

Building Integrity and Reducing Corruption in Defence

A Compendium of Best Practices



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Chapter 23

Making Change Happen

No two defence organizations face the same problems of integrity and corruption. Respectively, integrity building initiatives may require different levels and types of effort, from minor adjustments in a particular process, perhaps focused on increasing the transparency and integrity of the procurement procedure, to comprehensive endeavours aimed at enhancing the integrity of all core defence business processes and changing the general attitudes and behaviours of the people in the organisation.

This chapter is focused on the latter case. It provides the reader with an understanding of tried change management strategies and processes, with their respective strengths and weaknesses. It also informs the reader of likely pitfalls and suggestions of how to approach the challenges of creating and implementing integrity building programmes.

The design of such a programme is based on a solid understanding of the current status and trends in defence integrity and corruption risks, commitment, vision and strategy.

Assessment of Current Status

Frequently, leaders of the defence organisation initiate change under the pressure of parliamentary hearings or public opinion, related to a particular instance of corrupt behaviour. Much too often they want to demonstrate quick results, while the initiated change has only a temporary impact and yields meagre positive results, if any.

Therefore, it is strongly recommended to assess the status of integrity before embarking on the design of an integrity building programme. Such an assessment should lead to:

- Identification of the areas and defence activities involving corruption risks;
- Understanding of the reasons for actual or potential corrupt behaviour;
- Insight into perceptions and attitudes of the military, other MoD personnel and society regarding corrupt behaviour; and
- Estimation of the readiness to accept integrity measures and change.

In addition, a comprehensive and well structured assessment of defence integrity, involving the widest community of stakeholders, will contribute to:

- Understanding of causality and interdependencies among integrity enhancement measures and a variety of practices;

- Insight into who might be the likely allies and opponents of integrity building measures; and
- Identification of potential agents of change.

Studies of internal and public sources, focused discussions with people from inside and outside the defence establishment, structured questionnaires and interviews are used to assess the current status. The NATO self-assessment tool and questionnaire—one of the early results within the NATO integrity building initiative—can be particularly useful in this initial assessment. Box 23.1 provides initial information and references on this tool, available to any country and defence establishment, for adopting an anti-corruption agenda.

Box 23.1. NATO Self-Assessment Tool

A collaboration between NATO nations and Transparency International, led by Poland, resulted in an *Integrity Self-Assessment Process* for defence and security. It is available to any country wishing to use it and has already been implemented by several NATO and partner countries.

The Integrity Self-Assessment Process provides nations with a template to assess the strength of their own integrity systems. It focuses on answers provided by the Ministry of Defence and others to a detailed questionnaire that is then reviewed by an external expert review team. The questionnaire addresses the main pillars of the integrity system in the defence establishment and corruption risk across each of these. It contains guidance as to how to complete the questionnaire and how to initiate follow-up processes, comprising reform and implementation plans for building integrity and reducing corruption. The expert team assesses the responses and conducts an on-site visit to determine key strengths and weaknesses of the process, and makes a set of recommendations and observations for follow-up. The process can be conducted on a one-off basis or as part of a repeated cycle.

The Integrity Self-Assessment Process covers the following topics:

1. Democratic control and engagement;
2. National anti-corruption laws and policy;
3. Anti-corruption policy in defence and security;
4. Personnel – behaviour, policy, training, discipline;
5. Planning and budgeting;
6. Operations;
7. Procurement;
8. Engaging with defence companies and other suppliers;
9. Nation-specific questions.

Source: Mark Pyman, *Building Integrity and Reducing Corruption Risk in Defence Establishments: Ten Practical Reforms*, with foreword by Lord George Robertson of Port Ellen (UK: Transparency International, April 2009); The full description and the questionnaire are available at: Transparency International, “Integrity Self-Assessment Process,” <http://www.defenceagainstcorruption.org/tools-and-techniques/self-assessment-tool>.

Form a Strong Coalition

Among the most useful results of the assessment of defence corruption risks is the creation of a sense of urgency.¹ Focused interviews and studies often bring forward convincing narratives and qualitative data that may agitate people who may otherwise be oblivious to the problem of corruption or its wider and long-term impact on organisational performance and ethos.

That also provides a background against which to ensure the commitment of the senior leadership, both military and civilian, across the defence organization and not just of the heads of those organisational units considered most susceptible to corruption.

