

Tales from Twelve O'Clock High: Leadership Lessons for the 21st Century

by Major Attila J. Bognar

The year is 1942. The place: Archbury Airfield, England. The American 918th Bomber Group has just returned from another mission against German targets in France. The 918th's performance continues to be dismal. The unit cannot put steel on target and is experiencing unusually high aircraft and crew losses. Bad weather and having to conduct daylight low-altitude bombing missions contribute to the group's poor performance. However, the 918th's weak demonstrations sharply contrast with the other three 8th Air Force bomber groups' general success. As a result, the 918th is suffering from significantly poor morale. More and more men are making excuses to miss duty.

Because of its difficulties, the 918th has the reputation of being the "hard luck" unit. Despite this, the 918th's men greatly respect their commander, Colonel Keith Davenport. Davenport is their friend and confidant; he can do no wrong. Davenport sees his unit's failures as resulting from impossible missions, dictated from higher headquarters, which he believes places inordinate demands on his men's abilities. Davenport believes higher headquarters has lost touch with reality, especially in understanding the tragedy of losing good men.

Concerned about the 918th's performance, 8th Air Force Commander General Pritchard personally visits Davenport. Accompanying Pritchard is Operations Officer Brigadier General Frank Savage. In a tense conversation, Davenport emotionally relates his concerns. Ultimately, Pritchard relieves Davenport, and Savage assumes command of the 918th.

So begins the classic World War II movie *Twelve O'Clock High*. Many viewers will at first find this film to be just another good vintage war movie. However, on examination, it becomes a superb treatise on understanding the "charismatic leadership" paradigm, which will play an important role in the Army's future.

As the Army enters the 21st century, dramatic changes will occur in its force structure, organization, equipment and missions. Budgets will continue to shrink while deployments will become more frequent. With these changes, the need for superb, unwavering leadership will

remain constant. By studying Savage's conduct and actions, Army leaders can thoroughly grasp the charismatic leader paradigm's basic concepts.

Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leadership is perceptual in nature.¹ In *The Spellbinders: Charismatic Political Leadership*, A.R. Willner says charisma is not based on personality or context. "It is not what the leader is but what people see the leader as that counts in generating the charismatic relationship."² Charisma, then, might be attributional in nature. That is, followers might assign a leader charismatic qualities based on how they perceive his behavior.³ Essentially, the charismatic leader is dependent on perceived behaviors or attributes in order to remain in power.⁴ This aspect is particularly important since charismatic attributions are binary—either a follower perceives charismatic behaviors or he does not. Also, a charismatic leader to one follower may not be a charismatic leader to another.

Charisma, from Greek, means "gift from the gods." The German sociologist Max Weber used the word to describe a leader who could attain legitimacy, not through rules or traditions but by possessing qualities that endowed the leader with supernatural, superhuman or exceptional powers or qualities. Weber asserts that followers choose to accept the charismatic leader on the basis of his emotional appeal.⁵

Author R.J. House made one of the first attempts to demystify the charismatic leader by identifying specific traits and behaviors: self-confidence, the need to influence others and a strong conviction in his beliefs. House also determined a charismatic leader's followers exhibit implicit trust, obedience, affection and acceptance of the leader.⁶ Followers also held beliefs similar to the leader's and were highly involved in the organization's mission, believing they were essential to its success.⁷ Willner attributed the charismatic leader's success to his ability to create and foster an inspirational vision as well as to build confidence in followers through excellent rhetorical ability and a powerful aura.⁸



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Researcher B.M. Bass revived charisma's mystical aspect by asserting that the charismatic leader views himself as having a special or supernatural purpose and that followers see the charismatic leader as larger than life.⁹ Bass also identifies charismatic leaders as possessing energy, self-confidence, self-determination, insight, eloquence, freedom from internal conflict, assertiveness, emotional expression, ambition and the ability to seize opportunities.¹⁰ Similarly, J.A. Conger and R.N. Kanungo say the charismatic leader is also exemplary, unconventional, radical, willing to take risks and often emerges at times of crisis or change.¹¹

The charismatic leader's most significant attribute is his ability to create a compelling vision that followers readily accept and share.¹² The vision acts as a focal point to energize followers to accept organizational changes and commit to new ideals.

