The Assessment of Leader Adaptability in the U.S. Army
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Stephen J. Zaccaro, Cary Kemp, & Gabrielle M. Wood
Mirum Corporation
George Mason University
Overview

- The Nature of Army Leadership
- Army Leader Attributes
- Adaptability
- Company Commander Assessment Battery (CCAB)
  - 360 Feedback
  - Computer-based Situational judgment exercise
The Nature of Army Leadership
Characteristics of Current & Anticipated Operational Environments

In addition to traditional operations, there will be an increase in operations that are:

- Support operations
- Stability operations

Joint Operations

OOTW
- Support operations
- Stability operations

Technologically Based

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The Nature of Army Leader Tasks

- Problem-solving
- Decision-making

- Novel situations
- Multiple, competing roles
- High Stress
- Ambiguous and partial authority
- High Accountability
Anticipated Needs of Army Leadership

- Given the changing nature of leader tasks and operational environments, what are the requisite attributes of army leaders?

- Leader assessment and development should be based on a new set of attributes
Army Leader Attributes

Adaptability
Objective Force: Requisite Leader Skills
(Johnston, Leibrecht, Holder, Coffey, and Quinkert, 2002)

Attributes of future warriors:
- Multi-functional
- Innovative, creative risk takers in training and war-fighting
- Self-aware
- Capable of training their units without external support packages
- Adaptive
Adaptability

- “Functional changes in response to altered environmental contingencies” (Zaccaro, Banks, & Bader, 2003)

- Approaches to Adaptability
  - Adaptive attributes
  - Adaptive processes
  - Adaptive performance
Adaptive Attributes

- Social Intelligence
- Tolerance for Ambiguity
- Openness to experience
- Optimism
- Creativity
- Intellect/Imagination
Individual Adaptability

- Handling emergencies or crisis situations
- Handling work stress
- Demonstrating physically oriented adaptability
- Dealing with uncertain, unpredictable work situations
- Learning work tasks, technologies, and procedures
- Demonstrating interpersonal adaptability
- Demonstrating cultural adaptability
- Solving problems creatively
Adaptive Processes
(Zaccaro, Banks, and Bader, 2003)

- Diagnosing Change
- Environmental Scanning
- Monitoring Effects
- Formulating Adaptive Solutions
- Motivating the Unit
- Implementing Solutions
Adaptability in Army Leadership

- Adaptive Attributes
- Adaptability Processes
- Adaptive Performance
- Assessment
- Training & Development

Org Level
Company Commander Assessment Battery (CCAB)
Traditional Leadership Assessment

Traditional measures are inadequate considering the nature of Army leadership, failing to address:

- Leadership level
- Subjective vs. Objective ratings of adaptability
- Time constraints typical of Army operations
- Partial authority issues (i.e. reporting to higher)
- Team-based nature of performance
# CCAB Addresses Shortcomings of Traditional Measures

## Measures:
- Leader effectiveness
- Focus:
  - Army officer adaptability skills and processes
- Level:
  - Junior-level officers

## Methods:
- Subjective:
  - 360° Leader Adaptability Scale
- Objective:
  - Computer-based Interactive Situational Judgment Task
360° Leader Adaptability Scale

● Peer, subordinate, and supervisory ratings of leadership adaptability
  - Adaptability processes – 30 items, 6 factors
  - Adaptive attributes – 40 items, 8 factors

● For example:
  - Process: “When something unexpected happens, I readily change gears in response.”
  - Attribute: “I can easily deal with high stress situations.”
360° Assessment Features

- Ratings reflect behavior over longer period of time
- Measures “typical” not “maximum” performance
- Multiple scoring components (i.e. source, level, agreement)
- Useful implications (i.e. coaching and behavior modification)
Validation Studies

- **Study 1**
  - N = 585
  - Variables
    - Leader adaptive processes – (6-factor scale)
    - Cognitive, social, dispositional attributes
    - Adaptability ratings within role play exercise
  - Results
    - Acceptable reliabilities
    - Factor analysis supports 6-factor structure
    - Significant correlations with optimism, metacognitive skill, social intelligence

- **Study 2**
  - N = 185
  - Variables
    - Leader adaptability attributes (revised 8-factor scale)
    - Leader adaptability processes (revised 6-factor scale)
  - Results
    - CFA supported proposed factor structure for each of the measures
    - Significant correlations with openness, agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion
Computer-Based Interactive Situational Judgment Task

- Scenario-based
- Interactive, dynamic
- Present opportunities to perform behaviors and processes
- Low fidelity; higher than SJTs
- Multiple performance criteria and behavioral data
Specific Features of Task: Adaptive Processes

- Users can check the status of human and material resources.
Specific Features of Task: Adaptive Performance Dimensions

Strategy Formulation & Implementation

Instructions: Based on your current situation, choose 3 options from the list below that you would consider doing next. Rank order your choices so that the best or most likely option is selected in the "First Choice" column, your second is in the "Second Choice" column, etc. When you have made your three choices, click [Continue].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call and clarify enemy status with B CO CDR</td>
<td>Call BS2 and request update on enemy positions</td>
<td>Hold position at OBJ Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Begin to advance toward OBJ Black</td>
<td>Send out a recon element to confirm position at AAVs</td>
<td>Tell M1 to site TRP Charlie and prepare to engage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continue
Validation Plan

- Pilot the Simulation
- Compare Results to Other Existing Measures
  - 360 degree leader adaptability ratings
  - Cognitive, social, and dispositional attributes
- Evaluate
  - Construct validity and predictive validity
Conclusions

- New measures are needed to assess leader effectiveness
- Adaptability is a key requirement
- Focusing assessment on adaptability attributes and processes:
  - Identification of future leaders
  - Basis for future training and development efforts
Thank You