

The Assessment of Leader Adaptability in the U.S. Army

A.P.A. Presentation

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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:

Joint Operations



George Mason University

OOTW

- Support operations
- Stability operations



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Technologically Based



August 1, 2004

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

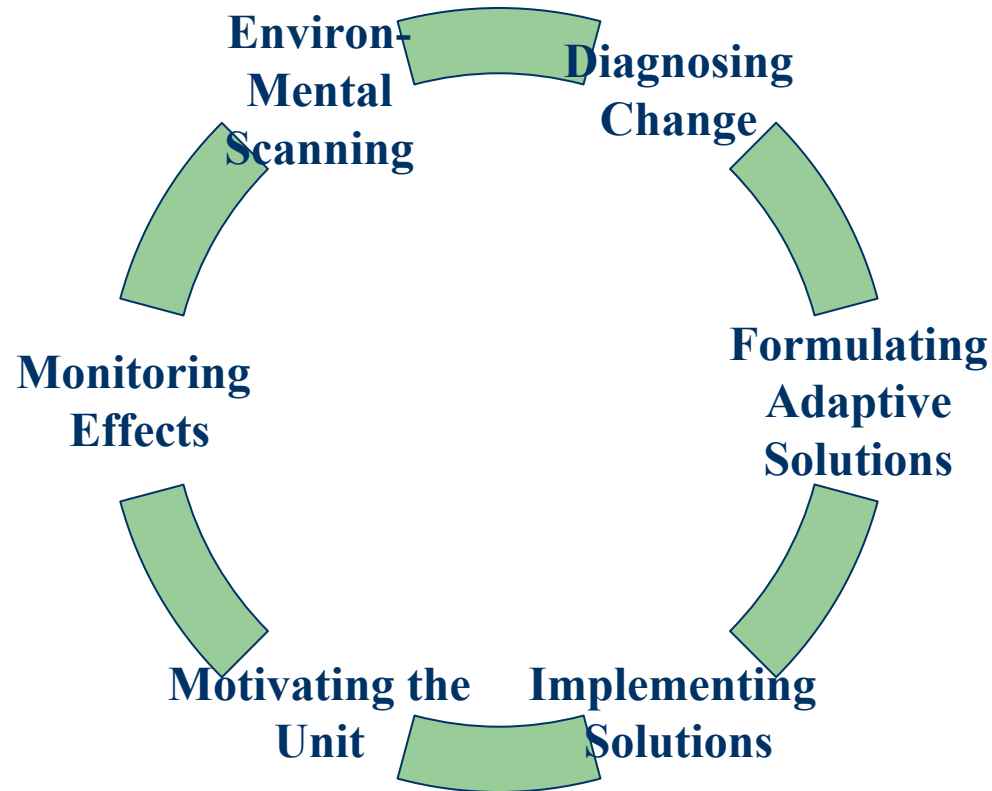
- Social Intelligence
- Tolerance for Ambiguity
- Openness to experience
- Optimism
- Creativity
- Intellect/Imagination

