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**NAVAL  
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**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**MANAGING THE TRANSFORMATION: A CHANGE  
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR U.S. MARINE CORPS  
EXPEDITIONARY ENERGY INITIATIVES**

by

Daniel H. Whitt

December 2017

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**MANAGING THE TRANSFORMATION: A CHANGE MANAGEMENT  
STRATEGY FOR U.S. MARINE CORPS EXPEDITIONARY ENERGY  
INITIATIVES**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

from the

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## ABSTRACT

In a response to the increasing demand for energy that threatens to limit the range and scope of expeditionary operations, the Expeditionary Energy Office spearheaded a campaign to instill a mindset of energy efficiency across the United States Marine Corps (USMC). However, pursuing an organizational change of this type necessitates a structured management process. This research identifies organizational change management approaches, theories, and models that will support the Marine Corps' adoption of energy efficient practices. The work incorporated a meta-narrative analysis to construct a narrative summary of the change management literature and the organizational characteristics of the Marine Corps that contribute to change. The synthesis of these narrative summaries revealed that extant organizational change models do not align with the unique organizational characteristics of the Marine Corps and, therefore, are not sufficient in guiding organizational change. As such, this study introduces the *Portfolio of Change* as a theoretical concept that appropriately structures organizational change for the uniqueness of the Marine Corps. This study also introduces the USMC Model for Change as a guide to developing an approach utilizing the *Portfolio of Change*.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Defense's demand for energy resources grew exponentially between 2000 and 2017. As each service expanded its fleet of aircraft, ships, vehicles and high-tech electronic equipment to meet operational requirements, they incrementally increased their reliance on fuel and power. A study commissioned by the Marine Corps estimated that an infantry company in 2010 was consuming more fuel than an entire 2000-era infantry battalion, a unit five times the size of an infantry company (United States Marine Corps [USMC], 2011a, p. 8). While the technology associated with the materiel is revolutionizing the capabilities of the Armed Forces, the growth rate of fuel-powered equipment coupled with a high operational tempo place a heavy burden on military logistics networks in garrison and across theaters of war.

In 2009, the commandant of the Marine Corps identified energy consumption as a threat to the Marines Corps' ability to remain an expeditionary force (USMC, 2011a, p. 4). Failure to seek out effective energy strategies will force the Marine Corps to trade the advanced warfighting capability found in fuel-dependent equipment for a less capable, but more sustainable expeditionary force. In response to this concern, the Marine Corps established the Expeditionary Energy Office with a mission to "analyze, develop, and direct the Marine Corps' energy strategy in order to optimize expeditionary capability across all warfighting functions" (USMC, 2011a, p. 5). Since its inception, the Expeditionary Energy Office has pursued research initiatives and messaging campaigns to advance the Marine Corps' pursuit of efficient energy strategies.

A Naval Postgraduate School student and faculty members recently published two research studies on efficient energy usage within the Marine Corps that highlight opportunities for furthering the Marine Corps' energy initiatives. Both of these studies also point to a common question of how the Marine Corps should pursue organizational change that will incorporate energy efficiency into the Marine Corps ethos. In their study into human behavior and its influence on effective energy utilization in the Marine Corps, Gallenson and Salem (2014) identified a need for an "ethos change" to sustain effective energy use (p. 42). They concluded that the lack of awareness and knowledge about the

relationship between energy efficiency and mission effectiveness were barriers to garnering buy-in from Marines into efficient energy practices (Gallenson & Salem, 2014, p. 14). Their research suggests that, in addition to practical technical modifications to equipment and energy assessment metrics, the Marine Corps must focus on its organizational culture if it intends to incorporate energy efficiency into its ethos. Peters (2016), in his research into human behaviors and their negative impact on energy consumption within the USMC, echoed some of Gallenson & Salem's arguments for an organizational change strategy that would aid in overcoming some of the individual behaviors retarding the adoption of energy efficiency practices. He further emphasized the need for additional research into the change strategies and approaches that would be the most influential in pursuing this course of action (Peters, 2016, p. 47).

#### **A. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The dynamic demands for energy in the Marine Corps threaten to limit the range and scope of expeditionary operations. The increases in consumption rates manifested by inefficient fuel use place an undue burden on logistical networks by requiring a larger logistical footprint to supply the Marine Corps Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) and increasing the frequency of tactical resupplies. Behaviors such as running vehicles throughout the night to stay warm or poorly estimating fuel requirements can have a compounding effect on the logistics network in the aggregate. Because of the limited space available on amphibious shipping, the addition of fuel life and storage equipment reduces the available embarkation space for combat vehicles, thereby reducing the scope of operations that a deployed unit can accomplish. As seen in the Afghanistan and Iraq theaters from 2001 through 2014, the increase in tactical resupplies across the battlefield places a MAGTF critical requirement—fuel—at a substantial risk to enemy attack.

New technology can temporarily stymie the inefficient use of fuel or other resources, but sustained change is reliant upon the actions of the individual Marine. New equipment, no matter how efficient, is only as good as the operator employing it. For this reason, the implementation guidance for the Marine Corps' Expeditionary Energy Strategy emphasized the need to incorporate energy concepts into the Marine Corps

warrior ethos and train Marines to understand the link between energy and combat effectiveness (USMC, 2014, pp. 31–33). While policies and standard operating procedures are common tools employed to control individual behavior, their enforcement can become challenging as competing operational requirements emerge. Coercion techniques that dictate prescribed behavior will only change individual actions so long as there is a substantial consequence for violation. However, as Gallenson and Salem (2014) noted, altering the mindset of an individual by targeting “personal goals, motivations, attitudes and values, awareness, knowledge, and social influences” (p. 10) will make them more able and willing to change their behavior. Individual Marines must be convinced that energy efficiency impacts their combat effectiveness to such a degree that they are willing to change their behavior.

Changing individual behaviors of more than 180,000 people in an organization with a well-established warrior ethos, ardent cultural values, and a proud history will require finesse and direction. While the importance of energy efficiency and the impact it has on operational reach is apparent to senior leaders, individual Marines should understand their role in the Marine Corps’ energy strategy. Significant changes of structure, capabilities, and procedures will require a central guiding vision that ensures compatibility across the force, but must also allow for adaptability as the environment evolves. The complexity of a shift in behavior such as this begets the need for a managed approach to change that is adaptable to an evolving environment and gains the attention of those who must change.

## **B. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The purpose of this thesis is to build upon prior research into human behavior and its effect on energy consumption by identifying organizational change management approaches, theories, or models that will support the best practices in the adoption of energy efficient practices across the Marine Corps. The base of knowledge is derived using a meta-narrative review technique that examines existing management theories, change management models, and Marine Corps warfighting publications to identify the organizational conditions conducive for change. By targeting the Marine Corps ethos

toward energy efficiency, the recommendations surfacing from this research will help sustain changes into the future.

### **C. RESEARCH QUESTION**

The question we pose with our research is as follows: How can the Marine Corps adapt best practices in change management to fit the unique characteristics and needs of the organization and increase the adoption of new policies, processes, and technologies?

## II. BACKGROUND

This chapter provides background material to serve as a framework for the subsequent literature review into the change management literature and the Marine Corps. The first section is an overview of USMC energy-related policies and highlights the Marine Corps' desire to incorporate energy efficiency into the organization's warrior ethos. The next section addresses the importance of structured change management. The last section of this chapter includes a discussion of characteristics of organizational change management in the public sector and the military.

### A. EXPEDITIONARY ENERGY STRATEGY

Since the establishment of the Expeditionary Energy Office in 2009, the Marine Corps has published several documents that provide the framework and direction for energy programs. The principal publication that conveyed General Amos', then commandant of the Marine Corps, vision for Marine Corps expeditionary energy was the *United States Marine Corps Expeditionary Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan: "Bases-to-Battlefields,"* (USMC, 2011a). This document describes how the Marine Corps will confront the challenge posed by energy dependency and the impact it has on operational reach. It provides a broad vision that serves as a guide for future capability development and describes how the Marine Corps will emphasize the importance of the efficient use of energy. Included in this overarching document are specific goals and metrics that will facilitate organization-wide adoption of energy considerations into the Marine Corps warrior ethos.

#### 1. Vision and Mission

The vision and mission of the *Expeditionary Energy Strategy* (2011a) are as follows:

- Vision: "To be the premier self-sufficient expeditionary force, instilled with a warrior ethos that equates the efficient use of vital resources with increased combat effectiveness" (p. 17).

- Mission: “By 2025 we will deploy Marine Expeditionary Forces that can maneuver from the sea and sustain its C4I and life support systems, which will be more energy efficient than systems are today” (p. 17).

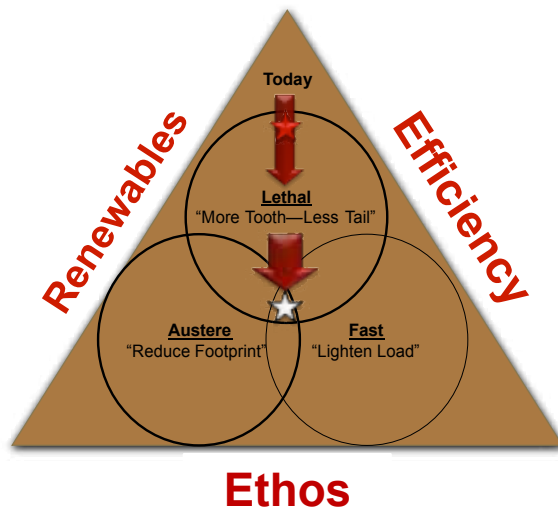


Figure 1. Vision of the Expeditionary Energy Strategy.  
Source: USMC (2011a, p. 17).

As a testament to the radical shift in status quo incorporated in this plan, the Marine Corps energy strategy explicitly calls for “no less than institutional change” if the Marine Corps is to achieve the vision and accomplish the mission set forth (USMC, 2011a, p. 17). This change relies on three lines of effort to shape the future of the Marine Corps. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of how Marine Corps leadership conceptualized this task. At the center of the plan is the task of building a Marine Corps that balances lethality, rapid mobility, and an ability to operate in austere environments. Shaping this future Marine Corps are the three lines of effort: efficiency, renewables, and ethos. The *efficiency* line of effort postures the Marine Corps with appropriate materiel by procuring more energy efficient equipment and upgrading of the current fleet of equipment. The *renewables* line of effort calls for an increase in renewable energy through innovation and adaptation. These two lines of effort are specifically addressed in a subsequent publication titled *Initial Capabilities Document (ICD) for USMC Expeditionary Energy* (USMC, 2011b). The *ICD* is a capabilities-based assessment of

current capability gaps in the Marine Corps' management of energy consumption (USMC, 2011b). It provides materiel and non-materiel solutions to address these capability gaps. The third and final line of effort, *ethos*, calls for the inclusion of an energy efficient mindset into the Marine Corps' warrior ethos. Of the three lines of effort, *ethos* is highlighted as the most "critical" to the success of the mission (USMC, 2011a, p. 17).

## **2. Goals**

While the title of the Marine Corps energy strategy places emphasis on *expeditionary*, or forward deployed energy use, the operational framework provided by the renewable, efficiency, and ethos lines of effort extends the scope of the Expeditionary Energy Strategy beyond expeditionary units to encompass the whole of the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps captures the whole force approach by establishing two overarching goals for the entire organization:

- Embed expeditionary energy into the USMC ethos, and
- Lead and manage expeditionary energy performance. (USMC, 2011a, p. 21)

The goal of embedding expeditionary energy into the Marine Corps ethos echoes the plan's vision and calls for leaders to reinforce the link between combat effectiveness and energy and resource efficiency. The concept underpinning this goal is that by reiterating the importance of energy efficiency to Marines during their everyday activities and by incorporating energy considerations into operations planning and execution, individual Marines will break away from their current mindset and begin to view energy as a finite resource. The second organization-wide goal within this plan calls for the implementation and use of monitoring metrics that will allow leaders to track their energy consumption.

