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EMPATHETIC LEADERSHIP IN CRITICAL SITUATIONS: HOW CAN LEADERS LEAD WITH EMPATHY IN TIMES OF TRAUMA?

by

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March 2010

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Junior officers and senior enlisted leaders face intense crises and duress during deployments. They operate in high reliability organizations (HROs) where planning for failure is the norm and individuals' expectation of loss is high. Still, when units experience IEDs (improvised explosive devices) or suicide bomb attacks, unit integrity and ability to stay together and focused are called into question. This thesis first explores and develops the concept of empathetic leadership; it is differentiated from similar concepts of leadership in the context of a critical military incident. The research then analyzes leadership behavior described in detail in a Ground Combat Element (GCE) after an unexpected suicide bomb attack at an entry control point in a combat zone where a well-respected Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL) lost his life. His positive effect on his men made his loss difficult for the unit, making it hard for the unit to recover and heal. The central aim of this thesis is to analyze the incident of the loss of the SEL and uncover key leadership behaviors under traumatic and life-threatening situations necessary for managers of high reliability organizations. More than any other characteristic of leadership, empathy plays a vital and effective role in the leading as long as it ensures communication and generates mutual trust between the leader and the follower. Lessons derived from this case provide useful perspectives of managing and leading in critical situations where major trauma is a vital concern.

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ABSTRACT

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Leadership is intangible, and therefore no weapon ever designed can replace it.

General Omar Bradley, 1967

A.   BACKGROUND

Leadership is a broad and extensive area of research and practice. The central point of leadership research aims to discover and uncover abilities and attributes a potential leader ought to possess in order to be able to cope with the requirements of contemporary leadership behavior. Leadership, though, has proved to be a not-so-easy role that someone must undertake or a mission one must fulfill, particularly when the environment and context includes unpredictable or unexpected situations. In many cases, effective leadership can save lives or prevent catastrophes. In the military environment, however, the key for leaders' effectiveness in crises is their ability to lead in recovery and restoration of the unit in order to accomplish its mission.

When military leaders face unexpected incidents or unpredictable situations, their attitude toward their men is inevitably affected. Leaders themselves are not able to eliminate personal suffering, and they cannot easily alleviate the suffering of their people. They cannot just ask those individuals who are dealing with crises or trauma to check their emotions as "they step outside of the building" (Dutton, 2002, p. 8). Incidents like the one analyzed in this thesis demonstrate the types of trauma situations a leader may face at any time during a deployment and describes the unpredictable consequences on the entire military unit. The primary objective of this thesis is to draw conclusions about how leaders can better lead their teams in times of unexpected (yet anticipated) events, which invariably cause trauma. Through the learning process, an individual normally seeks knowledge, education, and training, therefore a learning organization responds to the demands of both the organization and the

individual learner. O'Connor (2002) says that an organization itself learns not only from its past failures, but also from its past successes. By using the past as a guide and encouraging people to do their jobs well and creatively, the risks of failure are low and possibilities for individual success are high (O'Connor, 2002).

The context for military leadership is an environment of highly possible and anticipated combat that is predictable yet unexpected. Managing in such a context is not much different from a high reliability organization (HRO), such as a nuclear power plant, where emphasis is placed on anticipating failure (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). A main concern for HROs and systems is to maintain a high level of safety and a high percentage of success (Sellnow & Vidollof, 2009).

These concepts are not just an improvement methodology, such as Six Sigma, which aims to improve the quality of process outputs by eliminating the causes of defects (Noreen, 2008). Instead, they are concepts through which a leader improves the way of thinking and reconsiders whether he should change the vexing quality and safety issues that he faces. For the most part, the majority of the objectives that an organization plans and achieves coincide with their culture and their capabilities. Their fulfillment of objectives is structured according to the organization's strategy. Rarely, even if it is not scheduled, infrequent failures in critical processes do happen and they can have terrible consequences for a group of people (Hines, Luna, Lofthus, Marquardt, & Stelmokas, 2008).

Assuring high performance in an increasingly complex world requires good management of the work force and acquaintance with potential (unexpected) threats that can escalate out of control. Many preparations and practices are scheduled, such as planning in advance, in order to portray and be able to predict the future. Additionally, appropriate managerial training and education to protect organizations from potentially disruptive events have become one of the main concerns for managers. The goal of managing with high reliability is creating a culture and cultivating a process that radically reduces or eliminates system failures and effectively respond when failures do occur (Hines et al., 2008).

HROs are organizations that can effectively accomplish a mission in a high-risk failure environment such as nuclear power plants, aircraft carriers, ground combat units, and wild land firefighting crews (Roberts, 1990). This kind of group warrants closer attention from managers and organizational leaders because they often operate at their limits under trying conditions, yet experience fewer than their fair share of problems (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). Except for the skills and abilities of the HROs' members, cognitive tasks are of the same, or potentially higher, importance for their effectiveness. Task-related factors that can affect the mission, such as technical complexity (high-risk environment), high interdependence between the members of the unit, and potential catastrophic consequences, are associated with a few more cognitive factors such as accountability and salience; the combination of both (task factors and cognitive factors) is vital for the HRO (Roberts, 1994). Such organizations have developed specific ways of acting and reacting, and have invented distinctive styles of leading that enhance psychological cohesion between their members and enable them to manage the unexpected appropriately, better than most other kinds of normal organizations (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). The ways in which they do this should serve as a template for all organizations that need to improve their reliability.

Empathetic leadership, however, as many researchers believe, improves mutual communication and efficiency among members of teams or workgroups (Dubrin, 2001). Through this research, the main pillar of focus is the value empathetic leadership has to military leaders. Through the case analysis, this thesis will try to uncover key leadership behaviors necessary for managers in HROs, behaviors not typically associated with critical incidents in a military setting. More than any other characteristics of leadership, empathy plays a vital and effective role in the leading procedure as long as it ensures communication and mutual trust between the leader and the follower. Additionally, this research will analyze why empathy effectively enhances the way leaders treat their

followers under trauma situations and whether empathetic leadership contributes to resilience under stressful and catastrophic conditions.

Conceivably, a leader or manager with the ability to perceive and understand what is happening around him by using emotional intuition could reduce costs associated with acquiring, training, and retaining human resources (Trabun, 2002). By interpreting this on HRO terms, one may comprehend why they have developed ways of acting and styles of leading that enable them to manage the unexpected better than most other kinds of organizations in order to be more reliable and cost effective (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001).

B.   OBJECTIVES/PURPOSE

HROs in the armed forces are a distinctive category in the military. The mission of military forces is to defend their country. The process for this mission starts by utilizing personnel, men and women, to fight and lead in combat or in any other high-risk situation, where mainly military leaders with the appropriate knowledge and experience can seek and find the appropriate solution (Taylor & Rosenbach, 2005). This research, however, examines the role of empathy in military leadership behavior through critical situations where major trauma and organizational performance is a main concern. In the case described in this thesis, we examine the concept of effective leadership under stress and healing conditions where the way of leading is a matter of life or death for the entire unit. The goal is to uncover whether empathetic leadership affects individuals' behavior, especially the subordinates, and if it contributes effectively to their performance through the accomplishment of their mission during the healing phase of the unit after a distressing event. Furthermore, through this research, we will try to offer implications for selecting, developing, evaluating and, if possible, training military leaders for those situations.

C.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis is organized into four basic segments through which we will try to answer research questions. First, we introduce empathy and empathetic leadership and analyze whether empathetic leadership is different from other styles of leadership. Then, through literature review on leadership, empathy, and high reliability organizations, this thesis will provide an analytical framework to examine leadership in times of crisis or major casualty, which constitutes the third part. Finally, based on the analysis of the case with the loss of the SEL, this thesis addresses ways in which empathetic leadership might be best developed.

The research questions formed the profile for the research design, methodology, and analysis selected and utilized in this study. The categorization of the questions will be according to the advancement/progress of the research in order to make the concept of empathy more comprehensive to the reader. Hence, questions to be addressed through the literature review are:

1.   What is empathetic leadership? Is it different from similar constructs of leadership (servant leadership, values based leadership and so forth) and if so, how?
2.   Why is empathetic leadership important in critical situations where major trauma and organizational (unit or group level) performance is a main concern?
3.   What are the benefits of empathetic leadership?
4.   What process factors might be considered in developing this type of leadership?
5.   Under which conditions should and should not leaders display empathy?

Through questions 1–3 above, the research will try to achieve the conceptual depiction of empathy in a group or organization. Strengths and weaknesses of leading with empathy will be visible for the reader at this point. In the following chapter, the analysis of the case, the author will address the response to question 4

above. According to data presented in the case, the author will answer this question by analyzing some speculating conclusions. Through the final segment, conclusions will be addressed by answering question 5.

Based on the previous data, the answer to the last question will determine whether the concept of empathy can contribute positively to leadership in order to achieve an organization's or a team's objectives. The summary, conclusions and recommendations will offer possible reasons as to why a leader should consider empathetic leadership as an effective way of leading followers toward outcomes more valuable than anticipated.

D. BENEFITS OF RESEARCH

Through this research, the anticipation is to yield insights about the appropriate way of leading under difficult or unexpected situations. Specifically, the findings of this thesis may serve as a prime guide for potential leaders to gain a theoretical view of how they should expect to feel when under pressure. Most likely, that will provoke anticipated results for their group and for themselves as leaders and as individuals.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. OVERVIEW

Empathetic leadership is a topic that promises a great deal for leadership and the enhancement of personal and team effectiveness. Even if concepts of empathy are in the initial phase of research and the role it plays is yet unknown or not of great consideration, there are many examples that support the value of empathy in leadership. Literature and experience have uncovered the strengths of leading with empathy. "Empathetic leaders enhance mutual communication and generate mutual trust within their group between the leader and the follower" (Mackay, Hughes, & Carver, 1990, p. 57).