It is important already at this stage to consider who would act as agents of change, as well as to start seeking support of representatives of parliament and civil society, in particular of defence think-tanks, activist groups and media. Representatives of suppliers of defence technologies, products and services may also be considered among potential allies in initiatives to counter defence corruption.

Any successful attempt at building integrity and reducing corruption in defence would build on a strong coalition of the political leadership of the Ministry of Defence, the senior military leadership, parliamentarians and lead civil society representatives, supported by major defence suppliers and benefiting from the close monitoring of an independent, critical media.

Develop and Communicate a Vision and a Strategy

Complex endeavours such as building integrity and reducing corruption in defence require visionaries, who can also approach the problem strategically and communicate their vision and strategy effectively.

First, the leadership of the defence organisation needs to properly frame the problem of integrity building and the approach to considerably reducing the potential for corruption in defence. Framing the problem too narrowly is not likely to have a long-term and systemic impact on defence corruption. On the other hand, framing the problem too broadly, e.g., as “promoting democratic and accountable defence institutions,” would lead to loss of focus and may not generate the support necessary for a successful initiative. Chapter two of this compendium provides an example of how the problem and the approach to its resolution may be feasibly framed.

Next comes the formulation of a vision. The vision statement should be specific to each country and defence establishment and relevant to the status of integrity and the threat of corruption. Some may want to see corrupt defence officials land in prison, while others may call for a “corruption-free” defence establishment. There is no generally valid recipe of how to formulate a vision but it needs to be constructive and draw a

¹ This and several of the steps below are based on John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996).

future that is both challenging and achievable. Box 23.2 provides guidance on how to create a vision statement.

Box 23.2. Vision Statement

Bert Nanus defines a vision as a “realistic, credible, attractive future for [an] organization.” This short definition underlines the following key features of a vision statement:

- *Realistic:* A vision must be based in reality to be meaningful for an organization.
- *Credible:* A vision must be believable to be relevant. To whom must a vision be credible? Most importantly, to the members of the organization. If the members of the organization do not find the vision credible, it will not be meaningful or serve a useful purpose. One of the purposes of a vision is to inspire those in the organization to achieve a level of excellence, and to provide purpose and direction for the work of those employees. A vision which is not credible will accomplish neither of these ends.
- *Attractive:* If a vision is going to inspire and motivate those in the organization, it must be attractive. People must want to be part of this future that is envisioned for the organization.
- *Future:* A vision is not in the present, it is in the future. A vision is not where you are now; it is where you want to be in the future.

Such a vision statement can accomplish a number of things for the organization:

- *It attracts commitment and energizes people.* One of the primary reasons for having a vision for an organization is its motivational effect. When people can see that the organization is committed to a vision—and that entails more than just having a vision statement—it generates enthusiasm about the course the organization intends to follow and increases the commitment of people to work toward achieving that vision.
- *It creates meaning in the lives of members of the organization.* A vision allows people to feel like they are part of a greater whole and hence provides meaning for their work. The right vision will mean something to everyone in the organization if they can see how what they do contributes to that vision.
- *It establishes a standard of excellence.* A vision serves a very important function in establishing a standard of excellence. In fact, a good vision is all about excellence. A vision so characterized by lack of a striving for excellence would not motivate or excite anyone about that organization. The standard of excellence also can serve as a continuing goal and stimulate integrity building improvement programmes, as well as providing a measure of the worth of the organization.
- *It bridges the present and the future.* The right vision takes the organization out of the present and focuses it on the future. It is easy to get caught up in the crises of the day and to lose sight of where you were heading. A good vision can orient you to the future and provide positive direction.

Sources: Bert Nanus, *Visionary Leadership: Creating a Compelling Sense of Direction for Your Organization* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992); “Strategic Vision,” in *Strategic Leadership and Decision Making* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1997).

Collins and Porras elaborate another view on defining a vision. Conceptually, they see it as having two major components: a *Guiding Philosophy* and a *Tangible Image*, where the guiding philosophy is defined as “a system of fundamental motivating assumptions, principles, values and tenets” and stems from the organization’s core beliefs, values and purpose, and the image is provided by a vivid description of the organization’s mission.²

A vision alone is not sufficient to move the organisation from the present to the desired future. This transition from the present to the future requires a strategy that is adequate to the organisational culture and feasible. Box 23.3 provides an overview of basic change management strategies and the factors that condition the choice of one or another integrity building strategy.

Both the vision and the strategy to promote integrity and reduce corruption risks have to be clearly communicated to all members of the defence organization. Since strong anti-corruption coalitions involve stakeholders external to the defence organisation, the vision and the strategic approach also have to be communicated to the wider defence and security sector, as well as to society.