In addition to the two overarching goals within the Expeditionary Energy Strategy, there are two goals specifically geared toward expeditionary operations and four goals specifically geared toward non-expeditionary goals (USMC, 2011a):



Expeditionary (battlefield)

- Increase energy efficiency of weapons systems, platforms, vehicles, and equipment, and
- Meet operational demand with renewable energy. (USMC, 2011a, p.23)

Non-expeditionary (bases and installations)

- Reduce energy intensity,
- Reduce water consumption,
- Increase alternative energy, and
- Reduce non-tactical petroleum use. (USMC, 2011a, p. 23)

### **3. Proliferation of Energy Ethos**

The *ICD* recognized that an energy efficient program necessitates

establishing a permanent ethos throughout the Marine Corps that considers energy and water to be constrained resources and key combat enablers with operational “costs.” As a result: awareness, education, and training form a center of gravity to this capability set. (USMC, 2011b, p. 5)

In order to promulgate the concept of an energy ethos across the organization, the Marine Corps has incorporated the adoption of an energy ethos into other guiding documents and programs. In 2015, the Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics, General Faulkner, introduced the energy ethos campaign in MARADMIN 114/15, *Energy Ethos Campaign and Unit Energy Manager (UEM) Program*, with the primary objective of fostering energy saving behaviors that lead “to a sustained culture of efficient energy use” (USMC, 2015a). The *Installations Energy Strategy* published by Marine Corps Installations Command (MCICOM) in 2015 is one such document that reinforces the need for an *energy ethos* (USMC, 2015b). This document provides clear lines of operations, objectives, and responsibilities for Marine Corps installations and their tenant commands to incorporate energy efficient initiatives into their activities (USMC, 2015b). Underpinning MCICOM’s four lines of effort—energy information,

energy efficiency, renewable energy and alternative fuel, and energy security—is an overarching effort toward instilling an energy ethos (USMC, 2015b).

## **B. IMPORTANCE OF STRUCTURED CHANGE MANAGEMENT**

Over the past few decades, the business environment has grown into a more dynamic and complex arena challenging many organizations to find ways to change and adapt to the new environment or fade out of existence (Burnes, 1996). The emergence of new technology and globalization has spurred an era where, in order to remain competitive, organizations must be nimble and deliberate to remain relevant. The introduction and proliferation of change management theory is a result of organizations and theorists acknowledging the need for a process could help businesses successfully navigate a dynamic environment. Moran and Brightman (2001) defined *change management* as “the process of continually renewing an organization’s direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers” (p. 111). By (2005) describes it as a deliberate process, in which an organization identifies an internal or external threat or opportunity and determines how it needs to adapt to overcome the problem or pursue an opportunity. Creasey and Hiatt (2012) describe change management as the conduit that links solutions to results and allows employees to embrace change and recognize the objectives. These authors also note that people and their collective ability to bring about successful organizational change are critical to the change management process. While organizations today are more apt to recognize the need for change, those that have failed in pursuing change vastly outnumber those who have succeeded at implementing change (Burnes, 1996; By, 2005).

Understanding why change takes place is the first step in recognizing the need for structured change management. Passenheim (2010) suggests that the internal and external environment significantly influences the factors contributing to organizational change. Some examples of the external factors that can influence change are market conditions, the emergence of new technology, government laws and regulations, and economics (Passenheim, 2010). Internal factors include items such as corporate strategy, workforce

design, the adoption of new technology or equipment, and the attitudes of employees (Passenheim, 2010). At the center of any change initiative are the people who must actually alter their behavior for a change to take place. Change itself may illicit a strong emotional response among employees, which may culminate in resistance to the adoption of new behaviors. This, in turn, necessitates a proactive methodology to determine the risk and vulnerability that change inflicts on an organization (Epperson, 2006). Structured change management is the pathway toward mitigating these effects on an organization.

### **C. CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

Implementing organizational change in the public sector is more complex than in the private sector because of the influence of the external environment. Groeneveld, Kuipers, and Van der Voet (2015) describe an organization's external environment as the "relevant physical and social factors that are located outside of the boundaries of the organization and have a bearing on the decision-making processes and behavior of actors with the organization" (p. 291). While external stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, partners, and competitors influence private-sector and public-sector organizations, public-sector organizations must also contend with the influence of political superiors (Groeneveld, et al., 2015; Rainey, 2014). The role of politics in public organizations is characterized by checks and balances, shared power, divergent interests, and the primacy of politics (Boyne, 2002, pp. 101–102). As such, public organizations can find themselves under the influence of political stakeholders that do not always share homogeneous views on how an organization should change. Because the goals of a public organization and the external political stakeholders do not always align, there is a heightened risk of conflicting or ambiguous objectives and disruption of the decision-making process due to political expediency (Boyne, 2002). Because of the political hierarchy, public-sector organizations are at the mercy of political stakeholders due to the influence they can have on the organization as a whole. During an organizational change initiative, conflicting objectives can derail or marginalize the entire change process. In addition to the influence of political superiors, public-sector organizations are subject to a higher level of public accountability and heightened political scrutiny (Rainey, 2014).

The confluence of these external environmental factors contributes to the complexity public organizations must contend with while pursuing a change.

#### **D. CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN THE MILITARY**

Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff (2002), in their book *The Sources of Military Change*, characterize change in the military as at first “paradoxical” (p. 4). They claim the military is generally viewed as traditional in nature, lacking the inclination to pursue radical organizational change that diverges away from proven ideas, strategies, or processes. This view suggests that instead of major organizational change, militaries tend to pursue minor adjustments to their organization (Farrell & Terriff, 2002). However, major organizational change in the military is not as uncommon as many may believe. Over the course of the past century, the Department of Defense and the individual services have pursued several major changes that significantly departed from their previous behaviors. The U.S. Army’s shift to a divisional-based structure as a result of the introduction of nuclear weapons, the Navy’s transition from a battleship-center force to an aircraft carrier–based force, and the Department of Defense’s shift in mentality from conventional warfare to counter-insurgency during Operation Iraqi Freedom all represent significant organizational changes that defy the view of the military as a stagnant, conservative organization.

Change in the military represents an actual change in objectives or goals, adoption of new strategies, or substantial change to organizational structure (Farrell & Terriff, 2002, p. 5). In diagnosing how organizational change occurs in the military, Farrell and Terriff identified three sources of military organizational change: politics and strategy, new technology, and culture norms. Because the military is a component of the public sector, political influence for change is inherent. The primacy of politics over the military and the degree to which warfare is an extension of policy presupposes that a change in political motivations will result in a subsequent change in the military. Secondly, new technology brings about organizational change in the military through the introduction of new capabilities that fundamentally alter how the military needs to function or structure. The Revolution of Military Affairs (RMA) is an example of technology posing as an

instigator for military change. The RMA hypothesis suggests that as new technology such as the nuclear bomb, global positioning system, and precision-guided munitions were introduced to the U.S. military, the Department of Defense changed the way it organized to fight and the strategies it used to wage war.

The third source of military change, according to Farrell and Terriff, are cultural norms. Cultural norms represent the universal set of social rules or beliefs that regulate action within a specific group (Farrell & Terriff, 2002). They are rooted in, and held in perpetuity, through common social practices. Cultural norms are a powerful tool for change in the military because they influence behavior at an individual level (Farrell & Terriff, 2002). If an organization is able to alter its own cultural norms, it is effectively changing how the organization thinks about certain subjects.

### **III. METHODS**

With this research into organizational change management, I sought to extrapolate relevant lessons learned and best practices from the change management body and to distinguish the organizational characteristics of the Marine Corps that facilitate change to develop a change model that will explain how the Marine Corps can better adopt new expeditionary energy initiatives. I divided my research into three parts: a meta-narrative analysis of the change management literature, an analysis of foundational Marine Corps publications, and a synthesis of the two research areas. The meta-narrative analysis highlighted trends within the change management literature across time, and the review of Marine Corps publications provided me with insight into the guiding philosophies that determine how the Marine Corps functions. Through a synthesis of these two areas of research, I was able to conceptualize the similarities and dissimilarities that would provide the justification for a change model tailor-fitted for the Marine Corps. While I describe each part of my research method individually, it was actually an iterative process that involved several returns to each one of the steps.

#### **A. META-NARRATIVE APPROACH TO LITERATURE REVIEW**

A significant challenge to this research endeavor was the breadth and depth of the scholarly research into the topic. As far back as the 1950s, countless scholars and consultants have set out to explain the phenomena of organizational change through an exploration of the various dimensions of change, such as organizational culture, organizational leadership, organizational communication, and organizational design. Over the course of several decades, these scholars derived new theories and models to conceptually describe how change occurs, resulting in what is now a vast and diverse body of change management knowledge. While the growth of the organizational change management literature has led to a greater understanding of change, it has also led to a body of literature with contradictory findings (Burnes, 2004c; By, 2005).

To mitigate the challenge posed by the large body of change management literature, this study applied a meta-narrative approach to a systematic review of the

literature. A systematic literature review supports the collection and synthetization of information across a large body of knowledge by providing structure and methodology to the research process. The meta-narrative approach, developed by Greenhalgh et al. (2005), is a variation of a systematic literature review that first builds a narrative to describe the intricacies of a specific body of knowledge and then uses narrative-interpretive reasoning to extract a significant meaning from the narrative (p. 427).

The meta-narrative analysis is a six-phase process that methodically guided my research foray into organizational change management and the Marine Corp. While phases follow a linear pattern—planning, searching, mapping, source appraisal, synthesis, and finally recommendations—the process itself was designed to be iterative with certain phases blurring into subsequent or previous phases (Greenhalgh et al., 2005, p. 427). The first step in this approach is planning the research. During this phase, Greenhalgh and colleagues suggest that a broad research question should be established to define the initial scope of the analysis. The initial research question for this study focused the scope of this paper into two areas: organizational change and Marine Corps culture.

The second, third, and fourth steps in the meta-analysis—search phase, mapping phase, and source appraisal phase—involved collecting a breadth of sources from the literature that build a diverse contextual foundation of the topic, identifying the key elements, events, and theoretical underpinnings of change management models, and grouping the sources based on common themes. My search within the change management body of knowledge began with a focus on change models and their evolution over time. I searched for articles in academic databases such as EBSCO HOST and JSTOR, the Dudley Knox Library catalog, and Google Scholar, using the search terms *organizational change management, change leadership, organizational development, emergent, planned, change theory, transformational change, and transitional change*. This resulted in 196 articles.

I then read the articles noting the theorist, discipline, and primary change model. During this step, I observed that some change management lexicons varied over time, by theorist, by theorist discipline, and by change model while some remained consistent. This observation led me to focus on how the varying lexicons overlapped and intersected

and also why some categorization methods of change models remained persistent within the literature over time.

During the synthesis phase of the meta-narrative analysis, the sources gathered during the previous phases are blended into comprehensive narratives summarizing each area of research (Greenhalgh et al., 2005). I reviewed the articles, taking notes and building digital mind-maps of the major trends, which I then compiled into a summary narrative for each area of research, including the evolution of change management theories, change categorization, and organizational approaches to change. After constructing the narratives for my research, I reviewed and compared them. This step exposed the overarching narrative within the entire scope of the research. I developed a table categorizing and summarizing the change management literature that I would next use to compare against the characteristics of the Marine Corps that contribute to change, and that I would ultimately use to derive a tailor-fitted model for change.

## **B. ANALYSIS OF MARINE CORPS ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS FOR CHANGE**

Throughout my research into the organizational culture of the Marine Corp, I remained cognizant of my 17 years of immersion into Marine Corps culture and made every attempt to guard against my personal biases when selecting sources. I elected to draw sources for this line of research from Marine Corps doctrine because it is the baseline that guides Marine Corps activities. I searched for publications in the Marine Corps publication library using the search terms *Marine Corps*, *leadership*, *warfighting philosophy*, *adaptability*, *communication*, and *planning process*. This resulted in 10 sources, which were all Marine Corps doctrinal publications.

From the relevant Marine Corps publications, I built a conceptual map of the organizational characteristics that contribute to change. I first relied on the narrative summary built during the review of change management literature to focus my search within the doctrine. Following this focused approach, I expanded my search to identify whether the Marine Corps had any unique characteristics that the change management literature overlooked due to its focus on theory and application to private organizations.



