

THE **STINGER**

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Commander's Comments



Editorial by Col. Michael DiDio

You've probably heard the latest U.S. Air Force buzz phrase accepting risk over the last few years. For those of you with kids, I'm not talking about the board game for global domination, but rather the decision-making process that balances increased mission effectiveness against the potential for a specified negative outcome. Depending on the scenario in question, that negative outcome could be damage to equipment, infrastructure, safety, morale, or unfavorable higher-level attention such as inspections, audits, etc. The obvious benefit to making a riskier decision in a given scenario is that a more positive outcome can be achieved - else why would you do it. That positive outcome could be simply getting the mission accomplished when otherwise impossible. It could be increased efficiencies in processes, or an increase in morale.

A shifting Air Force culture with regard to risk: A tenant of U.S. military power is that we employ with centralized command, responsible for strategic guidance, vision, synchronization and decentralized execution. The effectiveness of this model is abundantly obvious. For instance, in combat, the tactical level requires real-time decisions to be made by lower echelon commanders. There simply isn't time to relay information up to higher levels since a decision needs to be made in the dynamic environment now. Delaying or not making a decision could have irreversible effects on future outcomes. Thus, lower level commanders are given basic guidance from their superiors and then given the latitude to make decisions within the framework of that guidance. While that sounds great in a textbook, my predominant experience in the Air Force is

a culture of risk adverse decision making. Lower levels of supervision or command would defer any decision that had any risk to their superiors up the chain of command. Most likely, that layer of command would again up-channel the decision and so on. This process not only was enormously inefficient in time and resources, but it also created a culture of micro-management or micro-informing. Many times, the riskier decision wouldn't even be considered or upchanneled because "what's the point." The end state was a culture that was inflexible, stagnate and lacked the creativity to continually improve. This was compounded by the old Air Force inspection system where teams would descend onto a base, imposing tyrannical judgements that were sometimes based on Air Force Instructions and sometimes opinion based.

Fortunately, we are entering a new cultural age for the Air Force; one that is focused on returning us to historical core beliefs. Whether this change was driven by the constrained financial resources of congressional sequestration or by a tiring force that has been at war for the last two decades, it is a welcome change. We see signs from the Chief of Staff of the Air Force where his first priority is to revitalize squadrons as the core fighting unit. This revitalization comes with increased responsibility at the squadron-level and increased empowerment for squadron commanders to make the decisions for their unit. An example of this is the Secretary of the Air Force and CSAF memo on reducing additional duties. A core tenant of this memo is that Squadron Commanders are empowered to discontinue non-critical duties beyond their ability to re-

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Swimming with Sharks



Story by Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes

Tech. Sgt. Tom Burden, a weapons mechanic assigned to the Ohio Air National Guard's 180th Fighter Wing, swapped his military uniform for a dark blue jumpsuit emblazoned with the Grypmat logo across the shoulders as he mingled with more than a hundred friends, relatives, entrepreneurs and investors at Rev1 Ventures in Columbus, Ohio. They stood together in small groups, discussing his invention while waiting for the newest episode of Shark Tank to air. Some speculated on the upcoming show. Would Burden get a deal? If he did get a deal, would it be what he wanted? Which shark would show an interest in his business? Would he even accept a deal if one was offered? Others speculated on the potential of his promising future; private jets, mansions, yachts and other various trappings of success. Some talked about their own inventions and Burden's example of entrepreneurial spirit, dogged determination, and dauntless courage. Others spoke hopefully about investment opportunities with Burden's self-built company.

"The show's about to start," an event organizer called out, beckoning the guests into a large room filled with chairs and a large projection screen where commercials played, interspersed with previews of the upcoming show. Burden stood near the front as representatives from Rev1 Ventures, Bunker Labs, and Congressman Steve Stivers' office spoke about the importance of entrepreneurship for the economy and shared personal stories of working with Burden

over the years. After the speakers finished, Burden took questions from the crowd as the minutes ticked down. As Burden answered a question about what kept him going through all the hard times, the Shark Tank theme music played and the crowd erupted into applause, cheers and whistles.

As the opening credits faded, the show's announcer began introducing the Grypmat while the audience watched as Burden walked on stage and stood next to the cockpit of an airplane, ready to make his pitch to billionaire investors. "First into the tank is a product created to solve a problem the entrepreneur had as a fighter-jet mechanic." This was the moment Burden had been preparing for since 2012, when he began watching Shark Tank with his neighbor, Mollie Giha, every Sunday night.

"When I first moved to Toledo, my first friend was Mollie," Burden said. "She's 86 years old, and we would eat supper at her house and watch Shark Tank together. One day when we were watching Shark Tank, I looked at her and said, 'I'm going to get on this show, and you're going to come with me.'" He made her promise him that she would go to the studio if he ever made it onto the show.

"I had a son who died," Mollie said, tears welling in her eyes as she recalled the memories. "He was very talented and Tom reminds me of him. I just took to Tom right away. He's just so wonderful, and I love him so much."

After years of hard work, determination and creative prob-



Photo provided

lem-solving, Burden received a phone call from a scout for Shark Tank. He had just finished raising more than \$100,000 through a successful Kickstarter campaign for the Grypmat, and they had seen the video he'd produced to help raise awareness about his product. They wanted him to apply right away.

"There was a ton of paperwork," Burden said. "The only time I've ever done anywhere near as much paperwork was when I enlisted."

He submitted his application to compete on the show in February, and continued working on the day-to-day challenges of building his business, capturing market share, and selling to retailers. Eventually, he got an email informing him that the field of competitors had been narrowed down to 10 thousand. A few more weeks passed and he got a phone call from one of the show's producers, Kate, telling Burden he was in the top 1,000 potential competitors.

"I didn't believe it was going to happen," Burden said. "When I applied, I gave it everything I had, but I didn't want to get my hopes up."

Burden spoke with Kate every week as the selection process continued and more candidates were eliminated. When he found out he was selected to be in the exclusive group of 150 candidates for a slot on Shark Tank, his first thought was of Mollie. He had made a promise and planned to keep it, but there were still several weeks to go before filming.

Burden spent those weeks practicing what he would say when he got his chance to make a pitch to the Shark Tank investors. One week prior to filming, he travelled to Florida, where he spent the week rehearsing his presentation with Ray Ferreira, a former ESPN producer and one of Burden's business partners.

"We were at a hotel that was being renovated, and there were a lot of empty shipping containers, so we set up some shipping containers like the set and we practiced his pitch and his energy," Ferreira said. "We practiced it over and over and over, until he had it just right."

"Ray helped fine tune my pitch to the sharks," Burden said. "Ray used to work with fishermen and he told me, 'If I can make them exciting on TV, you're going to be just fine.'"

"Tom is just the hardest working guy you'll ever meet," Ferreira said. "I had him doing so many rehearsals he was losing his voice."

Ferreira helped him be more energetic and animated in his presentation. That energy would be critical if he was going to be successful on the show.

"If you're not excited about your product, then they're not going to be excited about your product, and you have to show that to them," Burden said.

During that week, Kate called to let Burden know that there was going to be a guest shark. That guest was none other than Richard Branson, the founder of the Virgin Group, which controls more than 400 companies, including Virgin Atlantic, an international airline.

"When that happened, everything changed," Burden stated.

Burden's original pitch had been about the versatility of his product. Although he had developed his product while working as a jet mechanic at the 180th Fighter Wing, it could be used for more than just aircraft maintenance. The news about Branson

"When that happened, everything changed."



Photo provided

inspired a shift in tactics. His new pitch would focus on the product's origin in aviation and about how it has thrived in that field.

The time for him to film was approaching fast when disappointment struck; Mollie was in poor health and she wouldn't be able to make it out to the studio in California, where Burden was getting ready for his practice pitch in front of one of the show's directors. If the practice pitch wasn't good enough, it could prevent him from pitching to the investors. Everything

he had done up to this point hinged on this moment, and the pressure to perform well was intense.

Burden froze during his practice pitch and forgot his lines.

"It was so bad that Kate had to shout out the next line of my presentation," Burden said.

