

MILITARY

Core Values and the Air Force

David Deptula, Lt Gen (Ret), USAF, Dean, Mitchell Institute of Aerospace Studies

Interviewed by: Douglas Lindsay

Lindsay: Would you mind starting by talking a little bit about your career?

Deptula: I will try to do this in as condensed a manner as possible, but you know, I was in the Air Force for 34 and a half years. It all started with my enrollment as a ROTC cadet at the University of Virginia. I graduated and was commissioned in 1974. There were 10 pilot candidates in my class, but two months before graduation, we got notification that our induction to active duty would be slipped for a year. That was due to all the pilots coming out of Vietnam. I decided to get a master's degree while I was waiting. Interestingly, out of those 10 pilot candidates in my ROTC class, I was the only one that went on to undergraduate pilot training (UPT) in the Air Force. They were offering incentives to get people not to come on active duty, because they just had too many pilots at that time. So, I came on active duty in 1976. I was fortunate to be one of the first UPT graduates to be assigned an F-15. I was in the second or third class of UPT graduates assigned F-15s right out of flight school. For the next 10 years, I did what young officers do—learn, grow, and mature in their career field—in my case as an F-15 pilot. I got 1,000 hours

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flying the F-15 in four years, which is pretty incredible. I was selected as the Pacific Air Forces F-15 aerial demonstration pilot, and graduated from the Fighter Weapons School in the F-15.

My initial operational assignment was at the 49th Tactical Fighter Wing at Holloman Air Force Base, followed by the 18th Tactical Fighter Wing at Kadena Air Base, Japan. Following a one-year fellowship as Air Force Legislative Liaison in the Pentagon in 1983, I was then assigned to the 325 Tactical Training wing at Tyndall Air Force Base. In each of these flying assignments, I was part of the initial cadre transitioning each wing to the F-15. At the end of all that time, I attended the Armed Forces Staff College for Intermediate Service School and my follow-on assignment was to the Pentagon working in the Air Force doctrine division on the Air Staff. While in that position, I reported to Colonel John Warden. In 1989, I was selected to work for the new Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Don Rice. I was author, ghost author if you will, of the document *Global Reach-Global Power*, which basically laid out the vision of the Air Force, and what its relevance was in the post-Cold War era. Six months later, Saddam Hussain invaded Kuwait. I got involved with the planning effort in the Pentagon, and Dr. Rice gave me full authorization to go do that and to work with Colonel Warden. We put together a plan that was known as “Instant Thunder.” Some folks may recognize that. There’s a great book on the subject titled, *The Heart of the Storm*, written by retired Colonel Rich Reynolds.

We thought our planning effort would be over when we took our “Instant Thunder” plan down and briefed General Norman Schwarzkopf on Aug 17, 1990. But General Schwarzkopf asked us to go over to Saudi Arabia, and brief Lt General Horner, who was acting as the Central Commander forward. Five years prior,

Gen Horner was the senior commander of Tyndall Air Force Base and I was his instructor pilot in the F-15. In 1990 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, he asked me to stay as part of his staff, and I became the chief planner for the Desert Storm air campaign where I wrote the attack plans for each and every day of the Desert Storm air campaign.

After that, I came back to Secretary Rice’s office and was involved with building and delivering many briefings as you might imagine. After four years at Headquarters, Air Force, I went back to an operational F-15 assignment at Eglin Air Force Base. I led the 1992 William Tell team, became Deputy Logistics Group Commander, and then after getting promoted to Colonel, I attended National War College. After War College, I was selected by the Chief of Staff to be the Air Force representative to the Commission on Roles in Missions for the Armed Services. It was the first major service roles and missions review that had been accomplished since 1948.

Following that assignment, I had the privilege of going back to the 33rd Fighter Wing at Eglin Air Force Base, this time as the 33rd Operations Group Commander. While I was there, our group went through an operational readiness inspection, and our F-15s executed six operational deployments to Southwest Asia. It was during one of these deployments on June 25, 1996, that a terrorist bomb was detonated outside the Khobar Towers housing complex in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 Airmen—10 from the 33rd Operations Group. It was a terrible day and reinforced the risks and ultimate sacrifice that members of the military take.

