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Leadership Development in the Ecuadorian Military: Conversations with Members of Elite Units

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Abstract: Militaries around the world are studying leadership and consider that leadership training is giving them an advantage both on and off the battlefield. As the first ever research into leadership within the Ecuadorian military, the intent of the present study was to have military personnel explore their personal leadership and discuss individual and institutional ways to increase capacity. Empirical data was collected from men in the Anti-terrorism Special Forces and Intelligence Units of the Ecuadorian Army and from the Peacekeeping School which has military personnel from all three arms of the military, army, navy and air force. In addition, action research in the form of an Interview Matrix Activity and World Café were conducted with the Anti-terrorism Special Forces Unit. Research results were identified. Eight recommendations emerged from these findings that may assist the Ecuadorian military in taking steps to implement foundational leadership training.

Keywords: Military, leadership training, Ecuador, values.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this project was to initiate the dialogue around leadership with the personnel of a Special Forces Unit, *Grupo Especial De Operaciones (GEO)*, of the Ecuadorian Military. The project delivered a week of workshop sessions on leadership topics for military personnel within the unit. Many of these topics are not included in the present curriculum at any level within the Ecuadorian military. In addition, at the time of this writing, the researcher was unable to find any research pertaining to the topic of leadership within the Ecuadorian military. An opportunity to learn and discuss the additional topics with personnel within the Unit lead to further interest in leadership topics, and, perhaps, their inclusion in a revised curriculum. The intent is to have the personnel think about the concept of leadership within the military and identify personal and institutional ways to increase their own leadership capacity.

Increasing leadership skills will help servicemen to "cross the borders of the box" that is the hierarchy of the military and allow them to influence others up and down the chain of the command. The intent of the present research was to open a conversation around leadership issues and to start building some of those skills.

To date, there have been no studies on leadership within the Ecuadorian military. Many militaries around the globe are teaching leadership within their organizations. According to retired General C. Obando, developed nations have a global obligation to support developing

nations and this obligation extends to the military (personal communication, September 23, 2016). In 2007 and renewed in 2012, "the Government of Canada declared engagement in the Americas a foreign policy priority (Department of the Army [DoA], 2007

The findings of this study are significant to the Special Forces Unit which seeks to update the educational offerings in the institution to meet the needs of a new generation. The missions and roles of the military have changed to meet the demands of more complex issues facing the military emerged from the quickly advancing globalization and technology challenges. The military requires innovative ideas and an update of its definition of leadership to improve performance on the world stage (Canadian Forces Leadership Institute [CFLI], 2003). The information gleaned from the present study will have practical significance for shaping leadership education within GEO and perhaps the larger military.

2. Literature Review

The literature review is related to the role of leadership education within the context of the military in a developing nation. The literature that has been written by Canadian or American military officers was explored.

2.1 Values for Military Leadership

"The Armed Forces and National Police Force are institutions aimed at protecting citizen rights, liberties, and guarantees" (Constitute, 2018). Further, Article 159 states "obedience of orders from their superiors shall not exonerate those who carry them out from being held liable for them". While militaries are strong hierarchical institutions, here the foundational document, the country's constitution, lays out that everyone has direct liability for one's own actions, even in times of conflict.

It was stated that "The military ethos comprises of values, beliefs, and expectations that reflect core Canadian values, the imperatives of military professionalism and the requirements of operations" (Canadian Forces Leadership Institute [CGLI], 2005). The constitutions of both countries give the reader a strong sense of the values of citizens which are reflected in the actions of the military within their country and on the world stage, in both peacekeeping and wartime settings. It was acknowledged that there will be times where tensions will arise due to the need of finding ways to address issues where two or more values cannot be equally honoured. This is most obviously observed during times of combat when mission achievement and keeping one's troops out of harm's way are not possible (Canadian Forces Leadership Institute [CGLI], 2006). The task for leaders then becomes balancing the outcomes when equally justifiable values are competing and one must, of necessity, take precedence over the others. Although there are risks in making choices, responsible decision-making is the domain of all leaders. "Effective leadership is essentially about balance….This balancing is never easy….developing and honing skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and moral decision making will help leaders to determine the right balance in any given situation." (Canadian Forces Leadership Institute [CFLI], 2007). Thus, there is a need for the study of military leadership which embodies higher order thinking to bring resolution to today's complex global problems.

