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## Leading in Dangerous Situations *An Overview of the Unique Challenges*

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## CHAPTER 1

# **Leading in Dangerous Situations** ***An Overview of the Unique Challenges***

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**T**he idea for *Leadership in Dangerous Situations: A Handbook for the Armed Forces, Emergency Services, and First Responders* evolved from the editors' collective experiences and research in dangerous contexts and from Patrick J. Sweeney's experience directing a course in combat leadership at the United States Military Academy, West Point. We discovered that the leadership literature lacked a comprehensive guide outlining how and why leadership is different in dangerous contexts; how to prepare oneself and followers for the unique challenges of operating in such contexts and how to recover following exposure to adversity; how to lead when group members face danger; and how to leverage organizational systems to facilitate group members' resilience in the face of and after adversities associated with dangerous contexts. The intent of *Leadership in Dangerous Situations* is to fill the gap in the leadership literature by providing the brave men and women who risk their lives to serve the public a comprehensive and easily understandable guide, backed by research, to prepare themselves and their units for the unique psychological, social, and organizational challenges of leading and operating in dangerous contexts.

This book is written for the practitioner, in practitioners' language. It teams international scholars with members of the military, law enforcement, and fire and rescue services to address the unique challenges faced by leaders in dangerous situations. Thus, each chapter integrates theory and research with practical experience to address the unique challenges leaders face while operating in dangerous environments. The blending of perspectives provides leaders with a clear understanding of and a guide to mastering the challenges of leading people when lives are in the balance.

## WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK?

Whether you are a young leader preparing for war, a seasoned commander with multiple combat tours, a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team leader, emergency medical technician (EMT) supervisor, first-line supervisor of a law enforcement patrol unit, or a lieutenant responsible for a shift of firefighters, you are leading people in contexts in which life and death decisions are common. If a novice, you have likely asked, “How will leading in these situations be different from others I’ve faced.” If a more experienced leader, you have likely asked, “Why is leading in these situations different?” With these questions in mind, our purpose here is to provide you—a leader—with a better understanding of what is required of you in dangerous contexts.

The contributing authors here delve into the psychological, social, and organizational factors that can impact your ability to lead, your followers’ ability to perform, and your organization’s ability to accomplish its mission. In the end, you should take away not only an understanding of how leading in dangerous contexts is different from leading in situations where lives are not at risk, but you should also have a deeper understanding of why it differs, where commonalities exist, and perhaps more important, how to prepare yourself to lead and your organization to perform in dangerous contexts.

## DANGEROUS CONTEXTS

Dangerous contexts are highly dynamic and unpredictable environments where leaders and group members must routinely engage in actions that place their physical and psychological well-being at risk to accomplish the organization’s objectives. In such situations, leaders and subordinates recognize that failure to perform their duties and accomplish the organization’s objectives have the potential for catastrophic consequences not only for their organization, but also for the people it serves.<sup>1</sup> The group members perceive, experience, or expect a threat to their well-being while executing their duties. For instance, each time police officers respond to a call for assistance, they can reasonably expect a potential threat to their well-being. This is why most police forces require their officers to wear body armor at all times. Furthermore, if police officers fail to answer or properly handle calls for assistance, lawlessness will eventually ensue, and members of the community will be at greater risk.

### Unique Leadership Demands

Leading in dangerous contexts is fundamentally the same, yet qualitatively different, from leading in non-dangerous contexts. The common fundamentals

for leading in any context involve leaders possessing the key characteristics associated with competence, character, and caring; mutual influence exercised in and through leader–follower and peer–peer relationships; organizational factors, such as culture, policies, procedures, practices, and systems, that promote cooperation to achieve a common purpose; and the demands associated with the context. The demands of the context can exert a pervasive influence on leader and follower characteristics and skills; the nature of relationships within the group; and an organization’s structure, operations, and systems. The unique psychological, social, and organizational demands that arise as a result of group members’ perceptions of threat is what makes leading in dangerous contexts qualitatively different from leading in other contexts.