At the end of 1996, I was called back to Washington and being told I was needed again, this time to be the Air Force representative on the National Defense Panel

which was to evaluate the first Quadrennial Defense Review. At the end of 1997, I was selected to go to Turkey to become the Combined Joint Task Force Commander for Operation Northern Watch. In that assignment I oversaw the no-fly zone operations in Northern Iraq, which was a magnificent experience having soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and coalition partners under my command. We really applied the notion of effects-based operations to the military mission at the time and as a result, eliminated all the surface-to-air missile sites in Northern Iraq.

I was then called back to Washington in September 1999, this time to be the Director of the Air Force's Quadrennial Defense Review for 2001. Interestingly, I just finished doing a podcast with General John Jumper about what happened on 9/11. I was in the Pentagon on 9/11, two corridors away from where the airplane was flown into the building. A couple of days later, I got a call to go down to Chief Jumper's office. He told me that he had received a call from the Commander at 9th Air Force requesting me to become the Commander of the Combined Air and Space Operations Center (CAOC) and do the planning for America's response to 9/11. So, I was the first director of the CAOC for Operation Enduring Freedom.

After nearly three months in Saudi Arabia, I came under pressure from the Air Combat Command commander to take up the assignment that I had been given before 9/11, the Air Combat Command Chief Plans and Programs officer. In that job, I was responsible for putting together a balanced \$27 billion dollar resource plan in the face of significant competing challenges and fiscal limitations. I also built the first force structure flight plan in Air Force history that integrated fighters, bombers, weapons, ISR, and C2 aircraft into a game plan for planning and programming. I followed that assignment by going

out to the Pacific to become the Pacific Air Forces Director of Operations, the Vice-Commander of Pacific Air Forces, and then, the Kenney Warfighting Headquarters Commander, which at that time had replaced the numbered Air Force command structure. In that role, I was the standing Joint Force Air Component Commander for all air operations in the Pacific outside of Korea. In late 2004, early 2005, after the tsunami hit South Asia, I was appointed as the air component commander for Operation Unified Assistance, which was the tsunami relief operation. It was the largest humanitarian/disaster relief airlift—in terms of cargo—in Air Force history.

In the spring of 2006, I got a call from the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, then General Buzz Moseley, who said, "Hey, Dave. I've got something I'd like you to do. I would like you to come on board as the Air Force's first three-star Chief of Intelligence." For a minute there, I scratched my head. I thought, hey look, I'm an operator. But it only took a handful of seconds to realize it was a perfect pick, because I had been a consummate user of intelligence my entire career, understanding where its weaknesses and strengths were, so I came back to the Pentagon and stood up the first Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence. After I arrived back in the Pentagon, I convinced General Michael Moseley that he shouldn't make the job just about intelligence—it should have the responsibility for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR). He agreed. About a year later, I made the point to him that it would be smart to move responsibility for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) underneath my ISR position, and out from operations because UAVs need to be treated as an enterprise—the aircraft, the sensors, the analysts, and the associated intelligence distribution system. It's not just about those little pieces of fiberglass up in the air. It's about the sensors. It's about the distribution system. It's about all of that. And so, he agreed. For the next four

years, I oversaw the greatest increase in integration of unmanned aerial vehicles in the Air Force.

I transitioned from active duty into a different uniform in August 2010. I continue my role in trying to help the Air Force, and the Nation to understand the virtues and values of aerospace power as the Dean of the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies. So, there you go.

Lindsay: I think that's fascinating, because when you start out in whatever enterprise that you're in, you initially think, "Okay, what kind of path do I need to follow to be successful?" As a result, I think early on people think there is this one path that you can follow. But as I continue to talk to hundreds of senior leaders like yourself, I realize it's not what you would have initially planned. That is important, because one of the things that you kept bringing up was, "I got a call." The truth is, we don't get calls when we're not good at what we do. We don't get calls where we don't have good performance. Your ability to answer the call, be willing to do that, and then perform when needed, resulted in those calls to keep coming. Your ability and willingness to serve in that capacity, whether you thought that was good timing, or at the right time, or the right place, because you may have had other things that you probably wanted to do along the way.

