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**MOTIVATION IN THE RCAF AND
THE SUCCESSION PLANNING PROCESS**

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JCSP 43 DL	PCEMI 43 AD
Exercise *Solo Flight*	**Exercice *Solo Flight***
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INTRODUCTION

Much like any other organization, public or private, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) has a policy in place to ensure that it can fill its most senior roles and appointments with the right cadre of personnel at the right time. In order to accomplish this, a RCAF succession planning policy has been promulgated in RCAF Order 1000-7: Air Force Personnel Management - Officers. The stated purpose of this order is to identify officers with the potential and motivation to achieve senior appointments. As a strategic personnel policy for the RCAF, AFO 1000-7 meets many of the objectives that succession planning in general requires. For example, the RAND corporation identifies aspects of successful succession planning to include: focusing on key positions; identifying position-specific competency requirements and qualifications; identifying and assessing high-potential candidates; matching pools of candidates and positions considering both near- and long-term successions; using career paths to deepen and widen candidate pools; and engaging senior executives in the process, all of which are encompassed by the RCAF's policy.[1] RCAF succession planning also accounts for talent management, and looks to develop optimal talent further down the officer pipeline than just simply conducting replacement planning.[2] As a second order of effect, what the RCAF does not appear to have accounted for however is how its succession planning policy affects the motivation levels of its senior officer corps, particularly as this motivation pertains to advancing in the organization via

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[1] Andrew R. Hoehn, Albert A. Robbert, and Margaret C. Harrell, *Succession Management for Senior Military Positions: The Rumsfeld Model for Secretary of Defense Involvement* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2011), xiv.

[2] Michael J Colarusso and David S. Lyle, "Talent Management: Six Constraints on Senior Officer Succession Planning," Association of the United States Army, accessed May 27, 2018, https://www.ausa.org/articles/talent-management-six-constraints-senior-officer-succession-planning.

promotion and senior appointment. This essay will attempt to apply organizational behaviour and motivation theory to demonstrate that, while developing and generating the right officers at the right time to fill its senior appointments, RCAF succession-planning policy may in fact be demotivating a significant portion of its senior officer corps. This will be accomplished by offering a brief outline of the RCAF succession planning policy, followed by a description of Porter-Lawler's Model of Expectancy Theory. An analysis of RCAF succession planning policy under the theory will then be conducted leading to initial recommendations and concluding comments. This outline loosely attempts to ensure that the aspects of Context, Content, Process and Actors are assessed under Walt and Gilson's model of policy analysis.[3]

RCAF SUCCESSION PLANNING

A brief description of RCAF succession planning follows, in order to provide the context for further analysis. Succession planning for RCAF Officers is governed by RCAF Air Force Order (AFO) 1000-7 Air Force Personnel Management – Officers.[4] In that AFO, details for the selection of senior RCAF officers to be succession planned is provided, along with how this meets the intent of developing these selected officers to achieve senior appointment and General Officer rank.

In order to govern the RCAF succession planning process, an Air Personnel Management Board (Officers) (APMB(O)) is convened annually. Chaired by the Deputy Commander (DComd) of the RCAF and its membership being all available RCAF Major-Generals (MGens) and BGens, one of the main objectives of the APMB(O) is to produce the RCAF potential lists

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[3] Walt, Gill, and Lucy Gilson. "Reforming the Health Sector in Developing Countries: The Central Role of Policy Analysis." *Health Policy and Planning* 9, no. 4 (1994): 353-370.

[4] "Air Force Orders: AFO 1000-7 Air Force Personnel Management – Officers," Royal Canadian Air Force, last modified May 16, 2016, accessed May 29, 2018, http://rcaf.mil.ca/en/c-air-force-staff/afo-1000-7.page (Defence Wide Area Network).

