

Department of the Air Force

Cyber High Performance Teams (HPTs)



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SAF/CA
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Overview

- **BLUF**
 - **Strategic Advantage**
 - **What & How**
 - **Elite Performance Model (EPM)**
 - **EPM Use Case**
 - **Performance & Innovation**
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AF does not have a program to deliberately identify, assess, select, and continuously develop cognitive cyber high performers like today's elite organizations

- Existing ecosystems use proven methodologies to identify, assess, select, and develop high performers AF can leverage for their workforce

Lethality and high performance are linked by developing & fostering traits indicative of mission success (e.g., decisions under pressure, learning velocity, adaptability, stress management, etc.)



HPTs – Only Strategic Advantage

"intelligence officials believe the malware could give China the power to disrupt or slow American deployments or resupply operations..“*

ADVERSARY

USA



Technology



Technology

...learn same technical material



Training



Training

...train same concepts



Budget



Budget

...shrinking budgets



Manpower



Manpower

...reduced manpower

The only sustainable advantage is how our teams perform



What & How

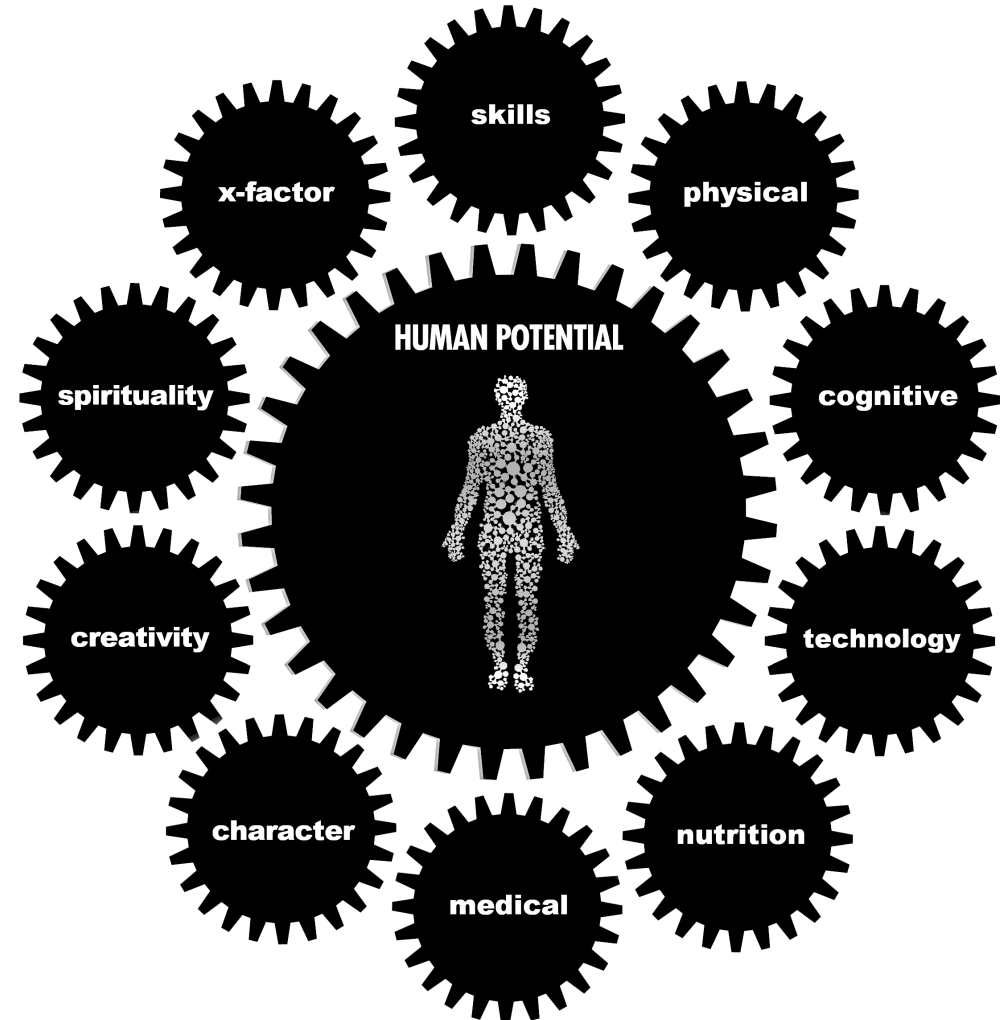
- **What Are We Doing?** Enabling existing processes & methodologies to facilitate targeted investments in training and development of cyber force
 - **How Are We Doing It?** Implementing existing frameworks and curricula used by high performance orgs (e.g., pro sports, SOF, Olympians, etc.) to strengthen talent management, training, develop useful innovation, and enhance creative solutioning
- **What Are We **NOT** Doing?**
 - ✓ Replacing existing processes and methods but exploiting gaps for competitive advantage
 - ✓ Creating Go / No-Go criteria but improving data driven decisions



