

# SENIOR LEADERS PROJECT - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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## **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this paper is to create the framework for continued professional development (PD) for Canadian Forces (CF) General and Flag Officers (GOFO), and those Chief Warrant Officers/Chief Petty Officers First Class (CWO/SA) selected for senior appointments, beyond and after the formal courses delivered to senior leaders at Canadian Forces College (CFC), Toronto.

The changing nature of society, the security environment and technological innovation has necessitated an aggressive approach to continuous professional development (PD). Current and ongoing CF transformation initiatives reflect this complexity and volatility of future CF leader roles, thereby indirectly reflecting the increasing challenges in leadership, as well as the need to enhance leader capacities through effective learning.

Canadian Forces Leadership Institute (CFLI) has been examining senior leader learning requirements through a substantial research effort, including a thorough analysis of the suite of 2020 CF documents, other military sources, and the generic leadership literature, as well as interviews with GOFO and CWO/SA. These interviews underscored the need for more such development. Accordingly, CFLI identified a number of requisite leader capacities (i.e., *Expertise, Cognitive Capacities, Social Capacities, Change Capacities, and Professional Ideology*) that need to be developed continually throughout the entire career of CF leaders, including GOFO and CWO/SA.

Contrasted with this stated need for increased breadth, depth and time for post-CFC senior leader development is the absence of availability and time among senior leaders. Any learning initiative, therefore, needed to be convenient and succinct, with no time wasted and limited time “lost” at work. Solutions existed through selection only of the most beneficial subject matter and the most appropriate learning strategies.

The best potential learning situations for senior leaders are:

- a) Self-Development. Organizational support for self-development among senior leaders on a self-starting, self-regulating basis, with opportunities internal or external to the CF. Examples are Personal Development Plan guidance (i.e. academic mentors, subject matter experts); several-day or 1-week exchanges/placements in other government ministries; executive courses at Harvard, Queen’s, U of Toronto; short reading lists from military and external sources, including the Internet, US or other foreign War Colleges on specified subject areas; battlefield tours; multi-rater assessment feedback (360°); and
- b) Canadian Defence Academy-Sponsored. Short, sharp, exclusive (privileged platform), focused, convenient (on site where enough GOFO / CWO/SA work or meet/congregate), half-day, seminars focused on senior-leader-specified subjects,

and facilitated to encourage open and general discussion. Subjects would include: Stewarding the Profession, “Understanding Ottawa” and “Working the Town”, Visioning, Leading & Implementing Change, Being a Strategic Leader, Personalities in Cabinet, Integrating the Major Internal Systems, Advancing Member Well-Being & Commitment, or Creating the Effective Institutional Leader. Senior leaders would be surveyed on specific topic/speaker requirements.

## Introduction

CFLI has created a Leader Framework to identify the requisite leader elements and attributes needed by effective CF leaders. CFLI also generated a Leader Development Framework to elaborate upon the subject matter, and the appropriate developmental methodologies, for professional development across the levels of leadership and across the requisite leader elements and attributes. Using these frameworks, CFLI identified the subject foci and learning strategies appropriate for senior leader professional development.

## CF Effectiveness – A Model of Outcomes

The CF is hierarchic and bureaucratic in nature, with a profession of arms embedded in it. The integration of these two components, the organization and the profession, necessary to achieve institutional effectiveness, is accomplished through leading people, mainly at the tactical level, and leading the institution at the operational and strategic levels.