After reading, taking notes, and mind-mapping the themes across all of the publications, I incorporated the key themes into the change management narrative in preparation for the synthesis of all the information.

### **C. SYNTHESIS**

With the narratives from both the change management literature and Marine Corps publications consolidated, I bridged the two data sets through a *conceptual leap* that would eventually lead to the development of a change model. Grounded in abductive reasoning, a conceptual leap is the act of deriving new insights through the connection of two or more previously unrelated ideas (Klag & Langley, 2013). Making a conceptual leap, as described by Klag and Langley, is a balancing act between the tangible things that you know and the ideas that are yet undiscovered. It represents the “a-ha” moment or the answer to a complicated riddle (Klag & Langley, 2013, p. 151). Throughout the synthesis part of my research, my conceptual leaps highlighted the similarities and gaps between the change management literature and organizational characteristics of the Marine Corps. It was an iterative process that slowly built the foundational ideas that I would use to formulate a model for structuring change initiatives within the Marine Corps.

## IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

This purpose of this literature review is to examine change management theories, change management models, and Marine Corps policy to identify the organizational conditions conducive for the different types of, and approaches to, change. This section begins with an examination of the differing types of change an organization may pursue. It includes a discussion of how factors such as the change objective, the life cycle of change, and the need for enduring change shape the foundation of a change strategy and guide the organization toward a specific approach to change. The second part of this chapter synthesizes the trends within the change management literature to build an in-depth narrative of the planned and emergent approaches to change. It contains a discussion of how each approach handles organizational flows of information, assignment of decision-making authority, and workforce participation in order to determine the organizational trends an energy efficiency change model should address. The final part of this chapter provides some insight into how Marine Corps policies, orders, and ethos influence change. The insights gleaned from this literature review inform the follow-on discussion of how the Marine Corps should approach change management and provide examples related to the reduction of fuel use in the Expeditionary Forces.

As a note to the reader, the terms *type of change* and *approach to change* are two different schemas used throughout this paper to aid in the discussion on organizational change. These two terms are not interchangeable, and the subsequent sections describe the nuanced differences between them. However, to arm the reader with a general understanding prior to emersion into the discussion, the term *type of change* refers to a schema that categorizes change initiatives based on the desired end state of the change. The term *approach to change* refers to how an organization fosters the change.

### A. TYPES OF CHANGE

The proliferation of management strategies through a burgeoning business consulting market has drawn out the subtle differences within organizational change and

resulted in multiple ways to differentiate change management models (Kezar, 2013; By, 2005). As theorists devised varying models to address the nuances of organizational change, new jargon was introduced to describe the attributes that determine how change comes about (Kleiner & Corrigan, 1989, p. 26). In 1986, Linda Ackerman (1986) introduced one particular schema that categorized organizational change into three categories: developmental change, transitional change, or transformational change. These categories describe change based on the expected outcome or end state of a change and the process through which the change occurs. Rodrigo Lozano (2012) referred to the differences between Ackerman-Anderson’s categories as the various “pathways” organizations may take towards organizational change (p. 278). Figure 2 provides a graphical depiction of Ackerman’s three different types of change, and the following passages provide more detail on each category.

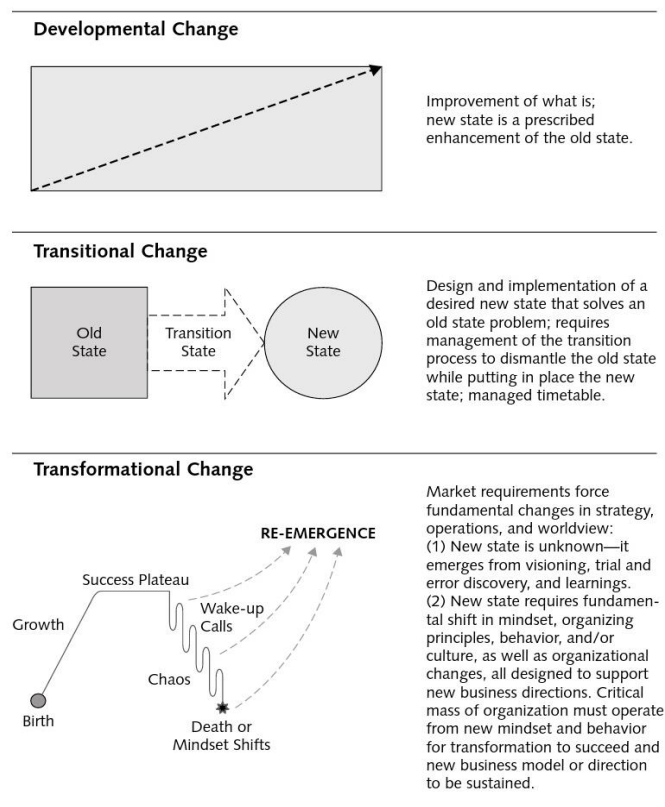


Figure 2. Three Types of Organization Change. Source: Anderson and Ackerman-Anderson (2010, p. 53).

Ackerman's first two types of change, developmental and transitional, are linear change initiatives that have an unambiguous beginning state and end state with a definitive course for change connecting the two. Of these two types, developmental change represents the simplest type of organizational change. Both of these types of change are executed within the framework of what is already known or practiced within an organization and do not require profound modifications to organizational culture, structure, or operations (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010, p. 52). They consist primarily of improvements or enhancements to current operations (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). Kleiner and Corrigan (1989) suggest that developmental changes focus on modifying minor aspects of an organization. The end state or expected outcome of a developmental change is determined primarily by a condition that fails to meet current or future needs. Examples might include changes to existing manufacturing processes to improve efficiency without designing a new production method or refining organizational roles to avoid redundancy without creating new sub-organizations or departments. Overall, developmental changes are negligible in regard to how they impact the organization and the employees (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010).

Transitional change is more complex than developmental change in that, instead of improving an existing process, a change replaces the current state with something entirely different. This type of change involves replacing the current state of being or operating in a new state that is more suited to correct a particular problem or pursue a particular opportunity (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). Examples of transitional change are installation and integration of information technology, divestitures, or reorganizations.

The first theorists to define transitional change were Beckhard and Harris (1987) in their Three States of Change Model (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). In this model, Beckhard and Harris (1987) note a fundamental characteristic of transitional changes: In order to transition to a new state, the previous state must first be completely dismantled. By dismantling the current state, an organization detaches from the previous behaviors that do not meet current or future needs (Lozano, 2012). Beckhard & Harris (1987) refer to the activities involved in the dismantling of the previous state and the

formulation of the new state as the “transition state” (p. 29). They suggested that because of the tenuous circumstances during the transition state, the transition must be planned and methodically conducted so that unwanted behaviors from the previous state are unlearned (Beckhard & Harris, 1987). Figure 2 graphically depicts transitional change and how an organization takes on a different shape following the transitional state.

Developmental and transitional changes are characteristically similar in that they are both linear and predictable. A central tenet of these types of change is the linear path that they both follow. Beckhard and Harris suggest that goals for change and detailed plans are the principle drivers for generating the requisite “organization energy” to achieve a change. As such, prior to entering a transition state, organizational leaders must clearly define what the end state of a change will look like (Beckhard & Harris, 1987, p. 46). Change management theorist William Bridges (2004) summarized this point with the quip, “Every transition begins with an ending” (p. 11). Knowing the start and end point of a change initiative gives these types of change their predictable linear design (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010; Kleiner & Corrigan, 1989). Managers of developmental or transitional change are able to design and plan a path for change that creates a stable and controlled environment for the organization and its employees (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). By defining the desired future state and establishing plans to guide the organization to achieve this state, the paths that developmental and transitional change follow become predictable for organizational leaders.

Transformational change is fundamentally different from developmental and transitional change because the objective of a transformational change is the creation of a “new state of being,” without having a clear picture of the final state prior to initiating change (Ackerman-Anderson, 1986). Kezar and Eckel (2002) further the explanation of this type of change by noting that organizational transformation “alters the culture of the institution by changing select underlying assumptions of institutional behaviors, processes and products” (p. 762). Used to overhaul strategy, structure, or culture, transformational change requires a shift in behavior and mindset at the individual and organizational level (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). While human and cultural variables are present to some degree in developmental and transitional change,

transformational change leverages these aspects in order to effect change (Boonstra, 2008, pp. 10–12).

Transformational change is the preferred type of change when external environmental change is so rapid and significant that the desired end state must remain in a state of flux to keep pace (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). When facing a dynamic market environment in constant change, managers are challenged to establish a well-defined end state that will enable the organization to survive. The non-linearity of transformational change allows an organization to embark on a path toward change that expects end states to emerge throughout the process of change. Lorenzo describes this process as a “new order” out of a “chaos” (Lozano, 2012, p. 278). Using this method, an organization can morph into an end state that is adaptive to the chaotic and dynamic environment. Because there is not a prescribed time that an end state will manifest, transformational change appears to be a continuous cycle of change.

Consequential to the linear, planned nature of developmental and transitional change is an assumed reduction in risk during the transition when compared to a transformational change. While the scope or size of the change initiative, the organizational culture, the communication flow, and the level of management engagement during the transition will ultimately determine the risk of a change initiative, the presence of a well-articulated plan for change reduces the resistance and risks of change (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). Transformational change, on the other hand, embodies more risk. Its non-linear structure, with a vision instead of a defined end state to guide the organization through change, has the potential risk of organizational breakdown (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010; Kleiner & Corrigan, 1989).

In summary, Anderson & Ackerson-Anderson’s (2010) classification schema provides a way to view change as a product of how the end state of change is described and of how the linearity of the change initiative is handled. The principal differences between the main categories are whether change initiatives have a known or unknown end state and whether change initiatives have a predictable or unpredictable path toward change. While both the developmental and transitional types of change have known end states prior to their initiation and follow a planned and predictable path toward a new

state, transformational change initiatives follow an unpredictable path in which the end state emerges as change is pursued.

The Marine Corps Expeditionary Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan explicitly states that the organization's intent to "create a new ethos regarding energy" (USMC, 2011a, p. 46). This falls outside of the characteristics of *developmental* change previously discussed. However, the creation of a new ethos does fall within the purview of both transitional and transformational change because they both describe change in which a new state is replacing the current state. Therefore, the developmental type of change is not involved in any further discussion, and the balance of this discussion is focused solely on the transitional and transformational types of change.

## **B. APPROACHES TO CHANGE**

As mentioned in the opening of this chapter, *type of change* and *approach to change* are two different schemas used to categorize change. This section on the approaches to change is focused on how an organization fosters and pursues change. For ease of reading, this section explains each approach to change by contrasting attributes across four categories: leadership, employee involvement, information flow, and intra-organizational relationships. Leadership is a necessary part of initiating and driving change, and rather than navigating the numerous theories of leadership, this review is focused on the trends, attributes, and actions of leaders during each approach. The second attribute, employee involvement, is relevant because it influences the level of individual resistance and adaptability. The discussion in this section contrasts how each approach to change is influenced by, or influences, non-management employees within an organization. Information flow is a third contributor to change. The section on information flow includes a discussion of the programmatic and participatory traits active during each of the approaches to change and also of the structure of communication during each approach. Finally, this section analyzes the characteristics of intra-organizational relationships and how different organizational structures influence the pursuit of change. These organizational relationships provide insight into how each approach contends with the sharing of knowledge and ideas throughout and organization.

The key points for each approach to change are detailed in Table 1 as a comparative summary. Also included in Table 1 are the key points regarding the Marine Corps' organizational culture as it relates to change. The discussion of the Marine Corps' organization characteristics follows this section. However, this table provides the reader with a glimpse into how the Marine Corps' organizational culture shares similar characteristics with both approaches to change.