Individual Adaptability

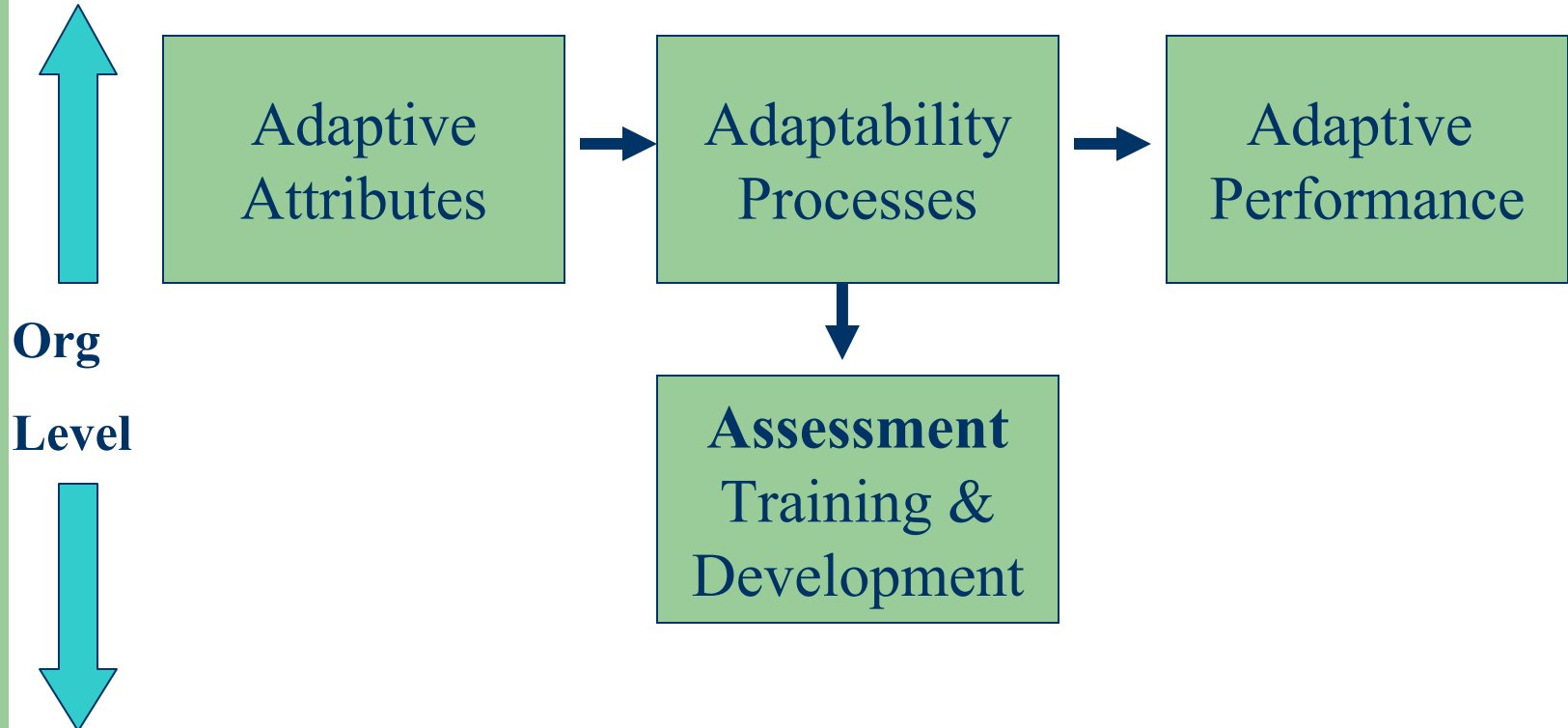
- Handling emergencies or crisis situations
- Handling work stress
- Demonstrating physically oriented adaptability
- Dealing with uncertain, unpredictable work situations
- Learning work tasks, technologies, and procedures
- Demonstrating interpersonal adaptability
- Demonstrating cultural adaptability
- Solving problems creatively

Adaptive Processes

(Zaccaro, Banks, and Bader, 2003)



Adaptability in Army Leadership



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:

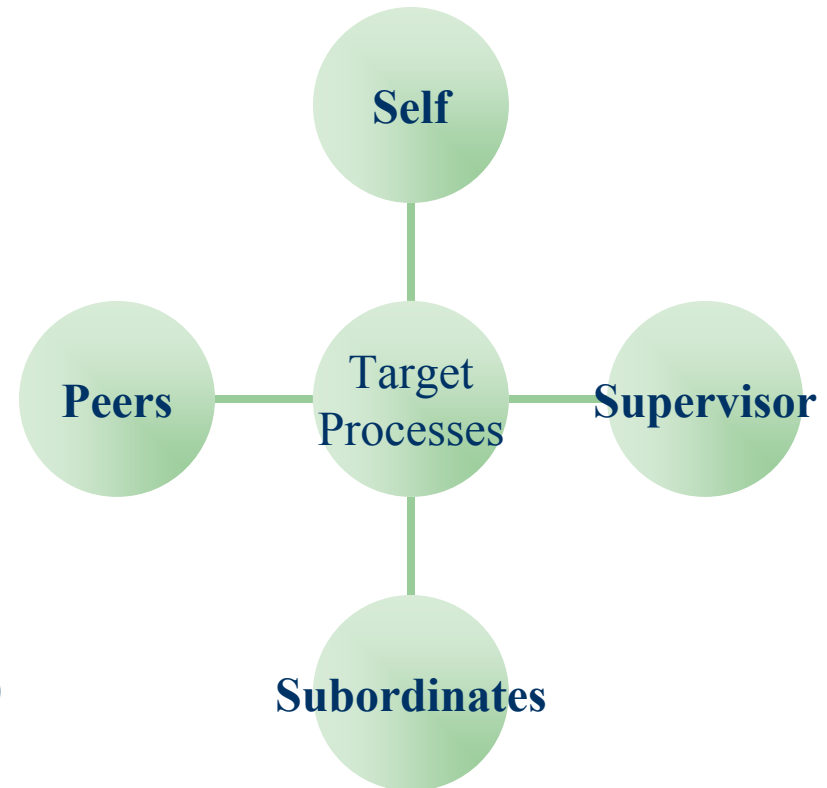
- Subjective:
360° Leader Adaptability Scale
- Objective:
Computer-based Interactive Situational Judgment Task