**Figure 1 - Canadian Forces Effectiveness**



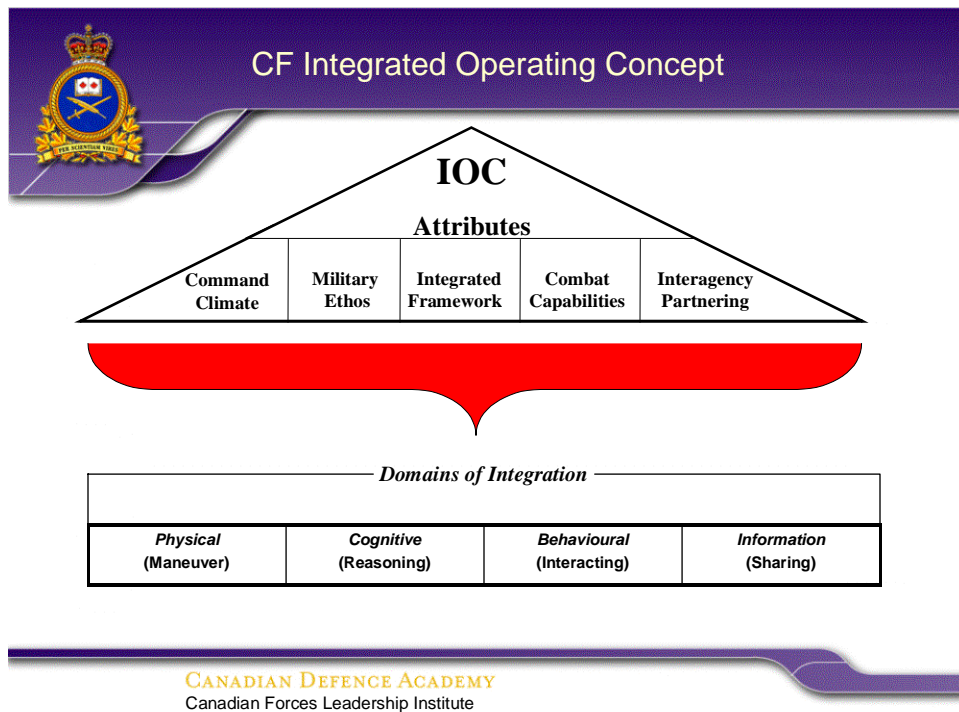
The four outcomes - mission success, internal integration, external adaptability, member well-being and commitment – (Figure 1) constitute organizational effectiveness, while military ethos infuses these outcomes with professional standards, conduct values and a

professional effectiveness. Accordingly, institutional / CF effectiveness = organizational effectiveness + professional effectiveness. A full explanation of CF / Institutional Effectiveness exists in *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*.

### The Current Concept for CF Effectiveness

The current, real-world, manifestation of CF Effectiveness is displayed at Figure 2. The Integrated Operating Concept (IOC, 2005) provides the overarching conceptual framework for designing the CF of the future. Five integrating Attributes of the IOC animate it. Essentially, this strategic framework envisages a command climate that emphasizes mission command, a culture predicated on a military ethos, an integrated military framework to plan and conduct operations, world-class combat capabilities, and interagency security partners. Key to its success is maximum agility and interoperability.

**Figure 2 – The CF Integrated Operating Concept**



These Attributes are operationalized in four Domains of Integration: *Physical* (where maneuver, broadly defined, takes place), *Cognitive* (where reasoning takes place and decisions are made), *Behavioural* (where social interactions take place, from the interpersonal to the inter-institutional) and *Information* (where intelligence is created, shared and used to shape change).

The IOC incorporates deployment of high-readiness and integrated national packages, which in turn will enhance Canada's credibility to lead multinational missions within wider coalitions. This complexity will demand a less hierarchic approach to problem solving and actions for leaders where networked forces, with access to common information, will be able to innovate and execute operations at the lowest levels. Finally, leader agility and adaptability are crucial in the operational responses to such profound uncertainty in IOC circumstances.

## A Framework of Requisite Leader Capacities

Senior leaders, in particular, must see the world in terms of its paradoxes and contradictions in order to balance the competing institutional demands represented at Figure 1 and the operational requirements of the IOC, Figure 2. Seeing organizational dynamics this way demands a systemic perspective of global activities and a dramatic flexibility in outlook. To respond to the Attributes and Domains of the IOC, senior leaders therefore require exceptional cognitive / thinking capacities and social / behavioural capacities, a capacity to shape change in a learning organization setting, with technical expertise and institutional knowledge, integrated with a professional ideology that supports a mastery of the profession of arms.

The five Leader Elements - *Expertise, Cognitive Capacities, Social Capacities, Change Capacities*, and *Professional Ideology* – shown at Figure 3 collectively constitute the CF Leader Framework. These Elements are derived from an especially thorough analysis of the suite of 2020 Documents, the Profession of Arms Manual, *Duty With Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*, and *Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations*, plus the substantial generic literature on leadership.

