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THESIS

**TRANSFORMING COUNTERTERRORISM TRAINING IN
THE FBI: PRESERVING INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY
AND ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

by

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March 2009

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**TRANSFORMING COUNTERTERRORISM TRAINING IN THE FBI:
PRESERVING INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY AND ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE
MANAGEMENT**

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ABSTRACT

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) remains committed to working seamlessly with its international, federal, state and local partners to counter terrorism, the number one priority of the FBI. In order to more effectively equip personnel to meet and counter the ever-evolving threat, it is critical that inefficient practices that cause counterterrorism practitioners to “recreate the wheel” are quickly transformed to promote the most efficient counterterrorism knowledge management, knowledge transfer, and training practices available. Lessons learned through both formalized training and on-the-job experience must be quickly leveraged to aid broader sectors of the FBI and partner communities in order to promote streamlined operations in combating terrorism while countering inefficient knowledge management. This research identifies and analyzes the knowledge management deficit in counterterrorism training, while examining the core influences of organizational mindset and individual mindsets, the importance of trust, and the misnomer of ‘best practices’ that must be acknowledged and overcome. Focused on the establishment of Counterterrorism Mobile Education Teams to drive the enhanced infusion of tacit counterterrorism knowledge, this research culminates in the delineation of a multi-faceted strategy comprised of recommendations to target remaining counterterrorism training gaps, to strengthen homeland security collaboration, and to combat terrorism.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its 100-year history, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has developed a strong reputation as one of the finest law enforcement agencies in the world. One critical component of this reputation emanates from the agency's ability to conduct large-scale investigations, evidence recovery, forensic analysis and extensive liaison in order to successfully investigate, locate and prosecute some of the world's most heinous criminals and national security offenders. Another critical component of this reputation is the extensive partnership of the FBI with foreign, federal, state, local, and tribal entities to fight transnational crime. The third component stems from the ability of the FBI to adapt to as well as counter emerging threats. As the FBI continues to address its number one priority of counterterrorism against a wide range of enemies who train daily to bring catastrophic harm to the United States, our citizens, and our interests, it is critical that internal FBI processes are streamlined to ensure not only the most proactive use of finite resources, but also the most efficient use these resources. Since the inception of the FBI, one of its most valuable resources has been its personnel who possess vast skill sets, honed areas of expertise, and an unwavering commitment to ensure justice.

Within the counterterrorism arena, the FBI remains committed to investigating domestic and international terrorism in order to protect our Nation and our interests. With the significant expansion of FBI personnel overseas, largely in the past two decades, the FBI has maximized partnerships with foreign and domestic agencies while expanding the breadth of proactive counterterrorism investigations occurring at the intersection of law enforcement, intelligence and military capabilities. Considering the wide range of counterterrorism (CT) training expertise developed by FBI personnel throughout the world, it is critical that the FBI better utilize this expertise to prepare more adequately a larger percentage of its workforce and its interagency partners to address the CT threat. In essence, the FBI must improve its knowledge management mechanisms to enhance the infusion of critical knowledge from its experienced personnel to its less experienced

personnel. Partly in response to recommendations emanating from the National Commission on Terrorist Acts upon the United States, the FBI created and implemented a formalized Special Agent Career Path, one of which is the Counterterrorism Career Path.

This thesis is founded in the theory that the FBI CT Career Path remains in its infancy; a template primed for enhancement. Of glaring importance is the fact that the FBI CT Career Path currently fails to capitalize upon the expertise of its most experienced agents and to spread this expertise to a larger portion of the agency. Three critical courses of action would significantly enhance the CT Career Path: a major overhaul of the agent mentoring system; the development of Mobile Education Teams to provide a forum for the most experienced CT agents and analysts to share their expertise with less seasoned personnel; and the development of a robust Web-based forum such as a Center for Lessons Learned. While several versions of the aforementioned courses of action have been considered and/or implemented, substantial room for improvement remains. This thesis acknowledges the fact that effective knowledge transfer is very difficult, if not impossible, by personnel who are constantly deployed away from home or fully assigned with CT duties. Effective knowledge transfer is also plagued by the fact that the FBI remains an organization where success is more readily measured by statistical accomplishments such as arrests and convictions rather than by holistic methods to more effectively understand and address the threat by streamlining knowledge transfer and reducing inefficiency that results from “recreating the wheel.”

As evidenced by the outcomes of numerous inquiries and public opinion polls since 9/11, the American public expects the FBI to execute effectively its duties as a dual counterterrorism and domestic intelligence agency. Since 9/11, the FBI has taken significant steps to counter the threat, to include the reassignment of hundreds of personnel to CT matters; the vast expansion of overseas offices and interagency partnerships; hiring drives to employ personnel with critical skills; revisions to training curricula, to include the implementation of several Web-based/self-paced options; the establishment the Strategic Execution Team (SET) to examine, improve, and address several gaps; and marked improvements in the FBI Intranet and other technology availability to improve communications. In the realm of CT training, however, the FBI

has been only partially successful in providing necessary training to CT personnel. Due to its position as the lead CT agency and partner homeland security agency, it is critical that the FBI continue to adequately train FBI and liaison personnel with the necessary resources to accomplish the mission.

Eighteen recommendations and implementation suggestions are proposed within this thesis, aimed at enhancing the infusion of counterterrorism expertise in order to target remaining counterterrorism training gaps, to strengthen homeland security collaboration, and to maximize success in combating terrorism, as follows:

- Provide renewed emphasis on training while countering the negative mindset that exists toward training;
- Enhance administrative support for counterterrorism personnel so that a significant portion of their time is not usurped by non-related administrative duties;
- Drive people out of their comfort zones by emphasizing the importance of each and every employee sharing their knowledge and expertise in order to not only streamline efforts, but also to ensure that the FBI continues to grow into a true and dynamic ‘learning organization’;
- Develop and disseminate the ‘story’ that great change has been accomplished and continues for the right reasons;
- Capitalize on the most viable ready reserve of highly trained CT personnel, specifically the Fly Team, and facilitate their transfer to numerous Field Offices throughout the FBI upon completion of three years or more of service to the CTD Fly Team;
- Develop an Expert Registry–this registry should include up-to-date information regarding the comprehensive experience of personnel, to include investigations worked, specialized skills, as well as travel and training completed;
- Develop a comprehensive CT Training and Tracking System–this system would be an important enhancement to the Expert Registry in that it would identify the training of CT personnel, existing gaps and needs for refresher/recertification training, etc.
- Implement a CT Readiness Index–This project has been led and directed by Associate Executive Assistant Director T.J. Harrington as part of a measurement framework for the CT Career Path. The implementation of this index, in combination with an Expert Registry and an overall repository of training received and deployment experience completed by

CT personnel, will provide the strategic framework to truly delineate the strengths and weaknesses of personnel, while providing a baseline of measurement for continued change;

- Revise the Training Agent/Mentoring program;
- Utilize the Field Office Training Coordinator Program as a mechanism to promote an enhanced Training Agent/Mentoring program, as well as a forum for promoting the use of Mobile Education Teams regionally;
- Establish quarterly CT training that is interactive in nature and not solely Web-based;
- Create a robust Web-based Center for Lessons Learned;
- Spread expertise to Field Offices through the development of CT Mobile Education Teams comprised of personnel who have completed assignments to the Fly Team, Extraterritorial Squads, Office of International Operations/Legal Attaches, etc.;
- Spread organizational understanding of and, where possible, link the strategic mission, messages, services and products of such entities as CEPDU, SET and METs, as well as the Special Agent Advisory Committee, Counterterrorism Division Assistant Director's Advisory Committee, etc.;
- Link training received and shared to performance appraisals;
- Develop a mechanism to review, assess and, where appropriate, implement strategic recommendations that emanate from the studies of personnel in advanced degree programs;
- Create a unit within the Counterterrorism Division to develop and guide the implementation of the Mobile Education Teams and to assist in the development of the other proposed recommendations in concert with the Continuing Education and Professional Development Unit (CEPDU);
- Ensure utilization principles authored by Steven Kelman regarding change, particularly by leveraging personnel that are ideologically discontent with the traditional system, exposing them to early wins from the development/implementation of knowledge transfer mechanisms, and utilizing the positive feedback to activate the discontented.

Historically, the FBI has risen to meet evolving challenges, most recently by further developing itself as a dual law enforcement and domestic intelligence agency. By transforming CT training and enhancing knowledge transfer mechanisms as recommended in this thesis, the FBI would not only enhance continued efforts to achieve its critical, dual mission, but also maximize preparedness to counter the threat successfully.

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This work is dedicated to the men and women of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and our federal, state, local and international partners, whose combined efforts and personal sacrifices continue to root out terrorist threats to our Nation. I am honored to work side by side with these men and women, and to have spent 18 months at the Naval Postgraduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security, with my classmates who have devoted their lives to building interagency partnerships to lead the continual development of homeland security strategy against our nimble enemies.

CHDS faculty and staff have been exceptional, and their commitment to the excellence of the CHDS program is greatly appreciated. In addition, I would like to thank my thesis advisors for challenging me to develop the following proposal that seeks to enhance knowledge management and to promote newfound, critical knowledge transfer practices regarding counterterrorism knowledge within the FBI and beyond. Specifically, I thank FBI Supervisory Special Agent Katherine Schweit for her time and support in regard to challenging the current practices of the FBI while constructing viable options for improvement. To my advisor, Dr. Christopher Bellavita, thank you not only for your continual commitment to CHDS as the true backbone of the program, but also for your unparalleled ability to foster critical thinking and debate, making us all stronger as homeland security partners. Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Scott, who has sacrificed the most throughout this process. Balancing the challenges of this program with our FBI careers and a two-year old son has required unwavering commitment on his part, in addition to tremendous support from both of our families, for which I am truly grateful.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In its 100-year history, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has developed a strong reputation as one of the finest law enforcement agencies in the world. One critical component of this reputation emanates from the agency's ability to conduct large-scale investigations, evidence recovery, forensic analysis and extensive liaison in order to successfully investigate, locate and prosecute some of the world's most heinous criminals and national security offenders. Another critical component of this reputation is the extensive partnership of the FBI with foreign, federal, state and local entities to fight transnational crime. The third component stems from the ability of the FBI to adapt to emerging threats.

Change: it's been a staple at the FBI since its very beginning. Over the decades, we've continued to adapt and build new capabilities to deal with wave after wave of emerging threats—the violent gangsters of the '20s and '30s. . .the Axis agents of World War II. . .the mobsters of the 1950s and beyond. . . the Soviet Spies of the Cold War. . .the financial and corporate hucksters of the rising global economy. . .and more recently, domestic and international terrorists.¹

Training is a core element in the foundation of FBI success. The FBI has a long tradition of providing exceptional training to its law enforcement partners through a variety of highly regarded courses offered at both the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, and at several locations overseas. Similarly, the rigorous 21-week training program required to become a sworn Special Agent of the FBI is another respected curriculum. With the ever-increasing advent of the terrorist threat throughout the past decades, however, the FBI has been unable, to date, to adjust procedures to provide adequate counterterrorism (CT) training to the majority of its personnel. For many years, despite the inadequacies in formal CT training, fundamental law enforcement training and on-the-job experience have allowed a small percentage of the Special Agent

¹ "Training," www.fbi.gov/aboutus/transformation/training.htm.

population assigned to CT matters to successfully conduct numerous high-profile, complex CT investigations worldwide, yet the stakes were clearly elevated by the terrorists on 9/11/2001.

Partly in response to recommendations emanating from the National Commission on Terrorist Acts upon the United States, the FBI created and implemented a formalized career path for Special Agents. This career path includes the assignment of Special Agents to Intelligence, Counterterrorism, Counterintelligence, Cyber, Criminal or Science/Technology tracks.² Still in its developmental stages, the career path is structured to allow agents to obtain a specialty designation in one of the six designations upon completion of specialized training and on-the-job experience during a five-year period.

The Counterterrorism (CT) Career Path is the foundation of what currently exists as a draft of the *Counterterrorism Developmental Plan*, comprised of four stages as follows:³

- Stage I: New Agent Training
- Stage II: Post-New Agent Training to Three Years
- Stage III: Three to Five Years
- Stage IV: Five Plus Years

Each stage of the draft plan involves on-the-job experiences, Web-based and classroom-based training, and core competency training. A second component of the Counterterrorism Career Path may evolve from what currently exists in draft format as a Counterterrorism Readiness Index. This index is a proficiency scale based on points gathered to place an agent in the red, yellow, or green stages of proficiency. Another component within the development of the CT Career Path included the September 2007 implementation of a six-week specialized Basic Counterterrorism curriculum beyond the CT training received by New Agent Trainees at Quantico for agents recently designated to the CT Career Path. At present, however, neither the component elements of the four

² Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI Responds to Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Acts upon the United States, Press Release* (Washington, D.C.: FBI, July 22, 2004), <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel04/pressrel072204.htm>.

³ FBI Science and Technology Division, *Draft Career Path* (Washington, D.C.: FBI, 2007).

stage CT Developmental Plan nor the CT Readiness Index address methods to preserve institutional memory or to infuse the expertise of its experienced personnel in Stage IV to its personnel in lower stages.

Since the number one priority of the FBI is counterterrorism, to include the prevention of terrorist attacks, it is critical that gaps in knowledge transfer and training are quickly addressed in order to more effectively equip personnel to meet and counter the threat. Ignoring these gaps has the potential to cause very negative implications in the realm of U.S. homeland security. As terrorists continue to train daily to bring catastrophic harm to United States citizens and interests worldwide, the FBI can no longer afford to be plagued by “recreating the wheel.” Lessons learned through both formalized training and on-the-job experience must be quickly leveraged to aid broader sectors of the FBI and partner communities in order to promote streamlined operations in combating terrorism while countering inefficient knowledge management. Failing to achieve this goal makes the FBI and interagency homeland security efforts less effective. As a result, the FBI must devise and implement a strategic plan to enhance and maximize the CT training available to its personnel by leveraging knowledge gained in the field, sharing it with additional personnel, and simultaneously enhancing core capacities.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

Considering the wide range of CT expertise developed by FBI personnel throughout the world, how does the FBI better utilize this expertise to prepare more adequately a larger percentage of its workforce and its interagency partners to address the threat? How may the FBI employ knowledge management to infuse critical knowledge from its experienced personnel to its less experienced personnel?