Elite Performance Modeling (EPM)

It starts with the EPM ...

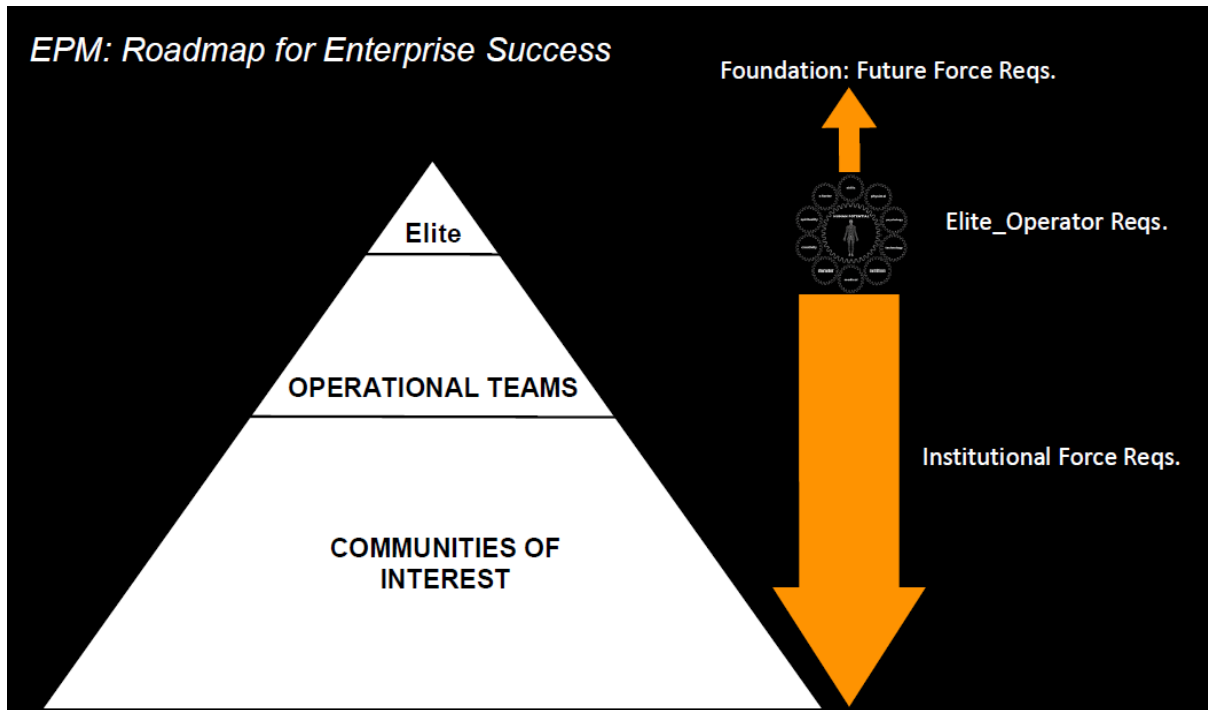
- ✓ Identifies **critical success factors** for sustained high performance in individuals, teams, and mastery of domain
- ✓ Provides a “qualitative” advantage against a quantitative threat driving readiness
- ✓ Supports identification, assessment, & selection of the right people for the right job(s)
- ✓ Identifies training tailored for mission outcomes and developing advanced TTPs