**Figure 3 – Interdependent Leader Elements & Leader Attributes**

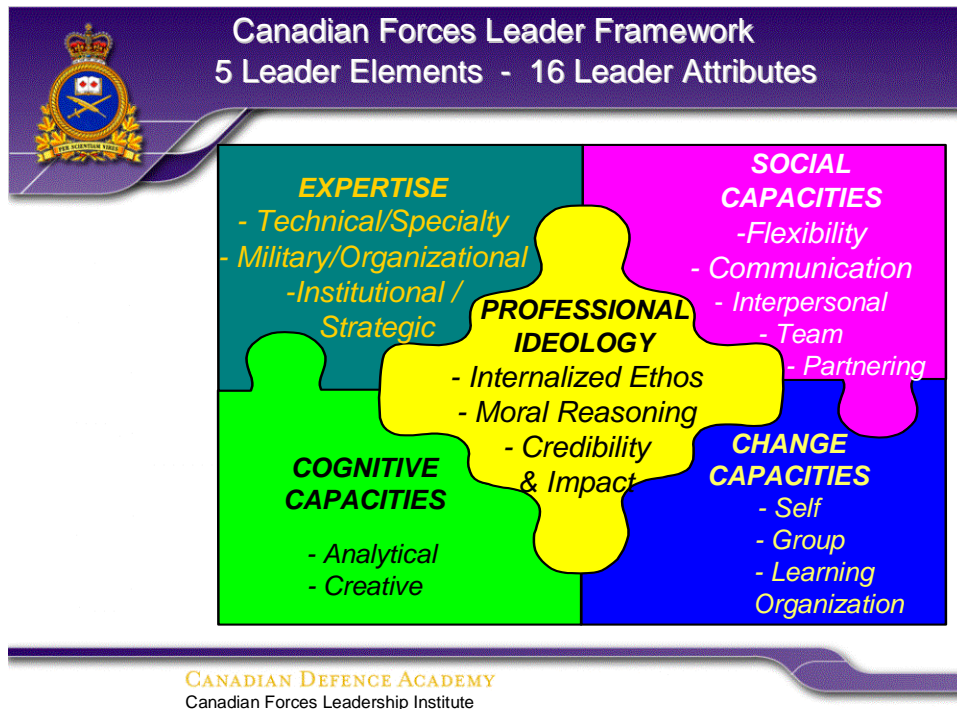


Figure 3 reflects the inter-relationship of leader elements through a schematic metaphor of joined puzzle pieces. It visually represents the interconnectedness and interdependency of leader elements that, only collectively, make effective leadership possible. A total of 16 attributes required of all CF leaders are nested in the five elements. Brief descriptions of the leader elements and the attributes are provided at Table A. A Leader Element consists of a cluster of Attributes (bold print). Each Attribute in turn would consist of a grouping of more position-, level-, and role-specific Competencies.