The following sections of this chapter present what is known about empathy and empathetic leadership. A brief discussion of the relationship of empathetic leadership with other aspects of leadership will be included. The goal is to uncover the importance and existence of empathy in other styles of leadership, such as servant leadership, values-based leadership, spiritual leadership, and transformational leadership.

Next, HROs will be introduced, along with the relevance of empathy with leadership under high-risk environment. The discussion will be focused in HROs and the inherent strengths of empathy as a vital ingredient of leadership in these organizations. The chapter concludes with a summary of contemporary thoughts on developing empathetic leadership in the military environment among individuals and within combat units.

B. LEADERSHIP AND EMOTIONS

Leadership and the performance of leaders are not easily measured, as leadership is not a position, but rather a relationship between people (Quinn, 2004). According to Eims (2002), the leader is one who sees what is not seen by

others, who sees farther than others, and who sees before others. Indeed, these are some of the most important attributes a leader normally possesses. Additionally, a review of the literature uncovered three vital ingredients of the leading procedure: (i) the leader itself; (ii) the follower; and (iii) the context or the environment in which they function (Hersey,1996). These three factors exist in a dynamic situation where the one affects the other, either by enhancing or by diminishing it. However, most would argue that the practice of leadership is more art than science (Cavallo, 2001). In this research, the focus is primarily on the leader, the follower, and the relationship between them.

Jones (2000) asserts the idea that feelings (moods and emotions) play a central role in the leadership process. More specifically, "it is believed that emotional intelligence, the ability to understand and manage moods and emotions in the self and others, contributes to effective leadership in organizations" (Jones, 2000). The combination of leadership style and emotions during a decision-making procedure may contribute to the possible negative or positive outcomes on individuals and organizations (Trabun, 2002). However, the positive aspect of this combination has not been of great consideration in solving problems. Additionally, Goleman (2005) found that emotional intelligence played an increasingly important role at the highest levels of administration in a company. Because of the training issues and the experience they had, there were minor differences in technical skills between individuals. However, emotional ways of thinking and acting were established among the members of the organization independently of cognitive skills. The higher the rank or the administrative position of a person, the more emotional intelligence capabilities showed up as the reason for his effectiveness rather than cognitive abilities (Goleman, 2005). We can infer from this statement that leadership and emotions can be combined and work together with important outcomes. Actually, leadership is not a matter of cognitive skills, but rather an issue of instinctive communication with one's own people as well as with other people.

C.   EMPATHY

Empathy by definition begins with awareness of another person's feelings. It would be easier to be aware of other people's emotions if there was mutual communication and awareness. Both leaders and followers could simply tell each other how they feel and externalize their thoughts. Nevertheless, if they establish essential communication, even if most individuals hesitate to communicate, empathetic leaders seek to either interact verbally with their followers by asking questions, or at the very least try to interpret non-verbal cues. Emotionally expressive people are the easiest to read because their eyes and faces are constantly letting everyone know how they are feeling (Hein, 2008). According to Silard (2009), one of the keys to effective leadership is self-management, which is built on self-awareness. Empathetic Leaders first need to become aware of what they are actually feeling. If they acknowledge, identify, and accept their feelings, they will become authentic with themselves and honest with the others. Only then, they are ready to empathize. That is one reason it is important to work on their own emotional awareness and sensitivity—in other words, to be "in touch with" their feelings and to help followers stay in touch with their own feelings as well (Hein, 2008).

As previously stated, even if empathy does not get much respect or consideration yet, it is a vital factor in human relationships for at least three reasons: the increasing use of teams and groups in any organization, the rapid pace of globalization, and the growing need to retain talent (Goleman, 2005). It does not fit in an organization's structure to compel the manager or the leader of a department to make hard decisions daily when he has in mind all those people who will be affected by those decisions. Goleman (2005) asserts that leaders with empathy do more than just sympathize with people around them. More deeply, they use their knowledge to improve their companies in subtle but important ways. The value and importance of empathy is beyond any other style of leadership regarding the three important reasons that mentioned above. Hence, in order to be able to manage effectively in these organizations and

evoke mutual trust and communication among the members of a group, leaders have to apply empathetic leadership and generate warmth and rapport simultaneously with discipline, obedience, and respect among the members of the group.

D.   EMPATHETIC LEADERSHIP

The first question of this research focuses on how empathetic leadership is different from other styles of leadership mentioned in the first paragraph of this chapter. An important current trend in understanding leadership is the perception that it is a long-term relationship or partnership between leaders and their group members. In a partnership, the leader and the follower are connected in such a way that a relationship between them exists in a dynamic situation (Dubrin, 2001). The power between them is approximately balanced (Dubrin, 2001). The most effective leaders are alike in one crucial way: the common denominator is that they all have a high degree of emotional intelligence. As mentioned above, the use of feelings and emotions in the decision-making process improves communication and enhances comprehension between the two. Without emotional intelligence, a person may have the best training in the world with an incisive, analytical mind, and an endless supply of smart ideas, but he still will not make a great leader (Goleman, 2005).

Goleman (2005) also defines empathy as thoughtfully considering employees' feelings—along with other factors—in the process of making intelligent decisions. Empathetic leadership is vital in the relationship between the leader and the individuals that follow him. The profile of the leader should be portrayed with specific attributes. A leader who works with empathy believes and respects his men. He acknowledges their power and accepts their weaknesses. Leading with a "command and execute" style is usually like saying, "you must be loyal to me, but I need to think only of my next promotion" (Taylor, 2005). Obviously, a leader with these thoughts will not go far. A resonant leader is one who is attuned to the emotional climate of the office and the group he belongs to;

he generates a culture and knows how to manage it (Taylor, 2005). Employees want to feel that their voices are heard. They want their issues to be acknowledged and integrated into the corporate or organizational processes and strategies. The author, inherently, is always leading others through influence. The experience of influencing others with thoughts and actions is very effective. Brunkhorst (2005) says, "leading with empathy is leading from the deepest values. These values allow the leader to focus on the strengths of those he leads; they allow the leader to lead others in ways he would want them to lead him." This is an extension of the definition of empathy. When a leader puts himself in the position of the follower first, essentially seeing through the eyes of the follower, he becomes attuned emotionally with how the follower wants him to lead. To demonstrate the value of empathetic leadership, in the next section we analyze the role of empathetic leadership in comparison with other styles of leading people.

E.   OTHER TYPES OF LEADERSHIP

There are different types of leadership. This thesis focuses mainly on the relationship of empathy and leadership. However, the first question refers to the distinction of empathetic leadership from other types of leadership. As this thesis tries to answer this question, it will uncover the value of empathy in leadership and demonstrate the importance of the cohesion, trust and communication between the followers and the leader. By considering transformational leadership, servant leadership, spiritual leadership, and values-based leadership the relationship of empathy with all these other styles will be uncovered. For example, is empathy different from these other styles? Do these other types fall under the umbrella of empathy? Could empathy be a small ingredient of each one of all these traits? Figure 1 portrays this question by considering empathetic leadership as an umbrella that covers these other styles.

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Figure 1.   Leadership Umbrella

1.   Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership starts with vision (Bass, 1998). Although vision is more task-oriented, the development of a vision is aiming in the view of the future that will excite, trigger off, and convert potential followers under a psychological and emotional desire to engage with the accomplishment of a mission.

Burns (1978), who influenced leadership research and theory, led to the development of transformational leadership. This type of leadership is used widely to contrast with transactional leadership. The transactional approach has to do with a transaction between leaders and followers; a sort of "give and take" process that is based mainly on an equitable exchange among them according to the self-interests of each. In contrast, the new transformational approach appeals to followers beyond their self-interest and incorporates the idea that leadership involves noneconomic sources of influence (Sashkin & Rosenbach, 2005).

Burns (1978) defines transformational leadership as "occurring when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality." Leaders and followers, as well as the social system in which they function, pass through a phase of transformation (Sashkin & Rosenbach, 2005). The definition of Burns above coincides with the role of empathy in the leadership process. Transformational leadership appeals to followers beyond any self-interest. Each leader strives to appraise the followers by empathizing with them.

Bass asserts empathy in transformational leadership as an important ingredient of EQ (Bass, 1998). Empathetic leaders are viewed as having the ability of effectively mentoring and developing followers. In addition, "empathy is important to individualized consideration that a leader shows his/her followers, which is one of the elements of transformational leadership" (Pillai, Williams, Lowe, & Jung, 2003). Hence, we assume that empathy will be positively related to transformational leadership.

2. Servant Leadership

Servant leadership, as described by Greenleaf (1970), has a few characteristics that make the leader act with an attitude based on the follower's perspective:

> The servant leader is servant first. He has the natural feeling that he wants to serve other people. He is sharply different from the person who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions.

The distinctive characteristic of servant leadership is that the leader leads from the aspect of the follower. He directs his followers toward a specific objective, while at the same time serving them. It is apparent that when a leader serves his men and still is their leader, he empathizes with them. Consciously or naturally gifted, he puts himself in their place and acts in a way that will make them satisfied and happy. Prior to any decision that he will make, he considers

the aspect of his followers. Of course, the accomplishment of the mission will always be on the top of his choices. However, through mutual communication and mutual trust, he will achieve an organization's objectives by making his followers proud and happy. Hence, we assume that empathy will be positively related to servant leadership.

3.   Spiritual Leadership

Another aspect of empathetic leadership is spiritual leadership where the leader's self-awareness and his followers' spiritual side are essential. Spirit has to do with the interpretation of what we are, who we are, and why we exist as human beings (Fairholm, 1997). Empathetic leadership here relates to the comprehension from the follower's aspect to the "what we are" part of this style of leadership. When they understand this part, they decide on their own to follow their leader. "True spiritual leadership, with a spirit of humility and service, will cause people to follow you because they want to, not because they have to" (*Spiritual Leadership-A Biblical Model*, n.d.).

