The *A Priori* Challenge: Recognizing and Understanding Collaboration

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It's a Tough Wicked Problem World out there….
and here as well

At the same time, we have our own problems….

- **Autonomous Agencies, coupled with weak integration mechanisms are able and do resist a Whole of Government Approach to Missions**
- **Components of the National Security System are not managed as a cohesive system but on a component by component basis**
- **Lower levels of government lack strong integration tools, forcing centralization of management to the White House**
- **There is a lack of an effective system for developing strategies that connect available resources, desired end states and implementation procedures**
- **Congress is not organized to provide a comprehensive assessment of US national security missions, but rather deals with individual policies and discrete components.**
- **and…**
- **and….**

Locher, James R. III, in Cerami, Joseph R., Engel, Jeffrey A., (Eds.),(2010, May) **Rethinking Leadership and "Whole of Government National Security Reform: Problems, Progress and Prospects** (Carlisle, US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute) pp. 32-41.

Despite the scale, scope and obviousness of these challenges, our progress towards effectiveness, mastery, capacity, capability is slow, strewn with obstacles and incremental and limited learning of lessons from previous events and situations.

With apologizes to Santayana,
I wish to adjust his famous adage to read:
"Those who do not <u>learn the right lessons fast enough</u> from the past are condemned to repeat it."

We have plenty of history to learn from….

- September 11 Attacks
- Hurricane Katrina/Rita
- Bali/London/Madrid Bombings
- Asia Tsunami
- Pakistan Earthquake
- Global Financial Crisis
- Haiti Earthquake
- Gulf Oil Spill

We are Revisiting but we are not learning….

The mission has not been clearly defined. There is a lack of unity of command resulting in a lack of unity of effort. Funding is not consolidated…and funding streams are extremely confusing. Selection, skill sets….and training of PRT personnel continue to be problematic. Metrics do not exist for determining if PRTs are succeeding." (PNSR Forging Shield Report)

DoS and DoD have not yet finalized their agreement on PRT operational requirements and responsibilities. This has delayed startup of some PRTs and hindered the operations of others. The lack of a formal agreement means that the lines of authority and coordination between U.S. Embassy and military components have not been spelled out and agreed to, and the operational support mechanisms that the PRTs at military bases depend on…..have not been settled on.

Lessons learned from the PRT experience in Afghanistan showed that the lack of specific guidance led to confusion about civilian-military roles at PRTs. Similarly, executing an effective PRT program in Iraq would have been greatly enhanced if DoS and DoD shared a common understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities.

Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, (2006) Status of the Provincial Reconstruction Team Program in Iraq (SIGIR-06-034, p. iv)

SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION
SIGIR

We are Revisiting, but We are Not Learning

"What was not easy was integrating everyone quickly and smoothly for a response of this complexity, scale, novelty, and scope. We were obviously storming and forming under a National Incident Management System construct with the Incident Command System, but <u>everyone asks the question 'who is in charge' and folks do not have patience with the necessary deliberative process when you are juggling various statutory authorities and jurisdictions along with State's rights</u>, etc. Everyone understood the value in an NCP response but we had never initiated an NCP response of this magnitude since OPA 90 was legislated and certainly not since the responses to nationally significant events such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina."

Rear Admiral Mary Landry (Photo from AL.com/Victor Calhoun)

Rear Admiral Mary Landry quoted in "Deepwater Horizon's Influence on Contingency Planning" (2010, 19 July), Contingency Today http://www.defenceiq.com/article.cfm?externalID=2861

The *A Priori* Challenge

It's on everyone's lips from across the world, to the President downwards:

But, wait….

What IS Collaboration?

Coordination on Steroids!

Warning! Warning! Warning Will Robinson…..

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Collaboration is what achieves the strategic advantage of Synergy

Coordination on Steroids will not do it!

