

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**Managing the Army National Guard Full-Time Force**

by

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## ABSTRACT

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One practice that sets premier organizations apart from others is the ability to hire and retain only the top quality performers. With the increased operational tempo and deployment of the Army National Guard (ARNG), and the impact that the full-time Guard person has upon both recruiting and retention, it is crucial to hire and retain only the best full-time employees. Retaining only top quality personnel to include Title 10, 32, and Military Technicians will continue to improve upon the premier organization of the ARNG. To improve current practices, the ARNG must create a challenging and synergistic environment utilizing standardized methodologies and practices in hiring, training, managing, assessing, and retaining a top quality full-time staff. A top quality full-time force will then be able to maintain the highest level of focus on the traditional force structure that will directly affect the overall readiness of the traditional force to include personnel retention. This paper will discuss proven techniques utilized by major United States Corporate Organizations that can be implemented by the ARNG to improve the performance and caliber of the full-time employees by implementing a systematic program of identifying talent, rewarding superior performance, and eliminating the non-performers.



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## PREFACE

I wish to thank my Project Advisor, Colonel Daniel Jensen, for his time and support in the formulation of this paper. I also wish to thank Dr. Clay Chun, PhD, for his assistance. Furthermore, I wish to express my appreciation to the Army National Guard (ARNG) for giving me the opportunity to attend the United States Army War College (USAWC) Senior Service Course (SSC), to my friends and colleagues in Seminar 6, and to the Sprint Corporation for supporting my attendance. Special thanks to my wife Jennifer and my daughters Grace and Hope, who endured during the research and writing of this paper. Jennifer reviewed multiple drafts and provided valuable comments and insight from her not-for-profit background. I am fortunate to have a family that supports my ARNG career. Jennifer took a leave of absence from the University of Missouri Kansas City School of Pharmacy where she is the Director of Development to support my attendance at this course.

The Army National Guard is, and will continue to be, an important and rewarding aspect of my life. I am proud to be a traditional member of the ARNG, and I salute those soldiers who have protected our nation and homes before our nation was even established. The ARNG has now been in existence for 366 years, long before the Declaration of Independence was written. Our ancestors have fought in every conflict. They were with General Washington -- they were at the Concord's bridge, and fired the shot heard round the world. They were at Bunker Hill and Valley Forge. They stood with Washington at Yorktown and returned to their homes after the British surrendered. They fought on both sides during the War Between the States -- they stormed the hill at San Juan, Cuba -- they stood on the Mexican border. They served in the War to end all Wars, and the War that followed. They fought in Korea and the jungles of Vietnam. They served in Desert Storm, stood vigil protecting our airports, and now serve in the War against terrorism. They have served their communities during times of disaster and now are ready to answer the call in support of their nation, whenever they are called, wherever they are sent.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The motivation for this paper is to provide the Army National Guard full-time force with a systematic process that will improve the entire force structure. The scope of my research began with my personal experiences in my civilian employment with the Sprint Corporation as they implemented a program similar to that of the General Electric Corporation outlined in Jack Welch's book, *Jack, Straight From The Gut*. My research identified Dr. Bradford D. Smart, PhD, and his work to include his book entitled *Topgrading*. Dr. Smart has developed a web site devoted to his concept located at <http://www.topgrading.com/>.

I expanded my research to encompass methods and techniques that allow ARNG full-time employees to understand performance expectations, the importance of individual accomplishment, and the negative impact that the poor performance of full-time employees can have on the overall organization. Poor performance requires change!

The Sprint Corporation provided me with my introduction to all processes covered in this paper. I feel fortunate to work for a corporation that is forward looking and provides professional development and training for their current and future leaders. In fact, many of the training opportunities conducted by the University of Excellence, the training division of Sprint, mirror the leader development in the U.S. Army Officer Professional Military Education system. Although Sprint provided me with the exposure to the processes outlined in this paper, no Sprint proprietary information was used in this paper.

My research has led me to many outstanding sources. One that I found as a "must have" is Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*. Leaders/mangers at all levels may find this a beneficial resource for navigating through the many challenges of daily leadership as well as change management.



## MANAGING THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD FULL-TIME FORCE

This paper recommends the Upgrading process to provide the conditions for positive change for the Army National Guard (ARNG) full-time force. The ARNG can improve current practices by creating a challenging and synergistic environment that utilizes standardized methodologies and practices in hiring, training, managing, assessing, and retaining a top quality full-time staff. The processes outlined in this paper present a proposal to improve the overall performance of the ARNG's full-time infrastructure. A top quality full-time force will then be able to maintain the highest level of focus on the traditional force structure that will in turn directly affect the overall readiness of the traditional force to include personnel retention. This process will create the conditions within the organization to retain top quality performers throughout a career. Retaining top quality performers will improve the ARNG and establish it as a premier organization.<sup>1</sup>

The United States Army consists of three distinctive components – the Active Army, the United States Army Reserve (USAR), and the ARNG. Citizen soldiers who serve in the ARNG are known as traditional members or traditional soldiers. The traditional force is comprised of soldiers who generally serve one weekend a month and two weeks per year for an Annual Training period. The time commitment increases dependent upon position and rank of the member in addition to unit funding. The Constitution of the United States provides each State, Territory and the District of Columbia with its own ARNG force structure.<sup>2</sup>

The ARNG also has full-time employees who serve in the Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) program or as an ARNG Technician. These individuals support the traditional force in the areas of organizing, administering, recruiting, institutional instruction and training support. The AGR program consists of United States Code Title 10 and Title 32 members. AGR Title 10 members generally serve in federal level jobs, while AGR Title 32 members serve in positions within their State, Territory or the District of Columbia. AGR Title 10 and 32 members receive the same benefits as those members of the Active Army. The primary difference between Title 10 members and Title 32 is that the Title 10 members receive assignments to positions worldwide.<sup>3</sup> Title 10 members will work for Active Army personnel or have Active Army personnel in the rating chain. Other Title 10 personnel work in positions in ARNG organizations such as the National Guard Bureau (NGB) or the National Guard Personnel Education Center (NGPEC). These individuals work for and are in the rating chain of active duty personnel who may be ARNG Title 10 or active component personnel.<sup>4</sup>

United States Code authorizes technicians in two capacities, a dual (or excepted service) status or in a non-dual (or competitive) status. The military technicians work in a full-time status in support of the ARNG. Most technicians serve in a dual (excepted) status and must maintain a position within the ARNG in order to retain their position as a technician. Military technicians perform the same duties as members of the Active Army and AGR members in like positions. ARNG military technicians generally work in supply, maintenance, personnel, administration, accounting, contracting, facility management and maintenance, safety, unit readiness, training, program planning, program management, and supervision.<sup>5</sup>

Title 10, Subtitle E, Part I, Chapter 1007 - Administration of Reserve Components, Sec. 10216. - Military technicians dual status: In General. - For purposes of this section and any other provision of law, a military technician (dual status) is a Federal civilian employee who - is employed under section 3101 of title 5 or section 709(b) of title 32; is required as a condition of that employment to maintain membership in the Selected Reserve; and is assigned to a civilian position as a technician in the administration and training of the Selected Reserve or in the maintenance and repair of supplies or equipment issued to the Selected Reserve or the armed forces. Military technicians (dual status) shall be authorized and accounted for as a separate category of civilian employees... Unless specifically exempted by law, each individual who is hired as a military technician (dual status) after December 1, 1995, shall be required as a condition of that employment to maintain membership in - the unit of the Selected Reserve by which the individual is employed as a military technician; or a unit of the Selected Reserve that the individual is employed as a military technician to support.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to Title 10 requirements, the following Title 32 requirements govern dual status technicians:

Title 32, Chapter 7, Section. 709. - Technicians: employment, use, status under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Army...may be employed as technicians in - the administration and training of the National Guard; and the maintenance and repair of supplies issued to the National Guard or the armed forces. Except as authorized...a person employed...must meet each of the following requirements: Be a military technician (dual status) as defined in section 10216(a) of title 10. Be a member of the National Guard. Hold the military grade specified by the Secretary for that position. While performing duties as a military technician (dual status), wear the uniform appropriate for the member's grade and component of the armed forces. A person may be employed...as a non-dual status technician (as defined by section 10217 of title 10) if the technician position occupied by the person has been designated by the Secretary of the Army to be filled only by a non-dual status technician. The total number of non-dual status technicians in the National Guard is specified in section 10217(c) (2) of title 10. The Secretary of the Army shall designate the

adjutants general to employ and administer the technicians authorized by this section.<sup>7</sup>