### **Psychological Demands**

To handle the weighty responsibility for group members’ well-being and lives and the potential catastrophic consequences of failure, dangerous contexts leaders must possess greater levels of credibility (trustworthiness) and psychological hardiness than leaders in other contexts. Leaders’ trustworthiness is determined by followers’ perceptions of their competence, character, and caring.<sup>2</sup> Psychological hardiness depends on how leaders frame events, their beliefs about influencing outcomes, finding purpose, and social support.

**Competence.** Dangerous context leaders need expertise in their domain, superb knowledge of the organization, outstanding stress management skills, and finely honed problem-solving skills that allow them to make quick, ethical decisions in dynamic, complex, and ambiguous circumstances. Leaders in other contexts are rarely faced with the challenge of managing the stress associated with having their lives in danger, and those of others, while at the same time being required to make quick decisions to accomplish the mission and minimize the risk to group members’ well-being. Results from studies conducted in a combat environment indicate that soldiers placed the most importance on leader characteristics related to competence (decision making, technical knowledge, judgment) because they addressed their greatest dependencies by ensuring mission accomplishment with the least amount of risk.<sup>3</sup>

Dangerous context leaders must also possess a higher level of personal resilience to deal with the adversity and trauma inherent in these types of environments. An array of well-developed, positive coping strategies are necessary for leaders to understand, make sense of, and move forward to grow after adversity. In addition, these leaders have the responsibility of bolstering group members’ resiliency through teaching and modeling positive coping strategies, shaping collective meaning-making, providing access to behavioral

health specialists, and if necessary, managing the grieving process.<sup>4</sup> Other contexts do not require such high resilience capabilities from leaders because they do not operate in environments with a consistent risk of injury or death.

Physical fitness is another important competency that promotes psychological hardiness and contributes to personal effectiveness.<sup>5</sup> It helps build psychological hardiness in assisting with the management of stress by generally enhancing one's assessment of one's capabilities and providing a realistic perspective for assessing the demands of a situation. Most important, physical stamina influences members' strength of will to overcome fatigue, pain, and other obstacles to persevere to accomplish a mission and take care of teammates. In terms of effectiveness, physical fitness helps members maintain the high levels of thinking necessary to make quick and sound decisions in dynamic situations. Furthermore, physical stamina positively influences moral and ethical decision making and courageous behavior.<sup>6</sup>

**Character.** The life and death risks inherent in dangerous contexts prompts group members to place great importance on leaders' honesty and integrity. Followers are more apt to trust leaders who are true to their own and the organization's values and provide accurate information about the mission. Group members believe that leaders with integrity will make decisions and take actions based on positive values and also provide complete factual information about operations, which alleviates concerns about hidden agendas and directives requiring unnecessary risks.<sup>7</sup>

Another important character trait required to meet the unique demands of dangerous contexts is courage. Leaders must possess a high level of physical courage to overcome fears of being injured or killed to execute their duties and set an example for group members. Those found lacking in physical courage are likely to lose their credibility and followers' trust.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the risks associated with operating in dangerous environments prompts group members to place a premium on a leader's moral courage or willingness to take a stand to do what is right or protect followers' interests. Leaders with high moral courage are more likely to conduct operations in a moral and ethical manner and question directives that place their followers at unnecessary risk than are those of lesser moral fortitude. Demands of other contexts require leaders to possess some level of moral courage but not at the level required to lead in a dangerous context, and rarely do they need physical courage.

**Caring.** To effectively perform in dangerous environments, group members must believe that their leaders genuinely care about their welfare. The level of leader caring goes well beyond an interest in assisting them in performing their duties. Followers must believe that their leaders care about them as people

and are interested in their personal as well as professional development. This includes leaders caring about, being interested in, and taking actions to promote the welfare of group members' families. Leaders that are genuinely concerned about their followers are more likely to be loyal, which includes looking out for group members' welfare during operations and willingly assuming risk to stand by and support them when they are vulnerable.<sup>9</sup> Demands associated with non-dangerous contexts do not require leaders to have such a deep and broad level of caring toward followers.

