is to be achieved within a unit, then all members must follow the same vision and share the intent of their respective CO. The communication of a CO’s vision and intent to the civilian members of a unit helps build the trust based on shared interests, and creates employee buy-in when challenges arise.

³⁶ Ross Pigeau and Carol McCann. “Establishing Common Intent: The Key to Co-ordinated Military Action,” Chap.4 in *The Operational Art: Canadian Perspectives – Leadership and Command*, (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006), 85 – 108.

³⁷ Robert E. Staub, *The Heart of Leadership*, 72.

CHAPTER III – MODERNIZATION AND TRANSFORMATION

*The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word ‘crisis.’ One brush stroke stands for danger, the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger – but recognize the opportunity.*³⁸

Any organization that hopes to remain relevant in today’s world will have to change and evolve. Nonetheless, the need for change is often looked upon by members of well established organizations as a crisis. The ability of the leaders of an organization to see the opportunities that come with change is what enables long-term success. Not all organizational change, however, can be viewed the same way. Defence scientist Douglas Bland argues that a defence organization, for example, cannot be treated as an ordinary business. To do so can lead to distortions and consequences which could impact future military operations, when lives are at risk. He contends that before they are considered for implementation, best-business practices must be carefully evaluated by leaders with military operational conditions and requirements in mind.³⁹

Both the CF and the Public Service have had to transform to better meet the internal and external pressures being placed on them. Coincidentally, both have recently undergone significant shifts in organizational structure and their approach to managing personnel. *Public Service Modernization* and *Canadian Forces Transformation* have had an impact on the way that civilian HR management is conducted within National Defence. Understanding the impact of Public Service Modernization and CF Transformation is essential to assisting COs in managing their civilian employees.

³⁸ Richard M. Nixon, quoted in MGen Perry M. Smith, *Rules & Tools for Leaders...*, 103.

³⁹ Douglas L. Bland, *Issues in Defence Management* (Kingston: School of Policy Studies, 1998), 28.

PUBLIC SERVICE MODERNIZATION

Ultimately, good government is about people. Few organizations have gone through more change in recent years than the Public Service.⁴⁰ In November 2003, the *Public Service Modernization Act* (PSMA), identified by the Public Service Human Resource Agency of Canada as the most significant human resources legislative reform in 35 years, received royal assent. The PSMA was designed to improve a number of areas affecting the Public Service including: hiring practices, labour-management relations, learning and training for employees, and clarification of roles and accountability.⁴¹

Under the PSMA, four pieces of legislation were implemented:

- a. Canadian School of Public Service (March 2004). The Canadian School of Public Service was created to facilitate providing training opportunities for Public Service Employees;
- b. Public Service Labour Relations Act (April 2005). The Public Service Relations Act provided better dialogue, joint problem solving, mutually agreed-upon solutions and more effective collective bargaining;
- c. Financial Administration Act (April 2005). The Financial Administration Act provided clarification of the responsibilities for certain aspects of human resources management; and

⁴⁰ Department of Finance, *Budget 2005: Strengthening and Modernizing Public Sector Management* (Ottawa: Department of Finance, February 2005)[document on-line]; available from <http://www.fin.gc.ca/budget05/pdf/bkmgte.pdf>; Internet, accessed 9 January 2007.

⁴¹ Public Service Human Resource Agency of Canada, "Public Service Modernization Act," http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/hrmm-mgrh/psma-lmfp/readiness_e.asp; Internet; accessed 9 January 2007.

- d. Public Service Employment Act (December 2005). The Public Service Employment Act makes it easier to hire personnel while respecting the values of fairness, transparency and access.⁴²

The PSMA clarified the rights of public servants and reinforced the government of Canada's commitment to Canadians to ensure good governance and responsible, ethical and transparent financial and human resources management.⁴³

CF TRANSFORMATION

Throughout the 1990s the CF went through a number of significant reductions. The 1994 Defence White Paper set a Regular Force target strength of 60,000, a reduction of 32% to be reached by 1999.⁴⁴ Reductions in the 1995 Defence budget also saw the implementation of a Civilian Reduction Program mandated to eliminate 13,600 civilian personnel or 40% of the entire civilian workforce.⁴⁵ In addition to force reduction programs, the CF also experienced a number of management renewal initiatives, including the Military Command, Control and Re-engineering Team (MCCRT) project designed to look at and redesign the management structure of DND and the CF.⁴⁶ These

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Public Service Modernization Portal, http://www.psmod-modfp.gc.ca/index_e.asp; Internet; accessed 20 November 2006.

⁴⁴ A total reduction of 28,800 from the 1989 strength of 88,800. Department of National Defence, *Audit of Force Reduction Program* (Ottawa: DND Canada, January 1997)[document on-line]; available from http://www.dnd.ca/crs/pdfs/frp_e.pdf; Internet; accessed 9 January 2007.

⁴⁵ Department of National Defence, *Audit of the Civilian Reduction Program* (Ottawa: DND Canada, June 1997)[document on-line]; available from http://www.dnd.ca/crs/pdfs/rep001_e.pdf; Internet; accessed 9 January 2007.

⁴⁶ Karen D. Davis and Brian McKee, "Culture in the Canadian Forces: Issues and Challenges for Institutional Leaders," in *Institutional Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Contemporary Issues*, forthcoming 2007, cited with permission.

planned reductions and management renewal programs caused senior military leadership to focus much of the CF's military manpower toward field units in an attempt to keep up with the CF's ever-increasing operational tempo throughout the late 1990s. They also significantly impacted the attractiveness of DND as a viable choice of civilian employment.

In 1999, the CDS and the DM released *Defence Strategy 2020*. Strategy 2020 proposed an approach based on the 1994 Defence White Paper that tried to assess what was called at the time a 'revolution in military affairs.'⁴⁷ Although Strategy 2020 attempted to move the CF into the 21st century, little was done within DND that impacted civilian HR management until 11 September 2001 (9/11). The terrorist attacks against the United States had significant repercussions on Canada and the way the Canadian government viewed defence. In 2005, the government issued its *International Policy Statement* (IPS). The IPS increased the government's commitment to protect its citizens and defend Canada against all threats.⁴⁸ The *Defence Policy Statement* (DPS) complemented the IPS, articulating a new vision for the CF. The Forces committed themselves to becoming "more effective, relevant and responsive," with the ability to provide leadership at home and abroad.⁴⁹ The goals identified in the DPS demanded that the CF move beyond traditional thinking and transform itself. Within the strategic context, the CDS, General Rick Hillier, identified six key principles applicable to the

⁴⁷ Department of National Defence, *Shaping the Future of the Canadian Forces: A Strategy for 2020* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 1999), foreword.

⁴⁸ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Overview* (Ottawa: DFAIT Canada, 2005), foreword.

⁴⁹ Department of National Defence, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World – Defence* (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2005), 11.

transformation of the Canadian Forces: Canadian Forces Identity; Command Centric Imperative; Authorities, Responsibilities, and Accountabilities; Operational Focus; Mission Command; and An Integrated Regular, Reserve, and Civilian Canadian Forces.⁵⁰ With principle six, the CDS committed the CF to forging stronger ties with civilians.