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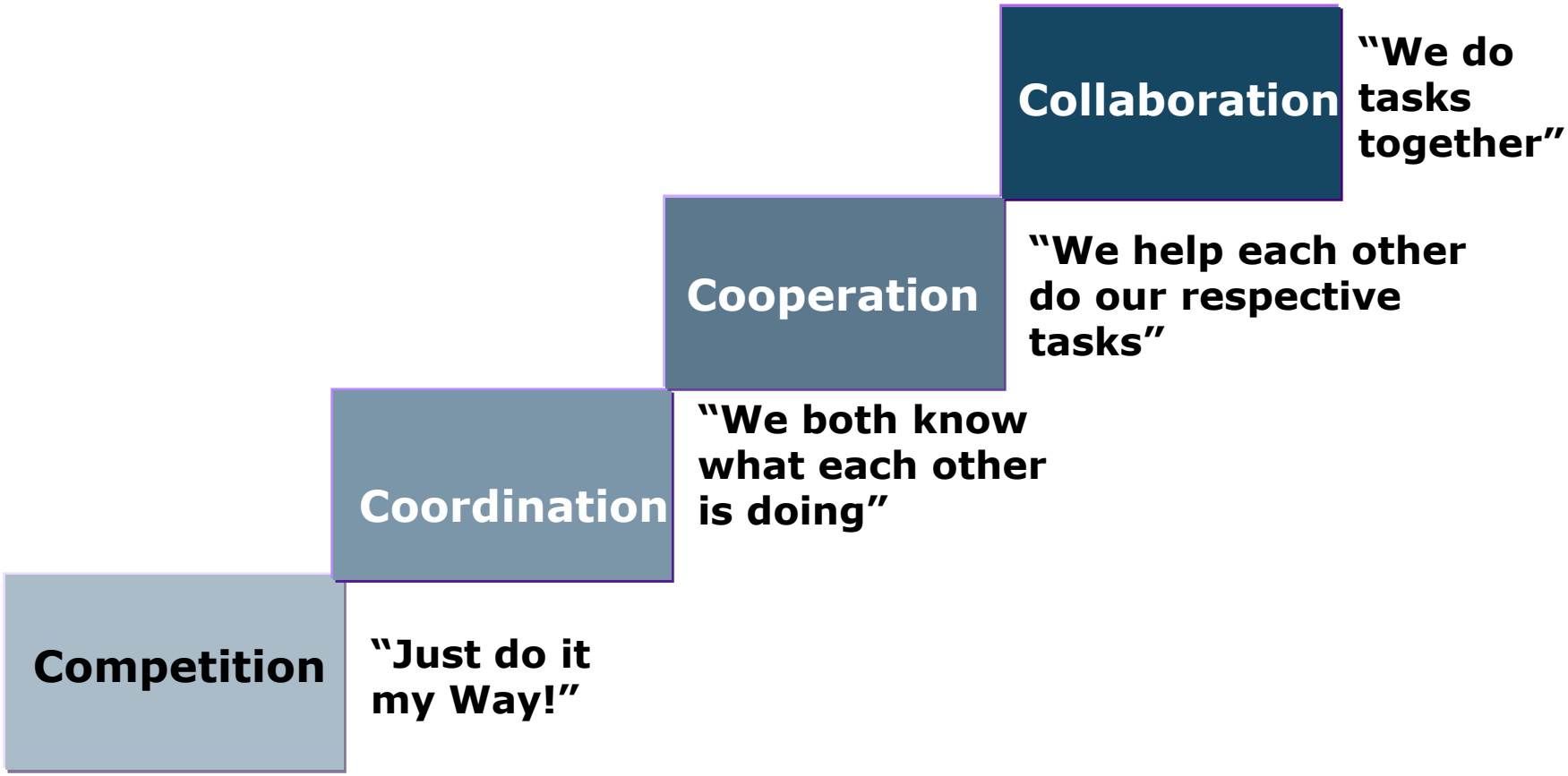
We have not overcome past failures and shortcomings because we have been aiming too low in our reform efforts-

