

## ASSESSING CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY RECRUITING COMMAND

BY

COLONEL FRED JOHNSON  
United States Army

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PAPER

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ARMY RECRUITING COMMAND**

by

Colonel Fred Johnson  
United States Army

Colonel John Cummings  
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013



## **ABSTRACT**

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This paper will investigate culture as it pertains to the United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC). USAREC will be considered exclusively because of its unique mission. It will be argued that USAREC's distinct task of recruiting civilians to serve in an All Volunteer Force (AVF) has produced a culture that is dissimilar to the rest of the Army. Further, it will be argued that this contrast produces significant challenges for the Army recruiters that serve in the command. While USAREC has developed a strategy to confront the challenges of recruiters and it has resolved to change its culture, there are potential disparities in USAREC's plan. This paper will first identify the challenges facing recruiters and then provide evidence that prompts concern for the health of USAREC's culture. Second, USAREC's newly developed strategy for implementing cultural change in order to alleviate the problems will be addressed. Third, using models of organizational culture and studies of the Army as a profession, USAREC's strategy for cultural change will be analyzed to determine if there are any gaps in the plan. The paper will conclude with recommendations for both USAREC and the Army to consider as it implements its strategy for cultural change.





## ASSESSING CULTURAL CHANGE IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY RECRUITING COMMAND

In *Organizational Culture: Applying a Hybrid Model to the U.S Army*, authors Stephen J. Gerras, Leonard Wong, and Charles D. Allen note that most studies on culture are insufficient in their analysis of the military.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the authors combine three theories of culture and apply them to the Army. Those theories include the “Competing Values Framework” designed by Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn, a study of organizational culture and leadership by Edgar Schein and the work of Geert Hofstede and the follow-on GLOBE report.<sup>2</sup> Gerras, Wong and Allen conclude that their study “offers a methodology and assessment of Army culture as a means to stimulate discussion on practical ways to address organizational culture in the military environment.”<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to explore an aspect of culture that merits further analysis as it affects the Army. Using the model of Gerras, Wong and Allen, along with other approaches, it will specifically investigate culture as it pertains to the United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC). USAREC will be considered exclusively because of its unique mission. It will be argued that USAREC’s distinct task of recruiting civilians to serve in an All Volunteer Force (AVF) has produced a culture that is dissimilar to the rest of the Army. Further, it will be argued that this contrast produces significant challenges for the personnel that serve in the command.

To fully analyze USAREC’s culture, this paper will first identify the challenges facing recruiters and then provide evidence that prompts concern for the health of USAREC’s culture. Second, USAREC’s newly developed strategy for implementing

cultural change will be reviewed. Third, using models of organizational culture and studies of the Army as a profession, USAREC's strategy for cultural change will be analyzed to determine if there are any gaps in the plan. The paper will conclude with recommendations for USAREC and the Army to consider as Recruiting Command implements its strategy for cultural change.

### An Understated Challenge of The Army Recruiter

Over the last 20 years, Americans between the ages of 16-24 years of age have become increasingly less inclined to enlist for military service.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, it has been determined that the Army is the least desirable option of all services for potential recruits of that same target audience.<sup>5</sup> While these issues are significant, they are not the most pressing. As the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Army stated in the 2008 Army Posture Statement, "We are in an era of persistent conflict."<sup>6</sup> This is the first time in the Army's history where recruitment of an All Volunteer Force (AVF) has been required during protracted war. The war is not only a strain on the Army's combat formations it is also wearing down the will of the American people. According to a recent study, 58% of the key influencers of parents, coaches, peers, and teachers won't recommend military service because of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).<sup>7</sup> As the challenge to meet recruiting goals becomes more difficult, there is greater risk to the Army's ability to continue effective and sustained operations. This is particularly true as the Army plans to increase its numbers of Active Component (AC) forces an additional 65,000 Soldiers 2011.<sup>8</sup> The United States Army recruiter is the leader at the tip of the spear, heading the Army's mission to meet its manning quotas.

NCOs selected to be recruiters represent the very best junior leaders in the Army. They are specially chosen and most are combat veterans arriving to their first recruiting assignment after having spent most of their careers in operational units. The Army prides itself on developing flexible and adaptable leaders capable of meeting the demands of any mission. Nevertheless, the challenges of leading a team, squad or platoon in combat are much different than convincing a young American and his or her family that military service is in the potential recruit's best interest. The Army provides the recruiter six weeks of training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina and the training continues at the unit level with additional certifications and assessments. However, this may not be enough. Even for the most versatile and intelligent person, adapting to an assignment so distinct from their previous experience is a stressful challenge and recent studies have shown recruiters to be under greater strain than in the recent past.

