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**NATIONAL EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT TRAINING OFFICERS'
CONFERENCE 2010**

DEVELOPING STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Presented By: Dr Terry Sheppard

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STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Strategic leaders are generally responsible for large organizations and may influence several thousand to hundreds of thousands of people. They establish organizational structure, allocate resources, and communicate strategic vision.

Strategic leaders work in an uncertain environment on highly complex problems that affect and are affected by events and organizations outside their own.

Strategic leaders apply many of the same leadership skills and actions they mastered as direct and organizational leaders; however, strategic leadership requires others that are more complex and indirectly applied.

Strategic leaders, like direct and organizational leaders, process information quickly, assess alternatives based on incomplete data, make decisions, and generate support. However, strategic leaders' decisions affect more people, commit more resources, and have wider-ranging consequences in both space and time than do decisions of organizational and direct leaders.

Strategic leaders often do not see their ideas come to fruition during their "watch" and their initiatives may take years to plan, prepare, and execute.

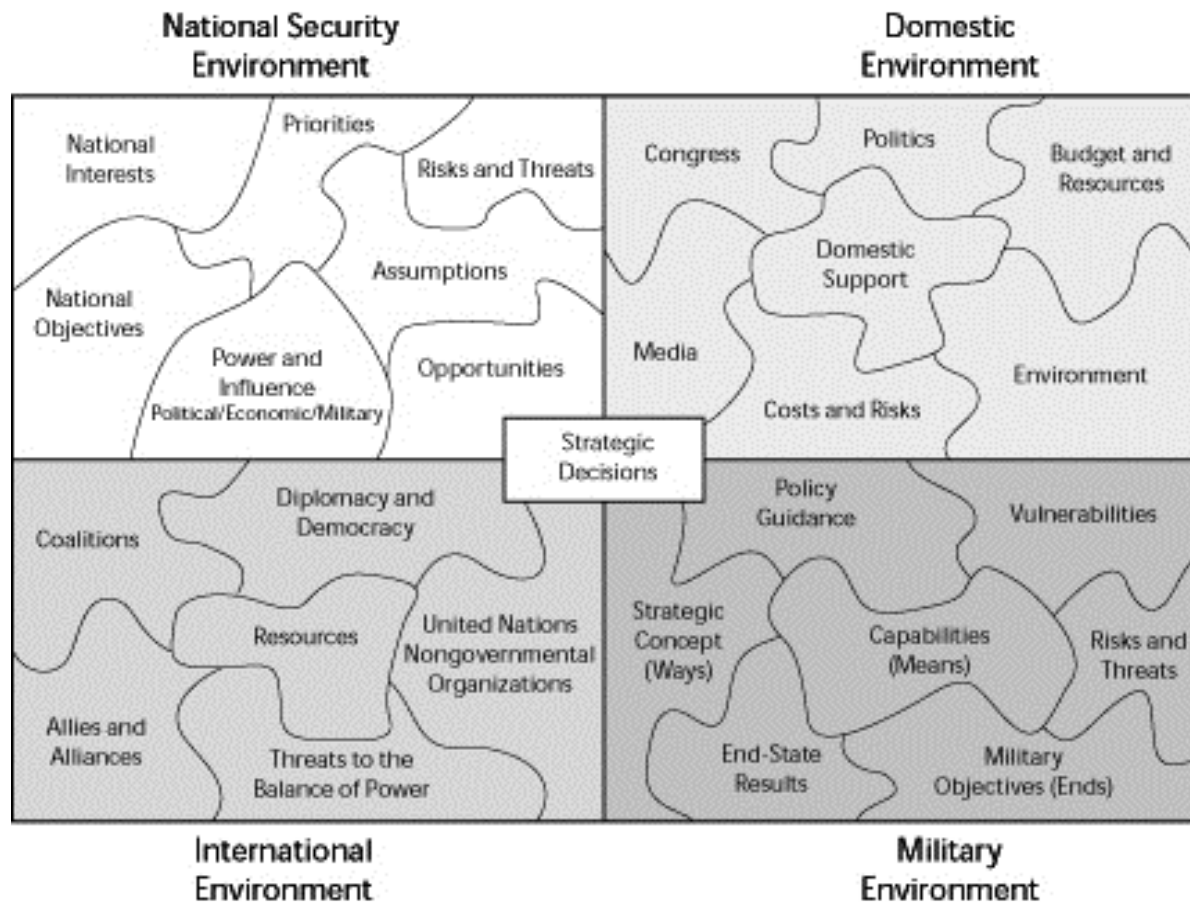
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- Strategic Leadership provides the vision and direction for the growth and success of an organisation in complex, ambiguous, changing, uncertain and volatile environment.
- To successfully deal with change, all executives need the skills and tools for both strategy formulation and implementation. [Managing change](#) and ambiguity requires strategic leaders who not only provide a sense of direction, but who can also build ownership and alignment within their organisations to implement change.
- Strategic leadership is a management model that trains and encourages employees to best prepare the company for the future.
- **What are the components of the Emergency Services strategic environment?**

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Emergency Services Strategic Environment

- Emergency Services Organisation – internal environment
- Government at all levels
- Australian community
- International community
- **What are current strategic issues in the Australian community which have the potential to impact the performance of emergency services organisations?**
- **What are the key characteristics of an effective strategic leader?**

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Effective strategic leaders:

- Take a holistic view of their organisation and the environments it operates within
- Have a clear vision of their business purpose and how to achieve it;
- Understand all the elements of a successful organisation and how they interact;
- Understand not only what business their organisation is in but also how to achieve sustained success;
- Understand that they can only be effective through others and therefore focus on building good relationships – they avoid a command and control approach to managing others;
- Keep long-term goals at the forefront while ensuring short-term goals are accomplished;

What are the elements of a successful organisation?

