

**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Learning Organization

FINAL VERSION
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“The concepts that shape the thinking of strategic leaders become the intellectual currency of the coming era; the soldiers and civilians who develop those ideas become trusted assets themselves.”

Army Leadership, FM 22-100,
August, 1999,
Paragraph 7 - 104

Introduction

Each decade of our history as a Nation has been filled with unexpected crises, significant opportunities and a wide array of challenges. In peace and war, challenge and change are constants. Now more than ever we must learn how to plan for a future which we can not easily predict.

Organizations that endure over time adapt by preparing for the future. The Corps of Engineers is 226 years old. To adapt for our future, we must continually learn from our work today. We have done this in our past. Yet, today the rate of change is greater than ever. Accordingly, we must learn faster than ever before. We must optimize this capability by developing a new cultural approach to our business and to learning. In this way, we will evolve with the needs of the Nation, and we will improve our competence as an organization.

Cultural change requires an understanding of all the dynamics in the Corps. Our strategy for change must take a holistic approach to align these dynamics to our desired end state. New initiatives, narrowly-focused, responding to the latest trend or management article will likely not yield enduring and widespread change. Initiatives focused solely on organizational structure will have limited success without aligning the other dynamics within the culture. When many initiatives are not integrated with each other, confusion will impede change. The Tower of Babel described in the Bible was an engineering project with high ideals. It failed because of multiple languages and a lack of integration in its plans.

Our attempts to institutionalize Project Management as our business process since 1988 have been frustrated because we did not view the change holistically. We focused on the system and structure, yet did little to change the skills and attitudes our people needed, the style of our leadership, and other elements of our culture. Clearly, we must understand all the dynamics, and how to align them with the desired end state.

What is a learning organization? Why should the Corps create a learning organization? How can the Corps become a learning culture? While still defining answers, we believe the journey is critical to the Corps' ideal future. Changes in our context, the social, economic and governmental environment in which we serve the Nation and Army, require us to continually develop our organizational competence. Learning from our past and present, as part of our on-going work, will make us agile and prepared for the uncertain future. It will also create an organization that values investments in learning, an attribute that attracts and will help retain fresh talent in our ranks.

This doctrine on learning organization, and the forthcoming doctrine on leadership for learning, are consistent with Army Leadership, FM 22-100, August, 1999. They amplify elements of that doctrine to fit the context the Corps is in today.

Context and Business logic

Today's historical and social context dramatically effects how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers serves the Army and the Nation. That context can be characterized by these realities:

The Corps' Changing Context

Economic and political realities

- ✘ Increased competition for business in a global economy
- ✘ Increased scrutiny from Congress, OMB, media, and interest groups
- ✘ More diverse kinds of work

Work realities

- ✘ More multi-stakeholder planning and collaboration (e.g., watersheds)
- ✘ Increased responsibilities as a steward of the environment
- ✘ New thinking, tools needed to be a knowledge-based organization
- ✘ More rapid pace of work and continual change

Talent realities

- ✘ Losing experienced senior people, too few mid-level replacements
- ✘ More competition for young talent
- ✘ New values and approaches to work in the workforce

These elements of the Corps' new context are part of the change in the mode of production from manufacturing to knowledge / service. The manufacturing era required bureaucratic stovepipes of experts to mass produce standardized products. This industrial-bureaucratic logic was based on making procedures ever more efficient, work fragmented into specialized parts, and a hierarchical organization. Our era today is defined by the knowledge / service mode of production. This logic requires interactive teamwork, strategic alliances, integration of knowledge, and coproducing solutions with customers to help them succeed. In order to adapt, the Corps must become a learning organization based on these new strategic values.

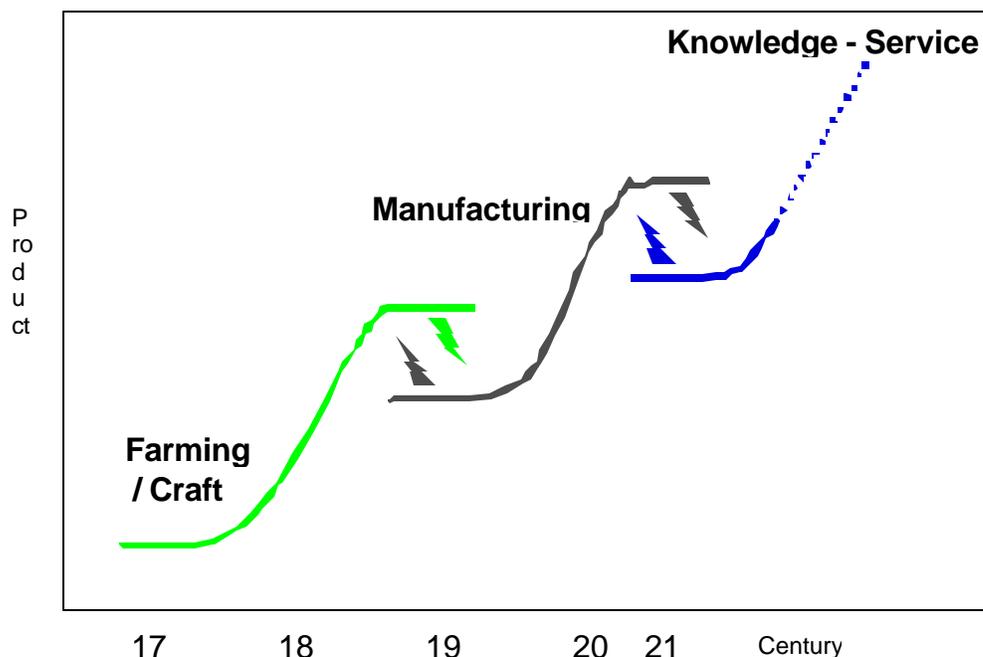
Today's employees are self-developing free-agents who want to continually learn. They want to acquire marketable skills, as well as attain advanced degrees / certificates to show for this learning.

