Chapter 5. Culture Change

We can choose to face the complex challenges of the future as maturing individuals or have change forced upon us with many tears along the way.

SMH, Letters to the Editor, 3 July 2017

5.1 Introduction
Advocates’ delivery of high quality, continuously improving advocacy services to DVA clients will depend, not only their professional knowledge and skills, but also on their attitude to their profession. Understanding what is required at a professional level of performance will engage a culture change process.

5.2 Purpose of Culture Change
Professional behaviours, national consistency, quality assurance, and good governance rely on a shared ethos, which in turn depends on a shared ‘vision’ of military advocacy. Culture change is the process that participants in the military advocacy system will undertake together to achieve that vision.

5.3 Military Advocacy Vision
Change is initiated, and its momentum sustained by participants’ developing and pursuing a ‘vision statement’.

A vision statement is a ‘picture in words’ of what military advocacy needs to be to achieve the ‘best’ outcome for each DVA client. It is the ‘ideal’ that military advocacy aspires to achieve.

5.3.1 Initial Vision Statement
In the absence of a strategic planning workshop engaging all advocates, the CFMG has developed an initial vision that combines the ATDP Blueprint vision and the strategic objectives of DVA’s veteran-centric reform program.¹

The following ‘vision’ will be amended on the basis of stakeholder feedback as the military advocacy system matures:

Self-directing advocates delivering high quality, continuously improving services to DVA clients, working within self-organising CoP that are led by trained, competent and respected mentors, all working within a highly collegial advocacy system.

5.3.2 Embedded Characteristics
The key characteristics that are embedded in the military advocacy vision are:

- DVA clients receiving high quality, continuously improving advocacy services.
- Advocates personally responsible for their own professional performance.

¹ The rationale for the initial advocacy system vision is developed in Beyond Blueprint, para 33 (see Library No. 1).
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- CoP and mentors facilitating professional growth.
- All participants in the military advocacy system working collegially.

5.4 Culture Change System

Culture change requires a systems approach. Participants must accept that they are an integral part of the military advocacy system. Successful attainment of the ‘vision’ and the time taken to achieve it, depends on each participant’s contributions to the system and responsiveness to its demands.

5.4.1 Personal Behaviour Change Model

Culture change at the systems scale is possible only if every individual at the level of personal behaviour is prepared to commit to change. Human dynamics studies show that the first response of 85% of human beings when presented with a situation react emotionally. Feelings will therefore be the primary driver of almost all participants in a change process. Having reacted emotively, each participant then has a personal responsibility to decide why and whether they can and should change their behaviours for the common good. The model below identifies the elements and process needed.

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Feeling
   (about engaging in change and/or prospective outcomes)
PLUS

Information
PLUS

Making sense of information
   (viz. reflecting on experience, analysing data, extracting meaning, abstracting principles)
PLUS

Decision-Making
PLUS

Action-Taking

Outcomes
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5.4.2 Culture Change Map

Culture change engages the following steps:

- First: individual Member’s self-appraise, and each organisation’s members group appraise, the existing elements of culture (values, myths, traditions, objectives and behaviours).
- Second: the existing elements of culture are compared with the aspired end-state elements of culture (‘vision’).
- Third: a ‘gap analysis’ identifies the elements of culture that need to be changed, and the dimensions and direction of change needed.
- Fourth: a change pathway is planned that includes:
  - the inherent flexibility to respond to events as they arise,
  - identification of the activities to be undertaken, and
  - allocation of the resources needed to effect change.
- Fifth: as culture change progresses:
  - distorting influences are countered and constructive influences are exploited,
  - emerging elements of culture are regularly compared with the ‘vision’, and
  - individual and organisational culture change activities are adjusted.

The diagram illustrates the culture change process.

5.4.2 System Requirements

The military advocacy culture change system requires the following:

- Shared vision and clear embedded ethos.
- Silo attitudes shed and full engagement in the VC/ESO-DVA-Defence-ATDP partnership.
- Active collaboration.
- Participation in deliberations and decision-making, including:
  - Top-down: open opportunities to participate.
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- Bottom up: interest in and willingness to participate.
- Delegation of authority and responsibility to lowest practicable level.
- Extensive network, featuring:
  - active communication;
  - links to all participants;
  - a range of media;
  - simultaneous communication of information; and
  - accepted responsibility to forward information to external networks.
- Clear:
  - policy boundaries (‘Why to do’ - on the OMS);
  - procedures (‘What to do’ – this Manual); and
  - freedom to decide 'How to do' (viz., how to implement).
- Mutual trust.
- Clear, flexibly responsive implementation path.

5.5 Pre-requisites for Success

John Kania & Mark Kramer identified the pre-requisites for successful culture change in multi-cultural collectives in the Stanford Social Innovation Review in 2011. Their five principles are:

- All participants must have a common agenda for change, including a shared understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed joint actions.
- Date must be collected and results measured consistently across all the participants to ensure alignment and accountability.
- A plan of action must be prepared that outlines and coordinates mutually reinforcing activities for each participant.
- Open and continuous communication is essential across the many participants to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.
- A body must be formed with the right persons and skill sets must be formed at the core of the initiative to serve and coordinate participants.

5.6 Key Responsibilities

The key responsibilities for culture change in the military advocacy system follow:

- CoP and Workplace Mentors have principal responsibility as agents of change.
- The CFMG Chair is responsible for:
  - SGB ratification of the initial military advocacy vision and ethos; and
  - progressing culture change at the RIG, CoP and VC/ESO advocate levels.
- CFMG and RIG members, learning facilitators and Regional Mentors key actions follow:
The Engagement Task Group will promulgate the initial military advocacy vision and ethos.

Supported by the Engagement Task Group until a system-wide military advocacy ethos and vision have emerged:
- Regional Managers will help VC/ESO executives understand and develop the initial vision and ethos,
- Regional Mentors will help CoP and Workplace Mentors facilitate VC/ASO advocates’ development of the initial vision and ethos, and
- Regional Managers and Regional Mentors will provide feedback to the CFMG on workplace-level development of the vision and ethos.

The NTM will ensure that:
- ATDP course materials contribute to the emergence of the required military advocacy ethos; and
- Learning Facilitators:
  - exemplify the military advocacy ethos, and
  - integrate the vision and ethos into learning facilitation.

National Training Team Learning Facilitators during training will ensure candidates, and Workplace Mentors during CPD will ensure advocates:
- understand the vision and ethos,
- participate in development/refinement of the vision and ethos, and
- incorporate the vision and ethos into their practice.