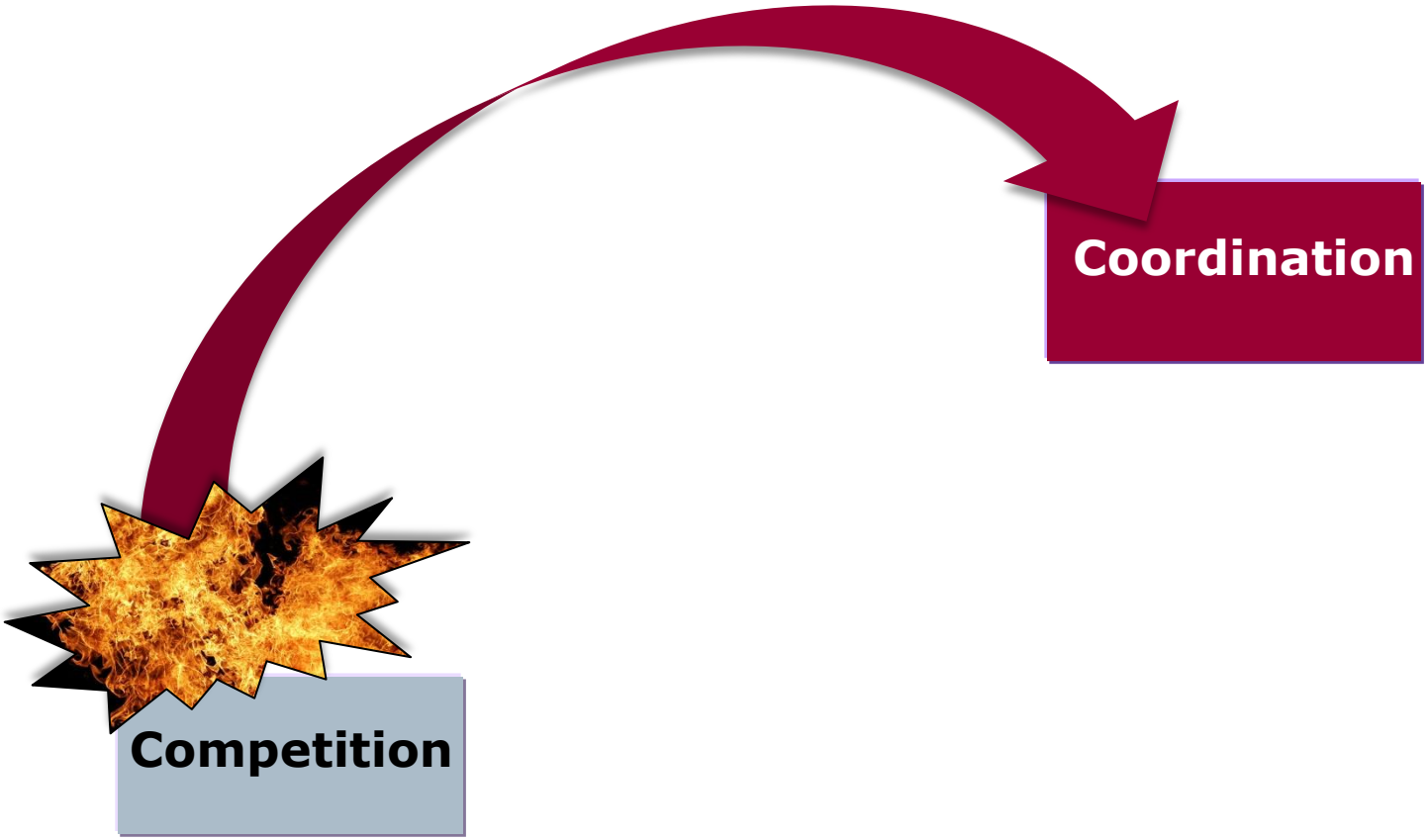
we have focused on more coordination as the goal, NOT on creating, crafting and sustaining Collaborations

Collaboration is an entirely Different Level and Scope of Capability



Cathy Downes, (2010)"Collaboration is NOT Coordination on Steroids: A Collaboration Capability Maturity Model for Improving Inter-Agency Collaboration"