The vital importance of communications in change management has been repeatedly stressed since the issue was first formulated and developed. Clarity, continuity and constancy of communication are most effective in achieving success. Communication must also be reciprocal, e.g. leaders and change agents have to listen as well as talk. Advocacy and sponsorship are also vital in communications.³

The role of the minister of defence as lead communicator is a clear sign of personal commitment and, in itself, sends a strong message to all members of the defence organisation and to society, in particular when the minister regularly communicates his or her own priorities and the achievements in enhancing integrity in defence.

Box 23.3. Basic Change Management Strategies

Experienced practitioners in the management of organisational change identify four basic change management strategies, with their underlying rationale as follows:

1. *Empirical-Rational*: People are rational and will follow their self-interest, once it is revealed to them. Change is based on the communication of information and the proffering of incentives.
2. *Normative-Reeducative*: People are social beings and will adhere to cultural norms and values. Change is based on redefining and reinterpreting existing norms and values, and developing commitments to new ones.

² James C. Collins and Jerry I. Porras, “Organizational Vision and Visionary Organizations,” *California Management Review* 34:1 (Fall 1991), 30–52.

³ Gregory R. Guy and Karen V. Beaman, *Effecting Change in Business Enterprises: Current Trends in Change Management*, Research Report R-1371-05-RR (NY: The Conference Board, 2005).

3. *Power-Coercive*: People are basically compliant and will generally do what they are told or can be made to do. Change is based on the exercise of authority and the imposition of sanctions.
4. *Environmental-Adaptive*: People oppose loss and disruption but they adapt readily to new circumstances. Change is based on building a new organization and gradually transferring people from the old one to the new one.

There is no single best change strategy; leaders of change are best served by some mix of strategies. The selection of one or more of these strategies hangs on a number of factors, including:

- *Scope and Scale*. This can vary from the minor, e.g. adjusting of a process within a unit, to the complete transformation of the entire organisation. The larger the scope and scale, the more likely a broad mix of strategies will be required with the Power-Coercive strategy playing a central role.
- *Degree of Resistance*. Strong resistance argues for a coupling of Power-Coercive and Environmental-Adaptive strategies. Weak resistance or concurrence argues for a combination of Empirical-Rational and Normative-Reeducative strategies.
- *Target Population*. Large populations argue for a mix of all four strategies, "something for everyone" so to speak.
- *The Stakes*. High stakes argue for a mix of all four strategies. When the stakes are high, nothing can be left to chance.
- *The Time Frame*. Short time frames argue for a Power-Coercive strategy. Longer time frames argue for a mix of Empirical-Rational, Normative-Reeducative and Environmental-Adaptive strategies.
- *Available Expertise*. Having available adequate expertise in change management argues for some mix of the strategies outlined above. Not having it available argues for reliance on the Power-Coercive strategy.
- *Dependency*. This is a classic double-edged sword. If the organization is dependent on its people, management's ability to command or demand is limited. Conversely, if people are dependent upon the organization, their ability to oppose or resist is limited. Mutual dependency almost always signals a requirement for some level of negotiation.

In sum, people manage organisational change pretty much the same way they would manage anything else of a turbulent, messy and chaotic nature – they do not really manage it, they grapple with change. It is as much a matter of leadership ability as it is of management skills.

Sources: Fred Nickols, *Change Management 101: A Primer* (Distance Consulting, 2007), www.managementhelp.org/misc/reqs-for-successful-change.pdf; The strategies are adapted from: Warren G. Bennis, Kenneth D. Benne and Robert Chin, eds., *The Planning of Change*, 2nd Edition (NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969).

To implement the integrity building strategy, change agents may consider a more or less formal plan or programme. Practice in that respect differs widely. Attempts have been made to use formal programmes with clearly set objectives, creation of a particular organisation with an explicit mandate, e.g. the anti-corruption bureaus in the Ministries of Defence of Poland and Ukraine, and the allocation of the requisite resources. Whether this is an effective approach or not remains to be seen.

Whatever the level of formalisation, these and other features of programmatic management, such as personal and organisational commitment, regular delivery of progress accounts with agreed measures of progress and results are common to most integrity building efforts.

Other features of a well planned, systemic process of organisational change are presented in Box 23.4.

