12. IMPLEMENTING POLICY CHANGE IN LARGE ORGANIZATIONS[1]

INTRODUCTION

Whatever its form or content, any new policy that would allow acknowledged homosexuals to serve in the U.S. military would have to be implemented in an organization that, like most organizations, resists changes in those structures, policies, and practices that have contributed to their past success. Even though military organizations are accustomed to rapid changes in technology and battle threats, they are usually highly averse to *social* changes--that is, changes in their traditions, customs, and culture (Builder, 1989).

In the case of allowing acknowledged homosexuals to serve in the military, the resistance to change touches not only on deeply held attitudes but, for a large portion of the military, on moral beliefs as well. For many, it makes no difference if a service member ever comes in contact with an acknowledged homosexual: The change in policy itself alters their perception of *their* organization in a fundamental way. (See the chapter on military opinion.)

This chapter considers how such a policy might be effectively implemented, in light of institutional culture, the current policy context, and what the literature tells us about implementing policy change in large organizations. To do so, the chapter first describes the implementation context, including the military culture and the current policy context. Then, it reviews factors that constrain and support policy implementation, including policy design, features of the implementation process, and the local context for change. Drawing upon this literature review, the chapter ends with a discussion of how the Armed Forces might most successfully implement a new policy concerning homosexuals.

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IMPLEMENTATION CONTEXT

Implementation as an area of study was born of a need to understand why policy changes imposed from the top often did not find their way to the bottom of large organizations, or if they did, why they resided there in substantially altered form. Moreover, organizations tend to overwhelm innovations, emerging unchanged from processes whose goal was explicitly to change them. These findings challenged the assumptions that organizational change is a relatively straightforward process with predictable outcomes.

The literature on the implementation of innovations in large organizations focuses heavily on the introduction of technological or organizational change (e.g., O'Toole, 1989; Langbein and Kerwin, 1985; Prottas, 1984; Wilms, 1982; Zetka, 1991; and Walsh, 1991). To some extent, all change follows the same process. But social change, which inherently involves much more deeply held attitudes about race, religion, sexuality, or values, brings added complexity to the change process. Externally imposed social change challenges an organization and its leadership to create a blueprint for change that considers the institutional culture and incorporates useful implementation theory principles, a large measure of leadership, an understanding of the extent to which previous experience applies, and a keen awareness of the fears and limits of those at the bottom, on whom the success of policy implementation ultimately depends.

Military Culture

The military is viewed organizationally as a hierarchical, rule-driven institution. However, it is also an institution with a strong culture and sense of itself in relation to the external social and political environment. This cultural sense is sufficiently strong that policies that seem at odds with it may meet considerable resistance, from the top to the bottom of the hierarchy.

The American military is a web of organizational and participant cultures at many different levels, and including a participant culture comprising the attitudes and values of the individuals who serve. Military subcultures have been described by Builder (1989), who notes

that military organizations and their suborganizations (Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines) have distinctive cultures that have a significant effect on the way the organizations operate and react in a variety of situations. Despite this variability across and within services, on balance, the military can be described as an organization that is based on a formal, hierarchical, and rule-driven structure, which values efficiency, predictability, and stability in operations. This structure is supported and reinforced by organizational and participant cultures that are conservative, rooted in history and tradition, based on group loyalty and conformity, and oriented toward obedience to superiors. Any policy change must take place in that military environment. Many observers have noted that, to the extent that a conservative military organization values predictability and stability, it is implicitly averse to change and explicitly averse to change dictated from outside the organization (e.g., Builder, 1989).

Militaries have always seen themselves somewhat apart from the larger societies that support them and that they are constituted to protect. Part of the separateness stems from the military mission and its burdens. But the American military has, during the Cold War, by its rapid rotation of people through assignments and posts and by its substantial forward presence overseas, enhanced that separateness and fostered a separate military family and society.

The demographic gap between the American military and the rest of society has been closing during the last decade with increasing numbers of two-career families and the decline of the "officer's wife" as an occupation. Nevertheless, many of the values of military families still reflect those of small towns and of several decades past, which may reflect the selective enlistment inherent in the all-volunteer force. For many of the more senior military people now in leadership positions, there remains a legacy of the hostility between the American military and the rest of society that reached a peak during the war in Vietnam. For those people, the imposing of unwelcomed aspects of American society on the military--often referred to as "social experimentation"--evokes familiar and hostile feelings. (See the chapter on military opinion for more discussion of these issues.)