Although a charismatic leader can inspire great commitment, sacrifice and energy, there is no guarantee his vision is worthwhile.¹³ In fact, some leadership scholars warn of charisma's "dark side," where unethical charismatic leaders, such as Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, use their visionary abilities for self-serving purposes with little regard for their followers' welfare.¹⁴

Charisma and Transformational Leadership

In 1987, J.M. Burns first described the concept of transformational leadership and further developed Weber's notion of the charismatic leader by postulating a leader able to change or transform his followers' actions and behaviors. In defining the transformational leader, Burns found it necessary to define the transactional leader.¹⁵

Transactional leadership relies on a series of exchanges or bargains between the leader and follower. The transactional leader primarily relies on the follower's compliance, which leads the follower to do what the organization expects of him. However, while the follower might comply with the leader in exchange for a reward, he might exhibit little commitment to the leader or organization. Unlike compliance, commitment is a process by which the follower does whatever it takes to better the organization, including personal sacrifice. As a result, a follower often does not share the transactional leader's beliefs, but rather, tolerates them, since the leader has the power to reward or punish.¹⁶

Many leadership scholars associate the transactional leader with the stereotypical manager, who dictates tasks to his followers and ensures they do such tasks correctly. Based on a follower's performance, the transactional leader administers rewards and penalties as well as

provides discipline when necessary. Because of the managerial functions associated with the transactional leader, such a leader tends to maintain the status quo and is largely responsible for the bureaucratic aspects within an organization as he focuses on planning, budgeting, organizing and controlling. Conversely, transformational leadership is largely associated with the term "leader."¹⁷

Perhaps the greatest difference between the transactional and transformational leader-the manager and leader, respectively is that "the manager does things right; the leader does the right thing."¹⁸ In this sense, transformational leadership is based on more than follower compliance; it includes shifts in the follower's beliefs and values. Followers internalize the transformational leader's end values, such as integrity and honor, and commit themselves to the leader and his vision.¹⁹ As a result, transformational leadership is built on follower commitment. Such a commitment cascades from the highest to the lowest levels in an organization, inevitably affecting all aspects of an organization's culture.²⁰ Furthermore, in gaining follower commitment, the transformational leader focuses on long-term goals, inspires followers to share his vision, enacts change and empowers followers.²¹

Transformational and charismatic leaders have many attributes in common. They both seek to move followers from a self-serving to a selfless state and to move followers from a "what can the organization do for me" to a "what can I do for the organization" state of mind.

Transformational leadership consists of distinct factors, including charisma, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration and inspirational motivation. Of these, charisma is probably the most important component. Bass identifies several key elements within the charisma dimension, including the creation of vision, a sense of mission, infectious pride and followers' trust and respect.²² Charisma has consistently been found to positively affect job performance, satisfaction and commitment as well as leader effectiveness.²³

A charismatic or transformational leader's followers experience increased self-confidence and pride, unequivocally identify with the leader and his vision-particularly with the values he instills. The followers' self-confidence is subsequently transformed into self-efficacy. This self-efficacy ultimately fosters higher levels of follower creativity, increasing productivity and success throughout the organization.²⁴

Still, it is important to note that the charismatic transformational leader also uses transactional methods in many day-to-day activities-but only as a means, never as an end. At all times, the charismatic leader's focus is on



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imbuing his followers with a value system that will allow them to perform at their highest levels for selfless purposes. Invariably, the charismatic leader achieves an influence over his or her followers that is truly transformational and surpasses the transactional style of leadership.²⁵