Dejected, he asked the director for another chance to make his pitch. Without a second thought, the director refused to give him another chance. He asked Kate if she thought his poor performance meant he wouldn't get a chance to pitch to the sharks, but as he talked to her about his chances, people who had been watching started to gather around the jet he'd brought, posing for photos with it. She

told him not to worry.

"We wanted a very impressive prop," Ferreira said. "It cost us some money, but sure enough, during the rehearsal, the whole crew was mugging around this jet. They were hanging off it and taking pictures. That's worth a second look because it's not something people see every day."

Two days later, Burden got his chance. He filmed his pitch and was forbidden from revealing the results until after the show aired on Sunday, Nov. 12.

"The tough part was keeping it secret," Burden said. "I would have to keep my laptop shut, so people wouldn't see emails from

Shark Tank. If anyone asked, I would tell them I had applied, but the selection process takes a really long time.”

When the opening credits ended and Burden’s segment was announced, everyone at Rev 1 Ventures went silent as they sat on the edge of their seats, studying Burden’s face for any hints about the show to come, including Mollie.

“Hello sharks,” he began, “my name is Tom Burden and I’m from the small, farm town of Celina, Ohio, and I’m seeking \$200,000 in exchange for 10 percent of my company.”

Burden introduced the problem mechanics face as they try to keep their tools nearby while working on the slick, curved surface of aircraft, then introduced the Grypmat, a flexible non-slip tool tray. He explained the benefits of his product and how it could solve problems in the areas of expertise for each investor. Branson spoke up immediately about how much the engineering teams at Virgin Atlantic would love a product like the Grypmat.

“If you know anyone who owns an airline, let me know,” Burden said to Branson with a sly smile. Roars of laughter erupted from everyone watching at the Rev 1.

“We would definitely buy this,” Branson replied. “The only question is whether or not you can make any money as a business.”

Without a moment’s hesitation at the challenge, Burden launched into action, recounting his business’ success in sales. His pitch was greeted by looks of surprise and amazement. Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks franchise, even began clapping after Burden explained how he was reinvesting his profits back into his product and business. Burden laid out his goals for the business and explained future possibilities for expansion. He explained his plans for the \$200,000 he asked for at the start of his pitch and got his first offer from an investor moments later. Daymond John, the founder of FUBU, offered him \$200,000 for a 25 percent stake in Grypmat, 15% more than Burden had offered in exchange for the investment.

Burden hesitated.

“Isn’t that a great offer?” John asked.

“I think I asked for 10, but we’ll see,” Burden replied. The crowd in Columbus cheered at the brazen audacity of Burden’s reply. He had refused his only offer, so far, and might not get another one.

The investors bantered back and forth as they asked Burden more questions about his invention. None of the other investors offered a deal, but Burden wasn’t backing down and wouldn’t accept the offer from John. John revised his offer: \$200,000 for a 20% stake.

Burden shifted uneasily, wringing his hands as he said, “We’re

getting closer.” More cheers erupted from the watch party as Burden refused to budge from his original offer. Lori Greiner, one of the most prolific inventors of retail products, reacted with shock. Burden had just refused his second offer from the only investor showing an interest in his business.

“My mission here today is to get as many sharks to take a bite out of Grypmat as possible,” Burden said.

That spurred interest from the other investors, who told Burden he’s need to revise his offer. He needed to offer a bigger stake in his company if he wanted to get multiple investors.

“What would you offer for two or three sharks?” asked Robert Herjavec, a millionaire entrepreneur who has built and sold several IT companies.

With another sly smile, Burden replied, “That depends on the sharks.”

More cheers and laughter erupted from the crowd watch-

ing from Columbus, but up on the screen, the cameras focused in on the investors looking at one another with skepticism before cutting to a commercial break. The crowd at Rev 1 groaned at the suspense and gossiped among themselves about the offer from John and speculated on what would happen next.

The commercials ended and the show returned. Herjavec asked Burden what sharks he wanted, and Burden suggested Branson. On the screen a long silence played out, mirrored by the silence in Columbus. This was a make or break moment, and the mood was tense. The confident, self-assured smile Burden held up to this point vanished as Branson sat silent.

“I think you’re fantastic,” Branson told Burden, in a tone reminiscent of someone preparing to reject a romantic suitor. “I think you should concentrate on what you’re good at, which is developing products.”

Herjavec jumped in with an offer: \$400,000 for a 40 percent stake split between him and Branson. Burden considered the offer, saying nothing. Another long silence followed, before Branson offered \$200,000 for 15 percent, an offer much closer to what Burden had wanted. Herjavec made

the same offer and then John made the same offer. Burden now had three investors offering the exact same deal. As Burden considered his options, John tried to apply pressure to him, criticizing the amount of time Burden was taking to consider his options.

Cuban and Greiner whispered among themselves, before Cuban made another offer: \$200,000 for a 20 percent stake, split between them, but they would take over all aspects of the business so Burden could focus on innovation. The investors began discussing the advantages each of them could bring to the Grypmat team. The momentum was starting to build in Burden’s favor.

Burden seized his opportunity, interrupting the investors. “Would you do 30 percent at \$360,000?” he asked, pointing to Branson, Cuban and Greiner.

Greiner considered the offer and Burden repeated it, causing the investors to look back and forth at one another. Branson accepted the offer first, followed by Greiner, and finally Cuban. The three investors stood up and hugged Burden. The entire crowd at Rev 1 stood up and applauded Burden, whistling and cheering. Mollie wiped tears from her eyes.

Now that the segment was over, people began talking excitedly again about the hard bargain Burden had worked out with the investors.

“I watch a lot of Shark Tank,” said Janie Asberry, a friend of Tom’s from 2011 when they attended military technical training together. “I always feel like it’s the sharks who manipulate the inventors, but in this case I feel like he had full control of the situation. He out-sharked the sharks.”

“Tom was on the offensive,” Ferreir said. “He was savvy enough to understand the situation and hold out for the best deal.”

Even though Burden had struck a deal with the investors while filming, it wasn’t official until much later.

“It’s honestly pretty stressful,” Burden said. “What a lot of people don’t know is that once you make a deal on the show, that just starts the due diligence phase. There’s still a lot left to go through. They have to verify that everything you said on-stage is true, because people go on-stage and lie all the time. Only about 10 percent of the deals that happen on the show actually go through. When you think about the numbers, it’s pretty crazy. More than 60,000 people apply and only 150 will film. If even half of those get a deal, only a tenth of them will actually happen.”

Now that Burden has three, billionaire investors, he is working with their teams to build his business, increase manufacturing output, capture more market share by getting the Grypmat into big-box stores and expand the line of products into more niche markets.

“The momentum this gives to the company will change everything,” Ferreira said.

Since the show aired, Burden spoke on entrepreneurship during the National Guard Association of the United States’ 21st Annual Industry Day in Washington D.C. on Dec. 12, presenting alongside generals and national directors. But one weekend a month, he can be found serving his country part-time as a Citizen-Airman. 🇺🇸

“He outsharked the sharks.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes

Living the Dream

Story by Airman Hope Geiger

During the fall semester of her sophomore year in 2016, just back from basic military training, she officially became a member of the U.S. Air Force. Surrounded by color and culture and proud to be a black woman in the military.

She was ready for the school year, and with a schedule full of classes.

Always doing her best work, she started noticing that her grades were lower than her peers around her. On group projects she would receive a lower score than her counter-parts even though the answers were the same. She realized she was the only black student in the class.

“I was always the only black person in the room,” said Airman 1st Class AnnAleada Whitehead. “I took the initiative to talk to the dean of the college, set-up a hearing to fight for academic honesty and to fight for my voice to be heard in a classroom where race seemed to be louder than education. I won the case and got all of my points back.”

Whitehead, a personnelist, or human resource specialist, assigned to the Ohio Air National Guard’s 180th Fighter Wing, has faced prejudice and discrimination throughout her life due to the color of skin, but finally feels at home since she joined the military.

“The term a lot of people use for the color of my skin is ‘light skin,’” said Whitehead. “Some people don’t even qualify me as a black person. They assume just because my mom is white that there is no way that I can be black and there’s no way that black history month applies to me.”