Non-dual (competitive) technicians are not required to maintain membership within the ARNG and must compete for their positions according to the Office of Personnel Management procedures.<sup>8</sup>

Title 10, Subtitle E, Part I, Chapter 1007 - Administration of Reserve Components, Section 10217. - Non-dual status technicians definition: For the purposes of this section and any other provision of law, a non-dual status technician is a civilian employee of the Department of Defense serving in a military technician position who - was hired as a technician before November 18, 1997, under any of the authorities specified...and as of that date is not a member of the Selected Reserve or after such date has ceased to be a member of the Selected Reserve; or is employed under section 709 of title 32 in a position designated of that section and when hired was not required to maintain membership in the Selected Reserve. Permanent Limitations on Number. - Effective October 1, 2002, the total number of non-dual status technicians employed by the National Guard may not exceed 1,950. If at any time after the preceding sentence takes effect the number of non-dual status technicians employed by the National Guard exceeds the number specified in the limitation in the preceding sentence, the Secretary of Defense shall require that the Secretary of the Army to take immediate steps to reduce the number of such technicians in order to comply with such limitation<sup>9</sup>

ARNG full-time employees who serve in the AGR program or as Military Technicians are extremely valuable in the daily operations of the ARNG. Their support to the traditional force is crucial in all areas of the organization and requires the highest performing and best qualified employees. Upgrading is the system that can be implemented within the ARNG to improve current practices by creating a challenging and synergistic environment that utilizes standardized methodologies.

## **UPGRADING**

The ability to make good decisions regarding people represents one of the last reliable sources of competitive advantage, since very few organizations are very good at it.<sup>10</sup>

—Peter Drucker

Leaders and managers of Title 10, Title 32, and Military Technicians throughout the ARNG realize that positive employee attitudes within any organization are formed through swift and appropriate leadership actions. An average employee does not modify their behavior to

become a quality performer without direct leadership intervention. A positive change in performance only occurs when behavioral modification is encouraged through a system that is meaningful to the employee.<sup>11</sup> Upgrading is a systematic process of filling every full-time position within the ARNG with an A Performer while simultaneously eliminating C performers. One quality that sets premier organizations apart from the rest is the ability to hire and retain only A Performers. An A Performer is a full-time guardsperson who qualifies among the top ten percent of those available for a given position. A B Performer is an individual who qualifies among the middle eighty percent of those available while a C Performer is one who qualifies among the bottom ten percent of those available.<sup>12</sup> Employees are evaluated against their peer group and are categorized according to pay grade or pay grade and duty assignment. Examples are to evaluate all Lieutenant Colonels in one peer group and all Sergeants serving as supply sergeants in another group.

A Performers are extremely valuable employees who have passion plus the ability to make things happen with little or no direct supervision.<sup>13</sup> These performers are as committed to supporting the ARNG traditional force as they are to the individuals to whom they report. They do not “kiss up while stomping down.”<sup>14</sup> They have a strong desire to perform, work to motivate others, have the ability to make the right decisions independently, and accomplish what they are responsible to complete. The key attribute that separates the A Performers from their peers is the passion and ability to work as a team member supporting the requirements of the full-time position they are assigned while also supporting the traditional force.<sup>15</sup> The premise of this paper, and suggested goal for the ARNG, is to work toward staffing the full-time employee force with only A Performers.

#### WHY CHANGE?

If you don't like change, you're going to like irrelevance even less.<sup>16</sup>

—General Eric K. Shinseki, Chief of Staff of the Army

When a potential recruit, or anyone for that matter, walks into an Armory, their first impression is usually made by a full-time employee. When a member of a state calls the National Guard Bureau (NGB), the full-time member who answers that phone call represents the NGB as a whole. First impressions are lasting impressions! If the full-time member is not an A Performer, does not have a professional appearance or attitude, or does not take the time to converse well with the individual, the lasting impression will most likely be a negative one, an

impression that will probably effect induction, retention of traditional members, and the reputation of the organization.<sup>17</sup>

A study for the White House Office of Consumer Affairs by Technical Assistance Research Programs, Inc. found that 96% of unhappy customers never complain, but up to 91% of these quietly dissatisfied customers will not buy again from the offending business. The average unhappy customer will tell their story to at least 9 other people, and 13% will tell more than 20 people...<sup>18</sup>

NGB as a collective organization will have a negative reputation if the NGB full-time members are not professional and helpful to state members and other customers to include the Department of the Army, Congress, and other organizations. The same will occur when a potential recruit has a negative experience at a local armory eventually spreading the word throughout the community and recruiting base.<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately, research shows that only two to four percent of all dissatisfied individuals will convey their dissatisfaction.<sup>20</sup>

With the increased operational tempo and deployments of the ARNG, and the impact that the full-time guard person has upon both recruiting and retention, it is crucial to hire and retain only the best full-time employees.<sup>21</sup> The process of Upgrading outlined in this paper suggests proven techniques utilized by Major Corporations to include PepsiCo, Gateway, the Viad Corporation, R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, and General Electric Company.<sup>22</sup>

By implementing the practices of Upgrading, the ARNG will improve the performance and caliber of the full-time employees. Implementing the systematic program of Upgrading helps identify talent, rewards A Performers, and eliminates non-performers. Undoubtedly, the process of Upgrading is controversial – even though the true controversy is in retaining marginal performers protected by a bureaucratic system.<sup>23</sup> Complacency to reform the status quo will simply propagate marginal performance that drives talent from the full-time force. The process of Upgrading can simply begin by reviewing past performance and taking the appropriate steps in making changes where necessary to improve the overall performance of the full-time force.<sup>24</sup>

Readiness is the primary reason for Upgrading. Upgrading will ensure that the ARNG full-time employees are able to support the traditional force structure. Full-time employees have a tremendous impact upon readiness. Personnel readiness is an organization's ability to maintain personnel strength to accomplish its assigned missions.<sup>25</sup>

"Readiness" refers to a military force's ability to accomplish its operational missions. Defining readiness more explicitly and establishing quantitative



measures is difficult because readiness involves a number of contributing and concurrent factors. Requirements include quality personnel and topnotch leadership, all with the requisite skills, the proper weapon systems and other equipment, all in a high state of maintenance; effective sustaining support; and the training to ensure that...units work together effectively and seamlessly through the organizational levels.<sup>26</sup>

There is much consternation by some members within the ARNG due to the requirement placed on unit members to recruit and maintain strength readiness. Some unit members believe their responsibility is to be a highly trained warrior while it is the recruiting command's responsibility to recruit new unit members.<sup>27</sup> The "bottom line" of readiness is that without trained personnel a unit will not be prepared or able to accomplish assigned missions. Competent full-time employees play a significant roll in both recruiting and retention.

Upgrading, an advanced technique of performance management, will facilitate the retention of A Performers in the full-time force when career opportunities that are more lucrative are readily available in the civilian sector, even in times of recession. C Performers drive A Performers out of an organization, depleting the overall talent pool. The result is an organization that reflects the talent, or lack of talent, of the C Performers.<sup>28</sup> A poor retention rate of A Performers and part-time traditional soldiers is a key indicator that an organization needs to undergo drastic redesign. An organization will maintain the "status quo" or begin to atrophy when the A Performers leave the organization.<sup>29</sup>

Performance management has been a part of everyone's life from the first grade. It starts in grade school with advanced placement. Differentiation applies to football teams, cheerleading squads, and honor societies. It applies to the college admissions process when you're accepted by some schools and rejected by others. It applies at graduation when honors like summa cum laude or cum laude are added to your diploma.<sup>30</sup>

The ARNG must be forward looking in order to meet the fast paced requirements of change in military force structure and emerging missions. Upgrading is an investment by forward-looking organizations and leaders/managers that will improve the capabilities of the individual and group performance of the full-time force. The ARNG must aggressively improve the full-time force to eliminate the possibility of requirements outgrowing the talents of the full-time employees.<sup>31</sup> Opportunities missed by full-time employees and organizations rarely present themselves again.