In its final report, the CDS Action Team, charged with looking at command and control within the CF, recommended a clear separation of operational level and strategic level functions residing in NDHQ and a realignment of CF and DND functions. The Team insisted that “the regrouping of certain CF functions under this strategic joint staff would not recreate a 1960s Canadian Forces Headquarters.”⁵¹ To ensure that NDHQ was not splintered as a result of CF Transformation, the DM stood-up a division to oversee the three areas of institutional alignment: coherence between a transformed CF and the Department; ongoing departmental initiatives; and alignment with broader Government of Canada priorities.⁵² Since its establishment in October 2005, the Office of the Chief of Defence Institutional Alignment has complemented CF Transformation by ensuring institutional awareness and alignment with the transformed CF.

⁵⁰ Robert S. Edwards, L. William Bentley and Robert W. Walker, “Professionalism and Leadership: Requisite Proficiencies for CF Transformation,” *Canadian Military Journal*, Vol 7, no. 1 (Spring 2006)[journal on-line]; available from http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/engraph/vol7/no1/03-Trans1_e.asp; Internet; accessed 13 December 2006.

⁵¹ Department of National Defence, *CDS Action Team 1 Report* (Ottawa: DND Canada, June 2005)[document on-line]; available from <http://www.cds.forces.gc.ca/cft-tfc/00native/CAT%201%20Exec%20Sum%20Eng.pdf>; Internet; accessed 9 January 2007.

⁵² Department of National Defence, *2006-2007 Report on Plans and Priorities*, 7.

IMPACT OF MODERNIZATION AND TRANSFORMATION

The impact of Public Service Modernization and CF Transformation on civilian management within DND has been significant. In 2002, the CDS and DM issued *HR Strategy – Horizon One 2003-2005*. It recognized the need to prepare for HR modernization and identified a three-year action plan as a strategy following the vision provided in *Strategy 2020*. *Horizon One* identified areas that impact HR management such as the governance structure within DND and the emerging civilian human resources environment. It proposed an action plan intended to address attrition, recruitment, and learning. Although useful from a strictly HR management perspective, the document failed to address the unique challenges faced by civilians in DND and it failed to comment on the importance of being part of the defence community.

At almost the same time as the issue of *Strategy 2020* and *Horizon One*, DND initiated a program called the *Modern Management in Defence*. As indicated in Figure 2.1, *Modern Management in Defence* was founded on four key pillars: HR strategy, modern comptrollership, an integrated defence management framework (IMDF), and an information management (IM) strategy. The four pillars were developed with the support of five enablers, including *Strategy 2020*, the management of strategic change, effective communications, reform of the procurement process, and the culture of values and ethics.⁵³ The final report on *Modern Management in Defence*, issued in July 2004, identified advances made in civilian HR management from 2001 – 2004, including changes in recruiting for select groups identified as having shortages, the development of a framework that promotes the well-being of civilian employees, and a review of HR

⁵³ Department of National Defence, *Final Report on Modern Management in Defence* (Ottawa: DND Canada, July 2004), 1.

processes and policies surrounding HR management. *Modern Management in Defence* also acknowledged the need for “fundamental business transformation” within ADM (HR-Civ) as a result of the *Public Service Modernization Act*.⁵⁴



Figure 2.1 – Modern Management in Defence

Source: DND, *Final Report on Modern Management in Defence*, 6.

In the fall 2004 issue of *Bravo Defence*, a magazine that discusses topics of interest to the CF and issued under the authority of the Vice Chief of Defence Staff, ADM (HR-Civ), Ms. Shirley Siegel was quoted as saying, “The key to our modernization has been looking at the critical day-to-day processes and working to rebuild the foundations. Only then will we be well positioned to address the future.”⁵⁵ In 2006, to address civilian HR issues resulting from Public Service Modernization and CF Transformation, she issued the *Corporate Civilian Human Resources Strategy and Plan*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

⁵⁵ Shirley Siegel, quoted in Brenda Stewart, “Modern Management in Defence Yields Impressive Results,” *Bravo Defence* (Fall 2004), http://www.vcds.forces.gc.ca/dgsp/pubs/bravo/fall04/management_e.asp; Internet; accessed 29 November 2006.

(hereafter referred to as *Strategy & Plan*), which addressed many of the deficiencies present in *Horizon One* and clearly reflected the impact of *Modern Management in Defence*, the Public Service Modernization Act and CF Transformation. Identified as the cornerstone of civilian HR planning, the *Strategy & Plan* committed the civilian component of DND to supporting the CF in operations and aligning Public Service priorities with the CF's mission.⁵⁶ The *Strategy & Plan* identified the Defence Team as existing in a dynamic environment where ADM (HR-Civ) was committed to generating civilian human capability to provide strategic and operational support to the CF.⁵⁷ Beyond merely explaining the impact of Public Service Modernization and CF Transformation on civilian HR strategic priorities from a nuts and bolts perspective, the *Strategy & Plan* clarified the need to better explore the integration of military and civilians in planning and a realignment of HR service delivery to facilitate a focus on operations. It saw DND as forming a partnership with other governmental departments and the security community to ensure continuity of civilian HR planning.⁵⁸ The *Strategy & Plan* demonstrated a vast improvement in considering the unique requirements of managing civilians within DND. It marked an important step in addressing how COs can better manage civilians in the CF. Without a clear articulation in ADM (HR-Civ)'s cornerstone document of the importance of the role civilian personnel play in supporting CF operations, everything else would have been doomed to failure.

⁵⁶ Canada. Department of National Defence, *Corporate Civilian Human Resources: Strategy and Plan*, (Ottawa: DND Canada, 2006), 2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*,4.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*,12.

Public Service Modernization and CF Transformation have both directly influenced how COs manage their civilians. Through the PSMA, HR management has been streamlined and made more flexible, while ensuring the rights of personnel are maintained. Concurrently, CF Transformation has re-affirmed the need to integrate military and civilian personnel at all levels of the CF to ensure success. Together they have acted as a catalyst for ADM (HR-Civ) to align the management of civilians within DND with governmental direction and policies, while affirming the unique role civilians in national defence play in supporting the CF and keeping our nation secure. This new *Strategy & Plan* will undoubtedly translate into new policies and directives that will allow COs to better manages their employees during upcoming times of change and will allow them to better apply HR management theory to the specific needs of their unit.

CHAPTER IV - HR MANAGEMENT, PLANNING HR, AND ORIENTATION

HR textbooks contend that managers at all levels must understand that the people in a unit are its heart and soul. Most leaders in industry will agree that people are at the centre of their success. However, by referring to people in the same manner as the other resources a company holds, the organization runs the risk of downplaying their value. Dave Ulrich, a professor of Business at the University of Michigan and one of the world's leading authorities on HR, argues that "the old adage remains true: the company, in the form of its people, walks out the door at the end of every workday."⁵⁹ Despite this adage, although some line managers already recognize HR as being vital to meeting their strategic goals, many still regard HR management as irrelevant or something someone else should do.⁶⁰ HR management is defined as integrating human resource management strategies and systems to achieve the overall mission, strategies, and success of the firm while meeting the needs of employees and other stakeholders.⁶¹ HR management includes a number of activities focused on planning for, and attracting the right people, orienting them to an organization, developing and evaluating them, and finally maintaining high performance through effective employee relations. Each of these areas is important to the successful management of employees and each of them is linked to the others. While all areas of HR management are important, this paper will only concentrate

⁵⁹ Dave Ulrich, J. Zenger and N. Smallwood, *Results Based Leadership* (Boston: Harvard College, 1999), 53-54.

⁶⁰ Dave Ulrich and Wayne Brockbank, *The HR Value Proposition* (Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2005), 71.