Charisma and Vision

Establishing a vision, looking toward some desired, idealized future state, is the key the charismatic leader uses to focus, draw in and gain his followers' commitment.²⁶ T.E. Dow describes vision as a "revolutionary image."²⁷ It acts not only as the catalyst for change, but also as the organization's bedrock, keeping it moving forward despite obstacles and challenges, transforming purpose into action.²⁸

A successful vision must attract commitment and inspire enthusiasm, create meaning by clarifying purpose and direction, establish a standard of excellence and bridge the present and future.²⁹ Simultaneously, a charismatic leader's vision must consider his followers' needs, values and hopes.³⁰ The vision must also instill self-confidence that will translate into a state of empowerment.³¹ Thus, the charismatic leader's most critical task is to consistently give attention to his vision, show its legitimacy and personify it by his actions.³²

Leadership Doctrine and the Charismatic Leader

Department of the Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, Operations, states that leadership is the most essential element of combat power. The end state of effective leadership is when soldiers can execute the mission at hand based solely on the commander's intent.³³ FM 22-103, *Leadership and Command at Senior Levels*, defines leadership as "the art of direct and indirect influence and the skill of creating conditions for sustained organizational success to achieve the desired result."³⁴ FM 22-100, *Military Leadership*, defines leadership as the "process of influencing others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction and motivation."³⁵ The charismatic leader concept is inextricably linked to these definitions, since this type leader ardently strives to create an organization committed to effectively realizing a shared vision.

As a whole, current Army leadership doctrine embodies the charismatic leader paradigm's most quintessential elements. For example, FM 100-5 succinctly describes charismatic leadership's most basic principles:

- Taking responsibility for decisions.
- Being loyal to subordinates.
- Inspiring and directing assigned forces and resources toward a purposeful end.
- Establishing a teamwork climate that engenders success.
- Demonstrating moral and physical courage in the face of adversity.
- Providing a vision that both focuses and anticipates the future course of events.³⁶

Like charismatic leaders, Army leaders must create environments in which followers will readily share their visions and commit themselves. As a result, Army leaders must continuously inculcate a sense of values in harmony with followers' needs and hopes. As such, Army leadership doctrine recognizes the importance of shared values between a leader and his followers, particularly in terms of followers understanding the commander's intent as stated in mission orders.

Any charismatic Army leader will inherently demand that his followers exhibit the individual soldier values of:

- Loyalty.
- Duty.
- Respect.
- Selfless service.
- Honor.
- Integrity.
- Personal courage.

Army leadership doctrine calls for leaders to act as standard bearers as well as guardians of the Army's professional ethic.³⁷ All of this value-rich philosophy in Army leadership doctrine is also the charismatic leader paradigm centerpiece.

Shared values build strong teams. The charismatic leader knows how to mold cohesive teams, showing innate trust in his subordinates and delegating decision making to the lowest level possible. Team building is a critical focus of Army leadership doctrine. For example, Army leadership principles call for leaders to develop a sense of responsibility in subordinates and to build the team. Army leadership competencies include teaching and counseling as well as soldier team development.³⁸

Army leadership doctrine also recognizes that team building happens only when the leader sets and enforces high standards in an environment where the soldier understands the task and is properly supervised. FM 25-101, *Battle Focused Training*, states that training builds



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self-confidence, promotes teamwork and esprit de corps and increases professionalism in soldiers, leaders and units, all of which are charismatic leader paradigm critical elements.³⁹ Thus, Army doctrine emphasizes the importance of creating technically competent followers. The figure lists a charismatic leader's key attributes.

Twelve O'Clock High Leadership Vignettes

After arriving at the 918th Bomber Group, Savage sees that discipline is extremely poor. The men exhibit little regard for military courtesy, are out of uniform and often drunk. Savage immediately reviews subordinate leaders' personnel files. Air Executive Officer Lieutenant Colonel Ben Gately has a strong file, but he is not at his place of duty. In fact, he is not even at the airfield. Savage orders the Military Police to arrest Gately.