#### Weak Signals and Sign Posts

Sergeant Nils Aron Anderson won the Bronze Star for Valor while serving in one of his two tours of duty in Iraq with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. By all accounts, Sergeant Anderson was a caring leader and high performer in his infantry unit. As a result of his duty performance he was selected to be an Army recruiter. After six weeks of recruiter training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, he was assigned to a Recruiting Battalion in Houston, Texas. Sergeant Anderson didn't achieve the same level of success in recruiting as he did as an Infantry Team Leader. After having failed to make his recruiting mission once, he had to undergo remedial training. It appeared he could not make the transition to this new position. On 06 March 2007, Sergeant Anderson shot

and killed himself, becoming one of at least 16 Army Recruiters who have committed suicide since 2002.<sup>9</sup>

Many reasons could have played a part in this terrible loss – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is clearly one possible cause. However, there are other possible contributors. The 2008 study by the Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies (JAMRS) on recruiter quality of life reported 65% of Army recruiters were dissatisfied with their assignment and 84% said they would not want to remain in a recruiting assignment.<sup>10</sup> The challenges of recruiters have only been exacerbated by the increased unpopularity of the war in Iraq as reported by more recent studies that show young Americans are less likely to choose military service as an option. In addition, the 2008 JAMRS studied revealed that 67% of recruiters believed current military operations made it hard for them to achieve their mission.<sup>11</sup> Another indicator that may have bearing on the problem is the recruiter's perception of the lack of support they receive from their leadership.

A 2006 USAREC leadership survey showed that station commanders were significantly dissatisfied with their leadership:

- 60% did not have a strong feeling of mutual trust and respect.
- 55% said their leaders did not inspire loyalty to USAREC.
- 50% replied there was not a balance with mission and taking care of Soldiers.
- 47% did not feel like an important member of the team due to leader actions.<sup>12</sup>

The detachment recruiter feedback was much worse:

- 72% did not have a strong feeling of mutual trust and respect

- 77% said their leaders did not inspire loyalty to USAREC
- 67% replied there was not a balance with mission and taking care of Soldiers
- 60% did not feel like an important member of the team due to leader actions<sup>13</sup>

Another important factor that may contribute to job dissatisfaction is that most recruiters do not request assignment to USAREC. According to the 2005 JAMRS study on recruiter quality of life only 31% of recruiters requested duty in USAREC.<sup>14</sup>

The question is whether the data from the JAMRS study, the USAREC leadership survey, and the sad vignette of Sergeant Anderson represents indicators of a larger problem. While recruiting has always been a difficult assignment even in the best market conditions, such as during a bad economy, recruiters have never had to persuade Americans on the value of military service in an All Voluntary Force (AFV) during a time of persistent conflict. With the external factors such as poor public perceptions of the war and a decreased propensity to enlist, along with internal factors like the personal impact of persistent conflict on Soldiers and leaders, the environment has changed for the recruiter.

All these factors identified in the JAMRS study are potential weak signals of a resistance to the recruiting culture. In *The Importance of "Wild Card" Scenarios*, James Dewar explains that "signposts" are developed to determine if assumptions are being violated, as a means to shape actions to prevent assumptions from failing and or to hedge actions to prepare an organization in case an assumption does fail.<sup>15</sup> S. Dyer Harris and Steven Zeisler, in *Weak Signals: Detecting the Next Big Thing*, suggest that small, seemingly insignificant events may point to important factors that could influence

success or failure of an enterprise.<sup>16</sup> The JAMRS and other studies demonstrate possible weak signals that may indicate that assumptions about recruiting could be failing. Significant signposts may be a continued downward trend in recruiter job satisfaction, increased suicide and depression amongst recruiters, higher rates of divorce, and increased attrition of recruiters as they either opt to leave the Army or their careers are ended as a result of poor performance.

Given these conditions, coupled with the perception in the operational Army that recruiting is not a desirable assignment, USAREC recently initiated a strategy to address the problem.

#### USAREC's Culture of Value

In the *US Army Campaign Plan*, redefining culture was identified as one of the four components of change in the Army. The plan addresses culture by stating, "We're not fixing it; we (are) making the needed adjustments to keep up with the environment we're in and the missions we're being asked to perform."<sup>17</sup> To address the challenges facing recruiters, USAREC is in the process of implementing cultural change within its organization. The intent of the plan is to attain three goals:

- Improve the perception of USAREC as a Culture of Value and become known as a station of choice for Soldiers, civilian employees, and family members
- Equip Soldiers with skills to consistently perform at higher levels, both in Army leadership roles
- Create compelling interactions with target audiences to produce more commitments<sup>18</sup>

