Publications

12-1-2013

Indian Aviation Leadership Engagement: Case Study in Leadership Development Using the Cynevin Framework

Daryl Watkins
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, watkind4@erau.edu

Kees Rietsema
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, rietsd37@erau.edu

Indian Aviation Leadership Engagement: Case Study in Leadership Development Using the Cynevin Framework

Kees W. Rietsema & Daryl Watkins, *Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University*

Abstract

The paper presents a case study of a leadership development workshop facilitated by two American educators for a group of Indian aviation executives. The Indian aviation environment is quite complex and at times chaotic. The leadership development workshop was conducted as a sense-making exercise using Snowden's Cynevin Framework. Pre-seminar and post-seminar survey comparisons indicated that the executives experienced significant shifts in attitude during the three-day workshop. Pre-seminar attitudes demonstrated little differentiation between sense-making and leadership action within complex and chaotic contexts. Post-seminar attitudes demonstrated a broader contextual understanding of sense-making and leadership in complex and chaotic environments. The executives left the workshop with a more nuanced understanding of contextually appropriate ways to make sense of and lead in the complex Indian aviation environment.

Keywords: Cynefin, leadership, India, aviation, complexity

Introduction

In November of 2012, two American educator/researchers travelled to Mumbai, India to deliver a leadership seminar to aviation industry professionals. The researchers' invitation came from the Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA), specifically CAPA India. The visit request was to address senior executives of the Indian aviation sector on the subject of leadership.

The seminar was marketed as a participatory event, enlisting the active involvement of its attendees and addressing relevant leadership issues in ways that might be immediately applicable to their professional lives. The researchers felt the underlying differences between Indian and western culture could not be ignored. While CAPA expressed a desire to review leadership precepts from a Western perspective, invoking Western management practices, the researchers were cautious not to assume congruity between Western and Indian outlooks.

The Indian Aviation Environment and Leadership's Perceptions

Prior to the seminar, the researchers studied the current state of the Indian aviation industry. What surfaced was a picture of multiple stakeholders ranging from government to private industry, a consuming public, and even international entities, all involved in the messy cauldron of an emerging aviation industry sector. In some ways, the Indian aviation industry is a reflection of the complex nature of Indian society which it serves. It is at once structured and

unstructured, static in its patterns and dynamic in its tendency to change. CAPA India's Aviation Outlook 2012/13 wrote:

> Indian aviation is facing its most uncertain phase in more than a decade. After reporting an estimated record loss of just over US $2 billion in the 12 months ended 31 March 2012, India's airlines are facing an equally challenging year ahead. Weak balance sheets, increasing costs, regulatory uncertainty, a sluggish Indian economy and a difficult global environment will continue to pile the pressure on airlines, especially the poorer performing carriers. However, this may in turn create market opportunities to exploit for those that are better positioned. (CAPA India, 2012, p. 2)

The researcher's objective was to assist seminar participants in understanding and making sense of their environment while also leaving them with a set of tools for use in their professional roles. They selected Snowden's Cynefin framework as a basis for sense-making and leadership discussion. First, the researchers assessed how the seminar attendees viewed their leadership roles in general terms.

A pre-seminar survey revealed the following information. With regard to questions concerning leader behavior, the respondents replied in a fairly predictable manner. Leadership style should be consistent across all situations, best practice as important, empirical problem analysis yields problem solutions, the top down leadership model is most prevalent in the Indian aerospace environment, the best way to solve problems is to break them down into smaller parts and analyze them individually, collaborative skills are important among employees, and emergencies often provide the impetus for new solutions.

Seminar participants described the aviation environment as highly technical in terms of the equipment, processes, and systems which underlie its operations. Air Traffic control and airport systems, customer facing systems aircraft and maintenance support systems cannot exist with extensive support and highly trained technicians. From a leadership perspective, aviation leaders must be conversant in technology-related matters that impact their industry. Additionally, aviation operations in India face uncertainty in almost every respect. Although domestic capacity is expected to grow in FY 2012/13, Indian airlines are expected to post a combined loss of $1.3-1.4 billion dollars (CAPA India, 2012). Yet, government run Air India and its domestic component, the former Indian Airlines, struggle to compete with private entities in their respective markets. Capital requirements for continued growth are to some degree dependent upon foreign investors; however, the Indian government has historically been unfriendly towards foreign investors. All the while, the demand for air travel inside India continues to grow.