⁶¹ Hermann Swind, Hari Das, and Terry Wagar, *Canadian Human Resource Management: A Strategic Approach*, 6th edition (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2001), 22.

on a few areas that COs should focus on to improve the management of their civilian employees.

In managing their workforce, federal government departments in Canada face a myriad of challenges. Economic pressures, keeping up with technological advances, demographic trends, and legal requirements all impact the way the government handles its people. These pressures also affect DND and the CF. The discussion of HR issues is not new to DND; however, as the department moves into the 21st century, it must address the strategic, operational, and tactical level HR issues that are becoming increasingly relevant. The objective of any HR management system is to address three (often competing) requirements: producing the right person for the right job, addressing a person's expectations for a suitable career, and complying with social norms and legal obligations.⁶² Of these three requirements, the first has become particularly complex within DND. The percentage of DND's overall budget apportioned to wages and HR initiatives is much lower than other departments. Unlike most departments in the federal government that manage programs, DND has operational tasks. As a result, it requires a significant amount of equipment to perform these tasks, and therefore, the HR budget in DND represents a smaller percentage of the internal budget. The DND workforce is composed of 80% military members and 20% civilian employees. The civilian budget in DND makes up only about 9 or 10% of the total departmental expenditures, unlike most departments where Public Service salaries make up the vast majority.

In recent years, there has been a tendency for senior leaders in DND to focus blame for civilian HR management issues on the shoulders of ADM (HR-Civ) and the

⁶² Cdr A. Okros, *Into the 21st Century: Strategic HR Issues*, Defence Management Committee (DMC) Discussion Paper (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1999), 4-5

civilian HR Officers supporting units on bases. This mistaken tendency to delegate responsibility for HR management has not only resulted in COs avoiding their responsibilities, but has also created an atmosphere where many HR Officers believe they are solely responsible for HR issues. In 2006, Karen Ellis, Assistant Deputy Minister, Infrastructure and Environment (ADM (IE)) with DND argued that “without understanding, integrating and working with human issues at play in any policy or programme or change, we diminish our efforts.”⁶³ A vital role of the leadership of DND is ensuring that its members are managed in an effective and efficient manner. As one retired general has explained:

A vital role of the leader is that of ensuring that associates are rewarded properly and moved on to subsequent and more senior assignments in a deliberate and thoughtful way. You should identify the very best associates, monitor their careers, encourage the reaching of their potential, and help them attain promotions within the organization.⁶⁴

The management of civilians within DND is an important aspect of the department’s HR strategy. But HR management is not just comprised of calling our people our most valuable asset. Nor is it solely comprised of making high level strategies and plans without properly executing them. Proper HR management takes effort. HR management is about delivering results at all levels.

In 2003, the Advisory Committee on Administrative Efficiency to the Minister of National Defence found that HR management was not consistently valued across DND

⁶³ Karen Ellis, “The Art of Engagement: Reflections on Leadership Change,” *Bravo Defence*, Vol. 6 (Fall 2006), 15.

⁶⁴ MGen Perry M. Smith, *Rules & Tools for Leaders...*, 171.

and that both military and civilian leaders had an inadequate understanding of it.⁶⁵ The added emphasis the Canadian government is placing on defence coupled with the CF's need to deploy troops in expeditionary roles is causing the percentage of civilian employees to increase in many units.⁶⁶ Furthermore, the existence of different sets of regulations covering term and contract personnel (as opposed to those for personnel on indeterminate contracts) has added to the complexity of management. Military supervisors at all levels within the CF are being presented with situations where, for the first time in their careers, they no longer have the luxury of responding solely to the military chain of command: Treasury Board standards, collective agreements, and unions are becoming standard issues of concern for supervisors within a CF unit. As base units are forced to increase their civilian population by hiring indeterminate, term, and casual civilian employees, officers and non-commissioned members of the CF must work alongside, supervise, and even serve DND civilians early on in their careers.

Within the CF, COs are faced with the dilemma of managing DND civilians who they technically do not employ (the Treasury Board is the employer of public servants). Although this dilemma is not unique to DND (other government departments face it as well), understanding this problem is critical in an environment where COs must manage both military and civilian personnel together. Because COs do not technically employ DND civilians, they are severely limited in the form of tangible benefits they can provide to either motivate their employees or recognize their work. To create an environment

⁶⁵ Department of National Defence, *Achieving Administrative Efficiency: Report to the Minister of National Defence by the Advisory Committee on Administrative Efficiency* (Ottawa: DND Canada, August 2003).

⁶⁶ This statement does not necessarily imply an overall increase in civilian personnel within DND nor any corresponding increase in the civilian salary envelope.

where employees are motivated and productive, COs must take an active interest in all aspects of HR management. First and foremost is ensuring the right person is in the right job to deliver the right product.

PLANNING HUMAN RESOURCES

One might think that unit COs have little to worry about when presented with the issue of HR planning. A unit has an establishment of military and civilian personnel that rarely changes, and aside from managing postings in and out of the unit, COs have little to do in terms of addressing the demands for personnel. Unfortunately, severe shortages of military personnel, especially those in specialized and technical trades, have reduced manning on bases to barely manageable numbers. The challenges facing civilian HR management in DND have never been so great. In 2002, the Conference Board of Canada's Report, *Building Tomorrow's Public Service*, found that based on current trends, by 2010 up to 44% of the Public Service could retire.⁶⁷ As such, the need to source replacements will continue to grow. As civilians leave the department, and people filling positions become more transient, the CF is losing the continuity once provided by civilians that allowed COs the luxury of moving military personnel around both within and outside of their unit. Furthermore, with an aging workforce, COs must address issues such as succession planning and recruitment for civilian positions to ensure the continuity they need for the civilian positions they hold.

⁶⁷ Conference Board of Canada, "Building Tomorrow's Public Service Today: Challenges and Solutions in Recruitment and Retention," <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/documents.asp?mnext=412>; Internet; accessed 2 December 2006.

From the point of view of many COs, HR management is first and foremost about getting enough people to complete the mission assigned to them. But how many people do you need? COs continually have to assess manning issues when dealing with short, mid, and long-term operational planning. Within the CF, supervisors at all levels are increasingly involved in assessments of personnel for tasks and support to recruiting campaigns. At the unit level, strategic military HR decisions (transfer of personnel to field units, deployments on missions, ship to shore rations, military critical positions) invariably affect HR planning for the civilians as well. Many units now have to hire increased numbers of casual and term employees to offset shortages of military personnel in units and COs have to spend considerable time and effort creating work descriptions and running competitions for these individuals. Moreover, as the percentage of civilians within a unit increases, the impact of proper civilian HR planning in the unit also increases. Proper civilian HR planning allows COs to become proactive in their HR demands as opposed to merely reacting to unforeseen occurrences. Vital to the process of HR planning is identifying how many employees are needed to perform the tasks assigned.