She always struggled growing up with people telling her who she is and identifying her versus her identifying herself.

“That has opened a lot of doors for me because I’ve seen both sides of culture” said Whitehead.

Her parents, who both served in the Ohio Air National Guard, got married at a time when interracial relationships were not as accepted and her mom was kicked out of the house for being with her dad, because he was African American. “I’m thankful for that because that has always



Photo by Airman Hope Geiger

opened up my eyes into my relationships with friends, family members and peers, that there is more to offer than the amount of melanin in your skin,” Whitehead said.

Growing up she has always felt isolated. “I remember in elementary school I was the only black student in my class of 60,” said Whitehead. “And in sports, I was the only black person besides my sisters.”

“In college, I am a small statistic of black people who are studying pre-medicine sciences and want to go to medical school,” Whitehead said. “A lot of people don’t believe me when I tell them I want to be a medical provider because they just don’t expect that of me.”

She tutors chemistry and biology at school and out of the 116 tutors she is the only African American, and at the pharmacy where she works, she is the only black employee in the entire store.

“I’ve always been the only black person in the room and I’ve always felt very segregated and at times discriminated against,” said Whitehead.

Things started to change when she joined the Ohio Air National Guard and left for basic military training in the May of 2016.

“When I got to basic training and looked around, I wasn’t the only black person in the room,” said Whitehead. “My military training instructor was black, my sisters in

my flight were black and even my roommate in technical school was black.”

Less than one percent of the U.S. population serve in the U.S. Armed Forces, and only about 106,000 of those serve in the Air National Guard. Being a part of something so small had such a big impact on her life. The military was the place she could finally

“With black history month, a lot of times we celebrate how far civil rights have come, but I didn’t really feel the expansion of civil rights until I joined the military.”

call home.

Out of all the places she has been and cities she has traveled to, it is in the military that she felt like she was one with everyone else.

“With black history month, a lot of times we celebrate how far civil rights have come, but I didn’t really feel the expansion of civil rights until I joined the military,” said Whitehead.

Finally, she did not have a certain expectation or standard because of the color of her skin and no one treated her differently or expected less out of her, explained Whitehead.

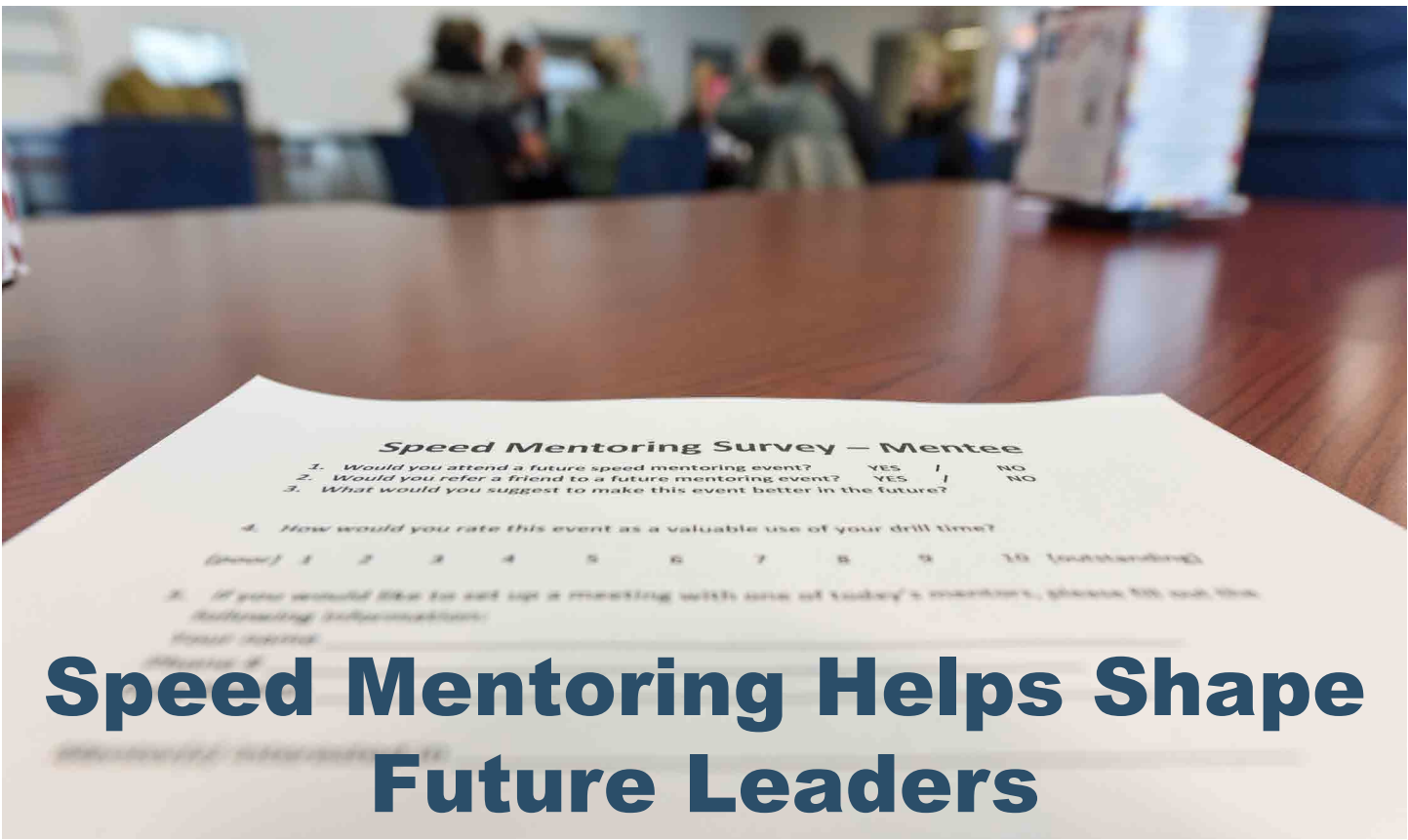
“That was a game-changer,” said Whitehead of joining the ANG. “It changed my

confidence and the way I look at black history, because I started to realize the impact that it has. That black history and civil rights didn’t show up in my civilian life, but in my military life it was very present and I’m thankful for the opportunities the military has given me. I don’t think I would be where I am today or have the opportunities that I

have had without feeling the confidence of being black in the military and feeling appreciated despite the color of my skin.”

“First, I’m proud of AnnAleada because she is part of the one percent that serves this great nation of ours,” said Col. Lindsey Whitehead, AnnAleada’s father and retired 180FW vice commander. “Secondly, and more

importantly, I am most proud of her because of the young woman she has become since joining the Air National Guard and what she represents as an African American female. A person of diversity, is particularly important in our business in the military and I’m just so happy, honored and blessed to have AnnAleada represent the ideals of what we have so generally fought for throughout our lives. The month of black history is most important because she is a shining example of what could be and what has become. I think AnnAleada is the epitome of what it is to be a proud Airman in the Air National Guard and as an African American.” 🦋



Story & photo by Staff Sgt. John Wilkes

More than 40 Airmen at the 180th Fighter Wing in Swanton, Ohio, participated in the first-ever speed mentoring event February 10, 2018, giving young Airmen the opportunity to learn from senior leaders from across the wing.

“We are holding this event to help Airmen build relationships,” said Senior Master Sgt. Nathan Howard, human resource advisor assigned to the 180FW. “Programs like this are important because participants are able to meet people from different sections in different careers around the base.”

The U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard mentorship program focuses on connecting an Airman with greater experience and wisdom with another Airman to help guide and develop them both personally and professionally. This relationship contributes to mission success and motivates Airmen to achieve their goals.

The event began with introductions from the seven mentors who participated. Afterwards, mentors and mentees were able to chat with each other before the event began to help participants relax and develop questions.

“This event really opened my eyes to the options that are available to Airmen,” said Airman 1st Class Liyaquat Qurbanali, a food services technician at the 180FW. “Talking with the mentors really helped me learn about other careers, network with others and learn from people with experience.”

Every mentee was given six minutes with each of the seven mentors to ask whatever questions they had before their time ran out. Some of the topics discussed included promotions, commissioning

opportunities, job changes, assignments and education.