Strong communication skills are one of the characteristics of effective leaders found in much of the literature reviewed that dealt with the issues of values and abilities. This is a core leader competency. "Leaders communicate by expressing ideas and actively listening to others. Effective leaders understand the nature and power of communication and practice effective communication techniques so they can better relate to others and translate goals into actions.

Communication is essential to all other leadership competencies (Canadian Human Rights Commission [CHRC], 1997).

Change in values as military personnel climb the chain of command has also been highlighted (Clark & Major, 2008). While working at the operational level the values for servicemen are occupational and move toward institutional values as military persons move up in rank. Consequently, within any military unit there will be both shared and divergent values. An implication for leadership curriculum and development in the military is that changes in leadership need to be addressed as soldiers move up the chain of command and for different military operations (Clermont, 2015).

2.2 Leadership Models

Authoritarian leadership was initially the predominant style within most armed forces around the globe but emergent research on followership points toward positive alternatives for these hierarchical institutions. There has been an increase in writing on military followership during the past decade (Corrothers, 2009). Three such models are the Values-Based Leadership Model, Intent Based Leadership Model and Situational Leadership Model, which are explored in detail below.

Values-Based Leadership Model; Values tell us what an organization regards as ethical for guiding activities and what characteristics it finds advantageous for its members. Military leadership must be based on values. This is particularly important in a security environment characterized by complexity, ambiguity, volatility, uncertainty and danger" (Davis, 2009). Military leaders must be able to accomplish their assigned missions while protecting their troops to the best of their ability while anticipating change and simultaneously representing the military values. Added to the strong discipline instilled during years of military training, an officer leader can use values based leadership to direct soldiers towards mission success in a way which is ethical and adheres to strong moral principles.

Intent Based Leadership Model; Leaders can be developed at all levels. Personnel can take responsibility and contribute towards an organization's goals whereby the success of an organization rests on everyone's shoulders. Marquette's intent based leadership philosophy concludes that leaders must create such environments where everyone contributes and feels valued – where every person is a leader (Canadian Defense Academy [CDA], 2007).

Situational Leadership Model; Not a single theory of leadership is totally correct for all contexts. The Situational Leadership Model espouses using differing leadership models depending on the maturity of the followers. Leaders need to delegate tasks and "empower subordinates to accomplish the mission" (Department of National Defence [DND], 2007). The further up the ladder a leader is, the more mature or senior his followers are and the more work that can be delegated. Thus it becomes appropriate to change leadership styles. Leaders, as they rise in the ranks, need more vision and more long term planning as they strategize the implementation of "big" ideas. Cognitive complexity, as a consequence, must increase so that the abilities of the leader match the needs of the organization. At the same time, the need to maintain communication becomes increasingly important (Goldberg, Febbraro & Dean, 2015). The most effective leaders are those who maintain the highest levels of exposure to their troops. The Situational Leadership Model also looks at the differences in leadership between times of peace and times of warfare and the shift in leadership that may be required to accommodate the change in soldiers' mental states. The leader – follower "interaction is even more difficult since it is

exacerbated by the fog and friction of war". He states that during battle, leadership becomes more autocratic or authoritarian.

It was articulated the difference in leadership styles which occur in the situation of combined allied forces working jointly. Historical, cultural and doctrinal differences will test the leadership abilities of all involved. The situation then must dictate the most appropriate way to lead such combined forces. The Situational Leadership Model would seem close to ideal and perhaps can be achieved by allowing flexibility for military personnel to adapt their leadership skills and style to the particular peacetime or wartime context. Each scenario can be analyzed and adaptive leadership can be put into place to achieve mission success under changing circumstances (Hofstede, 1984).