The turbulence in the Indian aviation industry reflects the multiple transformations evolving within the Indian economy. A socio-economic transformation is giving rise to a new middle class; macro-economic change promotes evolution from government control to a market driven economy, and technological transformation is raising expectations and promoting transparency. The Indian government is also pressured by a population that is experiencing an acute sense of rising expectations with regard to the economy's ability to deliver services and infrastructure. Aninda Mita, an economist from ANZ Bank commented "Rising incomes and growing demand in India are underexploited. Aviation is a prime example of that," (as cited by Harjani, 2012).

At the same time, the entire aviation industry requires expertise in fields extending beyond simply flying aircraft. The need for disciplines such as operations, marketing, training, human resources, labor management, logistics, air traffic control is as pressing as the need for aviators. Not only are varied competencies themselves required, but an enhanced understanding by leadership of how to work across disciplines in a networked environment is also necessary.

The Indian airlines system was nationalized in 1953 and forced to compete with private air carriers as part of the Indian economic liberalization of the early 1990's. Despite the liberalization process, economic sectors like the airline industry have found it difficult to compete due to the government's attempts to "protect" Air India, the national airline. The schizophrenic attitude of the Government of India (GOI) towards the airline industry results in an unstable environment where strategic planning and even short horizon planning are difficult.

The Indian economy as a whole is dynamic in nature, and remains a mix of state, family, foreign and privately owners despite hopes that it would leap somehow from socialism to full-fledged capitalism as a result of economic liberalization in the early 1990's, (Foulis, 2011). Also it remain hobbled by corruption. Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranks India 94th of 176 nations in 2012 (Indian Express, 2012). Indian aviation executives decry corruption as an issue they must deal with on a daily basis.

Aside from the above, other issues raised by aviation executives included the competitive environment, unions, resource conflicts, public scrutiny, corporate social responsibility, potential foreign entrants, and the need for public (consumer) support. It was clear that Indian aviation executives exist in a complex environment and would benefit from tools designed to help navigate their complex environment more effectively.

Complexity and Making Sense

As Obolensky (2010) comments, "the world is far more complex, faster changing and more uncertain than ever before…This means we are living in a large period of discontinuity; we have changed the context within which we lead faster than we can change our assumptions about what leadership is." (p. 19).

One of the most pressing tasks for effective leadership and decision making is to understand the various forces acting on organizations and existent in operating environments. A world where ambiguity and paradox abound places extraordinary demands on leaders who must find ways to make sense of their environments. "Sense-making involves turning circumstances into a situation that is comprehended explicitly in words and that serves as a springboard into action" (Weick, Sutcliff, and Obstfeld, 2005).

The researchers probed seminar participants regarding their perceptions of their world. This discussion was designed to enhance self-awareness on the part of participants and inform the researchers as well.

The Cynefin Framework

The Cynefin Sense-Making Framework, developed by Dave Snowden (2007) has been used as a tool to help create an understanding of context in various environments and is applicable in decision making support and contextualizing appropriate leader behavior in evolving circumstances. It is a good fit for making sense of the demands placed upon Indian aviation leadership. The Cynefin framework encompasses four key contexts: simple, complicated, complex, and chaotic, as well as a fifth context of disorder which characterizes those situations in which one of the previous four is not predominant (HBR, 2007).

Cynefin's simple context is referred to as the "domain of Best Practice" (Snowden and Boone, 2007, p.70). Environments within this context are easy to understand, answers are quickly discernible and associated functions may be automatic. It is known as the realm of the "known knowns" since information is easily accessible and the right answers are close at hand. Simple context environments might include straightforward administrative processes or other self-evident problems where cause and effect are easily diagnosed and dealt with.

Requiring little deliberation, leadership within the simple context is summarized by the words "sense, categorize, respond" (Kurtz and Snowden, 2003). The relative simplicity of leading within the so-called simple context can be misleading as it may contribute to leader complacency and generate overly simplistic analyses and decisions. Group think and routinized thinking may generate patterned responses that fail to address a changing environment. Within the Indian aviation sector, the existence for years of a sole domestic carrier run by the government was treated as a relatively simple contextual environment until private airlines were authorized to compete in the marketplace and the domestic market could no longer be taken for granted by the government run Indian Airlines. Today's Air India (merged international and domestic national carriers), still run by the government and saddled with years of bureaucratic structure must compete with its private counterparts in an environment characterized by intense price competition. The true context does not appear to be simple.