Notwithstanding the particular approach, experienced change management professionals identify the following common features of successful change management initiatives:

- Attention to eliminating obstacles to change;
- Early demonstration of success;
- Building on initial wins to accelerate change; and
- Embedding new practices into the organisational culture.⁴

Eliminate Obstacles to Change

There is hardly ever open resistance to integrity building initiatives. On occasion, there is an opposition that is more subtle, as well as obstacles of various natures. Change agents are advised to eliminate such obstacles to change, with a particular focus on the following ones:⁵

1. Complacency driven by arrogance;
2. Self-protective immobilization driven by fear;
3. Defiance driven by anger; and
4. Hesitancy driven by pessimism.

A good communication strategy with the involvement of the most senior defence leadership is a powerful tool to reduce roadblocks to change. More specific approaches may be applied to deal with particular target groups.

⁴ Kotter, *Leading Change*.

⁵ Jeanne Dininni, "Guide to Management Theory of John Kotter," *Work.com How-to Guides to Your Business* (2009).

Box 23.4. Example of a Planned, Systemic Change Process

A typical planned, systemic (and systematic) organizational development process often follows an overall approach as described below. There are many variations, e.g. combining various phases and/or splitting some into more phases. In this example it is assumed—and this is usually the case—that the leadership of the organisation tasks a change agent—either internal or external to the organisation—to manage the change process.

Phase 1: Clarifying Expectations and Roles for Change Process

This phase is sometimes called the “Contracting” and/or “Entry” phase. This phase is usually where the relationship between you (the initial change agent) and your client starts, whether you are an external or internal consultant. Experts assert that this phase is one of the most—if not the most—important phases in the organizational change process. Activities during this stage form the foundation for successful organizational change. The quality of how this phase is carried out usually is a strong indicator of how the initiative will go. This phase provides answers to a number of questions, including the following:

- Who is the current client?
- How is “success” defined?
- What is the client’s readiness for change?

Phase 2: Joint Discovery to Identify Priorities for Change

The more collaborative the change agent is working with members of the client’s organization, the more likely that the change effort will be successful. The change agent and the client work together during this phase to understand more about the overall priority of the change effort and how it can be addressed effectively. It might be a major problem in the organization or an exciting vision to achieve. Together, you will collect information, analyze it to identify findings and conclusions and then make recommendations from that information. Sometimes the data-collection effort is very quick, for example, facilitating a large planning meeting. Other times, the effort is more extensive, for example, evaluating an entire organization and developing a complete plan for change, conducting interviews, etc.

Sometimes people minimize the importance or skip this critical discovery phase altogether and start change management by articulating an ambitious and comprehensive vision for change. Many would argue that it is unethical to initiate a project for organizational change without fully examining (or discovering) the current situation in the client’s organization. Focusing most of the change efforts on achieving a robust vision, without at least some careful discovery, often can be harmful and you can end up dealing with symptoms of current issues, rather than the root causes. Also, the project could end up pushing an exciting vision that, while initially inspiring and motivating to many, could be completely unrealistic to achieve, especially if the organization already has many current, major issues to address.

This phase also involves:

- Establishing a project team;
- Joint planning and conducting data collection;

- Joint analysis of research results;
- Joint generation of findings and conclusions;
- Joint sharing of findings and recommendations in client's organization.

Phase 3: Joint Planning of Organizational Development Activities to Address Priorities

This phase is focused on further clarifying the recommendations on how to address priorities, along with developing them into various action plans. The various plans are sometimes integrated into an overall change management plan. Thus, the early activities in this phase often overlap with, and are a continuation of, the activities near the end of the previous discovery phase. Action plans together can now provide a clear and realistic vision for change. They provide the "roadmap" for managing the transition from the present state to the desired future state.

This phase also involves:

- Selecting organizational development activities to address the findings from discovery;
- Joint development of action plans;
- Joint development of evaluation plans;
- Joint development of learning plans.

Phase 4: Change Management and Joint Evaluation

During this phase, emphasis is placed on sustaining and evaluating the change effort, including by addressing resistance that arises from members of the organization and sometimes in the change agent as well. This phase involves:

- Client's ongoing communication of action plans;
- Client's implementation of action plans;
- Client and change agent maintain momentum during change;
- Joint evaluation of project activities and desired results;

Source: Carter McNamara, "Organizational Change and Development," *Free Management Library*, www.managementhelp.org/org_chng/org_chng.htm#anchor556912.