Though the pairs were allowed only six minutes during the event, mentees had the option to get the contact information from mentors they connected with so they could follow up in the future.

“I loved this event,” said Qurbanali. “I learned so much. I look forward to picking a mentor and having someone to ask for career advice and to help develop my skills.”

The mentors who participated in the event represented various career fields, from medical to security forces at all stages of military career development. The diversity made for a more dynamic and impactful mentoring session for the younger Airmen as the mentoring didn’t focus exclusively on one rank, job or lifestyle.

“I volunteered to be a mentor because there are a lot of things I know now that I wish I would have known when I enlisted,” said Staff Sgt. Xavier Graciani, security forces technician at the 180FW.

“Being able to share this knowledge with younger Airmen allows them to find more opportunity and advancement earlier in their career.”

Mentoring promotes a climate of inclusion that can help foster and develop the diverse strengths, perspectives and capabilities of all Airmen. Air Force and Air National

Guard capabilities and competencies are enhanced by diversity among its personnel who directly impact the warfight.

Speed mentoring helps prepare the next generation of Airmen to meet the challenges of tomorrow in new and innovative ways. Mentoring is just one way the 180FW continues to operate at its full potential and provide for America; protection of the homeland, effective combat power and National Guard civil authorities. 🦋

“This event really opened my eyes to the options that are available to Airmen.”

Photos provided





Airmen Excel During Extreme Weather Conditions

Photo by Airman Hope Geiger

Story by Staff Sgt. John Wilkes

Temperatures throughout the winter season have reached record lows across the country. In Northwest Ohio, the wind chill has consistently been in

the -10 to -20 degree range, even dipping close to -30 degrees at times.

Airmen at the 180th Fighter Wing in Swanton, Ohio have continued to operate and fly despite this bitterly cold winter weather.

“It has been very cold out these past couple weeks,” said Senior Airman Jacob Beckman, an F-16 Fighting Falcon mechanic assigned to the 180FW. “However, we have a job to do.”

Extreme weather has various impacts on

daily operations. The core job functions of maintenance personnel do not change much in extreme weather situations.

“We have been preparing the aircraft and getting them ready for their flight overseas

in support of the 180th Fighter Wings deployment to Estonia,” said Beckman. “With the exception of de-icing the aircraft there are not many big changes to the processes in what we do.”

To de-ice the jet, a deicing fluid is applied to the affected areas until the aircraft is free of frost. This process can take up to 30 minutes per jet depending on the temperature and conditions. Various other systems in the aircraft are also more likely to fail during extreme cold weather.

“The cold weather makes everything more difficult,” Beckman said. “We have to bundle up. Personal protective equipment is very important. Things like gloves, hats, under shirts, coats and overalls are a tremendous help.”

There are many things Airmen can do to keep warm but with each layer added there are additional safety concerns.

“Operations tend to continue at a slower pace,” said Senior Master Sgt. David Chandler, flight chief at the 180FW. “Bulkier equipment and other items that keep Airmen warm also hinder their movements and may present safety hazards.”

While wearing this equipment, Airmen are bulkier and must be careful while working to avoid injury.

“There are a lot of hazards and moving pieces around the aircraft that we have to be mindful of,” Beckman said. “Airmen are more prone to getting injured if not they are not careful.”

Dexterity is also reduced. When your fingers are extremely cold fine motor skills are impaired.

To combat this, the Air Force mandates that a work-rest cycle is put in place. There are different work-rest cycles for varying weather conditions which determine how long Airmen are allowed to work outside before coming in to warm up.

When the mission requires Airmen to be outside in these conditions for prolonged periods there are large industrial heaters that can be used to negate the effects of the cold.

“Regardless of the weather, we still have to do our jobs,” said Beckman.

Extreme weather situations such as this help prepare Airmen at the 180FW to operate in austere environments.

“When there is extreme cold, snow and ice, things are slow and methodical,” said Chandler. “We have to slow down and do our best so everyone is in a position to succeed. Everything we do we have to keep safety in mind.”

The 180FW and Air National Guard conduct daily training, in realistic environments, under realistic circumstances to ensure our force maintains the highest levels of proficiency and readiness for worldwide deployment. 🇺🇸

The Gift of Life

Story & photo by Airman Hope Geiger

More than 116,000 men, women and children are on the national transplant list as of August 2017, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and every 10 minutes another person is added. Each day, 20 people die waiting for an organ transplant because there are not enough donors.

In 2016, Master Sgt. Dane Adolph, an avionics technician assigned to the 180th Fighter Wing, Ohio Air

National Guard, donated his kidney to someone in need so that his wife could be moved to number one on the transplant list.

Adolph was not a match for his wife, but was willing to donate his kidney to someone else so she could be moved up on the list.

Before this experience happened, Adolph was already a registered donor.

"She was born with a disease called Polycystic Kidney Disease," said Adolph.

PKD causes numerous fluid-filled cysts to grow in the kidneys. When the cysts grow or if they get too big, the kidneys can become damaged. Overtime, the cysts slowly replace much of the kidneys, reducing kidney function and leading to kidney failure.

She was put on the transport list when she had a severe loss in kidney function.

"My wife was kind of unique, she was born with this disease and wasn't expected to live past two," Adolph

said. "With her having three kids and a miscarriage, she had a lot of antibodies built up that made matching her more difficult."

They went through the National Kidney Registration that matches people who are willing to donate kidneys to people in need. Adolph registered that he was willing to donate

be."

Adolph had to relearn how to get out of bed by using his elbows to get him up due to the incision on his abdomen that his kidney was removed from. He couldn't lift anything heavier than five pounds for a week, or do any vigorous activity and drive for six weeks.

"Even if I had to take leave without pay I still would have donated for her."

his kidney for his wife to receive one.

"I was helping my wife, the mother of my children and love of my life, stay around longer," said Adolph. "She means a lot to me and we've been together for 22 years, so knowing she is going to be around a lot longer was the best thing for me."

Before the donation, Adolph didn't know if he would be deployable or medically cleared to do his military job if he donated his kidney.

"I still would have done it," said Adolph. "Even if I had to take leave without pay I still would have donated for her."

Adolph did some research and he found out that after his donation he would still be deployable, medically cleared to do his job and receive paid time off to recover, which made his decision a little bit easier.

"It took us a year and a half to find a donor," Adolph said. "A woman walked in off the street in Syracuse, New York and said she wanted to donate a kidney to someone who needed one. She was a match for my wife."

In April of 2016, Adolph went into surgery early in the morning and his kidney was sent to someone in California. Later that same day his wife received her new kidney when it arrived from New York.

"It was pretty intense, but I would do it again if I could," said Adolph. "I was expecting all this pain, but it wasn't as bad as I thought it would

be," said Adolph. "We are only authorized so many visits for home healthcare, so I got a crash course in wound care to be able to pack the wound, clean it and care for it while she was recovering."

"My wife went back to work a year after her surgery," Adolph said. "I

was off for about three months before I came back to work."

Adolph started running again in September and when he tried to do core exercises, like sit-ups, he felt as if his incision were going to rip open.

"I couldn't do any core exercises for a year, I went back to the Cleveland hospital and they told me to take time off and not to over exert myself," said Adolph. "This past physical fitness test was my first time doing sit-ups since surgery."

It has been a long road of recovery for the both of them and they are still dealing with obstacles.

"Her kidney is showing some signs of rejection right now, so we are keeping an eye on everything," Adolph said. "The doctors are trying to do some medication changes, and we go back every three months for follow-ups to make sure everything is working the way it's supposed to."

"I would encourage others to become an organ donor because it's the right thing to do," Adolph said. "It's not as painful as you think it would be, and it's no cost to you because the donor insurance pays for the procedure."

While 33,611 transplants were performed in 2016, not nearly enough were done to keep up with the growing number of people on the waiting list. By being an organ donor you can give up to eight people a second chance at life, and improve the lives of many others.

"It was pretty intense, but I would do it again if I could,"

"Organ donation is an affirmation of life and is a reflection of the very best we can hope to be," said Col. Scott Reed, 180FW vice commander. "This selfless act of kindness touches countless lives and allows you to change the world. I hope we all consider giving the gift of life."