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

While substantial literature exists concerning preservation of institutional memory, knowledge acquisition, and knowledge management, it is applicable only indirectly in the homeland security arena, particularly about the entrenched tactics, techniques and procedures of the FBI. As a result, it is evident that a review and synthesis

of this broad literature is critical in building a newfound template that is directly applicable to homeland security efforts, particularly within the FBI counterterrorism arena.

1. Literature on Maximizing and Preserving Institutional Memory

Maximizing or institutionalizing expertise within the field of homeland security remains an exception rather than the rule. Since lessons learned are often not adequately institutionalized, agencies confront the same issues on a recurrent basis. As delineated by John Coffey and Robert Hoffman in the *Journal of Knowledge Management* in 2003, “Institutional memory loss is a significant problem that can impact an organization’s ability to advance its mission successfully, its ability to avoid making the same mistakes it made in the past, and its ability to leverage the accomplishments of departing employees.”⁴ As revealed in the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, it is vital that the U.S. government “lay the foundations and build the institutions and structures we need to carry the fight forward against terror and help ensure our ultimate success.”⁵ The FBI recognized the critical nature of capitalizing upon the skills of its personnel in the *FBI Strategic Plan 2004–2009* as follows: “Breaking needs down to their most basic elements, the key competitive difference in the 21st Century will be people. It will not be process. It will not be technology. It will be people.”⁶

While the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* champions the need to foster intellectual and human capital, it focuses on the development of a pool of counterterrorism experts without delineating the need for preserving institutional memory.⁷ Similarly, the *FBI Strategic Plan 2004-2009* recognizes the need to establish a

⁴ John W. Coffey and Robert R. Hoffman, “Knowledge Modeling for the Preservation of Institutional Memory,” *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 7 no. 3, (2003): 1, <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/Insight/ViewContentServlet?Filename=Publiched/Emerald.html>.

⁵ President George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2006), 1, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nsct/2006/nsct2006.pdf>.

⁶ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI Strategic Plan 2004-2009* (Washington, D.C.: FBI, 2003), n.p. <http://www.fbi.gov/publications/strategicplan/strategicplantext.htm>.

⁷ President George W. Bush, *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, 21.

‘preeminent workforce’ through human capital capability,⁸ yet excludes mention of the institutional memory component that is critical in ensuring this reality. To date, the most relevant source uncovered concerning the need for institutionalizing counterterrorism knowledge within the FBI emanates from the Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of the Inspector General (OIG). OIG recommended that the FBI “issue a policy on and develop a system for capturing and disseminating lessons learned from counterterrorism incidents, operations, and exercises.”⁹ An October 1, 2002 Press Release by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in response to the OIG report indicated that the FBI would accomplish the following: 1) institute a case review system to learn from past investigations; and 2) establish a working group, chaired by the Deputy Assistant Director from the Criminal Investigative Division, to implement this system and analyze lessons learned. Considering the fact that the case review system and working group results are not fully available to the organization within the CT realm, there is continued room for improvement.

As the FBI examines available avenues to expand institutional memory, it is clear that several factors must be overcome to ensure success. One of the most daunting barriers to the implementation of knowledge acquisition techniques involves the reality that, “knowledge acquisition methods can consume large amounts of time of busy experts, and take them away from their main tasks. It is difficult to convince time-pressed employees to record information in an ongoing fashion, which mediates against the approaches that require ongoing collection of information.”¹⁰ Taking this one step further, such change mandates a shift in the culture and mindset of FBI counterterrorism personnel. “FBI agents and managers have long measured their success on arrests,

⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI Strategic Plan*, n. p.

⁹ Office of the Inspector General, *A Review of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Counterterrorism Program: Threat Assessment, Strategic Planning, and Resource Management*, Report No. 02-38, Executive Summary Redacted and Unclassified (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2002), 8, <http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/doj/oig/fbi02.sum.html>.

¹⁰ Coffrey and Hoffman, “Knowledge Modeling,” 2.

prosecutions, and convictions, standard benchmarks for law enforcement investigative activities. These traditional measures are largely irrelevant to the prevention mission in terrorism.”¹¹

2. Literature on Knowledge Management

Homeland security knowledge management was examined by Deidre Walker in 2005 in a thesis entitled, *Homeland Security Knowledge Management for Local Law Enforcement in the National Capital Region.*” While this template provides important insight into homeland security knowledge management, it does not specifically relate to the preservation of institutional memory as it relates to CT matters. Relating knowledge management techniques, specifically the preservation of institutional memory, to counterterrorism knowledge will require substantial innovation and flexibility. In reality, CT knowledge is very difficult to quantify: it often emanates from unique experiences that cannot be separated from the psychology and unpredictable nature of human behavior.

David J. Snowden, founder of the Cynefin Center, whose studies reveal several techniques for knowledge management, has authored extensive literature on knowledge management. In his article titled, “Managing for Serendipity or Why We Should Lay Off ‘Best Practice’ in KM,” he delineates how best practice techniques may not be best suited for knowledge management because they are not forward leaning in promoting enhanced decision making or in creating environments for innovation.¹² The utilization of “best practices” has become a commonly discussed and more regularly implemented tool in the realm of homeland security, particularly within the FBI. When the research of Snowden, however, is extrapolated to the FBI, it sheds new light on the fact that tools other than “best practices,” may be more effective vehicles for enhancing knowledge management within the FBI.

¹¹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI Strategic Plan*, n.p.

¹² David J. Snowden, “Managing for Serendipity or Why We Should Lay Off ‘Best Practice’ in KM,” http://www.cognitive-edge.com/ceresources/articles/39_Managing_for_Serendipity_final.pdf.

As delineated above, substantial literature exists in the realms of maximizing and preserving institutional memory, as well as knowledge management, yet the application of this literature within the homeland security arena remains largely new and unsubstantiated. Synthesizing this literature as it relates to homeland security CT efforts within the FBI, to identify and address existing gaps, will result in the creation of an innovative model for infusing CT knowledge from experienced to newer personnel to maximize FBI and partner preparedness to effectively counter the threat.

D. ARGUMENT

As evidenced by the significantly larger number of agents working CT matters, the increase in the number of interagency Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF) throughout the country, the dramatic rise in the number of FBI Legal Attaché offices overseas, and the initiation of a targeted, CT Career Path for Special Agents, the FBI has undergone momentous change since 9/11 to better prepare to meet the threats and to address the primary counterterrorism mission of the FBI. With the human resources in place, however, now the FBI must adapt its training procedures and mold its CT Career Path to better equip these counterterrorism personnel.

This thesis is founded in the theory that the FBI CT Career Path remains in its infancy; a template primed for enhancement. Of glaring importance is the fact that the FBI CT Career Path currently fails to capitalize upon the expertise of its most experienced agents and to spread this expertise to a larger portion of the agency. Three critical courses of action that would significantly enhance the CT Career Path: a major overhaul of the agent mentoring system; the development of Mobile Education Teams to provide a forum for the most experienced CT agents to share their expertise with less experienced personnel; and the development of a Web-based forum such as a Center for Lessons Learned.

Revamping the agent mentoring system is the first step in building the CT Career Path to preserve institutional memory and enhance knowledge management from the ground up. Currently, new agents are assigned a “training agent” as a mentor upon reporting to their first Field Office. Providing a forum for experienced input by a training

agent for the duration of the two year probationary agent period is a strong concept. In reality, however, there is significant variation in the effectiveness of the training agent/new agent pairing based on a variety of different factors, to include: 1) how the personalities interact; 2) how well the training agent is able to balance a demanding investigative schedule with the time needed to mentor and train; and 3) how adept the training agent is at infusing knowledge regarding investigation, source development, and administrative requirements.

The development of Mobile Education Teams (MET) is a second step, and arguably, the most critical one, in bolstering the CT Career Path to preserve institutional memory and enhance knowledge management within the FBI. Particularly in the counterterrorism arena, this tool is underutilized in the FBI. This tool has the potential to provide great benefit, not only for the most experienced CT investigators, but also for the less experienced ones. Currently, the FBI is faced with a core of experienced CT investigators and analysts that have traveled worldwide to conduct large-scale counterterrorism investigations, some of whom have spent 75% to 100% of the calendar year deployed. Continued deployment at this rate is virtually impossible, leaving a wealth of CT experience ripe for utilization on a MET to provide a mechanism to share this knowledge while reducing the time away from home. This thesis proposes the initial implementation of two METs, housed within the Counterterrorism Division, comprised of agents and support personnel with extensive CT investigative deployment experience, and dedicated to the development of forward-leaning, flexible curricula to identify and address varying gaps in knowledge infusion.

A third significant step in developing the CT Career Path involves the development of Web-based applications modeled after tools developed by homeland security partners, such as the U.S. Army Center for Lessons Learned and the U.S. Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned. Currently, the FBI has made progress in developing an FBI Center for Lessons Learned. This web-based forum continues to be developed through SharePoint technology for the sharing of CT knowledge. When fully implemented, it will be one critical step in maximizing the infusion of knowledge while minimizing antiquated learning processes.

The further development of the CT Career Path in order to build a proactive CT Developmental Plan will enable the FBI to strengthen the knowledge base of its counterterrorism personnel while benefiting from the expertise of its most experienced personnel. Additionally, the FBI will create vast opportunities to streamline the learning process and capitalize upon tried and true investigative tools to ensure that lessons learned are not lessons ignored. Evidence has been collected through extensive research and interview, as well as analysis of narratives and various best practices. Through this combination of factors, a tailored, newfound model for knowledge management within the FBI will be accomplished.

E. SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

1. Significance to the Literature

As research to date has shown, the specialized and entwined missions of the FBI, as a critical international and domestic CT agency and a domestic intelligence agency, are unique to other agencies. With limited literature regarding the infusion of knowledge in the counterterrorism arena, this thesis proposes the combination of a variety of methods to emphasize and maximize effective knowledge transfer. This combination of methods will result in the creation of a newfound strategic document, which can be used as a reference tool for a wide variety of homeland security entities as collective efforts are made to improve knowledge management and transfer to most effectively meet and counter the terrorism threat.

2. Significance to Future Research Efforts

While this research is aimed at greatly strengthening the knowledge base and success of investigative personnel working CT matters within the FBI, it is only one stepping stone in a continuous effort to build capacities and partnerships to more effectively combat and dismantle the terrorist threat. This research will culminate in a product that will be one of the first templates for consideration by the FBI. As the CT

arena is ever changing, it will be a template that documents existing material, offers viable solutions within the current environment, and provides a foundation for further research needed to meet evolving threats.

3. Significance to the Immediate Consumer

As the immediate consumers of this research, the FBI Counterterrorism Division and FBI Human Resources Division will have a proposed model and recommended strategies to ensure the enhanced preservation of institutional memory and the strengthening of overall core training of the FBI CT Special Agent population. Infusing knowledge from more experienced to less experienced personnel is critical not only within the complex CT arena, but also within each and every division of the FBI, which is the lead agency for all CT investigations. Even if this policy recommendation is implemented only within the FBI, it will have an equally dramatic effect on the CT preparedness of many of the partner federal, state and local agencies that work and train side-by-side with FBI personnel on CT matters, to include Task Force Officers on the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Forces throughout the United States.

4. Significance to Homeland Security Practitioners and Leaders Nationally

This research seeks to provide a timely template that will propose viable strategies that may be implemented not only within the FBI but, possibly, on a wider scale within the homeland security arena. While the FBI is one of many partners in United States Intelligence Community (USIC) CT efforts, it retains primary jurisdiction in the United States and abroad for acts or attempted acts of terrorism perpetrated against U.S. citizens and U.S. interests. Historically, the FBI has played a leadership role in providing training to international, federal, state and local partners within the law enforcement arena. Taking this one step further, the FBI is presented with a challenge and an opportunity to again lead the way in providing premiere, necessary, and unparalleled training not only to its own personnel, but also to its partners in this multi-agency, international counterterrorism effort.

F. METHOD

The aforementioned literature review indicated there is little available research regarding knowledge preservation from experienced to less experienced homeland security CT practitioners, specifically within the FBI. This underdeveloped literature, therefore, requires a qualitative approach that will identify gaps, interpret plausible solutions, some of which are utilized by partner agencies, and formulate recommendations for implementation.

In order to identify methods of knowledge preservation utilized by other entities, case studies and interviews will be conducted. Contributors will include various sectors of the FBI, to include Executive Management within the Counterterrorism Division and the Training Division, expert CT investigators, and Department of Defense personnel with oversight of Web-based networks such as the U.S. Army Center for Lessons Learned and the U.S. Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned. Contributors will be asked to gauge the impact of a variety of knowledge management tools and their efficacy in preserving institutional memory and maximizing knowledge management. Tools such as mentoring systems, formalized vs. on-the-job training, the use of Mobile Education Teams, and the use of Web-based training and databases will be examined.

While the aforementioned data will be qualitative in nature, it will be derived from experienced personnel who are well aware of extraneous, yet often constraining factors such as budgets, resource allocation, and personnel issues within the homeland security arena. Considering these critical factors, when this data is analyzed and applied to the CT Career Path and CT Developmental Plan, a viable strategy or road map will be proposed that can be implemented by the FBI to strengthen its CT work force, comprised of FBI and partner agency personnel.

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II. IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT DEFICIT IN COUNTERTERRORISM TRAINING

A. ELEMENTS OF PRE 9/11 TRAINING

In order to understand the CT training challenges facing the FBI, one must examine the pre-9/11 training opportunities for Special Agents working such matters. Prior to 9/11, all Special Agents completed 16-weeks of training at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, including subject matter training in each of the investigative areas under the jurisdiction of the FBI, as well as legal training, firearms, defensive tactics, practical exercises, computer training, evidence recovery, and basic forensics. During this training, agents were provided with approximately 24 hours of combined CT and counterintelligence (CI) instruction. While at the FBI Academy, agents received transfer orders to their first Field Offices, as well as assignments to particular squads and investigative disciplines.