To achieve these goals USAREC has partnered with civilian corporations Koniag Services, Inc and AchieveGlobal to create a “Culture of Value” (COV) through a series of fifteen integrated projects, nine of which will be executed over the course of the 2009 fiscal year.<sup>19</sup> A summary of the nine projects follows:<sup>20</sup>

Project	Purpose	Process	Payoff
<b>Recruiter Value Proposition</b>	Create a Value Proposition for the Recruiter role – how USAREC provides unique professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use interviews, career pathing and data analysis to define drivers of perceptions, decisions, and value</li> <li>Draft value proposition, reflecting USAREC Culture of Value and industry best practices</li> <li>Define plan for implementation and communication</li> </ul>	Improve USAREC perception as a Culture of Value within the broader Army. Encourage voluntary assignment, increased conversion.
<b>Culture of Value Metrics</b>	Identify metrics for gauging the reputation of USAREC across the Army.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection (interviews, input from other projects)</li> <li>Draft, review and finalize set of formalized metrics</li> <li>Design, develop evaluation methodology and implementation plan</li> </ul>	Enable progress tracking for the Culture of Value efforts and provide input into timely course corrections
<b>Activating Change</b>	Equip Command with effective change management tools and best practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use survey instrument and interviews to evaluate organizational change capability against research-based “hallmarks”</li> <li>Review resulting Change Capability Report with leadership and formulate recommendations</li> <li>Initiate implementation planning for change management training</li> </ul>	Create a change capable organization which will be able to more quickly and effectively transform itself to meet market demands.
<b>Define and Design Coaching Process</b>	Identify process for transforming the Command leadership style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data and documentation analysis; Primary research via focus groups and interviews, comprehensive secondary research</li> <li>Deliver detailed recommendations re: coaching style, standards and frequency.</li> </ul>	Foster recruiting results and a better soldier experience through a new process for skill modeling, coaching, and reinforcement.
<b>Recruiter Experience Roadmap</b>	Pinpoint defining moments for soldiers and recruits during the recruiting experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze the recruiting process from multiple points of view</li> <li>Use process mapping to identify neutral, negative and positive defining moments</li> <li>Determine methods for optimizing the impact of experiences</li> </ul>	Increase commitments by treating soldiers and recruits in a way which creates more positive defining moments.
<b>Perceptions Communications Campaign</b>	Communicate USAREC Culture of Value across the Army	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build a communications campaign to support USAREC’s “Culture of Value” strategy across multiple battle fronts</li> <li>Find ways to increase awareness of the Recruiter Value Proposition, align messaging with Army Strong</li> </ul>	Render detailed recruiting a more desirable billet for high potential soldiers. Change the perception of USAREC.
<b>Coaching Curricula and Tools</b>	Equip those in key leadership positions with coaching skills and tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop skills-based training and enabling tools which will support adoption of the agreed coaching process</li> <li>Conduct program pilot and certify trainers</li> </ul>	Enable the Command to effectively adopt new developmental coaching procedures.
<b>Use Incentives to Create a Culture of Value</b>	Determine how incentives can be better aligned with desired behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection and documentation analysis, research review</li> <li>Identify misalignments and opportunities for improvement; Create recommendations based on best practices</li> </ul>	Eliminate disconnects and increase alignment between incentives and the targeted sales process.
<b>Skills-Based Training</b>	Equip soldiers with the skills they require.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct needs analysis with USAREC leadership</li> <li>Deploy training in context of Before/During/After implementation</li> </ul>	Improve performance through interpersonal skills mastery.

Table 1.

USAREC has clearly identified a way ahead to address the challenges of the current recruiting environment with special emphasis on providing a better climate for recruiters to work. The plan identifies methods to enhance the reputation of USAREC as an assignment of choice to attract NCOs to select recruiter duty, rather than being forced into the assignment. The plan focuses on leader development aimed at



producing better mentorship and connection with the leaders and recruiters within USAREC. USAREC's strategy also enforces the need to continue training on the skills needed to be an effective recruiter. However, to better understand the COV and how the program can best promote change it is necessary to review various models of cultural analysis.

### Army Culture and Sub-Cultures

In *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture*, Cameron and Quinn provide a framework that identifies four quadrants, which represent four types of culture:

Hierarchy, Clan, Market, and Adhocracy.<sup>21</sup>

- Hierarchy: formalized, structured, efficiency oriented
- Clan: cohesive, people-focused, morale-oriented
- Market: results-oriented, competition, goal-focused
- Adhocracy: dynamic, risk taking, innovation-oriented<sup>22</sup>

Organizations normally are dominated by one of these types of culture but may have some representation of all of four. For the purpose of this paper, only Hierarchy, Clan and Market will be addressed. According to Gerras, Wong, and Allen, the hierarchy culture fits most appropriately with the Army organizational culture because of the focus on chain of command and well-defined policies, along with processes and procedures.<sup>23</sup> While this may be true for the larger Army organization, there are sub-cultures which have characteristics of the other quadrants, which are more dominant.