Story & photos by Staff Sgt. Shane Hughes

“9-1-1 what’s your emergency?”

“I’m here at Laskey and Oakridge,” a woman replied, her words spilling out in a panic. “A little boy ran across the street and I didn’t see him and I hit him with my car and I need someone right now. Please send someone right now.”

“Slow down,” The operator said in a soothing tone, attempting to calm the woman on the other end of the line. “I’ve got someone on the way. How old is he?”

“How old is he, honey?” the woman asked. After a short pause she answered the operator. “He’s thirteen.”

Shortly after 8 p.m. on Nov. 21, 2017, as that call went through, Staff Sgt. Tara Zuber, a command post controller assigned to the 180th Fighter Wing, was driving home from dinner with her mother and grandmother when she saw a car stopped in the middle of the road, hazard lights flashing. The sun had set and a light rain was falling, reducing visibility. When she got close enough to see what was happening, she saw a person lying in the road. She pulled over, turned on her hazard lights and began assessing the situation.

A young boy, Israel Olan, was kneeling in the street supporting his friend, Keenan Harris, who had just been hit by the car. Two women stood by the other car, one of them on the phone with 9-1-1. Zuber laid Keenan down so he was flat on the ground, checked his breathing and checked his pulse. Using a first aid technique called c-spine, Zuber immobilized Keenan’s neck to protect his spine from injury.

Keenan was unresponsive when she spoke to him and he was bleeding from his ears. His leg was broken and blood soaked his jeans.

Although he was unresponsive, Zuber did her best to comfort the boy, reassuring him that help was on the way and that he would be okay.

Zuber wasn’t the only person to stop. As Zuber kept Keenan immobilized, Paula Okuley, a surgical technologist from Mercy St. Anne’s Hospital, pulled over to help as well. Okuley placed her coat on Harris to help keep him warm and dry. Zuber told Israel that she had a blanket in her car, gave him her keys and told him to get the blanket from the trunk. She instructed Israel to cover Keenan with the blanket to help prevent him from going into shock.

“There’s not a whole lot you can do in a situation like that, but to make sure they’re breathing, make sure that you have good c-spine precaution, and treat for shock,” Zuber said.

A man without any medical training stopped and told Okuley that nobody could see them, and then used his vehicle to block traffic to help keep Zuber and the others safe as they treated Keenan. Two nurses from a local hospital also stopped to help.

Jonathan Curtis, a patrolman with the Toledo Police Department, arrived on the scene next and began blocking traffic. Curtis got a flashlight from his car and they used the flashlight to check Keenan’s pupils in order to determine whether he had suffered a brain injury.

“We knew he had head trauma,” Okuley

said. “That was the part that was scary. I was holding his hand, and there were a couple times when he stopped moving and we all got really nervous, but the nurse monitoring his pulse would tell us she could still feel his heart beating.”

After securing the scene to ensure everyone’s safety, Curtis retrieved medical gloves

from his car and offered them to Zuber, but she already had blood on her and refused to let go of Keenan to take the gloves.

“When the officer offered us gloves, she looked at him and said, ‘I’m not moving my hands,’” Okuley said. “She was very focused on keeping him still.”

“This was Laskey Rd. at night. It’s dark

and people drive like maniacs. She had no regard for her own safety.” Curtis said of Zuber. “Her focus was on that kid. For her to do that, that’s brave. For her to have the courage to do that, it was impressive.”

“That night she was more of a hero than we were,” said a firefighter on scene that night. “These people put themselves in danger

just by stopping, and they got involved when they didn’t have to, and that is courageous.”

As they monitored Keenan and did their best to keep him still, they finally heard sirens. Zuber said she felt relieved to hear the sound, because help would be there soon and she knew every second mattered, but the ambulance wasn’t coming for them.

“She had no regard for her own safety. Her focus was on that kid.”



“We heard sirens, and the police officer who was standing there said, ‘they’re not coming for us.’” Zuber said. The sirens belonged to another officer responding to another call at the intersection of Laskey and Bowen. “That was the worst feeling. That moment when you think help is finally there and you’re not going to be responsible anymore, and then you find out they’re going somewhere else and we’re waiting on another station.”

“It was a busy night,” Curtis said. “We were responding non-stop to accidents, domestics and all kinds of calls. We actually had two calls for pedestrian struck. There was one on Laskey near Oakridge and another one further east on Laskey.”

The initial call came in as a pedestrian struck at the intersection of Laskey and Bowen, but there was nothing at that location.

Moments later the call came in correcting the location of the accident to Laskey and Oakridge.

“Somebody driving past saw this and reported a pedestrian struck on Laskey, but they told the operator the wrong road,” Curtis said. “Another crew went down Laskey and cleared it all the way down to Jameson”

The police officer who responded to the misreported call at Laskey and Bowen turned around and headed back to the corrected location and helped Curtis direct traffic away from the scene and clear the way for the Toledo Fire Department.

When the Toledo Fire Department arrived, Zuber began telling the others what to do, and she relayed information about Keenan’s injuries to the firefighters.

“She was calling out what to do,” Curtis said. “When she was doing that, I almost thought it was her scene for a minute.”

The firefighters took over, placing a neck collar on Keenan, transferring him onto a backboard, getting him on oxygen and loading him into the ambulance; and Zuber gave them as much information as she could

about Keenan’s injuries. They loaded Keenan into an ambulance and took him to Toledo Hospital.

When Keenan arrived at the hospital, the trauma team was activated. The team evaluated his injuries, a closed head wound and an open leg fracture. The team alerted the neurosurgery and orthopedic surgery teams, and began preparing the operating room. The head wound was determined to be catastrophic and life threatening. The doctors needed to remove part of his skull to relieve pressure on his swelling brain. The doctors performed the surgery in time to save Keenan’s life, but no one could predict whether he would survive the night or how he would recover if he did survive.

As Keenan was recovering after surgery, Zuber was at home thinking about the accident. Zuber said she would run through the whole scenario from start to finish, and questioned whether she had done everything she could have done to give Keenan the best

chance to survive.

“I spent a solid 24 hours running through it over and over again, trying to make sure there wasn’t anything I missed,” Zuber said. “I ended up not sleeping that night. I laid in bed, but every time I tried to go to sleep I kept hearing his breathing, the way it sounded at the accident.”

Zuber had learned Keenan’s name from Israel at the accident and decided to search the name online. Her search led her to Facebook, and that was when she first realized Keenan was the son of one of her co-workers, Master Sgt. Doug Harris, an armament systems mechanic and assistant shift leader assigned to the Aerospace Control Alert mission at the 180th Fighter Wing. Not only were they co-workers, but they were even teammates on the base softball team.

The realization that she was personally connected to Keenan added even more significance to the night.

“It was a whirlwind of emotions,” Zuber

said. “It was a lot to process for a few days.”

The next morning, Alina Fuller, Director of Psychological Health at the 180FW, called to check up on Zuber and to tell her that Keenan was the son of an Airman at the base, which she already knew. Fuller asked if she could pass Zuber’s contact information on to Keenan’s father, and Zuber agreed.

“I didn’t know she was the first one on the scene,” Harris said. “When Alina told me that it just floored me.”

Harris called Zuber the next day to thank her for all she had done and to update her Keenan.

As Keenan began to recover, his dad would text updates to Zuber. He told her when Keenan would make progress, and when Keenan would backslide in his recovery.

While Harris and Zuber had known each other before, they hadn’t known each other well. Zuber said the accident brought her and the Harris family closer together and created a life-long bond between them.

“I don’t care how cliché it is, at the 180th we are a big family,” Zuber said. “We take care of one another, we come together when things are going wrong for someone and we help support each other. It’s a huge situation and it’s had a ripple effect. Doug and I are bonded now.”

After three months, Keenan had fully recovered from his injuries.

“I didn’t think we’d get to this point, because of his head injury,” said Dr. Aaron Buerk, a pediatric orthopedic surgeon and chief of staff at Toledo Children’s Hospital. “He had a catastrophic head injury and the most likely outcome was that he would die that night. He made it through that night which is pretty impressive, but the second most likely outcome was that there would be significant cognitive damage. His recovery is as good as can be. It’s been a miraculous recovery.”