### **Psychological Hardiness**

The threat of risk, being responsible for people's lives, and the potential traumatic consequences associated with fulfilling their duties, requires dangerous context leaders to have an exceptional level of psychological hardiness. They have to be able to regulate how they think about tasks and experiences in order to frame them in a positive manner that leads to growth. Furthermore, dangerous context leaders must possess a level of agency or belief that they can control their own and their organizations' destinies. Key to a sense of agency is the self-efficacy or confidence that comes with job competence, expertise, and coping skills. Feeling that they serve a higher purpose also assists leaders in maintaining motivation and finding meaning in their experiences. Dangerous context leaders also have a great need for social support networks to assist in managing stress and making meaning out their experiences.

## **SOCIAL DEMANDS**

Studies conducted in combat consistently find that the quality of leader-follower relationships is higher in terms of psychological closeness, the degree of cooperation to achieve a common goal, and the extent of caring compared to non-dangerous areas.<sup>10</sup> Leaders achieve high-quality relationships with their group members by investing time to get to know them, seeking their input, caring about their training and development, and serving them and the organization in a selfless manner. A strong, quality relationship is functional in terms of ensuring mutual influence, open communications, and mutual concern for the mission and each other.<sup>11</sup>

Serving in dangerous contexts requires group members to form stronger psychological bonds with each other compared to members whose organizations do not operate in such situations. These strong bonds sustain their will and commitment to fellow members, the organization, and the mission.<sup>12</sup> They prompt group members to transcend self-interest to connect with and

serve something greater than themselves. Cohesive bonds provide group members with confidence that all members of the organization are looking out for one another's best interest, and all are sacrificing to achieve the higher goal or purpose. Cohesion is important in helping members manage stress because it bolsters perceptions of collective efficacy. It is not only one individual facing danger, but a united group working together to meet a challenge. Thus, strong psychological bonds assist group members in meeting threats and provide them a sense of security.

Cohesion is also an important source of motivation for group members to fulfill their duties that in turn allows them to continue to bolster or maintain their status and connection with the group. Dangerous contexts leaders must constantly monitor and engage in activities to purposefully enhance the connections between group members. Cohesive bonds between them are the psychological links that bind members together in a collective force to accomplish their mission. These connections with others also serve to buffer the potential psychological impact of adversity and trauma.

Strong cohesive bonds between members serve to form an effective social support network within an organization. Support networks are important in assisting group members in managing stress because they provide a forum to voice concerns, receive guidance, and get information about how to more effectively manage problems. Thus, support networks enhance members' perceptions of their ability to handle dangerous situations and also to formulate realistic expectations of the demands involved, which helps members manage stress.

Furthermore, social support networks play a critical role in assisting organization members in making meaning, or understanding, of the adversity or trauma they might experience in performing their duties in dangerous contexts. Individuals are more apt to disclose their thoughts and feelings to members of their social network than to people with whom they do not have a strong psychological bond. This network provides members with a forum to safely express their thoughts and feelings and to hear other members express how they are making sense of the experience.<sup>13</sup> For instance, if a police officer has to shoot a suspect who is threatening citizens, that officer can turn to the social support network to voice her concerns about having injured another human being and attempt to resolve the conflict with her belief system. This sharing of views and experiences in the network broadens each member's perspective and also serves to shape collective meaning-making. Therefore, in essence, social support networks are learning communities that play a vital role in managing stress, promoting growth from adversity, and mitigating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Leaders of organizations that operate in dangerous contexts also need to purposefully assist in shaping and ensuring the effectiveness of the social network among family members. These networks serve to socialize new members to the organization's culture, empower members to solve their own problems, serve as a sounding board for expressing concerns, learn new strategies to manage stress, meet each other's needs, and most important, support and uplift members if a loved one is injured or killed in the line of duty. Leaders must plan activities to encourage families to get together to start to build social bonds, keep them informed about organizational activities, demonstrate consideration for families by maintaining stability in work schedules when possible, and model concern for family members. Finally, leaders should consider providing family members the opportunity to voluntarily learn basic communication skills. Organizational members are more than likely to discuss adversities and trauma with their spouse or other loved ones, thus they too need the basic skills required to assist in the meaning-making process.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL DEMANDS**

Dangerous contexts require organizations to have a strong and clearly articulated culture. In essence, culture defines the identity organization members need for the context and also serves to unite and synchronize members' efforts around a core purpose and vision. The organization's core values define the characteristics members need to possess to accomplish its mission. A review of dangerous context organizations' core values yields the following common values: service, courage, duty, integrity, and honor.