Whether one is a CO in the CF or a CEO of an international company, the most important thing leaders will ever do in their positions will be to analyze their mission and develop tasks for their subordinates. Only through a complete and thorough review of the superior's intent, the assigned mission, and the necessary tasks can COs hope to understand what is expected of their unit and effectively manage their personnel. A key element of determining what tasks need to be accomplished within a unit and the personnel required is mission analysis. Mission analysis drives a CO's decision-making

cycle. It impacts how people within a unit are employed and how priorities for tasks, training, and funding are set. Within the context of civilian HR management, it is important to understand mission analysis and the outside influences COs must consider when making decisions on how to manage civilian employees. Regardless of the specific mission provided to a unit or the tasks assigned to a unit's members, the overriding concept that DND exists only to field the CF in operations is at the centre of mission analysis for a CO.⁶⁸ Service before self (mission first) is difficult for many people outside of DND to understand. It is, however, one of the compelling reasons why many civilians choose to make a career within DND. It is also the reason why at times COs must make decisions that might not be perceived by employees as being in their best interests. The key to successfully managing employees in an environment where decisions must often be made at the expense of individuals is transparency. Transparency helps COs develop the trust required of their civilian employees. COs must ensure that the analysis of their mission is clearly communicated to every member of the unit and that reasons for their decisions are similarly conveyed. Moreover, COs must conduct periodic reviews of their mission analysis to ensure that the situation has not changed enough to warrant changes in policy, procedures, or organizational structure. Involving civilian employees in these periodic reviews will reap dividends in creativity and employee buy-in. Once a thorough mission analysis has been completed and a mission statement for a unit is developed, applying personnel to tasks comes into play.

Civilians within a unit are recruited and employed according to the tasks required of them. Tasks are represented in work descriptions. Proper work descriptions are critical to the efficient functioning of any unit. Not only does a work description define

⁶⁸ Department of National Defence, *Corporate Civilian Human Resources: Strategy and Plan*, 2.

the job expected of an employee, it also drives issues such as classification and pay. This is significantly different than the situation that exists within the military, where rank, not the actual job being done, defines salary to a large extent. Treasury Board has struggled in the past with the issue of trying to update its occupational group structure in hopes of making it better reflect how work is done today. In the 1990s, it attempted to introduce a universal classification system, but found it was too cumbersome to implement across the Public Service. Instead, it chose to target select occupational groups and implement a more generic approach to writing work descriptions.⁶⁹ In turn, DND has tried to move its job analysis and design forward. In his discussion paper, *Into the 21st Century: Strategic HR Issues*, Cdr A. Okros wrote:

...the exponential growth of technological advances is producing a Revolution in Business Affairs (RBA) - also referred to as the Knowledge Economy or the Information Age. This fundamental transformation in the nature of work is resulting in a shift from an emphasis on the manufacturing of products to the creation of knowledge. It is characterized by rapid, complex decision-making cycles involving multiple parties thus requiring accessibility, immediacy and transparency of information (no time/no space/no matter). Increasingly, this will extend within and across a blend of multi-national corporations, international/governmental agencies, special interest/non-governmental groups, the media and academic institutions (the "edgeless" organization or "World, Inc."). RBA will force organizational restructuring to exploit technology specifically moving from traditional hierarchical command and control structures to a greater emphasis on networked systems. As with RMA, creation of a "wired-auftragstaktik" will require "knowledge workers" operating within a dynamic, adaptable HR environment incorporating flexible, agile, informed leadership and a similarly, flexible, agile workforce (the key is greyware not hardware or software).⁷⁰

ADM (HR-Civ) has struggled to ensure that work descriptions are up to date and accurately reflect what is being asked of DND's civilian employees. Senior management

⁶⁹ Public Service Human Resource Management Agency of Canada, "Classification Reform." http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/Classification/AboutUs/ClassReform_e.asp#Direction; Internet; accessed 16 January 2007.

⁷⁰ Cdr A. Okros, *Into the 21st Century*...,4-5.

is realizing that with improvements in technology, the workers of yesterday are becoming the system managers of tomorrow. Unfortunately, many COs are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain valid work descriptions, especially for those employees in highly technical positions: too detailed descriptions become invalid as technology advances, and too generic descriptions face the possibility of not accurately reflecting what an employee does. Maintaining the proper balance between validity and accuracy comes from COs knowing what they want their employees to do and their understanding of the job design process. Furthermore, periodic reviews of work descriptions must be scheduled for all employees to ensure their validity. These reviews must be tempered with the understanding that work descriptions are position and not employee based. COs must avoid amending work descriptions based on what the incumbent employee does or can do. Rather, they must reflect what would be required of a new employee filling the same position. Failure to adhere to this concept can create situations where classification levels for positions are raised over time as an incumbent employee does more and more, and can cause difficulties in finding replacement employees when the need arises.

Recruitment of new employees also relies heavily on the accuracy of a work description. Competitions are based on work descriptions. As such, if a work description does not reflect the work required of a position, COs cannot expect to hire a productive employee. Poorly written or misleading work descriptions are often the cause of lengthy delays in the recruitment process, and often result in DND losing potential candidates. Mission analysis, job analysis and job design validate the requirement for a civilian position, ensure the accuracy of a work description, and facilitate the hiring process.

ORIENTATION

Once new employees arrive at a unit, the process of orienting them to the CF and the unit is vitally important. Nothing is more powerful in any relationship than the first impression. As with any relationship, one of the most influential memories held by employees is that of their first day of work and the initial days that followed. Employees rely on their supervisors to guide them through uncertainty and provide them the direction they need to learn how to fit into the unit (i.e. socialization).⁷¹ One of the most important processes in welcoming new employees to an organization and commencing their integration into the organization is orientation. Orientation within any organization is closely linked with socialization. Defined as a method for cultural communication in an organization, socialization exposes newcomers to the core values they need to accept to be successful.⁷² Orientation programs familiarize new employees with their roles, with how the organization is structured, with policies, and with other employees.⁷³ They are part of an effort to facilitate socialization in which the employee begins to understand the values, norms, and behaviours that the organization views as desirable.⁷⁴ Orientation programs, if properly delivered, can serve several purposes. They can:

- a. reduce employee turnover;
- b. reduce errors and save time;
- c. develop clear job and organizational expectations;
- d. improve job performance;
- e. attain acceptable job performance levels faster;
- f. increase organizational stability;
- g. reduce employee anxiety;

⁷¹ Stephanie Paquet, *et al*, *Strategic Leadership Competencies in the Canadian Forces*, 4.

⁷² Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture...*, 16.

⁷³ Hermann Swind, *et al*, *Canadian Human Resource Management...*, 283.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 280.

- h. reduce grievances; and
- i. result in fewer instances of corrective discipline measures.⁷⁵

Indeed, without a properly constructed and delivered orientation program, employees can have great difficulty during the initial stages of their employment, and productivity is wasted.

General R. Hillier, CDS and W.P.D Elcock, DM agree that “DND exists only to field the Canadian Forces (CF) in operations.”⁷⁶ This concept must be the foundation of any orientation program in DND. The concept of service before self is not new to the CF or to any other military for that matter. Moreover, in times of crisis, when elements of the CF are called upon to deploy internally to Canada for a domestic operation, or externally for an international operation, civilian employees may also be called upon to work extended hours, outside of their work descriptions, and at times at odds with their collective agreements, to ensure the CF deploys on-time and in an operationally capable manner. A good civilian orientation program sets the stage for imparting in new employees the unique requirements of working in the CF and begins the socialization process whereby a commitment to DND is created.

Unit COs must ensure that from the first day of work, all members of their unit understand the mission of the unit and where they fit within the CF and DND. The socialization of military members in the CF has been structured into a phased orientation program. Basic training provides soldiers, sailors, and airmen the foundation required for their overall socialization within the military. Once instilled with the general service knowledge common to all military personnel, orientation is refined and focused along

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 281.