(O1, O2 and O3 Lists) that will subsequently be used to generate medium to long-term succession plans. The O1 List identifies Cols possessing the potential to reach the rank of Lieutenant-General (LGen) and LCols possessing the potential to reach the rank of MGen. The O2 List identifies Cols possessing the potential to reach BGen/MGen and LCols possessing the potential to reach BGen.[5] The O3 list is intended for senior Captains and Majors who are identified as having the potential to reach General Officer and in the interest of reducing scope, will not be further discussed here.

Several criteria for Officer selection are identified in AFO 1000-7, as well as some administrative constraints. Criteria for selection to the O1 and O2 lists are largely qualitative, with one quantitative example. Qualitative criteria include an analysis on the prospective candidate's leadership abilities, judgement, communication and management skills, experience, and ethics and conduct, as examples.[6] While noting the inherent subjectivity in any analysis conducted on these qualitative criteria, AFO 1000-7 indicates that by assessing candidates under these criteria the process is being made as objective as possible.[7] The sole quantitative criteria utilized is that of the candidate's Years of Service (YOS) remaining to Compulsory Retirement Age (CRA), determined as being either 55 or 60 years old. This criterion is utilized to ensure that any successful succession planned candidate has enough remaining years of service that he/she can serve minimum times at the rank of LGen/MGen/BGen and Col prior to achieving 35 YOS or reaching the age of 55 or 60, whichever is later. Not intended to be discriminatory, this criterion exists to guarantee that the RCAF will obtain a "return on investment on RCAF

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[5] "Air Force Orders: AFO 1000-7 Air Force Personnel Management – Officers," Royal Canadian Air Force, last modified May 16, 2016, accessed May 29, 2018, http://rcaf.mil.ca/en/c-air-force-staff/afo-1000-7.page (Defence Wide Area Network).
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

succession managed personnel."[8] There is a further administrative control placed on the O1 and

O2 lists which limits the total number of succession planned officers on the combined lists to

15% of the Preferred Manning Level (PML) for Cols or LCols.[9] For example, the PML of the

Pilot trade at the LCol rank is 125 officers, therefore there should be no more than nineteen Pilot

LCols on the combined O1 and O2 lists.[10] Lastly, it should be noted that in accordance with AFO

1000-7, officers who are selected to the O-list are informed via letter by the DComd RCAF, and

can subsequently be removed if the member no longer has adequate time left to serve in order to

achieve senior appointment or the assessment of potential no longer justifies retention on the O-

List.

 Having provided the context of how RCAF succession planning is stated in policy, one

can now think on how to apply theories of organizational behaviour to determine how effective

this policy is in achieving its aims. For the purposes of this paper, the focus will be on how

RCAF succession planning policy exerts a motivational force on its senior officer corps. To

accomplish this analysis, a model of organizational theory as pertaining to motivation must be

explained.

PORTER-LAWLER MODEL OF EXPECTANCY THEORY

 There are many organizational behaviour theories of motivation in the academic

literature, however one of the earliest to be developed and tested is that of Expectancy Theory.

Expectancy Theory was first developed by Victor Vroom in the 1960s and at its heart focuses on

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[8] "Air Force Orders: AFO 1000-7 Air Force Personnel Management – Officers," Royal Canadian Air Force, last modified May 16, 2016, accessed May 29, 2018, http://rcaf.mil.ca/en/c-air-force-staff/afo-1000-7.page (Defence Wide Area Network).
 [9] Ibid.
 [10] "Director Personnel Generation Requirements 5: Projected Status Report," Military Personnel Generation, last modified May 16, 2017, accessed May 29, 2018, http://collaboration-cmp-cpm.forces.mil.ca/sites/DPGR%205/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fsites%2FDPGR%205%2FShared%20Documents%2FPSR%20%2D%20Projected%20Status%20Report%2FPSR%202017.