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



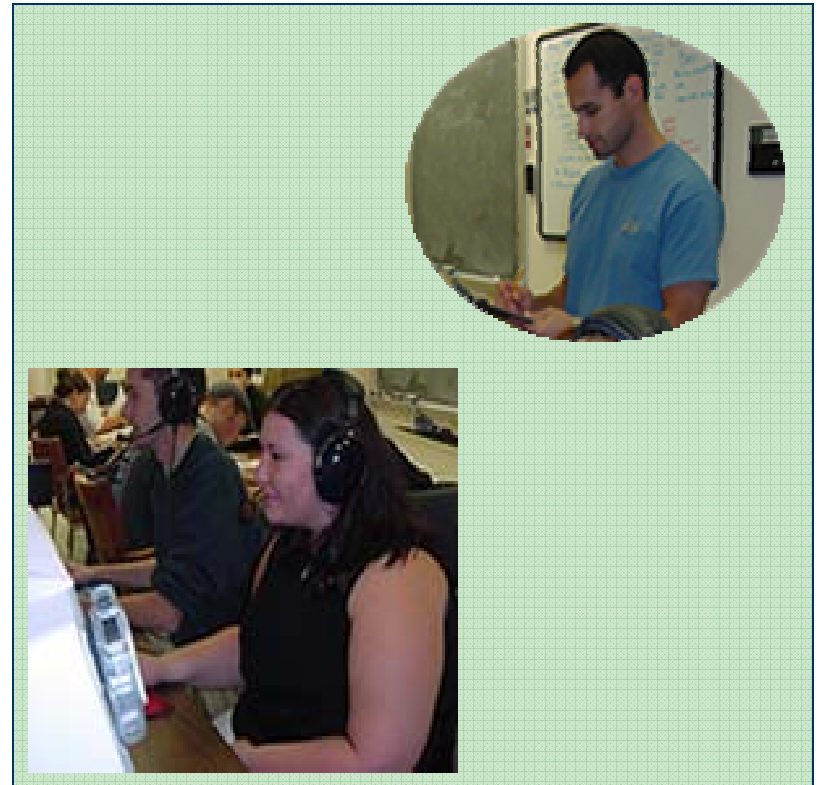
- Study 2

- 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



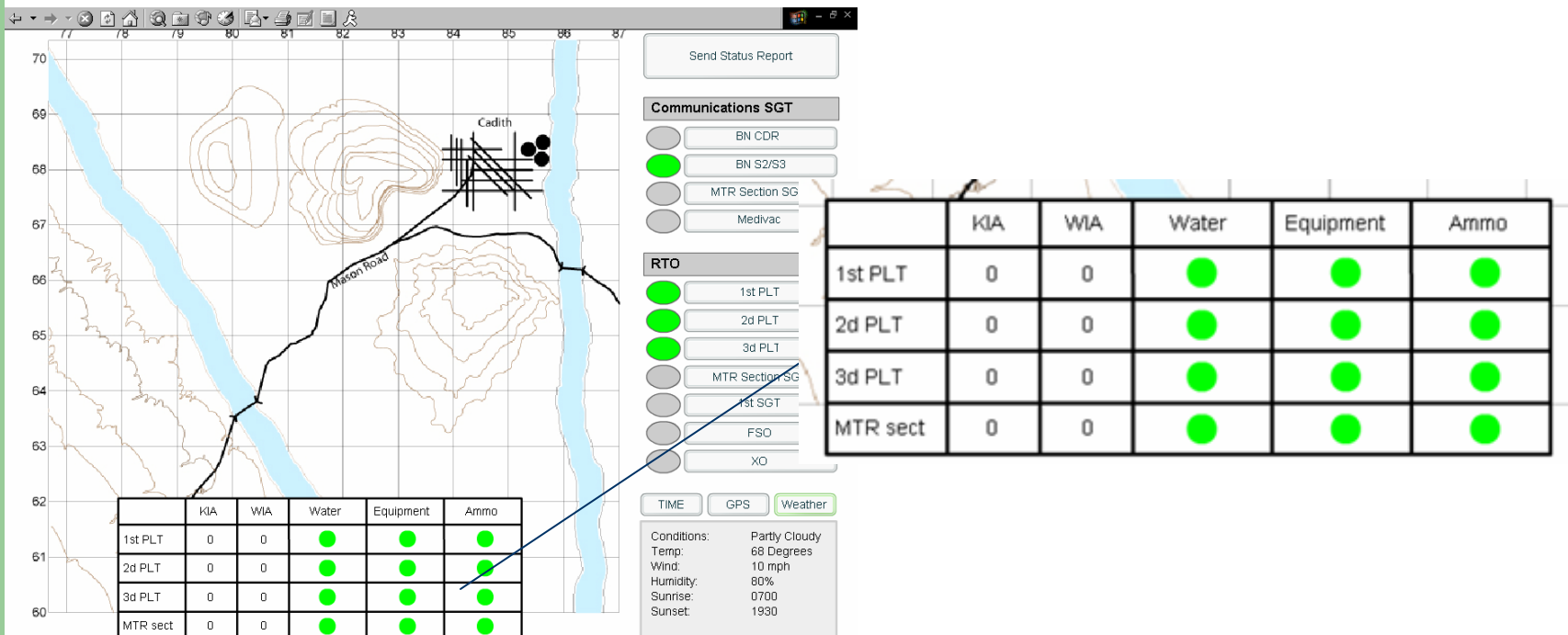
Computer-Based Interactive Situational Judgment Task