When people follow a leader because they trust and believe in him, they are eager to accomplish any kind of mission with any personal cost. "Leading by spirit, we guide coincidently our behavior, our spiritual dimension, our relationships with others and their relationships with us" (Fairholm, 1997, p. 112). The idea of spirit is central to life. It is also central to any activity, like leadership, that purports to order and direct a group of people toward specific aims. Empathy enhances the spiritual dimension of this kind of relationship among the members of a group. In order to communicate in a way that evokes followers to follow their leader because they want to and not because they have to, the contribution of empathy is vital as well.

4.   Values-Based Leadership

When a situation presents itself and some decisions need to be made specific steps should be followed. According to Barrett (2007), there are three

different ways we can do that, "either we can use our beliefs to formulate a response, we can use our values to formulate a response, or we can use our intuition to formulate a response." If we use our beliefs to make decisions, our decisions will reflect our history in dealing with similar situations (Barrett, 2007). When we say history, we are talking about our past experiences. If we use our values to make decisions, our decisions will be irrelevant to our past and will be aligned with the future we anticipate.

Values transcend experiences because experience is a potential situation. When we use values in decision-making, we are consciously creating the future that fits our personality. Values are not constrained by the past and are adaptable to new situations. The world today is becoming increasingly complex and unpredictable values provide a more flexible mode of decision-making than beliefs (Barrett, 2007). Values are the pillars we use to make decisions so we can portray the future in the way we want. They keep us aligned with our authenticity, and consequently they keep us in tune with our values.

Empathetic leadership is directly related with this style of leadership. The center of any organization is the human relationship (Powley & Taylor, 2006). When a leader leads based on an internal set of values and an external focus toward his followers, he will probably act driven by both values and empathy. In this case, he may influence how an organization, and especially an HRO, will manage a crisis. During a crisis, the values-driven leader will have the primary intent to engage with his men and support them psychologically (Powley & Taylor, 2006).

Quinn (2004) describes values-based leaders as being internally directed, other-focused, externally open, and purpose centered. Hence, the leader who leads inherently on internal values will inevitably be engaged with emotional relationships with his followers as long as these internal values are related with his own emotions. Furthermore, during a crisis he will contribute to how the

organization will recover by re-establishing a sense of identity, strengthening values, and restoring relationships that were ruptured because of the event (Powley & Taylor, 2006).

F. IS EMPATHETIC LEADERSHIP DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TYPES OF LEADERSHIP?

Through all these different aspects of leadership, we infer that the core idea is empathy. The follower is the prior factor throughout all these leadership styles. In each case, the attributes are congruent. A leader always aims to achieve his objectives but, according to Powley and Taylor, he has to be in touch with personal identity, personal values, and ideal aspirations, and through all these resources from within, he seeks the most appropriate way to lead others (2006, p. 197).

Covey (2004) asserts that the leader should find his voice from within and inspire his men to find theirs. Empathetic leadership is the common and more effective style of leadership. However, it is inevitably included in other leadership styles as long as the leader does not aim blindly at the achievement of the organization's objectives, but takes under consideration the well-being of his team and his followers as well. Many times, experiences from everyday activities have demonstrated that during a mission or a project, the people and the process are more important than the accomplishment of this mission.

The Greek poet Konstantinos Kavafis mentions in his poem *Ithaki* (Ithaki is a small Greek Island in Ionian Sea), "as you go for Ithaki you wish to have a long path, full of adventure, full of knowledge." The meaning is that the leader should not contemplate only the accomplishment of his mission, but also the way he would choose to get there. The leader should also consider the process and the people he will work with during this mission. Choosing the appropriate path could be effective and edifying. In many cases, learning through a specific process is more valuable and efficient than reaching one of the objectives.

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G. HIGH RELIABILITY ORGANIZATIONS

1. General

With a definition of empathetic leadership established this thesis now turns to its importance in critical situations where major trauma and organizational performance is a main concern. Careful study of organizations that continuously operate under very trying conditions and yet manage to have fewer than their fair share of accidents demonstrate the vital role of leadership in HROs (Xiao & Moss, 2007). To ensure reliability, groups or teams are obliged to adhere to practices that reduce the likelihood of low performance or failures. Some of these practices include learning and trusting each other, sharing responsibilities, ensuring team awareness, and being adaptive (Xiao & Moss, 2007).

2. Dealing With the Unexpected

One of the greatest challenges any business organization faces is dealing with the unexpected. Some organizations ideally require nearly error-free operations. Their nature and their mission coincide with dealing with high-risk and low predictability situations and accomplish them successfully. In any other case, they would experience catastrophes (Weick, 1993). Organizations prescribe simple sequences of actions and activities. There are objectives, plans, actions, and outcomes. Actual events fail to coincide with the intended sequence, however, and there are unexpected results and surprises. Although most times theory stands far away from reality, many people can manage unexpected incidents either poorly or well.

Crises occur when something that is expected to happen fails to happen, or something that was not expect to happen does happen (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). In general, people who are sitting at the head of a group or a team theoretically are trying to prepare themselves to be able to meet their objectives in any unexpected situation or crisis. A crisis is characterized by a surprise, threat, and short response time (Sellnow et al., 2006). In general, dealing with

the unexpected inevitably coincides with undesired results. In critical situations of trauma and casualty, events get worse and ongoing activities are disrupted. An unexpected situation means that people are not ready to deal with it, which can be interpreted as inexperience or carelessness. However, even if a situation is unexpected, the main concern of an effective leader is to stand up and seek solutions and alternatives.

3.   Obtain High Reliability

High reliability in an organization means a high level of readiness and success in dealing with difficult situations in an environment where normal accidents are to be expected due to risk factors and complexity (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). Despite the difficulties in defining what constitutes a high reliability organization (Rochlin, 1993), the field study on aircraft carriers reported by Weick and Roberts (1993) provides insightful answers to the question of "why a million accidents waiting to happen but almost none of them do" on aircraft carriers. One of those answers to understanding why HROs are resistant to fail can be found by seeking the reasons and comprehending why other systems fail (Roberts, 2000).

Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) attribute the success of HROs in managing the unexpected to their determined efforts to act mindfully. In other words, be aware that what you see is not always, what it appears to be. In some situations, a few minor or weak signals are not valued as much as they should be. These signals are a warning about potential failures or undesired side effects of an action that are intended to be taken. Mindfulness preserves the capability to see the significant meaning of weak signals and to give strong responses to them. This counterintuitive act holds the key to managing the unexpected (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001).

How well or poorly people manage the unexpected is an issue of how well or poorly they perceive the situation (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). Many people focus only on the result of an action and try to achieve it as soon as possible. The

weakness in this case is that, if something goes off course, they do not have the flexibility to realign again with the initial track. Others follow the appropriate procedure gradually and are ready to deal with an unexpected situation that will come up in any of those steps.

Weick and Roberts (2001) say that the management of unexpected situations is a foundational issue that underlies the handling of any pressing business problem. The difference, however, between an HRO and a non-HRO is not very large. In both settings, trouble starts small and is signaled by weak symptoms that are easy to miss; especially in an HRO where expectations are strong, mindfulness cannot be weak and those signals must be considered thoroughly (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001).

4.   Leadership in HROs

The consequences of the management of unexpected situations are part of the individual behavior and training of the leader (Powley & Taylor, 2006). HROs are supposed to maintain reliable performance most of the time, despite their exposure to high-risk situations. The leader of an HRO who stands in the front line and manages the whole group or organization has no other accepted reaction but effective leadership toward its objectives. Here, the role of empathetic leadership is important. Mindfulness, as mentioned earlier, is the compass that will help the leader decide to lead his team in the right direction. Feelings and empathy among the members of his team will ensure reliability in HROs.

Within the HROs, leadership is considered a core competency. The introduction of empathy in leadership portrays this relationship in a different dimension: mutual trust and communication. Leaders of HROs are responsible for establishing mutual trust, respect, and a certain warmth and rapport between the members of their team in order to be more effective (Cherniss, 2000). However, HROs have two basic pillars: they are task oriented, and they have an emotional/psychological aspect.

In trying to depict the cognition aspect of HROs, Dether and Black (2007) developed a mnemonic that integrates the concept of organizing high reliability groups. This mnemonic is related to key concepts and behaviors that are considered vital for attaining high reliability. Respectful interaction and cognition are the most important steps of organizing HROs. These steps are further divided into trust, honesty, and self-respect for the interaction step and learning culture for the cognition step. Members of HROs should always consider themselves as students because learning is continuous (Dether & Black, 2007). Because rules do not and cannot cover every situation, they should always be aware and challenged with the possibility of the unexpected. Additionally, emotions play an important role in the cognition part in HROs. When they fail under an undesired situation, they must prepare themselves to be able to lead the group through the crisis. Rules and procedures indicate the appropriate steps the leader will have to follow in order to deal with a situation, but there are times when the leader has to improvise.

Leaders seek to adhere to practices that reduce the likelihood of performance failures. These practices may include learning and trusting roles, sharing responsibility, ensuring team awareness, and being adaptive (Xiao & Moss, 2007). Although empathetic leadership is a very broad and useful style of leading people, it is important in critical situations because empathy builds trust. "We versus them" scenarios create division and resentment between the leader and the followers, making it more difficult to work together in the best interest of all (Schalm, 2009). Especially in unexpected situations, demonstration of high rates of empathy increase the effective attitude against unpleasant emotions of loss, death, or defeat (Schalm, 2009).

Empathetic leadership is the most appropriate way a leader might choose to contribute to the trauma resuscitation, and might demonstrate that failure is one of the expected outcomes when the team is spends a majority of the time under trying and high-risk conditions (Schalm, 2009). The main issue after a trauma situation is to seek the next step that will lead to realignment with the

initial objectives. Maintaining high performance and team awarness are a few such those factors that will provide the strength and patience to achieve those objectives (Schalm, 2009).

H.   CONCLUSIONS

Empathetic leadership is the common denominator in any kind of leadership a leader may apply. The building of trust among the members of a team through mutual communication is vital. Lieutenant General William Pagonis, in the book *Military Leadership*, describes his own experience when he was on duty in Saudi Arabia as head of the United States Army's 22nd Support Command: "I have concluded that leadership is only possible where the ground has been prepared in advance…this process of ground breaking is beyond the control of a lone individual in a large organization."