2.3 Expanding Roles for Soldiers

The Army Leadership document looks at leadership values that military soldiers should carry but also the new thinking militaries require for the future (Department of Defense, 2011). The Canadian Armed Forces state that to "pursue the ongoing transformation process" that "demonstrate(s) the necessity for the institution to further develop … more cognitive, intellectual, and communication skills … to reflect the nature of current missions" (Marquet & Covey, 2013). The modern day soldier, in both warfare and peacekeeping missions, also has a diplomatic function. Thus "soft skills" such as "cultural intelligence, intellectual capacity, communication, negotiation and mediation skills, language skills, and cognitive skills" need to be built into training programs (Mathews, 2008). Clement acknowledges that these skills take time to develop which points to the need to have leadership training at all levels of a soldier's career.

It was indicated that the service personnel in the 21st century must be "warrior + technician + researcher + diplomat". In a 2007 document, DND postulates that the soldier's role as warrior would evolve to include the "soldier as diplomat" and the "soldier as scholar" (National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces [NDCAF], 2014). Clearly, the role of military personnel is expanding and the training must consequently increase to include subjects that have not been traditionally taught in military educational institutions. CQ or cultural intelligence, "refers to the cognitive, motivational, and behavioural capacities to understand and effectively respond to the beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviours of individuals and groups under changing circumstances in order to effect a desired change" (Potter III & Rosenbach, 2009). They make reference to the work of Geert Hofstede's four value dimensions of comparison i.e. Power Distance, Uncertainty-Avoidance, Individualism-Collectivism and Masculinity-Femininity. His work on Cultural Dimensions Theory relates the effects of a society's culture to the values of its people and provides a framework for cross cultural interactions (Spencer & Balasevicius, 2009). They proposed two training centers, for research, doctrine and training, which could put Canada at the forefront of Cultural Intelligence innovation. They conclude that "a fully integrated CQ capability is a key enabler of today's intelligence-driven operations". The fast pace of globalization: due to financial, economic, technological, political, ecological and sociological changes has caused an increasing clash of cultures around the world. Militaries need to expand their knowledge of other cultures and augment their theoretical understanding and their practical intercultural skills to achieve mission success (Waddell, 1994).

The CQ training is inadequate for the environments in which American soldiers are finding themselves. The usual procedure to equip a combat troop for deployment in a foreign country is to concentrate heavily on military offensive and defensive skills with only a minor focus on

knowledge of local language, customs, religion and history. "Military transformation….must include transformation of thought and practice". To ensure mission success, units must not only understand the physical environment but also the social and cultural environment where they are expected to serve. Slow acquisition of cultural intelligence puts forth that it is necessary that a continuous learning cycle must be started early in the span of a military person's career.

The consensus is that the role of military personnel is rapidly changing to include additional characteristics that should be included under the umbrella of leadership. The call is for the Canadian and American militaries to put additional emphasis on cultural intelligence. This would lead to the conclusion that militaries in South America must also do so. Within the country and on their borders the Ecuadorian military deal with people of differing ethnicities and cultures. In addition they are deployed in many parts of the world as peace keepers. Thus, these new skills and leadership models that are now considered to be essential skills for soldiers in Canada and the United States should be added to the curriculum and instructions used to develop Ecuadorian military personnel.

3. Methodology
Foundational leadership is a new area of study for the personnel in the Ecuadorian military. Consequently, the purpose of this research project is to improve the leadership within the Special Forces Unit, GEO, by determining the most important leadership topics to include in the curriculum for officers and soldiers in the Unit, where they thought leadership would be best positioned within the curriculum, and how they felt leadership could best be taught. These questions were explored using two surveys and two exploratory leadership conversations. The results of the data analysis may be used for future curriculum design.

The participants for this study were military personnel from the GEO; Intelligence Unit, Grupo de reconocimiento Y monitereo Conjunto (GMREC); and the Peacekeeping School, which are all physically proximate. While the GEO and Intelligence are units of the Ecuadorian Army, the Peacekeeping School has military personnel from the army, navy and air force. Informed consent was obtained for all data collection.

The first activity was designed to create discussion. Each poster was unique and contained a picture of a military action and a word related to leadership. Four leadership workshops designed to provide military personnel with information and opportunities for discussion were given approximately 30 min per session.

