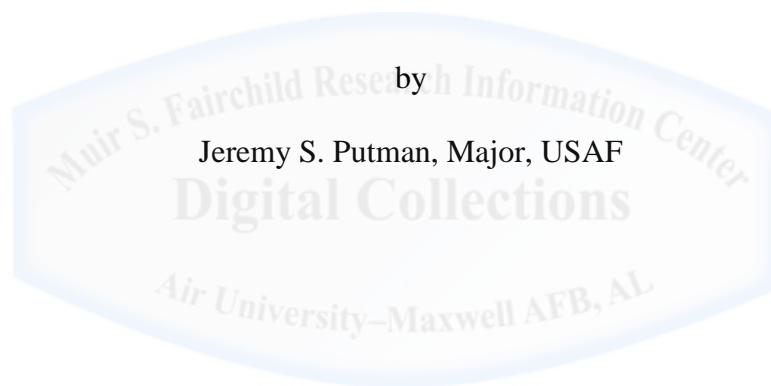


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AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

LEARNING TO LEAD: HOW WINSTON CHURCHILL AND GEORGE MARSHALL HARVESTED THEIR WWI EXPERIENCE



A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

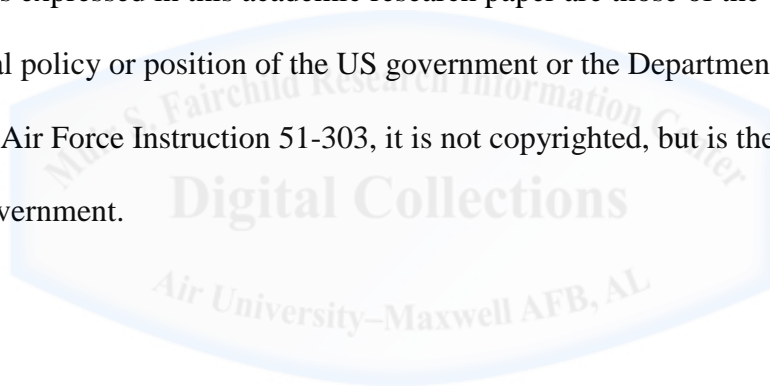
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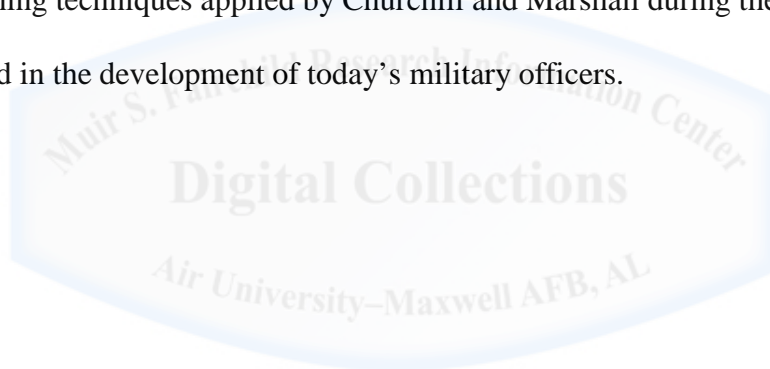
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Abstract

This paper examines the threads that connect the WWI experiences of Winston Churchill and George Marshall to their successes in the Second World War. The learning process engaged in by Churchill and Marshall corresponds well with modern experiential education theory. This correlation appears to explain their success to some degree. The conclusion drawn is that the experiential learning techniques applied by Churchill and Marshall during the interwar period should be utilized in the development of today's military officers.



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Introduction

Men are wise in proportion, not to their experience, but to their capacity for experience.

— George Bernard Shaw, *Maxims for Revolutionists*

What distinguishes history's greatest leaders from their mediocre counterparts? A number of factors could be identified but nothing plays a bigger role than experience. However the accumulation of experience alone does not distinguish the magnificent from the inferior. George Bernard Shaw was right, great leaders actually harvest more from their experiences than ordinary men. The increased wisdom gained from their encounters prepares them for even greater challenges. While other factors such as natural talent and education are important in leadership development, *experience* deserves special attention in the present-day US military because so many individuals have years of combat experience.

Interestingly, a conflict that began one hundred years ago provides fantastic examples that can guide the development of today's wartime leaders. The First World War was a monumental experience for the men that would become the top leaders in the Second World War and beyond. Two of the greatest examples of leaders who spanned these wars are Winston Churchill and George Marshall. These men transformed their experiences in WWI into wisdom about how to lead during war. When fate placed them in leadership positions during WWII they were able to translate their knowledge into success for their national cause. Churchill led the UK through the dark, early years of WWII, successfully courted the American alliance, and helped guide the Allies to victory. As Chief of Staff of the US Army for the entirety of WWII, Marshall organized victory by expertly managing the toughest strategic issues of the conflict. The story of how they learned from their experience in WWI reveals a pattern that can be repeated to enable tomorrow's leaders to benefit from the experience they have today.

Experiential Learning Theory

I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.

—Confucius

Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.

—David Kolb, *Experiential Learning*

The personal development methods used by Churchill and Marshall during the interwar period coincide with modern experiential learning theory. This is particularly remarkable considering that these theories were not even published at the time. Although Churchill and Marshall had to chart their own path to personal development, their example can guide the development of modern leaders when their stories are viewed through the lens of experiential education principles. Below is a summary of some key experiential learning theories.

There are many models for experiential learning but David Kolb's Model (fig. 1) is one of the most frequently cited. The model begins with concrete experiences then progresses to reflection about the event or events that occurred. Abstract conceptualization is an academic

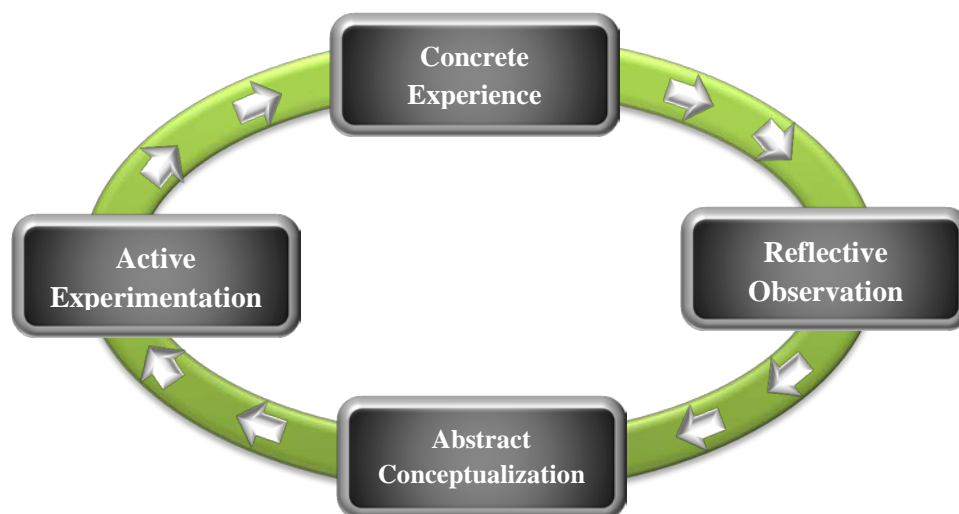


Figure 1 Core of Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning. (Adapted from David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as The Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentiss Hall, Inc., 1984: 33.)

term used to describe the recognition of connections and trends with other events. This step can also include the application of a theoretical premise to increase understanding. Active experimentation describes the process of preparing for the next experience by developing predictions and identifying actions that should be taken if a similar situation occurs in the future.¹

Another useful model was developed by Graham Gibbs. His contribution is less theoretical and more practical. Though not as frequently cited, it uses more common terms and provides a step by step process that more or less follows Kolb's more abstract cycle. Gibbs' Model calls for its practitioners to describe their experience(s), evaluate and analyze the positives and negatives, then draw conclusions that can be applied to future challenges.²