When Gately is found, Savage condemns him for not pulling his share of the load and for being directly responsible for the prior commander's downfall. Savage relieves Gately as air executive officer but does not order his transfer. Instead, Savage declares, "I'm not going to pass the buck. . . . I'm going to keep you right here."

Savage assigns Gately to a position as bomber commander and tells Gately to paint the name "Leper Colony" on his plane. Savage then reassigns all of the 918th's misfits and retreads to Gately's outfit.

Although Savage's actions may appear to be degrading, he is right on track. The charismatic leader is often unconventional, radical and assertive, generally acting as an agent of change. Savage demonstrates an uncanny insight or Clausewitzian "inner light." Savage realizes Gately can be a highly competent officer and pilot, but one who needs a wake-up call.

His desire is for Gately to become self-actualized-to rise from a *selfish* to *selfless* state and be imbued with a strong professional ethic. Savage demonstrates a charismatic leader's transformational tendencies. By giving Gately a chance to redeem himself, Savage ultimately leads him to a profound state of empowerment. Gately eventually understands his actions directly affect the unit's ability to successfully accomplish its mission.

Savage's first air mission brief. *As Savage enters, there is a great deal of tension in the room. Despite this, Savage tells the men the 918th's reputation as the "hard luck unit" is going to stop. He orders a practice mission to troubleshoot for training weaknesses, focusing on flying and bombing fundamentals. Even though Savage recognizes the men's stress, he asserts there will be no*

rest until the unit's shortcomings are identified and corrected.

Savage also tells the unit its mission is to fight and to die if necessary. He emphasizes that the unit will be no place to "lick wounds." He offers a transfer to anyone with such self-serving attitudes.

In this scene, Savage exhibits a charismatic leader's radical, risk-taking nature. By offering a transfer to anyone who wants one, Savage is betting he can commit the men to his vision. In fact, this becomes the cornerstone of Savage's vision-that the 918th can become a high-performing, proud unit capable of conducting precision daylight bombing. A living vision is paramount to a charismatic leader's success and goes hand-in-hand with Savage's keen sense of mission.

Savage also seeks to energize the men to transform them into accepting a selfless state. He challenges them with high standards by enforcing a strong professional ethic, giving them a sense of purpose and direction. His emphasis on training is important; he knows competency leads to pride, and pride leads to top performance.

Savage innately believes he understands the unit's hopes and needs. He feels they hold the same values as he does-only they have forgotten. Savage knows shared values are critical to gaining his followers' commitment and loyalty.

Savage prescribes the cure. *During interviews with the 918th's officers, Savage speaks with Flight Surgeon Captain Kaiser. Kaiser relates his candid assessment of the men's physical and mental conditions. He believes the men are sorely strained and that Savage's "shock treatment" is eroding the unit's already severely poor morale. Kaiser adds that the men are pining Davenport's loss and suggests Savage "ease up" and "just give them a chance to get used to you."*

Savage then gives his own prescription for healing the unit. "Pride in this unit is the critical factor that will cure their low morale-the kind of pride that will make it the last thing a man wants is to be left on the ground."

By generating pride in the unit, Savage believes he can develop esprit de corps. He instinctively knows that when the unit begins destroying targets while reducing its own losses, a sense of pride will permeate the entire unit. Unit pride runs parallel to Savage's vision of the 918th being a high-performance unit.

Savage shows remarkable self-confidence in the face of numerous obstacles, particularly the unit's tendency to cling to Davenport's memory. Also, he learns the men



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have all requested transfers from the unit. But, Savage still believes he can turn the unit around. Such self-confidence is indicative of a charismatic leader who demonstrates a strong conviction in personal beliefs and maintains freedom from internal conflict. Such detachment is absolutely essential—a charismatic leader cannot be restrained by popular opinion or self-doubt. Instead, he is guided by inner principles that override internal conflict—he instinctively does what is right. Savage's self-confidence comes from his belief that he can resurrect the 918th.