Table 1. Comparative Summary

	Planned Change	Emergent Change	Marine Corps
<b>Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Controlled environment</li> <li>- Episodic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dynamic environment</li> <li>- Continuous</li> </ul>	Continuous/episodic
<b>Leadership</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides the plan</li> <li>2. Supervises</li> <li>3. Management skills</li> <li>4. Risk minimization</li> <li>5. <b>Leaders are the agents of change</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides vision</li> <li>2. Guides/mentors</li> <li>3. Emotional intelligence</li> <li>4. Risk tolerant</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides vision</li> <li>2. Mentors</li> <li>3. Positional power</li> <li>4. Risk avoidance</li> <li>5. <b>Middle management are the agents of change</b></li> </ol>
<b>Employee Involvement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Minimal decision making authority</li> <li>2. Compliance</li> <li>3. Assumes consensus</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participative in decision making</li> <li>2. Improvisation</li> <li>3. Personalized change strategies</li> <li>4. <b>Employees are the agents of change</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decision-making within guidance</li> <li>2. Improvisation</li> <li>3. Develops the plan</li> </ol>
<b>Information flow &amp; Knowledge Generation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unidirectional</li> <li>2. Need-to-know</li> <li>3. Consolidated with decision makers</li> <li>4. Select experimentation personnel</li> <li>5. Informed decisions</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Omnidirectional</li> <li>2. Transparent</li> <li>3. Shared across the organization</li> <li>4. Encourages experimentation</li> <li>5. Sense-making</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formal: Unidirectional Informal: Lateral</li> <li>2. Need-to-know</li> <li>3. Consolidated with decision makers</li> <li>4. Select experimentation personnel</li> </ol>
<b>Intra-Organizational Relationships</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compartmentalized</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaborative</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compartmentalized</li> </ol>

## **1. The Planned Approach to Change**

The planned approach to change first gained attention in the organizational development discipline when Kurt Lewin (1947) published his three-step model for social change in a 1947 article titled “Frontiers in Group Dynamics: Concept, Method, Reality in Social Science; Social Equilibria and Social Change.” While Lewin did not publish this model for explicit use in organizational change, it has become the seminal work of modern planned change, inspiring numerous theorists to explore his concepts and develop similar, more refined, versions of the model (Cummings & Worley, 2001). The tenants of the three-step model are derived from Lewin’s early research into field theory, group dynamics, and action research (Burnes, 2004b; Bamford & Forrester, 2003). His research into field theory and group dynamics focused on the complexities of how and where group behavior occurs and how it can be influenced (Burnes, 2004b). This research led to three conclusions: the increased importance of influencing group behavior over influencing individual behavior when pursuing change, the importance of understanding the complexities of group dynamics in order to develop methods to influence behavior, and the assumption that organizations are stable entities (Burnes, 2004b; Groeneveld et al., 2014). Burnes (2004b) notes that this research “recognizes that successful action is based on analyzing the situation correctly, identifying all the possible alternative solutions and choosing the one most appropriate to the situation at hand” (p. 887). By (2005) suggested that Lewin’s research into field theory and group dynamics paved the theoretical pathway for his three-step model. This model purported that change is accomplished by moving from an unsatisfactory state to a desired future state (By, 2005). The model proposes that change results when an organization unfreezes itself from an unsatisfactory state or discards unsatisfactory behavior, moves to a new state by learning new behavior, and then refreezes or institutionalizes the changes (Burnes, 2004a).

The precepts of the planned change approach, initially inspired by Lewin’s work, are that organizations exist in generally stable environments prior to and after change, the objective of change must be known prior to a change, and individuals within an

organization conform to the change (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 2004b; Groeneveld et al., 2014). The stable state of an organization implies that the need for change is episodic and not continual (Bamford & Forrester, 2003). Weick (2000) describes this type of change as “threat-driven,” wherein change is initiated in response to external or internal stimuli (p. 227). According to Weick (2000), an organization will change only when it encounters a stimulus. At all other times, it exists in a stable environment. When a threat is encountered, prior to initiating change, the organization must analyze the situation and detail a desired future state in order to provide a clear objective of change (Cameron & Green, 2012; Groeneveld et al., 2014). Knowing the objective allows change leaders to formulate a deliberate plan of incremental changes that will enable the attainment of a desired future state that allows them to contend with a problem or opportunity (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Weick, 2000).

A general theme among these planned change precepts is the ability to control the change process. This has in turn led to planned change theories focused on programmatic and methodical processes such as Kotter’s 8-step change model, Bullock and Batten’s model for planned change, and William Bridges model for managing transitions (Cameron & Green, 2012; By, 2005). Hierarchical organizations with a top-down approach to management have leaned toward the planned approach to change because of their ability to keep organizations, including people and tasks, in an orderly state (Leavitt, 2005, p. 46). Such organizations are characterized by centralized decision making, minimal employee involvement in decision making, and minimal cross-functional coordination. These characteristics align with the underlying theme of control found in the planned change approach (Leavitt, 2005, p. 46). Change management theorists during the 20th century, when top-down organizations were more prevalent, developed models that leveraged the characteristics of hierarchical organizations in order to enact change.

*a. Planned Change: Leadership*

Planned change places a premium on the skills and talents of an organization’s leadership. A leader’s or manager’s capacity and ability to plan, implement, evaluate, and make decisions regarding a change initiative is critical to an organization’s success

(Peters & Waterman, 1980). Prior to a planned change, the leader is responsible for charting the course for change as well as the end state. Without the necessary talents and skills to make this first step, a planned change initiative would not get off the ground. During the transition phase of a change initiative, the leader acts as the “prime mover” or change agent that drives the organization toward change (Van der Voet, Groeneveld, & Kuipers, 2014). Managers must possess not only the skills and foresight to determine what the organization needs to change and how the organization will change, but also the skills necessary to motivate employees to change (Battilana, Gilmartin, Sengul, Pache, & Alexander, 2010).

To implement planned change, leaders must be able to consolidate decision making. Centralized decision making refers to the limited authority granted to subordinate employees to exercise disciplined initiative (Wong, Ormiston, & Tetlock, 2011). The power to make decisions is concentrated in the hands of the select few within the upper echelons of the organizational hierarchy. The lower rungs of the pyramid are responsible for execution, supervision, and the providing of information to the decision makers (Boonstra, 2008). Wong et al. (2011) suggest that because a small group of leaders share the same information, “there should be less conflict and need for consensus building,” thus making the decision-making process faster (p. 2010). However, decision makers are restrained by the process in which information flows to them from the lower echelons. The motivation of employees to gather and submit information has a direct influence on the speed at which senior management can receive, synthesize, and decide. Because of this influence, centralized decision making may have a negative influence on the change management process, specifically transformational change, by retarding the organization’s ability to make rapid adjustment.

Control of the change process, incumbent in the planned change approach, serves as a stabilizing force that minimizes the risks of change and resistance to change. Leaders mitigate risk during change through centralized decision making and thorough planning. The consistency and stability brought about by these levers help shield the organization and its employees from a dynamically changing external environment and provide focus (Weick, 2000). Because a plan for change is often a foreign idea to front-line workers, the

leader must possess the ability to motivate and generate the confidence in the proposed change initiative in order to overcome resistance (Talim, 2012).

***b. Planned Change: Employee Involvement***

Employee involvement in decision making, whether directly or indirectly, has an influence on the level of commitment an employee will have towards change. John Hayes (2014), author of *The Theory and Practice of Change Management* offered, “Top-down strategies are more likely to foster compliance, which can evaporate when the pressure to maintain the change is eased, whereas more involving strategies can win a higher level of commitment that is more likely to be sustained” (p. 34). Expectancy Theory is premised on the notion that individuals will choose the course of action that they feel gives them the most benefit (Isaac, Zerbe, & Pitt, 2001, p. 212). Hayes applied this theory to change by arguing that an employee who does not feel part of the “process” will fail to cognitively connect their actions as contributing to the change process (Hayes, 2014, p. 246). Deci, Connell, and Ryan (1989) explain that an employee’s commitment to change is directly related to their inter-self, or ego. If they no longer feel in control of their own actions through the use of coercive tactics, their ego will protest, resulting in resistance to change (p. 580).

***c. Planned Change: Information Flow***

The flow of information within an organization embarking on a change initiative is influenced significantly by the role leadership plays during change. In their research, Van der Voet et al. (2014) noted that when planning and implementing a planned change initiative, managers tended to adopt a top-down communication strategy in order to reduce ambiguity and resistance (Van der Voet et al., 2014). In a top-down communication or programmatic-based strategy, the flow of information from leaders to employees is focused on explaining the urgency for change by imposing the values or beliefs on workers (Collins, 1996; Russ, 2008). This strategy is designed to “tell” the employees about the change so they are “aware” (Russ, 2008). This communication strategy is widely used during planned change because it ensures that employees are

equally aware of the plan for change and serves as a means of preventing obstacles created by non-compliance.

*d. Planned Change: Intra-Organizational Relationships*

Hierarchical organizations maintain consistency in decision making and strategy by consolidating decision making at the top of the organization and reducing the need for cross-organization collaboration. The authors of the article titled “A Functional Model of Hierarchy: Why, How, and When Vertical Differentiation Enhances Group Performance” argued that top-down organizations are successful because distinct divisions of labor and centralized decision making are more efficient means of organizational coordination (Halevy, Chou, & Galinsky, 2011). Because the decision makers bear the sole responsibility for ensuring that the actions of one sub-component do not interfere with an adjacent sub-component, they must be aware of all actions with the organization. Given the ambiguous path that a transformational change follows, decision makers in this scenario face the challenges of receiving and synthesizing a large amount of information and providing sufficient guidance for the organization to follow.

**2. The Emergent Approach to Change**

The underlying precept for the emergent approach to change is that because change is ongoing, continuous, and cumulative, detailed plans are not sufficiently adaptive to meet the challenges of a complex environment (Kickert, 2010; Weick, 2000). As Kickert and Weick note, the complexity of problems facing organizations has grown with the spread of globalization and the infusion of technology, impacting business decision making and operations. Today, the interconnectedness of multiple decision variables is recognized as either directly or indirectly influencing the outcome of our decisions or actions. The emergent approach to change evolved from the need to become more nimble and adaptive in the dynamic business environment. This approach is suited to keep pace with the complex dynamics of the business environment by focusing on opportunity-driven decisions that are responsive and swiftly implemented (Chidiac, 2013; Weick, 2000).

Organizational scholars began to focus on complexity during the 1960s when General Systems Theory became the dominant model to explain organizational theory (Cummings & Worley, 2014; Grobman, 2005, p. 356). It arose from a realization that, when facing a complex problem, the control metrics used in planned change place too much reliance on the manager (Bamford & Forrester, 2003, p. 548). As noted by Higgs and Rowland (2005), the emergent change management literature tends to adopt both evolutionary and complexity perspectives that do not conform to linear and predicative models (p. 125). Theories like the “butterfly” effect were modified to explain how multiple changes throughout a system could result in a multitude of different outcomes. This perspective of organizational complexity led to the application of Complexity Theory and adaptive systems perspectives to explain how and why we achieve certain outcomes (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997; Grobman, 2005; Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Shaw, 1997). These perspectives presume that the complex nature of systems allows organizations to survive in perpetuity with minimal intervention (Reynolds, 1987). As such, the literature on emergent change portrays the organizational environment as a continuum of independent, open-ended, and unpredictable actions that cannot be efficiently structured or planned (Kickert, 2010, p. 495). Doing so would mean the calculation of millions of expected outcomes (Cummings & Worley, 2014). Weick (2000) contends that to do so would not only be an insurmountable task, but would also underestimate the value of innovative sense-making and the ability to conduct experimentation.

*a. Emergent Change: Leadership*

The role of leadership during emergent change is to set the conditions for adaptive change by ensuring employees understand the problem, know the general plan for the organization, and are able to adapt. Notably, leadership places less emphasis on detailed plans to overcome a challenge and more emphasis on developing a *vision* that describes the general path the organization will use to overcome a challenge. The vision of an organization is similar to the solid lines on a highway in that they do not limit which lane you must travel in, but they do keep you on the road. Organizational visions with wide latitude for innovation rely on the ability of employees to adapt. Specifically, employees

must be able to make decisions based on their understanding of the organization's vision. While decentralized decision making allows for organizations to quickly adapt to the complexity of change, a side effect is an increased risk for desynchronization across an organization as employees innovate new ways to overcome challenges. Therefore, leaders who guide their organizations through emergent change tend to possess higher risk tolerance thresholds.