Leading people is not a simple and standard procedure (Pagonis, 2001). The leader with empathy will not just give orders from his spot and expect from his men to abide them blindly. Especially in a combat or high-risk environment, the importance of personal presence and action of the leader is vital. Even if unexpected situations do occur, the leader has to be aware of this dynamic situation and, if possible, predict the next movements. Especially in HROs where high reliability is vital, empathetic leadership contributes and simplifies the achievement of the objectives (Pagonis, 2001).

I.   SUMMARY

Empathy is a vital ingredient to the relationship of people in a group or organization. As evidenced from the previous pages, one can infer that literature provides many prescriptions for leadership success in HROs. Empathy is one of the main issues that enhances the probability of positive outcomes and diminishes negative results. As suggested by many studies, empathetic leadership effectiveness can be judged based on subordinate's skills and performance. More important, though, is the mutual communication and the

exchange of feelings between the two. How these inputs can be balanced should be one of the main concerns of HROs, as well as how those qualitative values will be utilized to contribute to their final product. Empathy breaks down all the visible obstacles that prevent trust and the feeling of fellowship between the leader and his men. Leaders need to be ready for those moments when leadership is vital and the fate or fortune of others depends on what they do. Perhaps only a few people will be touched emotionally by their decisions at such critical moments, or perhaps many will. Nevertheless, either way they need to be familiar with empathetic leadership if they are to seize the opportunity and accomplish their mission.

III.   METHODOLOGY

A.   GENERAL IDEA

Based on the case study "Leading Healing in a Broken Unit," this thesis makes some inferences about empathy and the other types of leadership. This thesis will examine the attributes of a Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL) prior to the detonation of a suicide bomb and the reactions of his unit and the junior officers' perspectives after the blast. Furthermore, how they managed to heal and balance their feelings with the accomplishment of their mission and recover with the minimum casualties will be analyzed.

B.   MATERIALS

The primary data will be derived from the case "Leading Healing in a Broken Unit." The main analysis will be conducted by examining the incidents of the case with the frameworks of leadership presented in the literature review. A brief description of the case below will help the reader be in tune with the steps of the analysis in the next chapter[1]. Source material for this case comes from the first-hand experiences of an officer embedded within the Ground Combat Element of a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) and accounts from other attacks in Iraq and Afghanistan. An abstract from the case, "Leading Healing in a Broken Unit," is presented below in order to help the reader to get familiar with the topic:

> The announcement of increased deployments meant additional preparations for many military units who anticipated deployment to the US Central Command (CENTCOM) Area of Operations (AO). This case is about one Ground Combat Element (GCE) for a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) deployed into the CENTCOM AO. Excitement for the mission remained high, but extended deadlines well beyond the return date caused Marines and Sailors to become wary. On top of their fatigue, a suicide

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[1] A full version of the case may be obtained through the primary advisor.

bomber detonated himself at an Entry Control Point (ECP), significantly affecting the morale and welfare of the unit. The blast killed several individuals and severely wounded nearly a dozen others. One of those killed in the blast was the well-known and well-respected Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL) of the GCE. In life as well as in death, his presence affected the morale and productivity of the entire unit.

C.   PROCEDURE

By exploiting the types of leadership that were reviewed in the literature and their connection with empathetic leadership, this thesis will analyze whether the SEL and the other leaders demonstrated those characteristics as individuals and as military leaders. Additionally, through this analysis the author's aim is to articulate significant insights about empathetic leadership in HROs. Furthermore, how this type of leadership affects the cohesion and effectiveness of the unit when crisis does happen will be explored.

The analysis process is designed based on the case. It will demonstrate the traits and attributes of leaders mainly based on traits of leadership discussed in the literature review. As long as this research aims at an in-depth analysis of leaders' behavior during crisis, the use of just one case will help to make inferences by comparing the attributes of servant leadership, values-based leadership, transformational leadership, and spiritual leadership with the attributes of the behavior of the SEL in the specific case. Next, the author will answer the basic question of this research as to how leaders can lead with empathy in times of trauma and casualty.

The analysis will be done in the following steps:
- A codebook with codes corresponding to the styles of leadership that were discussed earlier in the literature review is the initial step. For example :
  - ✓   Code 1 → Transformational leadership.
  - ✓   Code 2 → Servant leadership.

- ✓ Code 3 → Spiritual leadership.
- ✓ Code 4 → Values-based leadership.
- An in-depth reading of the case is the next step in order to uncover the deeper meaning of the actions and behaviors. For example, "it was more than a duty and more than a sense of responsibility to protect" behind the action or feeling of the SEL is the style of servant leadership as long as he was charismatic by serving others and assuring their protection.
- After the interpretation of these words, actions of the leader, the unit and the other officers will be categorized as highlights of their behavior. An example of this is shown in Figure 2.

Action 1-01	"He deeply loved the freedoms"
Action 1-02	"He was particularly fond of studying the U.S. Constitution of Declaration"

Code for the style of leadership   Actions of the SEL corresponding to style with Code 1
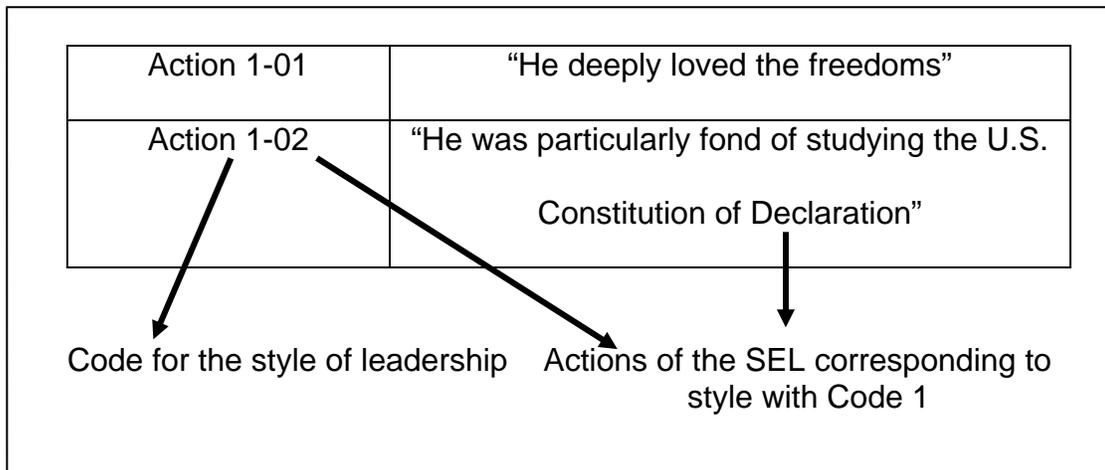
Figure 2.   Analysis Table Sample

- The last step will be to analyze all these attributes and infer how and why they functioned the way they did. The dependent variable is empathetic leadership. When it exists, it solves or simplifies many difficulties. When it is lacking, things become more complicated. The author's opinion is that empathetic leadership does exist on the SELs leading style and, with the use of examples,

will demonstrate how empathy was of the prevalent characteristics of SEL through his behavior.

- The conclusion (last chapter), with the use of a diagram, will demonstrate the value of empathetic leadership that was displayed by the SEL actions and the level of effectiveness that he achieved by those attributes and actions. With the use of three areas (A, B, and C), there will be a distinction of the attributes that he demonstrated according to the level of empathy he applied. Hence, it will be possible to infer whether it contributed to the successful accomplishment of the mission despite the crisis the unit went through. With an explicit discussion based on the case, the author will demonstrate the importance of empathetic leadership.

IV. PRESENTATION OF DATA

The brief mention of the four types of leadership in the literature review was a step toward familiarizing and introducing the reader to the concepts of transformational leadership, spiritual leadership, servant leadership, values-based leadership, and their relationship with empathetic leadership. Through the case, this relationship will be explored in practice. The SEL's behavior prior to the crisis and the reaction of the unit and other leaders after the fatal blow will demonstrate the connection of these four types of leadership under the umbrella of empathy.

The analysis below was conducted according to the time sequence of the events (prior to and after the loss of the SEL). The presentation of the data derived from the case will be depicted for the SEL, the unit, and the other leaders (next in hierarchy).

A. ANALYSIS

Worldwide military forces in recent years have been engaged in a process of training and sending soldiers on combat deployments in the global war against terror. Squads, platoons and companies are well-prepared before their assignment in a combat environment. They are aware of their mission and their responsibilities in order to be familiar with risks and challenges related with combat. All the members of the HRO in the case went through a similar preparation phase prior their deployment.

1. The Senior Enlisted Leader

The characteristics of the leader, as the author of the case describes, revealed a person who has dedicated his whole life to the welfare, safety, and success of his men. Throughout his career, he served his duties in difficult deployments. However, he always had in the forefront of his mind the men of his

unit and their well-being. Although his aim was the accomplishment of each mission, his gave the highest priority to the communication and the psychological association with each one of his men.

Table 1 depicts transformational leadership characteristics of the SEL's behavior toward his unit.