“It’s such a relief,” Zuber said. “It was a situation that could have gone completely wrong and devastated a lot of people.”

While most people wouldn’t have been able to help in that situation, Zuber was different. Before accepting a job at the 180FW, Zuber had planned on becoming a firefighter. After completing basic Emergency Medical Technician training, she went on to medic school, completing the course in 2014. The course included clinical experience with TFD.

The same day she was told they would start the background checks necessary for her to work with the fire department was also the same day she passed her last test for command post technical school. She had to make a decision for what she wanted to do. She decided to accept the position at the 180FW.

“If I never use those skills again, at least that training wasn’t for nothing,” Zuber said. “I don’t know if what I did made a difference or not, but to me it’s like all that training was worth it to be able to be in that situation and do what I did. Something good came out of it and it wasn’t just something small.”

While Zuber doesn’t know whether she had that much of an impact on that night, others say she did.

“You see kids come in with these catastrophic injuries and nine out of 10 times they don’t recover, but every now and then one does, and he’s that one,” Buerk said. “If you can help slow down the shock response, you can slow down the blood flow to the brain which is what causes the damage.”

“With this particular injury, less than 5 percent survive. I didn’t think we’d be out of the hospital in three months, but here he’s fully recovered in three months,” Harris said. “I owe that to Tara. What she did allowed the paramedics to do less, and got Keenan to the hospital that much faster.”

Nobody can say for certain what the outcome might have been if Zuber had not been on the scene immediately after the accident occurred, if she had stayed just a few minutes longer at dinner or had taken a different route home that night, but one thing is without question: her decision to stop has forever altered the lives of everyone involved. 🙏

“If I never use those skills again, at least that training wasn’t for nothing,”

Power & Status

The Building Blocks of Effective Leadership

Essay by Christopher P. Kelley, James M. Dobbs, Jeff W. Lucas &

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Experimental social science research tests theories about basic elements of social processes. This research offers valuable insights for leader development and indicates that structural power and status are the building blocks of effective leadership. Power, defined as the ability to get what one wants despite resistance, and status, defined as a position in a group based on respect or esteem, both lead to influence. Status overcomes the resentment that is typically produced by the use of power. We identify approaches to gaining status and power and discuss their use by leaders. Sixty years of cumulative research on power and status in groups indicates that developing effective leadership requires the sparing use of power. To be most effective, leaders should rely on status.

Bridging the Gap: Leadership Research and its Application

Several recent statements note the divide between academic research on leadership and leadership practices (Latham, 2007). Human resource managers report being unaware or skeptical of findings from academic research on job performance (Rynes, Colbert, & Brown, 2002). Latham (2007) points out the problematic divide of differing goals and language separating social sciences researchers and consumers of research. Nowhere is the research-practice gap wider than in the dissemination of experimental research on fundamental social processes. In this article we summarize the body of research on the elements of status and structural power, the two most widely studied concepts in group processes, and draw links between those literatures and the practice of leadership. This research provides insights for leader development in work organizations.

At its most basic level, leadership—in the military or anywhere else—is about getting people to do things. If people are doing things they would otherwise do, there is no need for a leader. We thus define leadership as changing what people do in order to achieve an objective.

There are many ways to change people's behavior. All of these can be classified as either coercive means, or noncoercive influence. Influence is a willing change of attitudes or behavior to meet those of another. In order to test the social processes in groups we begin by narrowly defining fundamental concepts. This facilitates research efforts to understand the nature of those concepts irrespective of any particular context. Group processes research provides theories and

standardized methods to study processes affecting influence. It does this by testing the relationships between these narrowly defining concepts in carefully designed studies and experiments. These findings build cumulative knowledge. When studying power, researchers make a distinction between structural power governed by network relations, and the use of power. In a classical research on power French and Raven (1959) develop typologies of "power" based on the experiences of those against who power is used. Many of their bases of power (i.e. expert power or legitimate power) would be classified by group processes researchers as status processes rather than power. This is an important distinction because status processes involve un-coerced changes in attitudes and behaviors and so produce much different reactions than coercive power processes. Status is the honor and prestige individuals hold relative to others in their groups. Status is based on esteem or respect. Status and power both command respect however, status and power used to change others behavior produces markedly different effects on follower's perceptions. It is useful to distinguish the two when examining processes leading to influence. Group processes researchers ask how these processes operate at their basic level across settings, as well as in conjunction with each other.

This approach to status and power differs from that of researchers attempting to capture the full complexities of concepts in all instantiations (Kelley, 1994). Power is a concept that spans multiple disciplines and countless treatments. Philosopher Bertrand Russell called power the fundamental concept of all social sciences (Russell, 1938). Group processes researchers choose narrow definitions to study concepts in settings removed from complexities that accompany concepts in natural environments. The result of this research then informs further investigation in more complex settings.

In the case of changing what people do, group processes research leads to the conclusion that power and status are basic building blocks of leadership (Lovaglia & Lucas, 2005). There are many ways to get people to do things, but power and status are two major sources behavior change. Both generate influence. We define power as the ability to get what one wants even when others resist. Status is defined as a position in a group based on esteem or respect. The primary outcome of status is influence, a change in the attitudes or behaviors of others without threat of punishment or promise of reward. A politician leads with influence if volunteers hold her in high regard and campaign for her without clear expectations of personal reward. Some of the ways that power translates into influence

are through perceptions of increased competence associated with favorable outcomes in resource accumulation (Williams, Troyer, & Lovaglia, 2005), or the ability to reward or punish individuals. According to Ridgeway (1982) status leads to influence through the perception by group members that high status people have the group's interests at heart (Berger, Fisek, Norman, & Zelditch, 1977). Recent group processes research on power and status in networks has also shown that status can alter the power of positions in groups (Thye, 2000).

We do not suggest that other definitions of power and status are wrong. Rather, by defining them narrowly and precisely, we may carry out research on their basic natures. This strategy has produced knowledge growth and insight into how people gain power and status as well as outcomes of their use. Power and status are fundamental ways to change behavior; understanding how to get and how to use them is essential for developing effective leadership.

How to Gain Power

For sociologists, power results from a position in social structure. Although skill, talent, and charisma usually play a role in attaining power, the power itself rests in a structural position. After decades of research on power in networks, social psychologists now identify that power primarily stems from the ability to control resources and exclude others from resources they desire (Lovaglia, 1999). Teachers control grades that matter to students, judges control outcomes for parties in legal cases, and in the military, commanders have tremendous authority over their subordinates. Power in this sense is relational, based on connections between people. People may deny others their expertise or knowledge. However, these individuals risk losing out on future interactions, especially if the actor they deny resources has alternatives. When we think of expertise and knowledge as aspects of status, we can predict that acting in this manner will decrease influence by building resentment.

In each of the examples above power rests in the position, not the person. If a supervisor leaves his job and is replaced by someone new, the replacement has the same positional power. Power stays with the position rather than being attached to the person. It is only an aspect of a position an organization or networks. This is what we mean when we say that power results from a position in a social structure.

People comply with powerful people because they fear the consequences of non compliance or value the rewards available from the power holder. How does one get power? Research on power in networks shows how it can be done. The key is to control resources that others value. Thus, a first step in attaining power is to identify important resources. The next step is to control their distribution. If you can exclude others from desired resources, you will have power. The power of controlling valued resources can be seen in human resources departments that exert control beyond what their positions in corporate hierarchies would indicate. They control resources that are important to people.

Power comes with many advantages, so competition for power within the branches of service is typically intense. Identifying resources and seeking their control is easier said than done. There are, however, effective approaches to gaining power beyond directly going after positions in the military hierarchy that control resources.

One way to sidestep the intense competition for power is to create a new resource that people don't yet know they want (Pfeffer, 1992). Engineers, for example, can design improvements in processes, the

nuanced workings of which only they understand. The engineers' knowledge of the improved process represents control of a valuable resource that they can use to gain power. This power gain results from a change in the preferences of actors within the social structure, much as French and Raven might have predicted. However, even given more highly valued resources, the power of a network position is still influenced by social structure. The explanatory power of group processes research has allowed sociologists to untangle power and status in order to understand how they work conjointly, and how status may lead to structural power.