Savage's second air mission brief. Just before the brief, Adjutant Major Harvey Stovall assures Savage he will buy Savage some time by slowing the transfer process. Savage understands doing so could invoke the inspector general's wrath.

At the brief, Savage informs the unit its performance is improving. Formations are tighter, bombing is slightly more precise and aircraft and crew losses are lower. He jokes, "Those enemy pilots took one look and didn't want any part of the 918th." Savage had hoped to elicit a laugh from the men, but they were silent.

Savage continues the brief, conducting an after-action review, challenging each man to justify his actions during the previous mission. Savage focuses on one bomber commander, asking him why he failed to stay with the group. The pilot responds that his best friend's aircraft was in trouble so he dropped behind to help out. Savage rends the commander for violating group integrity and tells the unit that "every gun in the B-17 is designed to give the group maximum defensive firepower, that's what I mean by group integrity. When you pull a B-17 out of formation, you reduce the defensive firepower of the group by 10 guns. A crippled airplane has to be expendable. The one thing which is never expendable is your obligation to this group, this group; that has to be your loyalty, your reason for being."

Stovall is Savage's first convert. While Stovall treasures his friendship with Davenport, he understands that Savage is attempting to give the unit purpose, direction and motivation—something Davenport could not or, perhaps, would not do. Stovall makes it clear to Savage that his loyalty is to him, not Davenport. By doing so, Stovall indicates he has "bought" Savage's vision and is committed to it.

The crippled airplane incident emphasizes Savage's desire to transform the group from individual, self-serving members to self-actualized, selfless members. Savage continues to portray well-defined charismatic qualities including a profound sense of mission, an unswerving vision, self-determination, a need to influence others and

energy. He does this despite the men's resistance to him and his vision. He firmly believes he can reawaken the men's comatose values.

New commander versus old commander. *Davenport, now on the 8th Air Force staff, meets with Savage about the rumor that Savage is holding up transfer requests. He warns that the inspector general will investigate. Davenport tells Savage he "can't drive those boys. . . . [You have] to win something from them; give them something to lean on." Savage retorts, "Lean on somebody? I think they're better than that!"*

Davenport's advice suggests he is a caring leader. However, as a charismatic leader, Savage is far more visionary. He does not believe passes and leniency indicate caring; he believes they are a form of neglect. The last thing the unit needs is a loss of focus (purpose and direction). The unit's performance has improved because of the increased emphasis on training—but there is a long way to go.

Being free from internal conflict allows Savage to understand that real caring involves giving the unit the technical competence and physical and moral courage to successfully conduct its mission. This is the purest form of empowerment. By providing the men with such attributes, Savage is giving them the greatest opportunity to return alive. That is the true mark of a caring leader.

Savage breaks the radio. *Savage and the men return from an extremely successful mission. The crews have pounded the targets and all aircraft have safely returned. However, before the strike, Pritchard had called off the attack because of poor weather. The other bomber groups returned to base. Savage ignored the radio call.*

When Pritchard asks Savage why he had not acknowledged the message to return, Savage quips, "The radio malfunctioned." Pritchard calls Savage's bluff and Savage responds, "The 918th got through today and hit a target when nobody else did. And, if Providence ever drops in my lap another chance like that to give this group the pride it ought to have in itself, I may have radio malfunction again, Sir. And, there's one more thing. I'm asking you for a commendation for this group—for their aggressiveness, skill and courage in reaching and bombing a target under extremely adverse conditions, and you don't need to mention the leadership, Sir." Pritchard puts the unit in for a commendation.

Again Savage demonstrates a charismatic leader's unconventional and radical nature. He risks his reputation and command by not responding to Pritchard's order to return. However, Savage also understands why Pritchard placed him in charge of the 918th. By ignoring Pritchard's



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order, Savage is actually following the higher commander's intent-whipping the 918th into shape.