What Actually Happens – Insufficient Strategy



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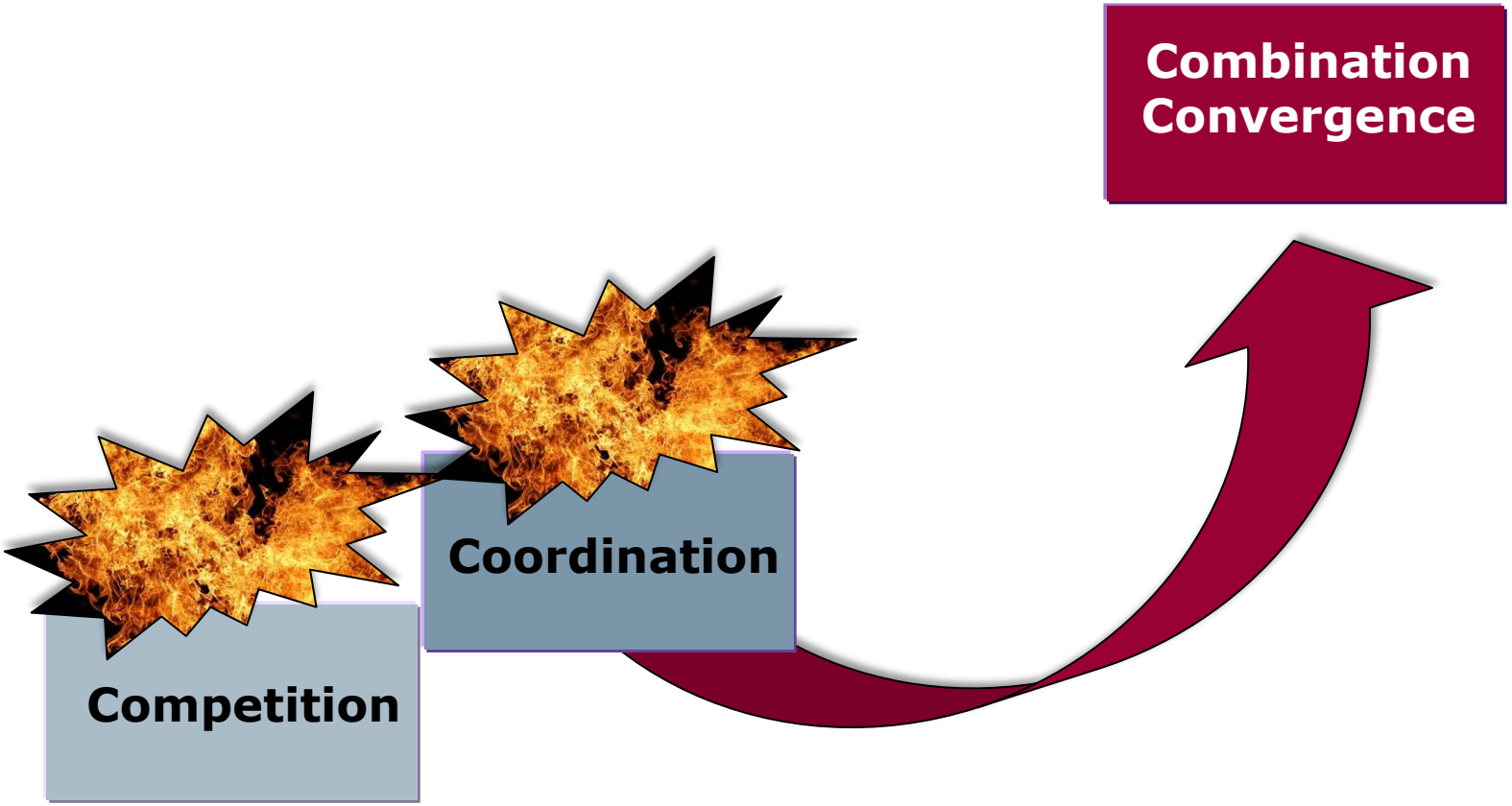
What Actually Happens –Wrong Structural Strategy