The second context in the Cynefin framework is the complicated context. It is the realm of the "known unknowns" and the Domain of Experts (Snowden and Boone, 2007). Within the complicated context reside environments that require expert analysis and may have multiple solutions. The key characteristic they share is that solutions are knowable, and with the correct application of expert knowledge, the complicated context can be successfully negotiated by leaders. Because there may be a multiplicity of options for complicated problems, all of which could be applied, the complicated context is characterized by "good" practice versus "best" practice. Leadership within complicated contexts requires a "sense, analyze, respond" approach (Snowden and Boone, 2007). Ostensibly, experts are able to see the cause and effect trail here most clearly.

In past years, GOI experts controlled the aviation industry and in particular, government owned, flag carrier, Air India. The proclivities of the GOI and its Ministry of Aviation to propose new rounds of cost cutting and infusions of capital into the national airline as it struggles to compete and eliminate "waste" suggest its leadership suggests these issues are viewed as complicated versus complex problems and depend upon the Ministry of Aviation and its five member panel to solve its problems (The Hindu, 2013). It may be the case that entrained thinking is hampering Air India's ability to manage its destiny.

Those leading within the complicated environment must depend upon the judgment of experts; experts who are trained to identify, analyze and select the most productive options. So, complicated contexts produce good diagnoses, but perhaps not the best. While reliance on expertise may be comforting, leadership in complicated contexts may become overly dependent upon subject matter experts. Complicated contexts may suffer from a lack of fresh thinking. Generating solutions through experts often excludes the presence of non-experts, thereby restricting leadership's ability to look at problems from novel or alternative viewpoints. Habitually unimaginative thinking has been at the root of Air India's problems as the government run airline struggles to remain profitable after the 2011 merger of Air India and Indian Airlines to form Air India Limited. Poor collective bargaining strategies combined with a

general neglect of employee and staff issues have repeatedly resulted in concessions to aircrews allowing them and lower level employees to dictate the airline's fortunes.

> Within the complicated domain, there is a temptation for experts to become entrained in their own thinking, and not open to novel solutions that might also constitute good practice. 'Analysis paralysis' is a further difficulty where a group of experts are unable to move to action before adequate analysis of the problem. (Deloitte, 2009)

Air India HR issues to date have been treated as complicated issues, requiring mere rearrangement of the deck chairs by entrenched government appointed bureaucrats. From the outside looking in, one suspects these problems reside more in the complex context discussed next. One such case came to light recently where the Indian Civil Aviation Minister directed Air India to immediately remove its General Manager (operations) because an aircrew was not available to crew a flight on the first of January 2013 from Mumbai to Singapore (GOI/Ministry of Aviation, 2 January ,2013). One wonders why the Civil Aviation Minister was/is involved in daily operations; more importantly, the situation points to systemic issues surrounding the issues of suspension, crew scheduling, and supervision. The problem appears to have more complex ramifications than simple cause and effect, requiring a systemic review versus simply firing the General Manager of Operations the day after the incident occurred as was reported by the GOI in its press release (GOI/Ministry of Aviation, 2 January, 2013).

The context which characterizes much of our world is the complex context. Use of the term complex is not by accident. In fact, the characteristics of the complex context are similar to those which define the science of complexity. Complex contexts involve multiple interacting agents; adaptive strategies; open and evolving, emergent systems; and ordered and disordered behavior. Snowden and Boone (2007) label the complex context "The Domain of Emergence". Complex environments are dynamic and fluid, comprising the realm of the "unknown unknowns" (Snowden and Boone, 2007, p.74). In complex environments, decision makers do not have the luxuries of experts or best practices to guide them. Rather they must probe, analyze and respond, initially allowing the path of action to evolve before them as part of an emergent process.

In discussion of complex versus complicated contexts, the terms adaptive and emergent signal the way in which complex differs from complicated. The Indian aviation environment, as controlled by the GOI through rules and legislation was historically treated as a complicated environment. As it emerges into the 21st century amid the complexities noted above, the environment demonstrates characteristics of a complex system, where change is unpredictable, cause and effect are not evident, but the entire industry is "learning". Assuming its leader participants begin to regard this as the new reality, they should become less insistent upon government experts to show the way, and more comfortable with building an aviation industry and aviation companies capable of learning and adapting to emerging facts on the ground. Dettmer (2011) wrote: "…in the complex domain, the knowledge of experts may be of limited value, and the effectiveness of cause-and-effect analysis is likely to be marginalized, or of short duration." (p.14).

