



Defense
LEADERSHIP
Summit

Defining the future of Civilian Leadership in the DoD

Actions, Images, Words

Strategic Communication as a Key Leader Skill Set

Dennis M. Murphy

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Session Objectives

- Understand what strategic communication is...and what it isn't
- Appreciate the role of strategic communication in both planning and implementation
- Appreciate strategic communication as a leader driven process

The Information Environment



Zits

By Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman



“The Times They Are a-Changin’.”

Bob Dylan

So why Strategic Communication?

"...Public relations was invented in the United States, yet we are miserable at communicating to the rest of the world what we are about as a society and a culture, about freedom and democracy, about our policies and our goals..... Speed, agility, and cultural relevance are not terms that come readily to mind when discussing U.S. strategic communications (sic)."

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, November 2007

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the slide consists of several overlapping diagonal bands in shades of blue, red, and white, creating a dynamic, modern look.



...and what is SC?
Upfront takeaway:

**Strategic Communication is
the orchestration of
actions, images & words to
achieve desired cognitive
information effects in
support of objectives**





Strategy 101

- Ends: Cognitive information effects
- *Ways (the “how”): Strategic Communication
- Means: *all available capabilities*

What it is...

- Process of planning and executing integrated capabilities
 - Where words are necessary but not sufficient
 - More than “themes and messaging”
 - Words provide the context to actions and images
 - SC seeks to close the “Say – Do” gap
 - Establish trust and credibility
 - Driven by enduring principles



DOD Principles of Strategic Communication

Leadership-Driven

Leaders must lead communication process

Credible

Perception of truthfulness and respect

Dialogue

Multi-faceted exchange of ideas

Unity of Effort

Integrated and coordinated

Responsive

Right audience, message, time, and place

Understanding

Deep comprehension of others

Pervasive

Every action sends a message

Results-Based

Tied to desired endstate

Continuous

Analysis, Planning, Execution,
Assessment

What it isn't...

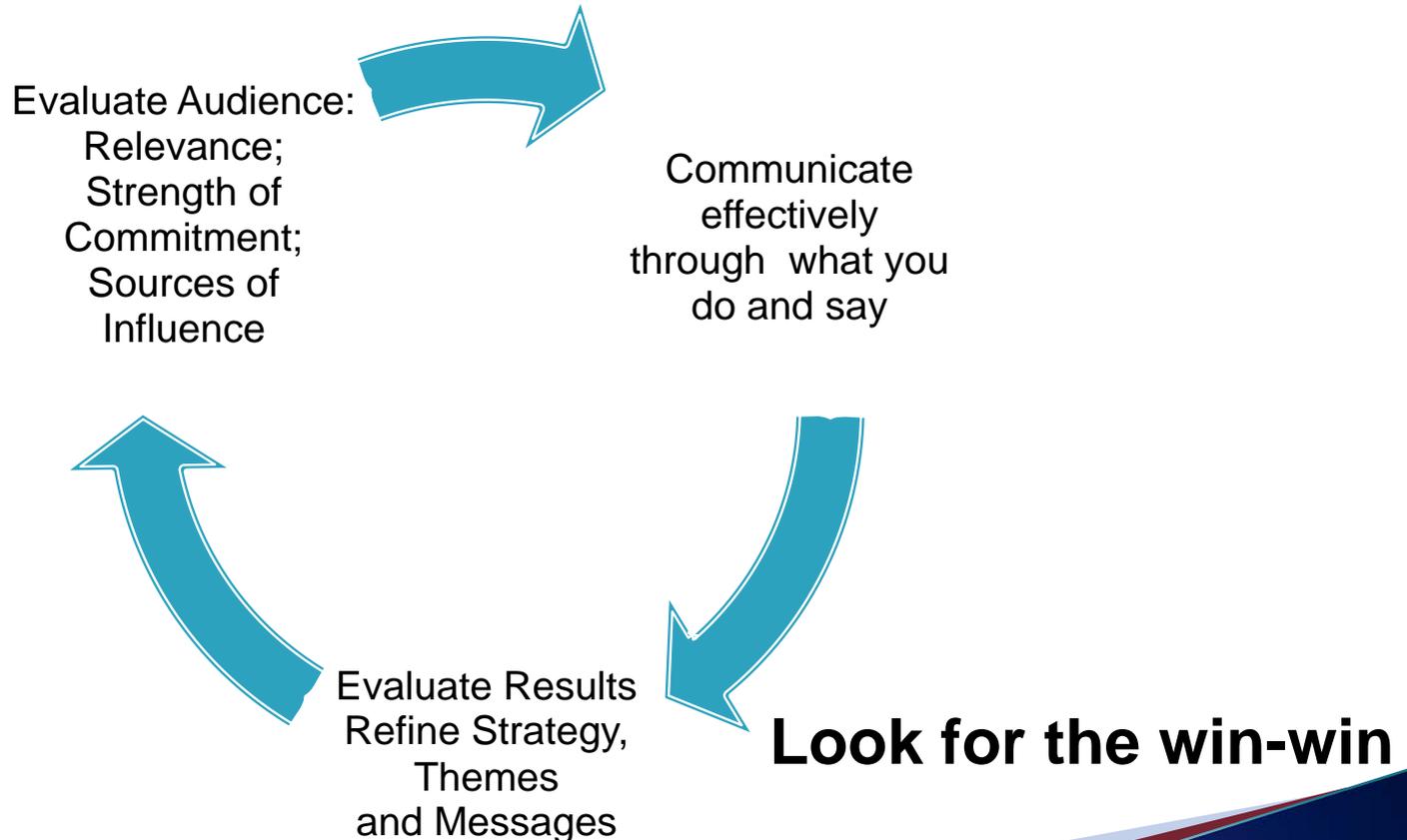
- It's not public affairs on steroids
- It's not senior leader talking points/engagement
- It's not always "strategic"
- It's not just communications
- It's not about "hearts and minds"
- It's not an afterthought
 - Good SC won't fix bad policy



SC and Policy Development

- “Bring me in on the takeoff....”
- Define the desired information effect/endstate
- Consider message, messenger (means), target audience(s)
- No need to be an apologist
 - Values drive interests drive policy
 - Inform and engage (active listening)
 - They don’t need to love us; but need to understand us
 - In the end we may agree to disagree
- Always consider information effects risk analysis; risk mitigation

Basic theory– You may not change someone’s mind, but you can find areas of agreement where interests overlap.