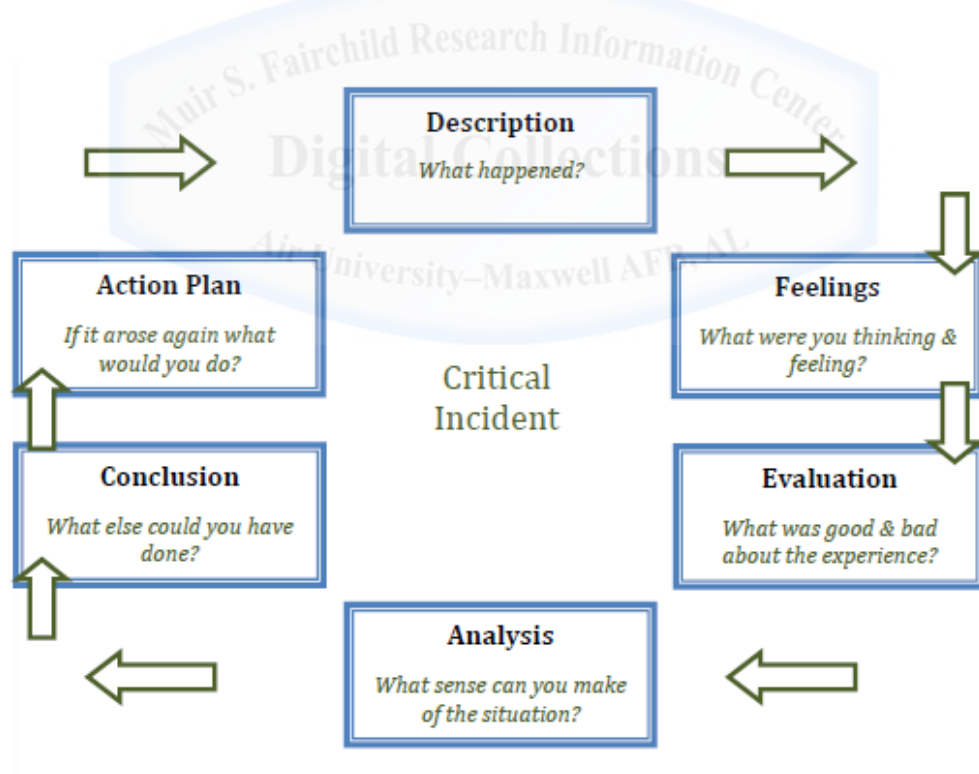


Figure 2 Overview of Gibbs' Reflective Model (Reprinted from Paul Surgenor, "Tutor, Demonstrator, and Coordinator Development at UCD." Resource paper. University College, Dublin. 2011. <http://www.ucd.ie/t4cms/Reflective%20Practice.pdf>)

Reflection and analysis are recurring themes across numerous experiential education models. Perhaps the simplest model is Rolfe's reflective model which boils the process down to three questions: (1) what . . . (2) so what . . . and (3) now what? *What* basically means describe what happened. *So what* is the analytical step that builds knowledge. Like the name implies, *now what* refers to the application of solutions to present or future situations.³

While the Kolb's and Gibbs' work provide the necessary background to understand how to effectively learn from experience, Rolfe's model really strips away all but the most critical elements. If one considers the "what" questions to be too vague to be meaningful, a good substitute is *describe, analyze, and apply*.

Present-day experiential learning theory is designed for educators who arrange somewhat controlled experiences to generate lessons for their students. Although the guidelines are designed for a peaceful, structured environment, the core concepts should also apply to experiential learning that originates in violent struggle. Experiential learning is allegedly more effective than didactic learning, especially for achieving long term results.⁴ If this is so, the impressions made by the experience of war must be even more indelible than an artificial scenario created by an instructor. Therefore, it is especially critical that only the *right* lessons be absorbed. A wrong conclusion could be just as enduring. The Armed Services must guide future leaders towards the methodical reflective practices most likely to result in accurate conclusions.

Albert Einstein once said, "I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn."⁵ Military exercises are a form of experiential education but they certainly cannot compare to actual war in terms of fog, friction, scale, and brutality. The crucible of WWI, the first large scale industrial war, definitely provided the conditions for experiential learning.

The ability of Churchill and Marshall to learn the correct lessons from WWI—at least most of the time—is particularly noteworthy. Some of their most significant successes in WWII can be tied directly to what they learned from their experience in WWI. These threads of experience are the ones that are most valuable for study. Certainly each man had his shortcomings. Churchill probably had more than Marshall. Nonetheless, it is almost universally agreed that each man's WWII leadership was a net positive for the Allies. Even Hall of Fame quarterbacks throw interceptions in the Super Bowl sometimes. Yet their methods of film study and preparation may still be valid techniques for the development of the next generation of quarterbacks. A less than perfect record is the natural result of taking on a thinking, adaptive opponent. The presence of that adaptive opponent in war makes consistently strong and effective leadership—like that displayed by Churchill and Marshall—even more worthy of study.

The following paragraphs will examine Churchill and Marshall to identify practices that bolstered their impressive ability to learn from their experience. There is no intent to provide a complete account of their involvement with both wars. Correlations between modern experiential education theory and the successful practices of these two great leaders will be recognized as potential methods that can be used to develop future leaders.



Figure 3. Marshall (reprinted from Marshall Int'l Center.
<http://www.georgecmarshall.org/World-War-II/>)



Figure 4. Churchill. (reprinted from NobelPrize.org
http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1953/)

The Power of Six – Sir Winston Churchill

If any of the great civilized and scientific nations of the world become engaged in war, they will be heartily sick of it long before they have got to the end.

--Winston Churchill, speech at Royal Academy, May 1912

Keep your eye on Churchill should be the watchword of these days. Remember, he is a soldier, first, last and always. He will write his name big on our future. Let us take care he does not write it in blood.

—A.G. Gardiner, 1914, British Journalist

A little more than two years after Churchill gave the speech containing the above quote, Europe would indeed find itself in a horrific war that lasted much longer than was anticipated or desired. At the outbreak of the war Churchill, age 39, had been first Lord of the Admiralty for two and a half years. He had already accumulated considerable experience in military service and politics. He fought in India (present day Afghanistan) and served as a soldier and war correspondent in both the Sudan and The Boer War in South Africa. During the Boer War he became a POW then escaped and rejoined the British cavalry in South Africa. In a manner rarely seen by modern politicians, Churchill eagerly sought personal engagement in combat. Perhaps at first it was to gain notoriety and launch a political career but as time passed it seems that he felt truly drawn to combat. He would begin WWI as a member of the Cabinet with great



Figure 5. Winston Churchill in 1914. (Reprinted from BBC. http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/famouspeople/winston_churchill/)

influence. By the end of the war, he was publically disgraced, having spent a good portion of the war exiled from the government. His critics called him a warmonger in a time when war was absolutely abhorrent. To make matters worse he was associated with the tragedy of the Dardanelles. His positive contributions to the Great War were overshadowed by these perceived negatives. In 1925 a biographer stated, "It is doubtful if even Great Britain could survive another world war and another Churchill."⁶ That estimation of Churchill could not have been further from the truth. When Great Britain faced its next world war, no single individual had more to do with her survival than Churchill.

So what did Churchill experience during the Great War and how did he learn the right lessons so he was more prepared the second time around? An unabridged list could easily fill many volumes so it is best to focus on three key threads that deserve particular attention. First, technology brings advantages in war to those who embrace it. Second, strategic maneuver has great potential but only if it receives the requisite commitment. Third, politicians must guide the generals. Two of these lessons had their beginnings in Churchill's pre-WWI war experience but really came to fruition amid the horrors of the Great War.