Regardless of their assigned investigative area, all new agents who reported to a Field Office were probationary agents for a period of two years from their entry-on-duty date. During this period, each agent was required to gain on-the-job experience in a variety of tasks, to include exposure to cases both within and outside of their assigned discipline, as well as experience in serving subpoenas, drafting affidavits, conducting searches and arrests, and testifying in court. A “training agent” was assigned to help guide each probationary Agent through the process. It should be noted that rarely was significant guidance provided to either the “training agent” or the probationary agent as to what the expectations of each position were. This disparate program resulted in a wide range of training methods and the effectiveness of the new agent training program.

Once assigned to CT matters within a Field Office, agents competed for available training, often through a panel selection process, rather than being consistently provided with continuing training. The majority of CT training was offered by the FBI Academy or Central Intelligence Agency, both located in northern Virginia. For each available training opportunity, Field Offices were allocated a limited number of spaces, so that the

class sizes totaled approximately 40-50 students. These procedures and logistics were problematic for virtually all FBI offices outside of the Washington, DC area. The New York Field Office, for example, had in excess of five hundred Special Agents and Task Force Officers working CT matters, but was often assigned two or three spaces in a particular course. The Basic CT Course, a 40-hour training course for Special Agents and Task Force Officers, became part of the foundation for CT training. Nevertheless, availability of such training remained limited, and several personnel working CT matters were unable to attend this course for years, thereby precluding them from gaining pertinent instruction regarding the building blocks of CT casework. Part of this deficiency was addressed by the development of computer-based training to fill gaps where possible. Other training opportunities within the CT arena were available through the CIA, foreign entities, and regional conferences targeting specific CT matters. Obtaining CT training became very difficult, not only due to the space limitations and lack of available formalized training, but also due to the workload that prevented agents from gaining the necessary approval to leave their investigative duties at their Field Offices even briefly. Without a central repository for monitoring CT training, what transpired was the very uneven dispersal of training; some agents were fortunate to obtain several courses, while the majority was exposed to little or none.

Another critical element of training in the CT arena comes from on-the-job experience. Attending courses and reading academic materials are vital, but they often do not provide adequate insight into the intricacies of CT work equal to that of being within the arena, face to face with suspected or known terrorists. This experience comes only through the crafting of investigative and debriefing strategies with the goals of not only securing information to prevent future attacks, but also bringing these subjects to justice through prosecution. While training and academic expertise are important in forming a solid understanding of culture and history, they provide only the foundation of knowledge that must be then successfully molded in relation to the particular personal history and personality of the suspect in order to be successful in reaching the aforementioned end states.

Prior to 9/11, on-the-job experience was gained often through the conduct of numerous large-scale CT investigations in high threat arenas, resulting in the development of substantial CT expertise. The examples are numerous, but a few of the most publicized complex CT investigative and evidence recovery successes include the 1993 successful worldwide manhunt and prosecution of Mir Amal Kansi, who shot and killed two USG employees and wounded three others as they attempted to report to work at CIA Headquarters in Langley, Virginia; the 1996 bombing of Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia; the 1998 bombings of the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and the 2000 bombing of the U.S.S. Cole in Aden, Yemen. These CT investigative and evidence-recovery operations were accomplished largely through the efforts of specialized squads and response teams within the FBI. The specialized squads are referred to as Extraterritorial Squads, tasked with addressing CT and other investigative matters affiliated with a designated area of the world. Naturally, agents developed vast expertise regarding terrorist organizations and operations endemic to their particular region of focus. These agents serve not only as case agents, but also frequently fill collateral duty roles as members of their Field Office Rapid Deployment Team (RDT).

Comprised of a wide variety personnel, to include Special Agents, Special Agent Bomb Technicians, Evidence Recovery personnel, Intelligence Analysts, Computer Specialists, Language Specialists, Photographers, etc., RDTs are located in the Washington, DC, Los Angeles, Miami, and New York Field Offices. Each RDT is assigned response capabilities for a geographic region of the world. The personnel who serve on these RDTs as well as the Extraterritorial Squads have acquired a vast amount of CT and related investigative insight, which offers tremendous potential for further exploitation in terms of spreading this knowledge to larger segments of the FBI.

B. 9/11—AN INDICATOR OF NEEDED CHANGE

The tragic day of September 11, 2001 marked a new era in the need for organizational overhaul of the USG to meet the ever-evolving threat posed by terrorists. By successfully causing catastrophic damage on U.S. soil, terrorists ensured the

undeniable realization by the USG and the American public that there was no longer any safe haven from the threats posed to the United States, our citizens or our interests. The need for sweeping change was outlined by several entities, to include the 9/11 Commission, who criticized the FBI for lack of fluidity in the sharing of information as well as the development and dissemination of intelligence, while recommending that the FBI realign internal efforts to meet its dual mission as a federal law enforcement and domestic intelligence agency. In response to the 9/11 attacks, “in the autumn of 2001, approximately 67%, or more than 4,000 of our agents in the field who previously worked on criminal investigative matters were diverted to investigate the September 11, 2001 attacks or the subsequent anthrax attacks”¹³ to supplement the number of agents already assigned to CT matters. While these newly assigned agents were not optimally prepared to work CT investigations, which are governed by Attorney General Guidelines and other policies, they applied the 16 weeks of investigative training received as new agents at the FBI Academy, in combination with on-the-job expertise they had gained in various investigative arenas.

Shortly after 9/11, the FBI was still undergoing great change in realigning personnel to meet investigative priorities. With the significant shift of personnel from more traditional criminal matters to terrorism matters, there was little CT training available to newly assigned personnel. Unfortunately, the FBI was unable to change the antiquated, centralized training opportunities described previously, in an efficient manner. Since the FBI was not in a position to immediately address this gap nationally, several local efforts were instituted. For example, the Miami Division of the FBI proposed and implemented a one-week training program for its agents, analysts and Task Force Officers. A Miami CT Special Agent developed the idea, gained approval, and sought the assistance of a team of personnel, representing multiple agencies, to implement the training. More than 100 interagency personnel benefited directly from the training, and several others were trained subsequently through portions of the training that were brought back to other agencies and implemented there. Although similar

¹³ “Report to The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States–The FBI’s Counterterrorism Program Since September 2001,” April 14, 2004, 12, www.fbi.gov/publications/commission/9-11commissionrep.pdf.

training programs were implemented in other locations, and shared with the FBI Training Division for possible widespread distribution, resources at that time did not allow for wider implementation.

Interestingly, the FBI may have been more successful in implementing CT training for its state and local partners, as mandated by the USA PATRIOT Act, than it was for its own personnel. State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training (SLATT) was a course modeled after the “train-the-trainer” concept, in which a core of 200 personnel who received training at the FBI Academy, in turn, provided CT training to an additional 25,036 police officers within a nine-month period.¹⁴ Once again, this model represents the potential of exporting training to widespread personnel through the committed efforts of a small core of individuals.

C. THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CHANGE WITHIN COUNTERTERRORISM TRAINING

The events of 9/11, in combination with the changing nature of the widely networked Al Qaeda threat, required the FBI to overhaul its deployment readiness capabilities and training. In 2002, FBI Director Robert S. Mueller, III, testified to Congress regarding the creation of the Counterterrorism Division fly squads, currently called the Fly Team. Comprised of a cadre of 25 seasoned CT agents and four seasoned analysts, the Fly Team responds to worldwide acts of terrorism or high-profile investigations both within and outside of the U.S., often on short notice to austere and hostile environments. Fly Team overseas response occurs when there is either a U.S. nexus or a request for assistance by a foreign government. The three-fold mission of the Fly Team is worldwide crisis response, investigative support to domestic Field Offices and foreign Legal Attaché Offices, and the development of proactive strategic initiatives to fill CT gaps in under governed areas of the world that are plagued by CT activity and described in further detail below.

To continually develop and hone the critical skills needed to operate in worldwide environments, the Fly Team proposed and implemented the most comprehensive CT

¹⁴ “Report to The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States—The FBI’s Counterterrorism Program Since September 2001,” 48.

training program devised to date within the FBI, known as the Fly Away Core Training (FACT) program. FACT is a three-month, full-time, intensive training program that focuses upon the development of the following mission essential skills: 1) CT subject matter expertise and cultural training; 2) advanced interview and interrogation; 3) interagency partnership; 4) advanced tactical and personal protection skills; 5) post blast and evidence recovery and 6) language skills. FACT training includes Personnel Recovery as well as Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) training, both of which aid in preparing Fly Team personnel to operate in virtually any overseas environment.

The Fly Team is a unique and forward-thinking addition to the range of specialized entities the FBI employs to address large-scale CT investigation and response in that team members are no longer case agents who must balance full-time caseloads with unpredictable deployment schedules. As a result, on a routine basis, the Fly Team fills an expeditionary role in filling CT gaps in under governed arenas with rampant CT activity, to include strategic initiatives in such areas as the southern Philippines, the Horn of Africa, and Pakistan. To date, the many successes achieved through these proactive strategic initiatives include: enhanced partnership with and training of foreign law enforcement services; the development of confidential human sources to gain invaluable intelligence on indicted and unindicted terrorists in an effort to locate, apprehend, and bring them to justice; the identification, extensive interview, and return of U.S. citizen Daniel Maldonado to the United States, where he was tried and convicted of Material Support to Terrorism; and the identification of two \$5 Million Dollar Rewards for Justice Fugitives. Shifting gears to its role in large-scale crisis response events, the Fly Team serves as the forward deployed, responding FBI entity in order to quickly establish liaison and investigative strategy, secure any perishable evidence and, in concert with the Legal Attaché, make recommendations to FBI Executive Management regarding the feasibility of the follow-on deployment of the larger Rapid Deployment Teams or case agent personnel often assigned to Extraterritorial Squads.

Counterterrorism knowledge management is, arguably, more developed within the Fly Team than within and through any other CT entity in the FBI. Upon return from each

deployment, team members draft a comprehensive After Action Report (AAR) that delineates overseas actions, gaps, accomplishments and recommendations. These reports are used by FBI personnel to learn about best practices, lessons learned and particular areas of concern prior to additional deployments. Currently, these AARs are uploaded into the FBI Automated Case Support system, where any FBI employee may electronically retrieve them. However, with the shortfalls of this system, in comparison to what will be developed in the future as the FBI Center for Lessons Learned as a more user-friendly way to retrieve specific information, these reports currently serve a very small sector of personnel outside of the FBI Fly Team. Another knowledge transfer mechanism employed by the Fly Team involves verbal briefings to colleagues to spread innate knowledge from a small core of recently deployed personnel to a wider audience. In February 2008, based on the initiative of several team members, the Fly Team instituted a newfound knowledge transfer mechanism, centered upon a panel-based knowledge exchange wherein Fly Team personnel who had deployed to work CT matters in the southern Philippines provided comprehensive overviews, compared lessons learned and provided interactive feedback to participants. These knowledge management mechanisms provide tremendous opportunities for further exploitation, and will be further addressed concerning the recommendations to create Mobile Education Teams and a robust Web-based Center for Lessons Learned.

Another possibility for the more fluid spread of knowledge emanates from an approved but not yet implemented transfer policy for Fly Team members that have completed their minimum three-year assignment to the team. With unparalleled training achieved through FACT, in combination with relentless deployment schedules that keep personnel on the road in excess of 50% of the year, there is an enormous untapped resource to be exploited by the broad range of FBI Field Offices throughout the country. Currently, Fly Team personnel wishing to depart the team to continue working as Special Agents have only the option of transferring to the Washington Field Office, where they are reassigned to the general investigative pool, resulting in possible assignment to non-CT matters. Furthermore, Washington Field Office already possesses immense CT experience as evidenced by their active Extraterritorial Squads and Rapid Deployment

Team. Therefore, the FBI may be better served by spreading the expertise of Fly Team agents to Field Offices that lack this degree of overseas counterterrorism experience in order to serve as senior agents who can serve as mentors and bolster knowledge transfer from seasoned personnel to less seasoned personnel. Unfortunately, institutional budget constraints currently impede this revised transfer option until 2011.

Within the past five years, the FBI has made marked improvements in its overall CT training program. New agents receive enhanced CT and CI training at the FBI Academy, augmented from 52 hours¹⁵ of training on 9/11 to 61 hours of training in 2008.¹⁶ Such training is augmented by the development of a number of standardized CT courses and Web-based training now routinely available to FBI agents, as well as federal, state and local partners working on Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF). Despite these improvements, such training continues to reach a limited number of personnel.

Since 2003, the FBI has also greatly improved its CT training to more adequately prepare personnel to work overseas, at the “tip of the spear” to better understand the threat and to operate in environments that are often dangerous, hostile, or austere. While the FBI has conducted investigations in these arenas for years, it greatly augmented its presence through the deployment of personnel to the Afghanistan and Iraq Theaters of Operation, as well as to FBI Legal Attaché offices in countries including those with the most rampant terrorist activity. For approximately two years following 9/11, Agents deployed to these locations with minimal or no addition to their CT or tactical training. Since 2004, however, ten-day pre-deployment training was implemented and quickly became more successful than general CT training in that its target audience was smaller and more narrowly defined, allowing it to become a pre-requisite for deployment. Yet another example of driving change within the CT training arena occurred after President Bush requested changes to ensure the adequate combination of the domestic intelligence and law enforcement capabilities of the FBI resulting, in part, in the creation of the FBI National Security Branch (NSB) in 2005.

¹⁵ “Headline Archives: By the Numbers—FBI Transformation since 2001,” September 6, 2006, www.fbi.gov/page2/september06/numbers090606.htm.

¹⁶ FBI Training Division, Unit Chief Debbie Beebe, March 5, 2008.

The NSB encompasses the Counterterrorism Division, Counterintelligence Division, Directorate of Intelligence, Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate, and the Terrorism Screening Center. Additionally, the FBI has initiated implementation of cross-training personnel as intelligence officers as well CT agents/analysts. Such training greatly augments the wide range of skills of Special Agents, making them better prepared to apply these skills in real-world national security environments. With the creation of the NSB came plans also to enhance the Career Paths of personnel working CT matters. In this realm, CT Agents will be required to complete core and elective training courses which, at the end of five years of investigative experience in that arena, will result in obtaining a “specialty” certification. While these requirements continue to be delineated within the CT arena, they represent significant change in standardizing training and addressing previous gaps.