There is a potential fit between the need to create an interactive organization designed for the knowledge / service mode of production and the needs of today's employees. Creating that fit is the challenge for leadership in this era: to design the right organization and lead it in the right way.

Becoming a learning organization will adapt the Corps to the service / knowledge mode of production, and attract young self-developers. While training will help update those with expertise, only an *organization* that is continually learning will attract and retain new employees to guarantee the Corps' service to the Nation.

In times of transformation from the old to the new mode of production people search for the best way to organize work and motivate people in the new situation. This began in the early 1980s and has continued to this day. People search for paradigms of what works in the new context. The problem is the old concepts and values are in our minds because we learned these in school. Yet, the old ways are no longer as effective and efficient. The transformation to a new mode therefore always creates a discontinuity, represented in the graphic below as lightning bolts between overlapping modes.

Discontinuities in Mode of Production



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During periods of discontinuity there is an outpouring of ideas and management books. Many have some truths, some add to the confusion, but most soon fade and are forgotten. One concept that has endured because it fits the new mode of knowledge / service production is the learning organization. This concept has been developed within organizations for over fifteen years. Organizations find it strategically important.

Definition

A learning organization systematically learns from its experience of what works, and what does not work. The goal of learning is increased innovation, effectiveness, and performance.

A learning organization is a non-threatening, empowering culture where leadership, management, and the workforce are focused on continually developing organizational competence. The goal of strategic learning is to create the Corps' ideal future in dialogue with our stakeholders. An ideal future is a more systemic, dynamic and full picture than a vision statement. The goal of technical and operational learning is to align all elements of the Corp's culture with this ideal future.

This continual learning guides the systemic development of our culture. Culture is defined as a 7 S social system (strategy, structure, systems, shared values, stakeholder values, skills, and style of leadership), which is described below.

Learning has a variety of sources. Three main foci are strategy, operations, and the technical realm. Strategic learning at the highest levels comes from continuous dialogue about values and goals with customers, stakeholders, and partners. Operational and technical learning comes from the process of designing and delivering products and services in dialogue with customers at the project level.

Strategic and operational learning also comes from best practices. Best practices can be found inside or outside the Corps. The goal is not to copy the best practice, but to innovate something better adapted to our needs.

Similarly, we can learn from cases drawn from our own experience, both positive and negative. Why did one strategy succeed and another fail? What could we do differently next time? Why did a particular initiative or operation, which had such support and resources, not produce what we had hoped? Why did another initiative or operation succeed? What are the systemic lessons from what we have done?

From all these sources of organizational learning strategic leaders define, and regularly refocus, the strategic goals of the organization. These leaders, interactively with operational leaders, then align all measurements, systems, values, structures, projects, and programs – all elements of culture – with the refocused strategic purposes. Organizational learning becomes a constant focus of leadership.

Training, on the other hand, is about *individual* competence. A learning organization understands the difference between individual competence and organizational competence, and connects them. Even the best training, however, does not make a learning organization.

Systematic Organizational Learning

Learning for the Corps of Engineers occurs every day all over the world. Individuals learn. Work groups learn. Project teams learn. Senior strategic leaders learn. A learning organization make use of these lessons for the whole organization.

As strategic, operational, and technical learning occurs it must therefore be brought into meetings and the centers of decision-making. Learning must also be entered into a knowledge management system that filters, distills, and integrates it so that information can be turned into knowledge. This knowledge must then be turned into wisdom for use throughout the organization, and especially for leaders who must shape culture, policy, decisions, and planning.

Knowledge management networks, techniques, and tools alone, however, will not get us the higher performance, productivity, and effectiveness we seek. That requires systematizing our learning, so that it drives how we plan and develop initiatives, how we align all elements of our culture, and how we make decisions.