So then, how did Churchill harvest more than others who had similar experiences. The answer is fairly straightforward. Without being familiar with the specifics of experiential learning, Churchill applied its fundamentals brilliantly. Recall the simplest model can be stated *describe, analyze, apply*. Churchill tackled the describe and analyze steps in a vigorous fashion. Shortly after the war, he endeavored to write a six volume history of the Great War called *The World Crisis*. Critics say he was motivated by an urge to save his reputation but if this were his only desire, certainly one or two volumes would have been sufficient. The six volumes document the entire war complete with inside information that could only have been gained from

someone with experience like his. He addresses the high points and does not shy away from the low points either. In fact, the 500-page volume about 1915 is overwhelmingly associated with the Dardanelles. Churchill painstakingly reviewed his steps and missteps, picking up bits of wisdom along the way. Some historians merely describe what happened. Churchill did that in great detail but went beyond simple description and offered a great deal of editorial comments about how things could have been done better or should have been done differently. His meticulous effort to record the events of the Great War gave him the foundation for a thorough analysis that prepared him to apply his lessons learned in the future. The following paragraphs will address each of Sir Winston's three major WWI lessons from his vantage point and from the view of other historians.

Technology has Its Advantages

Churchill was truly visionary when it came to technology. The origins of his affinity for the newest technology are difficult to pin down but it is reasonable to assume that it began before the First World War then matured during the war. One combat episode from the Sudan in 1898 certainly impacted Churchill. Most of the men in Churchill's cavalry unit fought with lances and swords but a shoulder injury sustained in India forced Churchill's to adopt a magazine-fed Mauser pistol as his primary weapon. Churchill emerged unscathed from a bloody cavalry charge at Omdurman that resulted in the deaths of over a quarter of his unit in roughly 2-3 minutes.⁷ Perhaps this episode caused Churchill to appreciate technology when other military men of his period were dismissive of new technology. Prior to WWI, Field Marshal Douglas Haig stated that the machine gun is a "much over-rated weapon." Field Marshall Lord Kitchener referred to a tank as a "toy." Marshal Foch was disinterested in both telephones and military

aviation. On the other hand, Churchill saw the potential of aviation and suggested in 1909 that “we should place ourselves in communication with Mr. Wright himself, and avail ourselves of his knowledge.”⁸

Churchill ran toward technology rather than away from it. From his early days in office as First Lord of the Admiralty he recognized that his primary responsibility was “to prepare for an attack by Germany as if it might come next day.”⁹ He would lead the conversion from coal to oil powered ships. This made them faster and thereby more maneuverable.¹⁰ But he did not confine the Royal Navy’s acquisitions to ships. In 1913 he created the Royal Naval Air Service. In fact, he was so interested in airplanes that he began taking flying lessons himself that same year.¹¹ As is common with technology, one thing led to another. The development of the tank was an indirect result of Churchill’s tinkering with the development of a land-based 15-inch gun like those on his battleships. As the head of the Navy, Churchill still felt a strong enough connection to the Army to spend time fleshing out the development of land weapons. This 15-inch gun was so large that it was moved to the field in sections by eight caterpillar tractors. Seeing these tractors, Churchill envisioned a vehicle (what we now call a tank) that would be able to carry men and weapons across trenches. He even directed the development of a prototype for the Army in November of 1914. Though this prototype tank would never see combat, Churchill did not give up on the idea.¹² Eventually—on what could be considered his fourth attempt to initiate or support some form of tank development—the Landships Committee of the Admiralty brought about the development of a tank that was used in battle at the Somme. In reviewing this episode Churchill astutely points out that “There never was a moment when it was possible to say that a tank had been ‘invented.’ There never was a person about who it could be said ‘this man invented the tank.’ But there was a moment when the actual manufacture of

the first tanks was definitely ordered. . .I sanctioned the expenditure of public money . . .I was prepared to incur both risk and responsibility in providing the necessary funds.”¹³

A critic could say that Churchill is just trying to elevate himself and take credit for the development of the tank. While that is probably part of it, there is an important lesson he learned here too. Without support from those who control the budget, great inventions don't help anyone on the battlefield. Churchill repeatedly sought to find a way to give British soldiers an advantage on the Western Front. Some were not as successful as the tank but still show his dedication to budding technology. On 9 November 1916, Churchill wrote a memo called “Mechanical Power in the Offensive.” In this memo he laid out a plan for the Royal Navy to develop an armored trench cutter that would furrow its way through the German defenses.¹⁴

By the time the Second World War came around, Churchill deeply understood the value of technology. “The use of force for the waging of war is not to be regulated simply by firm character and text-book maxims. Mechanical science offers on the ground, in the air, on every coast from the forge or from the laboratory, boundless possibilities of novelty and surprise.”¹⁵ By WWII though, he understood that his job was less about developing new technology and more about managing the inventions of others to see that weapons benefited those on the battlefield. As Prime Minister he had a secret weapons development outfit report directly to him. It was officially called MD1 (Ministry of Defense 1) but unofficially it was called “Winston Churchill's Toyshop.” This outfit would develop bombs for aircraft, booby traps, naval mines and anti-tank weapons.¹⁶ Churchill also realized that he would need to share technology with the Allies to expedite development and manufacture of critical technologies like radar and the atomic bomb.¹⁷

The following quote from Churchill dates from 1925 and shows that he had truly developed a grasp of the great potential of future technology long before the Second World War. “Might not a bomb no bigger than an orange be found to possess a secret power to destroy a whole block of buildings—nay, to concentrate the force of a thousand tons of cordite and blast a township at a stroke? Could not explosives even of the existing type be guided automatically in flying machines by wireless or other rays, without a human pilot, in ceaseless procession upon a hostile city, arsenal, camp, or dockyard?”¹⁸

Strategic Maneuver has Great Potential if Done Correctly

The Entente’s excursion in the Dardanelles is considered by many to be one of the greatest tragedies of a tragic war. The casualty figures are staggering for what some have called a sideshow. Exact numbers vary but one reliable estimate says that the campaign resulted in at least 250,000 casualties for the Entente.¹⁹ On the surface the charge of tragic mistake seems to be a valid conclusion, but sometimes the complex answer is more accurate than the simple.

The story of the Dardanelles really begins with a diplomatic failure by the Entente. Rather than actively pursue the Ottoman Empire as an ally, the Entente urged them to remain neutral. Apathy on one side was met with generosity on the other. Germany bought their loyalty with ships and gold.²⁰ With control over the Dardanelles, the Central Powers could cut off grain exports from southern Russia and prevent the resupply of the Russian Army by the more industrialized Entente powers.

Russia was begging for a diversionary operation to relieve some of the pressure they were feeling from the Turks. While the Dardanelles should have been the perfect opportunity for a joint operation, it did not work out well for a number of reasons. The Army and Navy never seemed to be on the same page. Their periods of maximum effort were not aligned in such a way

as to mass overwhelming force. But much of the failure stemmed from half-hearted commitment to the cause by flag officers, by politicians, and by the public at home. Losses seemed disproportionate to the value attributed to the Gallipoli Peninsula. At times commanders were hesitant to commit their forces. Leadership at the highest levels was also strategically distracted by fighting in Greece. Furthermore, the area was well defended by brave Turks who were advised, assisted, and in some cases led by a large number of German officers. Henry Morgenthau, the American ambassador to Turkey, toured Gallipoli's defenses and stated, "My first impression was that I was in Germany. The officers were practically all Germans."²¹ Eventually, the sacrifice was too large to stomach and the Entente abandoned the Gallipoli Peninsula. The failed campaign led to Churchill's removal as First Lord of the Admiralty.

Certainly he must have still been licking the wounds inflicted by the Turks as he wrote his history of WWI. Churchill allocated a tremendous amount of space to the Dardanelles in *The World Crisis, 1915*. He writes a detailed description of the events that occurred and a thoughtful analysis of what could have been. The conclusions he draws are somewhat controversial but the core of his message is convincing. Regardless of whether one accepts his conclusions, one cannot help but be convinced that he performed a thorough autopsy, no doubt swearing things would be different if there was a next time.