Teams, squads/sections, and platoons, while having a clear chain of command with a mission focus, most often more resemble a clan culture. According to Cameron and Quinn, clan cultures are like extended families that are inwardly focused, cohesive,

sharing similar values and goals.<sup>24</sup> Teams and squads, like clans, get things done through team work and member participation. Not to mention, in the current operating environment, Soldiers and leaders in small units literally live together like families. Most, if not all, NCOs come to the USAREC having spent most of their careers in this sub-culture of the Army. While Recruiting Stations and Companies are manned by a small number of personnel, the nature of the recruiting mission creates an entirely different sub-culture.

A market culture is outwardly focused, oriented on competition, productivity and the “bottom line.”<sup>25</sup> Organizations within USAREC clearly have market characteristics with their focus on meeting recruiting quotas and their need to compete not only with other services, but the civilian job market, colleges and universities, as well. Evidence of a market focus can be found in the USAAC 2008-2013 Strategic Plan. The USAAC Commander states his number one priority is “Mission Accomplishment (Recruiting the Force).”<sup>26</sup> Additionally, three of the six core competencies identified are recruiting, marketing and advertising, and market research and analysis.<sup>27</sup> Given these characteristics there is a clear distinction from the clan culture where NCOs come to their new environment as a recruiter in a market culture. This transition must be difficult.

Cameron and Quinn suggest that “if an organization’s culture has gravitated toward the lower quadrants (hierarchy and market) it is very difficult to enact change to move the culture toward the higher quadrants (clan and adhocracy).”<sup>28</sup> Conversely, it must be just as difficult to move in the opposite direction, especially given the amount of participatory commitment found in a clan culture. Moreover, change cannot occur

without individuals altering their behavior to conform to cultural values and norms, along with the need for organizational leadership to adapt their competencies and inspire subordinates to change their behavior.<sup>29</sup> It is in this area, especially, that USAREC's COV initiative is clearly moving in the right direction. Each of the nine projects aim at focusing on the individual's needs without giving up USAREC's core requirement of making its recruiting mission. Further evidence of USAREC's effort to shape its culture to meet the needs of the recruiters can be found in their Strategic Plan presented in April of 2008.

As stated by Gerras, Wong and Allen, "real cultural change comes from first ensuring embedding mechanisms are in place."<sup>30</sup> The move to create Army post-like conditions for the recruiters in their communities is an excellent reinforcing mechanism.<sup>31</sup> Edgar Schein posits that reinforcing mechanisms must compliment embedding mechanisms to facilitate cultural change.<sup>32</sup> The "design of physical space, facades, and buildings" as indicated by Schein is a reinforcing mechanism, which, in this case, bolsters the embedding mechanism of "how leaders allocate resources."

However, one aspect of the USAREC's Strategic Plan that should be scrutinized for potential weak signals is the effort to assign more operational Command Sergeant Majors (CSM) to USAREC commands. This move may cause an imbalance of the embedding mechanism of "how leaders recruit, select, promote, and attrit personnel" and send the wrong message to 79R's who have aspirations of serving at the CSM-level in USAREC. While assigning operational CSMs to USAREC will provide a fresh perspective on recruiting and leadership, it may also signal to the 79R NCOs that their

abilities are insufficient for service as a senior leader in the organization. At a minimum, USAREC should consider how the message is couched in their Strategic Plan.

Another way USAREC and the Army are allocating resources to support the recruiter is through the use of waivers to allow Americans who could not normally join the Army to enter service. According to one source, 1 in 8 Soldiers who entered the Army in 2008 required a waiver for criminal misconduct, more than doubling the number from 2004.<sup>33</sup> The Army is also offering bonuses to attract those not inclined to join without a significant economic benefit.<sup>34</sup> Another technique being used is allowing more non-high school graduates to enlist than is normally tolerated.<sup>35</sup> These resources provided to the recruiter eased their burden and allowed the Army to achieve its recruiting mission in 2008. However, leaders should be concerned about second and third order effects of such policies. The Army has always been committed to enlisting quality personnel into its ranks, but the external environment has caused the need for allowances that could potentially have adverse effects on the future readiness of the Army. It is too early to predict the impact that these waivers and attractive financial benefits for voluntary entry into the Army will have on the future force, but the Army must maintain vigilance on signals and signposts of a possible failing assumption.