The data for the present study was collected in four stages.
1. The first data collection involved administering a survey to 50 personnel. The survey questionnaire contained nine selection items related to the topics listed in Table 1.
2. The second data collection was completed using the Interview Matrix with the intent to discuss military leadership. There were four questions that were presented.
   - What is the most difficult part of being a leader?
   - Who has modeled strong leadership in your life, both inside and outside the military?
   - How can you improve your leadership skills?
   - How do you measure the success of a leader?

There were three Interview Matrices each involving four soldiers who were organized in pairs. The task for the pair of soldiers was to interview each other for one of the questions using a set of pre-determined probe questions. Each interview took two minutes or four minutes for the pair. New pairs were formed across tables and the process was repeated. Following six rounds, the

men from each group who addressed the same question amalgamated their findings, which were then presented to all.

3. The World Café was conducted during the third stage of data collection. The intent was to create an atmosphere conducive to thought and dialogue around military leadership. Four soldiers were at each of four tables with a table host. Each table dealt with one of the following three questions:
   - GEO is an elite group. What makes GEO a strong leadership team?
   - Does leadership in the military differ in any way from leadership in civilian life? If so, how?
   - How could the military help you to become a stronger leader?

There were three twenty minute rounds. The soldiers individually moved tables after each round so that they dealt with each question and interacted with as many different soldiers as possible. The table hosts were briefed on the previous day regarding the information to be gathered and strategies for soliciting ideas so that every soldier was heard. At the end of the third round the information was harvested and table hosts gave an overview of ideas coming from their table.

4. Finally, an Exit Survey was administered.

Using a variety of data collection procedures allowed for triangulation of the data, thereby contributing to a broad-based perspective of analysis.

4. Results

The responses to the two surveys were analyzed using standard formulas. For the questions that included "Other, please list", the suggestions made were recorded.

The responses made during the Interview Matrix and the World Café were coded by the group leaders and table hosts using instructions provided by the researcher. Individual comments were grouped together to form themes by the researcher. Formation of the themes revealed relationships among the themes. Trends found within the conversations provided insights into how participants experienced these leadership conversations. The themes were used to develop the recommendations about leadership for future curriculum. The results are presented in the order of the four stages of data collection described.

4.1 Survey

The survey results are presented in Table 1 and Table 2. The total number of respondents was 50. As shown in Table 1, the soldiers identified leadership as an essential skill both now and in the future. Of the 50 respondents, whereas 56% indicated they foresaw their leadership roles increasing over the next 5 – 10 years, the remaining were evenly split between not seeing the leadership increasing and being uncertain. Nearly all of the respondents indicated that the military motivated them to learn and develop leadership skills (96%), gave them opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills (92%), and provided them with the opportunity to initiate leadership at work (98%).

Questions 5, 6, and 8 asked the respondents to check all that applied. Consequently, the total for each of these questions exceeds 50. Question 5 concerned ways military leadership could be promoted. Slightly more than three-quarters of the respondents indicated that fostering relationships with military leaders would further their own development as military leaders. The next three ways for developing leaders were checked off by less than 50% of the respondents. In order, these ways were providing more resources (books, websites), more training opportunities and work opportunities. The respondents were also allowed to check "other" and then to specify

what the other was. Of the respondents, 18% did so and provided the 13 suggestions that have been consolidated into common areas. The first is to promote leadership by (a) respecting ideas from both officers and non-officers, (b) having leaders serve as role models that can be emulated and (c) establishing cultural exchanges with militaries in other countries that provide leadership training and promote knowledge about other cultures. The second area concerns benefits provided to military personnel, which apparently aren't equal.