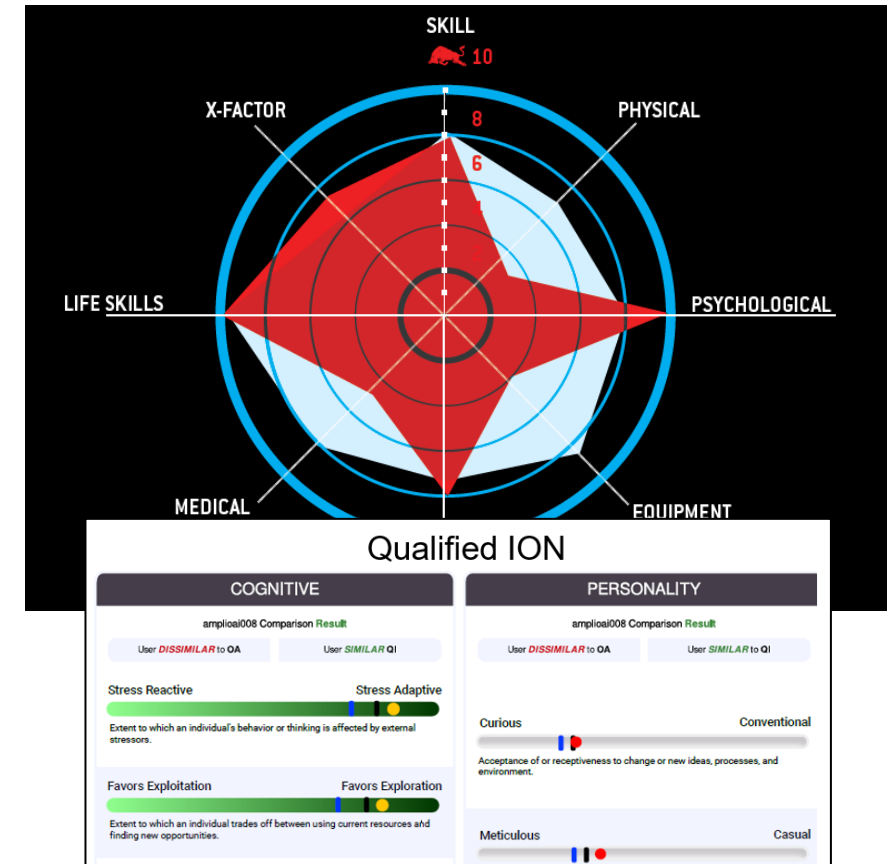


EPM Use Case

Selection & Assessment



- Used by SOF (NSW 4 - MAJCOM leaders)
- Broadens and improves selection and assessment criteria
- Future casting force requirements



PK Assesses

- ✓ Strategy vs Counter-Intel
- ✓ Methodical Approach
- ✓ Adapting to Adversary

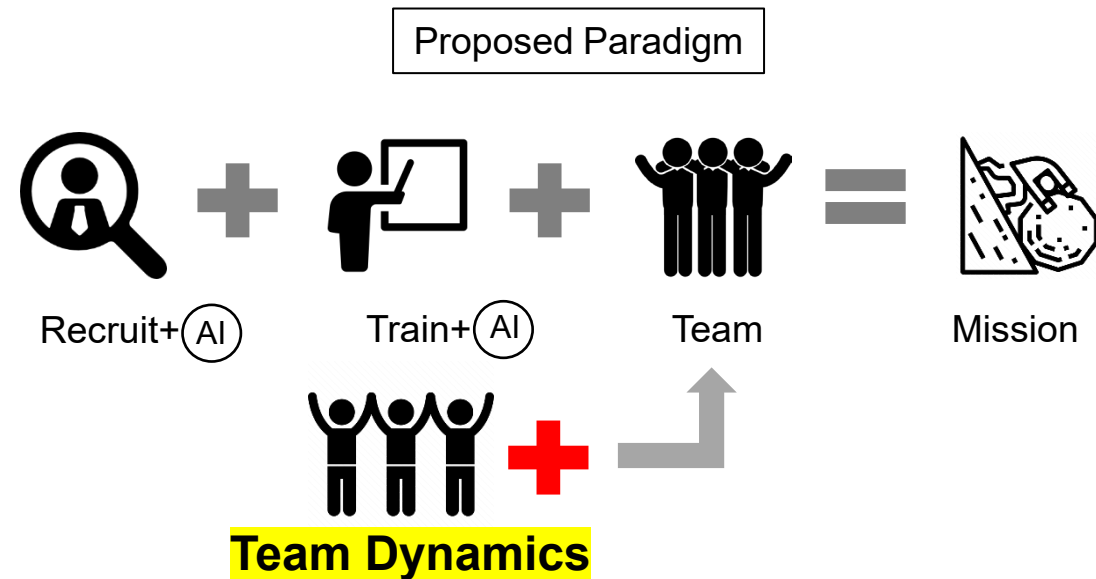
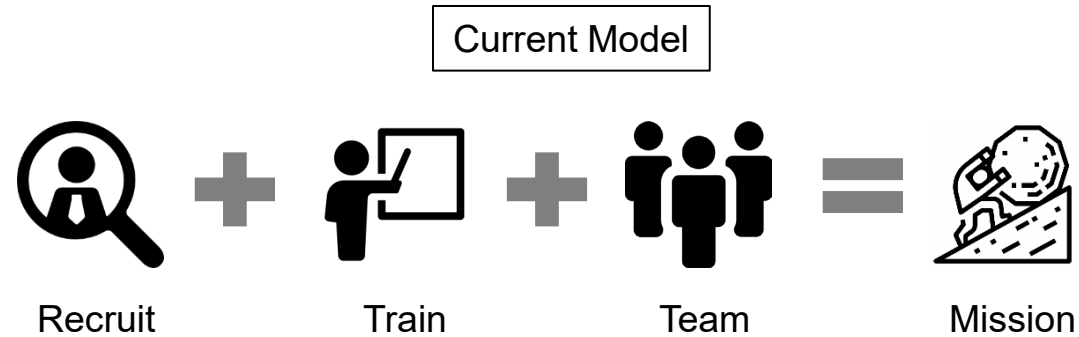
Forager Assesses