In today's rapidly changing environment, it is tempting to argue that the challenges leaders face are uniquely difficult, and in some respects that may be true. However, it is useful to look at how some leaders and organizations have performed when confronted with the need to make strategic choices.<sup>32</sup>

—General Gordon R. Sullivan, Former Chief of Staff of the Army

## STRATEGIC RAMIFICATIONS OF UPGRADING

When change outside the organization is greater than change inside the organization, the end is near.<sup>33</sup>

— Mr. John R. Walter, Former President of AT&T

The changing strategic environment that the ARNG faces due to mission requirements and the need for transformation demand orchestrated actions based on analytical decisions. The ARNG must be an organization endowed with “agility and flexibility” to meet the dauntless demands of emerging strategic threats.<sup>34</sup> The ARNG senior leadership must consider Upgrading as a method to create a full-time work force that can support the daily demands of the organization while allowing the organization to respond properly and successfully to changing mission requirements.

FM 22-100, *Army Leadership*, states, “Strategic leaders work in an uncertain environment on highly complex problems that affect and are affected by events and organizations...”<sup>35</sup> ARNG strategic leaders/managers must have full trust and confidence in the full-time soldiers', non commissioned officers', and officers' abilities to achieve the strategic goals of the organization. Many senior leaders may not see their goals achieved during their tenure. It is therefore important to have the highest caliber of full-time employee who can continue the strategic focus of the organization. Upgrading provides the continuity and processes to support the strategic requirements of today and the future.

## IDENTIFY THE A PERFORMERS

The first step in improving an organization from a personnel perspective is to recognize deficiencies and implement a long-term plan to increase the capabilities of an organization.<sup>36</sup> The best practices of Upgrading consist of numerically identifying the top talent in the

organization – preexisting employees and new hires. New practices must be utilized in an organization's hiring methods, evaluation methodologies, and performance reviews.<sup>37</sup>

The first step in Upgrading begins at the leader/manager level. Upgrading requires leaders/managers to annually rank order employees in a specific group. Upgrading consists of ranking subordinates in sequential order from best to worst. An example would be to evaluate all full-time majors within a State. The process continues until all majors within the State are placed in numeric order from top to bottom. Another example is if a leader/manager has twenty subordinates, the leader/manager must numerically rank them from one through twenty. The top two [or 10%] are the A Performers, the middle 16 [or 80%] are B Performers, and the bottom two [or 10%] are C Performers.<sup>38</sup> Implementation of the process of Upgrading requires the elimination of the bottom two majors from the full-time force structure or redeployment internally with reduced authority.

Make all attempts to retain individuals eliminated from the full-time force in traditional positions. There is a different skill set required to be an A Performing full-time employee compared to the requirements of a traditional member. Retention is important, and full-time C Performers have contributions they can provide to the organization as a traditional member. Often, C Performers are hired from the traditional force due to their A Performance as a traditional member. Retention will be difficult, but ensure that the person understands that they are not a failure -- they simply do not have the skill set to compete as a full-time employee at this point and time of their career.

## CATEGORIZING PERFORMANCE

Jack Welch in his book, *Jack, Straight from the Gut*, discusses the importance of identifying A Performers. He believes that an organization should do whatever it takes legally to retain the A Performers. He states that B performers are the heart of an organization, but are not the individuals to whom significant resources and positions of greater responsibility are entrusted.<sup>39</sup>

The A's are people who are filled with passion, committed to making things happen, open to ideas from anywhere, and blessed with lots of runway ahead of them. They have the ability to energize not only themselves, but everyone who comes in contact with them. They make business productive and fun at the same time.<sup>40</sup>

—Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric

Categorizing performance is simple in concept but extremely difficult for leaders/managers to accomplish.<sup>41</sup> The categorization of employees consists of both objective and subjective evaluation. The focus of the objective assessment is the tangible achievements of the employees based upon completion of both military and civilian education as an example. If an employee is not qualified for a position, they are candidates for elimination. An example of a subjective evaluation is the full-time employee's ability to maintain focus on multiple tasks, ability to work well with team members, or organizational skills.

## RETAINING A PERFORMERS

It is not good to be better than the very worst.<sup>42</sup>

—Seneca, C. 4 B.C. – A.D. 65

Civilian organizations, such as Mckinsey and Company, a global consultancy, utilize a comprehensive program to identify A Performers and eliminate the C Performers while continually retaining the very best employees.<sup>43</sup> All departments within an organization must Upgrade in order to retain the A Performers. It is important for senior leaders/managers to ensure that B and C Performers do not sabotage A Performers before the Upgrading process is implemented. This is especially true for newly hired A Performers who do not have the history or the same knowledge of the organization.<sup>44</sup>

Upgrading will undoubtedly shock an organization -- from the top to the bottom. An average of ten to thirty-three percent of all leaders/managers can find themselves identified as C Performers if the organization is under performing.<sup>45</sup> This is an increase of the normal classification of only ten percent of a group classified as C Performers due to the entire organization underperforming. Leaders/managers are solely responsible for poor performance of subordinates and are held accountable in the Upgrading process. Elimination or redeployment will provide the necessary positions for promotion of subordinate leaders/managers identified as A Performers. This method allows an organization to retain A Performers at all levels. The elimination of C Performers will allow the ARNG to focus on the inclusion of a diversified work force of A Performers to enrich and diversify the organization.<sup>46</sup> Many ARNG organizations find it difficult to retain A Performers because they must compete with the many opportunities that exist in the civilian sector. Long term Upgrading will provide the opportunities to retain the A Performers in an organization. Organizations that actively

Upgrade must communicate with A Performers and provide them with opportunities to compete for command positions with the traditional part-time force. The same command opportunities should not be available to B Performers until they become A Performers. The privilege of holding a command position is not a preordained right for a full-time employee. Command assignments should be proportional to the percentage of the overall full-time force to the part-time force, but A Performing full-time employees should be given favorable consideration outside the proportion if there are not sufficient quality traditional members to meet the assignment requirements.

## OBSTACLES IN CATEGORIZING PERFORMANCE

The Toughest decisions in organizations are people decisions – hiring, firing, promotion, etc. These are the decisions that receive the least attention and are the hardest to unmake.<sup>47</sup>

—Peter Drucker

What is the incentive for A Performers to remain in an organization if B and C Performers continue to receive the same considerations and career advancement without exhibiting the highest level of performance or contributions of A Performers? Though leaders/managers will find the implementation of Upgrading extremely challenging, organizations that upgrade their full-time force will have little difficulty retaining A Performers.<sup>48</sup> The most prevalent obstacles to Upgrading are the leaders/managers who are C Performers. C Performing leaders/managers avoid hiring someone who could possibly take their positions or dismiss the C Performing leaders'/managers' indispensable status. In a best case scenario, the well informed and wise B Performing leader/manager will hire A Performers creating a "dream team" and potentially elevating the B Performing leader/manager to an A status. Some argue that Presidents have done the same in their administrations in areas where they have little experience. Reality in the workplace indicates that B and C Performing leaders/managers will probably not hire or encourage A Performers. Redeploying or eliminating B and C Performing leaders/managers can eliminate this problem if you implement Upgrading throughout the organization beginning at the top and then moving throughout the organization. If redeployment or elimination is not possible, senior supervisors should require these leaders/managers to hire A Performers. If he or she refuses, the senior leader/manager may be required to take

measures that are more drastic by taking the hiring process away from the B and/or C Performing leader/manager.<sup>49</sup>

Another significant obstacle to implementing Upgrading is hiring a B or C Performer who appears to be an A Performer during the hiring process. Implementing hiring processes will ensure that only A Performers are hired. Mis-hiring will occur when leaders/managers are not able to conduct a thorough assessment that reveals the candidates' true potential. Eliminate these mis-hires by implementing the processes outlined in this paper and by eliminating the "tell me about yourself" interviews and replacing them with fact based questions and answers.<sup>50</sup>

The senior leader of the organization who is responsible for implementing Upgrading must guard against the common excuse that the organization is overworked and not able to dedicate the staff required to implement this process. The solution to this obstacle is to begin the Upgrading process from the top down, ensuring that all senior leaders are A Performers committed to improving the organization by Upgrading. Once Upgraded themselves, senior leaders/managers can continue the process with "finesse, not a sledge hammer."<sup>51</sup>

Some may feel that the ARNG cannot compete with the salaries offered in the corporate sector. Others believe "that A Performers are not driven by salary alone."<sup>52</sup> ARNG traditional members who are A Performers in civilian positions can be attracted to the full-time force by appealing to their patriotic aspirations or their desire to be part of a dynamic, mission-driven organization. Take every step to hire these individuals. These new A Performers will help drive the cultural change that Upgrading requires.<sup>53</sup> Leaders/managers must identify A Performers in corporate positions who have the skills that are transferable into the ARNG full-time force. It is important for the hiring leader/manager to identify the skills that are transferable from one position to the new full-time position for which the incumbent is being considered.