The Policy Context

The military has seemed particularly averse to removing the restriction on homosexuals because that policy threatens its cultural values and because it is externally imposed. Many people have argued that it was similarly averse to racial integration and the admission of women. However, five factors make the integration of homosexuals particularly problematic.[2]

First, a majority of military personnel, and a sizable portion of the general public, feel that homosexuality is immoral. For many, allowing homosexuals to serve would put the military in the position of appearing to condone a homosexual lifestyle.

Second, the debate is occurring in a context characterized by drawdowns and uncertainty. In response to the end of the Cold War, the military's role and mission are being widely questioned. Reduced military budgets have created considerable anxiety among military personnel. Many believe that with base closings, drawdowns, and reductions in benefits, the military has violated the psychological contract between the organization and its members (Rousseau, 1989). The resulting anger and resentment have made members disinclined to tolerate additional threats to military culture in the form of allowing homosexuals to serve.

Third, the policy debate is occurring in a context where norms of deference are significantly eroded. This lack of deference serves to restrain support for new policies and, ultimately, for change. Military members and leaders appear to feel little constrained to withhold criticism of the Commander in Chief or his policies.[3] Their outspoken opposition to permitting homosexuals to serve is a cause for concern because it sends the message that the new policy is bad for the military

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[2]These five factors clearly emerged in focus groups that were conducted by study staff at military bases in the United States and Germany. (For a description, see the chapter on military opinion.)

[3]A recent speech by Air Force Major General Harold N. Campbell in which he referred to President Clinton as "draft-dodging," "pot-smoking," "womanizing," and "gay-loving" is a particularly egregious example of the fraying of these norms. His subsequent dismissal was meant to send a strong signal that such flagrant violations of deference norms will not be tolerated.

and would have no support among top military leaders. Nevertheless, norms of obedience remain and some observers argue that they would carry the day.[4]

Fourth, the current budgetary context may restrain change if implementation planning fails to take it into account. Since budgets are not growing, all new programs are viewed as coming at the expense of old and sometimes cherished ones. We can expect that the more the integration process costs, the more it would be resented.

Fifth, there is no sense that the change would serve any legitimate need of the military. Objections that the policy is not based on need are reinforced by the sense among many military members that even the President is not committed to the change. Rather, they believe that his support simply reflects commitments made during the Presidential campaign in exchange for electoral support. (See the chapter on military opinion for more detail on these attitudes.)

Although military structure and culture and key features of the policy context are unique to the problems of implementing a policy to allow homosexuals to serve, every implementation process is to some degree unique. Consequently, empirical findings and general principles derived from studies of policy implementation and organizational change offer lessons for implementing such a policy. These literatures and the lessons they offer are described below.

FACTORS THAT CONSTRAIN AND SUPPORT POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation itself is best defined as "the carrying out of a basic policy decision, usually incorporated in a statute but which can also take the form of important executive orders or court decisions. Ideally, that decision identifies the problem(s) to be addressed, stipulates the objective(s) to be pursued, and in a variety of ways, 'structures' the implementation process" (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983, p. 20). Policy analysts often divide the change process into two

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[4]Indeed, on June 10 in a speech at Harvard University, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, said of a new policy toward homosexuals' military service, "The President has given us clear direction. . . . Whatever is decided, I can assure you that the decision will be faithfully executed to the very best of our ability."

phases: adoption and implementation. The adoption phase begins with the formulation of a new policy proposal and ends when that proposal is formally encoded in a law, regulation, or directive. The implementation phase begins with the formal adoption of the policy and continues at some level as long as the policy remains in effect (e.g., Weimer and Vining, 1992).

Those who study implementation generally agree that three categories of variables contribute most significantly to policy change, despite variations in how they are described: policy design, the nature of the implementation process, and the local organizational context in which the policy is implemented (e.g., Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983; Goggin, 1987). Each of these components is discussed in turn.