Code 1–Transformational Leadership		
Action	**Description**	**Area**
1-01	"Selden's loss threatened the organizational culture he was so much a part and the sense of stability and continuity he helped establish" p.2, line 19	A
1-02	"…he was especially fascinated by the stories of bravery and unconventional wisdom shown by military personnel in combat" p.3, line 6	N/A
1-03	"By the time Selden was in high school he had decided to pursue a military profession. When asked he would tell you this decision early in his life was not a choice but a "response to a call" p.3, line 10	N/A
1-04	"The SEL was an integral part of the day-to-day operations that led the Ground Combat Element" p.3, line 22	N/A
1-05	"He had often been told he should go into politics because…inspire them to action…" p.4, line 5	A
1-06	"Selden's philosophy was the best developmental feedback was built upon and took you beyond the best you could show" p.6, line 19	N/A
1-07	"Selden believed mistakes in non critical areas were tolerable and could serve as "teachable moments" for his men" p.7, line 4	N/A
1-08	"During pre-deployment period Selden was often seen encouraging his men and motivating them when they felt dejected and beaten" p.10, line 4	A

Table 1.   Transformational Leadership Characteristics

Transformational leadership relates to the development of a vision, which aims toward a view of the future that will excite, trigger off, and convert potential followers under a psychological and emotional desire to engage in the accomplishment of a mission (Burns, 1978). Through actions 1-01 to 1-07 listed in Table 1, the leader of the unit had established an organizational culture within his men. As an individual, he was inspired when he read the stories of bravery and unconventional wisdom demonstrated by military personnel in combat and he had the desire to convey this inspiration to his men.

His personal vision was to respond to the call that he felt from within at an early age to join the military. As a leader, he applied this vision by trying to engage with his men in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. He inspired his men by his philosophy that mistakes do happen, and these mistakes should be exploited as lessons learned about what should not be done the next time in order to avoid undesired situations. His idea was that his men, as long as they could not avoid mistakes, should use them to become better. Improvement has no limits and is mandatory, especially from mistakes that are happening in non-critical areas. Those mistakes were called "teachable moments." Under these perceptions of the SEL, the development of a vision and the view of the future would probably excite, trigger off, and convert followers under a psychological and emotional desire to act under his leadership toward the accomplishment of their mission.

The SEL during the mission acted with an attitude based on the follower's perspective. He had a natural feeling of wanting to serve other people. Consciously or naturally gifted, he put himself in their place and acted in such a way that would make them satisfied and happy. In Table 2, the actions related with servant leadership demonstrate that prior to any decision he would make, he would consider the aspect of serving his followers first.

Code 2–Servant Leadership

Action	Description	Area
2-01	"…positioned himself in front of one of his men to shield him from the blast"	A
2-02	"…moved up the enlisted ranks earning respect from his superiors and subordinates alike" p.4, line 1	A
2-03	"He had often been told he should go into politics because…he represents them well…" p.4, line 5	N/A
2-04	"…he found ways to help them discover what they wanted to become as a result of their decision to join" p.4, line 16	A
2-05	"Another distinguishing characteristic about Selden was his ability to anticipate how his actions and words would affect others" p.4, line 22	C
2-06	"...he knew when it would be more helpful to push or persuade, to be strict or to be more democratic and how the person he was working with would respond" p.5, line 3	B
2-07	"Julie would say these conflicts led Selden to look more outward and to try to understand her and others enough so that when he did interject or try to help someone, he knew them enough to know that what he would say or do would be appropriate and more accurately fit what they really needed" p.5, line 12	B
2-08	"…He would first counsel his own men before he sent them to the CO..." p.6, line 11	C
2-09	"Selden was known to make more recommendations for awards and promotions to the CO than any other leader" p.6, line 14	C
2-10	"Selden was known for recommending lighter punishments were he saw a need to maintain morale over creating frustration among the enlisted ranks" p.6, line 21	A
2-11	"Few would ever disappoint Selden for a second time" p.7, line 6	A
2-12	"Selden was often with his men on combat patrols, working at the ECP, or simply spending down time with them and joking with them openly. He wanted to be approachable and would not only know the names of his men but also the names of their spouses or girlfriends" p.7, line 9	C

Table 2.   Servant Leadership Characteristics

With action 2-01 above, he implemented the phrase of Greenleaf (1970) that the servant leader is a servant first. The leadership of the unit in the case was bestowed upon a man who was a servant by nature. The mention of the relationship with his wife in action 2-07 enhances this statement. As she was talking to him, his only concern was to serve her and make her happy. He was focused on what would be the most appropriate thing to say or do in order to fit

with what she really needed. The same attitude did not happen strictly with his spouse but, as the narrator says, it happened with other people from his environment as well.

Through various actions, he evoked respect from superiors and subordinates alike. In our nature, we get respect from supervisors as long as we serve them, but getting respect from subordinates as well demonstrates the greatness of the servant leader. The key to his greatness was the fact that he was seen as a servant first and then as a leader. Through the actions 2-03 to 2-06, he focused on how to communicate effectively with his men. He wanted to help them discover themselves (2-04). Even though he was a leader of a group, he spent his time by each one of his men individually, serving their desire to learn while they are there. His ability to anticipate how his actions and his words would affect the people around him demonstrates that he was putting himself in their position and was watching the world through their perspective (2-05).

Additionally, by putting himself in their position, he could recognize the appropriate way to manipulate the situation. Furthermore, he was able to comprehend how this would affect his followers (2-06). In the next three actions, 2-08 to 2-10, the SEL acted like their guardian. He served them and protected them against risky choices or actions. He counseled them before he sent them to the CO.

Furthermore, he recommended their punishment but whenever it was feasible, he proposed their rewards. The next action (2-11) reveals the cost of all the previous actions. His men would never disappoint him a second time. It was not because they had to but because they respected their leader. Respect means to be open to listen and honor each other's views, even if you disagree (Selman, 2001). As long as the SEL was open and approachable to his men by spending many hours next to them, it generated a different emotional connection between the two.

Next, the spiritual aspect of his leadership is analyzed according to the actions that he undertook toward his followers, as shown in Table 3. He served his men like a servant and his service was vital to them. "Jesus did not lead by giving out orders or by supervising. Jesus led by being a servant and serving alongside of His followers" (*Spiritual Leadership*, 2009).

Code 3–Spiritual Leadership		
Action	**Description**	**Area**
3-01	"Copies of those historic documents were among his prize possessions, and he kept them wherever he was stationed"	N/A
3-02	"For Selden, his profession was about being true to himself and to something greater than himself" p.3, line 13	N/A
3-03	"Hearing him speak about his choice to be in the military, his men would often joke saying he sounded like he was talk in about joining the ministry of defense not the Marines. He would admit it sometimes sounded this way, but he never apologized for it" p.3 line14	A
3-04	"He had often been told he should go into politics because…of his ability to communicate with his men…" p.4, line 5	A
3-05	"Selden understood that not everyone felt compelled or called to join the military" p.4, line 15	A
3-06	"He was known to ask questions like: As you think about your life, who has helped you become who you are today? And What do you want to become regardless of what happens in your life? He believed these questions helped his marines discover who they are and begin to chart a course for themselves" p.4, line 17	C
3-07	"While away from home he often asked his men when the last time was that they spoke to their family…" p.5, line 18	C
3-08	"…when he saw the opportunity to praise his men, Selden would recommend awards and promotions to the CO" p.6, line 12	C
3-09	"What was often not known was that Selden would later meet alone with the enlisted man who received a lighter punishment and tell him "I know who you are, and I know what you are capable of"" p.7, line 2	B
3-10	"Selden was often with his men on combat patrols, working at the ECP, or simply spending down time with them and joking with them openly. He wanted to be approachable and would not only know the names of his men but also the names of their spouses or girlfriends" p.7, line 9	A
3-11	"After the training Selden could sense the frustration of his men. He spoke with them frankly about their mistakes and then provided them some new strategies for facing the enemy. He inspired his men with stories, particularly his own experiences in combat…" p.10, line 7	A

Table 3.   Spiritual Leadership Characteristics

In spiritual leadership, the leader's self-awareness represents one end of the rope and his followers' spiritual side the other. As previously stated in the literature review, spirit has to do with the interpretation of what we are, who we are, and what is the purpose of our existence (Fairholm, 1997).

Through actions 3-01 to 3-10 above, the SEL excited the spiritual side of communication with his men. He created an environment where his men were willing to follow him and his instructions not simply by a "command and execute" process. He never forced them to do something against their own will. By his actions and way of thinking, he inspired them to obey him because they wanted to. With actions 3-06 and 3-09, he demonstrated his spiritual dimension of leadership as he contributed to and assisted his men in realizing who they are and why they were there. The SEL achieved a level where his men would abide by his objectives by demonstrating specific actions and not by using strict orders.

He communicated effectively by his spirit and excited the spirit of his men when he asked them about their families and whether they had news from them. Usually a normal leader is focused on his mission and keeps a distance from his subordinates. The SEL remained focused on his mission but was also aware that the key to the successful accomplishment of that mission was mainly his men. He praised them and he punished them, but he always maintained a profile of a friend as well as a leader with decisions and equitable settlements when issues arose. These actions generated trust and respect toward his men. He was important for them, he affected their performance and their morality and his presence next to them in day-to-day operations contributed to their efficient performance throughout the mission.

When a leader demonstrates such a behavior toward his followers, it is clearly not the result of simply one-day or one-month behavior; it reflects the history of that man. When we say history, we mean congruent types of leadership in dealing with similar situations (Barrett, 2007). Table 4 depicts a few attributes of the SEL's behavior that are related to his leadership based on values. If we use our values to make decisions, our decisions will be irrelevant to

our past and will be aligned with the future we anticipate. Values transcend experiences because experience is a potential situation. When we use values in decision-making, we are consciously creating the future that fits our personality.