The learning organization is initially difficult to understand because it is a systemic concept. We often think in terms we absorbed in school as individual students. We often think about learning as occurring in classes, as teaching in school. We see learning as separate from work. Learning is not 'real work' in the craft or manufacturing mode of thinking. Real work in these modes is making products and deliverables. Some even say that learning takes time away from getting the job done, instead of learning, we could be doing. In this way of thinking, learning is not seen as inherently a part of work.

In the knowledge / service mode learning is real work because it empowers us to systematically improve our effectiveness at making better things and providing better services. Learning is one of the essential keys to productivity in knowledge work. If we are not continually and systematically learning, someone else is, and they will get there before we do.

Taking an historical perspective gives an insight into the relation of learning and work. The purpose and process of learning change with the mode of production. New tools, technology, processes of work and organization require new ways of learning. Each changed context sets new purposes for learning. For example, with computers and the internet, people can quickly learn from colleagues around the globe about their organizational innovations – if the culture and systems are there to empower that to happen, and they are motivated to learn.

The historical shift in the purpose and process of learning is capsulized in the graphs below. Since it is not easy to learn, understanding this history assists our thinking.

In the craft mode learning is focused on individuals. People work alone, with their family, or in small groups. The purpose of learning is to increase their manual technique with hand tools.

In the early manufacturing mode learning is also focused on individuals. People work in large bureaucracies or assembly lines. Learning focuses on skill training for their function, or technical discipline. In the late manufacturing mode, starting in the 1980s, knowledge and service thinking began to affect manufacturing as statistical process control and total quality management techniques began to shift the learning focus from individuals to work groups.

Mode of Production	Learning Purpose	Learning Process
<p><u>Craft</u></p> <p>Hand tools</p>	<p>individuals</p> <p>Manual technique</p>	<p>Master - apprentice</p>
<p><u>Manufacturing</u></p> <p>Electromagnetic tools</p>	<p>individuals -</p> <p>Expertise in technical disciplines</p> <p>work groups -</p> <p>Expertise in team disciplines</p>	<p>Training in skills</p> <p>Courses</p> <p>Class teacher - students</p> <p>Statistical process control</p> <p>Total Quality Management</p>

With the increasing emergence of the knowledge and service mode in the 1980s advanced thinkers started conceiving of an *organization* that is continuously learning, developing its organizational competence and effectiveness. The transition from the manufacturing to the knowledge / service mode is a significant expansion of the purpose and the process of learning, now crucial for organizational performance. In the graphic below the +'s indicate that the manufacturing mode's

purposes and processes are still important, but new elements are added. The green box below shows these new elements of the learning organization.

Mode of Production	Learning Purpose	Learning Process
<u>Knowledge - Service</u>	<p>organization -</p> <p>+ Shape culture (7Ss)</p> <p>+ Systemic knowledge (technical, business, leadership)</p> <p>+ Innovation in product / service process relationships organization</p>	<p>+ Strategic learning - interactive dialogue</p> <p>on context - foresight and analysis with stakeholders - about values & goals with customers - about success & strategy</p> <p>+ Operational learning after action reviews (AARs) best practices - ours / others' frontline & technical learning lessons learned case studies</p>

The 7 Ss of Culture

To achieve systematic organizational learning and a higher level of organizational competence and effectiveness, leaders must transform the culture of how we think, meet, plan and perform our work. Culture is recreated everyday by the people of the Corps because the beliefs, values, mores, and concepts of culture reside in their minds. During times of transformation, understanding culture is critical. Strategic

and operational leaders must consciously shape culture to the changing context about them.

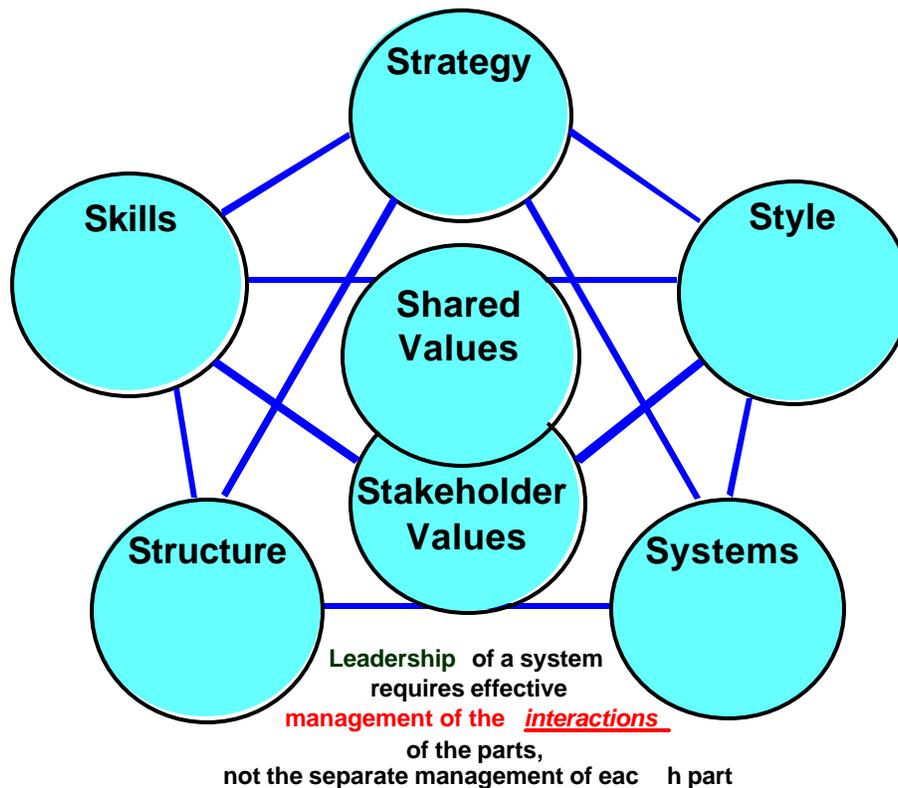
The 7 S model is an anthropological and systemic way to understand culture. It shows dynamically that corporate success requires the development of both the hard Ss (strategy, structure, and systems) and the soft Ss (style of leadership, skills, stakeholder values, and shared values). The 7 Ss help leaders in at least four ways as a:

- ❑ mental model to understand culture,
- ❑ guide for change management strategy,
- ❑ tool to design initiatives holistically,
- ❑ reminder of hard and soft assets to be integrated, aligned, and measured.

The lines in the graphic below indicate that all parts of an organizational culture are interconnected. It is not possible to independently change one part of an organization without effecting the other parts. Therefore effective systemic management focuses on the interactions of the parts.

7 Ss

Systems
Thinking
re
Culture



The Maccoby Group
www.maccoby.com

Below are definitions, discussions, and examples of the 7 Ss, as an introduction. These short statements are *not inclusive* of everything defining the 7Ss of the Corps. They do not address everything necessary to create our learning culture. These statements are merely introductions to a systemic and dynamic way for leaders to understand our culture.

Leaders must align all these elements of our culture so that they reinforce each other, and thereby continually improve our performance and our effectiveness.

The 7 S model is a tool for understanding and planning comprehensive cultural change. It is a means by which the Corps of Engineers can plan and implement cultural development to a learning organization.

Strategy

Definition of Strategy

Strategy is the art of devising and employing a system of activities that mobilizes all resources toward a valuable goal.

Discussion of Strategy

Strategy is formulated from what worked and did not work in the past (case studies, lessons learned), and shows what we must do in the present to achieve our desired future. Strategic leaders understand the relationship between the past, the present, and the future.

Strategic effectiveness comes from the way the activities align and reinforce each. Adding together activities randomly is not a strategy. Strategic thinkers must, therefore, organize the right mix of strategic activities, assure they reinforce each other, align all elements of the culture to reinforce the strategy.

Strategic leaders must have foresight about today's context and the dynamics that are shaping it, in order to extrapolate what the likely future will be. They must define, with stakeholders, a vision of the ideal future and maintain goals that cumulatively create that future. In developing strategies that mobilize all resources to achieve the necessary goals, strategic leaders realize that trade-offs must be made. Within the Corps of Engineers, strategic plans generally refer to plans that ultimately affect the whole organization.

For example, the Corps' strategy to attain its Vision as the world's premier public engineering organization covers many goals, including: forming key alliances, achieving synergy with the environment, aligning culture with organizational learning, promoting empowerment, and the development of leaders and talent at all levels. Outwardly, the goals best position the Corps to serve the Army and the Nation in peace and war. Inwardly, the goals improve, integrate and align all the parts of the Corps' organization. Therefore, strategy faces outward and inward, and over time guides how we transform the Corps to achieve our ideal organizational state.

Examples of Corps Strategies

- ❑ The Corps of Engineer – Federal Emergency Management Agency alliance to continually improve federal capability to respond to national emergencies.
- ❑ USACE Campaign Plan that includes becoming a learning organization.
- ❑ The leadership development programs and plans to develop leaders at all levels.

Structure

Definition of Structure

A structure is the formalizing of relationships, roles and responsibilities in order to organize and perform work.

Discussion of Structure

The type of organizational structure will determine how effective project development becomes. How flexible and adaptive structure is determines how responsive the organization is to changing conditions and needs of stakeholders. Ideal structure engages people's talents and shapes their responsibilities so that quality work and effective partnerships result. Unnecessary or burdensome bureaucratic structure undermines this work. The failure to engage the right people in the right structures also undermines projects. Lean but inclusive structures, based on shared values, focus performance. Good structure with developed relationships, open two-way communication, and empowerment increase employees' creativity.

Examples of Structures

- HQ, Divisions, Districts;
- Regional Management Boards;
- Command Council;
- Functional stovepipes;
- Project teams.