How important is SC?

In fact, sometimes SC is the policy

On September 17th, 2008 Dr. Gates announced a new policy to apologize for Afghan civilian casualties and offer compensation to survivors even before all the facts were known. There are obvious downfalls to this decision, not the least of which is that the wrong people may be compensated. But Gates "gets it." The policy aim has much less to do with the compensation and everything to do with sending the message that we care about the Afghan people. And so the Secretary's action closed a proverbial say-do gap and made inroads in the elusive battle of ideas. *(Murphy, Op-ed)*

Thank You

Professor Dennis M. Murphy

dennis.murphy@us.army.mil

717-245-3937

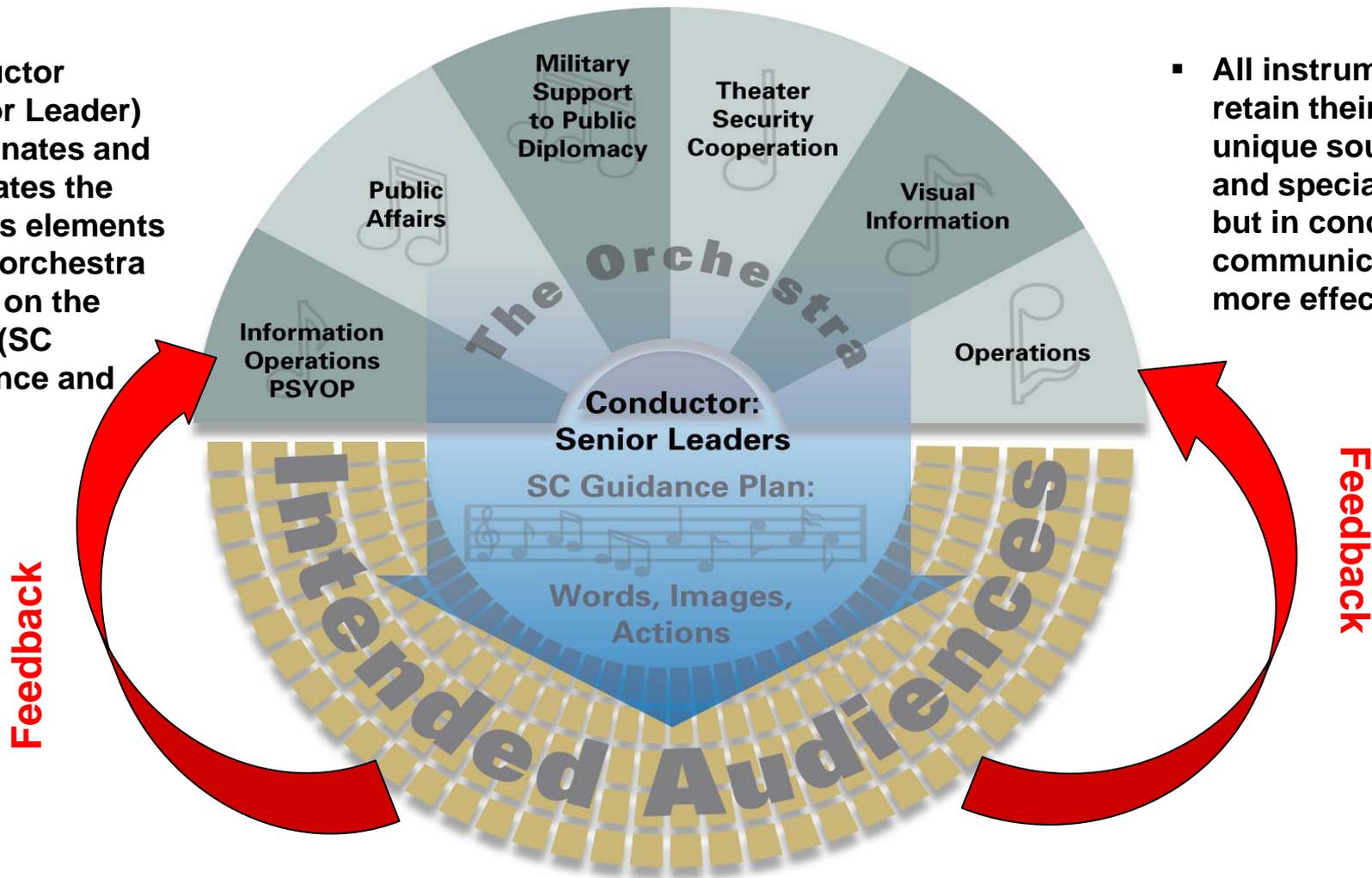
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- **Conductor (Senior Leader) coordinates and integrates the various elements of the orchestra based on the score (SC Guidance and Plan)**



- **All instruments retain their unique sound and specialty, but in concert, communicate more effectively**

Feedback

Feedback

SC and Policy Implementation

- ...See policy development
- SC is not a shoot and forget system
 - Continuous evaluation, feedback, adjustment
- Think “out of the box”: don’t limit your capabilities
- Engage and use assets beyond your organization