People who operate in dangerous contexts tend to find a higher purpose in serving others. Organization members who value service tend to transcend self-interest to serve the organization and the community, even at the risk of their own safety. Courage is an important value because it motivates members to face their fears and still perform their duties or take a stand for what is right. The value of duty ensures that members meet their responsibilities, especially when it is inconvenient or they must incur cost in terms of risking their safety. Integrity and honor serve as members' moral compass for determining the right way to execute their duties, especially when they require the application of lethal violence. Members who integrate these organizational values into their identities are more likely to possess the character necessary to fulfill their duties and to be resilient in dealing with the adversity and trauma they might experience.



Core purpose and vision unite members in their common quest to achieve a greater purpose that will have a positive impact on society. A worthy purpose can provide meaning to members' lives. They do not have a job; they have a calling or a profession that makes a difference in the world. A higher, noble purpose is worthy of sacrifice, including risking one's life.<sup>14</sup> Vision provides members with a common direction to work together to achieve the higher purpose in an effective manner. Therefore, core purpose and vision unite members in pursuit of a noble purpose and aligns them along a common direction. Operating in a dangerous context requires an organization's policies, procedures, practices, and systems to be geared toward achieving its core purpose in a hazardous environment. Leaders need to periodically review policies, procedures, practices, and systems to ensure they promote cooperation and cohesion and reinforce the organization's values and core purpose. For instance, if an organization has budgetary policies that pit sub-elements against each other as resource competitors, cohesion is likely to suffer in the group. Reward and evaluation systems deserve close scrutiny by leaders. As they review the reward system, leaders need to ensure it reinforces the organization's core values, teamwork, and training for mission readiness. Similarly, during an evaluation system review, leaders need to determine if the procedures assess core values, collective focus, teamwork, and mission readiness. Aligning organizational systems, policies, procedures, and practices assists in communicating and establishing a culture that prepares members for the psychological and social demands of operating in dangerous environments.

To summarize, leading in dangerous contexts is qualitatively different from leading in non-dangerous contexts because of the unique psychological, social, and organizational demands of such situations. Members of organizations that operate in dangerous environments require a greater degree of credibility and psychological hardiness to handle threats to safety and the adversity and trauma they might experience. To meet the unique psychological demands, leaders invest greater time in establishing high-quality relationships with followers that are characterized by mutual influence and trust. Leaders also take deliberate actions to build cohesive bonds among group members and to facilitate the creation of social networks for family members. Leaders also ensure that the organization's culture clearly articulates the core values that form the foundation of each member's identity and the noble purpose the organization serves. A higher purpose motivates members to transcend self-interest and to risk their lives to achieve it. Finally, leaders align the organization's systems, policies, procedures, and practices to facilitate mission readiness, psychological hardiness, cooperation, and cohesion throughout.

Thus, leading in dangerous contexts is, indeed, more complex, demanding, and dynamic than leading in safe contexts.

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

The contributions to *Leadership in Dangerous Situations* are presented in three sections: Enhancing One's Psychological Body Armor, Influencing When People Are in Harm's Way, and Leveraging the Organization.

### Section One: Enhancing One's Psychological Body Armor

The first section addresses the unique psychological skills and states leaders need to effectively function in dangerous, chaotic, and dynamic situations. Topics such as enhancing courage, managing stress, promoting resilience, assisting the group in handling trauma, mitigating stress-related pathologies, staying mindful of personal responsibilities, the ethics of applying lethal force, and the search for meaning and purpose are addressed in this section.

In Chapter 2, Paul Lester and Cynthia Pury introduce the concept of courage through the compelling story of Hugh Thompson's actions at and after the My Lai massacre. The authors discuss the components of courage and the various types of it using a variety of examples. The majority of the chapter focuses on simple actions leaders can take to build their own and their group members' courage to meet the fears and stressors of operating in dangerous environments. This chapter provides leaders with the means to turn lambs into lions.