Firing the C performers is a difficult challenge for leaders/managers. GE found that their managers were able to identify the bottom 10% the first year of the program, but had difficulty in the following years.<sup>54</sup> Leaders/managers should work with their C Performers to help them improve into B or A Performers, but the bottom 10% must be eliminated or redeployed for Upgrading to be successful when a milestone is achieved, such as a specified date.

Upgrading is a difficult process since it requires the leader/manager to evaluate the performance of their subordinates, potentially leading to an employee's elimination from the full-time force. However, there is no logical reason to retain C Performers when A Performers are available in the part-time, traditional force. Retaining C Performers can have catastrophic effects on the retention of the traditional force as well as full-time A Performers.<sup>55</sup>

## LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS OF ELIMINATING C PERFORMERS

Undoubtedly, leaders/managers want a list of “do’s and don’ts” that will keep them out of legal trouble when implementing Upgrading. There are definite practices that are illegal and inadvisable in the application of Upgrading. Laws in the United States are in place to protect the individual employee as well as the employer. Upgrading must not be used as a way to make an excuse for discriminating against anyone based on anything other than unacceptable performance. It is, therefore, critical that the organization that is Upgrading ensures that a system of safeguards is in place so that the process is conducted in accordance with all State and Federal regulations, laws,<sup>56</sup> as well as the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).<sup>57</sup>

The full-time structure of the ARNG is an organization with a diverse work force. Each specific group of the work force has explicit laws and regulations to include the dual status military technician:

Title 32, Chapter 7, Section. 709. - Notwithstanding any other provision of law and under regulations prescribed by the Secretary concerned - a person employed...who is a military technician (dual status)...is separated from the National Guard or ceases to hold the military grade specified by the Secretary concerned for that position shall be promptly separated from military technician (dual status) employment by the adjutant general of the jurisdiction concerned; and fails to meet the military security standards established by the Secretary concerned for a member of a reserve component under his jurisdiction may be separated from employment as a military technician (dual status) and concurrently discharged from the National Guard by the adjutant general of the jurisdiction concerned; a technician may, at any time, be separated from his technician employment for cause by the adjutant general of the jurisdiction concerned; a reduction in force, removal, or an adverse action involving discharge from technician employment, suspension, furlough without pay, or reduction in rank or compensation shall be accomplished by the adjutant general of the jurisdiction concerned; a right of appeal which may exist...shall not extend beyond the adjutant general of the jurisdiction concerned; and a technician shall be notified in writing of the termination of his employment as a technician and, unless the technician is serving under a temporary appointment, is serving in a trial or probationary period, or has voluntarily ceased to be a member of the National Guard when such membership is a condition of employment, such notification shall be given at least 30 days before the termination date of such employment.<sup>58</sup>

The ramifications of firing a C Performers or forcing their resignation hold significant consequences to the organization as well as the leader/manager who violates contractual agreements or the law. It is, therefore, essential that the organization thoroughly investigate the

legal requirements and ensure that “job descriptions are written in behavioral terms, accountabilities are spelled out, and nonperformance is documented.”<sup>59</sup> The leader/manager must complete the required disciplinary process when a C Performer is identified. Treat C Performers fairly and within the legal process. “Do your homework, work with Human Resource professionals and Counsel to document nonperformance and its consequences, coach like crazy to help the person succeed, and if worse come to worst, fire the person.”<sup>60</sup>

## **HIRING PRACTICES**

It is a heck of a lot easier to hire the right people to begin with than to try to fix them later.<sup>61</sup>

—Brad Smart

Staffing strategies refer to the decisions made by the organization on where to select employees for hire, the process for hiring or placing the employee, and the skills that are required for a given position.<sup>62</sup> The ARNG is a fast paced organization that is naturally interested in screening talent for a position for which an incumbent may be interviewing, but also screening the incumbent for future position(s), he or she may hold.<sup>63</sup> The ARNG should hire full-time employees based upon their capacity to become A Performers. These employees will primarily consist of junior enlisted members and Lieutenants or recent college graduates (Vocational Technical, two year and four year programs) for non-dual technician positions. Closely scrutinize these individuals and examine their abilities as B Performers immediately and their potential to eventually progress into A Performers for promotion or advancement. Before consideration for any position individuals must be branch or position qualified.<sup>64</sup> Hire the individual on a temporary basis if they do not possess the basic skills and abilities to be an A Performer and provide them with the resources, education, training, and mentorship to facilitate their transformation.<sup>65</sup> Then create and strictly enforce a timeline for the individual to become an A Performer before allowing the individual to become a permanent full-time employee.

Leaders/managers should not hire the “best of the worst!”<sup>66</sup> Leaders/managers should feel comfortable with dismissing all candidates for a position if no A Performers are available. Leaders/managers should consider temporary employees such as Temporary Technicians, Active Duty Special Work (ADSW) personnel, or contractors, to fill these voids. It is better to deal with temporary B or C Performers versus hiring a full-time C Performer. An alternative is to leave a position vacant while distributing those responsibilities to competent A Performers within



the current employee pool. Distribution of responsibilities is a short-term fix, however, because it will “burnout” the A Performers.<sup>67</sup>

The only time it is appropriate to retain C Performers is when the organization's hiring practices are not yet capable of selecting A Performers. If an organization's hiring process is broken, fix it using the hiring practice outlined in this paper. Great leaders/managers will never stop raising the bar to improve their organizations.<sup>68</sup> Some leaders/managers will undoubtedly find reasons to retain their C Performers. Loyalty to subordinates is admirable, but loyalty does not improve the overall objectives and abilities of the organization. Leaders/managers who are unable to face the responsibility of categorizing their subordinates demonstrate that they themselves are C Performers and should be redeployed or replaced.<sup>69</sup>

### C PERFORMERS IN SENIOR POSITIONS

C Performers in leadership positions can stifle the performance of A Performers and drive them out of the full-time structure. The C Performing leader/manager can also set the conditions or expectations of the A Performer to a level unattainable by even the very best performer. Conversely, these leaders might give the A Performer tasks that are not challenging enough creating a feeling of underutilization.<sup>70</sup> The A Performers are eventually driven out of the organization. Avoiding this scenario requires the redeployment or elimination of C Performing leaders and the transfer of B Performing leaders into limited positions of responsibility or positions of increased supervision.<sup>71</sup>

Senior leaders/managers must manage and protect newly hired A Performers to prevent the new hire from being undermined by preexisting sub-caliber B and C performers. Low performance may be a result of a systemic culture created by C Performers in key position within the organization. This culture is most certainly cultivated over time by leaders/managers who do not provide a sense of accountability, acceptance of change, an atmosphere of innovation and creativity, and are constantly providing excuses instead of results.<sup>72</sup> The only way to overcome this culture is to eliminate or make accountable C Performers and replace them with A Performers throughout the organization. A major challenge to this recommendation may be the lack of talented individuals in the required rank or grade to replace the C Performers requiring the hiring leader/manager to continue the search for A Performers.

## HOW TO AVOID MIS-HIRES

The leader/manager responsible for hiring must utilize a structured hiring process that identifies the specific characteristics of A Performers. Sometimes, individuals who appear to be A Performers during the interview process end up being C Performers after they are hired.<sup>73</sup> Poor hiring decisions are often a result of leaders/managers who hire based on “good feelings” during an unstructured interview or resume review. Leaders/managers must utilize a systematic interview process that will allow the hiring leader/manager to uncover the incumbent’s strengths, weaknesses, potential, and training needs.<sup>74</sup> Additionally, do not take resumes or assignment history for granted. Conduct the proper research to avoid mis-hires.

Implementation of a structured interview and evaluation process ensures that the best possible employee is hired. Bradford Smart in his book entitled *Topgrading, How Leading Companies Win by Hiring, Coaching and Keeping the Best People*, recommends the following guide to identify the strengths, potential training needs, and abilities of potential employees.<sup>75</sup>

### Prior to Interview:

- Review the incumbent’s employee history.
- Have a detailed Job Description and Competencies required for the position.
- Develop a detailed questionnaire to use as a guide during the interview.
  - Review the guide before the interview.
  - Customize the guide based upon the review of work history, application, and resume.
  - Identify the time needed for interview and clear your schedule.