Deptula: That is a very good summary. When I first got a call saying, "Hey, you're going to go over to be the Combined/Joint Task Force Commander in Turkey," I thought to myself, "What?" But, it happened to be my most enjoyable assignment of all of them. And I enjoyed every one of them. If you look at my career, I wish everyone in the Air Force had the same set of opportunities. Let me explain what I mean. Starting in 1992, after my second tour in the Pentagon, I alternated between headquarters assignments and operational

assignments. Then, over time, the level of responsibility went up. It's unique because I was able to bring back to the Headquarters Air Force staff, operational perspectives particularly from the joint operational experience I had that most people in the Air staff simply didn't have. And vice versa, when I went back to operational assignments. I could provide insights from a staff perspective that people in the operational world generally didn't understand.

One of the things I failed to mention is that I'm the only officer in Air Force history to have been fully combat mission qualified in the F-15 at every rank from Lieutenant to Lieutenant General. That's significant because as a senior commander out in the Pacific, I was fully combat mission qualified in a fighter. So, when I'd go down to the 199th Fighter Squadron of the Hawaii Air National Guard that was flying F-15s, they treated me just like a Captain. I wasn't one of those visiting Generals that had a special pilot sitting in the back seat to make sure that they didn't kill themselves. I could beat anybody in the squadron on a straight up high-aspect basic fighter maneuvers (BFM) mission—all but one guy. There's this one guy who was really, really good, but anyway, I digress. So, what was unique about my career was the movement back and forth between senior operations position and senior staff leadership positions. I knew and worked for every Chief and Secretary of the Air Force going back to Larry Welch and Don Rice.

Lindsay: That balance seemed to pay dividends for both operations and headquarters. Thanks for sharing that background. I was wondering if I could get your thoughts on the role of character in leadership?

Deptula: I think that we are very fortunate in the Department of the Air Force as we have three overarching tenants that stand as a great guide to

leadership and character. Those are the core values of, integrity first; service before self; and excellence in all we do. Those have stuck in my mind since they were initially instituted by General Ronald Fogleman. They are one of two sequences of words that have remained constant in the Air Force since their original inception. The other one being the vision of the Air Force of *Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power*.

With respect to *integrity first*, an airman or a guardian, must be a person of integrity, courage, and conviction. They've got to be willing to control their impulses and exercise courage, honesty, and accountability, in order to do what's right. And, as many people have said, even when no one's observing them.

Now, *service before self* means that the military professional's duties take precedence over personal desires. Every airman or guardian, is expected to have the discipline to follow rules, exhibit self-control, and possess respect for the beliefs, authority, and work, of others.

Finally, regarding *excellence*, what it means is that airman and guardians strive for continued improvement in self and service, in order to advance the capabilities of the Air Force and the Space Force as well as achieve greater accomplishment and performance for themselves, and their community. What I'd tell you is that I think it's important to continually reinforce these fundamentals, because they do stand as guideposts. Cadets, faculty, and staff at the Air Force Academy must demonstrate a sophisticated combination of these tenants, by employing responsibilities, skills, and knowledge, as members of the profession of arms, as they relate to service in the Air Force and the Space Force.

With respect to current events unfolding in Afghanistan, these tenants, and how they are applied, are coming to the forefront of discussion. You see it all over the news, and it just reiterates their importance. Let me give you a couple of examples. With a complete U.S. military exit as the goal, U.S. citizens in Afghanistan, personnel at risk, should have been evacuated well prior to removing our primary forces, particularly the asymmetric advantage of our airpower in country. Second, the evacuation was driven by the calendar versus conditions. This guaranteed that American citizens would be left behind. I would tell you; military actions should be conditions based, and should not be driven by arbitrary timelines, and certainly not by timelines driven by political opportunity, like getting our forces out prior to the 20th Anniversary of 9/11. So, the question is, how are these decisions made and why? Now, I don't have the answers. It would be presumptuous at this early stage to guess at what they are, and it will take an in-depth investigation to determine. But, they must be answered, and appropriate action taken, because as a result of the debacle of a hasty withdrawal from Afghanistan, extremists have been emboldened, not just in Afghanistan, but around the world because they view the U.S. now weaker than ever before. Furthermore, the loss of confidence in the United States for our allies in Europe and the Indo-Pacific region is going to reduce U.S. ability to influence events around the world. It undermines U.S. National Security. Unfortunately, what's not apparent is a path to recovery, but that highlights one of the major current issues that directly relate to leadership and character.