- ✓ Human vs Environment
- ✓ Explore/Exploit Balance
- ✓ Divergent Thinking



Deliver Continuous Performance & Innovation

“...takes more than simply hiring the right people and arming them with the right tools to do their work.”*





Impacts

I'm not sure if I've shared this with you, but it was a bit of a shock to my wife when I got back. Our training pipeline really changes people. It's something we talk about as operators. The processes we build internally to deal with the problems we face, constantly making hard decisions with incomplete information when the stakes are so high—it tends to boil over into our personal lives. Everything becomes a risk decision and it can rob us and our families of enjoyment. My wife had pointed this out to me over the years in the pipeline, but I either wasn't in the right place to hear it or just didn't have the tools to act on it. The HPT unlocked something for me. It showed me that I can be creative and vulnerable without sacrificing the side of me that's needed to be a good operator. In fact, that vulnerability can make me an even better operator. I came back changed. And for several weeks after I got back, I watched my wife go through a sort of grief process. She was happy that something had unlocked in me, but sad that our family and I had missed out over the years in training, and mad that it took some strangers for me to snap out of it, when she had been trying to get through to me. There were some tears and it was pretty tumultuous at first. She doubted it would stick. I doubted it would stick. It takes effort to stay in the right headspace, but I think the changes in me are here to stay. Pretty vulnerable and maybe TMI, but I just wanted to give you a window into how I've been processing all of this.

"It's been <several months> now and I still stand by the statement that it's the most worthwhile training the DoD has ever sent me to." - Active Duty CNMF ION

"This week has been a life-changing experience and really forging the high-performance future of Cyber Command." – Maj Kimo Bumanglag, PhD., Cyber WIC

Operator syndrome is real. The HPT experience really helped me with that, though. We all know that we all feel imposter syndrome...and all of us can't be right. But the HPT really gave me the clarity that "We are the adults in the room. If we don't do it, nobody will." I've talked to senior operators since and it's a realization they all had at different stages, often much further into their time as an operator than I did. I think the HPT helped me get there quicker.

I appreciate you sharing the good news throughout the day today and the chat on my drive home. It was actually a really hard day for me, but it was encouraging to see those things coming through. A good friend of mine, a great operator, turned in his badge this morning. He is separating with <reasons> and has been hitting him hard. He loves this job and is amazing at it, but work just ground him into the dirt. I've shared with him my vision for HPT and we are both 100% confident that he wouldn't be walking out the door if this stuff had happened a couple years ago. When I talk about the benefit of HPT for "retaining talent" by "treating people like people", it's very personal to me. I'm not just feeling the weight of losing an operator and needing to find someone to pick up the slack. It's hard to quantify this loss, but I wanted to share a little more of why HPT means so much to me.



END