Code 4–Values-Based Leadership		
Action	**Description**	**Area**
4-01	"Roger Selden was out with his men, working directly with them on the front lines" p.2, line 9	A
4-02	"His favorite holiday was the fourth of July" p.3, line 1	N/A
4-03	"He deeply loved the freedoms he enjoyed in the United States" p.3, line 1	N/A
4-04	"Selden was avid reader of the American history" p.3, line 3	N/A
4-05	"…a military career path was what he was meant to do in life: it was more than a duty and more than a sense of responsibility to protect and to honor" p.3, line 12	N/A
4-06	"...he felt a sense of duty and enlisted" p.3, line 19	N/A
4-07	"He loved the military, but he now felt he was being called to serve his country in a different way" p.4, line 4	N/A
4-08	"…after much discussion with his family, he had decided it was time to make the move and serve his country in a new way" p.4, line 9	N/A
4-09	"It was a routine for Selden to "order" his men to spend their time taking care of family needs" p.5, line 16	A
4-10	"Since the beginning of the current deployment, Selden felt his men needed to keep focus and engaged so they would not get destructed and discouraged with too much downtime" p.5, line 22	B
4-11	"Selden believed it was important to catch his men at their best and acknowledge it when he saw it" p.6, line 16	A
4-12	"Selden was known for recommending lighter punishments were he saw a need to maintain morale over creating frustration among the enlisted ranks" p.6, line 21	C
4-13	"In the combat zone Selden had little tolerance for lax behavior: There is a time to learn and time to perform. The combat zone is not the time for lighter punishments when avoidable mistakes are made" p.7, line 6	B
4-14	"Selden believed he and his man must continuously draw on the legacy of the Marine Corps: honor, courage, and commitment" p.7, line 12	N/A

Table 4.   Value-Based Leadership Characteristics

From the time he was a young man, he was inspired with values such as freedom, history of the country, fellowship and morality with other people. When an individual is obsessed with specific values at an early age, these values are the pillars that he will use to portray the future in the way he wants. He remains aligned with his authenticity, and through his career and his life, his actions and decisions keep him in tune with those values.

Through the actions that were highlighted from the case, the most important values the SEL based his life upon were freedom, family, honor, courage, commitment, morality, and focus on the mission. He did not use these values for his own good and improvement; he applied these values to his men through his leadership over them. He suggested that they take care of the needs of their families (4-09), he pressed them to remain focused and concentrated during their mission (4-10), he encouraged them to maintain their high morality and to assure effective performance from them (4-11 and 4-12), but overall he anticipated the accomplishment of the mission with the minimum avoidable mistakes from his men.

Lax behavior was not acceptable during combat and he distinguished time for learning from time to perform. His followers, however, did not complain about these strict decisions. They learned to be lead based on values—maybe not as many values as the SEL was based on, but they were the followers and they were supposed to learn from him by his guidance.

After analysis of the SEL's character and leadership style, other factors that have influenced the team should be examined. Prior to their deployment at the specific area, the kind of preparations that took place and whether they affected the way that the other leaders and the unit reacted after the loss of the SEL should be determined.

2. The Other Enlisted Officers

a. *General*

The outcomes of any type of leadership mainly depend on the attitude of the leader and the decisions he makes throughout the mission. Leadership, though, is a dynamic situation and balances between both the leader and the follower. In the case study, the SEL demonstrated specific attributes as presented above. However, the effectiveness of the applied leadership also depends on the compatibility of those attributes of the leader with the characteristics of the men that comprised the unit.

b. *Attributes of an HRO*

The specific unit in the case can be characterized as an HRO, as long as its mission is to operate under very trying conditions most of the time. To ensure reliability, groups of this category are obligated to adhere to practices that reduce the likelihood of low performance or failures. Some of these practices include learning and trusting each other, sharing responsibilities, ensuring team awareness, and being adaptive (Xiao & Moss, 2007). Table 5 portrays some key characteristics of the unit and other leaders that played an important role for the relationship that was established between them and the SEL.

The Unit Actions (UA)	
Action #	**Description**
UA-01	"The GCE was one with a long history in both world wars…" p.8, line 11
UA-02	"Those attached to the unit took great pride in being a part of it" p.8, line 13
UA-03	"The unit was known for its courage, honor, and holding together through challenging operations…" p.8, line 14
UA-04	"…the unit instilled a sense of purpose and high degree of excitement for their missions" p.8, line 16
UA-05	"Their mission was to oversee ground security operations, train local forces, and search out insurgents" p.8, line 18
UA-06	"By and large, the unit was prepared for their overseas deployment" p.11, line 18
UA-07	"The enlisted Marines were confident and well prepared" p.11, line 20
UA-08	• "The operation tempo has been unbelievable" • "The op tempo is as high as it has ever been" • "We are ready to execute any mission we are assigned as the theater reserve" • "We are ready for everything from sustained combat operations ashore to humanitarian relief operations and everything in between" p.11, line 21
UA-09	"They were conditioned, they were ready, and they were anxious to move out" p.12, line 5

Table 5.   Characteristics of the Unit

The first four characteristics describe the unit as a whole, demonstrating the given value and consideration the GCE had because of its history and its successful actions during difficult missions. Being a member of the GCE was a source of pride and honor for each military man. This depicts the high level of self-awareness and self-esteem of the people who made up this unit. The fifth action demonstrates the risky nature of their mission; it had multiple aspects and faced many dangers. Nevertheless, they desired this challenge and

were anxious to be deployed. The attributes UA-6 through UA-9 demonstrate they were ready to accept leadership and they had a desire for the accomplishment of any mission.

c.   The Other Officers

The GCE is one element of a Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) and includes its own headquarters staff with several sections and at least two companies. An officer designated as the Officer in Charge (OIC) was responsible for the staff of his section. Table 6 depicts the attributes and duties of those officers, and Table 7 includes the key points of their behavior after the loss of the SEL.

The Officers	
Action #	**Description**
OF-01	"The officers leading the various sections and combat elements held ultimate responsibility for the actions and activities of the individual units" p.8, line 21
OF-02	"The junior officers wanted to ensure that the unit established strong ties among members of the unit's operational elements" p.11, line 1
OF-03	"The junior officers wanted their units to operate more systematically and interdependently" p.11, line 8
OF-04	"Enlisted leaders had prepared their men with precision and exactness" p.12, line 1

Table 6.   Attributes and Duties of Officers

Other enlisted officers were also vital in the whole mission. From the phase of pre-deployment until the safe return of the unit, each individual contributed to the performance of the sections and the outcomes of the mission. Through OF-01 to OF-04, the characteristics of these officers depict what was mentioned earlier about group-oriented systems as the only way to work in a military environment. The success or failure of a mission will rarely be a consequence of individual action or performance. In a combat area a group works like a chain. But when the unexpected occurs, there is no standard

template of actions that one must undertake. The next leaders in rank have to continue the leadership procedure from the same spot that it stopped. The blast uncovered the real situation for the leaders who were next in line, as shown in Table 7.

After the blast	
Action #	**Description**
OF-05	"Section Chiefs and OICs were unsure how the unit as a whole would cope with this loss and the decreased morale, but more importantly how they would be affected and how it would affect their performance during the rest of their deployment" p.16, line 13
OF-06	"This disaster in combination with other casualties and an ambiguous return date, was an ideal environment for ineffectiveness within the GCE and it became the main concern of the leaders as evidenced for their growing lack of consideration for the locals, and disregard for safety rules" p.16, line 18
OF-07	"The junior officers were uncertain how to address the emotional issues facing the unit-no one had even considered that one of their most revealed leaders would be killed in action" p.16, line 22
OF-08	"Now they faced new questions: How would Selden's loss affect the unit? Would his loss paralyze the unit? Would a new leader be able to facilitate recovery and healing in the unit?" p.17, line 1
OF-09	"One of junior officers noted his experience: The mission did not go away with Selden's loss but it came at the lowest point in terms of morale for the unit" p.17, line 8
OF-10	"The officers and other leaders were initially unsure exactly how to address the situation to keep the unit on track and maintain all without being unemotional or too emotional about the situation and dwelling on the loss for too great a time" p.17, line 13
OF-11	"One junior officer who knew Selden fairly stated: But none of the incidents affected the entire unit at my section more than the loss of Roger, our most senior enlisted Marine" p.20, line 10
OF-12	"As a unit we handled the entire deployment well, but we had a few low points throughout –this was the one that stood out the most" p.20, line 13
OF-13	"…As a junior officer, I realized that all of the challenging training, preparation and trust in those abilities that we developed during the pre-deployment work-up were vital and necessary tools to rely upon in order to accomplish the mission. Although we feel like we took the right steps immediately following the death of Roger, it is unclear whether they really helped us to come together as a section. Perhaps we should have tapped more into the spirit de corps like Roger had done…" p.20, line 16

Table 7. Officer Behavior After the Loss of the SEL

After action OF-05 and beyond, it was discovered that the continuation of leadership had broken up. Not because the other enlisted officers were incapable or unable to undertake leadership of the unit for the rest of the mission, but because the SEL leadership style was a special issue. The trust and the communication he had with his unit was irreplaceable.

The word "uncertain" dominates through most of the actions in the table above. The other officers did not know where to start and whether to prioritize safety issues or the healing of the unit. Action OF-12 describes the unit finally made it through the mission but the incident of the loss of Selden affected everybody in the unit. The last action OF-13 summarizes the whole deployment in a few words, and the OIC of a section states that even though they made it through the mission, perhaps they should have followed the strategy of Selden and tapped more into the esprit de corps. Esprit de corps means team spirit with morality, which is the mental, emotional, and spiritual state of a person, where they both motivate people in achieving their objectives and accomplishing their mission (Clark, 1997).

3.   **The Unit**

One way to measure the effectiveness of leadership is the behavior and performance of the followers. A mission or an objective of an organization might not be fulfilled the way it was expected, as happened with Apollo 13 and the "Successful Failure" (Useem, 1998). However, the followers who are performing at their best levels can contribute to the success of the leadership process.

a.   *Pre-Deployment*

The literature showed that individual-oriented systems are not the only way to work in a group or a company. Most of the organizational life could be concentrated around teams and groups of people that will work together (Steers, Porter, & Bigley, 1996). In a military environment, a group-oriented system is usually the only way it will work. The success or failure of a mission will

rarely be a consequence of individual action or performance. In the combat area a group works like a chain. If one ring breaks, the situation becomes more dangerous and failure of the mission increases. Hence, when a group of people is well prepared for a high-risk environment, individuals within the group ought to have a sense of camaraderie and cohesion.

The pre-deployment workups for the mission described in the case study took nearly six months to complete before the unit had to leave their homes and families. Through this period, the unit got familiar with simulation drills that depicted the real situation, while companions in the group became their family and people on whom they relied.