the idea that people will develop varying perceptions of the degree of certainty that a particular action will lead to a desired outcome (expectancy).[11] This expectancy can be combined with the concept of valence, or the idea that people tend to prefer certain goals or outcomes over others, and thus anticipate experiencing feelings of satisfaction should a preferred outcome be achieved.[12] Positive valence would indicate that an individual would prefer to have the outcome as opposed to not have it. Vroom thus determines that motivation is a function of valence and expectancy combined and can be explained as the "force on a person to exert a given amount of effort in performance of his job…[as an] increasing function of the sum of the products of the valences…and his expectancies that this amount of effort will be followed by their attainment."[13] Or, put simply, an individual will feel motivated to put forth a greater degree of effort towards an action if he/she feels that a positive outcome will be the end-result and that this preferred outcome is realistically achievable. Porter and Lawler later added to Vroom's model by incorporating other variables, as Figure 1 shows. Thus, not only is motivation a function of perceived positive outcomes and the probability of those outcomes being achieved, but also of the abilities and traits of the individual and how he/she may perceive the types of effort a person considers necessary to effective job performance.[14] Importantly, feedback loops are also incorporated, where an individual may be exhibiting high performance, but may reconsider the effort being put into that performance due to not attaining the preferred outcome, or attaining the outcome but subsequently re-evaluating further effort-reward probabilities.[15]

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[11] John B. Miner, *Organizational Behavior 1: Essential Theories of Motivation and Leadership* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005), 97-98.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] John B. Miner, *Organizational Behavior 1: Essential Theories of Motivation and Leadership* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005), 98-99.

[15] Ibid.

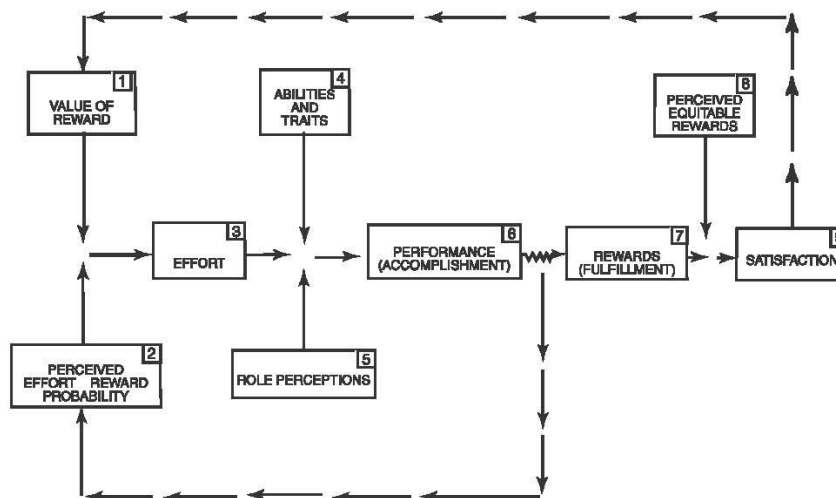Figure 7.1 The Original Porter-Lawler Model

Figure 1: Porter-Lawler Model of Motivation (Expectancy Theory)

Source: Miner, *Organizational Behavior 1*, 99.

Porter-Lawler's Model is applicable to the policy of succession planning in the RCAF, as being succession planned leads to Command appointments and other senior roles for RCAF officers. Satisfactory performance in those roles then leads to being competitive for promotion to Col and beyond, which, once achieved, leads to the succession planning cycle being continued. The model applies as desirable appointments and promotion can be considered to be positive outcomes for the vast majority of the RCAF senior officer corps, and the probability of that outcome is directly linked to whether an officer is succession planned or not.

ANALYSIS

Prior to commencing an analysis, that analysis needs to be explained as to its constraints and assumptions. One constraint is that much of the information regarding specifics on succession planning in the RCAF is Protected information, and therefore not readily available for research and analysis. Some data has been obtained from Director Military Careers 4 (RCAF)

who holds all the O-lists on behalf of the RCAF, and this information is presented in Figure 2 below.