Table 1: *Summary of Survey Responses: Questions 1 to 6 and 8 to 9*

Item	Yes		No		Uncertain	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
1. Do you see your leadership responsibilities within the military increasing over the next 5 – 10 year?	28	56.0	11	22.0	11	22.0
2. Does working with the military motivate you to learn and develop your leadership skills?	47	94.0	2	4.0	1	2.0
3. Does working in the military provide opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills?	46	92.0	4	8.0		
4. At work, do you initiate leadership?	49	98.0	1	2.0		
5. In what ways could the military foster leadership?						
more training opportunities	16	32.0				
more work opportunities	8	16.0				
fostering relationships with others in leadership roles	39	78.0				
Providing more leadership resources (books, websites, etc.)	21	42.0				
other, please list	9	18.0				
6. What leadership subjects would you like to explore more?						
Leadership theories and styles	28	56.0				
Leadership characteristics	18	36.0				
Critical thinking	18	36.0				
Personal and positional power	9	18.0				
Conflict management skills	29	58.0				
Time management	8	16.0				
Cultural intelligence	18	36.0				
Awareness of Indigenous issues	5	10.0				
Gender issues	22	44.0				
E-leadership	4	8.0				
English language skills	17	34.0				
Other, please list_____						
8. Where do you think that leadership should be taught in the Ecuadorian military?						
Military High School	17	34.0				
Cadet School	29	58.0				
War College	8	16.0				
Military Academy	14	28.0				
Commando training	15	30.0				
Individual Units	37	74.0				

The sixth question asked the respondents to select one or more of 11 leadership topics that each respondent would like to explore. Of the 50 respondents, 58% indicated conflict skills and 56% indicated leadership theories and styles. Gender issues were identified as a topic by 44% of the respondents. Three topics – leadership characteristics, critical thinking and cultural intelligence – were indicated by 36% of the respondents and closely followed by English language skills, 34%. The remaining topics – personal position and power, time management, awareness of Indigenous issues, and e-leadership – were identified by less than 20% of the respondents. The other topics identified by 8% of the respondents included leadership principles, how to maintain good leadership, ethics, family values and leadership, knowledge of emotions and emotional and workplace health. Taken together, the respondents, as a group, did not strongly endorse any of the 11 topics nor specify strongly another topic.

The eighth survey question asked what type of unit each respondent thought leadership should be taught in. Again, the respondents could indicate more than on unit. The two most popular locations were the respondents own individual units, 74%, and at the Cadet School, 58%. The remaining four locations were identified by less than 35% of the respondents.

All but two of the respondents indicated that they would like to know more about the American and Canadian militaries implemented mentorship programs. These programs could involve a military person with greater experience in the host country mentoring a military person with lesser experience in a developing country. Clearly, the respondents strongly felt mentoring is a good way to learn about leadership in a changing world.

The seventh question required the respondents to rank 10 values from most important (1) to least important (10) for leaders in the Ecuadorian military. The values are listed from most important to least important in Table 2 together with their mean ranks. The respondents ranked Honesty first, followed by Commitment and then Respectfulness. The difference between each these values was at least one. The next five values – Dependability, Decisiveness, Intelligence and Courage – had mean values that ranged from 5.2 to 5.9. The remaining three values – Flexibility, Resourcefulness and Enthusiasm – differed from the set of five and between each other by 0.8. However, what must be kept in mind is that while the respondents were asked to rank the 10 values, it should not be construed that the lower ranked values are not important. It may well be that all of the values are needed. Instead, the ranked list provided is an indication of the order is which they should be treated in new curriculum.

Table 2: *Summary of Survey Responses: Question 7*

Item	Mean Rank
What values are most important to leaders in the Ecuadorian military?	
Honesty	2.4
Commitment	3.5
Respectfulness	4.9
Dependability	5.2
Decisiveness	5.5
Intelligence	5.6
Courage	5.9
Flexibility	6.7
Resourcefulness	7.8
Enthusiasm	8.8

4.2 Interview Matrix

The themes derived from the responses of the 12 soldiers who participated in the Interview Matrix are listed in Table 3 under the relevant question. As shown, there are 2 themes for each of the four questions. Each theme for each question is discussed below.

Table 3: *Themes Derived from the Responses during the Interview Matrix*

What is the most difficult part of being a leader?	*How do you measure the success of a leader?*
Soldiers Lack Confidence in Leader	Personal Characteristics of a Successful Leader
Undesirable Characteristics of Leader	Military Characteristics of a Successful Leader
Who has modeled strong leadership in your life both inside and outside of the military?	*How can you improve your leadership skills?*
Model for Leadership outside of the Military	Personal Military Learning to Improve Leadership
Model for Leadership within the Military	Soldiers Influence to Improve Leaderships

What is the most difficult part of being a leader?