Table 8 describes the actions of the unit during pre-deployment.

Pre-Deployment of the Unit	
Action #	Description
PD-01	"Throughout this six months, the unit trained as though their destination was the combat zone" p.9, line 14
PD-02	"The often dangerous and life threatening hardships early on helped them establish mission purpose" p.9, line 17
PD-03	"…they (officers) wanted to ensure that the unit established strong ties among members of the unit's operational elements. The intense training help them understand each other" p.11, line 1
PD-04	"Throughout these preparations, members of the unit identified those they could trust and rely on to support and enable them throughout the deployment" p.11, line 16

Table 8.   Behavior During Pre-Deployment of the Unit

The pre-deployment phase is basically related to the operational and psychological preparation of the unit. In reading the case study, during pre-deployment of the unit the reader realizes the procedure of preparations of the individual who will act in a high-risk environment. The unit member gets isolated from family and friends, gets familiar and cognitive about the mission and

focused on himself, he is trained to live and survive in a combat environment, and he simulates stressed situations and dangerous incidents that are supposed to put his life in danger.

All these steps affect the psychology of the soldier or the officer as he will likely be exposed to real threatening situations, which may entail catastrophes or disasters or even the loss of human life. Under these conditions, the individual becomes weak and vulnerable and seeks a prop to lead him and direct him through his mission. He can use his skills and abilities to protect himself, but he needs a leader to align him with the objectives of the mission. This connection of the leader and the follower is vital for the reliability and the effectiveness of that unit.

b.   Deployment

When the group completed the six-month training and preparations, the entire population of Marines and sailors within the unit were hoping to deploy into combat. Men were in front of the big challenge; no more simulation, no more exercises.

Morale fortitude was in the highest possible level. Real danger and high-risk situations were ahead of them. Conditions became harder and the habitation was not so comfortable.

Table 9 describes the key incidents that uncovered the psychological level of the unit during deployment and prior to the blast.

Deployment Incidents	
Incident #	**Description**
DI-01	"All the population of Marines and Sailors were hoping to deploy into combat" p.12, line 7
DI-02	"While they were not planning to be in combat,…the MAGTF wanted to be sent in the combat area of operations" p.12, line 15
DI-03	"…they were only designated as "strategic theater reserve: in the outlying areas" p.12, line 20
DI-04	"The uncertainty surrounding their deployment was exasperated when their families read the newspapers: "MAGTF in the AO" before the men in the unit even know" p.13, line 9
DI-05	"…the poor communication created a stir among the ranks" p.13, line 14
DI-06	"A few Marines had lost some level of trust in the leadership" p.13, line 17
DI-07	"They were far from home doing their duty and being proud of the difference they were making in their area of operations" p.14, line 4
DI-08	"Despite the excitement and visible accomplishments after finally setting in, the deployment began to wear on" p.14, line 19
DI-09	"…for some unknown reasons the scheduled departure was postponed" p.14, line 22
DI-10	"Complaints of the men about the extensions increased. They simply wanted to go home…" p.15, line 5
DI-11	"With decreasing morale, the men began to lose site for the mission and defy safety rules" p.15, line 7
DI-12	"As the days progressed, they lack of information on a return date and the physical and mental fatigue seemed to reach a peak when the suicide bomber killed their SEL" p.15, line 17

Table 9.   Deployment Incidents

In the short term, they did not initially plan to be in combat. However, they did their best in order to participate in the buildup of their unit. Their role was to be "strategic theater reserve" in the outlying areas. The uncertainty of their deployment exasperated them, until one day they learned from their families that they were going into the area of operations. This was a blemish on their trust in the leadership.

The reliability of superiors and the poor communication system generated an ambigous feeling about the mission. Senior staff was sending

mixed signals that resulted in some ambivalence about where they were going to be involved. This feeling affected the morale of Marines and sailors.

During this phase of analysis, all of these incidents may seem irrelevant with the leadership issues that this thesis analyzes. However, the uncertainty the unit went through up to this point, in conjunction with the delayed redeployment that followed when the mission was supposed to be completed, affected their morale and concentration. Even those who had been so motivated for combat began losing steam. By the time the blast occurred, the morale and effectiveness of the unit was adversely influenced.

c.   The Blast

Despite the undefined timetable regarding the schedule of the deployment, men anticipated that the day of return would come. Major Lee E. DeRemer said, "our mind set envisions success in spite of external constraints…solutions to dilemmas do exist and these solutions will be honorable to all parties without sacrificing the mission" (DeRemer, 2005, p. 127). The delay of redeployment affected the morality of the unit. Even if they were trained to handle any difficulties and be able to survive under unexpected situations, the limits of human nature can not always be measured. They did not expect the loss of their leader. However, the blast did occur and affected them in different ways. Table 10 describes the reaction to the blast and the new SEL.

The Blast	
Incident #	**Description**
BL-01	"…the Marine related the news and made it known that Selden did not make it. Immediately, a somber mood of disbelief filled the room" p.16, line 5
BL-02	"Given the delayed redeployment, this incident caused morale and motivation to dip even further" p.16, line
BL-03	"The incident itself only lasted a few seconds, but the consequences of the incident had great potential to create additional adverse impacts on performance and behavior for the remainder of the extended deployment" p.16, line 15
BL-04	"One of the key tensions was the need for grieving coupled with the need to maintain an operational tempo at a level commensurate with the mission at hand" p.17, line 4
BL-05	"The new SEL arrived a week later. His recepton was rather cold. Regardless of his years of experience, he was not a member of the team" p.17, line 19
BL-06	"He had not trained with the unit and had not established the same rapport" p.17, line 20
BL-07	"He was nothing to us. He did not even compare with SEL Selden. He simply filled a position and had really no leadership influence in the unit" p.17, line 21

Table 10.   Unit Reaction to the Blast and New SEL

The unit had already suffered the psychological pressure of the uncertainty of redeployment. They did not have a timetable for the arrival of the next unit that would substitute them. Under this uncertainty and operating in the combat zone, their morale had declined.

In addition to this, the blast unexpectedly occurred in just a few short seconds. The consequences, though, would be forever engraved in their memories. When glass is broken, even if it is subsequently repaired, the rift in the lute will never been erased. The new SEL was in the area within a few days of the blast, but it was not possible to recover and heal from the previous situation. The inevitable comparison with the previous SEL was an insurmountable obstacle for the unit to accept the new leader. Through actions BL-05 to BL-07 in Table 10, the situation was portrayed as anticlimactic. The blast had changed everything, and recovery seemed to be hard to achieve.

B.   CONCLUSIONS

The SEL, through the analysis process, proved to be a gifted person as long as he demonstrated vital personal characteristics and many attributes of an empathetic leader. Without using many words or voice communication, he brought his men together only by his actions. He was a servant leader, too, and always put his men and the mission before himself. If he had to, he put his men above the mission. He anticipated the well-being of his unit, and consequently the success of every task was inevitable. The inherent style of empathy made him important to others. He was a transformational leader who offered vision to his unit and motive to strive to achieve their objectives. Through spirit, he inspired them toward this vision, and based on his values he guided them quietly to the accomplishment of the mission.

The unexpected loss of the SEL uncovered a few points for the value of empathetic leadership in HROs. All the other leaders, even if they were equally as experienced and capable as the SEL, were uncertain how to lead the unit until the end of the extended deployment. These men had been led with values and vision, and had served their former leader from an intrinsic desire for action and mission accomplishment. They could not act the same with the new SEL; they could not accept strict orders, and just obey them. Emotional commitment was also vital for them in order to be effective.

Despite the tragedy, they finally made it through. Sadly, the loss of the SEL was the most important incident of their mission. The whole case can serve as a tool for anyone who currently acts, or probably will act, in environments of possible upheaval and disarray.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A. GENERAL

Trust and respect among the members of a team are important in any organization. Interpersonal trust can positively affect the accomplishment of a mission by improving the relationship and communication among all the members (leaders and followers) of teams facing threats or crises (Powley & Nissen, 2009). Research on high reliability organizations identified three basic goals that HROs pursued in order to enhance their reliability:

- HROs aggressively seek to know what they don't know;

- HROs design their reward and incentive systems to recognize costs of failures as well as benefits of reliability; and

- HROs consistently communicate the big picture of what the organization seeks to do, and try to get everyone to communicate with each other about how they fit in the big picture (Roberts & Bea, 2001).

However, many times unexpected situations affect the moral and the concentration of people in those teams. Even if they are well prepared and maintain a high level of readiness and awareness, they become spectators of tragic incidents, which inevitably influence their emotional situation and the outcome of the mission. Incidents of this kind become obstacles that are usually hard to overcome.

B. REVIEW

The themes derived from the case "Leading Healing in a Broken Unit" highlighted actions and behaviors that portrayed attributes of a good leader; not only from the aspect of how to lead effectively but mainly from the aspect of how

the followers perceive and accept such leadership. The SEL used a unique method to align his followers with the objectives of their mission: he applied effective communication and he electrified their emotions.

One of the problems of leadership in an organization is that people fail to communicate with each other. According to Clark (1997), "effective communication occurs only if the receiver understands the exact information or idea that the sender intended to transmit." As a receiver, we may consider here both the leaders and the followers. The followers also transmitted messages and the SEL was able to receive those messages and interpret them in their "language," or more specifically in their way of thinking. Through that kind of mutual communication, the SEL acted by empathy for his men and hence, they developed the highest level of respect and faith toward their leader without following any voice instructions or directions.

During the pre-deployment phase, after standard preparation and training, members of GCE became a strong united team. They were ready and "thirsty" to act in a high-risk environment. Nevertheless, because of the SEL's leadership style, they also developed an emotional interaction; empathy was the key point in their relationship. This empathetic relationship was the basic concept discussed throughout this thesis. When the SEL achieved in balancing the needs of the followers with the requirements for successful accomplishments of the mission, it served to endear him toward his men. The SEL was a person whose nature would always put his men above anything else. Without them, he could not make it. The key was that he realized the value of his followers early on.