⁷⁶ Department of National Defence, *Corporate Civilian Human Resources: Strategy and Plan*, 2.

elements, trades, and regimental lines to provide for a further sense of belonging and a common focus. It is only upon completion of basic and trades training that a new member of the CF arrives at a unit to begin a job. If COs are not careful when developing an orientation program for their unit, they can become prisoners of their own experiences and culture, and risk developing a program based on the incorrect assumption that every new member arriving at their unit has an understanding of the military. This can result in new civilians to DND receiving fragmented or incomplete orientation programs. Civilians entering an institution built on ranks, appointments, and acronyms, with an ethos and culture different from most if not all civilian organizations, have been forced to learn these aspects for themselves. As such, the outcomes of orientation programs have been hit and miss: although competent in conducting the technical aspects of their jobs, many new civilian employees have suffered undue stress resulting from insufficient understanding of the CF culture.

In March 2003, in recognition of the need to better structure DND's civilian orientation, ADM (HR-CIV) released a revised program. This program satisfied the need to provide new employees the necessary background information on DND and the CF. It also provided detail on the rank structure of the military and some helpful material on the military culture (including acronyms).⁷⁷ The program, however, is only a portion of what new civilian employees need to gain a full appreciation of their roles and the contributions they provide to the CF and the defence of Canada. To complement the departmental orientation guide, a *Manager's and Supervisor's Handbook on Employee Orientation* was also issued in 2003. It provided guidance to COs and supervisors on the

⁷⁷ Department of National Defence, *New Civilian Employee's Orientation Guide* (Ottawa: DND Canada, June 2003).

orientation process.⁷⁸ Support to employee orientation was further endorsed by the issue of a Defence Administrative Order and Directive (DAOD), which made orientation programs mandatory within DND.⁷⁹ Without the investment by COs to complete the orientation process, vital information will be missed. Furthermore, COs must ensure that orientation for employees is not limited to their respective unit. Information on other units and elements of other environments must be included in orientation packages to ensure a complete understanding of the environment in which civilian employees work. A proper start to employees' socialization within the CF can dramatically influence their initial productivity and eventually their job satisfaction. Unit orientation programs benefit employees by quickening their integration into the organization and thereby increasing the rate at which they become productive.

Recruiting and properly welcoming civilian employees to DND rely heavily on proper HR planning and orientation programs. Mission analysis, job analysis, and job design ensure the right person is selected for the right job. Orientation to DND and the CF help employees begin the socialization process. Both of these introductory HR management processes are vital for ensuring COs' success, and occur before an employee becomes a productive member of the unit. To achieve long-term success in managing civilians, COs need to start investing in the competencies of their employees almost immediately.

⁷⁸ Department of National Defence, *Manager's and Supervisor's Handbook on Employee Orientation* (Ottawa: DND Canada, March 2003).

⁷⁹ Department of National Defence, "DAOD 5031-52: New Civilian Employee Orientation," http://www.admfincs.forces.gc.ca/admfincs/subjects/daod/5031/52_e.asp; Internet; accessed 20 November 2006.

CHAPTER V – TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT, AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

*To every man there comes in his lifetime that special moment when he is figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered that chance to do a very special thing, unique to him and his talents. What a tragedy if that moment finds him unprepared or unqualified for that work.*⁸⁰

Winston Churchill was right: “If you think education is expensive – try ignorance.”⁸¹ Some of the best ways the CF can address motivation issues with its civilian employees include better preparing them for work; and then offering support and development opportunities. A study by Hewitt Associates, one of the world’s largest providers of HR consulting (2005), found that the top twenty US companies (as identified by Human Resource Planning Society) are more likely than those not in the top tier to develop their leaders rigorously and to aggressively prepare them for future challenges.⁸² Creating an organization committed to learning is not easy. It requires a significant investment of time, money, and needs oversight at the highest levels. However, a learning organization reaps dividends in productivity. People who learn have proven to be able to solve problems faster and with more agility.⁸³ On 1 January 2006, the Treasury Board issued a new policy on Learning, Training, and Development. The policy gave Deputy Heads of departments the authority to determine the learning, training, and development requirements for public servants within their respective

⁸⁰ Winston Churchill, quoted in MGen Perry M. Smith, *Rules & Tools for Leaders...*, 203.

⁸¹ Derek Bok, quoted in MGen Perry M. Smith, *Rules & Tools for Leaders...*, 203.

⁸² Paul Bernthal and Richard Wellins, “Trends in Leader Development and Succession,” *HR. Human Resource Planning*, Vol. 29, Iss. 2 (2006): 31

⁸³ Dave Ulrich and Wayne Brockbank, *The HR Value Proposition*, 263.

departments.⁸⁴ Within the CF, training and development has always been a concern for COs. Not only can learning be directly linked to improved productivity, but training and developmental opportunities also have the indirect effect of improving morale and motivation by making employees feel valued within the unit. Although many people use the terms training and development interchangeably, there is a distinct difference between the two. Training is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and abilities that result in improved performance in the current job. It is the process of ensuring employees can do the tasks expected of them. Development looks beyond an employee's current duties and focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and attitudes that may be required in the long-term achievement of individual career goals and corporate objectives. The goal is to prepare individuals for future jobs or responsibilities.⁸⁵ In the fall 2004 issue of *Bravo Defence*, ADM (HR-Civ), Shirley Siegel was quoted as saying that "We [DND] have one of the best continuous learning stories in the government."⁸⁶ Yet from the perspective of a CO, the training of civilians is not that straightforward. There is never enough money to fund all the training and development needed in a unit, and allocating priorities for training and development with limited financial resources continually challenges COs. If COs are to become successful at implementing a program that caters to the training and development requirements of their civilian employees, they must create the right balance

⁸⁴ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, "Policy on Learning, Training and Development," http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pubs_pol/hrpubs/TB_856/ltd-afp01_e.asp#b2; Internet; accessed 20 November 2006.

⁸⁵ M. Belcourt, P. Wright and A. Saks, *Managing Performance through Training & Development*, 2nd ed. (Scarborough ON: Nelson Thomson Learning, 2002), 3.

⁸⁶ Shirley Siegel, quoted in Brenda Stewart "Modern Management in Defence Yields Impressive Results."

of training and developmental opportunities to support the needs of the unit and motivate their civilian employees to remain and progress in DND.

TRAINING

Everyone has the right to be trained to perform the tasks required of them. As such, it is the responsibility of COs to ensure that opportunities for training are available for all their personnel regardless of whether they wear a uniform. It is also the COs' responsibility to forecast training requirements well in advance and identify these requirements in their annual business plans. Vitally important in this process is understanding the fundamental difference between training military personnel and civilian employees. When most military personnel join the CF, they lack the requisite skills to perform the trade for which they have been recruited. As such, the CF accepts that it must provide training to its military members prior to employing them in a unit. Furthermore, unlike their civilian counterparts, military personnel are required to perform the duties of a soldier, sailor, or airman in addition to their technical trade. As such, they require annual refresher training to maintain these military-specific skill sets. Most DND civilians, on the other hand, come to DND possessing a majority of the requisite skills sets required to perform their job in a unit. Aside from training needed to educate them on military specific equipment or training required as a result of changes in technology and/or policies and procedures, civilian employees require much less initial training compared to their military counterparts to become productive. Because of this fundamental difference, COs are often forced to send a higher percentage of military personnel on training when compared against civilian members within a unit. This

inequity in training is often perceived by civilian employees as being unfair and biased. It is important for COs to understand that these feelings are present within their unit and they must be proactive at educating their personnel on their respective unit's training priorities.

