



MNF-W Engagement

Engagement Model



Context

This presentation is not about tribes or tribal systems

This presentation is about people who are raised in a tribal culture and how to understand them

This brief applies to any MNF-W engagement within Al Anbar Province, not just tribal engagements



“You allow kinship to prevail and put religion second; you excuse and hide your transgressors and tear down the order which Islam has sanctified for your protection. Take care not to creep about in the night; I will kill everyman found on the street after dark. Take care not to appeal to your kin; I will cut out the tongue of every man who raises that call... I rule you with the omnipotence of God and maintain you with God’s wealth (i.e. the state’s); I demand obedience from you and you can demand uprightness from me. However much I may lag behind my aims I will not fail in three things: I will at all times be there for everyman to speak to me, I will always pay your pensions punctually and I will not send you into the field for too long a time or too far away. Do not be carried away by your hatred and anger against me, it would go ill with you. I see many heads rolling; let each man see that his own head stays upon his shoulders!”

Ziyad ibn Abihi (673)
Governor of Basrah and Kufa



BLUF



To appreciate how institutions and organizations within Al Anbar operate, you must understand the ***tribal ethos*** first

Do not differentiate the behavior of tribes from that of “legitimate” organizations (government, military, religious, business) because the people within them were raised with a ***tribal ethos***