So what were the conclusions he reached? Put very simply, the British were going to fight the Turks somewhere and there was no more strategic location than the Dardanelles. Abandoning Gallipoli did not bring about an end to fighting with the Turks. He noted that by 1918, the British had 270,000 men in Mesopotamia.²² The Dardanelles actually had strategic potential beyond serving as a diversion to relieve Turkish pressure on the Russians. Army, Navy, and civilian leadership should have shown more resolve throughout the entire affair. He

believed there were a “dozen situations” outside the control of the enemy which could have led to success.²³ He implies that victory in the Dardanelles in 1915 could have shortened the war and prevented the fall of the Tsar and the rise of communism. Prolonged struggle benefitted the anti-tsarist factions. One prophetic excerpt published in 1923 reads, “In the war of exhaustion to which we were finally condemned, which was indeed extolled as the last revelation of military wisdom, Russia was to be the first to fall, and in her fall to open upon herself a tide of ruin in which perhaps a score of millions of human beings have been engulfed. The consequences of these events abide with us to-day. They will darken the world for our children’s children.”²⁴

After the Dardanelles, there was nothing left on land but a war of exhaustion. “No more strategy, very little tactics; only the dull wearing down of the weaker combination by exchanging lives.”²⁵ Churchill would later remark, “The decisive theater is the theater where a vital decision may be obtained at any given time. The main theater is that in which the main armies or fleets are stationed. This is not at all times the decisive theater.”²⁶

Despite the fact that the Dardanelles campaign led to his dismissal as First Lord of the Admiralty, Churchill again supported an attack on Germany’s “soft underbelly” in the Second World War. This time some things were the same but others were different. Combat in North Africa and Italy opened up the Mediterranean for Allied shipping. Perhaps the more critical issue was that these campaigns gave Allied soldiers and generals some valuable *experience* that would help them achieve victory in the more intense fight across France and Germany.

Politicians Must Guide the Generals

According to biographer Carlo D’Este, all the British politicians in WWI except Churchill deferred to the generals and admirals, thinking they were the experts. As it turned out,

the military men were incompetent as well. Churchill had seen poor leadership in the Boer War and knew that war must not be left only to the generals.²⁷ D'Este writes that perhaps Churchill's most valuable lesson from WWI was what Churchill called "the importance of preventing the admirals and generals (and budding air marshals) from running their own shows beyond Cabinet control."²⁸

Churchill and many others believed that the Western Front battles between 1915 and 1917 were poorly conceived. He said, "if only the Generals had not been content to fight machine gun bullets with the breasts of gallant men, and think that that was waging war."²⁹ While he was in the Cabinet he must have been troubled by the casualty reports he received. Yet, after he was exiled from the government, he volunteered to serve on the Front. Although he was not in a particularly violent region, his decision to go to war demonstrates that he was a man of great personal courage. His willingness to be in the action did not just benefit his reputation, it provided him more experiences to draw upon as he expanded his leadership ability.

Churchill describes his thoughts about generals and strategy as follows: "Battles are won by slaughter and maneuver. The greater the general, the more he contributes in maneuver, the less he demands in slaughter."³⁰ His time on the front certainly filled him with compassion for the men who served there. He constantly thought about strategic ways to win decisive victory without incurring great cost in human lives. There must have been many others who came to these same conclusions but not all were able to translate them into solutions. In one reflection he writes, "Suppose that the British Army sacrificed upon the Somme, the finest we ever had, had been preserved, trained and developed to its full strength till the summer of 1917, till perhaps 3,000 tanks were ready, till an overwhelming artillery was prepared, till a scientific method of

advance had been devised, till the apparatus was complete, might not a decisive result have been achieved at one supreme stroke?”³¹

Churchill *described* what he experienced in WWI—Generals were too quick to sacrifice their men and too slow to develop innovative strategies. He *analyzed* the events to develop a better strategy should a similar situation arise in the future. Then, when the time came, he applied his lessons from the First World War to the situation he faced in the Second. As the Allies prepared for Overlord, he urged patience to ensure they had the equipment and overwhelming force necessary for a successful invasion of France.

In *Supreme Command*, Eliot Cohen asserts that political leaders must sometimes prod even good military leaders. Churchill did not hesitate to do that in WWII. While his talent as a strategist probably did not rival some of his best generals, his relentless questioning of their plans certainly made the plans more robust.³² This propensity for questioning military leadership was no doubt rooted in his suspicion of their competency from his experiences in WWI and before.

Churchill's Application of Experiential Learning Theory

Distinguished historian Carlo D'Este says “the irony of Churchill's involvement in the Great War is that despite his near-disgrace and the enormous cost to his reputation over the Dardanelles fiasco, he advanced more bold ideas and innovations for winning the war than anyone else in Britain.”³³ He may have learned more about wartime leadership than anyone else in Britain as well. The main reason he harvested so much from his experience was his willingness to painstakingly record and analyze what took place.

Churchill's reflective writing during the interwar period follows experiential leadership models quite well. And he did it years before those theories were in vogue. Reflective writing is

a practice utilized by many experiential learning practitioners because it forces students to organize their thoughts.

Did Churchill have a secret? No, not really. But he did understand the value of hard work. His six volume history squeezed every bit of juice from the fruit of his experience. He must have believed it was beneficial for him. He wrote another six volumes about WWII. Apparently Sir Winston believed in the power of six.



Figure 6. Churchill speaking to the British people by radio. (reprinted from BBC. http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/famouspeople/winston_churchill/)

Black Jack and the Wizard – George C. Marshall

George Marshall's experience in the Great War was considerably different from that of Winston Churchill. While Churchill worked on the grand strategic level, Marshall's responsibilities were at the tactical and operational level. The manner in which he gleaned critical lessons was also somewhat different. He did not pen a multi-volume history of the entire war or even a comprehensive history of America's involvement. However, he did compile his own memoirs from the war. His book was written shortly after the war, between 1919 and 1923, but would not be published until 1976—17 years after his death. Although Marshall never earned royalties from the work, the process of organizing his thoughts paid off in a much bigger way. Like Churchill, he was accomplishing critical steps in the experiential learning process. According to Kolb's model, concrete experiences should be followed by reflective observation



Figure 7. George Marshall, 1919.
(Reprinted from the Marshall Foundation.
<http://www.marshallfoundation.org/about/timeline/ww1.html>)

and abstract conceptualization. The majority of Marshall's memoir could be considered reflective observation. Marshall catalogs the details of his experience from America's entry into the war through the Armistice and beyond. But he doesn't just *describe* what happened. He also provides abstract conceptualization. He recognizes trends and connections with other events. While reading his narrative of WWI one can clearly see that the conclusions he draws from his experiences must be connected to decisions he made later in life.

Experiential learning theory in education generally

envisions cycles that happen rapidly—perhaps minutes or hours, at most weeks or months. But the application of these principles to wartime experience extends the cycle over decades.

Nonetheless, the principles remain effective, especially when the participant is eager to learn.

Marshall certainly appears eager to learn from his experience. In 1921, he published an article in *Infantry Journal* entitled “Profiting by War Experiences.”³⁴ He described and analyzed his WWI experience then provided recommendations of how to apply his lessons learned to future conflicts. Some of Marshall’s astute recommendations from this article were adopted by the Army during the interwar period. However, they were primarily at the tactical and operational level and therefore did not have a major impact on his responsibilities as the Chief of Staff during WWII. One might come to the conclusion that he had not yet shifted his targeting to strategic lessons learned. But this conclusion overlooks an important fact. When Marshall published his article, he was only a major. There were plenty of generals to provide strategic advice.

The paragraphs below will focus on Marshall’s WWI lessons that directly related to his significant contributions to WWII. First, he learned that the fighting man will pay the price for the lack of strategic preparedness by a nation. Second, he learned how to create, organize and mobilize an Army. Finally, he learned that about the interaction of opposing interests among allied nations. Even though Marshall’s memoirs only fill a single 200-page volume—much less than Churchill’s work—he appears to have been no less adept at internalizing his experience. However, as will be explained below, his experiential learning process was aided in a way that Churchill’s was not.