Most COs will agree that effective training is crucial to acceptable performance. The complexity of providing training in a unit, however, has increased significantly over the last few years. First, within the military, phrases such as *train the trainer*, *train to need*, and *just in time training* have become commonplace. These new initiatives have placed further financial and coordination strains on units and have forced COs to strictly regulate what training is required by what position. Second, although in an utopian world every new civilian employee hired would have all the skill sets needed to perform all the duties required of them immediately upon arrival, COs are recognizing that it is unrealistic when recruiting new employees to expect every applicant to be fully prepared. As with many companies in industry, COs are realizing that skill sets make up only a portion of what is required to make an employee valuable within an organization. At times COs will make the conscious decision to accept an applicant who has the right attitude but might need additional training to become productive within the unit.

The cost of training has forced units to become more selective in its provision. In many instances one or two members of a section (regardless if they are military or civilian) receive training on a specialized piece of equipment when historically the entire section might have received it. In 2006, the Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada recommended that "core training be funded centrally and

delivered nationally.”⁸⁷ Although centralizing training funds for civilians has some advantages, it would be extremely difficult to manage throughout the department. It would require a great deal of effort in identifying training to be provided, and priorities for training (a challenging task in a department the size of DND). Nonetheless, regardless of how much money is applied to training, or how it is controlled, there will always be personnel who feel that they are not receiving all the training they need or deserve. The solution to this problem continues to be communication: risk management when dealing with training issues must be carefully considered and clearly communicated to all the members of a unit to ensure all personnel are treated fairly and that no perceived favouritism is created. As with any initiative, COs and subordinate supervisors must make a concerted effort to establish effective lines of communication with their employees and ensure requirements and priorities for training are discussed on a continuous basis. Unfortunately, training is not the only competing priority for time and funds in a unit. Employees need to be offered opportunities for development so that they do not lose motivation or choose to seek out more interesting challenges outside the organization.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada, “The Montebello Consensus: Key Elements of a More Coherent Approach to Managing the Public Service’s Executive Resources,” <http://www.apex.gc.ca/files/Full-Final-Eng.pdf>; Internet; accessed 20 September 2006.

⁸⁸ Paul Bernthal and Richard Wellins, “Trends in Leader Development and Succession,” 31.

DEVELOPMENT

“How can your company grow if your people don’t?”⁸⁹ In today’s competitive world, many companies are realizing that in order to be competitive they must focus increased effort and resources on being an employer of choice. One way to be recognized as an employer of choice is by providing opportunities to develop and progress within the company. Although DND is not a for-profit organization, it still must compete with industry when recruiting civilian employees. Developmental opportunities are one way of making employees feel valued in the workplace and directly affect recruitment, productivity, and retention. Unfortunately, creating a development plan for civilian employees is not as easy as it may seem. Unit COs have far greater challenges in developing civilian employees than in developing their military personnel.

One fundamental difference between the development of military personnel and their civilian peers is that of career management. The military HR model is based on centralized career management driven by merit. As such, the developmental requirements for progression within the military are identified and funded by strategic L1 organizations and are given to members who, by performance and demonstrated potential, are ranked high within their rank and trade. Furthermore, centralized funding has been identified to provide military personnel with educational opportunities. DND civilians, on the other hand, are for the most part not provided with career managers within DND. In his position paper *Into the 21st Century: Strategic HR Issues*, Cdr A. Okros argues that:

⁸⁹ Johan Beeckmans, quoted in James M Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1993), 153.

The "new" [Public Service] contract removes the implied job security/career management and signals that the employee will be retained as long as their services/skill set is of value but let go when this is no longer the case. The onus for upgrading skills and shopping around for employment is shifted to the member. In exchange for reduced job security, the employer has undertaken to make it easier for employees to be retained by enhancing employability and opening up previously restrictive internal hiring practices.⁹⁰

Although it is true that aside from only a few public servants, career management for civilians is a thing of the past, DND has committed itself to ensuring the employment of its indeterminate employees through workforce adjustment policies. In addition, there are ongoing attempts by Treasury Board and DND to reform classifications, including the creation of generic work descriptions. These will hopefully allow civilians more opportunities to move throughout the department and give them opportunities to develop themselves. However, to continue to be productive in an ever-changing world, employees also need to stay current in their fields of expertise.⁹¹ Although some centrally funded developmental programs for civilian employees have been put in place in the last few years (scholarship programs and management trainee programs) to encourage civilian professional development, little has been done to identify centralized funding developmental opportunities for lower level employees who work at the unit

⁹⁰ Cdr A. Okros, *Into the 21st Century...*, 15-16.

⁹¹ Stanley E. Fawcett, Gary K. Rhoads, and Phillio Burnah, "People as the Bridge to Competitiveness: Benchmarking the "ABCs" of an Empowered Workforce," *Benchmarking*, Vol 11, no. 4 (2004): 346; <http://proquest.umi.com>; Internet; accessed 15 November 2006.

level and who wish to improve themselves. As such, funding of developmental training for civilian employees is left in the hands of COs who invariably face increased training requirements, increased taskings, and reduced funding envelopes.

Regardless of how hard COs try to be impartial when making decisions or applying policies, they are invariably influenced by biases. By delegating responsibilities (both monetary and otherwise) for civilian development to the unit level, the possibility of biases impacting decisions by COs on developmental opportunities greatly increases. These biases are compounded by the absence of any meriting of civilian employees within DND. Unless COs implement strict guidelines for the selection and application of developmental opportunities within their unit, an atmosphere where employees perceive favouritism or neglect can foster. Moreover, many supervisors fail to see the inherent value in sitting down with their civilian employees, discussing their career goals and learning plans, and providing developmental opportunities based on these plans. As a result, many employee requests for developmental training are ignored or not supported. In doing so a disservice is done to the employee and the department.

The challenge for COs exists in determining the criteria for supporting civilian development. One possible model for DND to use in selecting civilian employees for developmental opportunities lies in recognizing that not all employees are created equal. In the 21st century, the work force will be divided into high demand workers (often moving from job to job), moderately skilled employees looking to develop themselves and move on to new careers, and low skilled workers who are simply looking for job security and life-long employment.⁹² As such, DND may be better served by identifying

⁹² Cdr A. Okros, *Into the 21st Century...*, 5.

those employees who have to potential to progress in the department, and invest developmental funds and opportunities in them rather than spreading developmental funds across the entire department.

Industry tends to agree with this model. In a recent article titled “Growing Great Leaders: Does it Really Matter?” Marc Effron, Shelli Greenslade, and Michelle Salob have argued that:

Top companies are willing to place large ‘bets’ or investments on a focused group of individuals. These high-potential leaders are those who the company believes will move the furthest, fastest. Top companies ensure their high potentials get the resources necessary to accelerate their development and provide the potential for meaningful financial gain if that potential is demonstrated.⁹³

Development must be seen as an investment not only in an employee, but also in DND. COs must keep this in mind when assessing candidates for developmental opportunities within their unit and affording the time and funds to help employees grow. But what about training and development for the managers themselves? Are subordinate managers within a unit capable of handling the complexities of HR management? To effectively manage the personnel within a unit, COs must ensure their supervisors have the training needed to manage their subordinates.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR MANAGERS

The lack of training for military leaders on the management of civilian employees has, in some cases, created situations where the civilians in a unit have had to educate

⁹³ Marc Effron, Shelli Greenslade, and Michelle Salob, “Growing Great Leaders: Does it Really Matter?” in *HR. Human Resource Planning*, Vol 28, Iss. 3 (2005): 18.

their boss on the differences between themselves and military members prior to addressing any of their own concerns. Unfortunately, when faced with the unknown world of civilian administration, many COs look at problems through the lens of the military HR model. Although one might argue that leadership and management techniques can be applied universally, regardless of whether a person is wearing a uniform, this broad brush approach can contradict collective agreements or create inequities in the treatment of civilians between units. Issues such as unit stand-downs, participation in unit physical training, and participation at unit sports days are just a few examples of areas that can cause animosity among civilian employees and are issues that are regularly raised with management and union representatives as points of concern.