	PLT	ACSO	AEC
O1	7	1	1
O2	21	8	4
PML (LCol)	125	61	36
PML (Col)	37	16	9

Figure 2: RCAF Succession Planning O1 and O2 Lists (LCol) and Air Operation Trades Preferred Manning Level (LCol)

Source: RCAF Director Military Careers 4 (RCAF) & Director Personnel Generation Requirements: Projected Status Report

In the interests of brevity, the analysis also focuses on extrinsic motivation (i.e. appointment and promotion) which can be more readily interpreted from the data, whereas intrinsic motivation would require interviews and/or surveys on a sample set of RCAF senior officers. An analysis of this nature is beyond the scope of this essay and therefore the intrinsic motivation of doing the best one can as that is what a professional officer does is left unresearched. In addition, in order to further reduce the scope of the analysis, only the rank of LCol will be analysed here. The basis of the analysis therefore is the assumption that the majority of RCAF LCols are extrinsically motivated by senior appointment and promotion and that this is a preferred outcome for which most believe is realistically achievable.

From a strategic theoretical application perspective, RCAF succession planning works as a motivator for a percentage of its LCol officers, which is to say some officers are succession planned, and do in fact achieve promotion to the General Officer rank. The Porter-Lawler model predicts that these officers value the prospect of promotion and believe that the perceived effort

required and likelihood of achieving that outcome are worth the costs of working toward that outcome. They believe that they have the abilities and traits required to succeed in the given role, which is generally true, as evident by the fact that failure in senior appointments is observed to be a rarity. Therefore, performance in the LCol role is achieved and recognized, and the outcome of promotion and the value of that reward leads to a satisfied state for those officers. For most of these officers, the Porter-Lawler model feeds back to its initial stages, and an evaluation is done by the officer on the next stage of promotion and appointment, where the value of reward and probability outcome of another promotion is again considered. This attainment of senior appointment, initially from LCol to Col rank, can only be achieved by a small percentage of LCol officers however, as there are only a small percentage of promotions available. For example, of sixty-one LCol Air Combat System Officers (ACSOs) in 2018, only two were promoted to Col, which is the historical annual average.[16] Knowing that nine LCol ACSOs are succession-planned, and assuming that that number remains constant year-over-year, only 3% of ACSO LCols in total, and 22% of succession-planned ACSO LCols are promoted to Col. This is a relatively small number of the aggregate total of ACSO LCols for whom the Porter-Lawler model would consider are being appropriately motivated. It is also representative of similar percentages in the other RCAF officer trades. For the remainder of the RCAF LCols, which is the vast majority of the cohort, there is the potential of a negative feedback loop in the model.

The first feedback loop to be considered is for those RCAF LCols who are not succession-planned and not promoted. These officers know they are not succession planned as they have not received a letter from the DComd RCAF indicating they have been selected. In this instance, despite valuing the reward, believing it is a potential likelihood, and having the ability

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[16] "CANFORGEN 043/18 CMP 022/18 151700Z MAR 18," Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, accessed May 30, 2018, http://vcds.mil.ca/apps/canforgens/default-eng.asp?id=043-18&type=canforgen (Defence Wide Area Network).

to perform at the next rank, it becomes apparent that promotion and key appointment is a diminishing likelihood. Performance, while likely recognized as exemplary by supervisor, will not result in reward fulfillment. In the model, this will lead to a reduced reward - probability outcome, despite still being valued, which could lead to reduced effort and performance. In that instance, different rewards may need to be considered for these officers in order for them to re-enter the model with a different outcome and probability consideration. Anecdotally, it is widely believed by RCAF LCols that if one is not succession planned it is extremely unlikely that promotion to Col will occur. If true, this is unfortunate as it reinforces the negative feedback loop in the model.

The second feedback loop to be considered is for those RCAF LCols who are succession planned and are promoted to Col, but will not be promoted again. For example, there are zero promotions to BGen for the ACSO trade in 2018, and historically only one every two or three years.[17] There were three promotions to BGen for the PLT trade in 2018. While data is unavailable for succession planned RCAF PLT Cols, as a percentage of Col PML, three BGen promotions is 8% of PLT Cols, which is reasonable. A negative feedback loop can still occur in the Porter-Lawler model however, as again while the outcome of promotion from Col to BGen is valued, the probability is greatly reduced. 15% of Col PML on the succession planning lists to General Officer is likely high, leading to a demotivational situation. This is further compounded when the RCAF does not follow its own recommended succession planning policy in terms of number of officers succession planned per PML. For instance, as per Figure 2, in the PLT trade 28 of 125 LCols are succession-planned or 22%. This is significantly higher than the