**Table A: The Leader Framework – 5 Elements, 16 Attributes**

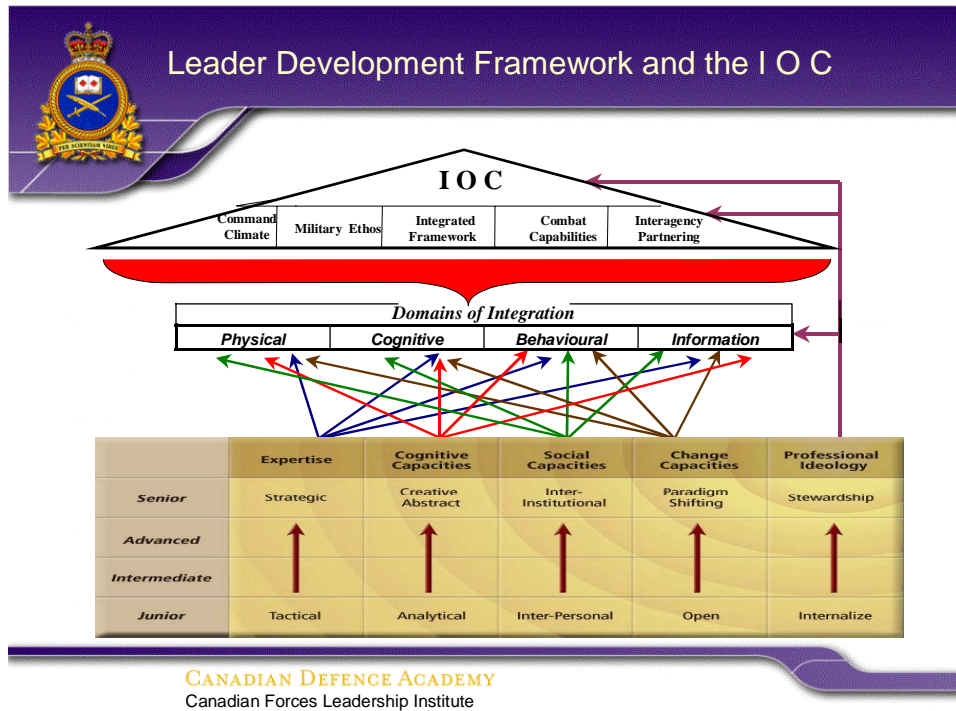
<p><b>A FRAMEWORK OF 5 LEADER ELEMENTS</b></p>	<p><b>16 ATTRIBUTES WITHIN 5 ELEMENTS ACROSS THE LEADER CONTINUUM</b></p> <p><i>The focus, scope, magnitude of positional responsibilities related to the leader attributes will vary with rank, leader level, position, etc., and usually increase with time in service, rank, seniority, professionalism, and credibility.</i></p>
<p><b>EXPERTISE</b></p>	<p>Expertise consists of <b>Specialist</b> (Military Occupation Classification) and <b>Technical</b> (clusters, e.g., combat arms, sea trades, aircrew) proficiency and functional acumen, an understanding and development of the <b>Military and Organizational</b> environment, practice and eventual stewardship of the profession of arms, and the capacities to transform the CF through applications at the <b>Institutional and Strategic</b> levels.</p>
<p><b>COGNITIVE CAPACITIES</b></p>	<p>Cognitive Capacities consist of a problem-solving, critical, <b>Analytical</b>, “left-brain” competence to think and rationalize with mental discipline in order to draw strong conclusions and make sound decisions; plus an innovative, strategic, conceptually complex <b>Creative</b>, “right brain” capacity to find novel means, “outside the box” ends, and previously undiscovered solutions to issues and problems.</p>
<p><b>SOCIAL CAPACITIES</b></p>	<p>Social Capacities consist of an authentic and meaningful behavioural <b>Flexibility</b> to be all things to all people, with sincerity, combined with <b>Communications</b> skills that clarify understanding, resolve conflicts and bridge differences. These capacities are blended with an <b>Interpersonal</b> proficiency of clarity and persuasiveness, <b>Team</b> relationships that create coordination, cohesion, trust and commitment, and <b>Partnering</b> capabilities for strategic relations building.</p>
<p><b>CHANGE CAPACITIES</b></p>	<p>Change Capacities involve <b>Self</b>-development, with risk and achievement, to ensure self-efficacy, <b>Group</b>-directed capacities to ensure unit improvement and group transformation, all with an understanding of the qualities of a <b>Learning Organization</b>, applications of a learning organization, and the capacity of strategic knowledge management.</p>
<p><b>PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGY</b></p>	<p>Professional Ideology consists of an <b>Internalized Ethos</b> of values and beliefs, and predictable reliability as a military leader understands, practices and lives the military ethos. This includes a capacity for <b>Moral Reasoning</b> through an ethical logic and moral philosophy in thinking and acting. A leader achieves <b>Credibility /Impact</b> by possessing character, loyalty, courage, self-sacrifice, fighting spirit, discipline, openness, extraversion, authenticity and approachability.</p>

To summarize, Figure 1, with adjacent text, provides the model for CF Effectiveness, while Figure 2 introduces the current operating concept, the IOC, designed to achieve CF effectiveness. Figure 3 schematically depicts the CF Leader Framework of five requisite capacities needed to generate CF effectiveness, while Table A provides descriptions.

## Integrating the IOC and the CF Leader Framework

Figure 4, below, demonstrates how the five leader elements, here integrated into a Leader Development framework, map directly and powerfully onto the IOC construct. The primary leader element, Professional Ideology, plays an integrative, normative role, not only in the Leader Framework, but also in operationalizing the IOC construct itself.