The CF has recognized the need to train its leaders better on civilian management. Despite this recognition, training on civilian HR management continues to compete with the myriad of other skills needed to be taught to military leaders and the compressed times to do so. In the meantime, there are limited on-line learning modules that facilitate certain civilian HR processes. Every effort must be made by unit COs to demand training for themselves and their subordinate supervisors placed in positions of authority regardless of what training might be provided in the future. The problem exists now and COs, with the assistance of HR professionals, must deal with this problem immediately.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management helps evaluate employee job performance and make placement, training, and development more effective. Performance management systems should clarify expectations for performance and assure employee behaviours are in line

with the goals/expectations of the organization.⁹⁴ For the majority of civilians in DND, performance management consists of annual reviews that compare their performance to their work description. Of vital importance in any performance management system is the need to identify the expected results during a reporting period. This not only sets a baseline of expectations, but reminds employees of the roles they play in achieving the mission of the organization.⁹⁵ As such, it is vital for COs to ensure that at the commencement of each reporting period, work descriptions are reviewed by supervisors and that employees are aware of the performance expected of them. Performance requirements should focus two areas; behaviour (what the employees should know and do), and results (what the employees should produce).⁹⁶ All employees have the right to know what is expected of them.

⁹⁴ Hollenbeck R. Noe, quoted in Sunil J. Rumlall, "Measuring Human Resource Management's Effectiveness in Improving Performance," *HR. Human Resource Planning*, Vol. 26, Iss. 1 (2003): 51.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁹⁶ Dave Ulrich and Wayne Brockbank, *The HR Value Proposition*, 82.

CHAPTER VI - HR PROFESSIONALS, THE COMMAND TEAM, AND RETENTION

Training and development ensure employees have the competencies required to do the jobs asked of them and expand their competencies to assist in motivation and retention. To ensure that civilian employees maintain high performance, COs and HR professionals must work together to form a command team. COs cannot manage civilian employees without the support of HR professionals. Civilian HR Officers not only support COs in administering employees in accordance with Treasury Board guidelines, but they can become a vital member of the CO's command team. Dave Ulrich, a professor of Business at the University of Michigan and one of the world's leading authorities on HR, argues that strategic clarity, change management, and intellectual capital are all outcomes of effective HR work.⁹⁷ The overall responsibility for HR management in a unit rests with the CO. One might expect to find COs approaching the personnel within their unit with equal levels of commitment. Unfortunately, quite often there exists a dichotomy between the way COs handle military personnel and civilian employees. Only through the specialized skills provided by HR professionals, the recognition of leaders of the value of HR, and the establishment of a command team focused on HR issues, can true benefits be brought to the CF.

Dedication, commitment, and motivation are beyond the capacity of an HR professional to develop. Only supervisors know their subordinates well enough to motivate them. Unit COs must become civilian HR champions and they must demand the same from the line managers under their command who supervise civilians. Despite

⁹⁷ Dave Ulrich, *Delivering Results: A New Mandate for Human Resource Professionals* (Boston: Harvard Business Review, 1998), 17.

the responsibility for COs to be versed in civilian HR issues, HR professionals are specially trained in HR processes and policies, and are more important now than ever to the success of the CF. Their expertise on matters such as HR planning, job analysis, recruitment and selection, development and evaluation, compensation and safety, and labour relations are key areas that COs can draw on to support the unit.

To more appropriately support COs, civilian HR Officers must also change. HR Officers who have traditionally acted as glorified clerks must move to a more comprehensive and more behaviourally based profession. HR Officers must work closely with unit COs to identify demands for additional personnel, then translate requirements into recruiting campaigns focused on hiring not only qualified personnel, but people who demonstrate the right values and beliefs to allow them to fit into the CF's culture. From a unit perspective, civilian HR Officers must attempt to attend COs' weekly meetings to ensure their awareness of the challenges being faced and afford them the opportunity to provide input into decisions being made. HR professionals must function as innovators and search continuously for strategies that will create value for DND as opposed to merely reacting to situations as they arise.⁹⁸ HR departments perform the critical function of aligning the skills, the knowledge, and the human abilities that COs need into a job description to ensure that recruits succeed in the organization. In essence, HR Officers need to be in tune with the psychological aspects of the position in addition to the qualifications required to fulfill it.

⁹⁸ Sunil J. Rumlall, "Measuring Human Resource Management's Effectiveness in Improving Performance," 51.

More and more, companies are realizing that employee education and previous job history (for instance, an employee's resume) only account for a small portion of what the company needs. People skills and emotional control are becoming more prevalent in today's workforce. As such, civilian HR Officers must become more skilled at seeking out the types of people that a unit requires for success. As the principle advisors to COs on HR matters, HR Officers must not only understand HR rules and regulations, they must also have a complete understanding of how these policies fit into the mission, roles, and strategy of the unit they are supporting. Without a clear understanding of the link between regulations and the vision of the unit, HR Officers can easily provide inaccurate advice to a unit CO and create legal or morale problems that can affect not only the success of the unit, but the image of the CF as well. HR professionals are employee advocates and are responsible for ensuring the employer-employee relationship is maintained and equitable. As strategic partners, they help COs reach their goals.

To tie this all together, civilian HR Officers must be leaders who have credibility in the eyes of the CO and the employees alike.⁹⁹ Additionally, HR Officers must ensure that legal issues are followed on a day-to-day basis. They must ensure that HR matters are incorporated into the strategy for the unit as well as advise the CO on the implementation of these issues as part of the unit's long-term plans. HR Officers also play an important role as the conduit between COs and unions. Finally, civilian HR Officers play a key role in advising management on governance systems (including, for example, team structures and decision making processes) to ensure accountability for

⁹⁹ Dave Ulrich and Wayne Brockbank, *The HR Value Proposition*, 199.

strategy.¹⁰⁰ The only way civilian HR issues can be successfully integrated within a unit is by having HR Officers and unit COs join forces as part of a command team. It requires an active approach by having the civilian HR Officer become a partner with the CO and unit line managers in strategy development and execution. HR Officers play a significant role in creating unity of purpose. As strategic partners, they design HR practices that can and should be used to both create and implement the CO's vision and intent.¹⁰¹

To create a true command team, working together to benefit the people and the effectiveness of an organization, traditional ideas about HR professionals and HR management need to be reassessed. First, civilian HR Officers must continue to work towards being seen as members of a profession. Continued activities such as the certified Human Resource Professional (CHRP) designation will assist greatly in this matter. But this is not enough: HR professionals (both Human Resource Business Managers and Human Resource Officers) must ruthlessly monitor themselves for competencies and actively educate senior management on their capabilities. They must be more active in championing employees, representing their concerns to senior management, and at the same time working to increase employee contribution to the organization.¹⁰² Susan Meisinger, past president and CEO for the Society for Human Resources Management, with over 30 years in HR management and executive-level positions, contends that “successful HR professionals today, and in the future, have to be Competent, Curious,

¹⁰⁰ Dave Ulrich, *Delivering Results: A New Mandate for Human Resource Professionals*, 11.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 30.