James Ness' team, consisting of Denise Jablonski-Kaye, Isabell Obigt, and David Lam, provide a comprehensive review of stress and how it affects individual and team performance. In Chapter 3, they address the sources of stress in dangerous contexts and introduce models that illustrate how stress ensues and how various levels of it impact performance. The heart of this chapter is the enlightening discussion of techniques leaders can use to manage high levels of stress and still function effectively. These techniques are equally applicable for assisting group members in managing their stress. In addition, some mundane activities, such as good training, sleep, circadian rhythm management, healthy diet, and physical fitness, play key roles in successfully managing stress. The models introduced early on in the chapter assist leaders in understanding why and how various stress management techniques work, which greatly enhances leaders' abilities to create stress management plans.

In Chapter 4, Christopher Peterson, Michael Crow, Nansook Park, and Michael Erwin address how leaders can promote psychological resilience. They provide a helpful definition of resilience and discuss various techniques

to promote it based on the concepts of positive psychology. The concept of post-traumatic growth is introduced, followed by a detailed discussion of how to assist organization members to grow from their traumatic and adverse experiences, instead of falling prey to stress-related illness. The authors also examine various techniques leaders can use to promote team and individual resilience. These authors propose that leaders try to mitigate post-operation psychological disorders by focusing on building group members' strengths to promote resilience prior to operating in dangerous contexts.

Joseph Geraci, Mike Baker, George Bonanno, Barend Tussenbroek, and Loree Sutton provide an enlightened and in-depth discussion in Chapter 5 on the concept of post-traumatic stress disorder, the factors that contribute to it, realistic expectations about probability of experiencing this disorder, and steps leaders can take to mitigate it. The essence of their analysis centers around a three-phase model leaders can implement to prepare themselves and followers for post-traumatic events and to mitigate the occurrence of PTSD.

In Chapter 6, George Mastroianni, Susann Kimmelman, Joe Doty, and Joseph Thomas provide an impactful discussion on obedience and personal responsibility when operating in dangerous contexts. The team addresses how individual, social, and organizational factors can work together to promote ethical behavior, but also how these same factors can conspire to prompt an individual to behave unethically. Invaluable is the discussion on what leaders can do to raise personal responsibility, manage social forces to promote ethical behavior, and establish organizational culture, policies, practices, and procedures to ensure ethical behavior in all circumstances, especially when operating in dangerous contexts.

C. Anthony Pfaff, Ted Reich, Walter Redman, and Michael Hurley address the ethics of applying lethal force. In Chapter 7, the team discusses ethics models from police and military perspectives for applying lethal force. The authors propose respect for humanity as the common moral grounding for applying such force. The concepts of discrimination, necessity, proportionality, immunity, and managing risk are introduced and applied to various scenarios to provide readers a thorough understanding of how to use lethal force in a moral manner. The authors provide leaders with a set of guiding principles to assist them in the moral application of lethal force to achieve an organization's mission. Understanding these ethics assists leaders and followers in making meaning out of injuring or killing another human in the execution of their duties and thus may help to mitigate PTSD.

David Barnes, C. Kevin Banks, Michael Albanese, and Michael Steger conclude this section with an exploration of the importance of meaning and purpose for people who serve in dangerous contexts. In Chapter 8, they

offer a thought-provoking and thorough discussion about the importance of meaning-making and how leaders and group members go about understanding or making sense of their adverse or traumatic experiences. The authors discuss meaning-making from philosophical and psychological traditions and provide leaders with multiple perspectives to make sense out of their experiences or to assist their followers' meaning-making. Leaders play a key role in assisting collective meaning-making by sharing their perspective on traumatic events with subordinates and providing them the opportunity and encouraging them to share their understanding with each other. The ability to make meaning of and understand the purpose of traumatic and stressful experiences helps promote resilience and growth, and mitigates PTSD.

### **Section Two: Influencing When People Are in Harm's Way**

The second section addresses the unique social and psychological challenges of leading in dangerous contexts. It exposes readers to theories and techniques for building strong teams, earning trust, exercising influence at a level that gets group members to step beyond individual needs to accomplish the mission and promote the welfare of the group. The contributions in this section highlight the importance of leaders investing in building good, quality relationships throughout their organization, genuinely caring for and protecting group members' welfare, seeking group members' input on decisions, and exercising values-based leadership. When peoples' lives and well-being are in the balance, relationships and leaders' credibility—competence, character, and care—assume far greater importance in the exercise of influence or leadership than in a non-dangerous context.