Leaders succeeding within a complex environment are experimenters; often they must allow the system to unfold and reveal itself, while they perform more as facilitators than directors. Leaders in complex environments must be good observers, and patient enough to allow patterns to emerge. These leadership skills are not normally those practiced in highly

bureaucratic, structured or traditional organizational environments where the influence of caste and status still exist (although diminishing with time) and are part of a "strong hierarchical structure" (Sinha & Kumar, 2004, p, 100). Attempting to lead what were historically complicated systems, but systems which are now complex will require changes in thinking.

Although the complex leader's role requires patient observation, this does not imply a passive stance. Rather it mandates full involvement, but not involvement of a directive type. Rather, leadership in complex environments is about probing and experimenting, using safe-to-fail experimentation in the form of multiple low risk experiments to develop patterns and emergent solutions. Attempts to over-control the environment inevitably lead to missed opportunities and the tendency to fall back to a command and control posture. Recall the Civil Aviation Minister's firing of Air India's General Manager! Writes Dettmer, "The most problematic situations occur when a complicated system finds itself trying to function in a complex environment" (2011, p.15)

One interesting observation of time spent with Indian executives was their unending sense of optimism and excitement with regard to the emerging possibilities in their industry sector - a complex sector where there are many unknowns and overwhelming and seemingly intractable circumstances. Despite their circumstances, the seminar participants demonstrated a common sense of what might be termed optimistic fatalism verging on manifest destiny for their industry in India's economy. In fact, these participants were comfortable with contradiction and contrast. They welcomed discussion and were open to new perspectives. This was particularly evident from those seminar participants who were employed by non-government entities such as privately held airlines. An area that should be considered in future research is the relationship between culture and society's ability to deal with the increasing complexities of our evolving global community. Is it possible that a culture such as that of India in all of its multiple cultural identities, frameworks, languages is better suited to deal with a complex environment than western cultures that are infused with Newtonian/reductionist approaches?

The fourth context defined by Snowden and Boone (2007) is the chaotic context. Here, relationships between cause and effect are elusive and impossible to discern. The chaotic context is the realm of the unknowables and when immersed in chaos, the most rational action for leadership is to act decisively to establish some kind of alternative context (complex, complicated or simple) from which the organization can then move forward.

Leadership in this context should not attempt to establish patterns or call in experts to establish best practices. Rather, the immediate imperative is to establish order. Thus a leader in a chaotic context is often reduced to acting first; often in a command and control manner designed to establish some form of order. Actions of this kind are typically not collaborative in nature. One example of recurring chaos in the Indian aviation sector is the frequent scene in which winter fog shuts down New Delhi's Palam and Indira Gandhi Airports causing flights to be cancelled. Generally, authorities find ways to accommodate waiting passengers using temporary measures such as tents or other band aid solutions (USA Today, 2007). However, once those solutions are in place, the problem is not solved, it merely moves across the chaotic/complex boundary and can be viewed in the complex context; once the immediate crisis in public confidence is resolved, then more complex aspects must be addressed.

Leadership in a chaotic situation requires a take charge stance which may over extend its stay – in other words, the leadership becomes over enthused with its own self-image and elects to continue its directive stance well beyond the period of its applicability. The Delhi Airport example illustrates this point. The methods of dealing with overcrowding as the result of

cancelled flights have become "routine" and leadership has become accustomed to addressing the immediate chaos, failing to move beyond to address the core issues.

Cynefin Framework Dynamics

The Cynefin framework can be used in a number of ways. As has been discussed above it can be used to define a context for leaders, but it can also be used to explore courses of action in more dynamic environments.