Soldiers Lack Confidence in Leader

The first theme concerned the lack of confidence some soldiers had in their leader. For example, one soldier indicated that he did not believe the leader, another said "Soldiers are not willing to follow their leader" and a third said "Soldiers do not listen to their leader at all times."

Undesirable Characteristics of Leader

The second theme concerned undesirable behaviors that leaders exhibited. For example, more than one soldier indicated their leaders failed to provide a good example of how soldiers should behave. Others indicated the leader did not clearly state his objectives. The soldiers commented that their leaders lacked empathy for his soldiers, failed to act justly and fairly at all times, lacked integrity, lacked creativity and failed to see the importance of the need for discipline.

It should be noted at this point that the opposite of what the soldiers said would lead to desirable characteristics. For example, soldiers believed their leader is creative, and has empathy for his soldiers.

Who has modeled strong leadership in your life both inside and outside of the military?

Model for Leadership outside of the Military

Military personnel identified sources of leadership modeling from outside the military which included family members, teachers, political leaders and religious figures.

Model for Leadership within the Military

From within the military, participants listed leaders who were specifically able to motivate their troops well and those who were known to work alongside their troops as "one of them".

How do you measure the success of a leader?

Personal Characteristics of a Successful Leader

Participants identified personal characteristics which they felt contributed to being a successful leader. These included flexibility, sincerity, courage, perseverance and charisma.

Military Characteristics of a Successful Leader

The men identified military characteristics which contribute to successful leadership. These included the leader's ability to know his troops well, to give clear understood orders, and to take

part in missions alongside his troops. Participants counted achieving orders and accomplishing missions and troops that have allegiance to their leader as measures of success.

How can you improve your leadership skills?

Personal Military Learning to Improve Leadership

Participants listed learning via the internet, learning study skills, reading, and attending seminars as ways they could improve their own leadership skills.

Soldiers Influence to Improve Leadership

In addition, the respondents stated they need to practice leadership, to learn by example, and have contact with other leaders in order to improve their leadership. It was stated that leaders must listen to soldiers and their thoughts on leadership, they must motivate soldiers and be conscious of their needs, be knowledgeable on the topic, have an objective and show concern and flexibility with their troops as they work on their leadership skills.

4.3 World Café

The themes derived from the responses of the 16 soldiers who participated in the World Café are listed in Table 4 under the relevant question. As shown, there are three or four themes for each of the three questions. Each theme for each question is discussed below.

Table 4: *Themes Derived from the Responses during the World Café*

GEO is an elite group. What makes GEO a strong leadership team?	How could the military help you to become a stronger leader?
Values Adhered to by the Leadership	Individual Actions to become a Strong Leader
Leadership Involvement	Strong Leaders develop Strong Leadership Teams
Uniqueness of GEO	A Strong Leader is Concerned about his Officers and Non-officers
	Selection of Leaders

Does leadership in the military differ in any way from leadership in civilian life? If so, how?	
Characteristics Different between Military and in Civilian Life	Respect Differs between Military and Civilian Life
Discipline and Risk Differ between Military and Civilian Life	

GEO is an elite group. What makes GEO a strong leadership team?

Values Adhered to by the Leadership

The first theme concerned the values. Leadership must be based on values. The respondents identified 22 values that the leaders should have and that they ask their soldiers to adhere to. The values mentioned by the respondents included communication, compassionate, commitment, confident, courage, decisive, dependable, desire to work cooperatively together, discipline, empathy, ethical, fairness, flexibility, honesty, humility, initiative, loyal, motivated, open, respect, resourcefulness and tolerance.

Leadership Involvement

Respondent's state that the Commander at GEO works with his men at all times, communicating effectively and instilling loyalty. The leader ensures everyone has the same objective with a clear mission and solidarity with partners.

Uniqueness of GEO

Participants identified the GEO as being a different and unique specialty in Ecuador where soldiers take initiative and everyone sets an example at all times. The best military personnel are chosen for this unit and they are given excellent physical and technical training. Men stated the soldiers in this unit are sure of their goals, enjoy their work and consider GEO a second home.

How could the military help you become a stronger leader?