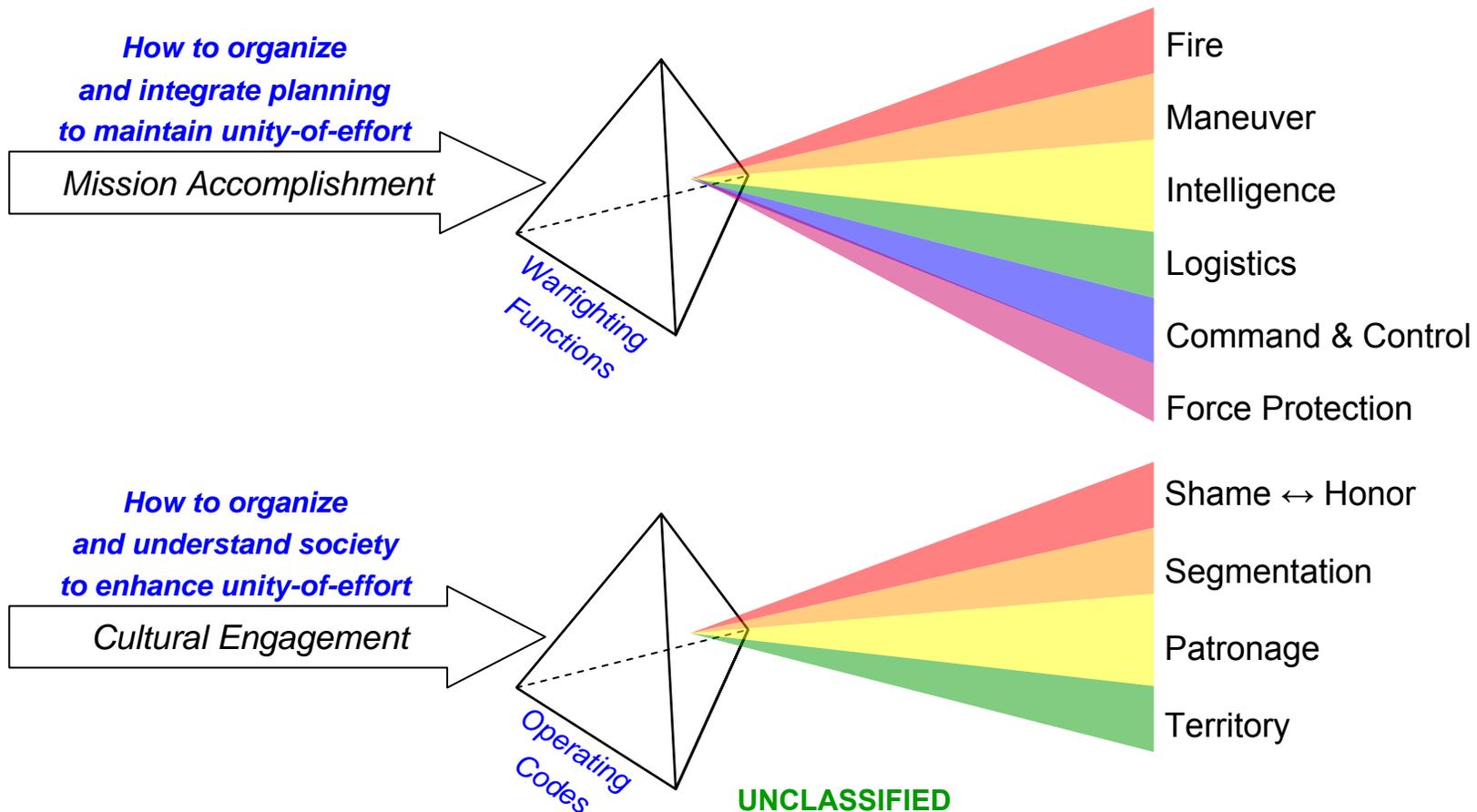
Agenda

1. Relevance of Engagement Model
2. Cultural Operating Codes
3. Coordinating Messages
4. Resulting Social Dynamics



Relevance of Engagement Model

1. Standardize terminology (common language)
2. Improve effectiveness (increase understanding)





Cultural Operating Codes



Rules of conduct that define the range of actions and the ideas of individuals and groups within a social system.

They influence what to do and what not to do, how to do it or not to do it, whom to do it with or whom not to do it with.

They dictate under what circumstances behavior will shift and change.



Cultural Operating Codes

Tribal Operating Codes

1. Shame ↔ Honor
2. Segmentation
3. Patronage
4. Territory

USMC "Operating Codes"

1. Honor, Courage, Commitment
2. Meritocracy
3. Combined Arms (Synergy)



Operating Codes (1 of 4)

Shame ↔ Honor



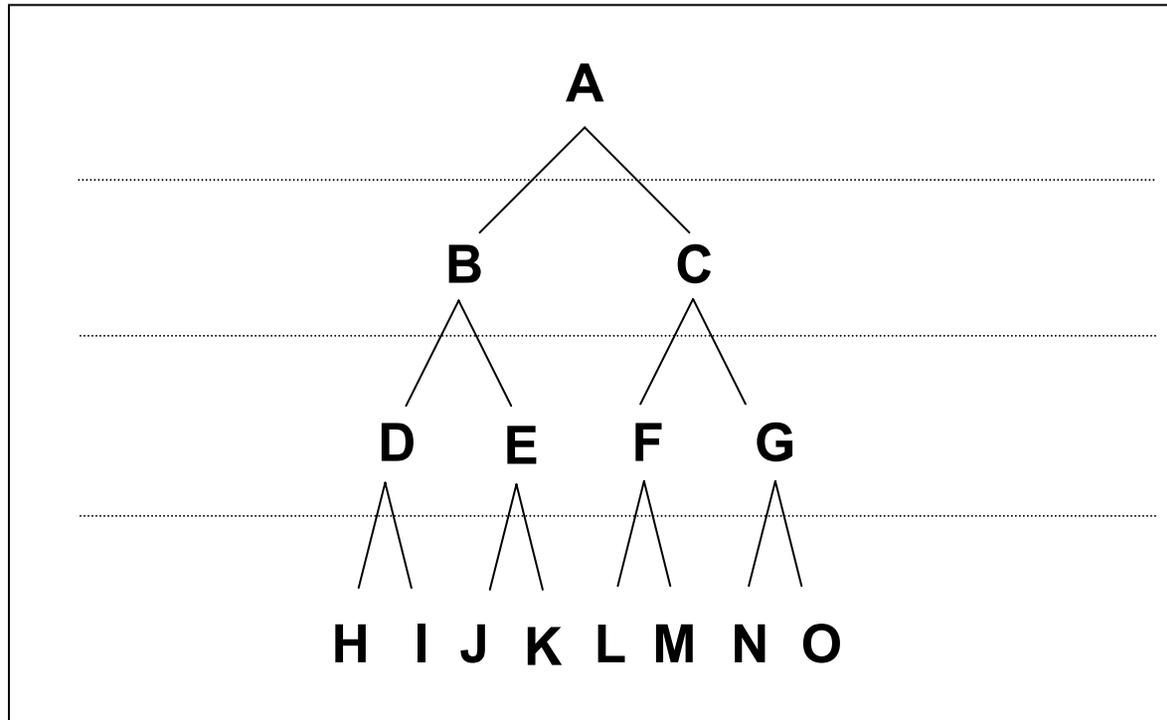
1. Shame and Honor NOT “hearts and minds”** govern individual / group relationships and competition
2. Key Points
 - A. Exchanged like currency. Honor is a limited resource.
 - B. Zero-sum exchange. One gains honor at another’s expense (who then has shame imposed as well)
 - C. Honor is not for sale (misplaced assumption of “hearts and minds”**). Honor can only be exchanged for honor and/or the imposition of shame