For the most part USAREC's COV initiative is on track and other programs are gaining traction. Unfortunately, as it will be shown, the larger Army culture and or the institutional bureaucracy are not necessarily embracing the proposed change, which may demonstrate a misalignment of "espoused and enacted values" within the Army.

The six-week Basic Recruiting Course at Fort Jackson, SC provides nine segments of instruction to Corporals and above and there is also a special case

consideration for the rank of Specialist. According to the Recruiting School website, “The largest segment is focused on training the student, “... to engage their market, establish their role as a counselor, (and) expand their recruiting network.”<sup>36</sup> Other than counseling, most of the skills required to be a recruiter do not easily transfer from those needed to be a successful team or squad leader. An effective recruiter must possess certain innate abilities, and, arguably, a proclivity towards salesmanship. A significant issue is that selection criteria for recruiters do not take into account the unique traits required of a successful salesperson.

The selection criteria for recruiters outlined in Army Regulation 601-1, *Assignment of Enlisted Personnel to the US Army Recruiting Command*, do not address any special skills other than the normal ethical, moral, and physical aptitudes expected of an Army NCO.<sup>37</sup> However, a 2006 RAND study provides greater insight to recruiter selection and productivity. The RAND research showed that level of education and the results of the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) have no significant relationship on recruiter success. Rather, the study revealed younger male NCOs from specific military occupation specialties (MOS) such as intelligence and combat arms and those who had technical skills demonstrated greater effectiveness. Nevertheless, the most interesting finding was that “Unmeasured personal attributes of recruiters account for more of the variation in production levels than do the attributes that we were able to measure.”<sup>38</sup> The study concluded by stating, “Potentially important unmeasured attributes are soldiers’ talent for selling, their general levels of motivation and energy, and their time-management skills.”<sup>39</sup> Additional research reveals more definitive skill required to be a successful recruiter, albeit in the civilian environment.

Writing for ere.net, a highly successful civilian recruiting firm, Jeremy Eskenazi, identifies several skills required to be a successful recruiter. These skills include: communications skills (written and verbal), relationship skill, project management abilities, the ability to be a strategic partner, a self-starter, political savvy, computer/technology skills, searching, sourcing, and other technical skills, creativity/innovative thinking.<sup>40</sup> Most importantly, Eskenazi states, "I'm a big believer that if you focus on a core set of skills necessary to do a job, any number of people with varying backgrounds can fill the role (of course, you'll have to determine if they can fit into your culture)."<sup>41</sup>

Understanding the importance of selecting NCO's with the requisite interpersonal abilities, work orientation, and leadership capabilities to be a recruiter, USAREC conducted a pilot study in cooperation with The U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) and Personnel Decisions Research Institutes, Inc. (PDRI). The purpose was to develop and refine a screening instrument, using online battery testing, to select Soldiers with high potential for success in recruiting duty. Many of the attributes tested are consistent with the findings of Jeremy Eskenazi. This measure is known as the Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Skills Inventory (NLSI).<sup>42</sup> According to ARI, "The overall objective was to eventually establish a screening process to identify Soldiers who are likely to perform successfully as recruiters and to select these Soldiers for recruiting duty prior to sending them to the recruiter training."<sup>43</sup> The results of the pilot were very favorable:

The results of the validation research demonstrate that the NLSI predicts both individual recruiter production and attrition from recruiter training. Recruiters with higher NLSI scores were more likely to graduate from recruiter training and had higher levels of individual recruiter production in

the field. There were no significant mean differences in NLSI scores across race and gender groups, suggesting the use of the NLSI would not result in adverse impact. Other benefits, such as increased levels of job satisfaction, lower levels of stress, and higher quality of life may result from using the NLSI to select those Soldiers best suited for recruiting duty.<sup>44</sup>

The NSLI, which is now called the Warrior Asset Inventory (WAI), appears to be exactly the tool USAREC needs to augment the COV initiative to effect cultural change. Unfortunately, implementation of the NSLI (WAI) has been stalled at the Army Human Resource Command (HRC) and with the Army G3 staff. According to COL Jim Comish, a senior leader with the USAREC staff, “Even though we have taken steps with the WAI, the reality is that unless it is enforced and unless HRC uses the WAI, we will derive absolutely no benefit. The whole initiative will wind up taking us no where toward the culture change we want.”<sup>45</sup>

Gerras, Wong and Allen state that “Organizational cultures are not good or bad, right or wrong, they are either aligned or misaligned with the organization’s environment.”<sup>46</sup> The authors further cite Edgar Schein’s work, identifying several embedding mechanisms that create the conditions for cultural change.<sup>47</sup> USAREC identified the WAI as a useful tool to employ the embedding mechanism “how leaders recruit, select, promote, and attrit personnel.” Nevertheless, the mechanism may not be integrated into USAREC’s COV as a result of a failure of “espoused and enacted value” matching. The Army must support change within sub-cultures if it is going to attain its goal outlined in the *Army Campaign Plan* of redefining culture for the larger organization. Nonetheless, a larger question looms as to whether recruiting needs to be a predominantly military function at all.