In a descriptive mode, the Cynefin framework aids in the process of what is termed contextualization…the assignation of meaning which can aid in the interpretation of the environment within which a text or action is executed. When one works on a particular situation employing the framework as an analysis tool, patterns emerge and can result in increased awareness of the environment and one's place within it. Kurtz and Snowden (2003) refer to engaging in "descriptive self-awareness, or a greater understanding of [one's] own biases and potentials" (p. 473). Since self-awareness is a competency central to all leadership models, greater self-awareness may be more useful than specific content knowledge. If leaders are better able to discern and analyze themselves, they become far more able to deal with the externalities of their environments. This is often the difference between consultative work which strives to provide "the answers" based upon expert advice, and coaching efforts that assume the "solutions" exist within the client. When meaning is assigned through analysis using a framework such as the Cynefin model, and self-awareness and understanding are achieved, situations of choice become less vague.

One example of how the framework might be employed to raise levels of understanding within the Indian aviation environment is the issue of foreign airline investment. Initially when discussed with Indian executives, their understanding seemed to reflect primarily the complicated context. The investment decision was discussed within the narrow parameters of the political implications surrounding government approved foreign investment in Indian companies. However as the discussion has progressed inside and outside government, it has become evident that there is much more at stake in this issue. Nationalism, competitiveness, government and ministerial issues, private investment groups are just some of the stakeholders and issues involved. It is clear that decisions to approve foreign investment are complex and the implications of foreign investment are not and cannot be fully understood even by the most prescient of experts within the government or aviation industry. At some point, the Indian government must adopt an approach that is "experimental" in nature, approving a number of possible arrangements and then monitoring and adjusting as strategic relationships between entities evolve. It is apparent that this is in fact happening with the September 2012 GOI decision to allow foreign carriers to own 49 percent in local carriers. By December of 2012, Gulf carrier Etihad Airways was in discussions to invest in part of either Jet Airways or Kingfisher Airlines, thus expanding service between India and the Middle East and also providing needed financial support (Thomson Reuters, 2012). Such arrangements will be key to the further development of the Indian aviation environment. They become far more "digestible" when understood within the complex context of the Cynefin framework.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to review the use of the Cynefin framework in a practical environment. The Indian aviation industry is in turmoil and seeking solutions. Its leadership is relatively young and does not have the benefit of years of experience in an aviation industry

characterized by a free market approach. As the Indian aviation sector continues to morph from a government dominated industry to one characterized by a more capitalist/free market approach and globally integrated, its leadership must think in terms that are less dogmatic and traditional, focusing on adaptive ways to accommodate India's needs.

It is possible that as changes in the environment occur, leadership is not fully aware of the consequences. The Cynefin framework provides a way for leaders to understand their current situations. For example as the effects of a global shortage of pilots become apparent in the next few years (Lowy, 2012), what was viewed in the past as merely a complicated process of recruiting Indian military pilots to move to Indian domestic carriers will become viewed as a complex problem requiring more creative and forward thinking approaches to pilot training and hiring for Indian carriers. Similarly, as foreign carriers are allowed to enter the Indian aviation marketplace, investing in Indian carriers, the competitive environment will necessarily change and require adaptation by the Indian national carrier, Air India Ltd., as well as other private Indian air carriers. Contexts may change from complicated where solutions are known, to complex, where solutions must emerge and leadership must exercise patience and experiment with new approaches. Fast or entrained response based upon past heuristics and ways of leading/operating will become increasingly less effective. Leaders must be increasingly self-aware and sensitized to these circumstances as the ordered universe based on traditional tools and methods to which they may have been accustomed is no longer contextually appropriate.

The promise of the Indian aviation industry is tremendous and the enthusiasm of its current leadership is not misplaced. This sector will continue to grow. The question that remains is how turbulent, how difficult will the process be? Increased awareness of the environment and the ability to lead and act in contextually appropriate ways will smooth the journey.

References

CAPA India, (2012). CAPA India aviation outlook 2012/23 Retrieved 11 October 2012 from Retrieved 11 November from http://centreforaviation.com/analysis/capa-india-outlook-201213-critical-uncertainty-prevails-74473

CNN. (2012). Final air France crash report says pilots failed to react swiftly. Retrieved 1 January 2013 from http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/05/world/europe/france-air-crash-report/index.html

Deloitte. (2009). Mining safety, a business imperative. Retrieved 11 November 012 from http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-SouthAfrica/Local%20Assets/Documents/ZA_Industries_Mining_MiningSafety_130209.pdf

Dettmer, William H. (2011). Systems thinking and the Cynefin framework. Retrieved 1 January 2013 from http://blog.jackvinson.com/docs/Systems-Thinking-and-the-Cynefin-Framework-Final.4.pdf

Foulis, P. (2011, October) Adventures in capitalism. Retrieved 12 December from http://www.economist.com/node/21532448

Government of India (GOI), Ministry of Civil Aviation (2013). Civil aviation minister directs immediate removal of air India's general manager (operations) for dereliction of duty and putting passengers at inconvenience. Retrieved 1 January 2013 from http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=91313

Hall, P.G., & Poloz, S.S. (2007, Fall). When will India reach its full potential? *International Journal*, 62.4, 771-779.