Systems

Definition of Systems

A system is a defined process, or set of processes, that links and orders activities to enable work to be done and goals to be achieved.

Discussion of Systems

Organizations use systems to accomplish both repetitive or non-recurring tasks. Leadership uses metrics to measure the effectiveness of systems and learn how well the organization, or its parts, are performing. Leaders rely on measurement, communication, and planning systems to learn where to make use of best practices, lessons learned, new technology, or new relationships to continually improve efficiency and effectiveness. Systems can become unproductive when they are not redesigned to meet changing needs. If necessary, new conditions and challenges may require the elimination of old systems.

Examples of Systems

- Project management business process;
- Personnel systems;
- Corps of Engineers Financial Management System;
- USACE Command Management Review (CMR).

Shared Values

Definition of Shared Values

A shared value is an essential characteristic or attribute promoted by the organization to motivate the behavior of members of the organization.

Discussion of Shared Values

Shared values define organizational behavior and what the organization strives to achieve. Shared values shape planning for the future, determine reaction to current events, and are a guide at moments of decision. By recognizing the Corps' shared values leaders gain insight and perspective on any issue or change facing the organization.

Shared corporate values have to be aligned with the values of the Corps' stakeholders.

In today's context shared values include the following examples.

Examples of Shared Values

- Continual learning;
- Innovation;
- Customer success;
- Public service;
- Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, personal courage;
- Professionalism.

Stakeholder Values

Definition of Stakeholder Values

A stakeholder value is an essential characteristic or attribute which is important to individuals or outside organizations systematically engaged with an organization.

Discussion of Stakeholder Values

Corps of Engineer stakeholders include the Army, the Air Force, the Administration, Congress, employees, the environmental community, labor unions, clients, the media, state and local governments, professional organizations, architect-engineer firms, construction companies and others.

Each stakeholder has cherished values which they pursue as they work with the Corps. The Corps must align its shared values with those of our stakeholders. Understanding stakeholder values is important to successful engagement. Shared projects depend on how well the Corps' values are understood and aligned with the stakeholder values. In the project management business process clients are integral members of the project delivery team. Clients' values help define project success.

Understanding stakeholder values requires respectful listening, communications, and dialogue, key competencies of a learning organization, at both the strategic and operational levels.

Examples of Stakeholder Values

- profit (private sector companies)
- responsiveness to local needs (Congress)
- responsiveness to national needs (Administration)
- fair and respectful treatment at work (employees)
- projects on time, within budget, meeting quality standards (clients)

Skills

Definition of Skills

A skill is the ability, knowledge, understanding, and judgment to accomplish a task.

Discussion of Skills

Skills require the integration of mental, physical and emotional abilities. To be competent at complex organizational tasks many skills need to be combined. Therefore, competencies combine many skills.

For example, to be competent at creating a motivating culture leaders must be skilled at understanding people, grasping dynamic trends in society, designing rewards, creating systems that help people succeed, and inspiring others to work for a vision beyond self.

Skills that facilitate organizational learning and knowledge integration are essential in a culture that wants to be continually learning. Leaders demonstrate learning skills through the way they work with clients, organize tasks, facilitate teams, and conduct meetings.

Examples of skills

- group facilitation to optimize learning
- coaching, mentoring
- systems thinking
- leading non-threatening, non-blaming after action reviews of projects
- facilitation of meetings to optimize performance and learning
- technical, leadership, and business management skills

Style

Definition of Style

Style of leadership or relationship refers to the manner in which an individual uses his or her talents, values, knowledge, judgement, and attitudes to lead and relate to others. Style expresses the person's character.

Discussion of Style

How leadership style fits the social system determines the effectiveness of the leader. The leadership style needs to be in tune with the historical context and organizational situation. Today, a leader whose style involves directing, monitoring, controlling people and information is going to demotivate people. However, the leader whose style involves understanding context and people, making goals clear and believable, learning from others, building relationships and teams, removing roadblocks so that others succeed, and honest communication is going to be effective in the knowledge / service world.

Examples of Style

- George Patton -- directive, forceful, authoritarian.
- Abraham Lincoln -- inspiring, visionary, strategic.
- Jimmy Carter -- moral, detail-focused.
- Dwight Eisenhower – consensus-building and corporate-focused.
- Robert E. Lee -- noble, strategic.

The Role of Leaders

There are leaders at all levels of the Corps. These leaders create the learning organization. They drive the change. They bring strategic and operational learning into the centers of decision-making at the District level, the Division level, and at the Headquarters level.

Personal Involvement

Leaders must integrate organizational learning into the agenda of their meetings.

They must advance organizational learning into their personal schedule. If their schedule is filled with operational, short-term, and reactive issues only, where is the role of being a leader of learning?