### Expert Knowledge and the Jurisdiction of Recruiting

The 2008 Army Posture Statement states that the Army's mission "is to provide ready forces and land force capabilities to the Combatant Commanders in support of the National Security Strategy, the National Defense Strategy, and the National Military Strategy."<sup>48</sup> To accomplish this mission, the Army "recruits, organizes, trains, and equips Soldiers who operate as members of Joint, interagency, and multi-national teams."<sup>49</sup> These statements confirm that the primary purpose of the Army remains its commitment to the core competency of fighting and winning the nation's wars and recruiting is subordinate to that mission. As a result, it is unclear whether recruiting demands an organization manned primarily with Army professionals or is the mission better accomplished in some other manner and or by experts in the field of recruiting and marketing.

In *Mapping the Army Professional Expertise and Clarifying Jurisdictions of Practice*, Richard Lacquement defines four broad categories of expert knowledge required in the Army profession, which were first introduced by Don Snider in *The Study of Military Professions*.<sup>50</sup> These categories include:

- Military-Technical is how the Army fights and wins the nations wars through the application of doctrine, employment of Soldiers and use of technology.<sup>51</sup>
- Human Development is primarily the component of leadership in teaching and training Soldiers to enhance their professional growth.<sup>52</sup>
- Moral-Ethical is how to apply force in a moral and ethical manner, understanding the Army's commitment to the American people.<sup>53</sup>



- Political-Cultural is our interaction with the American people and understanding the needs of the nation that the Army serves, along with cultural awareness of the nations the Army is deployed in service of national objectives.<sup>54</sup>

Lacquement applies these areas of expert knowledge across a spectrum of primacy ranging from the Army having sole ownership of the function to the extreme category where the Army hires out civilian professionals to accomplish the task. For example, “The ability to succeed in sustained land warfare is the indisputable responsibility of the Army,”<sup>55</sup> while other functions like acquisition and management can often be hired out to contractors.<sup>56</sup> Lacquement goes on to suggest, “If the expertise doesn’t ever need to be applied in a combat zone, there may be no need for the practitioners to be Army members.”<sup>57</sup> This statement is the most severe view and there is great risk in completely contracting out an institutional function like recruiting. However, there is merit in the idea of compromise by enlisting the services of contract personnel to compliment Army recruiters, lessening the requirement to use non-volunteers in recruiting.

The 2001 the Department of Defense Authorization Act required the Secretary of Defense to conduct a pilot study of contracting out recruiting to civilian firms for a period of five years, which was eventually extended an additional two years. The 10 contract recruiting companies were given the same resources as the Army recruiting companies and worked under the same rules and regulations.<sup>58</sup> At the conclusion of the pilot, the summary report revealed that most of the contract recruiting companies fell short in

effectiveness compared to the Army recruiting companies. However, the report also states,

While the overall production of the ten contract companies during the test years has remained below the control companies, contract recruiting has still proven itself to be a viable recruiting option. At least half of the individual companies have consistently performed well within the range of performance of the uniformed control companies. This speaks well for contract recruiting, since this was accomplished despite the problems of high turnover and a less-than-friendly recruiting market, all while establishing a new business. It is therefore recommended that contract recruiting in some form (to include integrated contract recruiting) be continued after the end of the pilot test on September 30, 2007. The mode and extent of contract recruiting should be left to senior Army decision-makers for the widest possible flexibility to insure maximum efficiency and effectiveness. The lessons learned from the failures and successes of the 10 Contract Company Pilot Test will serve the Army well in exercising this option.<sup>59</sup>

After further analysis a hybrid of this model is being considered. According to Colonel Jim Comish at USAREC, a more viable option is to employ Government Service (GS) civilians, rather than contractors. Comish explains that, "Mixing NCOs with GS civilians is the direction we want to go. Why GS versus contractors? The contractors cost more and attrit at much higher rates. The NCOs will prospect and conduct Army Interviews. The civilians will process and manage our future Soldiers until they ship to Basic Training."<sup>60</sup> Comish further elaborates that USAREC is currently conducting a pilot across the 3rd Recruiting Brigade breaking out the roles and having recruiters specialize in the roles. The team is rewarded as opposed to holding recruiters accountable for all roles. Feedback from the recruiters reveals they liked the team concept (supporting clan culture) although production has remained much the same. At the same time, if recruiters like it better and are more comfortable working as a team, then that contributes to Culture of Value. USAREC is also piloting contractors performing roles other than production. The intent is that the concept will prove

worthwhile and will lead to a pilot involving a mix of Army NCOs, contractors and GS civilians by role.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this paper was to examine the culture of USAREC and determine if there are any gaps in the newly proposed Culture of Value initiative, which aims to change USAREC's culture. The models of Gerras, Wong, and Allen, along with other approaches, to include the Army as a profession, were used to determine if the culture is aligned with environmental factors.