Several of the component divisions of the National Security Branch have created specialized units to augment the training opportunities that continue to be researched and developed in concert with the traditional Training Division of the FBI, based in Quantico, Virginia. Within the CT arena, the NSB established the Continuing Education and Professional Development Unit (CEPDU) to guide the training that will become the foundation of the CT “specialty” to be earned by agents upon the completion of five years of CT investigative work, in combination with several core-training requirements. One of the outstanding accomplishments of CEPDU was the initiation of a Counterterrorism Working Group, comprised of individually selected personnel with extensive foreign and domestic CT experience within the interagency arena to assist in making recommendations for revised CT curricula and improvements. While this group has made significant contributions, its full potential remains stymied because participants remain fully assigned to operational, analytical or supervisory duties that often preclude participation.

Another of the forward leaning accomplishments of CEPDU since its creation was the development and implementation of a six-week, intensive CT training curriculum for agents recently designated to the CT Career Path. In the fall of 2007, 40 agents returned to Quantico to receive a variety of specialized CT training, as an enhanced

building block to the CT instruction they received previously during New Agent Training. While the curriculum was an outstanding combination of historical and cultural information involving guest speakers from renowned academic institutions and government positions, provided practical applications of investigative techniques, and gave insight into overseas CT experiences, etc., the training was not optimally received. Several attendees expressed dissatisfaction with the length of time they were away from their Field Offices and cases, as well as the fact that some of the training did not relate to the exact types of CT cases they were currently working.

Why is it that a significant number of the aforementioned students reacted negatively to one of the most positive CT training opportunities available in the FBI? One reasonable explanation is the mindset of FBI employees toward training, in particular. Many feel that if they are training, they are not advancing their cases. In essence, the positive results of training are not tangible, whereas the results of arrests and prosecutions are tangible. As the FBI further develops and implements strategic changes in its training curriculum, CEPDU and the Training Division must play leadership roles in changing the mindset of the organization as well as individual employees toward training.

D. SNAPSHOT OF THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

In September 2002, the Office of the Inspector General produced Report No. 02-38, *A Review of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Counterterrorism Program: Threat Assessment, Strategic Planning, and Resource Management*. At that time, it was noted that, "the FBI has not issued a policy on or developed a system for capturing, disseminating, and using lessons learned from past terrorism incidents, operations, and exercises to improve the FBI's counterterrorism capabilities."¹⁷ Two of the fourteen recommendations, therefore, relate to the aforementioned knowledge management tool regarding lessons learned, as well as the establishment of a "core curriculum and minimum competencies for agents assigned to counterterrorism."¹⁸ Approximately seven

¹⁷ Office of the Inspector General, *A Review of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Counterterrorism Program: Threat Assessment, Strategic Planning, and Resource Management*, Report 02-38, September 2002, <http://www.usdoj.gov/oig/audit/FBI/0238.htm>.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

years after this audit, the FBI is actively building the infrastructure to meet these important objectives. The FBI National Security Branch Strategic Training Plan 2009–2013 acknowledges these objectives and several of the strategic goals include the following objective, “develop and update training courses to ensure timely and effective transfer of lessons learned from FBI and interagency operations.”¹⁹

On a macro level, the FBI has utilized the Strategic Management System (SMS) as a planning and measurement tool to ensure that goals, objectives, and policies are aligned with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence goals and objectives as indicated in the *National Intelligence Strategy, The United States Intelligence Community 100 Day Plan for Integration and Collaboration*, and the *United States Intelligence Community 500 Day Plan for Integration and Collaboration*.²⁰ One of the SMS components, Maximizing Workforce Success, includes the following goals that have been instrumental in guiding related development of and alignment with National Security Branch training goals and objectives.²¹

- Improve recruiting, selection, hiring and retention
- Train and develop skills and abilities of our workforce
- Link skills and competencies to needs
- Identify, develop and retain leaders throughout the organization
- Enhance work environment to facilitate mission

On March 5, 2008, Director Robert S. Mueller, III, provided a statement to the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate, regarding FBI priorities, changes, and challenges. Although the statement was not aimed specifically at addressing counterterrorism knowledge management or infusion, nevertheless, it revealed achievement, to date, by the FBI in meeting several of the above-listed goals, to include the training and development of employee skills, leadership development, and the enhancement of the work environment to facilitate the mission. The examples outlined by

¹⁹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *FBI National Security Branch Strategic Training Plan 2009–2013* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Bureau of Investigation, March 15, 2008), 7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 9.

²¹ *Ibid.*

the Director are centered on the fact that the Training Division of the FBI has made numerous training curriculum improvements, and has “expanded leadership, sabbatical, joint duty, and advanced degree programs.”²² To expand upon this information, within the past three years, there has been a significant increase in advanced degree opportunities available to FBI personnel within the realm of leadership, homeland security, and/or counterterrorism. The FBI has become an integral participant in the renowned programs of such institutions as the Naval Postgraduate School/Center for Homeland Defense and Security, National Defense University, United States Military Academy, Naval War College, Princeton University, Harvard University/Kennedy School of Government, and Northwestern University/Kellogg School of Management. As the FBI continues to promote participation in these programs, significant steps are made in changing the aforementioned mindset toward training. An integral part of this continuing change process, however, will require a newfound focus on building mechanisms to examine, promote, and implement recommendations that often emanate from FBI work products while enrolled in these programs.

²² Robert S. Mueller, III, Statement before the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate, March 5, 2008, www.fbi.gov.

III. CORE INFLUENCES TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED AND OVERCOME

A. ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

While exceptional counterterrorism (CT) training exists, both operational tempo and scheduling limitations preclude a large number of personnel from obtaining the training. Finally, the organizational mindset within the FBI and individual behavior patterns remain focused on the short-term, tangible results inherent in investigative accomplishments/statistics rather than the long-term, less tangible benefits inherent in advanced training.

In his book titled, *Unleashing Change—A Study of Organizational Renewal in Government*, Steven Kelman delineates the complexities of bureaucracies and provides research and insight on how to counter bureaucratic pitfalls to drive change. Kelman states,

Where organizational change becomes difficult is where it requires modification of embedded individual behavior patterns or ways the organization has been structured. . . Change is easier when it involves adding an innovation to existing practice than when it involves. . . altering existing practice.²³

Concerning counterterrorism training in the FBI, it is critical that organizational practice and individual behavior patterns are changed. As Kelman delineates in *Unleashing Change*, social psychologist Kurt Lewin outlines the critical importance of unfreezing existing attitudes.²⁴ Changing attitudes must take place through a newfound emphasis on and value in training, not only by the organization, but also by individual employees. Firstly, because “knowledge structures created by organizations [to include the FBI] make it hard for people to notice that change is needed,”²⁵ an organizational

²³ Steven Kelman, *Unleashing Change—A Study of Organizational Renewal in Government* (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

awakening must occur. Secondly, changing the individual mindset will occur only when personnel recognize the importance of receiving advanced training, which, in turn, will positively affect the development of their CT cases. In reality, training and operations correlate directly with each other: as the time spent on one increases, the time spent on the other decreases. Therefore, in the CT realm, investigators are often so heavily assigned that training opportunities, when available, are viewed as detrimental because they may postpone near-term operational progress. Furthermore, it can be extrapolated that personnel are so inundated that they fail to comprehend the need to obtain the training that would increase their knowledge base, reduce duplication of effort and, ultimately, speed up investigative success rather than slow it down.

In relation to the difficulty of instituting change, Kelman acknowledges the abundance of literature that shows “that it is not truly that people resist change, but that it faces political and other challenges.” The FBI is not immune to these challenges. As with many bureaucracies, change often occurs slowly. As Kelman notes, literature by Robert Behan and Olivia Golden indicates, “managers should implement some part of a change quickly, rather than studying the idea to death until perfected, and make corrections along the way.”²⁶ Arguably, in the case of providing ample, structured CT training to its personnel, the FBI has failed to achieve its fullest potential. While numerous, exceptional training opportunities exist in the CT realm, the aforementioned factors preclude the majority of personnel from receiving this training, resulting in a vicious circle. Employees are concentrating on CT matters, they view the work demands as too critical to take time to receive training or are unable to obtain training due to scheduling constraints, and they lose perspective on the fact that “training ha[s] a positive impact on behavior change.”²⁷ Furthermore, training in the CT realm is important in the further development of perishable skills.

In one respect, factors for driving successful change efforts in individual behavior and in organizational mindset diverge in several areas. To be successful at driving individual behavior change, a change effort in CT training in the FBI must accomplish

²⁶ Kelman, *Unleashing Change—A Study of Organizational Renewal in Government*, 83.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 173.

the following: 1) provide timely, pertinent knowledge and skills that can be directly applied to case work; 2) minimize extraneous or duplicative information; and 3) ensure fluidity in the curriculum to account for the dynamic nature of the CT arena. To be successful at changing organizational mindset, the FBI must accomplish the following: 1) recognize and promote the importance of training in developing employee knowledge and skills; 2) create a working environment that allows time for training and development while minimizing detrimental effects on operational tempo; and 3) be relentless in communicating the leader's change message because "stopping [the message] could be interpreted as the end of the executive's commitment."²⁸

Conversely, change efforts for both individual behavior and organizational mindset do converge in several areas. As Kelman states, "a change effort can feed on itself through positive feedback [and] early wins are important"²⁹ to both the individual and the organization. Furthermore, recognizing the importance of the "change vanguard"³⁰ is critical to the individual and the organization. By leveraging those that are ideologically discontent with the traditional system, exposing them to early wins in providing CT training, and utilizing the positive feedback to activate the discontented, successful change may be driven. All three elements outlined by Kelman, specifically, persuasive discussion, the burning platform and leader pressure,³¹ are critical in driving successful changes in counterterrorism training within the FBI and will be addressed in further detail in the recommendations section.

²⁸ Kelman, *Unleashing Change—A Study of Organizational Renewal in Government*, 204.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 111-112.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

B. CONTINUOUS SKILL BUILDING AND STORYTELLING: TWO IMPORTANT FACTORS IN EFFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

While the FBI has a renowned reputation of providing some of the most advanced training in the world to its personnel and liaison partners, it has arguably remained less effective within the realm of CT training and knowledge management. Without doubt, a small percentage of FBI employees benefit from some of the most advanced CT training and experience in the world. However, this training does not benefit the masses. Due to shortages in the number of training classes, it is not unlikely that a significant number of personnel work many years without more formal, updated CT training, with the exception of limited, Web-based training opportunities. In addition to these limitations, the FBI does not employ effective knowledge management tools in the CT training arena, meaning that it has failed to provide ample mechanisms for more experienced personnel to pass knowledge and skills to less experienced personnel. As business author David Maister indicates, “left unattended, knowledge and skill, like all assets, depreciate in value—surprisingly quickly.”³² Furthermore, as stated by Steven M. R. Covey, author of *The Speed of Trust*, “unless you’re continually improving your skills, you’re quickly becoming irrelevant. And when you’re irrelevant, you’re no longer credible.”³³ In the CT arena, antiquated knowledge is no longer credible, and it also becomes an impediment to the development of forward-leaning practices to more effectively counter the terrorist threat.

The transfer of CT knowledge occurs through formal training/academic studies, informal training, as well as first-hand experience within the arena. A small percentage of FBI employees possess a myriad of CT experience that is not only unparalleled, but also can not be duplicated through academic studies or formal training opportunities. Therefore, the deficiency that must be filled quickly is that of knowledge management or, more specifically, knowledge transfer regarding the personal counterterrorism experiences of personnel. Covey states, “when leaders structure opportunities and

³² Steven M. R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 93.

³³ *Ibid.*, 98.

processes so that people teach what they learn to others within the organization, it dramatically increases individual and organizational learning and knowledge transfer.”³⁴ As the FBI continues to expand upon the counterterrorism training opportunities afforded to personnel, it must balance this critical need with unwavering operational needs as well as staffing shortages.

One of the prominent mechanisms for creating networks of trust and driving change within the most elite business arenas is the utilization of “storytelling.” Why is storytelling important and what are its implications in the government CT arena?

It is safe to assume that any individual or group you wish to influence has access to more wisdom than they currently use. It is also safe to assume that they also have considerably more facts than they can process effectively. Giving them even more facts adds to the wrong pile. They don’t need more facts. They need help finding their wisdom. Contrary to popular belief, bad decisions are rarely made because people don’t have all the facts. Bad decisions are made because people ignore the facts, do not understand the facts, or do not give the facts enough importance. Why? Basic human emotions like anxiety, greed, exasperation, intolerance, apathy, or fear have hijacked their brains and directed them to the “easy way out,” the “path of least resistance,” the “safe route,” or the “taking care of number one” option. More facts will not help them gain perspective. A story will. A story will help them figure out what all these facts *mean*.³⁵

Storytelling is an underutilized mechanism within the FBI CT training arena and provides tremendous opportunity to promote the infusion of knowledge from the most experienced CT personnel of the FBI to the less experienced personnel. In support of the efficacy of the practice of storytelling or the use of narrative,

³⁴ Covey, *The Speed of Trust*, 99.

³⁵ Annette Simmons, *The Story Factor* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 51.

faced with a choice between drawing down best practice from a knowledge management ‘system’ and hearing the stories of 8/9 trusted individuals about their experiences the vast majority would opt for the stories. Narrative works in the same way, recording experiences as they occur and accessing them through high abstraction criteria such as archetypes and themes to reflect the natural process of enquiry.³⁶

In October 2008, the FBI Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer compiled several expert speakers to address several facets of knowledge management during “Knowledge Week,” which focused, in general, on the importance of enhancing knowledge management within the FBI as well as developing effective tools to guide these efforts. One participant, Paul Johnson, provided the following insight during his presentation entitled, “Tentative Lessons about Lesson Learning:”

government agencies and private sector enterprises are rediscovering the value of informal but time honored storytelling practices. They are proving valuable not only as a means of communicating common norms and values and building “social capital”, but also as a relatively non-threatening way to capture insight about what works.³⁷

Johnson also revealed,

It appears that most Intelligence Community agencies could benefit greatly from a flexible, mixed approach—one that leverages exciting new information management and communication tools, experiments with a variety of “knowledge dissemination” activities that go well beyond formal classroom instruction, and borrows new insight from anthropologists and social psychologist about how to improve intuitive thinking and retain tacit knowledge within the organization.³⁸

It is the aforementioned, flexible and innovative approach that guides the combination of options and the ensuing recommendations to vastly improve the infusion of CT knowledge within the FBI.