To mitigate the perils of planned change in a complex environment, emergent approaches rely on a vision to guide an organization through change. The vision that directs a planned change initiative tends to be more specific and only provides a pretext to account for changes that may be incidental to planned change (Weick, 2000). However, the vision within an emergent approach is focused on sense-making. That is, it reframes the desired change as a primary action (Kickert, 2010, p. 496). As described by Orlikowski (1996), it is "guiding toward the realizations of a new pattern of organizing in the absence of precise a priori intentions" (p. 65). Vision, in this sense, is not prescriptive or a desired end state of a change initiative, but an open-ended challenge that propels continuous change. The leaders within an organization are the nexus for the vision. They create the overarching direction (the big blue arrow in military operations planning) and they ensure a common understanding of the operational environment. A vision will arm employees with sufficient guidance to institutionalize individual adaptive behaviors, inform decision making, and also encourage innovation.

To pursue change within a complex environment, leaders build adaptive behaviors in individuals and organizations by guiding, not directing. The emergent change approach involves the distribution of authority throughout the organization (Van der Voet et al., 2014, p. 185). In this type of organization, leaders amass their informal power from their followers. In Van der Voet et al.'s (2014) study of the role of leadership, they found that even the perception of hierarchical authority will result in the slower adoption of change. This is not to say that emergent change disregards the necessity of authority within an organization. Rather, as Maimone and Sinclair (2014) suggests, leaders who are pursuing an emergent approach to change must manage the authority boundary and adopt a delegation leadership style (p. 349). This suggests that by



de-centralizing authority and empowering the employees, the leader's role transitions to that of a guide for employees (Chidiac, 2013, p. 466; Maimone & Sinclair, 2014, p. 349). Volberda and Lewin (2003) broadened this view by describing leaders as the stewards of change. In both cases, the literature points to the trend that emphasizes the need for leaders to adopt the role of the "shepherd" and to choose the carrot over the stick.

When viewed through the framework of complexity theory, it can be rationalized that the emergent change approach needs more people to make decisions in order to navigate the continuously changing environment. Leadership during these change initiatives merely ensures that the collective group is moving in generally the same direction (Cummings & Worley, 2014). The role of managers during change is not to plan, but to set the conditions for change by fostering a climate that encourages experimentation and risk-taking (Bamford & Forrester, 2003, p. 557). As such, the leader must possess a risk tolerance threshold that assumes that some experiments or risky decisions will not yield positive results.

Relying on managers to synthesize and act on a large volume of information unnecessarily exposes the organization to risk, including lags in implementation and slowness in adapting to additional changes (Burnes, 2004a; Weick, 2000, pp. 226–227). Instead of managing risk, emergent change management produces flexible strategies that allow subordinates "to be treated as active subjects who make sense of situations, take responsibility and make decisions and judgements, detect and correct errors and solve problems" (Kuutti, 1996, pp. 178–79). By incorporating the entire workforce into the change process, emergent change strategies can provide plans without explicit intentions by relying on the employees' "adaptive" behaviors to address the problem (Brown & Osborne, 2012, p. 92; Weick, 2000, p. 226).

***b. Emergent Change: Employee Involvement***

Organizations adopting an emergent approach to change are able to adapt to continuous change in complex environments because of active employee participation in the change process. Employee involvement in the change process cultivates an atmosphere that encourages initiative and improvisation by transferring ownership of the

change initiative to the individual. The resulting effect is the active engagement of individuals in the change.

Experimentation, creativity, and innovation are behaviors that typify the emergent approach and are used to connect the change with the members of an organization (Chidiac, 2013; Maimone & Sinclair, 2014). Sims and Sims (2002) note that making the responsibility of change a joint venture between management and employees provides a framework for “enthusiastic” involvement with the change (p. 44). There is a subtle difference between participating in change and being the subject of change. The latter connotes having a person’s views, decisions, and opinions thrust upon another person with or without consent. Participation with change, however, denotes a certain amount of individual freedom in how change is brought about. The emergent approach seeks to pool the individual ideas from across an organization to build diversity in change. A complex environment that perpetuates change, employee ownership of the change problem, higher risk thresholds within the organization, and a collaborative work environment stimulate a culture of creativity (Chidiac, 2013; Maimone & Sinclair, 2014). However, this does not imply that acceptance to change will be automatic. Emergent change leaders must also set the conditions to support the personal responsibility and empowerment of individuals within the organization (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010).<sup>1</sup>

Empowerment and personal responsibility are a means to help individuals subdue their resistance to change and begin to make sense of the change. Increasing the involvement of employees in the change process not only helps break down barriers, but also establishes a personal connection with the organization and the change itself (Sims & Sims, 2002, p. 44). The emphasis on individual initiative during the emergent approach fosters a personal connection with change as it allows an individual to determine the best way their personal attributes can contribute to the change (CEB, 2016). The convergence

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<sup>1</sup> “Personal responsibility is acknowledging that we are the source of all of our internal reactions and the behaviors, style, and outcomes they produce. . . . Personal empowerment is the ability to step outside of our ego’s comfort zone to make positive things happen and deliver results” (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010, p. 179). For a more comprehensive discussion of ego as it relates to organizational change, see Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson (2010).

of individual initiative and empowerment with the urgency for organizational change generates what Chidiac (2013) refers to as “co-created change.” This is an effect created when the motivation of the individual and organization are aligned and moving in the same direction.

To perpetuate the urgency for change and to keep the organization moving toward the desired vision, the emergent approach relies on engagement with the change initiative across the organization. The placement of change agents throughout an organization, from the grass-roots level to management, fosters a culture of employee empowerment that contributes to effective change (Brinkhurst, Rose, Maurice, & Ackerman, 2011, p. 340). A study conducted to evaluate the appropriate placement of change agents to implement sustainability initiatives on college campuses found that distributing the agents at the top, middle, and bottom of the organization was the most effective method (Brinkhurst et al., 2011, p. 344).

*c. Emergent Change: Information Flow*

Synchronizing individual decisions and actions in a complex environment across an organization poses a challenge to any change initiative. Without a dynamic flow of information, the change initiative would rely on multiple independent behaviors chaotically navigating change. The literature on emergent change extensively discusses the communication web that enables practitioners to pursue this type of change. The general theme throughout the literature is that emergent change relies upon the interaction of interdependent agents across the organization. This section includes a discussion of the trends of information flow, specifically, how the structure of bottom-up organizations facilitate communication, why interpersonal connections foster acquiescence to change, and the importance of omnidirectional feedback loops.

The organizational structure and culture of bottom-up organizations facilitate horizontal interaction by eliminating barriers to lateral communication. Brown and Eisenhardt (1997), in their study of continuous and emergent change, found that organizational arrangements that were well-enough defined to facilitate organization and

coordination, but that were also loosely bound, allowed organizations to remain adaptive in a chaotic environment.

In addition, collaborative communication is a necessity within emergent change. Open dialogue can mitigate uncertainty surrounding a change and increase trust (Cummings & Worley, 2014). Collaborative communication also facilitates intense communication by capitalizing on the synergy created by utilizing individuals with a diversity of perspectives, skills, and hierarchical seniority (Cummings & Worley, 2014). Structuring an organization to facilitate extensive communication creates the freedom for improvisation (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997; Cees & Aarts, 2011, Leeuwis & Aarts, 2011). The emergent approach to change fosters this behavior by emphasizing informal communication networks (Chidiac, 2013).

The interpersonal communication fostered during emergent change in a bottom-up organization is a catalyst for additivity across an organization. To understand how emergent change influences behavior, you must first acknowledge that an organization is not the primary entity undergoing change. Rather, organizations are a social construction comprised of individuals who are undergoing change (March & Simon, 1958; Silvester, Anderson, & Patterson, 1999; Weick, 1995). Communication is one of the bridges that facilitates the acceptance of change because it explains intent, describes possible outcomes, and makes agents aware of conditions that could affect them (Kitchen & Daly, 2002, p. 50). An employee who understands the change and connects to the social structure will be able to overcome resistance and accept the change (Proctor & Doukakis, 2003, p. 274). However, connecting with the social structure of an organization is more than where you are located in the hierarchical structure. It comes from how an organization fosters communication throughout its structure.

Another communication factor that increases the effectiveness of change communication during the emergent approach is the feedback loop. The open dialogue structure discussed in the preceding paragraph not only allows for innovative behavior, it sets the conditions for adaptability by shortening the decision cycle. The reduction of horizontal barriers connects multiple decision makers and allows for more rapid coordination of decisions across the organization (Weick, 2000). This phenomenon

increases the overall situational awareness of all agents participating in change and allows them to build a better picture of how their actions could influence decisions throughout the organization (Chidiac, 2013; Kitchen & Daly, 2002). The interaction between employees creates a dynamic of “co-evolution,” in which individuals learn to adapt to the environment and cooperate with each other to improve the probability of an outcome (Grobman, 2005, p. 368). However, inter-dependence and distributed decision-making authority may present a challenge in coordinating the pursuit of the overall vision.

*d. Emergent Change: Intra-Organizational Relationships*

Organizations pursuing emergent change may be structured in many ways. The emergent change approach does not change the physical structure; rather, it challenges how the organization views the structure (Grobman, 2005). The emergent change approach embraces collaborative and interconnected relationships across the organization. The catalyst for these behaviors is the communication network discussed in the previous section. Through open communication, individuals across the organization are able to pool, ally, and link resources, ideas, and general knowledge (Kanter, 2007). The interactions between different parts of the business precipitate inter-dependence and allow for different parts of the organization to work together to forge change. The act of collaboration develops a co-create approach to change wherein agents build upon each other’s inputs to generate the next change (Chidiac, 2013; Sims & Sims, 2002). Through the sharing of knowledge across organizational boundaries, a community is created that builds tighter bonds and trust (Chidiac, 2013; Maimone & Sinclair, 2014; Sims & Sims, 2002). It is this complex engagement of multiple agents with differing goals, positions, and interests that creates the atmosphere for change and cultivates an adaptive mindset (Kickert, 2010; Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010; Sims & Sims, 2002).

**C. MARINE CORPS ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

Like war itself, our approach to warfighting must evolve. If we cease to refine, expand, and improve our profession, we risk becoming outdated, stagnant, and defeated.

—General Alfred Gray (1997, Preface)

Over the past 100 years, the Marine Corps has moved through some significant changes, such as the development of amphibious operations, the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) concept, and maneuver warfare. Each of these changes has had a profound influence on how the Marine Corps operates on today's battlefield. This section seeks to describe how the Marine Corps' doctrinal philosophies and the standards that guide Marine behavior influence the organization's ability to change. To highlight the similarities and differences between the planned and emergent approaches to change and how the Marine Corps is structured to change, this section carries over the categories used in the previous discussion. Table 2 provides a summary of the highlight from this section.

To understand the Marine Corps' approach to change management, consideration must first be given to the bureaucratic and hierarchical nature of the organization. Carl von Clausewitz's description of war as "the continuation of politics but with other means" provides insight to the subservience of the military to politics, or to politicians in general (as cited in Soeters, van Fenema, & Beeres, 2010, p. 3). In order to fulfill their statutory obligation, civilian leadership within both the executive and legislative branches dictate the military's operations and conduct through policy and law, respectively. This serves two main purposes: First, they ensure military actions reflect societal values and, secondly, they prevent the organization from succumbing to pitfalls such as nepotism, corruption, or general organization misbehavior (Feaver, 2009, p. 4). The accumulation of regulations aimed to prevent problems has, in turn, imposed a bureaucratic system on the military that developed into a culture of "stovepipes" and "red-tape" (Soeters et al., 2010, p. 5). While the bureaucracy of our civil-military relationship did not create the military's long-standing hierarchical structure, it set a tone at the upper echelons of the organization that fosters the structure.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Marine Corps Contributing to Change

	Marine Corps
<b>Environment</b>	Continuous/episodic
<b>Leadership</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provides vision</li> <li>2. Mentors</li> <li>3. Positional power</li> <li>4. Risk avoidance</li> <li>5. Middle management as the agents of change</li> </ol>
<b>Employee Involvement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decision-making within guidance</li> <li>2. Improvisation</li> <li>3. Develops the plan</li> </ol>
<b>Information flow/ Knowledge Generation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formal: Unidirectional Informal: Lateral</li> <li>2. Need-to-know</li> <li>3. Consolidated with decision makers</li> <li>4. Select experimentation personnel</li> </ol>
<b>Intra-Organizational Relationships</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compartmentalized</li> </ol>

In 1989, then commandant of the Marine Corps, General Gray, introduced Fleet Marine Force Manual 1, *Warfighting* (FMFM-1), as the Marine Corps philosophy of warfighting. The contents of this document were the result of a decade of internal debate and experimentation by Marine Corps “maneuverists” who sought to reshape how the organization thought about and approached warfare (Damian, 2001, p. 3). The manual describes the theoretical and enduring concepts that underpin how the Marine Corps will pursue maneuver into the future. Because FMFM-1 focused on shaping the warfighting mindset of Marines, it consequently altered the culture of the organization (Damian, 2001). Although this manual was renamed Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1 (MCDP 1) in 1997 by General Charles Soeters (USMC, 1997), it maintained the original guidance that set the stage for the Marine Corps transformation to maneuver warfare. In the forward of MCDP 1, General Krulak noted how the philosophy detailed in the manual dictates how Marines approach duty in war, in crisis, and in peace (USMC, 1997). It is

from this manual that a theoretical explanation of the Marine Corps' organizational characteristics that influence change can be extracted.