**Figure 4 – The Leader Elements and the IOC Domains of Integration**



The IOC must leverage interoperability and agility in all four domains of integration – maneuver, reasoning, interacting, and information sharing/shaping. The Leader Framework is designed to develop leaders who have mastered these capacities – expertise, cognitive capacities, social capacities, change capacities - at the tactical, operational and strategic levels, and exercised these capacities with a professional ideology reflective of the CF’s military ethos.

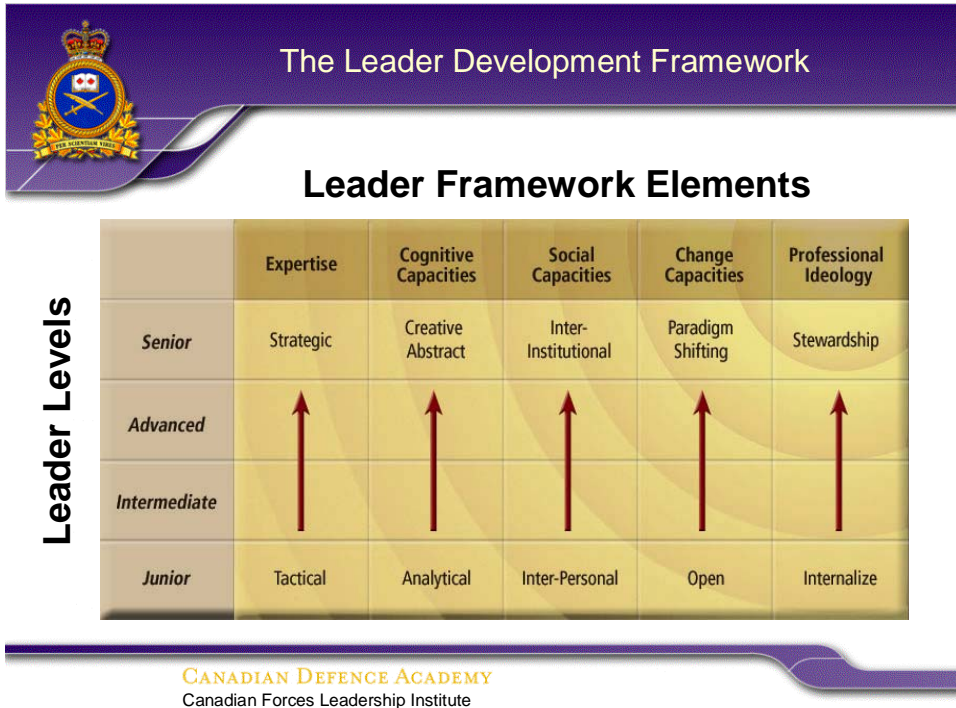
## A CF Leader Development Framework

The challenge, at this point, is to identify the particular element-based set of specific attributes and capabilities for each leader level – junior, intermediate, advanced and senior – in order, subsequently, to identify developmental methodologies and learning strategies.

First, when the five Leader Elements are arrayed against a progressive professional development process stretching from junior to senior leader levels, the Leader Development Framework, first introduced as part of Figure 4, is created. As per the expanded detail at Figure 5, below, the Leader Development Framework’s vertical arrows indicate macro-level objectives across all five elements. Professional ideology is seen to occupy a privileged place in the Framework. All four elements across the top left

side of the Framework can be expected to be generically present in most effective organizations. Only when these elements are shaped by military professional ideology (i.e., depicted in Figure 5 as concentric rings, like an old-fashioned sonar burst or a radar beam) do all five elements coalesce into a collective, interdependent, “Rubik’s Cube” set of effective leader elements capable of achieving complete institutional effectiveness.

**Figure 5 – The Leader Development Framework**



A fully mature Leader Development Framework will populate the cells or compartments, created by the five elements cross-tabulated with the four leader levels, to represent a seamless, balanced leader development program whose centre of gravity would be education. It will be balanced because the less concrete and more abstract capacities - cognitive, social, change - and professional ideology would be accorded greater emphasis than currently, where expertise / knowledge is inordinately emphasized, partly due to its congruence with pedagogical, group-taught, show-&-tell, lecture approaches to pure information dissemination. Development of complex and gradual cognitive, social and change capacities, as well as inculcation of a professional ideology, requires adult learning strategies, individualistic “andragogical methodologies”, for experienced and inquisitive, self-starting, intellectually oriented students.