There are clear signals and signposts that indicate the USAREC culture has not been aligned with the individual needs and abilities of NCOs assigned as recruiters. However, USAREC's Culture of Value initiative, designed to promote cultural change in the organization, addresses the most pertinent issues pertaining to NCOs crossing from the clan culture of the operational Army to the market culture of USAREC. Most significant is USAREC's effort to employ embedding and reinforcing mechanisms to ease the transition of recruiters into the new culture. The nine projects to be implemented in FY09 represent a valid strategy to change culture for the recruiters, particularly those who did not volunteer for an assignment with USAREC.

USAREC has tested a strategy for the selection of recruiters into its culture with the Warrior Asset Inventory and results of the test have proven very favorable. Suffice to say that personnel who possess the talent and desire a place in a culture will be better performers and have greater job satisfaction than those who would rather be working somewhere else. Not to mention the fact that most NCOs volunteer to serve believing they will work in the MOS they initially chose upon entry into the Army and in

the culture they self selected. While USAREC is working toward creating a reputation as an assignment of choice with the COV initiative, the desire to recruit and serve that function requires a penchant for salesmanship and marketing.

The selection criteria outlined in AR 601-1 is insufficient in determining the attributes and characteristics of NCOs with the predilection for salesmanship and marketing. Moreover, time and resources are wasted as NCOs endure the six month trial and certification process at the unit level to determine if they have the abilities to be an effective recruiter. The traditional use of AFQT scores, along with moral, ethical and physical fitness clearly are not adequate indicators of an NCO's ability to convince a young American, and their family, that service as a Soldier during a time of war is a viable alternative, particularly when college is the most desired post-high school option. The inspirational and physical leadership required to lead Soldiers in battle takes time to cultivate during extended periods of training and living together. The recruiter must be an effective salesman, as unpopular as that characterization may be. As COL Glenn Richey, a former USAREC battalion commander, explains, "Recruiters that are naturally extroverted tend adapt to the challenges of recruiting better than those that are introverted."<sup>61</sup> To avoid this shortfall, and other issues related to skill and selection of recruiters, one of the most important conclusions of this study recommends that HRC and the Army G3 staff support USAREC's initiative to implement the Warrior Asset Inventory as a part of the selection criteria.

USAREC should also consider growing the number of NCOs with the Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) of 79R (Army Recruiter). NCOs that volunteer to be recruiters are choosing entry in the USAREC culture, thereby increasing the likelihood

of effectiveness and job satisfaction. By growing the number of 79Rs, the Army would keep more NCOs in tactical units where their talents and predilections naturally reside, while creating a professional cadre of Army recruiters in a culture where they are more inclined to thrive. Additionally, USAREC should take into consideration training in marketing and advertising at the entry level within the Adjutant General's Corps, thereby creating an MOS that provides the necessary technical skills required in the recruiting environment. Ideally, USAREC should be comprised entirely of 79R and GS civilian recruiters without the need for non-volunteers. USAREC can get fresh experience and perspectives from Soldiers and NCOs with recent combat and operational experience by expanding the Hometown and Special Recruiter Assistance Program (HRAP/SRAP) outlined in Army Regulation 601-2, *The Army Promotional Recruiting Support Programs*.

To further promote the expansion of the 79R population of recruiters, USAREC should be watchful of their effort to assign more operational CSMs into the organization. USAREC should maintain vigilance for weak signals that may demonstrate an adverse effect on morale of 79R NCOs who may inspire to serve at the CSM level within USAREC.

USAREC must continue its effort to find the right mix of Army recruiters, GS civilians and contractors to form a recruiting team that is task organized to perform the roles and functions in accordance with the abilities of the personnel. The Army must support this initiative and continue to fund pilot tests to confirm or deny proof of concept.

## Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 228-233.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 251.

<sup>4</sup> United States Army Accession Command, *Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2008-2013*, (Fort Monroe, Virginia, United States Army Accession Command, February 2008), 2-9.