Savage is relentless in his quest to rebuild the unit's morale and confidence. He continuously strives to energize his followers, gain their commitment, in-still them with a sense of mission, imbue them with pride and gain their trust.

Savage's vision. *Despite its successful mission, the unit still fails to exhibit pride. Savage calls in Lieutenant Jesse Bishop, a medal of honor nominee highly regarded by the men. Savage asks Bishop why the men are not responding to success with greater enthusiasm. Stating that he cannot speak for the rest of the men, Bishop tells Savage, "I can't see what good we're doing with our bombing. . . . [It's] like we're some kind of guinea pigs. You've got to have confidence in something." Savage replies, "Sure we're guinea pigs, Jesse, but there's a reason. If we can hang on here now, one day soon somebody is going to look up and see a solid overcast of American bombers on their way to Germany to hit the Third Reich where it lives. Maybe we won't be the ones to see it-I can't promise you that-but, I can promise you that they'll be there, if only we can manage to make the grade now." Bishop responds, "I'd like to believe you, Sir. I just don't have the confidence in anything anymore." Savage tells him, "It's easy to transfer out of the group, Jesse, but it's pretty hard for a man to transfer out of his obligation."*

Savage is the epitome of a visionary leader. He can see far into the future and has a thorough grasp on the fact that the 918th's actions are not just directly tied to the next mission but are linked to the conduct of the entire war. Savage is clearly a systems thinker. He understands that the action of one element in a system has an influence on all of the system's other parts. He sincerely believes every man in his unit plays a critical role in the war's outcome.

Because he is a systems thinker, Savage also understands his responsibility to empower the unit to successfully accomplish the mission. Moreover, he believes the only way to make his vision a reality is through hard work, selfless service and a strong professional ethic. The unit must understand its obligation to the nation and uniform. This vignette also demonstrates Savage's inspirational and motivational behavior.

Savage's third mission brief. *The inspector general is conducting an investigation into the holdup of transfer paperwork. Savage clears off his desk, believing he will be found culpable of denying men the right to swift administrative action. However, the new air executive officer, Major Joe Cobb, announces to Savage that all transfer requests have been withdrawn. Cobb declares, "I knew those jokers couldn't buck you forever. They finally*

realized they had a chance to hit the target and get home when you were up front leading."

Although Cobb thinks the men should receive a reward for good performance, Savage realizes the men are now becoming dependent on him. He decides to assign the next mission to Cobb's leadership, the next to Bishop and so on. Savage says, "I want this group combed for every man who shows signs of being able to lead a mule to water."

At the brief, Savage tells the unit its next mission will be into the heart of Germany. He jokingly says the Germans are putting up extra air defenses because they have heard about the mighty 918th. The men burst into laughter.

Savage's charismatic leadership is beginning to produce dividends. The withdrawal of transfer requests indicates a shift in values-the 918th is beginning to share its leader's values. The unit has rediscovered its identity. The transformational process is well under way.

Still, Savage is relentless. He knows the unit still needs to improve; it is not time to rest. The men begin seeing Savage as almost larger than life, possessing exceptional powers, which energizes them. Where there was despair, now there is hope.

The 918th takes to the air. The 918th has an extremely successful day of bombing against its first targets in the German heartland. However, on his return, Savage notices his driver, Sergeant McIllhenny, stuffing a flight suit into the trunk of the car. When questioned, McIllhenny tells Savage, "I've been checked out as a gunner, and I just had to make the big one." Savage busts the driver down to private for flying when unauthorized. Later, Cobb tells Savage that busting McIllhenny complicated things because he would then have to bust the chaplain, the doctor and Stovall. Cobb says, "I guess the whole ground echelon was someplace on this one." Naturally, Savage rescinds his order.