IBM. (2012). Leading through connections. Retrieved 30 October 2012 from http://www-935.ibm.com/services/us/en/c-suite/ceostudy2012/

Indian Express. (2012). India ranked 94th in corruption perception index ratings says transparency international. Retrieved 1 January 2013 from http://www.indianexpress.com/news/india-ranked-94th-in-corruption-perception-index-ratings-says-transparency-international/1040857

Kurtz C.F. & Snowden, D.J (2003). The new dynamics of strategy: sense-making in a complex and complicated world. *IBM Systems Journal*, 42, 462-483.

Lowy, J. (2012, July 7). Possible pilot shortage raises safety concerns. Retrieved January 2, 2013 from http://news.yahoo.com/possible-pilot-shortage-raises-safety-concerns-221251529.html.

Obolensky, N. (2010). Complex adaptive leadership. Gower Publishing, Surrey England.

Sinha, J.P. & Kumar, R. (2004). Methodology for understanding Indian culture. Retrieved 4 December 2012 from http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CDQQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fej.lib.cbs.dk%2Findex.php%2Fcjas%2Farticle%2Fdownload%2F27%2F26&ei=zOjpUMKRK4_82gXnxIGACw&usg=AFQjCNEtpv2XspzhC3vtnE9jyVHWsxJIww&sig2=4cBhn1_wFErAQL6MJEJTPA&bvm=bv.1355534169,d.b2U

Snowden, D. & Boone, M. (2007) A leader's framework for decision making. Retrieved 10 November 2012 from http://www.mpiweb.org/CMS/uploadedFiles/Article%20for%20Marketing%20-%20Mary%20Boone.pdf

The Hindu. (2013, January 3). Panel to suggest cost-cutting measures for Air India. Retrieved 2 January 2013 from http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/logistics/panel-to-suggest-costcutting-measures-for-air-india/article4269908.ece

Thomson Reuters. (2012). Etihad in final talks to buy India carrier stake: source. Retrieved 2 January 2013 from http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/12/17/us-jet-shares-etihad-idINBRE8BG0OP20121217

USA Today. (2007). Chaos at New Delhi airport highlights India's infrastructure woes. Retrieved 23 December 2012 from http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/travel/flights/2007-01-04-delhi-airport_x.htm

Weick, K.E., Sutcliffe, K.M., & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sense-making [Abstract]. Organization Science, 16.4, 409-421.

Author Information

Kees W. Rietsema, PhD.
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
816 East Circle Road, Phoenix, AZ 85020
rietsd37@erau.edu

Dr. Rietsema is a 1973 graduate of the USAF Academy Further, he received his MBA from Golden Gate University, a Masters in Aeronautical Science from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University and his doctorate in Organization and Management from Capella University. He is a graduate of the Indian National Defense College, New Delhi, India. A twenty one year USAF career included service as an F-16 Fighter Wing Commander and duty on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Presently he is the Dean of the ERAU Worldwide College of Business. He resides in Phoenix, Arizona with his wife Liz and multiple pets.

Daryl Watkins, DM
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
20847 Fallen Leaf Road, Yorba Linda, CA 92886
daryl.watkins@erau.edu

Dr. Watkins, Department Chair of the ERAU Worldwide Department of Leadership is a 1987 graduate of the US Naval Academy. He received his MBA from the University of California, Irvine, and his Doctorate of Management in Organizational Leadership from the University of Phoenix. Dr. Watkins spent 13 years as a U.S. Naval Officer where he was a decorated F/A 18 Hornet Fighter Pilot. After leaving the Navy, Dr. Watkins enjoyed a short career within the Orange County Transportation Authority before joining ERAU. Dr. Watkins lives in Yorba Linda, California with his wife, Dr. Nancy Watkins, and their three boys.