<sup>5</sup> United States Army Accession Command, *2008 Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield 11 March 2008*, briefing slides sent by COL Dennis Krings, USAAC G5, in September 2008, Fort Monroe, Virginia, March 11, 2008

<sup>6</sup> Pete Geren and George W. Casey, Jr., *A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities: A Statement of Posture of the United States Army, Fiscal Year 2008*, presented to the Committees and Subcommittees of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, 110th Congress, 2d Session (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 26 February 2008), i.

<sup>7</sup> United States Army Accession Command, *2008 Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield 11 March 2008*, briefing slides sent by COL Dennis Krings, USAAC G5, (contacted at dennis.krings@us.army.mil and 757-788-4866) in September 2008, (Fort Monroe, Virginia, March 11, 2008), 73.

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<sup>9</sup> Lindsay Wise, "A Soldier's Tragic Tale: A victim of the war within," linked from *Houston Chronicle*, May 18, 2008, <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/side2/5788103.html> (accessed 30 September 2008)

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<sup>12</sup> USAREC *Culture of Value* Brief, sent by COL Jim Comish (contacted at james.h.comish@us.army.mil and 803-751-8750) in October 2008, (Fort Knox, Kentucky, 17 October 2008), 19.

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<sup>14</sup> Joint Advertising, Marketing Research Studies, *2005 Recruiter Quality of Life Survey: Overview Report*, (Arlington, VA: Joint Advertising, Marketing Research Studies, May 2006),

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<sup>15</sup> James Dewar, "The Importance of "Wild Card" Scenarios," in the U.S. Army War College Academic Year 2009 Core Curriculum, Strategic Leadership, Selected Readings (Carlisle Barracks, Pa, 2008), 219.

<sup>16</sup> S. Dyer Harris and Steven Zeisler, "Weak Signals: Detecting the Next Big Thing," *The Futurist*, (November-December 2002), 4-5.

<sup>17</sup> Army Campaign Brief, linked from the *United States Army Home Page*, <http://www.army.mil/thewayahead/acp.html> note pages (accessed 11 October 2008), slide 3 of notes page

<sup>18</sup> USAREC *Culture of Value Snapshot* , sent by COL Jim Comish (contacted at james.h.comish@us.army.mil and 803-751-8750) in October 2008, (Fort Knox, Kentucky, 17 October 2008), 1.

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<sup>21</sup> Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1999), 33-40.

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<sup>23</sup> Gerras, Wong, and Allen, 229.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>26</sup> United States Army Accession Command, *Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2008-2013*, (Fort Monroe, Virginia, United States Army Accession Command, February 2008), 1-3.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 4-2.

<sup>28</sup> Gerras, Wong and Allen, 240.

<sup>29</sup> Cameron and Quinn, 105.

<sup>30</sup> Gerras, Wong, and Allen, 242.

<sup>31</sup> United States Recruiting Command, *Strategic Plan Brief*, sent by COL Jim Comish (contacted at james.h.comish@us.army.mil and 803-751-8750) in October 2008, (USAREC, Fort Knox, Ky, 18 April 2008), 19.

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<sup>33</sup> Jim Michaels, "1 in 8 Army Recruits Needs Conduct Waiver," USA Today, April 9, 2008, [http://www.armytimes.com/news/2008/04/gns\\_waivers\\_040708/](http://www.armytimes.com/news/2008/04/gns_waivers_040708/) (accessed November 10, 2008)

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<sup>36</sup> *United States Army Recruiting Command Home Page* at "Recruiting and Retention School," <http://www.rrs.army.mil/!ARC/arc2.html> (accessed 11 October 2008)

<sup>37</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, *Assignment of Enlisted Personnel to the U.S. Army Recruiting Command*, Army Regulation 601-1 (Washington, DC: Department of the Army), 3-4

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<sup>42</sup> Army Research Institute, *Evaluation and Refinement of a Screening Instrument for US Army Recruiters: Non Commissioned Officer Leadership Skill Inventory*, (Arlington, VA, March 2006), <http://www.stormingmedia.us/80/8076/A807644.html> (accessed 10 November 2008), iv.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> COL Jim Comish, email messages, October 22 2008

<sup>46</sup> Gerras, Wong and Allen, 233.

<sup>47</sup> Gerras, Wong, and Allen, 242

<sup>48</sup> Pete Geren and George W. Casey, Jr., *A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities: A Statement of Posture of the United States Army, Fiscal Year 2008*, presented to the Committees and Subcommittees of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, 110th Congress, 2d Session (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 26 February 2008), 1.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 218.

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<sup>60</sup> COL Jim Comish, email messages, October 22 2008

<sup>61</sup> COL Glenn Richey, USAWC student, interview 22 October 2008