## **1. Leadership**

The philosophy of Marine Corps leadership is focused on decentralized command and control and the value of human capital. In order to manage uncertainty, disorder, and the dynamic environment, the Marine Corps relies on the competence of subordinate commanders to control their organizations within the commander's intent, but without directives from senior leaders (USMC, 1997, p. 78). While decentralized command and control highlights the reliance on subordinate leaders, it also emphasized the importance of a leader's ability to provide his subordinates with an "intent" that incorporates that overall concept of their task. A commander's intent is the mechanism that allows subordinates to understand the "larger context of their actions" (USMC, 1997, p. 89). Similar to the "vision" described during the emergent approach to change, *intent* is the idea that guides the actions and decisions of the employees to ensure the organization is moving in generally the same direction. Leaders must possess the cognitive and personal skills to both conceive an intuitive intent and convey the information to their subordinate leaders.

The conveyance of the commander's intent from senior to subordinate leader relies on trust between both parties. To develop trust, MCDP 1 highlights the importance of establishing long-term working relationships through mentorship (USMC, 1997). The Marine Corps Mentorship Program, MCO 1500.58, emphasizes MCDP 1's need for investment in human capital by formalizing how Marine Corps leadership teaches middle managers/subordinate leaders to work within intent and to build trust. Leaders in the Marine Corps are expected to teach subordinate leaders to use "sound and timely judgement" (USMC, 1997, p. 81). During a change initiative, the application of MCDP 1's philosophy in its purest form would closely resemble a leader's role during the emergent approach to change. The vision and engagement with junior employees fosters an environment of collaboration and flexibility during execution.



## 2. Employee Involvement

The Marine Corps' approach to management in general is a hybrid of top-down and bottom-up approaches to organizational design that combine to form a unique environment for change. The two most prominent levers of change the Marine Corps uses are bottom up: the empowerment of subordinates through participation in the decision-making process and the encouragement of independent decision making within the framework of senior management's guidance.

With the publication of MCDP 1, *Warfighting*, the Marine Corps adopted a tenet of mission tactics in which the leader gives the subordinate a task without specifying how they must accomplish it (USMC, 1997, p. 87). This tenet evolved into the "top-down planning, bottom-up refinement" philosophy that has been incorporated into several doctrinal publications. The first half of this phrase, "top-down planning," is likened to a traditionally hierarchical organization, in which a commander, the centralized decision maker, issues an order for a subordinate to execute. Along with an order, the subordinate receives the commander's intent and guidance, which provides insight into the purpose of the order. As part of the "bottom-up refinement" process, the subordinate, working within varying levels of latitude, determines the best method and course of action to accomplish the mission. As part of the Marine Corps Planning Process, subordinates are expected to request prudent changes to the orders. The procedural and cultural attribute that facilitate this process allows subordinates to participate in the decision-making process, thus creating a sense of ownership.

Former Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Charles Krulak (Ret.), penned an article in which he articulated the importance of Marines understanding, at all levels, the importance of independent decision making. He offered that "success or failure will rest, increasingly, with the rifleman and with his ability to make the right decision at the right time at the point of contact" (Krulak, 1999). In this quote, the general explained that the lowest ranking Marine could be, at some point, in a position where they will have to make an independent decision under harsh conditions. Understanding that a supervisor will not always be able to tell a Marine when to act, General Krulak (1999) suggests that Marine Corps leadership should strive to empower and educate Marines in order to arm

them with the confidence, trust, and judgement necessary to deal with an array of challenges and threats.

### **3. Information Flow and Intra-Organizational Relationships**

The management of information in the Marine Corps, specifically how it is transmitted, breaks from the emergent approach by instituting a top-down or programmatic schema. Marines convey information via two methods: reports or verbal communication (USMC, 1997). There is an emphasis placed on key leaders speaking directly to other key leaders as opposed to the omnidirectional or participatory communication strategy. The impetus behind this type of communication is to ensure leaders are fully apprised of the situation so that they may make necessary adjustments to their intent as needed. While this form of communication suffers from slower adaptability during change than in the planned approach, it ensures different parts of the organization are synchronized. This top-down communication schema has an additional effect on intra-organizational relationships that results in the compartmentalization of information. Gateways to communicating across the organization are consolidated with leaders of each sub-organization.

Davis Alberts and Mark Nissen (2009) developed a model that measured the allocation of decision rights, patterns of interaction, and distribution of information, which provides a different portrayal of military management. Key to this model's success is the organization's willingness to allocate decision rights, which influences the distribution of information and patterns of interaction. According to the model, military organizations are, generally, less willing to grant broad authorities to make decisions and, in turn, limit patterns of interaction and distribution of information (Alberts & Nissen, 2009, pp. 13–14). This model generally fits the military as whole, but does not take into consideration the cultural difference between the services, specifically, the hybrid model of the Marine Corps.

## **D. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The first step in pursuing organizational change is not merely selecting a change model; rather, it is in diagnosing the most appropriate pathway toward change.

Transitional and transformational change each offer unique perspectives through which a change can be undertaken. Attributes such as the scope of change, the desired end state, and the organizational culture all contribute to the selection of a particular *type of change* and will ultimately determine how change should be planned and implemented. The next step in pursuing change is determining an *approach to change* that is most appropriate for a given organization. Planned and emergent change models have certain attributes regarding leadership responsibilities, employee involvement during change, information flow, and organizational relationships that enable them to manifest change efficiently. Understanding the expectations for these functions within an organization, during a particular approach to change, aids in determining the organizational attributes that must be modified before change is initiated.

## **V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. FINDINGS**

My review and comparison of the Marine Corps shows that organizations pursuing change will not always possess the organizational culture or structure that aligns with either the planned or emergent approach to change. Instead, an organization will be a combination of characteristics from both of these approaches. Such is the case with the Marine Corps, where the current doctrine and structure encourages organizational behavior that is resident within both the planned and emergent approaches to change. Of the attributes discussed in the previous chapter—leadership, employee involvement, information flow, and intra-organizational relations—half align with the planned approach to change and the other half with the emergent approach to change.

The presence of organizational behavior from both the emergent and planned approach to change within an organization complicates the use of extant models to guide change because of a complementary relationship between transitional change and the planned approach to change, as well as between transformational change and the emergent approach to change. The literature suggests a complementary relationship between transformational change and the emergent approach to change based on common issues related to adaptability; transitional change and the planned approach are complementary based on the common issue of control. Transformational change is noted for remaining in a constant state of flux throughout the change process (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). In order to pursue a change in this state, an organization must possess the ability to adapt to the change process. The emergent approach to change offers a way to address this constant flux by offering attributes such as risk tolerant leadership, participative employees, omnidirectional communication, and collaborative organizational relationships (Kickert, 2010; Weick, 2000). The literature suggests a similar complementary relationship between the pursuit of transitional changes and the use of the planned change approach because they are both underpinned by the idea of control. Control manifests itself through a common reliance on detailed planning and the

need to define the future state prior to the initiation of a change initiative (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Beckhard & Harris, 1987; Burnes, 2004b; Groeneveld et al., 2014).

Therefore, to pursue a transformational change such as that involved in creating an energy ethos, a model is needed that takes into consideration the attributes of both the planned and emergent approaches to change. This new model must be able to account for the differing *types* and *approaches* to change. To address the shortfall, I introduce the Portfolio of Change as a way to combine the deterministic characteristics of transitional change and the evolutionary characteristics of transformational change into a model tailored to fit a hybrid organization such as the Marine Corps. In the subsequent section, I describe a portfolio approach to change that includes each of the factors that influence an organization's decision to change and offers a set of questions that a change instigator can ask to help identify the best approach.

### **1. Portfolio of Change**

To bridge the gap between transitional and transformational types of change, the Portfolio of Change combines smaller transitional changes in a way that guides an organization toward a transformational change. By placing smaller transitional changes in series and in parallel to one another, an organization is able to follow a transformational pattern. Figure 3 represents the overall structure of this combination of transitional changes within a transformational change. The Portfolio of Change captures the deterministic characteristics of transitional change and the evolutionary characteristics of transformational change.

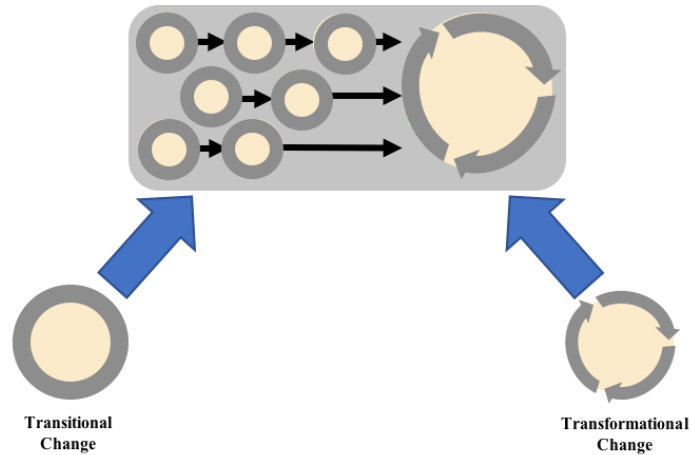


Figure 3. Portfolio of Change

The goal of a Portfolio of Change approach is to combine multiple transitional change initiatives, executed in series and in parallel, and build toward the vision for transformational change. This type of change follows Kantor’s (2007) “Long-March” logic whereby employee behavior is modified and sustained as change is reinforced over time (p. 54). However, the Portfolio of Change differs from Kantor in that transformational change is achieved by reinforcing with coordinated transitional change initiatives. For example, the Marine Corps’ planned transformation of using telematics in vehicles overlaps with existing transitional change programs for improved vehicle reliability and safety. The synergy of the Portfolio of Change is in combining changes that work toward one shared vision—mission effectiveness. The Portfolio of Change collects small, narrow, transitional initiatives and sequences these initiatives into a larger transformational vision of change.

Smaller changes that target limited objectives assist in reducing organizational resistance. The inertial influences of a stoic organization like the Marine Corps have proven to be a challenge during previous change initiatives. However, there are examples in which a portfolio approach was successful. For example, the adoption of maneuver warfare was successful due partly to the series of smaller changes that added up to a changed mindset of Marine leaders. While even small change initiatives encounter resistance, changes that are small and focused on a set of limited objectives will not encounter the same resistance as a

large transformational change. A series of small changes can erode resistance over time, much like a river creating a canyon over many years. When selecting these small changes, the transformational path or vision is the driving force. In addition, the changes must be large enough to shift the organization toward the transformational change, but small enough so that the Marine Corps does not sacrifice flexibility. Additionally, by breaking the change into small pieces, the Marine Corps can more easily assimilate the change by reducing the number of jolts to the system.