### During Interview:

- Build rapport with the incumbent and explain the interview process.
- Follow the detailed questionnaire.
  - Ensure that the incumbent answers all questions.
  - Allow silence if the incumbent needs time to consider the question(s).<sup>76</sup>
- Write the answers provided by incumbent during the interview.
- Close by asking the incumbent if he or she has any questions.

### Post Interview:

- Review the notes taken during the interview to ensure competencies needed are present.
- Conduct complete reference checks.

- Make final assessment of the incumbent.
- Write a brief report on the incumbent's potential.
- "Make the decision to hire, promote, or transfer...or not."<sup>77</sup>

## PROMOTING FROM WITHIN VERSUS HIRING FROM OUTSIDE

An extremely important decision that must be considered by the organization or the hiring leader/manager is whether to hire from within the organization or from outside the organization to fill vacancies.<sup>78</sup> The ARNG can be divided into several internal components consisting of hiring selections made from within the State's ARNG full or part-time force, other State's ARNG full or part-time members, or ARNG members employed by the National Guard Bureau. Additional external organizations consist of the USAR or the United States Army Active Component (AC). An organization the size of the ARNG should continue the practice of promoting and hiring from within, but there should be no hesitation in hiring externally if the internal pool of candidates does not have an identified A Performer(s).<sup>79</sup>

Hiring from outside the organization is a proven method for improving upon the talent pool of the full-time force. This method of hiring can improve the performance of current personnel by exposing them to new talent and fostering some healthy competition. Every full-time employee, and every potential employee, has a different personality with different capabilities and professional aspirations. Leaders/managers must understand that there are different personality types and different approaches to job functions. An employee may approach processes in ways different from the leader/manager, but the outcome is valid and most likely the same as the leader/manager may have achieved. Understand the differences and allow the employee to make individual contributions as long as the actions do not have a negative impact on the organization.<sup>80</sup> Identify constructive, outspoken personnel and foster their ability to contribute. Do not immediately target these individuals as non-team players.<sup>81</sup> "Protect voices of leadership without authority. Give cover to those who raise hard questions and generate distress—people who point to the internal contradictions of the society. These individuals often will have latitude to provoke rethinking that authorities do not have."<sup>82</sup>

The primary source of filling vacant positions is by hiring or promoting from within the organization. Many of the premier civilian organizations have "grown their own." Internal selections allow an organization to evaluate the individuals over time and know the work habits and abilities of the potential candidates.<sup>83</sup>

## LEADERSHIP ROLE IN RECRUITMENT

Upgrading must be a top down process to ensure the identification and retention of A Performers.<sup>84</sup> The flag officer(s) within the ARNG must begin the process and be at the forefront of Upgrading. The flag officer(s) play an important role in Upgrading to include the following:<sup>85</sup>

- Lead Upgrading by beginning with the senior leadership within the organization.
  - This includes the development and application of all policies and processes.
- Set specific goals.
- Hold all leaders/managers accountable for Upgrading and hiring practices.
- Monitor the Upgrading progress at all levels and stages to include hiring A Performers.
- Devote a significant portion of time available to Upgrading.
- Minimize the need for external recruitment of personnel by encouraging full and part-time leaders/managers to identify A Performers within the extended organization.
- Override subordinate hiring decisions when A Performers are not selected for hire.
- Never allow Upgrading to be undercut.

## USING MULTI-SOURCE FEEDBACK TO IDENTIFY TRUE PERFORMANCE

One method used to identify developmental needs of employees and to gain valuable information for rating is the Multi-Source Feedback Evaluation. The Multi-Source Feedback, commonly referred to as the 360-Degree Assessment, assesses performance from co-workers, leaders/managers, peers, subordinates, and customers.<sup>86</sup> The 360-Degree Assessment has been widely accepted by corporate America. The 360-Degree Feedback Assessment serves as a “needs” assessment for an individual. The feedback provided can indicate if training is required to improve performance or to change specific behavior in the workplace.<sup>87</sup>

The 360-Degree Assessment allows the leadership team to identify those full-time employees who “kiss up while stomping down” by having traditional members who are peers and subordinate complete the survey.<sup>88</sup> As mentioned, a full-time employee can have drastic effects on retention and the 360-Degree Assessment will identify this problem if the correct sample set is surveyed. Take immediate, corrective action when such performance is identified.

The full-time employee must change. If not, every effort should be made to redeploy the individual within the organization. Otherwise, the C Performer may need to be eliminated.<sup>89</sup>

The 360-Degree Assessment will not replace the Officer Evaluation Report (OER) or Non Commissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER). The 360-Degree Assessment will be utilized by the leader/manager in conjunction with the counseling form and technician evaluation report to assess developmental needs, and eventually performance, during an entire performance period. Unfortunately, many AGR leaders/managers are not in the OER or NCOER rating chain that evaluates the full-time employees' performance. This omission is a result of many full-time employees having a full-time position such as a readiness NCO, for example, while serving as a Platoon Sergeant during drill weekends. This full-time employee may be an A Performing Platoon Sergeant, but a C Performing readiness NCO. With the current evaluation system, this individual would receive an NCOER that does not reflect his or her full-time performance.<sup>90</sup> The process of Upgrading allows the leader/manager to evaluate all full-time employees who report to him or her, but are not rated by that individual leader/manager.

The changes suggested in this paper will not have an impact upon the "Total Army" personnel and evaluation system. Incorporating the 360-Degree Assessment into the evaluation process will improve the Army's evaluation system. Lieutenant Colonel Timothy R. Reese, in his 2002 Strategy Research Project entitled *Transforming The Officer Evaluation System: Using A 360-Degree Feedback Model* recommends the use of the 360-Degree Assessment as part of the OER. Colonel Reese, in his abstract states:

Since 1996, the Army has come to recognize that it has an officer leadership problem, particularly at its field grade and general officer levels. Too many officers run their units, their people (and sometimes themselves) into the ground in the pursuit of short-term mission successes. The Army has an excess of transactional leaders and a deficit of transformational leaders. The effects are many and varied: low morale among the force, rampant cynicism and mistrust, a retention crisis among mid-grade NCOs, captains and lieutenant colonels, officers declining command, and less effective, less ready units. This realization has come about at the same time that the Army is attempting to transform not only its equipment and tactical /operational doctrine, but also the way in which units operate and are led in the information age. The Army should take a cue from civilian practice in broadening its understanding of successful leadership from one that currently focuses almost entirely upon mission accomplishment, to one that includes long term organizational health of the unit and its personnel alongside of mission accomplishment. Army leadership doctrine emphasizes transformational leadership and the need to sustain units and individuals over long periods of stress. Army practices, however, ignore this aspect of leadership

when it rates officer performance and in how it selects officers for schooling, promotion and command. A 360-degree leadership assessment of officer effectiveness, using peer and subordinate input, should be used as a formal part of the officer evaluation system.<sup>91</sup>

The 360-Degree Assessment is an emerging assessment and development tool used by a wide variety of corporations. Its use can eventually migrate from the full-time force to the part-time force. There are a significant number of online multi-source assessment providers. They are identifiable by executing an online search of “360-Degree Assessments.” The 360-Degree Assessment tool will assist the leadership/management team in identifying individual and team strengths and performance that requires additional refinement. The collection of this information will allow the leadership/management team to identify A, B, and C Performers. It also provides the employee an increased individual awareness of their own behavior that will in turn cause behavioral change and an improvement in their overall performance.<sup>92</sup>

#### BENEFITS OF MULTI-SOURCE FEEDBACK

The primary benefit of the 360-Degree Assessment is to allow the organization to evaluate the level of performance and training needs of the full-time force. Initial utilization of the 360-Degree Assessment will identify employee problem areas that will result in training to help employees to improve their performance. Use subsequent assessments for evaluation and identification of performance during a rating period.<sup>93</sup> This method of performance feedback provides increased reliability versus the individual manager's subjective evaluation. The 360-Degree Assessment provides individual feedback and highlights the employee's perceived self-performance. The results of the 360-Degree Assessment can help the leader/manager identify employee-training needs and pinpoint immediate actions needed to prevent potentially abusive behavior. The 360-Degree Assessment is also a useful development tool for A and B Performers. A Performers can focus on maintaining and improving upon identified areas, while B Performers can concentrate on an individual development plan in areas identified as needing improvement. This in turn will assist them in becoming A Performers. The leader/manager also receives feedback that can be used in coaching and counseling sessions with their employees. Over time, leaders/managers can identify negative and positive trends in individual employees and within the team. The leader/manager can then create developmental requirements to address the negative trends identified in the feedback.<sup>94</sup> Leaders/managers are the sole

safeguard to ensure that assessment participants do not attempt to sabotage A Performers – a difficult and daunting task.