- Scenario-based
- Interactive, dynamic
- Present opportunities to perform behaviors and processes
- Low fidelity; higher than SJTs
- Multiple performance criteria and behavioral data

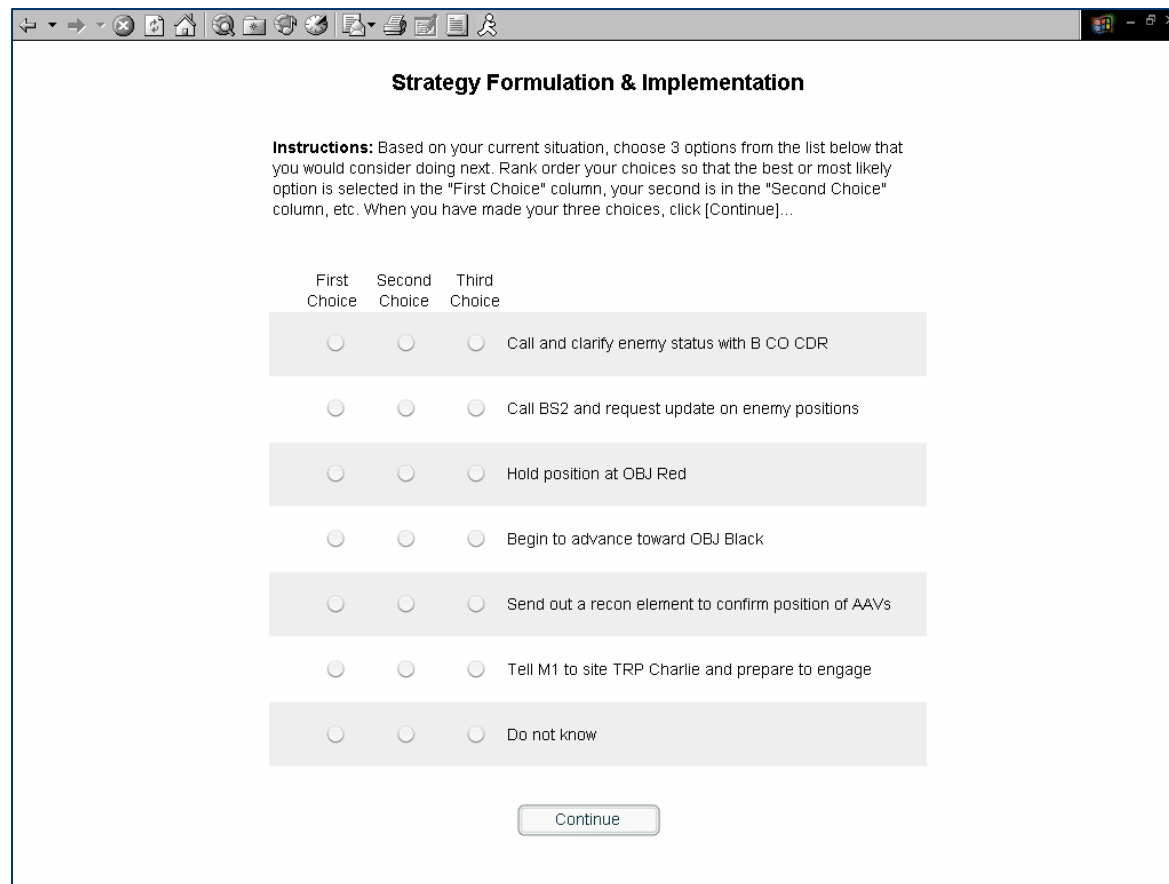


Specific Features of Task: Adaptive Processes

- Users can check the status of human and material resources.



Specific Features of Task: Adaptive Performance Dimensions



The screenshot shows a web browser window with a title bar and a standard toolbar. The main content area is titled "Strategy Formulation & Implementation". Below the title, there is a block of instructions: "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]...".

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

At the bottom of the form, there is a "Continue" button.

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