The Elements, leader levels, and foci for professional development are presented at Appendix A in a format that emphasizes that the more expansive leader levels - advanced and senior - are founded on development at the less expansive leader levels – junior and intermediate. Senior leaders understand the significance of these leader levels as each level represents a necessary, foundational, layer for each successive and higher level of leadership. Hence, senior leaders would have mastered all compartments of the Leader Development Framework as they progressed through their careers.

## **Senior Leader Professional Development Methodologies**

With respect to professional development, the five Leader Elements traditionally have been addressed through the conventional PD pillars of experience, training, education, and self-development. There is no intention to change this PD construct, but Canadian Defence Academy continues to review the dependence on, and resulting effectiveness of, each pillar, and the learning methodologies within it, in this learning construct.

For example, for contemporary senior leaders engaged in institutional leadership, the past emphasis on the professional development of Expertise at technical and knowledge levels, and Cognitive Capacities like troubleshooting and basic problem solving, which are tackled through the pillars of training and experience, is insufficient in itself. Greater emphasis is required now and in the future to develop expertise related to institutional and strategic capabilities (e.g., understanding and influencing “how Ottawa works”), cognitive capacities (e.g., “metacognition”, mental mapping and knowledge creation), social capacities (e.g., leader flexibility and communication for partnering with international organizations, non-government organizations, and other government departments), change capacities (e.g., self-development toward self-efficacy through self-awareness, mastering learning organization information sharing when applied to combat communications), and professional and ethical socialization (e.g., proactively becoming exemplars, custodians, stewards of the profession). This Professional Ideology deserves special attention, with professional development in the stages of moral reasoning/identity development, to balancing autonomous thinking with conformity / team member, 'professional' motivation, ethics, and the values, beliefs and expectations articulated in *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*.

There is great potential, particularly at advanced and senior leader levels, for the development of these leader capacities beyond the training and experience pillar and, instead, more through additional education, self-development, and professional socialization. Importantly, these pillars need to be integrated with the most effective learning strategies (e.g., brief and focused seminars/symposia, self-awareness through multi-rater (360°) feedback, self-directed reading initiatives and internet sources, informal but focused coaching and mentoring, stretch assignments, brief focused liaisons and exchanges, internet sources.) These methods dovetail well with the limited time available to senior officers to spend on professional development.

The need exists to explore further the potential of adult learning strategies and methodologies / andragogy, over an all-students-receive-the-same-material-through-the-same-method, classroom lectures / pedagogy, for senior leader development.

## **Conclusion**

The Leader Development Framework, partnered with the most effective learning strategies, is a comprehensive model for expanding the depth and breadth of learning. The CF Leader Development Framework supports a shift from a pedagogical sufficiency (“pass”) model of professional development to a mastery (“excel”) model of performance and leadership, one that could lead to the identification of the best potential, professionally developed, performers for promotion, appointments, special projects, and



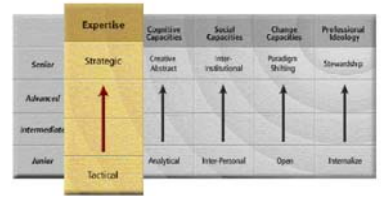
complex roles and responsibilities, rather than simply the performers basically suited for their next assignments.

Clearly, this Framework goes far beyond the granularity of individual level competencies, single attributes, and dollops of new knowledge. In fact, it represents a key design component for the CF's competitive strategy, its organizational learning, its commitment to evolve, and its professionalism.

The overriding theme for the CF is *Transformation*. This must be led by a focus on people – people professionally enhanced in the leader capacities essential to master the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With the senior leadership of the CF currently tackling this challenge of ongoing transformation, the Leader Framework and the Leader Development Framework are professional development linchpins in this overall effort.