The empowerment of the members of the organization is another instrument to circumvent or eliminate obstacles. It spans a whole range of techniques – from encouraging people to report on conflict of interest and other corruption risks, through delegating responsibilities and resources to achieve concrete integrity objectives, to assigning members of the organization to function as leaders of teams tasked to oversee processes and practice in whole areas with significant corruption risk, e.g. defence procurement, offsets, etc.

Empowerment may be particularly effective when the senior leadership of the defence establishment widely acknowledges the achievements of individuals and teams and demonstrates continuous commitment to integrity building.

And finally, it is not necessary to eliminate all barriers as a condition for taking action. Leaders and change agents may choose to eliminate some of the potential barriers, reduce the impact of others, and even ignore some obstacles with the belief that the positive reasons for change are more important than the obstructions that may be set up.

Demonstrate Quick Wins

Of particular importance is to create a momentum of change and to convince sceptics of the seriousness of intent and the feasibility of the integrity building strategy. Therefore, change agents are under pressure to start implementing the integrity building strategy or programme as soon as it has been announced and are expected to demonstrate that it is working.

Seasoned practitioners provide advice to change agents—and to leaders of the defence establishment as well—not to engage in destructive behaviours, such as focusing heavily on detail, reacting negatively to criticism, jumping to conclusions or micromanaging employees, since all such behaviours undermine their chances of success.

“Quick wins” are not necessarily related to major change in the ways the organisation is functioning. They may not have a great impact on corruption risks in quantitative terms either. What is really important is to demonstrate commitment in practice, to show resolve in the face of resistance, and to prove the feasibility of the counter-corruption strategy that is based on building integrity, increasing transparency and improving accountability.

For example, when the use of independent monitors of defence procurement cases is part of the building integrity strategy (see, for example, chapter 7 of the compendium), it is not necessary to wait for large procurement cases, e.g. for procurement of airplanes or ships. The feasibility of the approach may be tested in smaller procurements—maybe just for a few hundred thousand Euros—that still get on the radar of specialized media and non-governmental organizations. The success of such a novel approach will contribute to the initiative gaining momentum and, on the other hand, will help the change agents to foresee future obstacles and refine the integrity building strategy respectively.

Build on Initial Wins to Accelerate Change

Initial gains in building integrity and reducing corruption risks, however small at the start, have to be consolidated and then expanded to produce more of the desired changes.

The desired end state, however, may also shift. The implementation of integrity building programmes is a dynamic process, undergoing frequent revision to accommodate lessons learned from the experience gained. It may turn out that the scope of the initiative is overly ambitious or that it does not reach far enough.

In addition, change management, just like any form of management, must allow for revising plans or altering the process in the light of experience. In full accordance with the famous military aphorism, "No battle plan survives contact with the enemy,"⁶ no change management plan survives contact with the real world of implementation.⁷

But there are also some constants in successful implementation, such as the need to:

- Recognise and reward performance in line with the objectives of the integrity building programme;
- Continue to clarify and communicate the scope and rationale for change;
- Provide for feedback by defence employees and external stakeholders;
- Continue with the efforts to identify potential resistance and the rationale behind it; and
- Identify and invest in competencies necessary to accelerate and institutionalize integrity.

Embed New Practices into the Organisational Culture

The final stage according to Kotter's change management treatise is to make the desired change, in this case in integrity and corruption risks in defence, irreversible.

That may be achieved when new standards and, more importantly, new behaviour characterised by integrity and zero tolerance to corruption become part of the shared attitudes, beliefs and customs of the defence organisation and its external stakeholders, including those in parliament, the defence industry, the media and so on.

Training the future leaders of the defence sector has an important role to play in the institutionalisation of such organisational culture. Box 23.5 describes the training course provided within the NATO Integrity Building Initiative to future leaders of defence in both NATO and partner countries. Box 23.6 provides an example of using role-play, which has been used successfully in the training of the next generation of leaders of the defence and security sectors in numerous partner countries.

In summary, the compendium provides many examples in dealing with particular corruption issues and practical approaches to enhancing integrity. This particular chapter examined notional processes of change management. But there is no off-the-shelf solution for each defence establishment. The application of the ideas and good practices herein to a particular setting requires imagination and strategic thinking, leadership qualities and perseverance, combined with application of good governance principles to defence.

⁶ Attributed to Field Marshall Helmuth von Moltke (1800-1891). The phrase is translated from German in the following way: "No plan of operations extends with certainty beyond the first encounter with the enemy's main strength."

⁷ Guy and Beaman, *Effecting Change in Business Enterprises*.