In Chapter 9, Patrick Sweeney, Kurt Dirks, David Sundberg, and Paul Lester provide a compelling discussion on trust development and the link between trust and influence. An elegant, easily understood, and empirically supported individual, relationship, organization, and context (IROC) model for trust development is presented with dialogue about techniques leaders can use to earn deep levels of trust. A leader's competence, character, and care (credibility) form the foundation upon which trust is built. Positive, cooperative relationships characterized by respect and empowerment facilitate the creation of trust. An organization's culture, policies, practices, and procedures also play a significant role in the development of trust throughout the group. The authors discuss how dangerous contexts influence the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for leaders and followers to earn credibility and how the characteristics of the social relationships within an organization must change to meet unique social demands. At the heart of this model is the proposition that trust is necessary and essential to influence group members to risk

their lives to accomplish their mission. This chapter empowers leaders with the knowledge, model, and techniques to build trust at the high levels necessary to lead in dangerous contexts.

Stephen Zaccaro, Eric Weis, Rita Hilton, and Jack Jefferies address the techniques for building resilient teams to handle the unique social challenges of operating in dangerous contexts. In Chapter 10, they introduce the concept of team viability, defined as how strongly committed members are to working together and their sustained ability to do so effectively. Team viability is grounded in cohesion, trust, and collective efficacy. The concepts of social and task cohesion are examined and leaders are provided suggestions on how to enhance cohesion in their organizations. Techniques for building team trust are only briefly covered here because trust is discussed in detail in Chapter 9. Collective efficacy is defined and leaders are provided suggestions for building it in their teams. The second half of the chapter examines how leaders can build cognitive, social, and emotional resilience in their teams to meet the unique psychological and social demands associated with dangerous contexts. The chapter provides leaders with a detailed guide on how to build strong, resilient, and effective teams.

In Chapter 11 Brian Reed, Chris Midberry, Raymond Ortiz, James Redding, and Jason Toole address the essential intangible to a group's will to complete its mission, its resilience, and its effectiveness, which collectively represent its morale. Also known as *esprit de corps*, morale is the spirit of the unit and the indicator of its well-being. Morale infuses group members with the motivation to endure extreme hardships and overcome insurmountable odds to complete the organization's mission. When morale is good, group members develop a strong identification with the group, take pride in being part of something greater than themselves, and thus willingly step beyond self-interest for the needs of the group. The authors define the concept of morale, discuss how to assess it, and devote the majority of the chapter to providing leaders with suggestions on how to build this critical intangible.

Angela Karrasch, Alison Levine, and Thomas Kolditz provide a gripping and insightful discussion on how to influence when lives are on the line. Using evidence from research and compelling practical experience, the authors in Chapter 12 address sources of power and the most effective ways to influence people when they feel their lives and well-being depend on their leader's decisions. Leaders are provided a detailed discussion on skills, traits, and behaviors necessary to increase their ability to exercise influence in harm's way.

In Chapter 13, Joseph Pfeifer and James Merlo present a forceful discussion on intuitive decision making for dangerous contexts. They discuss several

models for intuitive decision making and then propose their own model based on experiences from combat and firefighting. Moreover, the chapter provides an in-depth discussion on strategies to improve decision making in these circumstances. Dangerous contexts leaders will find this chapter invaluable for understanding how mortal stress affects decision making and will help prepare themselves and group members for making decisions under such conditions.

Michael Schuster, Lee Chartier, and John Chartier address the tenants of crisis leadership using the Station club fire in Rhode Island as a case study in Chapter 14. The authors use this compelling case to introduce leaders to L. Wooten and E. James' crisis leadership model, which identifies five phases of a crisis and outlines specific leader competencies associated with each of them. The authors use the gripping story of the 2003 Station club fire to discuss how competencies were either effectively or ineffectively employed and provide leaders with suggestions on how to apply them. Leaders are also presented a comprehensive framework to prepare themselves and their organizations for a crisis.