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[17] "CANFORGEN 043/18 CMP 022/18 151700Z MAR 18," Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, accessed May 30, 2018, http://vcds.mil.ca/apps/canforgens/default-eng.asp?id=043-18&type=canforgen (Defence Wide Area Network).

recommended 15%.[18] This leads to a greater percentage of officers who are informed via DComd

RCAF letter that there is a potential that General Officer rank will be reached, yet promotion

stops at Col. Worse, the stratification by community in the PLT trade further exacerbates the

issue. There are thirty-four (34) Tactical Aviation (Tac Avn) LCols in the RCAF, yet twelve are

succession planned on the O1 and O2 list.[19] The result is that 35% of Tac Avn LCols are

informed they have the potential to reach General Officer, yet there are only two (2) Tac Avn

BGen officers.[20] This is a skewed percentage and has the potential to create an increased

likelihood of a Porter-Lawler model negative feedback loop.

RECCOMENDATIONS

While a more fulsome analysis with full exposure to RCAF succession planning data is

desirable to make detailed recommendations, with the limited data from the preceding paragraph

some recommendations can be determined. One recommendation that could result in minimizing

a likelihood of a negative feedback loop is for the RCAF to follow one aspect of the Canadian

Army model of succession planning, and not formally inform its senior officers when they are

succession planned. By eliminating this requirement, the RCAF would be changing the reward

probability of the outcome in the Porter-Lawler model, in that an officer is no longer

demotivated when they are not succession planned and they know it, or know they are succession

planned and yet fulfillment of the reward (promotion) never occurs or occurs fewer times than

expected. Far from attempting to obscure the succession planning process, keeping knowledge of

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[18] "Air Force Orders: AFO 1000-7 Air Force Personnel Management – Officers," Royal Canadian Air Force, last modified May 16, 2016, accessed May 29, 2018, http://rcaf.mil.ca/en/c-air-force-staff/afo-1000-7.page (Defence Wide Area Network).

[19] LCol Kyle Rosenlund, Director Military Careers 4 (RCAF), interview by author, Telephone, May 22, 2018.

[20] "Director of Senior Appointments – Senior Officer Biographies," Chief of Military Personnel, accessed May 31, 2018, http://cmpapp.mil.ca/dgmc/en/biographies/list-officers.asp (Defence Wide Area Network).

the candidates who are on and off the list confidential will reduce the likelihood of inadvertently demotivating RCAF officers. A second recommendation is to enforce adherence to the quantity of succession planned candidates, as more than 15% of LCol and Cols on the lists again leads to a greater likelihood of negative feedback loops and inadvertent demotivation.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this essay was to determine if as a second order of effect the RCAF was affecting the motivation levels of its senior officer corps via its formal succession planning process. It was demonstrated that via the feedback loops in the Porter-Lawler model of Expectancy Theory, that a majority of the RCAF senior officer corps may be negatively influenced by the RCAF succession planning policy as currently implemented. It should be noted however that the RCAF succession planning process exists not to motivate its senior officer corps, but rather to identify and develop a quantity of senior officers with the requisite experience to fill senior appointments, and in particular General Officer positions. While not a primary aim of the policy however, motivational effects and the impact on effort and performance is an important implication of the application of AFO 1000-7. Succession planning policy and RCAF officer corps motivation are not mutually exclusive, and they should not be considered in isolation of each other. RCAF succession planning policy can meet its aim of developing identified officers, while also concurrently motivating the greater whole of its personnel. Further research on how this can be accomplished beyond the identified recommendations should be expanded, including an incorporation and analysis of intrinsic motivations in addition to extrinsic motivations. There are many inputs to motivation in organization behavioural theory, and this essay conducted only a simplified analysis in one area.

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