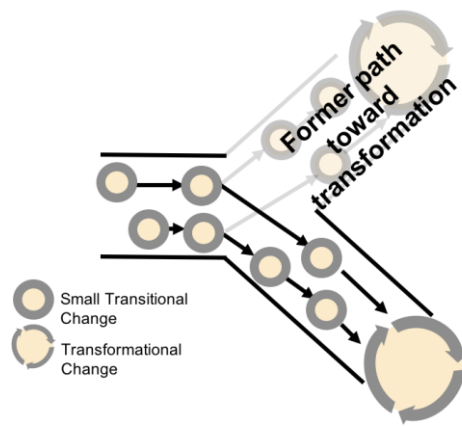


Figure 4. Flexibility of the Portfolio of Change

The Marine Corps can also retain flexibility by placing these smaller changes in series or in parallel. Because the portfolio relies upon a collection of changes and not merely a singular change initiative, individual change initiatives, if aligned to a common vision, can be retained while leaders and planners restructure the overall Portfolio of Changes to adapt to a changing vision or environment. Figure 4 provides an example of how this structure can capitalize on previously successful transitional changes while the overall path shifts toward a new emergent concept. I liken this structure to a school of fish that move in complete unison even as the collective school meanders toward new emergent sources of food. The adaptability of this structure ensures that as new innovative technology and ideas surface, the Marine Corps can remain nimble and adaptive.

To facilitate building synergy within this Portfolio of Change, planners and leaders must remain engaged in the process of change. As discussed in the previous chapter on the emergent approach to change, the innovative strength of an organization is built through active participation in the process by all its members. Leaders and planners alike must remain engaged with employees at all levels to ensure that their Portfolio of Changes are working together toward the transformational change. Without this level of situational awareness, the synchronization and synergy of the smaller change initiatives will be marginalized.

While the Portfolio of Change can bring about transformational change without relying on one bold change initiative, it does require time to fully develop. The transformational change is a summation of a series of transitional changes that must be planned, executed, and sustained. Because organizational inertia no longer poses a significant threat of relapse, change is more readily sustained. While transformational change, or the changing of a mindset, should be a long-term approach, there may be some instances in which this type of change is needed quickly. If a transformational change is required in a short timeline, the Portfolio of Change might not have enough time to mature the series of smaller changes. In this circumstance, the Portfolio of Change might not be an advisable option.

## **B. IMPLICATIONS**

The Portfolio of Change is suited for the Marine Corps because it shares organizational attributes with both the planned and emergent approaches to change. The involvement of both Marine Corps leadership and employees closely resembles that found in the emergent approach to change. By combining the planned and emergent approaches, the Marine Corps can become a more adaptive organization that fosters creative thinking and encourages employee improvisation. However, if the Marine Corps employs a more restrictive, hierarchical information flow and reinforces a rigid, compartmentalized change structure, the entire organization risks sacrificing adaptability and makes the transformational change of the Marine Corps Expeditionary Energy Strategy more difficult. However, by adopting the portfolio model, the Expeditionary



Energy Office can more readily overcome its risk adversity, lower its resistance to change, and minimize the fallout from failed experiments. A portfolio model also supports a transformational change by leveraging the flexibility and synergistic benefits of the model.

### **C. USMC MODEL FOR CHANGE**

This section introduces the USMC model for change (Figure 5). This model serves as a guide for the Marine Corps in determining the type of change that is most appropriate.

The USMC model for change is divided into four steps: Understand, Select, Modify, and Critique. The first step of the model calls for a risk analysis of the organization and includes five risk factors. The second step is the selection of the most appropriate type of change that aligns with the strength of the organization and the need for change. The third step is the modification of organizational attributes to maximize the benefits of the Portfolio of Change. The final step is a feedback loop that includes a critique of the hybrid approach's ability to exact change. This hybrid approach is an organization's unique approach to change that contains elements from both the planned and emergent approaches to change.

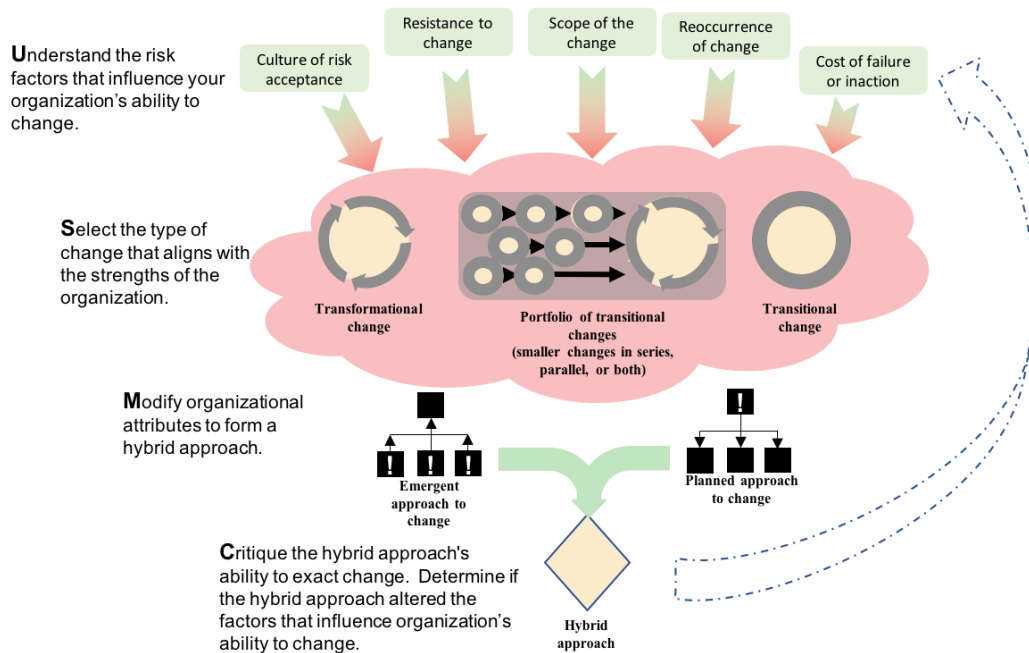


Figure 5. USMC Model for Change

## 1. Understand the Risks

The change literature suggests five factors that impact how an organization will pursue change: risk acceptance, resistance to change, scope of the change, reoccurrence of the change, and cost of failure. I elaborate each in this section and discuss how these decisions influence change strategy.

- **How does an organization's culture of risk acceptance influence a change strategy?**

The first factor influencing how an organization will pursue change is the acceptance of risk. An organization's culture of risk acceptance represents the collective cognitive processes and level of control that influence the degree to which risks are mitigated or avoided in the organization (Brown & Osborn, 2012). An organization's acceptance of risk represents the extent to which it is willing to absorb the negative consequence of a given decision. Every organization has a unique threshold for risk that is shaped by that organization's culture (Brown & Osborn, 2010). This cultural threshold is influenced by the leader's role and the type of change selected.

The literature concerning the planned and emergent approaches to change emphasizes the leader's role in determining the culture of risk acceptance within the organization (Brown & Osborn, 2012). A leader's reaction to risk and willingness to delegate risk decisions communicates and sets the standard for how risk should be handled. Leadership influences the decision-making process that individuals will use to make independent risk assessments. For example, leaders of emergent change tend to encourage employee experimentation and provide the resources, such as time and money, that are needed (Chidiac, 2013; Maimone & Sinclair, 2014). These leaders accept the risk that their scarce resources will be consumed without the guarantee of a useful outcome. Conversely, the planned approach to change seeks to mitigate risks through detailed planning and centralized decision making, ensuring that if experiments are conducted, there is a higher probability that the consumed resources provide a useful outcome (Weick, 2000). While these two examples highlight the two opposing sides on a scale of risk acceptance, the measure of an organization's culture of risk acceptance can lie anywhere in between.

Because of the different ways transitional and transformational change contend with risk, the risk threshold of an organization is also influenced by the type of change pursued. Transitional change primarily focuses on changes in processes, structures, or systems that have clearly defined future states along one path (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). Transformational change, on the other hand, is designed to change thought processes, mindsets, and strategy by following a loosely defined goal with the expectation that the future state of the organization will emerge as the organization evolves (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). Both types of change face the residual risks associated with all change, but they confront the risk very differently. Transitional change mitigates risk through a deterministic approach that gives the organization a defined path toward effective change, thus reducing the probability the organization will veer off course (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). Transformational change views the risk of veering off course as an opportunity to find a more desirable future state (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010; Weick, 2000). The dilemma posed by the different methods is that an organization with a culture of risk avoidance is often

confined to transitional change and unable to capture the benefits of transformational change.

- **How does organizational resistance to change influence a change strategy?**

The inertial effects that contribute to organizational resistance limit the flexibility of an organization to pursue dynamic change. Organizational inertia is the force that keeps an organization moving in one direction via the establishment of cultural norms (Burke, 2008). Change of any type is an affront to these norms. The effects of inertia are especially prominent within the military, which has a layer of bureaucracy codifying and habituating behavior (Farrell & Terriff, 2002). Pursuing transformational change within an organization with a high resistance to change poses a significant challenge because its core focus is to change the mindsets, thought processes, and culture of an organization. Because this type of change is dynamic and in a state of infinite shift, it is often resisted by organizations mired in inertia. Transitional change is more suited for resistant organizations, but it is limited in effect.

An effective change strategy will incorporate the type of change that considers the breadth of changes across the organization, the sequencing of changes, visualization of the changes, and socialization of the changes in order to overcome resistance. Because changes to one part of an organization might directly influence the operations of another part of the same organization, the change strategy should ensure that the breadth of changes across the organization do not conflict with one another in order to prevent further dissatisfaction with the change. The sequencing of changes across time can serve as a way to incrementally evolve an organization without the shock of one big change initiative. Lastly, the socialization and visualization of change serve as a means to connect the changes with the employees. The ADKAR model described by Aten, Salem, and Whitt (2017) in their report, “Improving Operational Decision Making,” is a tool that will assist in the reduction of individual resistance with a secondary benefit of altering the organizational inertia.

- **How does the scope of change influence the type of change an organization pursues?**

The scope of a change initiative is the extent to which an organization is trying to accomplish its vision through organizational change. One starting point for determining the scope of a change initiative is by determining if the end state is to create a new way or a new mindset? *Creating a new way* is the act of making something new to replace the old way of doing business. This could include adopting new processes or new technologies but stops short of significantly altering behavior. The *new way* moves past conception by taking physical form; it is a tangible change that is easily defined. A change initiative with a scope that creates a *new mindset* differs in that the target of change remains conceptual. This scope of change seeks to change how an organization cognitively understands a concept in an attempt to alter behavior. For example, the Marine Corps' adoption of maneuver warfare in the early 1990s aimed to change how Marines thought about combat. This change in mentality had a ripple effect in how Marines approached leadership and tactics. Similarly, the ethos change proposed by the Expeditionary Energy Office focuses on cultural change and calls for a change in how people think about fuel. Because creating a new mindset is more abstract, it is more appropriate for transformational change.

- **How does the reoccurrence of change influence a change strategy?**

The literature generally holds that change is either episodic or continuous (Cameron, Pettigrew & Woodman, 2001; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Episodic or event-based change is caused by a single catalyst, either internal or external to an organization, that prompts an organization to adapt. Continuous change is an iterative process where change is constantly improving upon itself, never pausing or remaining idle (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997). This is a pattern followed by transformational change because it remains in a state of adaptation to the external environment. Transitional change is event-driven or episodic change as it moves from one state to the next (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2010). This type of change is naturally opposed to an external environment that changes at a rapid rate. Rather, the desired result calls for a cyclical pattern of

change. The benefits of transitional change in this cyclical pattern is that the organization becomes more accustomed to routine change and thus less stymied by inertia.

- **How does the cost of failure or inaction influence the type of change an organization pursues?**

Failed attempts to change or missed change opportunities can carry a heavy monetary and strategic cost. Failing to deliver on a change initiative is detrimental in both the private sector and the government sector. Whether rebuked by shareholders or congressional delegates, failed change has consequences. For the Marine Corps, a failure not only represents a break in trust with the American people to serve as good stewards of federal tax dollars, but it can also impact other strategic programs that are related to the change initiative. Equally as detrimental to the United States is that missed opportunity to change. As the security and economic environment change, the Marine Corps must maintain its competitive advantage by adapting faster than its competitors. The costs associated with failure are directly connected to mission effectiveness and capability.