Box 23.5. NATO Building Integrity Training Course

This UK-led initiative to train future leaders of defence establishments resulted in a five day integrity building training course, endorsed within the NATO Integrity Building Initiative.

The training course is designed for Defence Ministries, armed forces personnel and is aimed at colonel level staff. Lectures are conducted by the staff of the Defence Academy of the UK, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, NATO, the Swedish Defence College and Transparency International, as well as external speakers from a range of government and international institutions.

The content of the lectures includes the types of corruption and vulnerabilities in the defence sector, corruption issues in military operations and peacekeeping and the role of media and managerial aspects in tackling defence corruption. It focuses on practical issues, different national experiences and the role of officers and civilians in the middle of the hierarchy in effecting change.

The main goals of the training module are to help participants to:

1. Understand what corruption is;
2. Understand corruption in defence;
3. Understand ways to build integrity and tackle corruption at the political level, at the functional level and through personal behaviour;
4. Gain confidence that the topic can be addressed.

Course participants also examine the concepts of transparency and good governance and ways to engage appropriately with defence suppliers, the public and civil society. They exchange personal experiences and learn from each other. The highlight of the course for the trainees is their individual presentations of the topic "How I will tackle integrity."

The first pilot course was conducted at the UK Defence Academy in July 2008. It was delivered to a group of eighteen international participants from Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Romania, Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, Poland, the UK, Norway and Switzerland.

To date, the course has been delivered to participants from more than 20 nations at the NATO School Oberammergau, the Peace Support Operations Training Centre in Sarajevo and the National Defence Academy of Ukraine in Kyiv. It has had a highly enthusiastic reception from some 30 high ranking military officers and civil servants and up to 15 additional lecturers and international experts in anti-corruption participating in each of the courses.

Source: NATO Building Integrity Training Course: <http://www.defenceagainstcorruption.org/tools-and-techniques/training-module>.

Box 23.6. Role-Play Games: A Powerful Training Tool

As a tool for political reform, training must have the full backing of the authorities, reach the right people and enhance their knowledge and skills, as well as their attitude. However, it is never easy to influence people's attitudes because these are often deep-seated and unconscious. If we want to invite trainees to change their attitudes, we must first lead them to recognise these attitudes. Then we need to help them figure out what gives rise to the attitudes in question. Finally we must encourage them to try out and practise different attitudes. None of this can be achieved by conventional teaching. To think it can be done in a PowerPoint presentation is folly.

But imagine a role-play game in which an opposition parliamentarian is criticising a plan to buy jet fighters and a minister of defence who is arguing why the air force needs the aircraft. In real life, one of the players is indeed involved in opposition politics, while the other works for the defence establishment, but in the game, each is playing the other's role. So they are putting themselves in the shoes of the other and they now see their own role portrayed by someone else. Besides, the players experience the issues of weapons procurement in a dramatic, direct, almost tangible way. This can serve to complement what they previously learned in a more conventional training session.

At the end of day one, a trainee commented on the introductory sessions on democratic governance, saying: "I know this stuff. We had it at university." On day two, he played a leading role in a role-play game. Later, he said, "Yesterday I thought I understood what you were saying, but I didn't. NOW I understand it."

During a role-play exercise, a trainee who was playing a member of a parliamentary committee of inquiry told the game controller he was going home. The controller, taken aback, asked why. "I can't stand that arrogant minister of defence," the trainee said. The game controller pointed out that the acting was realistic, and the trainee agreed. The controller pointed out that this arrogant behaviour was serving an educational purpose, and the trainee agreed to that as well. "It's so realistic that I can't stand it, even if we are learning a lot," he said, and went home.

At the post-mortem after a role-play game, a trainee who had played a corrupt minister said: "I am disgusted at my own character. I never thought I could play such a crook." And another player, when asked whether his realistic acting was a gift or inspired by the circumstances of the game answered: "I'm a terrible actor. It was the game."

Another benefit of role-play is that it helps in group-building, which greatly benefits the subsequent class work. Finally, the excitement makes a durable impact. Long after the trainees have forgotten the instructors and the course, they will remember the game. The instructor can only provide circumstantial evidence, but we firmly believe role-play is an essential part of "best practice" in training programmes that aim to do more than convey knowledge and improve skills.

Sources: Sami Faltas, Centre for European Security Studies, www.cess.org; Sami Faltas and Merijn Hartog, "The Starlink Program: Training for Security Sector Reform in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, 7:2 (Summer 2008), 81–91.