All leaders, no matter what level or how strategic or operational in their work, must take responsibility to understand and reinforce the learning organization. How they do this, how they work with other leaders, how the learning they help create is distributed and used, becomes the leadership process. That process will initially be described below, and in subsequent doctrine on leadership for learning.

Leaders Educate and Use Doctrine

In spite of the importance of establishing doctrine and distributing it, this is just a beginning. Operational leaders focus on performance and actions that must be accomplished now. There are always crises and short-term problems that must be reacted to. Learning may seem opposed to doing what must be done now. Many may not believe the way to continually increase the Corps' performance and effectiveness is through continual organizational learning.

It will be necessary for the doctrine to be discussed in Headquarters, in Divisions, in Districts, in project groups, and in the various meetings of leaders. The concepts that underlie the learning organization require this discussion and dialogue. The concepts have to be 'unpacked', thought about, and practiced, before their full meaning becomes clear.

Some may believe the Army and the Corps are already learning organizations, and no more development is necessary. For leaders who see the development of a higher form of the learning organization as a means to continually increase innovative effectiveness and performance, creating a dialogue is a first step.

Leadership process

Systematic organizational learning requires leaders focus on all elements of the Corps's culture they must develop. Strategic learning occurs when top executive leaders create a dialogue about values and goals with customers, stakeholders, and partners around the question: how can USACE best help you succeed? They then align organizational strategy with this new learning.

The strategic leaders then ask operational leadership to achieve these strategic goals. Operational experience and learning feeds back to the strategic level and is used to explore opportunities and refine strategic goals. This interactive dialogue between levels develops a learning-driven plan to transform the culture of USACE and align all systems, measurements, values, structures, planning, etc.

Operational leaders implement functional changes and align project delivery teams with this new learning. Operational dialogue is an integral part of work with customers, teams and the frontline. Operational learning also comes from discovering internal and external best practices, and innovations.

Organizational alignment comes from this continuous interactive dialogue between strategic learning and operational learning. Alignment is also guided by learning from measurements (CMRs, PRB's, etc.) across the organization, and from customers.

Learning case studies also provide systematic organizational learning. These cases are selected because they are prominent, well-known events in the life of the Corps. They may be about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of an initiative, a public controversy that involved the Corps, a notable response from a client, or any example of the Corps' competence as an organization which might challenge assumptions and offer learning.

Knowledge Creation Process

As new knowledge is generated it must be integrated into the Corps' institutional memory and centers of decision-making. Leaders must take responsibility for insuring that learning from projects, initiatives, and organizational strategies are made accessible across USACE.

The knowledge management system is not just the network that stores the information. It consists primarily of the communities of practice, the experts in each type of work, who must filter, condense, and integrate the learning. The technology is merely a tool they use.

USACE University and Learning Network consists of two interrelated parts, each with a different, but important knowledge function. The University part expands the training function. Courses and training events are customized to the needs of individuals and groups. Partnerships with universities and firms will allow the codesign of on-site customized offerings, distant learning (e-learning), or traditional courses. Internal Corps experts may also function as educators, trainers, and mentors.

The Learning Network will filter, distill, and integrate learning from all over the Corps. Another function of the learning network is to consult internally based on the latest knowledge and best practices. The Learning Network consists of communities of experts in all areas of competence required by the Corps. Assessing individual and group learning needs, and integrating learning into the work process will be other aspects of the Learning Network. These communities of practice will also help insure that learning in their field of competence is distributed to leadership for decision-making.

USACE Learning Network

University

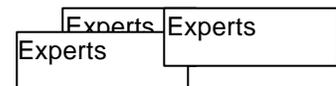
Corps' & Partners'