³⁶ David Snowden, “Just in Time KM—Conceptual Roots and Pragmatic Interventions,” www.greenchameleon.com, 6.

³⁷ Paul Johnson, Abstract: “Tentative Lessons about Lesson-Learning. Summary of Remarks during FBI Knowledge Week, October 19, 2007.

³⁸ Ibid.

IV. OPTIONS ANALYSIS

The following three options are explored as methods for the FBI to address its inefficient mechanisms of knowledge management in the counterterrorism arena.

- Status Quo
- Development of the CT Career Path in concert with routine, but enhanced knowledge management mechanisms, to include the following:
 - Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer
 - Expert Registry
 - CT Readiness Index
 - Training Database
 - Center for Lessons Learned
 - Strategic Execution Team
 - CT Mobile Education Teams
- Development of the CT Career Path in concert with more abstract knowledge management mechanisms
 - Cynefin Framework
 - Why Best Practices May Be a Misnomer

In each of these, there is a need to address the following.

- Mindset toward Training
- Operational Tempo

A. OPTION I: MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO

Maintaining the status quo is one option as the FBI continues to undergo significant change in developing further as America's lead federal law enforcement and domestic intelligence agency. As outlined previously, FBI employees receive renowned training as they begin their careers at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia; a factor that, combined with a tireless work ethic, unwavering commitment to protecting and defending the Constitution, as well as providing superior service to the Nation, make the

organization very successful in fulfilling its mission. Despite continuous success, however, in this era of working harder and smarter than ever before, maintaining the status quo no longer offers the most viable arena for driving continued change.

If the status quo were maintained, the progression of a CT investigator through the CT Career Path would likely be as follows.³⁹

1. Stage 1 (New Agent Training)

- Complete 21-weeks of New Agents Training at Quantico, Virginia, focusing on all aspects of being a Special Agent, to include 61 hours of CT training

2. Stage 2 (Post New Agent Training to Three Years)

- Work CT investigations in a Field Office, where he/she is assigned a Training Agent/Mentor, who assists the new Agent and provides on-the-job training during his/her two year probationary period
- Obtain CT Stage II Academy training at Quantico, Virginia, a six-week comprehensive training program implemented in the fall of 2007, initially reaching 40 CT Agents. (Note: if the size and frequency of CT Stage II Academy classes offered in 2008 were maintained through 2009 and beyond, the training of all Agents assigned to the CT Career Path would take approximately 20 years. Since the ultimate goal of Stage II Academy training is to reach all Agents assigned to the CT Career Path, it is critical that additional means to more expeditiously provide the training are achieved).
- Obtain periodic, often sporadic CT training as available at the FBI Academy or through other domestic and international partner agencies
- Core Competency training. Ten core competencies are the foundation for the Special Agent Career Paths and are required of all Special Agents, as follows.⁴⁰
 - Writing Effectively
 - Organizing, Planning and Prioritizing
 - Communicating Orally
 - Relating Effectively With Others

³⁹ Draft Counterterrorism Developmental Plan, Revised November 16, 2007.

⁴⁰ Federal Bureau of Investigation, Federal Bureau of Investigation National Security Branch Strategic Training Plan 2009–2013 Appendix, version dated March 15, 2008, 18.

- Attending to Detail
- Critical Thinking, Information Evaluations/Judgment and Decision Making
- Initiative and Motivation
- Adapting to Changing Situations
- Maintaining a Professional Image
- Physical Requirements

3. Stage 3 (Three to Five Years)

- Complete a variety of training courses, in-services, conferences and joint agency meetings
- Core Competency training

4. Stage 4 (Five+ Years)

- Complete advanced training with international partners
- Complete mission critical and specialty courses
- Core Competency training

In further expanding the Core Competency training that occurs in Stage 2, Stage 3, and Stage 4 of the CT Career Path, program-centric competencies remained under development, but the following four job-related/technical competencies for Special Agents were adopted.⁴¹

- Ability to Lead
- Physical Requirements
- Analytic Thinking
- Intelligence Writing in the FBI Organizational Style

The additional competencies listed above, once again, fail to target directly and aggressively the critical need to enhance FBI knowledge transfer mechanisms with the CT Career Path.

⁴¹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, Career Development Competency Dictionary, June 11, 2008.

Efficiency is directly and negatively influenced by maintaining the status quo. When training reaches only a small percentage of personnel, it leaves the remainder to fill in those gaps as practicable with methods which include such options as pure trial and error, which can result in an increased percentage of misguided steps; obtaining guidance from a colleague, a time-consuming process which may result in reduced efficiency; or conducting research to fill in gaps with information that has, most likely, already been researched and enacted by others, in essence, duplicating effort. An example of these intricacies was readily apparent shortly after the 9/11 attacks.

With hundreds of personnel diverted from criminal matters to work the 9/11 counterterrorism investigation in south Florida, where the majority of the hijackers had resided, it quickly became apparent that there were no formal means for efficiently transferring knowledge from seasoned CT personnel to less seasoned personnel during the crisis management phase. While very capable investigators and analysts, the newly assigned personnel often lacked understanding of such things as governing regulations surrounding such cases and cultural considerations when conducting interviews, for example.

During the crisis management phase of 9/11 investigations in south Florida, what resulted was the implementation of informal mechanisms for the passage of knowledge from more experienced personnel to less experienced personnel. The establishment of daily shift briefings became forums for the passage of some knowledge but, considering that such briefings only occurred a few times per day, they still did not adequately and efficiently pass knowledge. As a result, several experienced CT personnel were sought out for advice and mentoring concerning thousands of CT-related matters being worked by less experienced personnel. These experienced personnel provided immediate guidance and knowledge to the less experienced personnel, but doing so in a one-on-one environment did not allow for the optimal use of time for these busy “experts.” Oftentimes, these “experts” were asked the same types of questions by different personnel throughout the day, resulting in the need to repeat many of the same important lessons. While this was an important stopgap at the time, it was readily apparent that there was a critical need to institute a more efficient mechanism of knowledge transfer.

As a result, one Miami employee recommended, developed and implemented a one-week interactive training curriculum to ensure the transfer of critical pieces of knowledge to newly assigned personnel, not only representing the FBI, but also numerous partner agencies. The training served as a “train the trainer” program, allowing attendees to take the knowledge back to their departments/colleagues and, again, spread the knowledge that was infused. The same principle that guided the development of the aforementioned training again guides the development of mechanisms to improve the infusion of CT knowledge as outlined in the following portion of this thesis. For this reason, maintaining the status quo is not an option.

Maintaining the status quo is, truly, a non-viable option in that it requires the FBI to ignore the insights and recommendations made by numerous entities to include the 9/11 Commission, the Robb-Silberman (WMD) Commission, the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, the Office of the Inspector General, the National Academy for Public Administration, etc., and the requirements initialized by Executive Order 13434, National Security Professional Development. Secondly, while the enemies who threaten our national security continue to develop methods to bring harm to the United States, our citizens, and our interests worldwide, the homeland security community must remain equally innovative and committed in deterring and defeating them. As a result, it is critical that the FBI “drive people out of their comfort zones”⁴² to effectively foster change, making the status quo unacceptable. Thirdly, maintaining the status quo would not maximize the continued growth of the FBI as a worldwide partner in combating terrorism while building its own capacity and that of others to more effectively address the CT threat.

B. OPTION II: DEVELOPMENT OF THE CT CAREER PATH IN CONCERT WITH ROUTINE, BUT ENHANCED KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

The commitment of the FBI to adapt continually to optimize its preparation to meet its number one priority of counterterrorism is the guiding impetus behind the

⁴² John P. Kotter, “Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail,” *Harvard Business Review*, March-April 1995, 60.

continued development of the CT Career Path and training program. In developing existing mechanisms in combination with some routine, but enhanced knowledge management mechanisms, there are substantial opportunities for career development, improved knowledge transfer, and increased organizational efficiency. In 2005, the National Academy of Public Administration provided ten recommendations concerning FBI counterterrorism operations, only three of which are remotely associated with knowledge management and training, as delineated below.

- The Panel recommends that immediate steps be taken to develop an initial scheme for evaluating the performance of counterterrorism agents in the field, that it be incorporated into agent training, and updated as needed.⁴³

Comment: In relation to knowledge management, this recommendation could be implemented through the correlation of CT agent performance evaluations with the effectiveness of these agents in infusing knowledge/passing lessons learned to less experienced personnel. This proposed mechanism is further delineated in the recommendation section.

- The Panel recommends that the FBI promote the sharing of information on best practices for state watch and warning systems among state and local law enforcement and that it work with the relevant DHS components to accomplish this.⁴⁴

Comment: While this recommendation relates to the sharing of best practices from the FBI, in concert with DHS, for state watch and warning systems related to state and local law enforcement, it does not address the broader need to share best practices within the FBI, as a whole, or throughout the many facets of the homeland security arena, in general. This proposed mechanism is further delineated in the recommendation section.

- The Panel recommends that the FBI improve its performance measures, making sure that they are clearly linked to the satisfaction of its strategic goals and objectives.⁴⁵

Comment: While the FBI has examined and aligned its performance measures with its strategic goals and objectives, it continues to fall short on linking these important concepts with enhanced knowledge management requirements. This proposed mechanism is further delineated in the recommendation section.

⁴³ Dick Thornburgh, Chair, et al., *Transforming the FBI: Roadmap to an Effective Human Capital Program* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Public Administration, September 2005).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 47.

Concerning strategic management, the report also delineated the following recommendation.

- The Panel recommends, at a minimum, that the FBI moves to, and Congress supports, a multi-year resource planning system for critical technical systems and key personnel skills. In addition, it recommends that the FBI actively seek to broaden the training and experience of personnel, including agents, by encouraging enrollment in external management and technical training programs, and by promoting assignments to other agencies.⁴⁶

Comment: The FBI has made great progress in regard to these recommendations. Specifically, the FBI has made significant improvements in the training of personnel in regard to leadership and management training, such as that received at the Kellogg School of Management and the United States Military Academy, a substantial increase in the number of advanced degree training opportunities such as at the Naval Postgraduate School, Harvard University, Princeton University, Tufts University, Naval War College, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, etc., as well as the development and implementation of numerous joint duty training and assignments. As the FBI continues to offer significant training opportunities in concert with its partners, it is critical that methods of capitalizing on both the research conducted by FBI personnel enrolled in these programs, and the enhanced skill sets developed. This proposed mechanism is further delineated in the recommendation section.

1. Building Knowledge Management from the Ground Up

In October 2007, the FBI established the Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer to “establish knowledge libraries of products, to develop a knowledge enterprise architecture that identifies system content and usage, and to create knowledge sharing and collaboration programs such as expert registries, lessons learned, best practices, and communities of interest.”⁴⁷

As outlined by the Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer, the following table represents the knowledge management challenges faced by the FBI in the realms of environment, organization and evolution:⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Thornburgh, *Transforming the FBI: Roadmap to an Effective Human Capital Program*, 23.

⁴⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation, OCKO: Background, <http://ocko.fbinet.fbi/background.htm>.

⁴⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigation, OCKO: Challenges, <http://ocko.fbinet.fbi/challenges.htm>.

<u>ENVIRONMENT</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>EVOLUTION</u>
Resource Constraints	Identify Current Knowledge Infrastructure and Assets	Incentivize Knowledge Sharing to Reduce “Knowledge Hoarding”
Organizational Acceptance	Obtain Timely Feedback from Knowledge Producers and Consumers	Promote practices to become a “Learning Organization”
Overcoming Change Fatigue	Support Geographically Dispersed Organization and Diversity of Employees	Progress from Hoarding to Scalable to Repeatable to Optimized

Table 1. Knowledge Management Challenges

2. Building an Expert Registry, A Counterterrorism Readiness Index and a Comprehensive Training Database

The professional and personal experiences of FBI personnel in the CT arena and related realms provide the FBI with a ready reserve of some of the most qualified CT personnel in the world. Personnel possess a variety of deployment and training experience, foreign language capabilities, and additional specialized skills needed within the CT arena. While there are a variety of mechanisms that serve as registries of these experiences, there is no central, easily-accessible repository for such information at the current time. As outlined by the Chief Knowledge Officer and the Associate Executive Assistant Director (A/EAD) of the National Security Division, the latter of which leads the Strategic Execution Team formed to address strategic gaps, there is a strong need for the development of a comprehensive Expert Registry of skills in addition to what has been termed by the A/EAD as a Counterterrorism Readiness Index (CRI). The CRI assigns points to training and skills developed by CT personnel working within the CT Career Path. As these personnel accumulate points through training received, deployment experience, etc., they earn points that move them from a readiness rating of “red” to “yellow” to “green.”

In addition to delineating the range of experience gained by personnel through the CRI, it is vital that the FBI develop an Expert Registry that allows the Bureau to identify quickly and easily the personnel who possess the greatest combination of skills required

for often complex and specialized missions worldwide. An extension of the importance of the CRI is the ability to build a useful, user-friendly database to catalog training received, so that gaps may be easily identified and addressed. Considering the diverse, and sometimes hostile or austere operating environments within which the FBI works, it is critical that a comprehensive, effective tracking system be created to readily identify the need for recertification/renewal of specialized training such as within the fields of advanced tactical or evidence recovery skills. In February 2009, the Human Resources Branch, Career Path Unit launched a management software tool known as Manage Your Career (MY Career). Although in its infancy this database, if fully developed and utilized, has the potential to serve as a mechanism to catalog and track skills/training, as well as to quickly identify specialized skill sets.