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Elements of a successful organisation:

- PURPOSE – THE WHAT?
- STRATEGY – THE HOW?
- STRUCTURE
- SYSTEMS
- CULTURE
- **What is the purpose of any emergency services organisation?**
- **What is its core business?**

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What is the core business of Emergency Services?

“ Modern emergency management is not really about fighting fires and floods or cleaning up oil spills (although that needs to be done and done well) . It is really about understanding and dealing with risks.” Roger Wilkins, Secretary – Attorney General’s Dept.

What is risk management?

What are the key elements of a successful emergency services business strategy?

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Risk Management

Risk management is taking steps in advance to minimise or eliminate the chances and impact of catastrophe.

For example, creating community 'disaster resilience' (reflected in lower insurance premiums) to assist communities prepare for and hopefully avoid or, at least, manage disaster more effectively. Developing community resilience is critical to future emergency management as risks increase in size, complexity and impact (eg. Pandemics, cyber threats).

Thinking about risk management means understanding the likelihood and impact of different events allows emergency services leaders to contribute to a range of policy making discussions from land care to planning. It also provides a framework for informed planning and decision making.

What are the key elements of a successful business strategy for emergency services?

- Prevention
- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery

What are the learning challenges for managers moving into strategic leadership positions in Emergency Services?

What issues would strategic leadership development need to address in each of the above four areas of business strategy?

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What are the learning challenges for Strategic Leaders in Emergency Services?

- Moving “mentally” from the operational to the strategic
- Environmental scanning and awareness
- Focus on developing and implementing strategies for the long term, rather than reacting only to current or short term issues
- Understanding risk management at a strategic level
- Stepping back to analyse/reflect rather than merely reacting
- Thinking outside of the square, outside of command and control
- Focusing on Prevention, Preparedness, and Recovery, as well as Response
- Generating changed expectations of Emergency Services – community, members/personnel, government.
- Being/becoming Politically ‘savvy’
- Working with and utilising ambiguity
- Change management – remaining resilient in the face of resistance
- Working effectively with and connecting with the community and other agencies
- **Building commitment and ownership of change and improvement across the organisation and the wider community**
- Dealing with complex, multi partied problems

Strategic Leaders are made, not born (lessons for L&D professionals):

- Executive one on one coaching
- Cross sector development programs
- Engaging with Executive programs eg MBA
- Development of 'soft' and interpersonal skills and strategic thinking
- Focus on behaviour change not operational activity
- Exchange programs
- Mentoring
- Lessons learnt through reflection – sharing
- Opportunities for the development of 'wisdom', experience
- Create a network of strategic leaders that collaborate together and are
Commit to create a sustainable competitive advantage
- Create an environment of open discussion and knowledge sharing

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Strategic leadership begins with organizational values, standards, and ethics—the foundation of our profession.

- Upon this foundation, the officer develops an abstract body of expert knowledge based primarily on experience. Continuing education can influence, expand, and accelerate development.
- Next, the officer is exposed to command responsibility and accountability—a vital phase during which the officer gets his or her first real taste of consequential decision making.
- Further education in strategic-thinking skills enhances the officer's competence. In each case, an officer could have opportunities to exercise strategic competency in support of a strategic leader.
- Ultimately, the officer will participate in strategic decision making and become a strategic leader.

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STRATEGIC
DECISION MAKER

STRATEGIC COMPETENCY

STRATEGIC THINKING SKILLS

COMMAND, RESPONSIBILITY, AUTHORITY

EXPERIENCE, BASIC SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE

VALUES, ETHICS, CODES, MORALS, STANDARDS

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DIRECT LEADERSHIP

Direct leadership is face-to-face, first-line leadership. It takes place in those organizations where subordinates are used to seeing their leaders all the time. The direct leader's span of influence, those whose lives he can reach out and touch, may range from a handful to several hundred people.

Direct leaders develop their subordinates one-on-one; however, they also influence their organization through their subordinates.

For direct leaders there is more certainty and less complexity than for organizational and strategic leaders. Direct leaders are close enough to see—very quickly—how things work, how things don't work, and how to address any problems.

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ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Organizational leaders may influence several hundred to several thousand people. They do this indirectly, generally through more levels of subordinates than do direct leaders. The additional levels of subordinates can make it more difficult for them to see results. Organizational leaders have staffs to help them lead their people and manage their organizations' resources. They establish policies and the organizational climate that support their subordinate leaders.

Organizational leadership skills differ from direct leadership skills in degree, but not in kind. That is, the skill domains are the same, but organizational leaders must deal with more complexity, more people, greater uncertainty, and a greater number of unintended consequences. They find themselves influencing people more through policymaking and systems integration than through face-to-face contact.

Organizational leaders focus on planning and mission accomplishment over the next two to ten years. Getting out of their offices and visiting the parts of their organizations where the work is done is especially important for organizational leaders. They must make time to get to the field to compare the reports their staff gives them with the actual conditions their people face and the perceptions of the organization and mission they hold.