Many leaders lead blindly toward their objectives. Leadership, though, is a dynamic relationship and a leader cannot lead strictly by the book. The SEL was a leader whose style was based on values as a man, and as a military leader. He thoroughly considered the people that he had to work with. He respected them, he praised them, and he accepted them for their weaknesses and their strengths. He applied a servant-leadership framework where everyone was part of a team

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working toward the same goal. According to an article from Trinity Western University about "Servant Leadership as a way of life" (2000), in a framework of servant-leadership:

> People play different roles at different times, according to their expertise and assignment, rather than being positioned by their rank or title. Enabling each member to play a meaningful leadership role generates a receptive climate and an infectious energy that helps the organization to fulfill its shared mission. Leaders recognize that it is better for them to be wounded than for their followers to suffer.

The SEL served his men and protected them against any threat. These people were key to the accomplishment of the mission. He would put his own life as a shield to protect his men, and in the end that is what he did when he had to.

The unexpected blast uncovered many weaknesses within the unit. The tragedy affected all the people in the area, but the largest impact was on the already haggard soldiers of the SEL's unit who operated with no timetable of return. After the blast, there was no control or leadership. The soldiers were familiar with the style and spirit of their former SEL and could not accept their new SEL easily. The other leaders could not handle the situation with certainty and did not know where to start. Finally, they completed their mission but the gap from the loss of their leader will remain unbridgeable forever in their memories.

C.   EMPATHY COMPETENCIES

In this section, the findings of the analysis are related to empathy competencies. Empathy is an attribute that when possessed by leaders helps achieve a strong relationship with their followers, and emotional communication and mutual respect between both. Empathetic leadership does not have to be applied directly. Leaders who base their decisions on transformational style of leadership exhibit the following characteristics:

- They start leading with vision.
- They appeal to followers beyond any self-interest.

- Leaders and followers praise one another into higher levels of motivation and morality.

One illustration of this type of leadership was demonstrated in Table 1 by action 1-08: "during pre-deployment period Selden was often seen encouraging his men and motivating them when they felt dejected and beaten" (p.10, line 4). From this early phase of preparation, he demonstrated his intentions of the unit to be a strong team with a feel of family where everybody cares about the others.

A leader may also act with servant leadership where he serves others and motivates them toward specific objectives by mutual communication. He listens to them and makes them feel comfortable in the unit. He praises them and always aims to keep them satisfied and motivated in order to be willing to contribute to the accomplishment of the mission. Servant leadership characteristics are:

- Listen and empower rather than dominate and tell.
- Help men identify their higher purpose.
- Focus on what is important in order to build a sense of community with the men.

One example of this type of leadership was demonstrated in Table 2 by action 2-04: "he found ways to help them discover what they wanted to become as a result of their decision to join the military" (p.4, line16). When a sailor or a Marine accepts these kinds of questions or discussions from a superior officer, he understands that he is valuable and a member of a great team. His leader inspires him and he feels emotionally committed to accomplish any task or mission because he feels an intrinsic desire to do so.

Spiritual leadership is another competency of empathy. This kind of leadership allows the leader to establish effective communication not only by voice but also with spirit and actions that electrify the feelings of his men. Some characteristics of spiritual leadership are:

- When somebody does work, it is for the world around him rather than for himself.

- Integrity is the protection of an individual.

- The leader should create a compelling spirit.

One illustration of this type of leadership was demonstrated in Table 3 by action 3-06:

> He was known to ask questions like: As you think about your life, who has helped you become who you are today? In addition, what do you want to become regardless of what happens in your life? He believed these questions helped his marines discover who they are and begin to chart a course for themselves. (p.4, line 17)

By asking those questions, he made his Marines feel a deeper sense of their role in the conflict. When their leader helped them reflect on who they were and why they were there, he influenced them and directed them through positive thinking about their unit and the objectives of the GCE.

The last competency of empathy is leadership based on values and rules that a leader believes and takes into consideration when he has to make a decision. Some characteristics of a leader with this style are:

- They lead in a way that is guided by a purpose.

- Leading by values creates a future that fits with that leader's personality.

- Leading people with the same values maximize effectiveness.

The most important attribute the SEL displayed in the case was the action 4-13: "In the combat zone Selden had little tolerance for lax behavior: There is a time to learn and time to perform. The combat zone is not the time for lighter punishments when avoidable mistakes are made" (p.7, line 6). Even if he applied empathetic leadership and made his men feel like members of a family where everybody cares about the others in the group, he never condoned lax behavior from his soldiers. The unit members knew that and respected that because they

knew what kind of person the SEL was. He would not do that just to punish them. There were safety rules to keep them alive and active. If anybody disobeyed them, he knew the consequences.

Under all these competencies, the common denominator is empathy. By leading from the aspect of the followers, that leader is able to see the situation though their eyes. When he achieves that, he knows what they can and cannot do. Hence, he exploits his men in the appropriate way in order to achieve best results. This is a vital benefit for those leaders who lead by empathy.

D.   DEVELOPING EMPATHY

Empathy may not be a gift that we can acquire any time we want, but rather a neuroscience issue. Researchers claim that the existence of empathy in our activities is a matter of brain structure (Henry, 2009). Some people seem naturally gifted in empathizing, while other people seem to be incapable of showing empathy. However, empathy can be developed in any character with strong effort and discipline (Henry, 2009). The case study showed two ends of a situation where the first displayed empathetic leadership in the highest possible level from the SEL and the other with other enlisted leaders who did not know what to do after the blast. Developing empathy is vital when the circumstances are appropriate.

If a leader believes in empathetic leadership, he can develop empathy competencies by finding the most appropriate attribute that will fit with his character. Leadership based on values and servant leadership toward the followers are two ways in which leadership can be applied. The SEL in the case study apparently was a gifted man because he had empathy in his style by nature and he knew how to apply it without going too far. Figure 3 depicts the distribution of the key points of the character and the attitude of the SEL as he led his men during that mission. The horizontal axis represents the attributes of leadership and the vertical axis represents the level of effectiveness of these attributes.
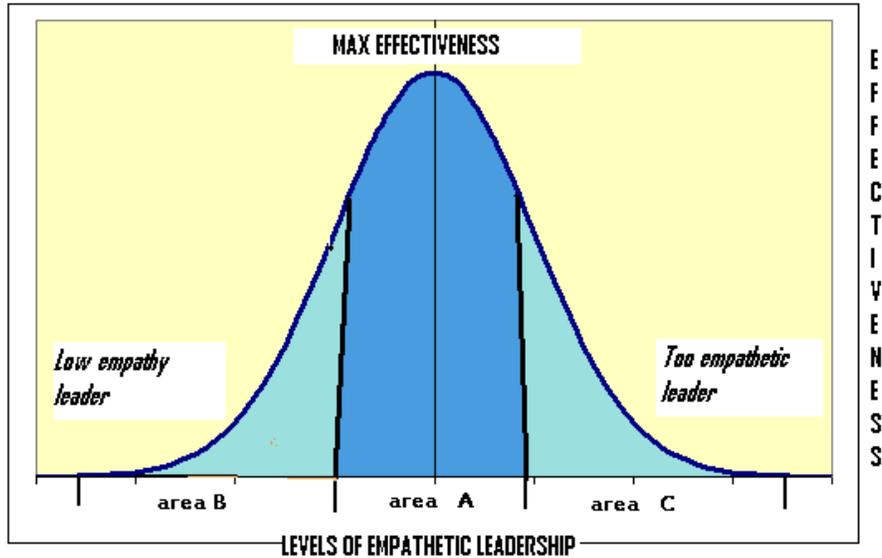
Figure 3.   Effectiveness of Empathetic Leadership

This diagram demonstrates the ideal of empathetic leadership. It categorizes the characteristics we found during the analysis and depicts those in a normal distribution diagram. Areas A, B, and C represent the group of actions that the SEL displayed and are categorized according to the level of empathy that was applied. The vertical axis depicts the effectiveness from each one of them. Area A represents the best attributes of an empathetic leader, which are supposed to entail a high level of effectiveness. Too much empathy can cause problems in a unit because there are limits in behavior and in relationships, and too much empathy may be interpreted as closeness and loss of respect toward the leader. For example, action 2-08 represents how the SEL consulted his men prior to sending them in the CO. The SEL belonged to the administration team and was not supposed to advise his men of the CO. Furthermore, less empathy also can cause difficulties. Other enlisted leaders in the case could not react in any way after the blast because the unit could not synchronize with the style of leadership they tried to apply. For example, action OF-05:

Section Chiefs and OICs were unsure how the unit as a whole would cope with this loss and the decreased morale, but more importantly how they would be affected and how it would affect their performance during the rest of their deployment. (p.16, line 13)

These other leaders obviously were able to undertake the unit and lead it toward the accomplishment of the goal. They did not have the appropriate way of communicating though, because the unit at that point was acting under empathy with their leader and all the activities were based on spirit and values.

E.   CONCLUSIONS

Empathetic leadership as we saw is a dynamic relationship. Stromeyer (2009) said, "A true leader has the ability to give meaning to a crisis event and turn it into an opportunity for growth. Empathy is the key to building trust in the leader-follower relationship, and is indispensable for crisis leadership and recovery today." This is especially true in the military, where discipline and hierarchy dominate in the relationships between people under specific conditions; empathy can resolve difficult issues and can amplify the achievement of hard objectives.

Generating emotions and respect for others contributes to the enhancement of team spirit and courage. A basic attribute that a leader must possess is to be aware of the appropriate conditions where application of empathetic leadership will be effective for the achievement of the organizations' objectives. This research has shown that empathy is good when the members of the group are ready to accept it and have identified those around them to support and enable them throughout any deployment. However, further analysis can be conducted regarding the consequences of applying high or low levels of empathy. Why, for example, with high levels of empathy, is there a chance of insubordination and loss of respect toward a leader? However, this is beyond the scope of this research.

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