The Price of Unpreparedness is Paid in Human Lives

Some of the most compelling episodes Marshall describes relate to what he called the “price of unpreparedness.” On the morning of 1 November 1918, an American infantry advance west of the Meuse River should have had roughly 500 tanks in his estimation but they could only muster 18. In his memoirs, Marshall lamented, “Here was a commentary on the price of unpreparedness to be paid inevitably in human life. With America the master steel-maker of the world, American infantrymen were denied the support and protection of these land battleships.”³⁵ Comments such as this are a common theme throughout Marshall’s memoir. From the outbreak of the war, he saw how the US Army had to beg and borrow for supplies and equipment both in the US and in France. Often they would even have to go without necessary items. It wasn’t just advanced mechanical items either. Even basic items like shoes were in short supply. Marshall recalls that “Many had only one pair of shoes and . . . some of them did not even have one pair.”³⁶ In another chapter he states, “I saw men with their feet wrapped in gunnysacks making long marches and going through maneuvers, in the mud and snow.”³⁷ One can only imagine that these images were still in his mind during the buildup for World War II.

Other similar experiences were still in the collective conscience of the US Army at the time. Supply difficulties created problems in both the Spanish-American War³⁸ and the Mexican Punitive Expedition.³⁹ Interestingly, the commander of the Mexican Punitive Expedition was General John J. Pershing, a man who would become a very important figure in Marshall’s life. In fact, one of Marshall’s first encounters with Pershing would teach Marshall a lesson that would come in handy two decades later when he fought to prepare America for entry into the Second World War. The episode began when Pershing scolded Marshall’s superiors after they gave a weak explanation for a poorly executed exercise. As Pershing was walking away,

Marshall actually put his hand on Pershing's arm to stop him then gave unsolicited feedback that included some criticism of Pershing's staff.⁴⁰ He told the commanding general about men without shoes, inadequate quarters and insufficient transportation among other issues. Many expected Marshall to be fired in short order but Pershing respected him for it. In the future, Pershing would actually seek out Marshall's opinion because he knew he would tell him the truth. Marshall learned that even the toughest leaders can take well-reasoned criticism if it is delivered with the proper intention.⁴¹

In November of 1938, Marshall would again feel compelled to disagree with a superior. This time it was President Roosevelt. Marshall was the Deputy Chief of Staff. During a meeting where Marshall was on the sidelines, he said very little until the President asked his opinion at the end. Everyone else in the room had voiced their approval of a plan to prioritize building of aircraft factories while letting the buildup of the army wait. Marshall, knowing the price of unpreparedness, firmly disagreed with the President's idea. Again, many of his compatriots thought his career in Washington was finished. This was far from the case, Roosevelt respected Marshall for standing on the courage of his convictions and promoted him to Chief of Staff of the Army the next year. It was in that position that he would be able to apply the lessons that he had internalized from the First World War.⁴²

In May 1940, eighteen months before Pearl Harbor, Marshall went with the Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, to meet with President Roosevelt with the goal of securing \$657 million in additional funding to expand the Army and prepare it for possible entry into the war. This was a massive figure at the time—twice the Army's annual appropriation. Furthermore, money was tight. In the month prior Marshall had been unable to secure a mere \$12 million for a separate request. It was Morgenthau who began the meeting with Roosevelt.

Certainly he must have been convincing. As the Ambassador to Turkey during WWI he had seen Germany train and equip the Turks helping them successfully defend Gallipoli against the Entente. However, Roosevelt noted Morgenthau's opinion then simply dismissed him. Marshall, however, would not be deterred. Perhaps he thought of men marching in the snow with gunny sacks for shoes. Or perhaps it was a vision of brave soldiers attacking German trenches without the aid of tanks. Whatever his inspiration, he confronted the President much like he had Pershing in 1917. He delivered fact after fact about supplies that were needed to properly prepare for war. He described how the US could put no more than 15,000 men into combat whereas the Germans had 2 million men in the West alone. He criticized the fact that the economy was not on a war footing and that no priorities were established to guide the uses of steel being produced. He finally concluded by saying, "If you don't do something . . . and do it right away, I don't know what is going to happen to this country." Morgenthau wrote in his diary that Marshall "stood right up to the President." This time Roosevelt was convinced. Two days later, Roosevelt asked for a supplemental appropriation of \$1.8 billion—\$1.55 billion of which was for the Army.⁴³

Creating, Organizing, and Inspiring an Army

After World War II, Winston Churchill said to Marshall, "It has not fallen to your lot to command the great armies. You have had to create them, organize them, and inspire them. Under your guiding hand, the mighty and valiant formations which have swept across France and Germany were brought into being and perfected in an amazingly short space of time."⁴⁴ Again, the genesis of Marshall's great performance in WWII can be found in the wisdom he gained from his WWI experience.

Marshall's WWI experience with the creation and organization of a force began before he even crossed the Atlantic. His boss, General Bell, became commander of the Eastern Department. Bell's key responsibilities were training, equipping, mobilizing, and shipping new recruits to Europe. When Bell became ill with Grippe (the flu), Marshall himself took over most of the responsibilities without anyone realizing the general was sick.⁴⁵ For about a month, Marshall effectively ran the Department of the East as a captain. Every other day he would go by the Rockefeller Hospital to inform the general of the decisions he had made on his behalf. Those decisions were primarily related to supply and training, and included significant work on the organization of Officer Training Camps.⁴⁶

Marshall's stateside duties did not last long. He was able to secure a position in the 1st Division staff and left with that unit for France in the spring of 1917. The division's second lieutenants were drawn from the very best officers candidates at the camps Marshall set up. He later wrote, "I recall crossing over to New York on the government ferry with nine of them, each with a bride. I never learned of the career of two of these officers, but I do know that each of the other seven was killed fighting in the 1st Division."⁴⁷ This must have been a powerful memory for a man who had a personal role in organizing their training.

Marshall spent a lot of time in France before the US got significantly involved in combat. He saw an army transformed from a skeleton into a wartime force. In addition to the aforementioned logistical challenges, he witnessed the challenges of training an army filled with new recruits. When combat operations began, Marshall described his concerns as "feeding, clothing, training, marching, and fighting the men. Their health and morale was a daily issue; their dead and wounded a daily tragedy."⁴⁸

After a period of time with the 1st Division, Marshall was transferred to the operations section of the General Headquarters Staff. There he gained a larger perspective on the whole war. The men he worked with there were worried about big issues related to the plans and organization of an army of several million men. They talked about things like ocean tonnage, ports of debarkation, construction of docks, methods of training new divisions, problems of securing French and British artillery, the manufacture of tanks, and the complicated relations between the French, English, and Americans. These topics were discussed on and off duty, at the office and at the dinner table. As a young field grade officer, he was being prepared for his great responsibilities decades later.⁴⁹

Throughout all of this, Marshall was observing that victory required much more than just combat action. Despite contributions as a top combat planner in WWI, Marshall pointed to a logistical movement as his greatest contribution to the war effort. In his memoir he described in detail how he came up with a plan to move American forces from the St. Mihiel battlefield to the Meuse-Argonne.⁵⁰ The brilliance of the order would earn him the nickname, “The Wizard.”⁵¹ He also learned about the importance of support troops and about the sacrifices they made. During one period of trench warfare, he states that the most dangerous duty was that of the Quartermaster sergeants and teamsters who brought rations to the infantry. “No publicity or glory attached to this service, but those who carried it through always had my profound admiration.”⁵²

Marshall appreciated that behind the scenes tasks like training, equipping, and moving man and materiel were as critical to victory as brilliant tactics. His metaphorical description of the development of the US Army in France rivals Churchill’s literary genius. “This was not a simple case of an army undertaking an offensive operation, but it was the combination of the

birth of an army, the procurement of material and detachments for its services from virtually every point in France not occupied by the enemy, and the plunging of this huge infant into the greatest battle in which American troops had ever engaged.”⁵³

Ed Cray, one of Marshall’s most significant biographers, states that Marshall emerged from WWI with a rare combination of experience. He had served with troops, experiencing both the boredom and the terror that were part of life as an infantryman. He had also worked as a staff officer and gained experience on the grand scale.⁵⁴ In eighteen months the US Army had gone from 100,000 men to a force of 4 million, with 2 million of them overseas. Marshall had played a huge part in all of it. By the end of the war, the AEF was of comparable size to the British and French armies, which had 1.8 million and 1.7 million men respectively.⁵⁵

World War II would require an even greater buildup in the US Army. In 1939, the Army numbered 189,000. By 1945, Marshall had led the Army’s expansion to 8.2 million men—an increase of 4300 percent.⁵⁶ The Army would fight simultaneously in Europe and the Pacific. Marshall did not get to command this mighty force in combat but his expertise was vital to its creation, organization, and inspiration. He knew how to apply the lessons he learned while effectively running the Department of the East as a captain. He also knew how to organize, train, and supply an expeditionary force due to his time in the 1st Division. Finally, he must have remembered some of the conversations about ocean tonnage, dock construction, and tank production from his time at the General HQ.