3. Building a Center for Lessons Learned

In an effort to develop mechanisms to pass more efficiently lessons learned to a wider number of personnel, the FBI is in the process of developing a Web-based FBI Center for Lessons Learned. The backbone of the FBI Center for Lessons Learned will be through the FBI Intranet, specifically using Microsoft SharePoint technology. The FBI Center for Lessons Learned will possess capabilities similar to and, in some cases, improvements upon the Army Center for Lessons Learned and the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, both of which are robust programs aimed at providing personnel with readily accessible knowledge. In the instances of these centers, for example, personnel who have learned important information during combat scenarios may effectively pass the knowledge to others through the appropriate Web-based centers, allowing others to gain this knowledge without also having to endure combat situations. As a result, the number of personnel who benefit from the lessons of a few increases dramatically, resulting in enhanced knowledge transfer and a substantial increase in core knowledge.

By developing a template for experienced CT personnel to document their lessons learned, smart practices, etc., and by uploading this information into the appropriate SharePoint site, FBI and Task Force employees have and will continue to gain the

opportunity to search for needed information and to learn from the experiences of their colleagues, thus lessening the need to “recreate the wheel” and increasing efficiency in knowledge transfer. Numerous applications within SharePoint promote streamlined research, collaboration and knowledge management capabilities. For example, SharePoint technology includes MySite opportunities for individual users to configure their own websites, allowing them to set notification alerts when information is available regarding topics of specific interest, for example. Additionally, SharePoint allows the development and utilization of shared sites, allowing multiple entities to work more efficiently on collaborative efforts. As stated by John T. Wydra, Jr., in a presentation entitled, Utilizing SharePoint 2007 Technology at the FBI, “the FBI needs a quick, secure, scalable and inexpensive way to track unstructured data such as documents, forms, discussions, and ad-hoc surveys in a searchable, auditable system that is flexible to change as our needs do.”⁴⁹ As evidenced by a few of the aforementioned capabilities of the software, SharePoint will assist in addressing many gaps.

The implementation of the FBI Center for Lessons Learned is an enormous project that requires the identification, documentation, review, and upload of voluminous amounts of information. Personnel who represent the West Point Combating Terrorism Center and the United States Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned continue to assist the FBI in developing pertinent procedures and materials. One important element to develop is the creation and use of Collection Teams, whose task is to focus the collection of information on important, priority matters. Modeled after the practice of the Marine Corps with the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned, whose Collection Teams often deploy forward to conduct the collection of specific information, and to report their results to the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned through various media in order to ensure the identification of emerging issues and trends, FBI Collection Teams could focus forward deployed efforts on the identification, collection, and analysis of information relative to priority CT investigations.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ John D. Wydra, Jr., Utilizing SharePoint 2007 Technology at the FBI, Presentation and PowerPoint Slides, October 2007.

⁵⁰ Draft Strategic Management System Document, FBI Counterterrorism Division, Lessons Learned Program, March 1, 2008.

One component of this process relates to knowledge libraries. As delineated by the Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer, knowledge libraries are being compiled throughout several facets of the FBI to share a myriad of information, to include best practices and lessons learned. Elements of the Counterterrorism Division, namely the National Joint Terrorism Task Force, and its parent unit, the Domestic Terrorism and Response Section, have web sites to publish their best practices. With any new tools, however, there remains a need to develop these tools continually so that they become effective resources. At the current time, without either a unit of personnel dedicated to this function, or entrenched Collection Teams as outlined above, the growth and usage of the information remains slow.

4. The Development of the Strategic Execution Team to Drive Change

In September 2007, Director Mueller appointed two Executive Managers to head a Strategic Execution Team, comprised of approximately 55 personnel from Headquarters and Field Offices to assist in driving further progress concerning recruiting, training and career development throughout the organization. The Strategic Execution Team has grown into an entity of approximately 100 people and is supported by the management consulting firm McKinsey and Company. In November 2007, Director Mueller provided an update to the FBI as to the progress of the SET, indicating that the team's focus areas would be as follows.⁵¹

- Program Management Office—geared toward the alignment of initiatives, processes and priorities in order to reach goals. (Note: important sub-components of this office include a Networks Team and a Mindset and Behaviors Team, both of which are critical in instituting organizational change and will be discussed in further detail in the recommendations section)
- Human Capital—geared toward improving recruitment, selection, development and promotion of agents and analysts to more effectively meet the FBI intelligence mission (Note: an important sub-component of this element includes the Agent Career Path and Training Team. The critical connection between this team and the Program Management Office/Networks Team as well as the Mindset and Behaviors Team will be delineated in the recommendations section)

⁵¹ FBI Intranet, SET: Frequently Asked Questions, <http://intranet.fbinet.fbi/set/faq.htm>.

- Intelligence Operations—geared toward enhancing the Field Intelligence Group structure, performance measures, intelligence production as well as dissemination

SET management meets with Director Mueller on a weekly basis, while the SET gathers information from across the FBI in order to design pilot programs that may include visits to Field Offices to conduct training, focus groups and Town Hall meetings in order to address identified initiatives.

The SET identified eleven work streams to be addressed within the subprograms of Program Management, Intelligence Operations and Human Capital, three of which relate to or are peripherally related to knowledge management as follows: understand the strength of internal networks for information sharing; align organizational mindsets around transformation; and create clarity around career paths and training programs for agents/analysts.⁵² These work streams have been aligned with the overall FBI strategy map, which includes numerous objectives in the fields of resources, talent and technology, internal processes, and American public expectations. As of August 2008, the SET implemented Waves 1 through 3 of its Intelligence Operations subprogram, specifically directed at enhancing intelligence capabilities.

5. CT Mobile Education Teams

Each of the aforementioned mechanisms of knowledge management is in various stages of development, offering tremendous promise for enhancing the infusion of knowledge to a larger percentage of the CT workforce. One underutilized and critical mechanism, however, that lies at the core of this option for driving change is the development and implementation of Mobile Education Teams in the CT arena. While the FBI possesses numerous variations of Mobile Education Teams with varied foci, to date, such METs have not been created to address knowledge management issues within the CT arena. Furthermore, the proposed development of CT METs involves a newfound combination of seasoned personnel to include those from the most actively deployed

⁵² T. J. Harrington, Federal Bureau of Investigation Director's Strategic Execution Team Briefing for Office of the Director of National Intelligence Staff, February 5, 2008, 2.

units for counterterrorism matters, such as the Fly Team and Extraterritorial Squads, Assistant Legal Attaches (Supervisory Special Agents) who have completed tours of duty in overseas offices, as well as what may be the most underutilized resource in the FBI, its retired personnel. Regarding the latter, the expertise and knowledge possessed by our retirees, often with 20 to 35 years of service, cannot be underestimated.

The establishment of CT Mobile Education Teams within the FBI would provide individuals with an exceptional degree of CT experience to share their knowledge immediately with less seasoned personnel, while simultaneously providing a finite respite from the direct CT arena, which, at times, has required the deployment of personnel for the majority of the calendar year. This symbiotic relationship would be aimed not only at enhancing the transfer of knowledge, but also at providing a more predictable, stable environment for the MET members who, at the end of their assignments to the MET, may be more apt to return to working CT matters rather than other violations, resulting in continued opportunities to share CT expertise. Further details regarding the structure of the proposed teams, their multifaceted mission in support of improving knowledge management in the FBI, and their proposed interface with other segments of the FBI are detailed in the Implementation of Strategy and Recommendation sections.

C. OPTION III: DEVELOPMENT OF THE CT CAREER PATH IN CONCERT WITH ROUTINE AND ABSTRACT KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

As numerous fields evolve over time so, too, has the field of knowledge management. While KM previously focused upon ‘tacit’ knowledge, that which is contained within personal experience, and ‘explicit’ knowledge, that which is contained in processes, it has evolved to focus upon,

the importance of narrative and concrete knowledge: we always know more than we can say and we will always say more than we can write down. Learning communities act as critical mechanisms for the transfer of concrete knowledge through imitation and mentoring, but also define and are defined by their narratives.⁵³

In examining the field of knowledge management, what framework can be utilized to address the complexities of counterterrorism knowledge and the critical nature of enhancing the infusion of this knowledge to a greater percentage of personnel? The Cynefin framework, developed by David Snowden, Mary Boone and other contributors, appears to provide the context required to understand and address the aforementioned complexities. “Cynefin, pronounced *ku-nev-in*, is a Welsh word that signifies the multiple factors in our environment and our experience that influence us in ways we can never understand”⁵⁴ resulting in the important acknowledgement that “the world is often irrational and unpredictable.”⁵⁵ The framework is divided into five contexts based on the relationship between cause and effect, as follows.

- Simple contexts—known knowns
- Complicated contexts—known unknowns
- Complex contexts—unknown unknowns
- Chaotic contexts—unknowables
- Disorder—unclear which of the aforementioned contexts is dominant

The aforementioned contexts, with the exception of the fifth context of disorder, are also prevalent in more routine knowledge matrices, such as the Knowledge Matrix depicted on the left. This Knowledge Matrix is posted on the internal Intranet website of the FBI Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer. While it relates to the aforementioned cynefin framework, depicted on the right, it does not provide the additional element to address the complicated and chaotic realms of cause-effect that the cynefin framework provides, particularly in the fifth context of “disorder” in which it is not known which of the other

⁵³ David J. Snowden, “From Atomism to Networks in Social Systems,” www.greenchameleon.com, October 4, 2007, 3.

⁵⁴ David J. Snowden and Mary E. Boone, “A Leader’s Framework for Decision Making,” *Harvard Business Review*, <http://harvardbusinessonline.hbsp.harvard.edu/hbsp/hbr/articles/article>, 1.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

four contexts one is in. Since the complex and chaotic contexts are unordered, cause and effect are not readily discernible and the focus must be on emerging patterns over time.⁵⁶ A comparison of a routine knowledge matrix and the cynefin framework are provided below.

KNOWLEDGE MATRIX ⁵⁸		FIVE CONTEXTS OF THE CYNEFIN FRAMEWORK ⁵⁷	
WE KNOW WHAT WE KNOW	WE KNOW WHAT WE DON'T KNOW	SIMPLE Known knows Sense, categorize, respond	COMPLICATED Known unknowns Sense, analyze, respond
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE KNOW	WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE DON'T KNOW	CHAOTIC Unknown knows	COMPLEX Unknown unknowns Probe, sense, respond

Table 2. Knowledge Matrix vs. Five Contexts of the Cynefin Framework

Within the complicated context, two possible obstacles are ‘entrained thinking,’ being blinded to new ways of thinking, or ‘analysis paralysis’ where conflicting, entrained thinking among experts inhibits creative solutions.⁵⁹ One solution involves placing people in unfamiliar environments to stimulate innovation. As described by John Kotter in the Harvard Business Review article entitled, “*Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail*,” the inability to “drive people out of their comfort zones”⁶⁰ is often a critical part of transformation failure. In combining these assertions, it will be critical that the FBI effectively implement this transformation tool to infuse CT knowledge effectively from its more experienced personnel to its less experienced personnel.

While the right answer(s) exist within the complicated context, the complex context does not contain a right answer, requiring decisions to be made on incomplete data. “In this domain, we can understand why things happen only in retrospect.

⁵⁶ Snowden and Boone, “A Leader’s Framework for Decision Making,” 6.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁸ Federal Bureau of Investigation, OCKO: Background, <http://ocko.fbinet.fbi/background.htm>.

⁵⁹ Snowden and Boone, “A Leader’s Framework for Decision Making,” 3.

⁶⁰ John P. Kotter, “Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail,” *Harvard Business Review* (March-April 1995): 60.

Instructive patterns, however, can emerge if the leader conducts experiments that are safe to fail. That is why, instead of attempting to impose a course of action, leaders must patiently allow the path forward to reveal itself. They need to probe first, then sense, and then respond.”⁶¹ The need to revamp counterterrorism training and to enhance knowledge management within the FBI falls within the realm of the complex context. Since interactions in this context are not linear, even minor changes have the possibility of producing substantial results.⁶² The creation of the Strategic Execution Team by Director Mueller has “created an environment from which good things can emerge, rather than trying to bring about predetermined results and possibly missing opportunities that arise unexpectedly.”⁶³

This thesis promotes the extension of the aforementioned flexibility to the proposed Mobile Education Teams in order to allow them to utilize the cynefin complex context as an instrumental part of their guiding principles. Armed with this flexibility, the METs would be empowered to “probe, sense and respond,” thus tailoring instruction and knowledge management exchange to emerging patterns. The result would be a departure from the pre-planned, often more rigid, curriculum most often associated with FBI CT training to date.

The chaotic context is plagued by turbulence rather than any emerging patterns of cause and effect. This context requires a leader to act in an effort to move the context from chaotic to complex. This portion of the cynefin network was readily apparent in the homeland security arena immediately following the 9/11 attacks. As previously outlined, when the rapidly-evolving crisis caused the Miami Division of the FBI to reassign hundreds of personnel to counterterrorism matters without providing formalized knowledge transfer and training, it was forced to operate between the contexts of chaotic and disorder. Patterns either were not emerging or were masked by the breadth, complexity and unpredictable nature of developments. When CT training was developed by the Miami Division, it moved operations and knowledge infusion from the chaotic

⁶¹ Snowden and Boone, “A Leader’s Framework for Decision Making,” 4.

⁶² Ibid., 6.

⁶³ Ibid., 8.

context to the complex context. Similarly, the shift from the chaotic to the complex arena is critical in driving necessary change within the realm of CT knowledge management because it allows for the emergence of patterns and development of tailored tools to address these patterns.

D. WHY BEST PRACTICES MAY BE A MISNOMER

As the FBI continues to strengthen its development as the primary federal law enforcement agency and domestic intelligence agency, it continues to develop mechanisms to transfer knowledge through best practices. The Counterterrorism Division of the FBI, for example, has acknowledged the need to capture and disseminate best practices, yet the Web-based portion of the knowledge library has not yet developed into a robust, reliable, or functional tool for the majority of its workforce. It is important that the FBI continue to understand that best practices at one particular time may not, in fact, be best practices at a subsequent time, particularly due to the fact that the CT-arena is ever-changing. “It’s important to remember that best practice is, by definition, past practice.”⁶⁴ The FBI must remain committed to the constant examination of practices so that creativity and innovation are not stifled.