- training events
- courses
- e-learning

Offerings



Communities of Practice

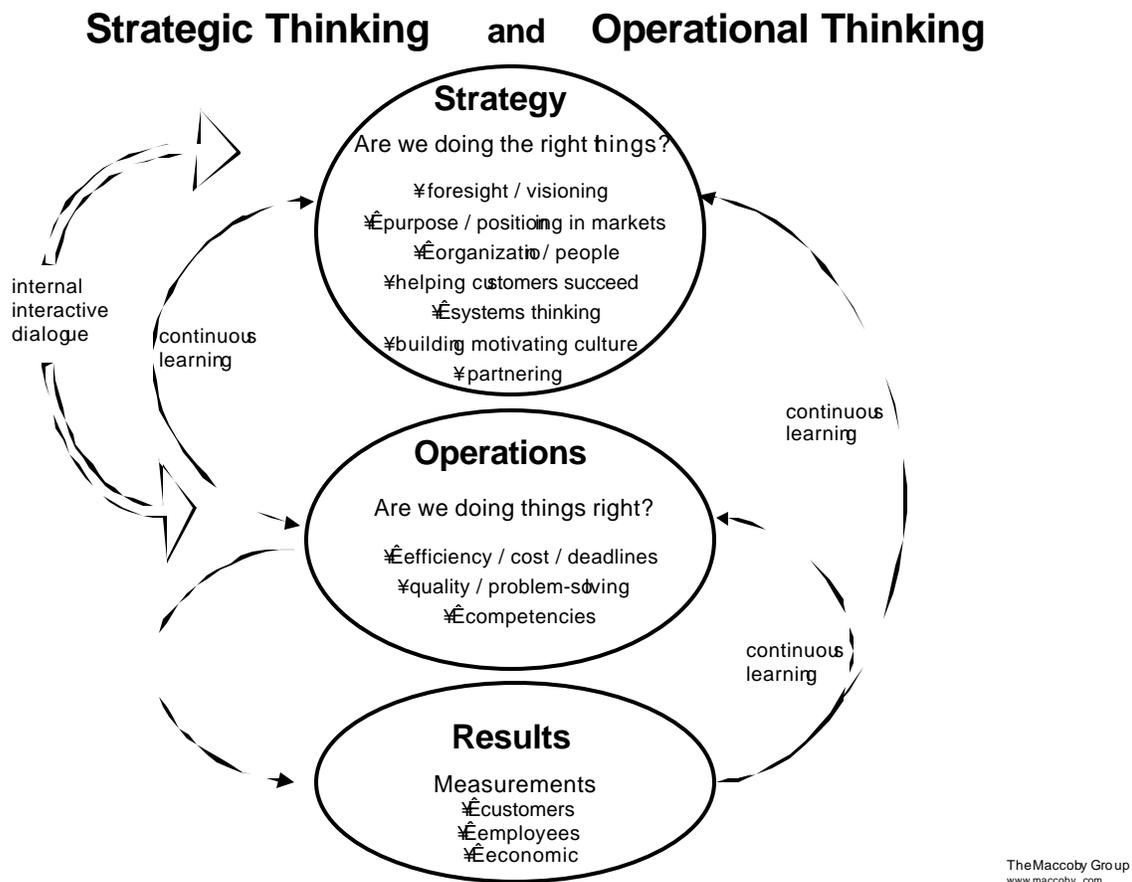


- learning in work
- assessments
- best practices
- knowledge management
- updates of university offerings

Strategic and Operational Leadership

Understanding the contribution of both strategic and operational thinking assists the leadership process. Individual leaders are often a mix of strategic and operational qualities. Nonetheless, because of their unique talents, values, understanding, and character each individual is usually either dominantly strategic or operational. While strategic and operational thinking are both important, leaders who are strategic thinkers must guide the Corps at the highest levels.

The graphic below illustrates that each type of thinking has its own focus and concerns. The arrows indicate the continuous learning cycles between results and the operational and the strategic realms. The internal interactive dialogue is indicated between the strategic and the operational.



Strategic leaders must understand context, history, and today's challenges in order to position the organization and its people to succeed. Their strategic thinking involves foresight, visioning, partnering, creating a motivating culture, and systems thinking. The strategic thinker asks: 'Are we doing the right things to succeed in today's context to create our ideal future?' Strategic leaders explain how the organization creates value for its customers and helps them succeed. This value equation is the foundation of the organization's strategic logic.

To inform decisions, they continually thirst for fresh information and knowledge of what is working and not working. They want to learn from customers, colleagues, stakeholders, and operations. They learn from people whose ideas and concerns differ from their own, not just from those who agree with them.

They manage the interrelationships between all parts of the culture, and do not bog down in the details of any part. Their focus is global and long-term, oriented to the adaptation of the whole social system of the Corps.

Strategic leaders are therefore, systems thinkers. They align all elements of the organization's culture and its people to create value for customers. This cultural alignment is the basis for realizing the organization's ideal future.

Operational leaders ask the question, 'Are we doing things right to implement the vision and guidance of the strategic leaders?' They run the operations, and like entrepreneurs, creatively find the best way to implement projects. They create the processes necessary for success in each situation. They assure that promises are kept and the organization's offerings to customers are delivered. They are responsible for quality and continuous improvement.

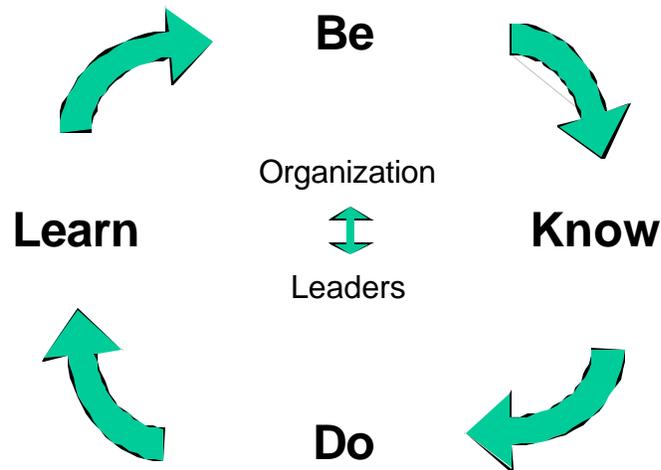
Operational leaders create teams of experts with different types of knowledge to share information, and build on each other's contribution, in the customer's interest. They empower others, giving clear mandates, authority, and the resources to be successful. They remove barriers to the team's success. They create a culture where the team regularly assesses where it is succeeding, and where its efforts are not working, so the team can make the necessary improvements.