Challenges to Unity of Command among Allies

From the first days that the American 1st Division was in Europe, the Entente allies wanted them to fight under French and English command but Pershing refused. He would not

allow them just to be reinforcements slaughtered under someone else's command.⁵⁷ Pershing understood that President Wilson wanted US participation in the war to enhance American international influence especially in expected post-war peace negotiations. That could not happen without distinct American battlefield accomplishments. However, the British and the French felt that they were the experienced commanders and, therefore, were best able to employ the American fighters.

Sometimes the relationship among the allies became severely strained. In one case Haig and Foch wanted to spread American divisions all along the front but Pershing refused. Haig and Foch only relented when the American threatened to take the matter to the White House.⁵⁸

Similar situations arise again and again throughout the war. Pershing continued to stand strong. Some modern historians, such as David Trask, have criticized him for his "unduly rigid interpretation of his mandate to create an independent army."⁵⁹ Marshall praised him for having "created a distinctive American combat army, despite almost overwhelming difficulties, and in opposition to the pressing desires of all the great Allied leaders and most of their statesmen." It seems Marshall's appraisal is most accurate. It is well documented that the French and English commanders used colonial soldiers as cannon fodder in many cases. Perhaps they would have treated American divisions similarly. Furthermore, Pershing was willing to moderate his stance when circumstances dictated. When the Germans attacked early in 1918—before the majority of US troops arrived—Pershing sensed the importance of the moment and offered up his four divisions to Pétain.⁶⁰ Marshall recalled this as one of Pershing's great moments in the war, because he was putting so much on the line for the greater good. The American commander rose to greatness by splitting up his army over four hundred miles of front. Marshall says Pershing "temporarily jeopardized his own and even American prestige . . . toward salvage of the Allied

wreck. In the midst of a profound depression he radiated determination and the will to win. His manner and his expression, more than his speech, fired the officers of the First Division with the determination to overcome the enemy wherever he was encountered.”⁶¹

Even when the tide of the war turned against Germany, the French and English continued to scramble for American divisions to be attached to their command. On 30 August 1918, Foch met with Pershing and proposed the Meuse-Argonne battle. As a part of this, he brought up the possibility of abandoning the purely-American St Mihiel operation and made another effort to split the newly formed American Army.⁶² Pershing both held on to the St Mihiel operation and committed to the Meuse-Argonne offensive while preventing the split of American divisions.

Even after the Meuse-Argonne battle was underway and the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) was pushing back the Germans, the relentless British and French leaders were still trying to pry away American forces. The British attempted to have US divisions transferred to a British sector where they would fight under “experienced” commanders. The French were even sneakier and considered a plan where the French would be inserted into the middle of the American army. As Cray puts it, “The question was no longer could the Allied Powers win, but who would get the credit for the victory.”⁶³

The relationship between the Americans, the British, and the French was strained throughout the war. Early on the command relationship was not well defined. Even after Foch was made the Supreme Commander, he still had significant limits on his power. As Hew Strachan puts it, “his powers extended little further than any consensus he could forge. Individual blows, coordinated in time and space, allowed each national army to do its own thing.”⁶⁴

While Marshall personally witnessed some of the jockeying amongst friendly powers, it is likely that much of his information was gleaned from Pershing himself. After the war, Pershing selected Marshall to be his aide-de-camp, a position he held for the next five years.⁶⁵ Certainly this constant infighting must have made an impact on Pershing. That impact seems to have reverberated with Marshall who was writing his own memoirs of WWI while serving as Pershing's aide. Marshall frequently mentions the struggle among the allies in his book.

In an interview after WWII, Marshall would say, the First World War “shows how difficult it is for armies of different nations to work with full harmony.”⁶⁶ When the British and Americans struggled to work out command relationships shortly after Pearl Harbor, Marshall insisted on a strong, single commander. He understood that even Allies would be tempted to pursue their individual agendas. If the Anglo-American Alliance was to defeat Germany in Europe, Marshall believed their actions must be unified—not simply cooperative. While some might claim that he was just angling for American control of British forces, it seems more likely that he recalled the difficulties Pershing had experienced while dealing with Foch and Haig. Marshall wanted a unified command relationship agreed upon at the highest levels as early as possible.

Years later, with Eisenhower serving as the Supreme Allied Commander, the British began to push for a deputy to Eisenhower who would be in charge of the land war. Their pick was Field Marshal Sir Harold Alexander—one of Churchill's favorites. They pointed out recent shortcomings in leadership related to the Battle of the Bulge. Marshall knew that national pride and influence were at stake as well as Eisenhower's credibility in the organization he commanded. Even though Eisenhower himself was inclined to accept the deputy, Marshall forbade it and even said he would step down as Chief of Staff if such an arrangement was

made.⁶⁷ Marshall was determined to maintain the established command relationship and not have it undermined by clever political maneuvering within the Allies. He witnessed those challenges in the First World War and wished to avoid them the second time around.



Figure 8. Marshall (*left*) joins President Roosevelt and Churchill. (reprinted from Marshall Foundation. <http://www.marshallfoundation.org/about/timeline/ww2.html>)

Marshall's Application of Experiential Learning Theory

As previously noted, Winston Churchill learned his lessons by laboriously producing a six volume history of WWI. Marshall's reflected writing was not nearly as lengthy. But he was aided by other factors that neatly follow experiential learning theory. A facilitator to help guide the student through his or her development process is a key component of the experiential learning process. Marshall could not have had a better mentor than General "Black Jack"

Pershing. After serving as Commander of the AEF, Pershing was Chief of Staff of the Army. As Marshall reflected on his experience in WWI, he could bounce his analysis off of Pershing since the two were constantly together.

Pershing was able to guide Marshall as he went through the Reflective Observation and Abstract Conceptualization steps. Yet the connection goes even farther. Marshall was almost certainly involved with the development of Pershing's own memoirs from WWI. Direct discussion of his involvement is not easy to locate but it is known that Pershing gave Marshall a copy of his manuscript after serving as the best man in Marshall's wedding.⁶⁸ However, the story of how Marshall first met Eisenhower indicates that Marshall may have been even more intimately involved with Pershing's work. Eisenhower explains that while he was serving as

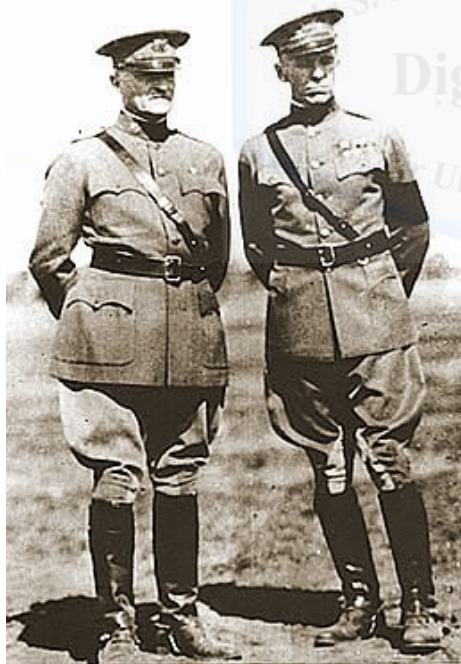


Figure 9. General Pershing (*left*) and Marshall in France. (reprinted from Marshall Foundation. <http://www.marshallfoundation.org/about/timeline/ww1.html>)

Pershing's assistant in 1930, the general asked him to review a section of his memoir. After Eisenhower recommended a significant change to the writing style, Pershing directed Eisenhower to re-write them in his proposed format. Pershing then sent Ike's version to Marshall to review. When Marshall came to Washington, he and Pershing met privately about the writings and reached the conclusion to stick with the original format.⁶⁹

Two conclusions can reasonably be drawn from this episode. First, Pershing was willing to ask an assistant to help pen his memoirs. Perhaps Marshall did the same at some point. Second, Pershing not only trusted Marshall a great deal, he considered him the closest advisor in his own

reflective writing—a work that was two volumes long. The Wizard was guided to excellence by the Jack, but not just any Jack—Black Jack Pershing, a man who was at the time, the highest ranking military officer in American history.