It is worth remembering that the primary purpose of knowledge management is to enable better decision making and to create the conditions for innovation; better decision making is contingent on active learning, innovation is dependent on disruption of entrained patterns of thinking.⁶⁵

These ‘entrained patterns of thinking’ can be equated with antiquated practices or perceived ‘best practices’ that only guise forward leaning strategies to most effectively counter terrorism.

⁶⁴ Snowden and Boone, “A Leader’s Framework for Decision Making,” 3.

⁶⁵ David J. Snowden, “Managing for Serendipity or Why We Should Lay Off ‘Best Practice’ in KM,” www.cognitive-edge.com/ceresources/articles/39_managing_for_serendipity_final.pdf, 6.

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V. IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY

As stated in a Naval Postgraduate School thesis entitled, *Transforming Leadership in the FBI: A Recommendation for Strategic Change*, Supervisory Special Agent Richard D. Schwein stated,

changes are being driven internally by FBI executives who understand the urgency required to navigate the FBI's strategic shift from a domestically focused, case and fact driven, predominantly law enforcement culture to a much more agile, threat and intelligence driven, globally focused and fully integrated culture of law enforcement and national security excellence.⁶⁶

The processes involved in this continuing strategic shift present tremendous opportunity to address ineffective mechanisms for exporting the knowledge and expertise from the most experienced core of CT investigators to less experienced investigators. As a result, the FBI must devise and implement a strategic plan to enhance and maximize the CT training available to its personnel by leveraging knowledge gained in the field, exporting it to additional personnel, and simultaneously enhancing core capacities. It is recommended that the FBI pursue a strategy that encompasses both Options I and II as delineated above.

The strategic shift of the FBI can be compared to a shift in the business arena that involves identifying and capitalizing upon uncharted territory to build market share. In the work entitled, *Blue Ocean Strategy*, W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne delineate how companies compete in today's market to find newfound territory, or "blue oceans" in order to diverge from the saturated, "red oceans" that prevent company growth, profit, and success. The following tools outlined in *Blue Ocean Strategy*, specifically the Four Actions Framework, Strategy Canvas, Value Innovation, and Environmental Scan, reflect the sectors of uncharted blue ocean that are primed for the FBI to imaginatively address and conquer in regard to its knowledge management and training deficiencies.

⁶⁶ Richard D. Schwein, *Transforming Leadership in the FBI: A Recommendation for Strategic Change* (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, March 2007), 87.

A. FOUR ACTIONS FRAMEWORK

<p><u>ELIMINATE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigative Silos • Inability to Transfer Lessons Learned • Antiquated Training Practices 	<p><u>RAISE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of Institutional Memory • CT Core Capabilities
<p><u>REDUCE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redundancy and Recreating the Wheel • Burnout of Experienced Personnel • Negative Mindset Toward Training 	<p><u>CREATE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional Change • Streamlined Knowledge Transfer • Value in Training/Exporting Knowledge • Regional and Interagency Networks <p>(Vehicles for change: Revamp the Agent Mentoring Program; Develop CT Mobile Education Teams; Create/Implement a Center for Lessons Learned, an Expert Registry, a CT Readiness Index and a CT Training Database)</p>

Table 3. Four Actions Framework for Transforming Counterterrorism Training, Preserving Institutional Memory and Enhancing Knowledge Management

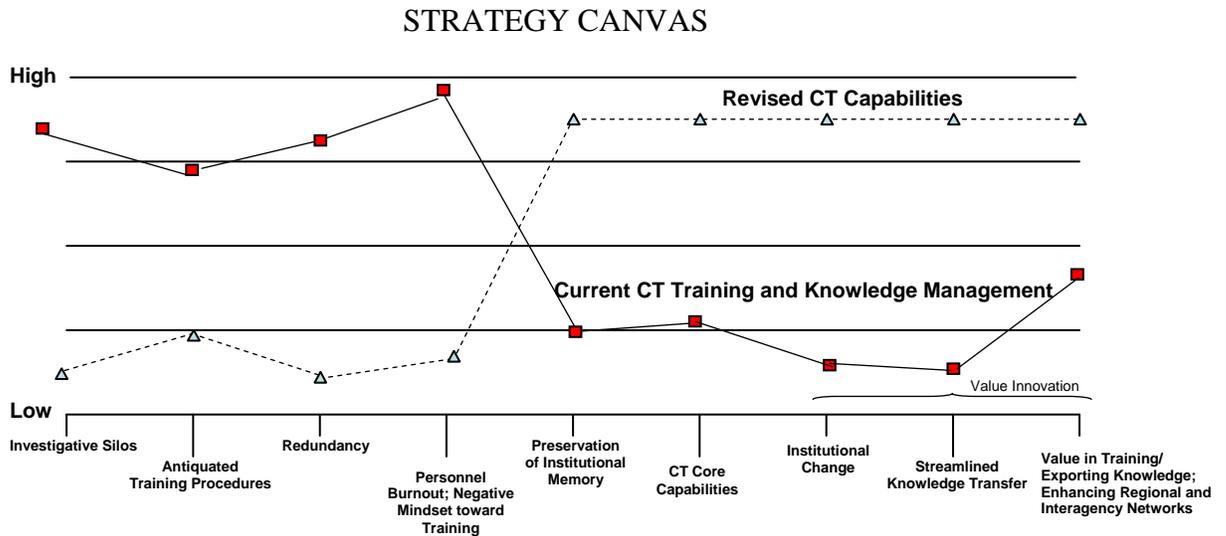


Figure 1. Strategy Canvas for Transforming Counterterrorism Training, Preserving Institutional Memory and Enhancing Knowledge Management

B. VALUE INNOVATION

The value innovation is institutional change to more effectively meet the counterterrorism threat by exporting knowledge from experienced personnel to less experienced personnel. The vehicle for implementing this institutional change is revised counterterrorism training, specifically through streamlined knowledge transfer, creating value in training/exporting knowledge, and developing regional and interagency networks in order to raise the overall effectiveness of all counterterrorism personnel. Specific actions proposed in the four actions framework to further guide this strategic change are as follows: 1) Revamp the Agent Mentoring System; 2) Create/Implement CT Mobile Education Teams; 3) Create/Implement a Center for Lessons Learned; 4) Create/Implement an Expert Registry; 4) Create/Implement a CT Readiness Index; 5) Create/Implement a comprehensive Training Database to catalog CT training which, at a minimum, should be conducted quarterly.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The environmental scan or “just one thing” related to the importance of this Strategy Canvas and Four Actions Framework centers around the critical need to raise the bar in knowledge management/transfer in the homeland security arena, particularly by leveraging knowledge of experienced personnel and creating mechanisms to infuse this knowledge effectively to less experienced personnel.

As evidenced by the outcomes of numerous inquires and public opinion polls since 9/11, the American public expects the FBI to effectively execute its duties as a dual counterterrorism and domestic intelligence agency. Since 9/11, the FBI has taken substantial steps to meet the threat, to include the reassignment of hundreds of personnel to CT matters, hiring drives to employ personnel with critical skills, revising training curricula, etc. In the realm of counterterrorism training, however, the FBI has been only partially successful in providing necessary training to CT personnel. Due to its position as a lead counterterrorism agency and partner homeland security agency, it is critical that the FBI continue to adequately train FBI and liaison personnel with the necessary resources to accomplish the mission. Historically, numerous homeland security partners

have relied on revered FBI training programs to provide innovative training through such programs as the FBI National Academy or the Law Enforcement Executive Development System. Currently, the FBI is presented with a challenge and an opportunity to again lead the way in providing premiere, necessary and unparalleled training not only to its own personnel, but also to partners in this multi-agency, international War on Terror that requires joint effort.

D. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

Why is the development of an effective mechanism of counterterrorism knowledge transfer critical to homeland security efforts? Developing institutional change within the FBI to revise counterterrorism training effectively to transfer expertise from experienced CT personnel to less experienced personnel will raise core capabilities, both within the FBI and among partner agencies. With an enemy becoming more and more capable of causing catastrophic damage in this asymmetrical conflict, it is critical that proactive steps be taken by the FBI to quickly address the aforementioned gap. This proactive approach will better equip the U.S. homeland security community, beginning with the FBI, to more effectively meet and counter the terrorist threat.

In building a newfound strategy to link the many facets of counterterrorism training, it is critical that there is substantial interface between all elements. For example, there has been limited interface between the SET and CEPDU, which provides room for enhancement in the future. Additionally, the recommendation of establishing CT Mobile Education Teams offers a mechanism through which MET members could spend three months building educational modules through liaison with such entities as the SET, CEPDU, Training Division, etc., prior to implementing tailored, yet flexible curricula to most effectively increase CT knowledge management in the FBI. As evidenced by the success of the FBI Counterterrorism Division Fly Team in terms of enhanced knowledge management (Note: team members do not serve as case agents while assigned to the team, allowing for substantial increases in deployment time, training time, and opportunities to transfer knowledge), the fact that MET members would also not be case

agents during their MET assignment, provides the same opportunities to focus upon the knowledge management mission from continuous development in the ever-changing arena, to implementation.

Several mechanisms for creating and implementing Mobile Education Teams were considered. At the inception of this research, it was believed that the FBI Training Division, which offers exceptional training through New Agents' Training, the National Academy (foreign and domestic law enforcement), and the Center for Intelligence Training (analysts). Interviews were conducted of Training Division instructors and curriculum development personnel. As delineated above, and reinforced by Dr. Deborah Beebe, Unit Chief of the Curriculum Development and Evaluation Unit, "our focus is on the National Academy, New Agents' Training, and the Intelligence Career Service."⁶⁷ There is no Career Path Unit or element thereof at the Training Division. While case studies and lessons learned are a small segment of the training provided to each of the three focal areas at the FBI Academy, there is no formal or comprehensive study of ways to improve knowledge transfer, specifically from experienced personnel to less experienced personnel.

Counterterrorism-related in-services such as CT Stage II Academy and other topics are predominantly developed and operated by the operational Division, often with little input or oversight by the Training Division. However, the Training Division includes both personnel and tools that would be particularly helpful in the possible development of CT Mobile Education Teams. Concerning Training Division personnel, Instructor System Specialists assist in identifying instruction gaps, goals, and methods to teach to those gaps. As recommended by Unit Chief Deborah Beebe, the Instructor System Specialists could partake in a "Focus Group" comprised of the specialist and the Subject Matter Expert from the MET to delineate competencies, to identify gaps, and to develop learning objectives as well as content for the course. Following that collaborative effort, Instruction Designers develop course materials, lesson plans, activities, Power Point presentations, instructor and student guides, etc. They send drafts to the Subject

⁶⁷ Deborah Beebe, FBI Training Division, Curriculum Development and Evaluation Unit, Interview, March 5, 2008.

Matter Experts to review and modify. As stated previously, one of the common roadblocks to effectively transferring knowledge is that it usurps the valuable time of busy experts. With the opportunity for Subject Matter Experts to collaborate with the aforementioned personnel to proactively and quickly delineate objectives and create course materials, METs could truly spend a fraction of their time fully developing curriculum, while devoting the majority of their time to additional methods, implementation, and to what actually works best, to include techniques such as storytelling.

Concerning available tools to foster the forward movement of CT Mobile Education Teams, the technological advancement of CENTRA affords on-line, interactive and collaborative learning where course attendees can sit at their desks at Field Offices around the country, and with only a sound card and earphones, can partake in active on-line sessions. These sessions provide the capabilities to provide live lecture, view PowerPoint, conduct instant messaging, etc. Therefore, without agents, analysts and task force officers having to leave their offices, they can partake in collaborative, interactive learning environments that could be facilitated by members of the MET. While this would be one mechanism that could be immediately utilized by METs, it certainly should not be the only mechanism employed.

So how would Mobile Education Teams be created and where would they be housed? It is proposed that the FBI conduct a Bureau-wide canvass for seasoned investigators who possess a myriad of CT and deployment experience to compete through the Career Board process for approximately 10 MET positions, in order to form two METs. These positions should be Term GS-14 Supervisory Special Agent and Intelligence Analyst positions, with a minimum assignment period of one year. The METs should not only operate within the Counterterrorism Division, but also co-located with the Counterterrorism Education and Professional Development Unit (CEPDU) at FBIHQ.

Upon selection to the MET, the teams would work with CEPDU, the SET, Counterterrorism Division Executive Management, and Training Coordinators throughout the 56 FBI Field Offices to specifically identify, target and address training

and knowledge infusion gaps. Currently, since there is no central mechanism within the FBI with sufficient manpower to identify, address and fill such counterterrorism training gaps, the creation of METs would provide immediate benefit in fostering strategic change as the FBI continues to develop its CT work force. METs should be tasked with developing curricula to fill the aforementioned training and knowledge infusion gaps, not only by providing regional training sessions to FBI and interagency partners, but also by providing hands-on consultation with Case Agents and Intelligence Analysts in Field Offices, to share personal experience with these personnel to increase the fusion of tacit knowledge. By accomplishing these tasks, the FBI will make significant improvements in counterterrorism knowledge management.

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VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. STRATEGY FOR TARGETING COUNTERTERRORISM TRAINING GAPS

Considering the wide range of CT expertise developed by FBI personnel throughout the world, how does the FBI better utilize its vast expertise to prepare more adequately a larger percentage of its workforce to address the threat? As terrorists continue to train daily to bring catastrophic harm to United States citizens and interests worldwide, the FBI can no longer afford to be plagued by “recreating the wheel.” The FBI must devise and implement a strategic plan to enhance and maximize the CT training, while directly enhancing the mechanisms for effective knowledge transfer among personnel. While the FBI has made substantial steps in making necessary changes in line with its primary counterterrorism mission post 9/11, while also developing several building blocks to drive further change, additional room for continued improvement exists. By combining the following recommendations and implementation suggestions, the FBI would quickly address a significant number of its CT training gaps.

- Recommendation: Place renewed emphasis on training, spreading the message through a widespread publicity campaign from the highest levels of the FBI down through the ranks to the newest personnel. The negative mindset that exists toward training must be acknowledged and dismantled at all levels. The intangible, long-term benefits of training combined with a more effective knowledge management scheme must be emphasized as much as the tangible statistics inherent in case work such as arrests, convictions, etc. In essence, raising the bar of all personnel through training and knowledge transfer will streamline efforts and will result in increased benefits within case work, effectively enhancing the ability of the FBI to meet its number one priority of preventing terrorism.