Let me offer you one more. Another topic that's directly related to character and leadership at a strategic level, and I think this is something that, too often, folks at the Academy don't get exposure to, but it's the

fundamental issue of U.S. Defense Strategy and the resources allocated to achieve it. Simply put, there exists a growing strategy resource mismatch. The strategy calls for more defense resources, but Congress ignores that. And frankly, the Pentagon does, to a degree, also. Let me give you an example. The current Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) planning guidance calls for more of the attributes provided by the Department of the Air Force in order to meet the challenges of the current National Defense Strategy. But at the same time, the Office of Defense fiscal guidance, or budgetary guidance, does not reflect that focus in terms of resource allocation, because it gives each of the services roughly an equal share of the budget. If you go back to 2018, Congress directed the Department of the Air Force to identify, in a resource unconstrained study, just what force structure they actually need to meet the demands of the National Defense Strategy. You may recall, the answer was 386 operational squadrons. That's a 24 percent increase over what we have today. When was the last time, Doug, that you heard a discussion about how the Air Force is planning to get to the 386 operational squadrons?

Lindsay: I haven't.

Deptula: Right. As an institution, are we standing up for the resources we need or are we going along to get along, by not making waves with the other services, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Congress, by silently accepting the arbitrary budgets they issue, that we know are not sufficient to accomplish our assigned missions? The Department of the Air Force remains the world's preeminent force in Air, Space, and Cyberspace. We maintain that distinction by maintaining our objective of Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and

Global Power. But, our position is rapidly slipping, in part because of the social and fiscal pressures to go along to get along. So, I'd tell you it's time to examine the current strategic issues that I've highlighted here, in the context of the Department of the Air Force core values of integrity, service, and excellence.

Lindsay: I appreciate that, because you hit on a lot of different points, starting with the idea of the core values. I think you're right. They're really weigh points. What I appreciate about the core values is that, they're not destinations. They're aspirational. There has to be a continued, increased focus as we move up as leaders, on what does excellence mean for me at this level? It's not necessarily tactical. It's operational, and strategic, and in your case, often enterprise, country wide, or even coalition wide. So, it is the aspect of it being

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grounded, not in, "I got there", but in getting there, and understanding that you look at it as a scale from zero to 10, and you sit there and you start to feel good and go, "Okay. I'm getting up to about a nine". And then by the time you reach a nine, you realize it's not a scale of one to 10. It's really a scale of one to a 100. So then, I need to keep going, by time I maybe I get to 95 or 96, I realize it is bigger. That aspect of it being aspirations is very important.

You also made a point about how the DoD needs those attributes of the Air Force, but they don't necessarily line up. I was wondering, can you talk a

little bit more about those attributes? When you talk about that, are you saying those focused on the core values, or are there some specific attributes that you see?

Deptula: I'm talking about the actual mission capabilities, military capabilities that the Air Force supplies, like range and payload, the ability to penetrate, the ability to provide 24/7/365 intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, and then, the ability to accomplish events in quantity, at range, and rapidly. When you look at the Pacific—I told you I was the Kenney Warfighting Headquarters Commander out there—I used to get sick and tired of listening to my Navy friends talk about, "Oh, this is a marathon theater, you know. We've got the tyranny of distance out here. We've got 16 time zones." And I'd remind them, I'd go, "Yeah, you have 16 time zones, so you know the way you conquer the tyranny of distance is by going 600 miles an hour in an airplane, not going 20 miles an hour in a ship."

When Operation Unified Assistance started on December 28, 2004, they started to get the USS Mercy hospital ship in San Diego, ready. It departed San Diego on January 5, 2005 and by the time it got off the coast in Indonesia, it was 34 days later and the operation was essentially already concluded. Operation Unified Assistance was a mobility operation. The way you solved that was with airpower. Many people think about airpower as a clenched fist—it can also be an open hand. We saw that in Operation Unified Assistance. We just saw it with the evacuation of Kabul. So, what I'm talking about are those capabilities that aerospace power is bringing to our defense equation. That's what is necessary to meet the needs of the peer threats that we are facing today. It's important to recognize that the Air Force is the indispensable force when it comes to joint force operations. We cannot conduct any joint

force operation, none, without some element of the Department of the Air Force involved. You can't say that about any other service.