## **PERFORMANCE REVIEWS**

You must talk to your soldiers...I don't just mean in formation or groups, but one-on-one...<sup>95</sup>

—Command Sergeant Major Daniel E. Wright

Many employees feel threatened and intimidated by change and improvement. They may also feel that suggestions for individual improvement are actually implied or directed criticism of their job performance. Other employees will be uncomfortable with the uncertainty that the implementation of Upgrading will create. Nonetheless, quality improvements demand a systematic change in how the full-time force is managed. Positive improvements can be achieved through aggressive competition that Upgrading will foster.<sup>96</sup> The most effective method to convey assessments, coach, and discuss training needs is the performance review. Conduct informal reviews daily in an informal dialog and formally review on a regular schedule. The use of the performance review is the best approach in implementing the Upgrading process for an organization. Feedback on a regular basis, focusing on performance and feedback from the 360-Degree Assessment, is essential to allow employees to understand their strengths and areas that need immediate attention to improve their contributions to the ARNG.<sup>97</sup> The method of using the 360-Degree Assessment differs from the current practice of leaders/managers providing their own assessment of a full-time employee.

## **PURPOSE OF REVIEWS**

The performance review is the most important feedback tool a leader/manager provides to employees to maximize their individual and collective contributions to an organization. Continuous performance feedback creates an atmosphere of open communication that will alleviate the tension that often accompanies annual reviews. Leaders should praise quality performance immediately to reinforce that behavior as well as work with employees who are not performing to a specified standard. Leaders/managers should demand that employees work to their full potential in order to continue to improve the organization's overall performance. All employees desire to know how their leader/manager, peers, and subordinates perceive them. It

is important that they receive feedback continuously so they can maintain their current performance or work to improve performance in their quest to become an A Performer.<sup>98</sup>

In addition to informal reviews, conduct quarterly performance reviews with all full-time employees.<sup>99</sup> Formal reviews should include the information that is shared during informal interaction as well as information from the 360-Degree Assessment and the leader's/manager's assessment of the employee's performance. Formal reviews should not have surprises if the leader/manager has established a positive communication climate with the employee. The formal review should consist of the performance review and a review of development goals, objectives, and training needs agreed upon by the leader/manager and the employee.<sup>100</sup>

#### SETTING OBJECTIVES (EXISTING AND NEW HIRES)

The review process provides a structured method for the leader/manager and employee to establish performance objectives and requirements. An up-to-date and detailed job description must be on hand and agreed upon by the leader/manager and employee before a performance review. It is imperative that the leader/manager ensures that the job description and goals support the organization's overall mission. The leader/manager must ensure that he or she is adequately prepared to conduct a thorough and detailed review with the employee. The manager literally holds the employee's future in the balance if the employee is not given the feedback needed to maintain acceptable performance.<sup>101</sup>

The hiring leader/manager should meet with each new employee and begin the process of goal setting immediately upon the employee reporting for the first day of employment. Leaders/managers should orient new employees to the organization and outline the required performance that is expected. If new employees do not receive this orientation, they can develop incorrect perceptions of expectations or feel lost resulting in the loss of a potential A Performer. Managers should meet with new employees to assess the effectiveness of their orientation once the new employee has integrated into the team.<sup>102</sup>

#### GOAL SETTING AND ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES

The focus of the ARNG must be to create a climate where multiple goals are achieved simultaneously. Both leaders/managers and employees must know what is expected of them and how their contributions will allow the organization to achieve the stated objectives. It becomes critical that the leadership of the ARNG allows subordinate leaders/managers and



employees to have individual goals that feed into the goals and objectives of the organization in order to improve the overall organizational performance. ARNG senior leaders must bridge the gap between the subordinate leaders/managers and employees by creating an atmosphere of trust within the organization. Trust is developed by subordinate leaders/managers being influential spokespeople for their employees with the senior leadership. Leaders/managers who are true advocates for the employees will be effective communicators of the organizational goals to employees, and employees will readily accept the organizational goals from leaders/managers they trust.<sup>103</sup>

Leaders/managers can develop trust with employees over time. Trust will be severely fractured if a leader/manger makes a promise to an individual or group of employees and then the promise is not carried through. Leaders/managers should not make promises they cannot keep. Promises should be carefully and sparingly made to employees. If leaders/managers develop the habit of keeping promises, they will build the trust between themselves and their employees.<sup>104</sup>

Objectives must be measurable in numeric or percentage terms. This will allow employees to understand their targets of performance.<sup>105</sup> Give employees the opportunity to provide ideas on their individual goals, creating a commitment in the employees' mind. Employees will rarely suggest goals that are below their potential.<sup>106</sup>

## LEADER/MANAGER PREPARATION FOR REVIEW AND EVALUATING PERFORMANCE

The leaders/managers have a daunting role in the processes outlined in the paper. Research suggests that they are responsible for the following:<sup>107</sup>

- Evaluate performance and assess commitment.
- Identify goals and set standards.
- Plan long term.
- Create a positive work environment.
- Be objective.
- Plan the review process structure.
- Manage the review while building agreement.
- Encourage interaction and handle difficult situations.
- Be practical.
- Deal with performance problems immediately.

- Develop training plans based on developmental needs.

The leader/manager manages individual performance by motivating employees to improve upon performance, providing the employee with timely feedback, and insuring proper training to improve performance.<sup>108</sup>

## **OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTING UPGRADING**

In monitoring levels of distress, any leader has to find indicators for knowing both when to promote an...issue and whether the stress generated by an intervention falls within the productive range for that social system at that time.<sup>109</sup>

—Ronald A. Heifetz

Upgrading will truly change and possibly transform the ARNG as an organization. It will require the full-time force to give up the processes they hold dear and that often create an artificial comfort zone. However, this comfort zone is the primary reason a change is required. Daily habits, loyalties, and set ways of thinking are eventually modified in order to achieve the desired results of an organization's capability to rapidly adjust to the future demands of the organization.<sup>110</sup>

Upgrading will require a complete organizational transformation that requires courage and commitment by senior ARNG leaders. The changes that Upgrading provides transcend a simple change of how the ARNG manages and develops its full-time force structure. Upgrading will most certainly be "marginalized" and "attacked" by B and C Performers who fear the scrutiny that upgrading requires. Senior leaders will be "bombarded" by every conceivable excuse why Upgrading should not be implemented, but the bottom line of Upgrading is a focus on the good of the organization.<sup>111</sup>

Six rules in Ronald Heifetz's et al., article "*A Survival Guide for Leaders*" published in the Harvard Business Review can guide the senior leadership of the ARNG in the implementation of Upgrading. The first rule is "Operate in and above the fray."<sup>112</sup> Dynamic leaders/managers committed to improving the ARNG must be reflective and able to maintain perspective on the end goal of their actions based upon the overall intent of Upgrading. A significant challenge is to be both observer and participant in the change process of Upgrading. Leaders/managers are encouraged to use meetings as forums to work with and watch participants engage in

conversation and dialog. The senior leader must allow subordinates the opportunity to discuss and debate the process without interference.<sup>113</sup>

The second rule is “Court the uncommitted.”<sup>114</sup> Upgrading will not be successful if the leadership/management team of the ARNG is not committed to the process of improving the organization as a whole. “Going it alone” will not work! Upgrading requires change to occur from the top down. The senior leadership/management of the ARNG must seek partners who will protect the program from internal and external attacks. Identify your opponents, keep them close, and include them in the process.<sup>115</sup> If you cannot convince these individuals to support the process, they may have identified themselves as C Performers, or there may be a problem with the marketing of the process.<sup>116</sup> It is important that these individuals believe that Upgrading is not something they can simply outlive until the senior leadership changes.