Courageous, and Care about people.”¹⁰³ In essence, they need to ensure the entire organization knows what they do and the benefits they provide. Second, COs and all supervisors within a unit need to recognize what civilian HR Officers can provide to the overall success of the unit, and they need to actively demonstrate the importance of HR both in works and deeds. Strategic HR management is the key to the success of any organization. Without it, the most important asset a company holds will be ignored.

RETENTION

In an environment where there is no room for excess personnel in a unit, and in which those personnel employed are key to the success of the CF, civilian HR Officers and unit COs cannot afford but to work together for the benefit of civilian employees and to ensure they remain in DND. Retention goes hand-in-hand with the concepts of HR planning and recruitment. If an organization does not focus any effort on retaining its personnel, it will most assuredly need to plan for replacements and focus more resources on recruitment, orientation, and training. In his position paper, *Into the 21st Century: Strategic HR Issues*, Cdr Okros argues that:

Motivation and long-term retention [within DND and the CF] will increasingly be based more on organizational culture, fair treatment, and developmental opportunities than on salary levels. Clearly Canadian society and values are evolving.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Susan Meisinger, “The Four Cs of the HR Profession: Being Competent, Curious, Courageous, and Caring About People,” in *The Future of Human Resource Management: 64 Thought Leaders Explore the Critical HR Issues of Today and Tomorrow*, ed. Michael Losey, Sue Meisinger and Dave Ulrich (Alexandria: Society for Human Resources Management, 2005), 79.

¹⁰⁴ Cdr A. Okros, *Into the 21st Century...*, 9.

At the unit level, retention issues have never been as important as today. Regardless of the argument that little is being done by NDHQ to address retention within DND, there is still much that COs can do to ensure retention within their units. First and foremost, prevention is the key: COs must know their people and ensure that they feel valued. Nothing adds more to an individual's desire to leave an organization than the feeling of being useless. COs must also continually educate individuals within their unit on the compensatory rewards of being employed by DND (both financial and otherwise). Recognition for accomplishments at functions such as sports days, mess dinners, and unit barbeques all play significant roles in retaining personnel and making them feel appreciated. The celebration of the things that make DND unique from any other organization is too often forgotten by those employed by the organization.¹⁰⁵ Second, when individuals decide to leave, COs must ensure that they receive exit interviews. Only through understanding of the reasons why a person is leaving can COs hope to prevent similar departures in the future. Finally, if a person decides to leave, COs must understand that the departure does not automatically imply that the person is no longer loyal or dedicated to DND. The respect and recognition provided to those people who choose to leave (thorough departure luncheons, certificates of appreciation, and similar activities) not only sends a message to departing members of their value within the unit (many of whom may choose to return in the future), but allows those remaining individuals to feel that even in departing, they will continue to be valued by the unit.

¹⁰⁵ Civilian participation in functions such as sports days and other similar activities must be balanced against legislation and agreements such as workman's compensation and collective agreements. COs must use caution, despite their best intentions, not to open themselves up to grievances and/or other consequences in an attempt to create esprit de corps.

CHAPTER VII - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The management of civilians at a unit encompasses a number of activities. COs must not only understand the outside influences affecting how they manage their civilian employees (governance, culture, modernization, transformation), they also need to be competent in applying HR management practices in a manner that best fits their unit and their employees. It is important to understand that the analysis of civilian HR management (or any type of HR management for that matter) must be holistic. Changes to any HR activity within DND cannot be implemented without considering their effects on all of the other activities involved. There is no magical shopping list that can be provided to a CO to ensure success in managing civilians. However, an effective way of communicating ways to improve HR management of civilians in the CF is to provide a list of guiding principles or issues raised in this paper for consideration:

- a. Know your people. If leadership is truly about influencing others, then COs need to know their people and understand how best to influence them. Because civilian employees are different in many aspects from military members, knowing who they are is the foundation for successful leadership at the unit level. To effectively manage civilians, COs must understand who their civilian employees are (their culture), what motivates them, and what makes them feel valued. They must also know what tasks (work description) they have assigned to their employees. Only then can COs translate this knowledge into leadership and motivational techniques;

- b. Know yourself. COs must “know what they do not know.” COs must have the capacity and humility to understand that they may not have all the knowledge to effectively lead at the unit level in a mixed military/civilian atmosphere. As such, they must recognize their weaknesses and work towards educating themselves (and their subordinate managers) on civilian HR management;
- c. Obey the law. COs must understand the policies and guidelines governing the management of civilians. Despite their best intentions, collective agreements, departmental policies, and governmental policies may preclude COs from making certain decisions or taking certain action within a unit. COs must understand their liability when making decisions that affect their civilian employees and use this information when making decisions;
- d. Educate, educate, educate. COs must invest in the education of their employees. This starts with an inclusive orientation program and is complemented by training and developmental opportunities. If COs do not allow their employees to grow, they risk losing the creative spark that allows an organization to move forward into the future. More importantly, they risk losing their employees who will seek out other organizations that will allow them opportunities to learn and grow;

- e. Demand results from your advisors. COs must understand what Human Resource Business Managers and Civilian Human Resource Officers can provide and they must demand results from these HR professionals. HR Officers have the vital function of providing COs advice based on an in-depth knowledge and experience in the field of civilian HR management. Although not decision makers, HR Officers play an important advisory role in a unit by providing options and resulting impact assessments prior to COs making decisions that affect civilian employees. As with any advisor/decision-maker relationship, for this relationship to be effective, COs must include civilian HR Officers in their command team and ensure they understand the challenges facing the unit and provide advice based on situational awareness; and
- f. Be fair, open, and transparent. COs must continually work on ensuring that communication within their unit is clear and open. Although given the authority to make decisions with as little or as much consultation as they wish, COs waste valuable intellectual capital and risk alienating their personnel if they choose not to involve them in the decision making process. Allowing employees to be part of the decision making process and informing them of reasons for decisions ensures motivation and unity of purpose when faced with ever-increasing challenges.

CHAPTER VIII – CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to examine the challenges COs face today when managing DND civilians at the unit level. HR management is the key to the success of any organization. Without it, the most important asset a company holds is ignored. The challenges COs face in managing civilian employees will continue to confront them as DND and the CF move further into the 21st century. Traditional views of many COs that HR issues were strictly the purview of HR specialists and could be ignored are no longer valid. COs must ensure that their civilian employees are afforded the same dedication and commitment they give to the military component of their unit. Changes to any HR activity within DND and the CF cannot be implemented without considering their effect on all the other activities involved. This paper has reviewed the outside influences that impact COs' ability to manage their civilian employees. It has considered the governance structure in DND, differences in military and civilian cultures, and the competencies required of COs in order to properly manage personnel. It has addressed the impact Public Service Modernization and CF Transformation have had on civilian HR management and it has reviewed HR management theory and made assessments of how COs can apply HR management theory to better manage their civilian employees. Finally, this paper has provided a list of guiding principles for COs when managing civilians in the CF. In an environment where there is no room for excess personnel in a unit, and those personnel employed are key to a unit's mission, COs cannot afford but attack the challenges of managing DND civilians head on – for it the unit where the rubber meets the road. Leadership cannot be selective – it must be all-inclusive if a CO wishes to be successful.

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