In Chapter 15, John Eggers, Rebecca Porter, and James Gray address leading and managing people in detention and those working with detainees and doing so in a way that promotes dignity and respect. The Abu Ghraib prison scandal illustrated to the world the importance of having clear and unambiguous procedures for the treatment of people in detention and the importance of leader presence. The authors discuss how leaders can leverage transformational and authentic leadership principles to develop and lead correction officers and inmates. The chapter provides a compelling glimpse into the leadership challenges associated with captive environments. The section on the psychology of inmates is powerful and insightful. The authors conclude with a discussion on how leaders can use principles of positive psychology to create a culture to promote growth and respect.

Closing out this section, in Chapter 16 Janice Laurence offers a thorough and impactful discussion on leading across cultures. In an era when military and civilian organizations are socially and culturally diverse, it is critical that leaders understand how diversity can enhance team performance and contribute to mission success. Various cultural views concerning leadership, the importance of emotional intelligence, and universal leadership traits and behaviors are addressed in this chapter. Leaders who treat people with respect and as valued members of their team, empower them, practice values-based leadership, and provide them a compelling vision are the ones best able to exercise effective leadership across all cultures.

### **Section Three: Leveraging the Organization**

This section addresses how leaders can leverage an organization's structures and systems to prepare themselves and group members for the challenges of leading and operating in dangerous contexts. Leaders are provided techniques on how to build and assess the powerful influence mechanism of organizational culture. Also, leaders gain insights into the various methods law enforcement tactical teams and military Special Forces units use to recruit, assess, and select personnel. Choosing the right people is an important step toward building effective organizations that can operate well in dangerous environments. Another important step in building effective organizations is leader development. Readers are provided an in-depth discussion of targets and techniques for developing leaders to operate in stressful, dynamic, and dangerous environments.

Donald Horner, Luann Pannell, and Dennis Yates address the topic of creating an organizational culture for leading and performing in dangerous contexts in Chapter 17. Techniques for discovering and generating member commitment to the organization's core values and beliefs as well as establishing a compelling vision are discussed. The authors offer insights into establishing an effective socialization process to communicate the culture. Moreover, they examine ideas and techniques for shaping a professional identity centered on the organization's core values and beliefs. The authors also provide ideas on how to assess and align an organization's policies, procedures, and practices with the espoused culture.

In Chapter 18, Ole Boe, Kristin Woolley, and John Durkin explore recruitment and selection of leaders for dangerous contexts. The military, police and fire departments, and other high-threat organizations are turning more often to highly specialized units (SWAT, Special Forces, and so on) for precise and sometimes deadly responses to tactical situations. Members of elite teams tasked to these assignments must be stronger, faster, smarter, and more tactically proficient than the ordinary soldier, police officer, or firefighter. Hence, more care in the selection and training of team members is needed when forming these units. The authors provide readers a review and assessment of various selection models in a variety of high-threat occupational contexts.

Noel Palmer, Sean Hannah, and Daniel Sosnowik provide an insightful discussion on developing leaders for dangerous contexts in Chapter 19. Leader development starts with self-awareness and understanding how one makes meaning out of one's experiences. Personal insights are gained through seeking feedback and reflection on experiences and how one views leadership. Trigger or crucible experiences that put leaders outside their comfort

zones by challenging skills or philosophies of leadership or life tend to lead to development. Various exercises are discussed to help leaders gain greater self-awareness and sense of agency. Leader development is a process of trial and error in which leaders take on and struggle through situations and then reflect on the experience. Mentors play an important role in assisting leaders in seeing their true selves, making meaning out of their experiences, sharing knowledge, suggesting challenging experiences, and prompting reflection. This chapter also presents a comprehensive model for understanding leader development.

## CONCLUSION

In Chapter 20, the editors introduce a holistic development model for individuals and organizations to synthesize lessons learned and themes from *Leadership in Dangerous Situations* and to provide insight into developing people to operate in dangerous contexts. The holistic model provides a common framework and language that facilitates purposeful development. It addresses how to prepare people for the unique intrapersonal (individual), interpersonal (relationships), and organizational challenges of operating in dangerous contexts.

We wish you the best on your developmental journey and hope that leaders find this book helpful in preparing themselves and their organizations for the unique demands of leading in dangerous situations.

## NOTES

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