The third rule is “Cook the conflict.”<sup>117</sup> Senior leaders rarely enjoy conflict. However, conflict is an inherent part of organizational change and requires careful management to keep Upgrading on track. Conflict will be the result of clashes between members of the full-time force due to deeply held differences of opinion and fear of change. The senior leaders/managers should embrace these passions and channel them to support Upgrading for the good of the organization. Senior leaders should create forums for employees to express their conflict in a professional manner. Allow concerns to be placed on the table and discussed. Most importantly, the senior leadership must ensure that conflict does not get out of hand, eliminating the possibility to channel passions and differences into constructive efforts. Strict rules must be established to prevent fissures within the organization that will delay change.<sup>118</sup>

The fourth rule is “Give the work back to people, but at a rate they can stand.”<sup>119</sup> “Transforming change requires all members of an organization to adapt.”<sup>120</sup> Senior leaders should avoid the temptation to give all the answers and the specifics on exactly how to implement the changes. The successful senior leader/manager will allow subordinate leaders/managers to work the problem solving processes of Upgrading. Successful long-term change requires that subordinate leaders/managers who remain in the organization past the tenure of the senior leaders/managers work the process to create long term “buy in.”<sup>121</sup>

The final two rules deal with the senior leader’s/manager’s personal leadership desires. The fifth rule for the senior leader is “Manage your hungers.”<sup>122</sup> The challenges of Upgrading will be overwhelming and angst producing. The senior leader must encourage and work through subordinates and withstand the desire to control the process. The senior leader should

allow some chaos and disorder to be generated within the organization to allow subordinates the opportunity to work through the process and develop a sense of ownership.<sup>123</sup>

The final rule for the senior leader is “Anchor Yourself.”<sup>124</sup> Ensure that your mission statement is not limiting. The senior leader, as well as everyone within the organization, must be open to reinventing themselves to support Upgrading. A senior leader may find that he or she is a C Performer requiring immediate development.<sup>125</sup> The courage displayed by senior leaders/managers that implement Upgrading will be admired if properly implemented. Leading the process of Upgrading will seem lonely since the senior leader/manager is taking the responsibility to change the environment of the organization.<sup>126</sup> Subordinates will not forget that they are the heirs of the courageous leadership that improved the ARNG full-time forces.<sup>127</sup>

## METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Change is hard. It's hard for some to bear, and it's hard for all of us to achieve.<sup>128</sup>

—Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld

Implement Upgrading in a two-phase process during a two-year period. Conduct Phase 1 during the first year implementing the program without removal or redeployment of any of the C Performers. This will give the full-time employees a chance to improve individual performance and understand how the program works. Conduct Phase 2 during the second year concluding with the redeployment and/or dismissal of the C Performers. A third year will consist of dismissal of C Performers if the second year is only redeployment of the C Performers.<sup>129</sup>

Upgrading requires ongoing coaching, mentoring, training, and development of all personnel. Upgrading will improve the focus and quality of hiring and retention of A Performers as it has done in the civilian sector.<sup>130</sup> The results will potentially eliminate the need to document the continued poor performance of C Performers, and eventually B Performers, requiring the leaders/managers to subdivide performers into categories of A<sup>1</sup>, A<sup>2</sup>, or A<sup>3</sup>.<sup>131</sup> Upgrading is the total process of hiring and progressing A Performers within an organization.<sup>132</sup>

An alternative to full implementation of this process is completion of all steps without redeployment or replacement of the C Performers. It will entail identifying C Performers, reviewing with them their unsatisfactory performance, and limiting their areas of responsibility.

## RESULTS OF UPGRADING

Leadership is dangerous... People who lead frequently bear scars from their efforts to bring about adaptive change.<sup>133</sup>

—Ronald A. Heifetz

Upgrading will provide the cultural change needed to launch the ARNG to a premier organizational status utilizing standardized processes to hire and retain only the top quality performers. These changes will allow the ARNG to meet the increasing operational tempo and deployments and improve both recruiting and retention. Upgrading will create a challenging and synergistic environment utilizing the standardized methodologies and practices in hiring, training, managing, assessing, and retaining a top quality full-time staff. The top quality full-time force will maintain the highest level of focus on the traditional force structure directly affecting the overall readiness of the traditional force to include personnel retention. Upgrading will be successful in the ARNG as it has been in many major civilian organizations.

**WORD COUNT: 9,765**

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bradford D. Topgrading, *How leading Companies Win by Hiring, Coaching and Keeping the Best People*. (Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall Press, 1999.), 6.

<sup>2</sup> Information taken from National Guard Bureau Website; available from [http://www.arng.army.mil/About\\_Us/](http://www.arng.army.mil/About_Us/); Internet; accessed 19 October 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Information taken from National Guard Bureau Website; available from [http://www.arng.army.mil/soldier\\_resources/Title10/](http://www.arng.army.mil/soldier_resources/Title10/); Internet; accessed 19 October 2002.

<sup>4</sup> COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, discussion with author, 20 December 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

<sup>5</sup> Hunter, Ronald S., Et Al., Eds., 2002 National Guard Almanac, Falls Church, VA: Uniformed Services Almanac, Inc., 2002. 132 – 133.

<sup>6</sup> Information taken from the Legal Information Institute, US Code Collection Website; available from <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/10/10216.html>; Internet; accessed 23 November 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Information taken from the Legal Information Institute, US Code Collection Website; available from <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/32/.html>; Internet; accessed 23 November 2002.

<sup>8</sup> Hunter, 132 – 133.

<sup>9</sup> Information taken from the Legal Information Institute, US Code Collection Website; available from <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/10/10217.html>; Internet; accessed 23 November 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Smart, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Stevenin, Thomas J. *People Power, Tapping the Spirit of Quality Performance and Service in Your Organization*. (Chicago, IL: Northfield Publishing.) 1996, 27.

<sup>12</sup> Smart, 14. I recommend a change from the percentage that Smart suggests for A and B Performers. He recommends the top 20% be categorized as A Performers and 70% categorized as B Performers.

<sup>13</sup> Welch, John F. Jr. and Byrne, John A. Jack, Straight From The Gut. New York: Warner Books, Inc., 2001, 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Information taken from Prepared Remarks for General Eric K. Shinseki, Chief Of Staff, United States Army, At The Association Of The United States Army Seminar November 8, 2001, Washington DC, U.S. Army News Website; available from

<http://www.dtic.mil/armylink/news/Nov2001/r20011109csa-remarks.html>, Internet; accessed 11 December 2002.

<sup>17</sup> COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, discussion with author, 22 November 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA..

<sup>18</sup> Information taken from the City and County of Denver, Division of Public Health Inspection Website; available from <http://www.denvergov.org/PHI/template1521.asp>; Internet; accessed 25 November 2002.

<sup>19</sup> COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, discussion with author, 22 November 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

<sup>20</sup> Information taken from the What Happens to Dissatisfied Customers?, Technical Assistance Research Program Institute, Consumer Complaint Handling in America: An Updated Study for the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs (Washington D.C., 1986) Part II, Chapter 3; available from <http://www.ultrabond.com/consumer-survey.htm>; Internet; accessed 25 November 2002.

<sup>21</sup> Slater, Robert. The GE Way Fieldbook. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1999, 9.

<sup>22</sup> Information taken from Topgrading Web Site; available from <http://topgrading.com/smarts.html>; Internet; accessed 11 December 2002 and Welch, 175.

<sup>23</sup> Byrne, John and Welch, Jack "Jack and the People Factory, In his own words, Welch tells how to jolt a business to life:" FORTUNE. September 2001 Issue, 7.

<sup>24</sup> Slater, 9-10.

<sup>25</sup> Smart, 6.

<sup>26</sup> Institute of Land Warfare. Fiscal Year 2003: Army Budget – An Analysis Arlington, VA: Association of the United States Army, June 2002. 14 – 15.

<sup>27</sup> COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, discussion with author, 20 December 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

<sup>28</sup> Smart, 6.

<sup>29</sup> Byrne, 1 – 8.

<sup>30</sup> Welch, 162.

<sup>31</sup> Smart, 22.

<sup>32</sup> Sullivan, Gordon R. and Harper Hope is Not a Method. New York: Random House, Inc., 1996, 26.

<sup>33</sup> Quote credited to John R. Walter at the Global Information Website, available at <http://www.global-vision.com/Silverado.asp>, Internet; accessed 11 December 2002, information taken from Government Executive Web Site, Managing the Flood of Information; available from <http://207.27.3.29/features/0398sup1.htm>, Internet; accessed 11 December 2002, and information taken from Defense Link Web Site, Defense Issues: Volume 13 Number 10-- Special Operations Forces: The Way Ahead Threats to U.S. interests are developing new dimensions. America is increasingly challenged by regional instability, transnational dangers, asymmetric threats and the likelihood of unpredictable events, Internet accessed 11 December 2002. Quote also credited to Jack Welch at the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York, The Transformation of a Health Care System, Prepared by Scott Murray, Ph.D., Director, Network Behavioral VA Health Care Line, available at [file:///C:/WINDOWS/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.IE5/KFYNM70P/402,1,Slide 1](file:///C:/WINDOWS/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.IE5/KFYNM70P/402,1,Slide%201), Internet; accessed 11 December 2002 and information taken from The Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Department of Leadership and Information Strategy Website; available from <http://www.ndu.edu/icafe/departments/leadinfosystems/slmc/4.htm>, Internet; accessed 11 December 2002.