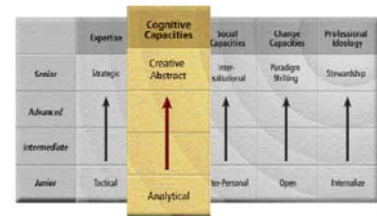
September 2005

# APPENDIX A: LEADER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



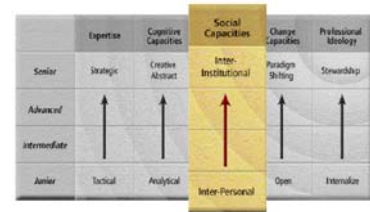
**Table B-1: Expertise**

<b>EXPERTISE</b> TACTICAL TO STRATEGIC	
<b>JUNIOR</b>	
<b>Technical &amp; Tactical Procedures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning standard Military Occupational Classification (MOC) and sea/land/air procedures.</li> <li>For initial leader roles, acquiring an overview of such standards and procedures, small group tactics.</li> </ul>
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>	
<b>Military Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How MOC contributes to larger formation capabilities.</li> <li>Understanding not only what to do but the context in which this occurs (data + context = information).</li> <li>Examples: Effects-Based Operations, context of incremental information on democratic systems, international law, civil control of the military.</li> </ul>
<b>ADVANCED</b>	
<b>Defence Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From information to knowledge, incorporating a broad understanding of CF and defence as a key component of security and government functions.</li> <li>Shift from information to knowledge requires additional perspective of understanding the rationale and purpose of intended actions; the generalized outcomes, which are to be achieved (information + purpose = knowledge).</li> </ul>
<b>SENIOR</b>	
<b>Security Expertise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope and content moves from knowledge to expertise with accompanying expansion to a strategic understanding of the domain of security.</li> <li>Shift from knowledge to expertise requires ability to apply the philosophy and principles that govern the generation and employment of military capacities (knowledge + philosophy = expertise) and strategic, institutional co-existence among peer ministries, foreign defence agencies.</li> <li>Expertise at this stage clearly is dependent upon the complementary development in Professional Ideology, a full understanding of the Profession of Arms.</li> </ul>



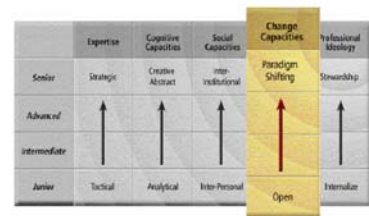
**Table B-2: Cognitive Capacities**

<b>COGNITIVE CAPACITIES</b> ANALYTIC TO CREATIVE/ABSTRACT	
<b>JUNIOR</b>	
<b>Theorems, Practical Rules</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasoning at this level is intended to identify the appropriate task procedures using simple theorems, practical rules or established scientific principles/laws.</li> <li>Interacting, interconnected with Expertise, the two elements represent a 'cookbook' approach to problem solving and task accomplishment with limited capacity for innovation.</li> </ul>
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>	
<b>Theories &amp; Concepts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Able to reason, moving from the concrete to the abstract, from procedures and rules to principles.</li> </ul>
<b>ADVANCED</b>	
<b>Mental Models</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inductive and deductive reasoning skills to create, adapt and generalize knowledge both from one's own previous learning and experiences as well as from other domains such as professional literatures.</li> <li>Conducts abstract reasoning and draws on appropriate professional orientation to be able to understand desired outcomes.</li> <li>Aware of assumptions embedded in the 'military' way of framing issues, testing working hypotheses, operating within the academic discipline of 'military thinking'.</li> </ul>
<b>SENIOR</b>	
<b>Knowledge Creation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Able to generate, organize and manage the theory-based body of knowledge applied across the profession.</li> <li>This goes beyond the analytic, creative and judgment capacities needed to adapt the profession to the external environment, and expands to include the obligation to update and extend the profession's unique body of knowledge so as to ensure that the profession is discharging all of its responsibilities to society in the most effective manner.</li> <li>Cognitive capacities at this stage have a strong parallel to those at advanced academic post-graduate levels - masters the particular academic discipline but also generates new knowledge.</li> </ul>