Individual Actions to become a Strong Leader

Individual actions to improve leadership were identified. These included repeating and respecting military values on a daily basis, learning new leadership techniques and training every day to become a good leader. Men noted the military provides a good life and gives personnel the ability to learn and to transmit values.

Strong Leaders develop Strong Leadership Teams

It was stated that leaders must be an example and participate in all activities. The leaders could provide more opportunities for leadership training, teamwork, conferences and seminars, opportunities to share ideas and projects with the entire team, and national and international training opportunities. The military must have confidence in its troops and provide motivation to personnel to become strong leaders.

A Strong Leader is Concerned about his Officers and Non-officers

A leader must continue the tradition of strong leaders and take care of all personnel in all aspects of their military life from food to physical training appropriate to the mission to updating equipment.

Selection of Leaders

It was stated that the selection process for leaders must be optimal with selection from all personnel.

Does leadership in the military differ in any way from leadership in civilian life? If so, how?

Different Characteristics between Military and Civilian Life

It was noted that knowledge and training is at a high level in the military and that communication is better in the military than in civilian life. Respondents commented that in the military personnel work they have a love of their jobs which is not always the case in civilian life. Time is more important in the military and following rules and regulations is especially important in the military.

Discipline and Risk Difference between Military and Civilian Life

Participants stated that discipline in the military differs from civilian life with higher morals, ethics and values in the military. It was noted that the risks are high in the military and military orders may have the potential for death.

Respect Differs between Military and Civilian Life

Men stated that in the military, work is done in teams as personnel have respect for their partners at all times. Personnel in the military know the strengths of each other and have great empathy between team members. The military also requires respect for the flag and for all people.

4.4 Exit Survey

The results for the exit survey are presented in Table 5. The total number of respondents was 18. Given the small number of respondents, care must be taken in using the results.

Table 5: *Summary of Exit Survey*

Item	*f*	%
Which sessions did you attend? Please check all that apply.		
Values Based Leadership on Monday	7	38.8
Conflict Resolution on Tuesday	11	61.1
Interview Matrix on Wednesday	9	50.0
World Café on Thursday	13	72.2
Foundational Leadership/Windup Activities	17	94.4
Please check the statement which <u>BEST</u> describes how much of the presentations you understood.		
I understood all of the presentation points	14	77.8
I understood most points but missed some details	4	22.2
I understood half of the presentation	0	0
I didn't understand the information presented	0	0
What did you enjoy about the presentations? Please check <u>ALL</u> the statements which apply		
I learned a lot over the course of the week about leadership	10	55.6
I learned a lot over the course of the week about Canada	6	33.3
The information has made me think more about my personal leadership	14	77.8
I felt comfortable sharing my opinions with the group	14	77.8
The format of the sessions was enjoyable	12	66.7
What would you change to make the presentations better? Please check <u>ALL</u> that apply.		
Smaller group size	0	0
Better translation services	1	6.6
Increased confidentiality of opinions	3	16.6
More time for discussion	14	77.8
Different topics	7	38.9

As shown in Table 5, the 18 soldiers who completed the exit survey had attended varying numbers of workshops as this was dependent on their work schedules for the week. Most of the soldiers, 94% had attended the final workshop as it was when the exit survey was presented.

Question 2 asked the men to rate how well they understood the presentations, given that the presenter was English speaking. All presentation materials and printed materials had been translated into Spanish and there was a translator at all sessions. All of the respondents indicated a high degree of understanding, 78% indicated they understood all presentation points and 22% indicated they missed some details.

Question 3 asked what the men enjoyed about the sessions and asked them to check all statements which applied. Slightly more than three quarters, 78%, indicated the information made them think more about their personal leadership and the same percentage indicated they felt comfortable sharing their opinions with the group.

The final question asked what the respondents would change to make the sessions better. Again, 78% indicated they would like more time for discussion. 39% requested different topics. 17%

indicated they would like increased confidentiality of opinions and 7% felt better translation services would be useful. No one indicated a desire for smaller group sizes.

Two additional open-ended questions were asked at the end for the Exit Survey. The first question asked the respondents to provide suggestions for future topics. The second question asked for suggestions for improving the workshops.