<sup>34</sup> Information taken from The Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Department of Leadership and Information Strategy, Strategic Leadership 5050, Lesson 4, Reframing Organizations Website; available from <http://www.ndu.edu/icafe/departments/leadinfosystems/slmc/4.htm>, Internet; accessed 23 November 2002.

<sup>35</sup> FM 22-100, 1-12.

<sup>36</sup> Strickland, A. G. How to Get Action: Key to Successful Management. West Nyack, NY: Parker Publishing Company, Inc. 1975, 20.

<sup>37</sup> Smart, 11.

<sup>38</sup> Byrne, 6 – 7.

<sup>39</sup> Welch, 160.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 160

<sup>42</sup> Smart, 60.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 28 – 30.

<sup>46</sup> Welch, 28.

<sup>47</sup> Smart. 45.



<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>49</sup> The information in this footnote, as well as others to follow, has information found in multiple sources. Ibid., 34 – 35 and Byrne, 7 –8.

<sup>50</sup> Smart, 35 – 36 and Byrne, 7.

<sup>51</sup> Smart, 36 – 37.

<sup>52</sup> Note from COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, review of author's work, provided on 20 December 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

<sup>53</sup> Smart, 37 – 38 and Byrne, 7 – 8.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 38 and Ibid., 7 – 8.

<sup>55</sup> Byrne, 8.

<sup>56</sup> Noe, Raymond A., Hollenbeck, John R., Gerhart, Barry, and Wright, Patrick Human Resource management. Gaining a Competitive Advantage. (Burr Ridge, IL, Austen Press, 1994.), 117 – 118.

<sup>57</sup> Each State has their version of the State UCMJ.

<sup>58</sup> Information taken from the Legal Information Institute, US Code Collection Website; available from <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/32/>.html; Internet; accessed 23 November 2002.

<sup>59</sup> Smart, 74.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. 77.

<sup>62</sup> Noe, Raymond A. Employee Training & Development. (Boston: Irwin McGraw-Hill, 1999.), 30.

<sup>63</sup> Smart, 18.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>65</sup> Note from COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, review of author's work, provided on 20 December 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

<sup>66</sup> Smart, 24.

<sup>67</sup> COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, discussion with author, 20 December 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

<sup>68</sup> Smart, 24 – 27.

<sup>69</sup> Welch, 160 – 162.

<sup>70</sup> Smart, 22.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 – 27.

<sup>73</sup> This bullet and the following two are points learned by the author during a University of Excellence (UofE) training course entitled “Fact Based Decision Making.” Fact Based Hiring was a module of the course. The UofE is the internal training division for the Sprint Corporation.

<sup>74</sup> Smart, 35 – 36.

<sup>75</sup> Smart, 320 – 321. The following bullet points, excluding the bullets marked with an alternate source, have been paraphrased from the listed resource.

<sup>76</sup> UofE training course.

<sup>77</sup> Smart, 321.

<sup>78</sup> Noe, 30.

<sup>79</sup> Smart, 86 – 87.

<sup>80</sup> Kroeger, Otto and Thuesen, Janet M. Type Talk at Work, How The 16 Personality Types Determine Your Success on The Job. New York: Delacorte Press, 1992, xiii – xv.

<sup>81</sup> Welch, 155.

<sup>82</sup> Heifetz, Ronald A., Leadership Without Easy Answers. Boston: Harvard University Press, 1995, 207. Heifetz defines authority as: “*Formal* authority is granted because the officeholder promises to meet a set of explicit expectations (job descriptions, legislated mandate), whereas *informal* authority comes from promising to meet expectations that are often left implicit (expectations of trustworthiness, ability, civility).” Above quote taken from Heifetz, 101.

<sup>83</sup> Smart, 85.

<sup>84</sup> Welch, 169 – 172.

<sup>85</sup> Smart, 87. The bullet comments have been paraphrased from Smarts “CEO ROLE IN RECRUITMENT” to meet the needs of the ARNG General Officers leading Upgrading.

<sup>86</sup> Kaplan, Robert E. and Palus, Charles J. Enhancing 360-Degree Feedback for Senior Executives, How to Maximize the Benefits and Minimize the Risks. Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership, 1994, 1., Tornow, Walter W., Langdon, Manuel and CCL Associates Maximizing the Value of 360-Degree Feedback, a Process for Successful Individual and

Organizational Development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, xiii – xv., and Fleenor, John W. and Prince, Jeffrey Michael Using 360-Degree Feedback in Organizations. Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership, 1997, 1.

<sup>87</sup> Noe, 52, Welch, 157, and Byrne, 6.

<sup>88</sup> Welch, 159.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., 157, Kaplan, 1, and Timothy, 10.

<sup>90</sup> COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, discussion with author, 22 November 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA..

<sup>91</sup> Reese, Timothy R., Transforming The Officer Evaluation System: Using A 360-Degree Feedback Model. Strategy Research Project. Carlisle Barracks, U.S. Army War College, Class of 2002, iii.

<sup>92</sup> Information taken from the Legal Information Institute, US Code Collection Website; available from <http://www.robbinsgioia.com/educationtraining/360DegreeFeedback.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 September 2002, Tornow, xiii – xv, and Kaplan, 1 – 5.

<sup>93</sup> This concept is based upon the author's experiences with the 360-Degree Assessment and training during employment with the Sprint Corporation.

<sup>94</sup> Information taken from the Legal Information Institute, US Code Collection Website; available from <http://www.robbinsgioia.com/educationtraining/360DegreeFeedback.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 September 2002, Kaplan, 5 – 11, and Tornow, 1 – 16.

<sup>95</sup> FM 22-100, 5-2.

<sup>96</sup> Stevenin, 28.

<sup>97</sup> Langdon, Ken and Shervington, Martin Essential Managers: Performance Reviews. New York, Cooling Brown, 5 and Fleenor, 55 – 56.

<sup>98</sup> Langdon, 6.

<sup>99</sup> This recommendation is based upon author's experiences with the practices at the Sprint Corporation.

<sup>100</sup> Langdon, 7, Welch, 156 – 158, and Fleenor, 55 – 56.

<sup>101</sup> Langdon, 10 and Welch, 156 – 158.

<sup>102</sup> Langdon, 10 and Welch, 156 – 158.

<sup>103</sup> Information taken from the Change Management, Achieving Goal Congruence, Integration of Goals and Effectiveness Website; available from <http://www.accel->

team.com/techniques/goal\_congruence.html; Internet; accessed 15 October 2002 and Reese, 10 – 11.

<sup>104</sup> Covey, Stephen R. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989, 193 – 194.

<sup>105</sup> This relates to the authors personal experiences in his civilian employment with the Sprint Cooperation. All goals in the LINK review, Sprints equivalent to the Army's OER, requires measurable, realistic, and achievable objectives.

<sup>106</sup> Langdon, 12.

<sup>107</sup> Langdon, 20.

<sup>108</sup> Noe, 26 – 27.

<sup>109</sup> Heifetz, 207 – 208.

<sup>110</sup> Heifetz, Ronald and Linsky, Marty, "A Survival Guide for Leaders" Harvard Business Review. Vol. 80, No. 6, 65 – 74.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 65 – 66.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 67 – 68.

<sup>116</sup> COL Daniel Jensen of the United States Army War College, discussion with author, 20 December 2002, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

<sup>117</sup> Heifetz and Linsky, 69.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 69 – 70.

<sup>119</sup> Heifetz, 128.

<sup>120</sup> Heifetz and Linsky, 70 – 71.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 71 – 72.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 72 – 74.

<sup>126</sup> Heifetz, 250.

<sup>127</sup> Kennedy, John F. Profiles in Courage. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956, xi—xvii.

<sup>128</sup> Remarks as delivered by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld. The Pentagon, Monday, September 10, 2001. DOD Acquisition and Logistics Excellence Week Kickoff – Bureaucracy to Battlefield.

<sup>129</sup> This implementation process is base upon the author’s experiences that occurred in his civilian employment during the implementation of a similar process to Upgrading.

<sup>130</sup> Smart, 22.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 12 – 18.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>133</sup> Heifetz, 235.

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