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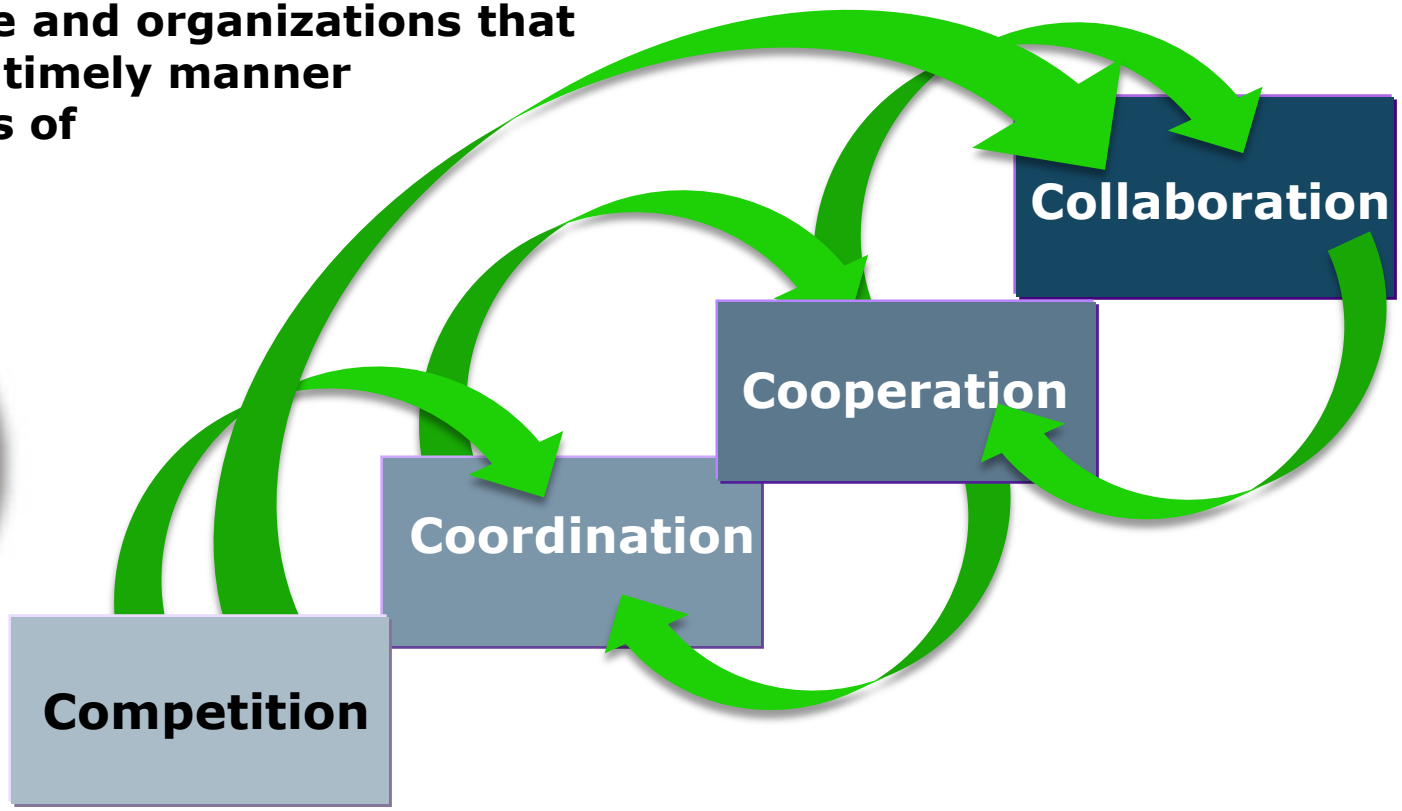
The *A Priori* Challenge -

understand the People, Leadership, Governance, Human, technological, process, and organizational dimensions of Collaboration so that we can construct collaborative cultures, leaders, people and organizations that can adapt in a timely manner to other modes of interaction.



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Thank You

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