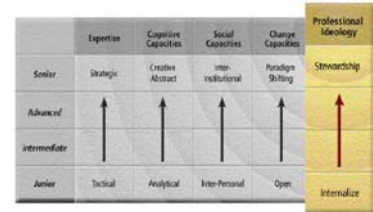
**Table B-3: Social Capacities**

<b>SOCIAL CAPACITIES</b> INTERPERSONAL TO INTER-INSTITUTIONAL	
<b>JUNIOR</b>	
<b>Team-Oriented Followship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aware of group norms, minimum leader style flexibility.</li> <li>Moderate communication capabilities applied through baseline interpersonal skills reflecting an awareness of basic influence factors, group diversity issues and non-prejudicial self-behaviour.</li> </ul>
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>	
<b>Individual Persuasion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social skills for Leading People, particularly the abilities to effectively influence others 'one-on-one' or small-group, using some range of influence behaviours appropriate to the characteristics of the situation, the followers and the individual leader.</li> </ul>
<b>ADVANCED</b>	
<b>Group Cohesiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At this level of larger or multiple units/teams/groups, is involved in aspects of Leading the Institution, applies broad influence processes to ensure internal cohesion, fostering commitment and supporting subordinate leaders while also engaging in effective boundary spanning activities especially in joint or multi-national operations.</li> </ul>
<b>SENIOR</b>	
<b>Strategic- Relations Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relates to the concept of Leading the Institution, relies on secondary and tertiary influence processes for the senior leader to communicate institutional priorities and strategic intent across organizational systems; builds open teams such that immediate subordinates can contribute novel ideas and can critique taken-for-granted assumptions.</li> <li>Externally focused capacities pertain to building and maintaining strategic relations with others engaged in the broad security arena and related national / government initiatives.</li> </ul>



**Table B-4: Change Capacities**

<b>CHANGE CAPACITIES</b> OPENNESS TO PARADIGM SHIFTING	
<b>JUNIOR</b>	
<b>External Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal expectation in change capacities would be a generalized orientation and awareness of changes occurring external to the CF, and the CF transformational efforts, as means of signaling the importance of practicing openness to externally-driven change.</li> </ul>
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>	
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacities at this stage are focused on the individual's abilities to monitor self-efficacy, engage in self-reflection, make early commitments to self-development, and adapt one's behaviours to the social environment/context in which one is functioning.</li> </ul>
<b>ADVANCED</b>	
<b>Group Transformation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Able to adapt and align groups or sub-systems to the broadest requirements of the institution while ensuring the tactical proficiency and effective integration of individuals and small teams/sections within the larger formation.</li> </ul>
<b>SENIOR</b>	
<b>Multi-Institutional Partnering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus is external, on changing others' understanding of the military as a strategic political capacity, and internally on implementing internal change initiatives.</li> <li>In this latter regard, there is an emphasis on the initial stages of anticipating change, effectively contributing to the change, and monitoring and adjusting initiatives over the change period.</li> <li>Senior leader initiatives exist to transform and improve a team or multiple units, or to attempt learning-organization applications at organizational and institutional levels.</li> </ul>



**Table B-5: Professional Ideology**

<b>PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGY</b> INTERNALIZING TO STEWARDSHIP	
<b>JUNIOR</b>	
<b>Normative Compliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands the concepts and practices of the profession of arms at an introductory level. At a minimum practices military group norms, adheres to discipline demands.</li> <li>As an <i>ab initio</i> professional (apprentice), looks externally (to supervisors or codes of conduct) for guidance as to the appropriate behaviours in specific circumstances. Internalizes values minimally.</li> </ul>
<b>INTERMEDIATE</b>	
<b>Self-Regulation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducts basic self-regulation, avoiding obvious ethical violations and not displaying behaviours which erode the reputation, image or credibility of the profession; essentially a journeyman stage of professionalization.</li> <li>Abides by the principles of the Defence Ethics Program.</li> <li>Is capable of serving as an example at this level.</li> </ul>
<b>ADVANCED</b>	
<b>Cultural Alignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guides framing of problems, interactions with others, to apply leader influence to shape or align the extant culture to be consistent with the ethos.</li> <li>Advanced leader level contains some of the most complex challenges in achieving competing Institutional Effectiveness objectives – mission success versus member well-being; internal synchrony and stability versus external adaptability and experimentation.</li> </ul>
<b>SENIOR</b>	
<b>Stewardship of the Profession</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core capacities are related to managing collective professional identity – the key issues of articulating what the profession is, what it stands for and what it believes in.</li> <li>Able to engage in very abstract reasoning, exemplified at the highest stages of moral/identity development, in particular, the capacity for independent judgment of the profession's core philosophy, ideology and principles.</li> <li>This capacity is integrated with acquisition of related capabilities in Cognitive Capacities and Change Capacities.</li> </ul>