CONCLUSION

War, disguise it as you may, is but a dirty, shoddy, business, which only a fool would play at.

—Winston Churchill

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.

— John F. Kennedy

As Churchill eloquently points out in the quote above, war is a hideous event that should not be undertaken lightly. However, when fate does force men into armed conflict, it is their duty to learn as much as possible. Just as Churchill and Marshall harvested the lessons of their World War I experience, junior officers today must take advantage of their experiences. The current generation of US officers has a great deal of combat experience. Imagine the leadership dividend possible if they engage in rigorous reflection of their own combat experience. Just telling war stories over a cold beverage is not sufficient to deeply ingrain the important lessons. A detailed, systematic approach will render greater understanding.

This systematic approach should follow the guidelines of experiential learning theory but it does not have to involve a six volume history or even a book at all. It could be as simple as the development of a briefing that includes the three steps of the simplified experiential learning model--*describe, analyze, and apply*. If reflective writing is preferred, the individual could write a book, or simply write an article for publication. Just like Marshall benefited from the Pershing's memoirs, modern officers could learn from the writings of their peers. With modern

technology printing costs are no longer a consideration since most publications are online only. Barriers to publication need to be lowered accordingly to encourage more participation.

Mentorship should also receive a renewed focus. Not everyone can be mentored by the Chief of Staff like Marshall was. But future squadron and group commanders could also benefit from the guidance provided by current leaders. While this isn't a new concept, Marshall's story again shows how powerful the impact of a mentor can be—especially when paired with reflective writing as part of a guided experiential learning process.

During World War I, Marshall stated, “Changes came so rapidly in those days that one spent little time in cogitation over what had happened; reflecting in the past tense found no place in one's mind.”⁷⁰ As wartime operations begin to wind down in 2014, the US military is ending a period during which it had little time to reflect. Now is the time to pursue the lessons provided by experience just like Marshall and Churchill did almost 100 years ago.



Figure 10. Churchill (left), Marshall (center) and Eisenhower at the Algiers Conference. (reprinted from Marshall Foundation.

<http://www.marshallfoundation.org/about/timeline/ww2.html>)

(All notes appear in shortened form. For full details, see the appropriate entry in the bibliography.)

¹ Kolb, D. *Experiential Learning*, 21-33.

² Surgenor, Paul. "Tutor, Demonstrator, and Coordinator Development at UCD." 11-12.

Surgenor presents the Gibbs model in a concise manner. Original model is presented in a 1988 book by Graham Gibbs. Reference is provided in bibliography.

³ Ibid, 10. Similar to the Gibbs Model, Surgenor provides a concise description of the Rolfe et al Model. The Rolfe Model is actually an adaptation of Borton's developmental model. Rolfe and Borton references are provided in Bibliography.

⁴ Kolb, and Kolb. "Experiential Learning Theory," 39.

⁵ Walter and Marks, *Experiential Learning and Change*, 1.

⁶ D'Este, Warlord, 239.

⁷ Churchill, *A Roving Commission*, 192-194.

⁸ D'Este, Warlord, 159.

⁹ D'Este, Warlord, 150.

¹⁰ D'Este, Warlord, 153.

¹¹ Bocca, *The Adventurous Life of Winston Churchill*, 76.

¹² Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1915*, 61-65.

¹³ Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1915*, 70-71.

¹⁴ D'Este, Warlord, 363.

¹⁵ D'Este, Warlord, 231

¹⁶ D'Este, Warlord, 362,

¹⁷ Churchill, *Memoirs of the Second World War*, 582-583.

¹⁸ Churchill, *Maxims and Reflections*, 91.

¹⁹ Ulrich Trumpener, "Turkey's War." *Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War*, ed.

Hew Strachan, 84. Bibliographic entry is for entire book, not this specific chapter by Trumpener.

²⁰ Ulrich Trumpener, "Turkey's War." *Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War*, ed.

Hew Strachan, 80. In *The First World War*, Hew Strachan states that British actually offered £4 million but the Germans had just offered £5 million.

²¹ Strachan, *The First World War*, 119.

²² Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1915*, 538-539.

²³ Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1915*, 545.

²⁴ Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1915*, 540.

²⁵ Churchill, Warlord, 544.

²⁶ Churchill: *Maxims and Reflections*, ed. Colin Coote, 82-83.

²⁷ D'Este, Warlord, 171.

²⁸ D'Este, Warlord, 237

²⁹ D'Este, Warlord, 237.

³⁰ D'Este, Warlord, 237

³¹ Churchill, *The World Crisis, 1916-1918, VI*, 50.

³² Cohen, *Supreme Command*, 129.

³³ D'Este, Warlord, 237.

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- ³⁴ Marshall, "Profiting by War Experience," 34.
- ³⁵ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 183.
- ³⁶ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 52.
- ³⁷ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 40.
- ³⁸ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 165.
- ³⁹ Yockelson, "The United States Armed Forces and the Mexican Punitive Expedition."
- ⁴⁰ Perry, *Partners in Command*, 21-22.
- ⁴¹ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 57.
- ⁴² Perry, *Partners in Command*, 23.
- ⁴³ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 155-156. Marshall's request was the turning point in making the President's decision but not the only factor in the final amount for which he asked. While Roosevelt dismissed Morgenthau, he agreed to meet with Marshall the next day to work out the details. As President Roosevelt and Marshall went over the request in the following two days, Germany invaded France. Certainly this also had an impact on Roosevelt decision to ask Congress for more money than Marshall's original request. It is also important to note that the invasion itself was not enough to draw America into the European war even if the US did begin to build up its military. Perhaps most significantly is that Marshall made the request prior to the invasion. Unlike in 1917, the WWII buildup began before events drove the US to become an active participant in the war.
- ⁴⁴ Moseley, *Marshall: Hero for Our Times*, xvii.
- ⁴⁵ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 2-3.
- ⁴⁶ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 50.
- ⁴⁷ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 52.
- ⁴⁸ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 121.
- ⁴⁹ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 120.
- ⁵⁰ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 139.
- ⁵¹ Abshire, "The Character of George Marshall," 5.
- ⁵² Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 85-86.
- ⁵³ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 128.
- ⁵⁴ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 86.
- ⁵⁵ Strachan, *The First World War*, 310.
- ⁵⁶ National WW2 Museum Website. "By the Numbers: The US Military."
- ⁵⁷ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 54-55.
- ⁵⁸ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 67.
- ⁵⁹ David Trask, "The Entry of the USA into the War and its Effects," *Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War*, ed. Hew Strachan, 247. Bibliographic entry is for entire book, not this specific chapter by Trask.
- ⁶⁰ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 61.
- ⁶¹ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 79.
- ⁶² Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 132.
- ⁶³ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 76.
- ⁶⁴ Strachan, *The First World War*, 316.
- ⁶⁵ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 85.
- ⁶⁶ Perry, *Partners in Command*, 18.
- ⁶⁷ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 500-501.