That's a long answer to your question. The defense guidance says, hey, we need more of this aerospace stuff, but then, the planning, the budgetary guidance says, by the way, we're not going to give you any additional money. We want additional capacity and capability out of you, but we're not going to give you any more money to do it. But, we're going to maintain the same size of the Army. We're not going to use it in the Pacific to the degree that we might in other locations. It doesn't mean the Army's not important. I want to have the strongest Army, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, and Marine Corps, in the world. But, we have to adjust for the strategy, if in fact, we have limited resources. If Congress isn't going to plus up the Department of Defense where it needs to be, then inside the Department of Defense, we need to start making decisions on the basis of cost per desired effect. If your desired effect is rapid, long-range reach, with high payload, the Air Force is your solution, not the Army.

Lindsay: When you take what you just said on the idea of fixed resources, and you hear the Chief say we want to have airpower anytime, anywhere, that is not a resource constrained statement, or a vision. It is actually quite the opposite. I appreciate you talking about those attributes, because what you're talking about are these things that are uniquely the Air Force. You've also talked about some of the things that are uniquely about leadership—the things that we need from our people. As you start talking about trying to make decisions, what can I do with what I'm given—again to me—leadership, character, integrity, those things become magnified... because you're making choices between, not just "do I want this airframe?", "do I want

this capacity?" — but also about the ability to wage war, life, and death, potentially lose-lose scenarios, not necessarily win-win scenarios.

Deptula: Right. You got it.

Lindsay: So, with that in mind, what are your thoughts about getting back to some more of those core values of integrity, service, excellence, and character? When you're talking about this type of leadership, and certainly at the levels that you've been at, a lot of people get into trouble in areas of discretion. It's not necessarily about not knowing your job. It's about making those bad choices, or it's about prioritizing things wrong, or not necessarily doing the right thing. Any thoughts about how character and leadership are intertwined? We talk about them oftentimes separately, but in reality, they are more integral than I think a lot of people give it credit for.

Deptula: Yes, you can't have integrity without character, and you can't have character without integrity. It's an interesting proposition, and I think back to one of my taglines when I was Chief of Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance, that you can't have intelligence without surveillance and reconnaissance. And, the only reason we do surveillance and reconnaissance is to acquire intelligence. So, I agree with you, that character, leadership, and integrity, are integral. They are three parts of a triangle, or three legs. They are three legs of a stool, and the stool won't work if one of those legs isn't around.

Lindsay: It also doesn't work effectively if one of them is underdeveloped. For example, it's not like we can just be excellent at our job and not care about service. If character is underdeveloped, you've got a wobbly stool either way. And, you've got a problem.

Deptula: You've got me thinking here as I go back and I look at my career. First, I was blessed by a wonderful mentor, my dad. My dad was in the Air Force. He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. He was not a pilot. He was in Research and Development. But, I've known no one in my life that was more dedicated to the virtues and values of air and space, than he was. I went to the University of Virginia, Mr. Jefferson's university. He said, "Son, you need to have a goal in life." One day when we were walking around the school, he goes, "I've got one for you. It's a Thomas Jefferson quote. It's on the south gate. "Seek the path of honor, the light of truth, and the will to work for mankind." I thought, "Yeah, that's a good one. That's going to be my tagline for my movement forward." That was ingrained into me by my dad, and he would reiterate that periodically, as time went on, starting in college. Then, probably after I'd gone to Intermediate Service School, or once you start thinking about goals...what is it that you want to do, I tried to set one up for myself. I thought about the goal of being a general officer. No, that won't work. First, it's too covetous. Second, from my perspective goals should not be about rank. They should be about having an impact. So, what I came up with is this; "to have a positive policymaking influence on the Air Force." That became my goal for my Air Force career.

As I look back on that, and I think about that moment, that worked pretty good. And here's why. It's not connected with rank. It turns out that I achieved that goal when I was Lieutenant Colonel; as the author Global Reach-Global Power that still is fundamental in Air Force doctrine; and then as a planner in the Gulf War, coming back and translating some of what we did into organizational changes inside the Air Force. But, it didn't stop. The beauty of that goal that I laid out is, even though I achieved it as a Lieutenant Colonel, it remained in effect as I elevated in rank. So, it continued

to be a motivator, but it didn't stop once I achieved it. There was another level to work toward.