How to Gain Status

Status is a position in a group based on respect. Research on groups shows that people quickly rank themselves and each other into status hierarchies (Berger, Rosenholtz, & Zelditch, 1980). Early small groups research found that some people talk more in groups, are evaluated more highly, and have more influence over decisions. Further research found that distinguishing characteristics between actors predicted who would behave in these ways. Being a member of high status group in society results in greater influence within other groups. Research on status in groups demonstrates that status hierarchies emerge from often unconscious expectations people develop for the performances of themselves and others in groups or organizations (Berger & Webster, 2006). Those expected to perform at higher levels have higher status in groups. Note that expectations of superior performance, not performance itself, produce higher initial status.

Some characteristics act as status markers in society. Gender is one example. People in many societies tend to expect higher performances from men than from women, even on seemingly gender neutral tasks like leadership (Lucas, 2003). Other status characteristics include education, attractiveness, and race. Where people stand on these characteristics activates expectations producing status hierarchies in groups. Those expected to perform at a higher level are accorded higher positions in the group's status order.

Status hierarchies in groups will sometimes defy expectations based on the status characteristics of group members. If a white male consistently performs at a level lower than other members of the group, his status suffers. However, status hierarchies tend to be resistant to change for two reasons. First, the processes that produce status hierarchies are primarily non-conscious (Webster & Driskell, 1978). Second, status hierarchies once established tend to be self-reinforcing. As a result high-status group members are consistently afforded more positive performance evaluations. Low-status group members receive lower evaluations because expectations for their likely contributions are lower (Lucas, 2003). These forces make status hierarchies stable.

Some status characteristics (such as gender and race) are out of our control; others can be changed. One way to gain status is to change your standing on status characteristics within your control. Education brings status; increasing your education credentials leads to influence beyond job-related benefits of the acquired knowledge (Bunderson, 2003). For example, the career value of an MBA degree over that of a bachelor's degree is enormous relative to the two-year investment required to complete it (Davies & Cline, 2005). Appearance is another important status characteristic. More attractive people are expected to be more competent than less attractive people (Umberson & Hughes, 1987). The burgeoning cosmetic surgery industry likely owes much of its success to the

status implications of appearances. Similarly, the military uniform is a form of clothing with a particular symbolism and a long history and tradition that connotes a formal status rather than individuality. The uniform reflects order and discipline, and calls for subordination by displaying a variety of insignia, including badges that indicate rank and emphasize the hierarchical structure of the armed forces. It also calls for respect and symbolizes status in the eyes of comrades, civilians, and the enemy. The more rank a member of the armed forces has alters expectations for his or her performance in groups, ultimately affecting how much influence the wearer can wield (Fisek, Berger, & Norman, (1987).

One method toward gaining status, then, is to move to more valued categories of status characteristics. Other routes lay in self-presentation. Although status hierarchies tend to be stable, they do change. One way to gain status in groups is to perform competently. In the military many groups do not interact for long periods of time for group members to get a good sense of the relative competence levels of its members due to high personnel turnover. Moreover, even in organizational groups that meet over long periods of time, status hierarchies tend to reflect the status characteristics of group members (Cohen & Zhou, 1991). This is because of the self-fulfilling nature of status orders described above. Nevertheless, competence does matter, and performing more competently in groups will enhance your status.

Research has identified another effective strategy for increasing influence in groups (Ridgeway, 1982). People in groups typically assume that high-status group members are more oriented toward group interests than low-status group members. This is one reason why high-status persons tend to be leaders in groups—we assume that leaders have the interests of the group in mind. Research shows that a group-motivation self-presentation strategy increases status (Shackelford, Wood, & Worchel, 1996). You can increase your status in a group by making clear that your actions are carried out with the interests of the group in mind, focused on the group’s objectives, and in the interest of group members. These behaviors will increase your influence in the group.

Using Power or Status to Gain the Other

Power and status usually vary together. Many jobs, such as senior military commanders, are high in power and status. Other jobs are high in one but not the other. Police officers have more power than status. High school teachers have more status than power (Rogalin, Soboroff, & Lovaglia, 2007). The strategic use of both power and status can be used to gain the other.

For sociologists, the use of power has two primary outcomes: (1) those with power tend to accumulate valued resources, and (2) those without power resent those who use power (Willer, Lovaglia, & Markovsky, 1997). Because power use creates resentment, and because status is a position based on esteem or respect, it is difficult to use power to gain status. But it can be done. There are at least three ways that power can translate to status, and they result from the fact that those with power accumulate resources.

1. The foundation of status differences are the expectations that people have for the competence of each group member. The resources that come with power result from a position in a structure rather than personal ability. Nevertheless, if we see one person accumulating more resources than others, we tend to assume that that person is more competent than those who

don’t accumulate as many resources. Thus, one way power translates to status is that people assume those using power are competent because they see the powerful person accumulating valued resources.

2. Another way that power can be used to gain status is to use the resources that come with power to essentially purchase status. Al Capone became the most powerful person in Chicago largely through ruthlessness. Once powerful, however, Capone was generous with the proceeds of his criminal activities, giving to schools and organizing one of Chicago’s first soup kitchens. These activities led to Capone not only being the most feared person in Chicago, but also beloved in many Chicago neighborhoods. In the same way, Pablo Escobar, the notorious Columbian drug lord, gained status in his community despite being responsible for the deaths of scores of Columbian citizens. He purchased his status by using proceeds from his drug operation to do things such as build community soccer stadiums. Members of his community rewarded these actions with respect.

3. A third way that power can translate to status is through strategic image control. Research shows that powerful people are presumed by others to be self-interested and greedy (Lovaglia, Willer, & Troyer, 2003). When powerful people practice strategic humility and philanthropy, they counter negative expectations and enhance their status with others who admire their perceived restraint and compassion. Powerful people who exercise restraint are lauded as “having their feet on the ground.” Bill Gates, for example, enhances his status by conspicuously applying resources to philanthropic causes. It may not be coincidence, however, that Gates’s philanthropic activities increased dramatically at the same time as European antitrust legislation against Microsoft.

Although power can be used to gain status, it is easier to accumulate power after you have status. Power is a natural outgrowth of status. The principle antecedent of status is expectations for competence. Status leads to power in part because selections to powerful positions are typically made based on perceptions of competence. Powerful leadership positions in organizations are filled with people who were perceived as most competent by making those hiring decisions. In other words, those who are highest in status (who may or may not truly be most competent) are typically rewarded with powerful positions.

Status may lead to power because we value resources held by high-status others (Thye, 2000). Those higher in status are held in higher esteem, and people will trade relatively more of their own resources for fewer of a high-status person’s resources. Time is a resource we all value, and lowerstatus people will wait longer (i.e., trade more of their time) for high-status others. In the same way, people will trade money for the autograph of high-status celebrities; giving a resource they likely value a great deal for a resource relatively insignificant to the celebrity. Higher status people can trade on status to accumulate more resources with less effort. Power, then, naturally grows out of status.

Leading with Power and Status

Power use creates resentment. This is true whether people are threatened with punishment for undesirable behavior or promised rewards for desirable behavior. Using both rewards and punishments

compel people to do things they wouldn’t do if the rewards or punishments weren’t in place. Using power to lead is also inefficient. It requires a great deal of energy on the part of the leader to always use rewards and punishments to compel behavior. If leaders only initiate action through the use of power, then followers will stop carrying out leader’s desires when incentives are removed.

Leading with status has significant benefits. People do what a high-status leader wants because they hold her in respect. The influence of high-status leaders make people want to perform actions they would not otherwise perform. Moreover, influence (the principle outcome of status) can lead followers to carry out positive actions that the leader herself may not have imagined. This is because while power works at changing behavior, status changes behavior through attitudes. High-status leaders change the attitudes of followers who then carry out behaviors that the leader desires or that followers perceive will benefit the leader.