## **2. Select the Type of Change**

Once the organization understands how risk influences the change strategy, the process of selecting the type of change begins. While the desired future end state will determine if the change is transformational or transitional, organizational culture will influence how that change is approached. Organizations that possess all of the attributes found within the emergent approach to change will be capable of pursuing a transformational change using extant models. The same is true for organizations pursuing a transitional type of change using the planned approach. However, because not all organizations are perfectly aligned with the attributes of planned and emergent approaches to change, the Portfolio of Change should be considered as a tailored-fit model that bridges the gap between the two.

## **3. Modify Organizational Attributes to Form a Hybrid Approach**

Once the type of change is selected, the third part of the model calls for an organization to identify its organizational commonalities with the planned and emergent approaches to change and improve areas that will enable the Portfolio of Change. The

emergent and planned approaches to change both have strengths and weakness depending on the type of change pursued and the organizational culture. An emergent approach is more adaptive to an ever-changing environment but susceptible to unsynchronized efforts across the organization. Planned change is able to better synchronize efforts across an organization but is slow to respond to a changing environment. The literature has numerous change models that fall within these categories. However, selecting an approach is not a binomial decision; instead, it is more likened to selecting an approach from a spectrum, with emergent and planned approaches at opposing ends. Because leadership, communication, employee involvement, and intra-organizational relationships are all handled differently according to the organizational culture, an organization might find that the best approach to change for them is a mix between planned and emergent characteristics.

#### **4. Critique**

The final step in this model for change is to critique the hybrid approach's ability to elicit effective change. This is a feedback loop to the first step of the model to measure if the factors that initially influenced the decision to pursue a particular type of change remain accurate and relevant. As an organization changes, it evolves and matures much like an adult moving through life. The reappraisal serves as a check to ensure that the organizational goals and culture still align with the current trajectory of change.

#### **D. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Marine Corps is unique in that while it has the hierarchical characteristics typically aligned with planned change, it also has a culture that encourages bottom-up or emergent ideas. Modifying the Marine Corps' culture to mirror one approach is not feasible or practical. Rather, because the Portfolio of Change is well suited for organizations that are not completely aligned with one approach to change, the Marine Corps should concentrate on pursuing minor adjustments to its organizational culture so that the benefits of the Portfolio of Change are fully attained. Following are some recommendations for areas that the Marine Corps should concentrate on improving. When these

recommendations are combined with the Roles for Driving Change model (Figure 6), a balanced and practical approach to effective change is achieved. (Aten et al., 2017).

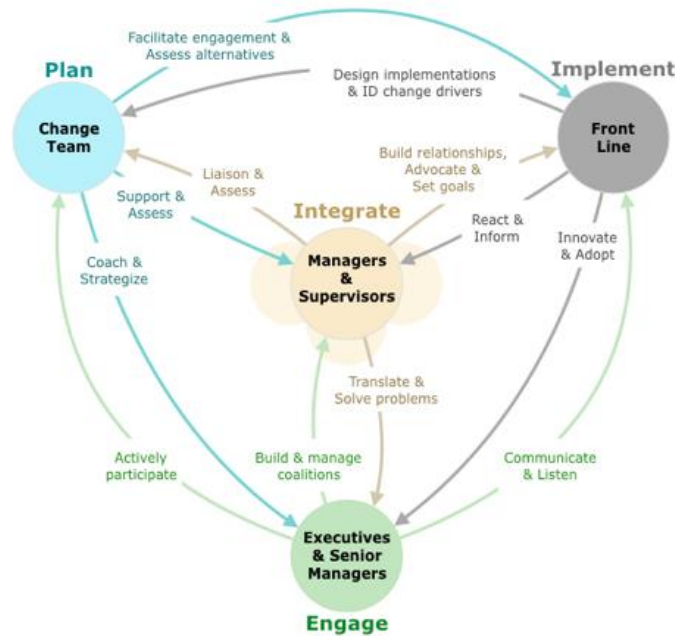


Figure 6. Roles for Driving Change Model. Source: Aten et al. (2017).

The Roles for Diving Change model is a hybrid change model designed for organizations that have attributes of both emergent and planned change. When considering implementing a hybrid change model, the Marine Corps needs to identify specific roles involved in the change and specify what they need to do to be effective. Aten et al. (2017) define these four roles and describe the types of activities that a Marine fulfilling each role should engage in. The four roles (and their expeditionary energy equivalents) are the middle managers (logistics), senior leadership (commanders), change team (E2O), and front line (boots on the ground). These stakeholders are key to leveraging the power of the frozen middle, utilizing feedback loops to reduce risk, and engaging leadership to increase commitment.



## **1. Reemphasizing the Role of the Middle Manager**

If the Marine Corps is to pursue a Portfolio of Change, the role of the middle manager needs to become more than a conveyor of information and become an active part of the change team. Hierarchical organizations employing a planned approach to change rely on senior executives to direct action while bottom-up organizations employing an emergent approach rely on lower echelon employees to execute within the framework of a vision. The Marine Corps juxtaposes both of these concepts by having a rigid hierarchical rank and billet system, while encouraging decentralized decision making within a leader's vision, formally referred to as Commander's Intent.

The Marines who occupy the positions between senior leaders or decision makers and the junior Marines executing are the Marine Corps' middle management. The role of the middle manager in any organization is that of a link between a vision and discernable action. Senior leaders expect middle managers to translate their intent into a common vernacular that will eventually turn into direct action by lower level employees. In addition, they are expected to provide substantive feedback and recommendations to senior leaders that will build their understanding of how change is occurring and how it should be refined. This requires not only a conceptual understanding of the problem but also the ability to interpret real-time feedback.

Treating middle management simply as executors of orders and not encouraging them to actively participate discourages middle management's creativity, limits their ownership of the change, and reduces their motivation to participate. Trends from the literature on the emergent approach to change highlight how employee involvement in the decision process fosters a collaborative culture that can collectively expand the knowledge base of the organization and support the desired change. By making the middle management a key part of the change team, senior leaders can spend more time directing the transformational change and less time focusing on the individual transitional changes.

## **2. Risk Mitigation, Not Risk Avoidance**

A consequence of pursuing a transformational change within an organization is confronting uncertainty. Uncertainty is generated externally, by a dynamically changing environment, and, internally, when there isn't a defined end state. Organizations pursuing emergent change are seen as more suited to deal with the risks of uncertainty because of their greater adaptability. While Marine Corps' warfighting philosophy embraces adaptability, it also tends to follow a pattern of risk avoidance. Therefore, in order to pursue transformational change, the Marine Corps must become more accustomed to risk mitigation and avoid a mentality of risk avoidance.

The use of the Portfolio of Change in combination with the Roles for Change model provides a measure of risk mitigation by diversifying the risks associated with transformational change across a large portfolio of smaller changes and by broadening organizational feedback loops. The Portfolio of Change mitigates the risk of uncertainty by leveraging the stability and controlled nature of subordinate transitional changes. Transformational change pursued using an emergent approach to change can be likened to a trial-and-error method of change in which many different paths are attempted with only one being successful. The Chief of Naval Operations has called for just such an approach in his *A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority* (United States Navy, 2016). The CNO acknowledges that "there is an inherent and fundamental uncertainty" in the challenges that are faced by the Navy and Marine Corps that can only be mitigated by taking a "learn and adapt" approach (United States Navy, 2016, p. 4; p. 1). With this type of trial-and-error approach, a successful path toward change is found, but it comes at the cost of multiple failures. In a risk-averse organization such as the Marine Corps, however, the cost of multiple failures is not acceptable. The Portfolio of Change can reduce the frequency of failure by dividing the transformational vision into small transitional changes that can be thoroughly planned and executed within the intent of the overarching change vision. Although some of these smaller changes will fail, visionary yet pragmatic planning and supervision will reduce the impact to the organization. This pattern reflects an evolutionary method in which change takes place over time through a series of smaller changes.

The second risk mitigation measure associated with the Roles for Change model is the broadening of feedback loops between organizational change stakeholders. While Marine Corps doctrine adheres to a top-down or programmatic communication schema, Aten et al.'s (2017) model strategically places feedback loops between all parties involved with change. This closely represents the omnidirectional flow of information found within the emergent approach. The expansion of communication from bidirectional to omnidirectional greatly expands the situational awareness of all stakeholders. Additionally, it provides the leadership with the ability to ensure that those implementing change fully understand the vision and direction. Within the framework of the Portfolio of Change, these feedback loops ensure that the collection of transitional change initiatives remain within the vision of the overarching transformational change.

### **3. Follow-Through / Engaged Leadership**

A Portfolio of Change relies on the overarching vision of change to guide the planning and implementation of the subordinate transitional change initiatives. Transformational changes that are vision-driven are adaptive and non-linear, necessitating persistent awareness of the organization and the ever-changing external environment. While the smaller transitional changes instill more stability and control during the change process, the fundamental nature of a transformational change involves chaos. Like a shepherd moving a flock of sheep, the leader must be present and engaged with each change initiative to keep the organization moving toward the transformative change.

Leaders who engage with the organizational change and follow through with their commitment for change will embody the importance of change across the organization. Engaged leadership is not a new concept for Marine Corps leadership: It is woven into Marine warfighting philosophy. However, as organizational commitments requiring attention from leadership increased, there has been a tendency to neglect certain responsibilities. If an organizational change such as the one E2O is pursuing is bested by other organizational priorities, it will lose the momentum necessary to transform the Marine Corps. To prevent this from occurring, leaders must prioritize these changes

within the organization and use all of their omnidirectional feedback loops to be effective.

## **E. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The challenge for the Marine Corps as it seeks to adopt an energy efficiency mindset is that its organizational attributes do not align with those of the emergent approach, making the pursuit of a transformational change difficult. The Marine Corps shares the attributes found in both planned and emergent change strategies. While these attributes have enabled the Marine Corps to remain an effective fighting force, they pose a challenge to pursuing dynamic change. In order to effect a dynamic transformational change such as adopting an energy-efficiency mindset across the organization, the Marine Corps must find a way to structure a change initiative that leverages its strengths and requires minimal changes to its culture.

This chapter introduced the Portfolio of Change as a method for organizations such as the Marine Corps, which possesses organizational attributes from both planned and emergent approaches, to pursue change. I believe that the flexibility and synergy of this model gained through small transitional changes placed in sequence make it a better path toward transformational change when the scope of change is taken into consideration. When the Portfolio of Change is combined with a customized approach and clear roles and behaviors for the change, the Marine Corps will be able to take full advantage of the positive trends of emergent and planned change while capitalizing on the uniqueness of the Marine Corps organizational culture.

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## **VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDY**

### **A. CONCLUSION**

The Marine Corps' campaign to instill energy efficiency into its warrior ethos is a practical first step for an enduring energy strategy. However, a dynamic change that seeks to alter how individual Marines think about energy necessitates not only an understanding of organizational change theory, but also an honest self-assessment of the Marine Corps' ability to pursue a transformational change of this type. This research revealed that extant organizational change models and theories are not sufficient in guiding the Marine Corps through a transformational change. As such, the *Portfolio of Change* presented in this thesis serves as a potential solution by customizing the structure of a change initiative to account for the organization's unique characteristics. It should be noted that the Portfolio of Change only addresses the architecture of a change initiative. To achieve successful organization change, it should be used in concert with a change model such as Aten, Salem, and Whitt's (2017) Roles for Driving Change.

### **B. SUGGESTED AREA OF FURTHER STUDY**

This study extracted the organizational characteristics of the Marine Corps solely from publications, doctrine, and warfighting philosophy. While this approach to understanding the Marine Corps during change shed light on how the organization "should" function, it assumed that all Marines follow the warfighting philosophy and other foundational standards of conduct uniformly across the organization. There is undoubtedly some variation between how the organization *should* function and how it *does* function. Research into where the Marine Corps diverges from its warfighting philosophy during a change initiative would provide a broader perspective and understanding of how the organization actually undergoes change. This research could focus on recent organizational changes in the Marine Corps such as the inclusion of females into combat arms jobs or the Force's shift in operational focus from conventional warfare to counter-insurgency operations.

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