** – *a Muslim’s heart belongs to Allah*



Operating Codes (2 of 4)

Segmentation



- H and I will act together as Group D, if confronted by E
- D and E will act together as Group B in a dispute with C
- **Segmentation:** groups come together against external threats, even though they may be potentially hostile toward one another, or involved in open conflict with each other (fragmentation ↔ aggregation)



Operating Codes (2 of 4)

Segmentation



1. “*Asabiya*” (solidarity) and “*nasab*” (origin)
2. “*Nasab*” ≈ cohesion of groups that share not only genealogy but also “solidarities” (*asabiyat*).
3. “*Asabiya*” ≈ **power** and **competition** (one’s ability to defend and conquer)
 - A. Power – Sahawah al Anbar (SAA) tribal alliance now comprises a number of Ramadi centric tribes and sub-tribes. Other tribal leaders apprehensive, fearing growing power of Sheikh Sattar, leader of SAA (Anbar Awakening). Sheikh Abdel Sattar Baziya heads the Abu Risha tribe and is a co-founder of the Anbar Awakening Movement.
 - B. Competition – “Desert Protectors” – Abu Mahal tribe in western Al Anbar. Control of smuggle routes.



Operating Codes (3 of 4) Patronage



1. Linked to segmentation (“Social Contract”)
2. Both an obligation and system requirement
3. Access to scarce resources, sources of power (honor, guns and money)
4. Commitment to maximizing “kindred” strategies



Operating Codes (4 of 4) Territory



1. Every piece of terrain controlled by some primary descent or community group
2. Principle Methods of Control
 - A. **Hereditary** – Organization of Martyr Sadr (OMS) / tribal lands
 - B. **Right of customary usage** – grazing and/or water rights
 - C. **Sanctioned by central power** – smuggle routes
 - D. **Conquest** – the “fight for Baghdad”
3. Territory will be defended by force
 - A. A hybrid of tribal, Shari' a and civil law applies, and no central power exists to enforce order



Coordinating Messages

Culturally-accepted themes that resonate among members within the society and shape their behaviors and decisions (psychological links)

1. “No stability without us”
2. “What have you done for me lately...what will you do for me tomorrow?”

USMC Coordinating Messages

“Service before Self”

“Every Marine a Rifleman”



Resulting Social Dynamics

1. Violence is politics...politics is violence
 - A. Zero-sum mentality (power ↔ challenge)
 - B. Conflict pervades the system but can be managed through mediation, negotiation, truce and tribute
2. Power (authority, knowledge) is centralized
 - A. Arabs rule...they do not administer
3. Complex and nuanced system of allegiances
 - A. Loyalty reflects context of the situation
4. Patronage – an accepted form of corruption that lubricates the social system



Summary

1. The ***tribal ethos*** underpins Arab society and shapes the organizational culture of all social institutions (gov't, military, business...)
2. This Engagement Model provides a common terminology (operating codes, coordinating messages) that enhances one's ability to appreciate unfolding social dynamics
3. Applying this model to MNF-W engagements can enhance understanding, thereby improving long-term effectiveness



Questions



How we reconcile the difference between...

**what we read and what we see;
what we are told and what we experience**

**...is the difference between effects desired
and effects achieved**