An appealing conclusion that one might draw from this discussion is that effective leaders don’t use power. Or as Admiral William Crowe put it when he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “You cannot run a unit just by giving orders and having a Uniform Code of Military Justice behind you” (Tsouras, 1992). However, leadership positions usually require leaders to use power—teachers grade students and judges decide legal matters. That leaders sometimes use their power is especially true for military leaders. A military commander may require a subordinate to conduct physical exercises as corrective training to the point of utter exhaustion. In combat, a commander may order a subordinate officer to assault a fortified enemy position in the face of heavy resistance. In either situation, the subordinate often has little choice but to accept his orders as a matter of position.

Research has found that the most effective leaders use power least (Rodriquez-Bailon, Moya, & Yzerbyt, 2000). Effective leaders use their power only when necessary, and actively manage the resentment produced by the use of power. Although leading with power can be easier in the short term, the benefits of leading with status multiply over time. This is because leading with status does not bring with it the resentment produced by the use of power (Willer, Lovaglia, & Markovsky, 1997). While those who use power risk losing it, those who lead with status usually gain more.

An effective approach to leadership is to avoid the use of power when possible and instead lead with status. The result is that status, and in turn power, grows. After George Washington became the commander of the Continental Army, his troops won an important battle in Boston against the British. Washington might have led the troops into Boston as a signal of his newfound power. Instead, Washington had the generals in charge during the battle lead the troops into the city (McCullough, 2005). He quietly arrived in the city the following day. Such an approach required Washington to be confident he would get credit for the accomplishments of the army even if he didn’t claim them. This confidence certainly grew out of his status. The strategy also required long-range thinking about his status among the troops. The result of his actions in Boston increased his status among the troops and ultimately his power.

Practical Implications

Effective leadership requires having power and status. It then requires their effective use. Good leaders use power sparingly, and only when necessary. They rely on the benefits of the high status that both accompanies and produces influence.

Research on small groups outlined above indicates a number of ways to gain power and status. Power rests in being able to exclude others from resources they desire, and acquiring power begins with the control of resources that others value. One way to circumvent the intense competition for powerful positions is to create a new resource that people will value. Status can be increased by moving to more valued categories of status characteristics such as education or by performing competently. A particularly effective way to gain status, and in turn to lead, is to present your behaviors as being carried out with the interests of the group in mind. Give credit to others and focus on the benefits to the group.

Thinking in terms of status requires leaders to think beyond power, but status together with power produces effective leadership, increasing the likelihood of access to future leadership positions. Conspicuously taking action for the benefit of the group, exercising power with discretion and restraint, and giving credit to others can be difficult. Such actions may present immediate threats to one’s power. As in the case of President Washington, however, being willing to trade power for status enhances both power and status, the foundational building blocks of effective leadership. 🐝

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COMMENTS Continued from pg 3

source. Another cultural sign of empowering lower levels is the SecAF’s mandate of a complete, top to bottom, AFI scrub. Her belief is that requirements have stacked upon requirements and the force is crumbling under the pressure. Furthermore, she wants to minimize guidance from Headquarters Air Force and drastically reduce additive Major Command restrictions to allow more flexibility to lower levels of leadership. A final example of pushing decisions to the lowest practical level is the new Air Force Inspection System. This inspection system is Commander-based, not MAJCOM based like the one before it. It pushes responsibilities and decision making to the wing level and below, thus empowering those commanders to make decisions based on their organization.

So, what does accepting risk really mean? I’ve already highlighted that the Air Force’s culture is changing to allow lower-level commanders the freedom to make decisions and to accept the risk of those decisions. In practical terms, this decision of increased risk can come in multiple scenarios. If a fighter squadron needs to train for near-peer adversaries, robust training scenario must be developed that push pilots to make complex decisions while completely task saturated. While this makes the pilot better in complex tactical scenarios, it also has an increased risk because inadvertent errors can be made under those strenuous conditions, thus compromising safety. In other career fields there could be a scenario where the AFI or established guidance doesn’t match the situation at hand, forcing a subjective opinion. A decision could be made on the most conservative side, on the riskier side or, of course, no decision could be made and instead pass the risk to higher levels. Also, many organizations are faced with auditors or inspectors that may second guess decisions being made at lower levels. Fear of a negative report could dominant the decision-making process. In all of these scenarios, making a decision that is not the most conservative or making a decision at a lower level would be considered accepting risk, and is something that every supervisor and command must be willing to do for the health of their organization.

So, the question is at what level is it appropriate to accept risk in a given scenario. Well, the standard fighter pilot answer of “it depends” fits better here than anywhere. Concerning AFIs, the Air Force has provided a tiered waiver system to help answer this dilemma that places three waiver levels at HAF, MAJCOM, or Wing level. This helps when deviating from an AFI, but doesn’t help the grey area scenario mentioned above. The bottom line is experience and solid communication with your superior is the best way to navigate how much risk can be taken at a certain level. As leaders, we must be willing to take risk when appropriate. For individuals under your supervision/ command, we must foster an environment that promotes this culture without the fear of harsh adverse action when the riskier decision is made that you disagree with.

In summary, I’ve tried to outline the changing Air Force culture with regard to empowering lower levels of

leadership coupled with supervisors and commanders understanding the concept that accepting risk is acceptable in certain scenarios. Always accepting risk by deviating from policy or guidance and becoming a rogue organization is not the intent of this article. Instead, use the vast experience resident in a guard unit, be a confident supervisor or commander; and don’t be afraid to make informed, calculated decisions that are in the best interest of your organization, the mission, and the USAF. 🇺🇸

CONGRATULATIONS

to the following Airmen on their recent promotions

To Airman:

- Kregg A. York, Fighter Wing

To Airman First Class:

- Juliana J. Cessna, Medical Group
- Megan A. Ortiz, Medical Group

To Senior Airman:

- Carly P. Brindley, Medical Group
- John M. Fenkanyn, Maintenance Group
- Brady A. Harris, Maintenance Group
- Cameron J. O’Brien, Maintenance Group
- Kyrstyn R. Wallen, Medical Group
- Joshua E. Holland, Maintenance Group
- Connor B. Phillips, Maintenance Group
- Paul L. Trendel, Mission Support Group
- Brayden A. Bubp, Maintenance Group
- Branden B. Eldred, Mission Support Group
- Jacob C. Hancock, Maintenance Group
- Libby L. Mathewson, Maintenance Group
- Abbie R. McGuire, Operations Group
- Kevin M. Packard, Maintenance Group
- Nathaniel D. Shafer, Maintenance Group
- Jacob C. Yeckley, Operations Group

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- Courtney E. Iannucci, Operations Group
- Nathan E. Stinehour, Operations Group
- Andrew M. Winchell, Maintenance Group
- Dereck X. Duschl, Maintenance Group
- Nicholas J. Geiger, Operations Group
- Alec D. Herhold, Maintenance Group
- Annamarie E. Herold, Maintenance Group
- Ryan M. Keel, Maintenance Group
- Brian C. Mathus, Maintenance Group
- Emily M. Miller, Maintenance Group
- Collin N. Newsome, Mission Support Group
- Delaney L. Preston, Medical Group
- Kaley S. Ryan, Maintenance Group
- Justin A. Spencer, Mission Support Group

To Staff Sergeant (Cont’d):

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- Michael R. White, Mission Support Group
- Tyler I. Everman, Maintenance Group
- Samuel J. Metzger, Maintenance Group
- Monae S. Turnage, Mission Support Group
- Kevin L. Wright, Operations Group

To Technical Sergeant:

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- Adam K. Krouse, Mission Support Group
- Luke J. Turnage, Maintenance Group
- Adam L. Berry, Mission Support Group
- Bryan K. Crowley, Maintenance Group
- Kyle R. Meyer, Mission Support Group
- Ashley C. Schmidt, Mission Support Group
- Michael O. Sperry, Mission Support Group
- Samantha J. Wood, Mission Support Group
- John R. Schmidt, Mission Support Group
- Travis L. Sumner, Mission Support Group

To Master Sergeant:

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- Shamecka M. Awls, Mission Support Group
- Andrew P. Turner, Maintenance Group

To Senior Master Sergeant:

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To Chief Master Sergeant:

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- Gregory E. Chonko, Mission Support Group

To Captain:

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