Operational leaders as facilitators align the strengths and talents of individuals with the goals of the organization. They understand the importance of talented individuals for a winning team. Like a coach, operational leaders synthesize individuals' talents into team excellence. They continually connect team strengths with customer aspirations.

Operational leaders inform the strategic leadership of new business opportunities discovered working with customers. They also indicate where organizational changes are required by operational learning and best practices.

Doctrine on Leadership for Learning

A future doctrine on *Leadership for Learning* will describe the principles, competencies, and expectations that leaders will guide them in creating the Corps' learning organization. This doctrine will build on the Army's doctrine FM 22-100, August, 1999, *Army Leadership: Be, Know, Do*. The forthcoming *Leadership for Learning* doctrine will expand on that doctrine's references to learning and make it a continuous dynamic:



This current doctrine on the learning organization has described today's knowledge / service mode of work and the changed strategic logic it requires. The forthcoming doctrine on *Leadership for Learning* will describe the changing values of the workforce, and more specifically what leaders will have to do to lead in a new way.

Below are some of the expectations for leaders to be discussed in the forthcoming doctrine. Other expectations will emerge as the Corps' systemic organizational learning proceeds.

- HQ leaders must transform HQ culture
- Unproductive bureaucracy should be reduced
- Empowerment should be increased
- Performance and learning should be measured at all levels

- Projects should include learning
- Meetings are forums for organizational learning
- Learning leaders should be recruited, promoted, and recognized
- Frontline learning is essential
- Training must be synchronized and updated with organizational learning
- Knowledge integration must transform information into wisdom
- Measurements of performance and learning drive decision-making

Steps Toward the Learning Organization

This doctrine, and the leadership activities it describes, is not an initiative. It is a process of transformation. It starts with leaders changing how they think. Everyone has theories about organization, work, people, and their own leadership. This doctrine requires they rethink them.

This doctrine includes a model of systemic change. It describes the ideal future of the Corps as an organization. The essence of the change is revolutionary. The process of change, however, will be evolutionary. It will take years to fully realize what this doctrine, and the accompanying Leadership for Learning, are describing. Actions can be taken immediately, and they should be. And there will be immediate results in the improved organizational effectiveness of teams, programs, and the Corps as a whole. The full cultural transformation, however, will take time. It is the nature of the mind that fundamental learning and unlearning which cultural transformation requires, is gradual, except in extraordinary situations. Culture changes slowly.

The steps forward are not a simple linear cause and effect scenario. Some steps may occur simultaneously. Others will open up new opportunities, that are merely possibilities at the moment. Passionate advocates may retire or depart, new hires may bring new drive and ideas to the process. Changing culture is a multi-dimensional, self-generating process that can not be put into a neat plan as if it were a physics or chemistry equation.

- Senior leaders study the doctrine individually, learn the concepts.

- ❑ Senior leaders discuss the doctrine in a dialogue format, raise questions, test the ideas and concepts against their own theories and ideas. People need time to discuss the doctrine, to assimilate it, to transform it from information to knowledge and understanding.
- ❑ MSC leaders distribute the doctrine to their leaders, require them to study it, then create a leadership dialogue with them. They should address the question: what does the doctrine require us to do differently?
- ❑ HQs leaders need the same process: time to study it individually, then forums for leadership dialogue. What does the doctrine mean for how we run HQs?
- ❑ Leading advocates and HQs leaders will align Corps values, systems (KM, HR, leadership, communications, corporate measurements, etc.), all 7 Ss and strategic planning with the ideal future of the Corps described in the doctrines. HQs and MSCs will establish interactive planning to create the ideal future.
- ❑ Leaders and managers need to conduct their business with stakeholders, and in teams, as leaders for learning.
- ❑ Case studies will be done that will educate about the ways the Corps needs to change how it conducts itself and does business.
- ❑ The USACE University and Learning Network will be established and become active.
- ❑ The ever-expanding list of change and improvement initiatives will be integrated and reduced.
- ❑ Systematic organizational lessons will improve ways of doing business and creating initiatives. This will transform the focus of HQs and MSC meetings. Meetings will become leadership dialogues in which organizational learning shows how to be more effective for our stakeholders and to create our ideal future.

The learning organization will transform our work and our way of thinking, and it is intended to do so. The learning organization will systematically improve our performance and effectiveness as public servants. And this is its purpose.

We must be continually learning and innovating – this is our charge today, as the Army's and the Nation's engineer in war and peace, abroad and at home.

Essayons!