(U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy Gray taken Aug. 24, 2019) U.S. Army Sgt. Jordin Katzenberger, right, a squad leader with 1st Battalion, 178th Infantry Regiment conducts pre-combat checks with his Soldiers before a training mission at McGregor Range Complex, New Mexico, Aug. 24, 2019.

Reinforcing the Pillars

How Organizational Behavior Can Improve the Self-Development Domain

By Sgt. 1st Class Marc A. Lopez

4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division

The U.S. Army's Leader Development Model drives the Army Leader Development Program (ALDP). The model consists of three leadership domains: *operational*, *institutional*, and *self-development* (see Figure 1) (Department of the Army, 2013).

However, as the Army evolves and adapts to new challenges, the self-development domain is often under utilized by noncommissioned officers (NCOs). One way to remedy this is to expand NCOs' leadership tool kits by studying alternative and effective forms of leadership. This article examines the principles of leadership style, authenticity, job satisfaction, neuroleadership,

and vulnerability as ways to produce empathetic leaders capable of positively influencing their Soldiers.

Leadership Styles

It is important for NCOs to understand the impact an effective leadership style has on an organization. It improves work/life balance, job satisfaction, and individual employee (Soldier) performance (Akar & Ustuner, 2019). Two prime examples of different yet effective leadership styles are *transformational* and *transactional*. The transformational leadership style centers on the development of subordinates and their needs whereas the transaction-
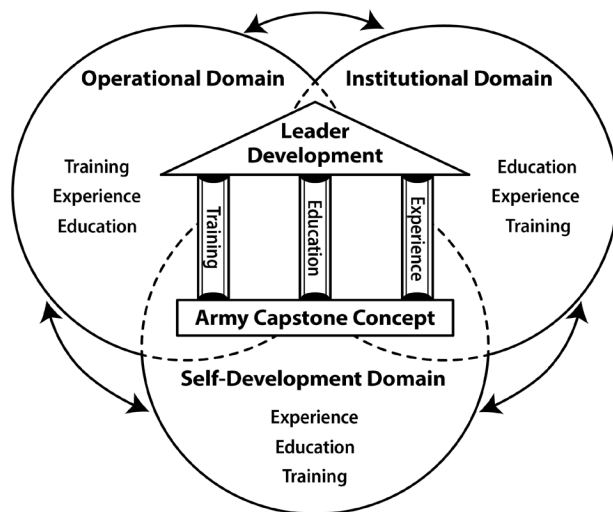
Figure 1 - Army's Leader Development Model; *DA PAM 350-8 Army Leader Development Program*

al style focuses on rewarding subordinates for meeting performance criteria (Ingram, 2019). Both leadership styles promote a positive work environment.

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership is the behavioral tendencies of a leader to encourage positive emotional capacities, ethical climates, and moral perspective. It is based on the four values of *self-awareness*, *balanced processing*, *internalized moral perspective*, and *relational transparency* (Towler, 2019).

- Self-awareness is how a leader internalizes concepts to better understand their environment.
- Balanced processing describes how a leader interprets information and is open to feedback from others before making a decision.
- Internalized moral perspective is the manner in which a leader operates, utilizing personal morals rather than being influenced by the values of others.
- Relational transparency is when a leader shares personal opinions and emotion to humanize themselves to their subordinates.

Authentic leadership positively influences personnel down to the lowest level and improves performance, work engagement, job satisfaction, and innovation (Lyubovnikova et al., 2017). Implementing the four values of authentic leadership will allow NCOs to demonstrate genuine care for Soldiers and build mutual trust within their respective units.

Job Satisfaction

If an organization develops a high percentage of employee dissatisfaction, it can spread to others and lower overall morale. According to Forbes' Human Resources Expert Panel, "It's commonly understood that very often,

people don't leave their jobs — they leave their managers" (How to Catch Employee Dissatisfaction, 2019, para. 1). There are several factors that contribute to job dissatisfaction: unpleasant working conditions, job stress, and lack of communication or recognition. Leaders can mitigate dissatisfaction by identifying whether their employees' motivations are intrinsic or extrinsic, and then reward their performance accordingly.

Intrinsic job satisfaction is when employees are motivated by the type and importance of their work. These employees enjoy challenges, responsibility, involvement in decision-making, a sense of importance, and recognition.

Extrinsic job satisfaction is when employees are motivated by work conditions such as pay, coworkers, and supervisors (Lee, 2017).

By applying both factors, an organization can increase overall employee job satisfaction and positively affect the physiological and psychological state of its employees (Bektas, 2017).

Neuroleadership

Modern research on human behavior shows the old way of "do what I say because I said so" is not effective leadership. Instead, high performing companies are using a *neuroleadership* approach, which is a combination of psychology and neuroscience. Neuroleadership is unique because it delivers solutions via science to work performance enhancement, diversity management, and the learning environment (Bavel et al., 2018). Companies are now relying on neuroleadership coaching tools to better understand the social nature of the workplace.

An example of two leadership themes often associated with neuroleadership:

1. Social behavior motivations reduce threat while exploiting reward.
2. The human mind places social needs on the same level as food and water (Rock, 2009).

By employing neuroleadership and studying subordinate social behavior, NCOs can leverage their capabilities to build cohesive teams and achieve unit goals.

Mindfulness

"Mindfulness, once considered a fringe movement in the Western world, is now being incorporated into medicine, science and the workplace" (Meister, 2015, para. 1).

Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally (similar to meditation). Its techniques reduce stress while improving productivity (Meister, 2015).

Examples of mindfulness techniques include breathing exercises, taking frequent small breaks, and developing a growth mindset to combat stressful situations. Mindful-

ness has been shown to increase creativity, memory, and decision-making skills (Shriar, 2016). Mindfulness can be used to develop positive mental health the same way physical activity is used to improve physical health.

Mindfulness is currently being used at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii by U.S. Army infantry as well as the British Royal Navy, New Zealand Defence Force, and the Netherlands (Richtel, 2019). Research shows mindfulness prepares Soldiers for high-stress situations experienced during combat deployments while also developing emotional intelligence and resiliency (Myers, 2015).

Vulnerability

Historically, leaders have operated under the belief that personal emotions need to be masked. According to the *Journal of Military Learning*, "There is a tendency in the military to

(U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Genesis Miranda taken April 18, 2020) U.S. Army Spc. Kima Bramlette, 642nd Aviation Support Battalion, meditates during a lunch break at the Javits New York Medical Station, in support of the Department of Defense COVID-19 response, April 18, 2020.

view the role of emotion in leadership as something that must be under control and out of sight" (Smith et al., 2018, para. 8). However, a leader that masks emotions can damage subordinates' trust leading to doubt in authenticity, friction between leader and employees, and a sense of isolation. Conversely, leaders who employ vulnerability and emotional intelligence are shown to establish deeper connections with employees, creating opportunities to build trust and respect (Smith et al., 2018).

Conclusion

As the Army culture continues to evolve, NCOs must expand their leadership tool kit to usher in a new generation and prepare the "Backbone of the Army" for the future fight. Equipping NCOs with these leadership principles will enable them and their squads to conquer any challenge. ■

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Sgt. 1st Class Marc A. Lopez is a senior intelligence sergeant in the U.S. Army. He is currently serving as a platoon sergeant in the Military Intelligence Company, Arctic Brigade Engineer Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division located in Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson, Alaska. He has previously served as an intelligence sergeant in XVIII Airborne Corps, 173rd Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), and the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne). He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from American Military University and is currently working on his master's degree in management.

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