As the 918th prepares for another mission, Savage learns that Gately, the Leper Colony commander, has flown the last three missions with a broken back and is now in intensive care. Savage rushes to Gately's bedside, telling the nurse Gately is "extra special." Gately cries.

The transformation is complete. The 918th has become self-actualized. The unit is fully committed to Savage's vision. Under Davenport's command, men were running from duty; under Savage's command, men are begging for it. Savage's motivating vision has given the unit purpose and direction. These are the overarching effects of the charismatic leader, with such effects directly resulting



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from the leader's strong convictions, insight, self-confidence and self-determination.

The big one. *The 918th receives its toughest mission. The 8th Air Force orders the unit to conduct, over a period of three days, precision daylight bombing against German ball-bearing factories. On the first day, Savage leads. He witnesses Cobb's plane going down in flames. The next day, Savage prepares to lead the mission, but he collapses from exhaustion and must stay behind. A fully recovered Gately commands the mission.*

During the mission, Savage remains in an almost catatonic state on the ground. He neither moves nor speaks until he hears the planes returning. When all aircraft return, Stovall proudly announces, "The boys really did it today." Savage retires to bed.

This vignette validates the 918th's transformation. The unit can successfully conduct even the most dangerous missions without Savage. The unit's commitment to Savage's vision has given it the ability to be a top-performing unit. The 918th can execute a mission through understanding the commander's intent—the highest compliment the unit can pay.

It is important to note Gately's redemption. He has progressed from the Leper Colony to being in charge of the unit's most critical mission. Savage has truly empowered Gately. Now Gately can transfer his own high professional ethic to those he leads. Savage's conduct and actions are now clear and stand as a testament to a charismatic leader's power and its effects on an organization.

After-Action Review

Tomorrow's leaders will encounter many situations in which they will need to exercise a charismatic leader's transformational qualities. Like Davenport, many leaders will believe higher headquarters has given them impossible missions, especially in light of continued budget reductions and fewer forces to conduct even more deployments. For the Davenports, higher headquarters will always serve as a scapegoat for ineffective leadership. I dub this the "Davenport Syndrome." The Savages will rise above the Davenports and ensure the Army successfully conducts its missions. The Savages are the leaders who will conquer 21st-century challenges.

All Army leaders, from squad to division, need to exercise charismatic leadership. This is the type of leadership soldiers seek, want and need. The charismatic leader's overarching goal is to transform followers into self-actualized soldiers who see their actions intrinsically

connected to their organization's success. Such a selfless state would compel the organization's members to incessantly seek ways to improve the organization's capabilities while maintaining its strong professional ethic. As a result, followers would learn to implicitly trust their leaders.

The charismatic leader establishes a vision that embodies a set of shared values. As a result, the organization's members experience increased self-confidence, pride, self-efficacy and, ultimately, high performance levels.

Few Army leaders truly rise above the transactional level. The day-to-day organizational demands often stifle a leader's vision. Increased operating tempos also thwart would-be charismatic leaders. Yet, the true charismatic leader remains undaunted by such distractions.

The charismatic leader is often seen as being superhuman or having some special mystique. In reality, he simply possesses a keen ability to understand human nature and to exercise sound, time-proven leadership practices. The charismatic leader paradigm offers all Army leaders the opportunity to truly exercise effective leadership and to maximize their followers' talents. I think we should all heed and exercise these principles. **MR**

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Major Attila J. Bognar is the deputy G6, 4th Infantry Division (EXFOR), Fort Hood, Texas. He received a B.A. from The Citadel and an M.S. from the Florida Institute of Technology. He is a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College. He has served in a variety of command and staff positions in the Continental United States and Korea, including brigade executive officer, 1st Signal Brigade, Republic of Korea; signal officer, 3d Signal Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood; company commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3d Signal Brigade, Fort Hood; and instructor, US Army Aviation Center, Fort Rucker, Alabama.