Suggestions for future topics: The respondents made four suggestions for future topics. The first was how to deal with poverty when working in areas of poverty. The second suggestion included providing practical sessions that mimic what soldiers do in the field (for example, practicing on the shooting range, walking through swamps). The third suggestion was that the topic of attitudes in the military needs to be discussed with examples provided of positive, neutral attitude and negative attitudes and the consequences of positive, neutral, and negative attitudes. The fourth suggestion was teamwork; what is needed to form a functional team?

Suggestions for improvement of workshops: The suggestions for improving workshops were divided into two groups. The first group involved more. For example, more time for discussion, more time for teaching and discussing values and augmented by such aids as videos and more group work. Additional workshops were called for to discuss more fully leadership and other topics such as poverty. Lastly, it was suggested that leadership would be strengthened if the workshops were conducted more frequently such as once each quarter of the year. If so, some of the same topics would be covered each time and other different topics would be covered at another time.

The second group of suggestions for improving workshops dealt with staffing and attendance. Additional staffs, with different qualifications, are needed so that other topics can be covered. Soldiers should be allowed to attend all sessions so that they get full value from the workshop speakers and activities. Printed books and handouts should be available in PDF form and should be made available to the soldiers so they can read them and review them on their computers for reading/ strengthening leadership by having sessions frequently.

5. Discussion

One of the themes was the powerful and continuously articulated opinion of leaders as models for others in the organization. This begins with the Ecuadorian Military Ethos that states "command your soldiers by example". When asked in the Interview Matrix activity to give examples of those who had modeled strong leadership, soldiers came up with specific military leaders and when questioned why, stated that these men were always participating with their soldiers. Themes emerging from both the Interview Matrix and World Café events spoke about leaders working alongside their service personnel and about leaders taking part with their troops. The most effective leaders maintained the most contact with their men. This also leads to the extremely high interest in learning more about mentorship in the military.

That leadership must be based on values. Many of the statements generated in the Interview Matrix activity were centered on values which participants saw as important for leadership. Similarly themes stemming from the World Café were based on values.

Communication is considered as a core competency of leadership. Statements generated in both the Interview Matrix and World Café spoke to the importance of communication as an essential leadership skill.

During the week at GEO, during which workshops, Interview Matrix and World Café were conducted, soldiers were strongly engaged with the presentations and action research with extreme focus. It was recognized that the researcher was working with men from elite units and

thus the research should also be repeated with less specialized troops. Their interest appeared genuine and they willingly engaged with new subject matter that was delivered through a language translator. This indicates a readiness, at least on the part of this group of men, to embrace new knowledge delivered in a culturally diverse manner. Although the present study did not specifically seek for change in organizational readiness, there was a small but important indication of such readiness.

The themes identified in the results with respect to overwhelming desire for more leadership resources and training again support readiness for change. There was a clear willingness and aspiration for personnel to engage in leadership training. This correlates highly with the literature which indicated that military personnel in both Canada and the United States were ready for more training, even before the institutions were prepared to deliver. Countries that embrace the need to expand the knowledge of their military forces in order to meet the modern day needs of the different cultures in the world will be the countries which realize military success. The soldiers of the Ecuadorian military who were part of this study are similarly keen to expand their knowledge of cultures, languages and leadership capacities.

The soldiers were able to quickly take in and synthesize information. Their questions gave insight into their thinking and their depth of analysis of the material. When talking about leadership traits and characteristics, such questions as "Are leadership traits something one is born with, or can they be taught?" showed the men were actively listening, absorbing information and using critical thinking even with the language barrier.

6. Recommendations

The eight recommendations are based on a synthesis of the literature review and the results are listed in Table 6. Further analysis is required to assess organization change readiness.

Table 6: *Recommendations*

INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Establish a Leadership Center pilot project
2. Repeat the present study with same and other units
3. Create a database of resources
4. Begin formal meetings with higher levels within the Ecuadorian military
5. Collaborate with other international militaries
6. Explore opportunities internationally for key personnel to further their training
7. Set up workshops with both Ecuadorian and international experts
8. Explore the mentorship model of leadership

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