Implementation: CEPDU, with the assistance of the Training Division and proposed Mobile Education Teams, should continue to increase the number of training opportunities available to CT personnel. Regarding the overall mindset toward training, it is vital that the critical importance of training be advocated from the Director on down through all ranks of the

FBI. Communication of the leader's change message "must be relentless," not to persuade people. . .but because "stopping [the message] could be interpreted as the end of the executive's commitment."⁶⁸

- Recommendation: Lessen the burden placed on managers and agent personnel alike by enhancing the administrative support within the CT arena. A substantial increase in administrative support would allow supervisors, agents and analysts to devote full attention to the elements of their job descriptions, rather than also being burdened by administrative functions that usurp precious time. Many Counterterrorism Division employees assert that approximately 20% or more of their time is devoted to critical administrative duties that could be accomplished by administrative support personnel. If this administrative burden were lessened, it would open a substantial portion of time for training, career development, and knowledge transfer at no expense to operational tempo since it is already negatively affected by these administrative duties.

Implementation: It is critical that the FBI effectively leverage all applicable entities, including Congress, to ensure funding for significant increases in administrative support within the CT arena. Current administrative support within the CT arena is woefully inadequate.

- Recommendation: Drive people out of their comfort zones, by emphasizing the importance of each and every employee sharing their knowledge and expertise in order to not only streamline our efforts, but also to ensure that the FBI continues to grow into a true and dynamic 'learning organization'.

Implementation: Driving people out of their comfort zones requires not only a change in the expectations placed on FBI personnel, but also a change in mindset of many personnel. In some instances, personnel are less apt to change or question current operations, perhaps due largely to the fact that within the CT arena, there is little, if any, room for experimentation and failure. "In government, the environment punishes error more than it rewards excellence, encouraging bureaucracy because it makes it easier to avoid error and to have an excuse when error occurs."⁶⁹ As a result, it is critical that the FBI promote creativity, innovation, and substantial improvements in knowledge management.

- Recommendation: Develop and disseminate the 'story' that great change has been accomplished and continues for the right reasons.

Implementation: The practice of storytelling remains an important mechanism through which knowledge and insight are transferred. Similarly, storytelling remains a vital tool in leading personnel because it

⁶⁸ Kelman, *Unleashing Change—A Study of Organizational Renewal in Government*, 4.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 21.

allows personnel to gain insight into the personal experiences of their leaders. Storytelling should become an integral part of CT training within the FBI. The training coordinators within each Field Office, in combination with the Training Division, CEPDU and METs should ensure the inclusion of this tool in training offered within Field Divisions as well as at the FBI Academy.

- Recommendation: Capitalize on the most viable ready reserve of highly trained CT personnel, specifically the Fly Team, and facilitate their transfer to numerous Field Offices throughout the FBI upon completion of three years of service to the Fly Team. Currently Fly Team Special Agent personnel departing the Counterterrorism Division have only one transfer option, to Washington Field Office, where robust Extraterritorial Squads and Rapid Deployment Teams already possess a variety of specialized CT experience. Instead, Fly Team personnel should be transferred to a wide variety of Field Offices where, as senior agents with extensive training and deployment experience, they can infuse knowledge to less experienced CT personnel.

Implementation: While the Human Resources Division approved the proposal to allow Fly Team personnel to transfer to a range of FBI offices after three years of service to the team, funding for the implementation of this option is not available until 2011. The utilization of other sources of funding would allow the immediate implementation of this program.

Recommendation: Develop an Expert Registry—this registry should include up-to-date information regarding the comprehensive experience of personnel, to include investigations worked, specialized skills, as well as travel and training completed.

Implementation: CEPDU, in coordination with the Training Coordinators in each Field Office, should develop and implement one comprehensive Expert Registry that will provide the most up-to-date information regarding the experiences, training, and qualifications of CT personnel. In February 2009, the Human Resources Branch/Career Path Unit launched a Web-based site called Manage Your Career (MY Career), which has the potential to serve as the foundation for this Expert Registry. Currently a developmental tool, which allows employees to manage their career development, MY Career, allows employees to develop an Individual Development Plan based on competencies to guide the employee from novice to expert in a given field. Similarly, MY Career, if fully developed and utilized among FBI personnel, would allow FBI Executive Management to identify unique or specialized skills rapidly or to identify training gaps that could be addressed by such entities as Mobile Education Teams.

- Recommendation: Develop a comprehensive CT Training and Tracking System—this system would be an important enhancement to the Expert Registry in that it would identify the training of CT personnel, existing gaps and needs for refresher/recertification training, etc. As a result, there would be one mechanism for tracking and ensuring that personnel are being provided the breadth of training they truly need to operate in a variety of worldwide arenas while pursuing terrorism subjects. In the constantly evolving CT arena, it is not impractical to idealize the creation of a system in which personnel working CT matters obtain relevant training, whether Web-based, in-service, through lecture, advanced study, or other methods, on a quarterly basis, as outlined in further detail below.

Implementation: CEPDU, in coordination with Training Coordinators in each Field Office, should develop and implement one comprehensive CT Training and Tracking System to identify and quickly address gaps in CT training. The recently launched MY Career software tool has the potential to become this training/tracking system by incorporating data that is currently disparate or incomplete in the Bureau Personnel Management System (BPMS) and Virtual Academy training records.

- Recommendation: Implement a CT Readiness Index—This project had been led and directed by Associate Executive Assistant Director T.J. Harrington as part of a measurement framework for the CT Career Path. The implementation of this index, in combination with an Expert Registry and an overall repository of training received and deployment experience completed by CT personnel, will provide the strategic framework to truly delineate the strengths and weaknesses of personnel, while providing a baseline of measurement for continued change.

Implementation: CEPDU, in coordination with Training Coordinators in each Field Office and the Career Path Unit should further develop and utilize MY Career as a CT Readiness Index. Updates for the Readiness Index should be made by Training Coordinators on a monthly basis, ensuring the timely entry of information into the index.

- Recommendation: Revise the Training Agent/Mentoring program—The two-year Probationary Agent period, which dictates a wide variety of experiences and requirements to be met by the probationary agent with the guidance of a Training Agent/Mentor, provides a broad foundation for further development as an investigator. While a Probationary Agent is capable of gaining these experiences and meeting these requirements without the assistance of an effective Training Agent/Mentor, why not ensure that the Training Agents/Mentors uphold the highest standards of developing and supporting these new personnel? In reality, mentoring is equated to apprentice schemes, “which evolved to transfer tacit knowledge through observation, coaching and practice and they are not only more

effective than manuals and computer based training, but they are also one of the only ways of embedding and validating knowledge transfer between humans.”⁷⁰

Currently the FBI Career Path Unit is considering methods to improve and standardize this program. One recommendation for consideration would involve utilizing the recommended CT Mobile Education Teams to develop and focus a block of instruction for Training Agents tasked with mentoring new Agents assigned to the CT Career Path.

Implementation: The Human Resources Branch, Career Path Unit, maintains oversight and responsibility for the Probationary Agent and Training Agent programs. By leveraging METs to provide CT training to Training Agents, the FBI would implement a new mechanism to promote at least a minimum baseline for training within the CT realm.

- Recommendation: Utilize the Field Office Training Coordinator Program as a mechanism to promote an enhanced Training Agent/Mentoring program, as well as a forum for promoting the use of Mobile Education Teams regionally.

Implementation: Fully leverage Training Coordinators to create consistency in CT training and mentoring within each Field Office.

- Recommendation: Establish quarterly CT training—The establishment of an Expert Registry, Training and Tracking Database, and CT Readiness Index, which are intended to be addressed through the further development of the MY Career site, will provide the foundation for understanding strengths and weaknesses within the FBI regarding CT training and knowledge management. Through this, a rigorous and comprehensive training regimen should be established to allow personnel to engage in training/knowledge transfer on at least a quarterly basis. The development of Mobile Education Teams as outlined below may provide one mechanism of supporting the quarterly training goal. By building small, but frequent, training blocks, investigations are disrupted less than by longer, less frequent blocks.

Implementation: CEPDU, in concert with the Training Division and Human Resources Branch/Career Path Unit, should develop ample training opportunities to allow for quarterly training of personnel.

- Recommendation: Create a Web-based Center for Lessons Learned, which will become the FBI Center for Lessons Learned—As delineated and developed by the Offices of the Chief Knowledge Officer and the Chief Information Officer, the FBI has initiated the implementation of tools such as SharePoint to facilitate the sharing of lessons learned, identification of gaps, and networking of personnel. As these elements are further

⁷⁰ Snowden, “Just in Time KM—Conceptual Roots and Pragmatic Interventions,” 6.

developed, however, it becomes important for users to be fully cognizant of the fact that “best practices are past practices” and may not provide the most prudent path for current practices in the dynamic counterterrorism arena. Therefore, while this Web-based Center for Lessons Learned through SharePoint as well as future mechanisms offer tremendous opportunities, they should be further supported by the additional, critical facets of knowledge management that are outlined within other sectors of these recommendations.

Implementation: Office of the Chief Knowledge Officer and Office of the Chief Information Officer, in concert with the Counterterrorism Division, should ensure the development and refinement of an FBI Center for Lessons Learned, to include full staffing of the requisite Collection Teams, as well as training to ensure optimal employment of this important tool.

- Recommendation: Spread expertise to Field Offices through the development of Mobile Education Teams comprised of personnel who have completed assignments to the Fly Team, Extraterritorial Squads, Legal Attaches, etc., as well as retirees with broad experience to share. Foster an environment whereby these teams may work within the cynefin network, allowing patterns and gaps to emerge, rather than often being predicted and dictated. While atypical in the field of government operations, this cynefin network provides a foundation that accommodates the ever-changing and unpredictable nature of counterterrorism work. By allowing MET personnel to utilize the chaotic and complicated realms as means to address needs as they arise would provide increased opportunity for the rapid identification of gaps, and the development of programs to address those gaps.

Implementation: Within the Counterterrorism Division, establish two Mobile Education Teams comprised of ten persons who serve as Term Supervisory Special Agents and Intelligence Analysts.

- Recommendation: Spread organizational understanding of and, where possible, link the strategic missions, messages, services and products of such entities as CEPDU, SET and METs, as well as the Special Agent Advisory Committee, Counterterrorism Division Assistant Director’s Advisory Committee, etc.

Implementation: The Program Management Office of the Strategic Execution Team is already geared toward the alignment of initiatives, processes and priorities in order to reach the goals of the SET. By increasing the number of personnel assigned to the Program Management Office of the SET, the missions, messages, services, and products of the aforementioned entities could be simultaneously enhanced and streamlined.

- Recommendation: Link training received and shared to performance appraisals. While knowledge management is part of FBI performance appraisals, under the critical element of Acquiring, Applying and Sharing Job Knowledge, the appraisals are not directly tied to promotion and recognition. By linking training received and applied, as well teaching of lessons learned to the performance evaluations of personnel, substantial growth measures will occur, thereby fostering 'buy in' by a larger percentage of personnel. A similar recommendation, to align performance appraisals with Department of Justice and Intelligence Community Standards is recommended in the February 5, 2008 Federal Bureau of Investigation Director's Strategic Execution Team Briefing for ODNI Staff.⁷¹

Implementation: Human Resources Branch and Counterterrorism Division Strategic Execution Team, in concert with Office of General Counsel and Industrial Psychology reviews for validation as a legally defensible criterion of performance measure.

- Recommendation: Develop a mechanism to review, assess and, where appropriate, implement strategic recommendations that emanate from the studies of personnel in advanced degree programs.

Implementation: The Continuing Education and Professional Development Unit (CEPDU) within the FBI Counterterrorism Division may be a viable option.

- Recommendation: Create a unit within the Counterterrorism Division to develop and guide the implementation of the Mobile Education Teams and to assist in the development of the other proposed recommendations.

Implementation: This new unit should house the recommended Mobile Education Teams, which, in concert with the Counterterrorism Division CEPDU, and the Human Resources Branch Career Path Unit, should continue the development, coordination, and implementation of viable recommendations for change.

- Recommendation: Ensure utilization of the principles of Kelman, specifically leveraging those that are ideologically discontent with the traditional system, exposing them to early wins from the development/implementation of knowledge transfer mechanisms, and utilizing the positive feedback to activate the discontented.

Implementation: For each unit playing a role in the implementation of the aforementioned recommendations, utilize Kelman's principles to leverage and increase support as well as success.

⁷¹ Harrington, Federal Bureau of Investigation Director's Strategic Execution Team Briefing for Office of the Director of National Intelligence Staff, 9.

B. CONCLUSION

As astutely recommended by the 9/11 Commission,

A specialized and integrated national security workforce should be established at the FBI consisting of agents, analysts, linguists, and surveillance specialists who are recruited, trained, rewarded, and retained to ensure the development of an institutional culture imbued with a deep expertise in intelligence and national security.⁷²

It is the aforementioned institutional culture with deep expertise that begs to be fully exploited through the significant overhaul of the FBI CT training program.

Implementation of the recommended elements of the delineated training strategy would ensure that FBI personnel and partner Task Force Officers working CT matters receive necessary training, while also guaranteeing that the expertise held by a finite number of individuals is more adequately exported. Perhaps more importantly, the execution of this strategy would maximize learning by simultaneously promoting self-paced training in combination with classroom instruction, regardless of whether the student is a probationary agent or a CT veteran. By implementing one recommendation, alone, specifically the development and implementation of CT Mobile Education Teams comprised of seasoned CT investigators who are empowered to utilize a broad range of knowledge management tools to identify and address CT knowledge gaps, would ensure significant improvements in the infusion of CT knowledge among FBI personnel.

Historically, the FBI has risen to meet evolving challenges, most recently by further developing itself as a dual law enforcement and domestic intelligence agency. Transforming CT training and enhancing knowledge transfer within the FBI is vital not only in achieving our critical, dual mission, but also in maximizing our preparedness to counter the threat.

⁷² 9/11 Commission Report, 425-426.

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