⁶⁸ Cray, *General of the Army: George C. Marshall*, 110.

⁶⁹ Perry, *Partners in Command*, 9.

⁷⁰ Marshall, *Memoirs of My Services in the World War*, 177.



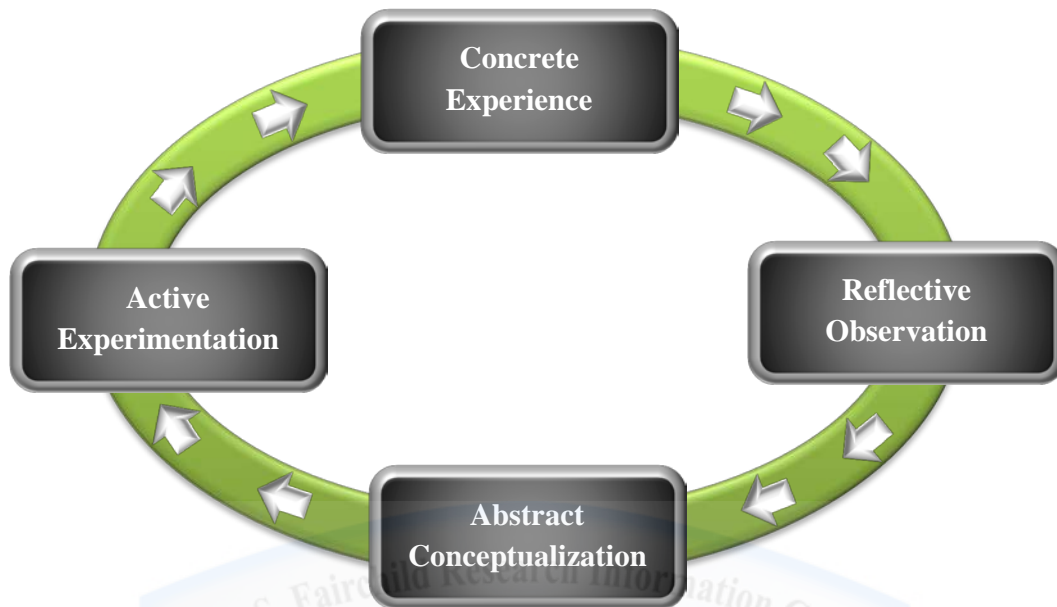
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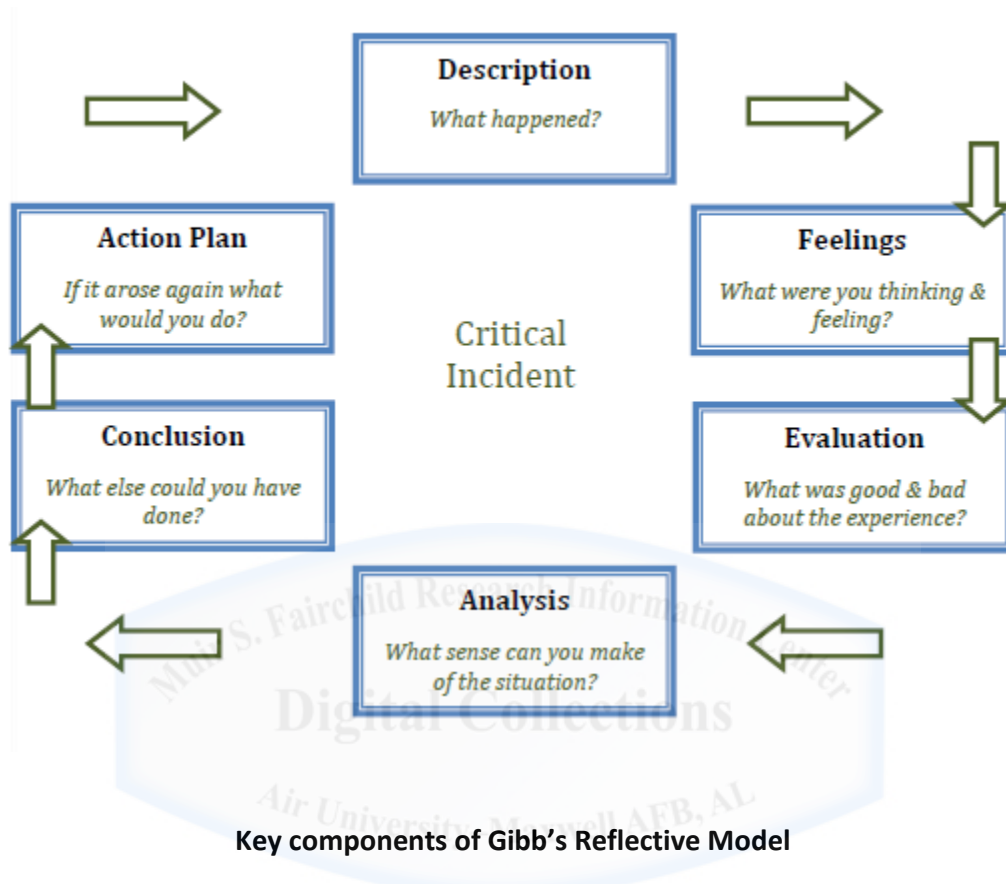
Appendix A. Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning (reprinted Paul Surgenor. "Tutor, Demonstrator, and Coordinator Development at UCD.")



Components of Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning

Concrete Experience	This relates to the incident or event prompting the reflection and involves the physical act of being involved in, or having hands-on experience. Although in theory you can enter the model at any stage this tends to be the main point of entry.
Reflective Observation	After the event comes the initial reflection. This entails stepping back and viewing the event or incident from an objective perspective. This should provide some insight into what you did and why you did it.
Abstract Conceptualization	These initial reflections are then explored in greater detail. Conceptualization involves interpreting events and actions, looking for connections between these, and the process of applying some theoretical premise to understand events.
Active Experimentation	Once this deeper understanding has been established the individual translates it into predictions about what is likely to happen next or what actions should be taken to refine the way similar events may be handled in future

Appendix B. Gibbs’ Reflective Model (reprinted Paul Surgenor. “Tutor, Demonstrator, and Coordinator Development at UCD.”)



Description	<i>What happened?</i>	Describe in detail the event you are reflecting on. Include e.g. where were you; who else was there; why were you there; what were you doing; what were other people doing; what was the context of the event; what happened; what was your part in this; what parts did the other people play; what was the result
Feelings	<i>What were you thinking and feeling?</i>	At this stage, try to recall and explore those things that were going on inside your head. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you were feeling when the event started? • What you were thinking about at the time? • How did it make you feel? • How did other people make you feel? • How did you feel about the outcome of the event? • What do you think about it now?
Evaluation	<i>What was good and bad about the experience?</i>	Try to evaluate or make a judgement about what has happened. Consider what was good about the experience and what was bad about the experience or what did or didn't go so well

Analysis	<i>What sense can you make of the situation?</i>	<p>Break the event down into its component parts so they can be explored separately. You may need to ask more detailed questions about the answers to the last stage. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What went well? • What did you do well? • What did others do well? • What went wrong or did not turn out how it should have done? • In what way did you or others contribute to this?
Conclusion	<i>What else could you have done?</i>	<p>This differs from the evaluation stage in that now you have explored the issue from different angles and have a lot of information to base your judgement. It is here that you are likely to develop insight into you own and other people's behaviour in terms of how they contributed to the outcome of the event. Remember the purpose of reflection is to learn from an experience. Without detailed analysis and honest exploration that occurs during all the previous stages, it is unlikely that all aspects of the event will be taken into account and therefore valuable opportunities for learning can be missed. During this stage you should ask yourself what you could have done differently</p>
Action plan	<i>If it arose again what would you do?</i>	<p>During this stage you should think yourself forward into encountering the event again and to plan what you would do – would you act differently or would you be likely to do the same?</p> <p>Here the cycle is tentatively completed and suggests that should the event occur again it will be the focus of another reflective cycle</p>