Lindsay: Exactly. I like that because it goes back to that idea of the core values. It's bigger than ourselves. So, and I think that focus, not on a rank, but on the ability to have influence, allowed you to focus, whether intentionally, or maybe it was just a script running in the background, a mental model of that's what you wanted to do, to have influence. If you had been solely focused on a rank, you might have not taken a couple

...success is all about human relations.

of those phone calls. You might not have done some of those opportunities, and said, "No. I'm not really sure how that fits. I need to go hit this gate. I need to do this because that's where I need to be in order to just set my next promotion up." Because the goal was larger than yourself, or something that wasn't tied to a position, you were able to keep that open. I think you hit on something there that, I think a lot of times, people miss. If I focus on what simply I can do just transactionally, we can miss the opportunity to really have that influence at a much larger level. That gets into that whole idea of a calling. And, I know you are still making a difference enterprise wide, in your position, through your influence. I think that's a very critical point. I don't think young leaders get that all the time. Some leaders never get that. They never grow, because their vision is only about where they can be.

I know we only have a few minutes left and I have a question I like to ask, if current day David Deptula could go back to ROTC Cadet Deptula and give some advice on leadership, knowing what you know now, what would you say?

Deptula: Well, first, I would like to go back, but I'd like to go back with the knowledge that I have now. Obviously, you learn a lot along the way, but I like to keep things relatively simple, so I've got two. The first one is, if you want your ideas accepted, then, you need to convince your boss that your ideas are really his, or her, ideas. Number two, to reinforce that, you shouldn't worry about who gets the credit, because fundamentally, if you're trying to achieve a positive policy making influence in the Air Force, or in whatever endeavor you're involved with, you're not interested in self (core value of Service Before Self). You're interested in the betterment of the institution, or the organization, that you're trying to change. That's the one segment of advice that I would give to folks in college. Now, they might be too young to really appreciate and understand that, but I would tell them that, just stick it in the back of their cranium.

Now, here's a more practical one, and this is not what you're going to expect, but my dad was in Research and Development. He was in Air Force Systems Command. He worked on nuclear weapons effects testing. It was very science and technology focused, and so, when I went to the University of Virginia, I majored in Astronomy. I was looking forward to perhaps becoming an astronaut. I thought that the Social Sciences, things like Psychology and History, were actually soft subjects that really weren't that relevant. Science and technology was where it was at. But, if I was to go back, and I actually advise this today, when I have college folks, or interns, or fellows, come and ask me for advice... As I grew more and more senior, I realized the value of the two courses that I eschewed when I was in college, but was forced to take, and those were Psychology and History. I tell them the importance of making sure that they have plenty of Psychology and History, because the way that you succeed as you grow more senior is by properly dealing with people—success

is all about human relations. I saw that with the way General Horner worked with General Schwarzkopf, in how he brought him over to his perspective, by working with him as a human being.

Then, history is the other thing that is fundamental to success, not just U.S. history, but also your service's history. Only in that manner can one understand what has gone before; what has worked, and what has not. There is simply not enough time in one's career to personally accumulate the wisdom of those who have faced the same or similar challenges to the ones that you will have to deal with. This is why for the last 10 years, I've been trying to get the Air Force Academy to make Air Force History a core curriculum requirement. I'd like to start by at least having them teach it. The Air Force Academy doesn't even teach a course in Air Force History. It's fundamentally important, regardless of what discipline you're going to go into, to understand your service's history.

Lindsay: To understand the profession. Understand what it is that the Air Force is about. I appreciate you bringing that up, because I know there's always a bit of this pull to be technical. We have to do STEM.¹ And it is important to have that basic knowledge, that basic cognitive ability, that level that you have to be tactically good at what you do. But at some point, that's just the cost of entry into the room. If you don't get the other stuff, at some point you are going to look around the room and go, "Everybody here is at least as smart of me, if not smarter than me." So, it isn't just about that. I appreciate you sharing your story about how, not only were you around senior leaders, it sounds like you paid attention to those senior leaders, how they lead, what they did, and that opportunity to grow and develop yourself.

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¹ Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math (STEM)