Policy Design

The design of a new policy and its expression in a policy instrument can substantially affect both the implementation process and the extent to which the policy's original objectives are met in practice. Those policy design components that bear most on outcomes include characteristics of the change required and the nature of the policy instrument.

Characteristics of the Required Change. Some changes are inherently more complex than others. For example, a law whose goal is to reduce highway fatalities by lowering the speed limit contains within itself all the information necessary to enable individuals to comply (McDonnell and Elmore, 1987). In contrast, a court order to create equal educational opportunity is less clear-cut. Individuals must not only read and understand the equality standard but must create a plan that translates the goal into required behaviors, a more complex task that may fail because of unwillingness to comply or, more likely, some failure of capacity to do so (McDonnell and Elmore, 1987).

A policy's successful implementation also derives from the validity of the causal theory that underlies it. Every major reform contains, at least implicitly, a causal theory linking prescribed actions or interventions to policy objectives. Indeed, one of the major contributions of implementation analysis is its emphasis on seeking to build an

overall theory for obtaining desired organizational changes (Mazmanian
and Sabatier, 1981). To the degree that there is consensus about the
validity of the theory (that is, that most agree that by carrying out
the intervention, attainment of policy objectives is likely), policy
implementation is facilitated (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983).

Another key characteristic of the required change is the scope of
change required. Scope can be measured in terms of the size of the
target group, the percentage of the population affected, or the extent
of behavior change required. In general, policies that require less
change, in terms of numbers and extent, are easier to implement
(Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983).

Nature of the Policy Instrument. McDonnell and Elmore (1987)
describe four generic classes of policy instruments: (1) mandates,
which are rules governing the actions of individuals and agencies,
intended to produce compliance; (2) inducements, the transfer of funds
to individuals or agencies in return for certain agreed-upon actions;
(3) capacity-building, the transfer of funds for investment in material,
intellectual, or human resources; and (4) system-changing, the transfer
of official authority among individuals and agencies to change the
system through which public goals and services are delivered.

The choice of instrument structures affects the implementation
process to a significant degree. Expected outcomes, costs, and the
extent of oversight all vary by type of policy instrument. For example,
while mandates seek uniform but minimal compliance, inducements are
designed to produce substantial variability in outcomes because there is
often a variety of ways to achieve high performance. Mandates require a
strong focus on coercion and compliance monitoring, while the
implementation of inducements requires oversight but no coercion
(McDonnell and Elmore, 1987).

Implementation Guidance. Implementation guidance is built into
some policies, e.g., a reduced speed limit, as noted above. In other
cases, guidance is less inherent in the policy, but may be built in in
several forms. Among the most important ways to do so are by clearly
ranking policy objectives and by stipulationg decision rules for
implementing agencies.

A clear ranking of policy objectives is indispensable for program evaluation and for directing the actions of implementing officials. Statements about objectives may also be used as a resource for groups that support the policy objectives. Formal decision rules of implementing agencies, e.g., the stipulation in a statute of the level of support required for a specific action (e.g., two-thirds majority of a specified commission required for a license to be issued), reduce ambiguity and increase the likelihood that a mandate will be carried out as intended (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983).

Implementation Process

Implementation researchers (e.g., Elmore, 1978, 1980; Goggin, 1987; McLaughlin, 1987, 1990; Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983) view the process through which a new policy is implemented as a key contributor to understanding organizational change. From the implementation perspective, any analysis of policy choices or the effects of policy on organizations matters little if implementation is poorly understood.

What emerged from the early implementation studies was a sense that while change was not straightforward, the implementation process could be understood and ultimately managed. Several key notions emerged (McLaughlin, 1990). First, changing practice through policy is a difficult undertaking. Second, policymakers cannot mandate what matters--capacity and will at the lower levels of the organization where the policy must find a home. Third, by focusing on policy implementation, certain processes and rules could be brought to bear that would increase the likelihood that policy would find its way, relatively unscathed, into practice (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1981).

These notions suggest an implementation process structured around pressure and support. Pressure, argues McLaughlin (1987), focuses attention on the new policy and increases the likelihood of compliance; support is necessary to enable implementation. Such support may include adequate financial resources, a system of rewards that recognize compliance efforts, and room for bottom-level input into the process.

Pressure. Studies of efforts to reform education practice in classrooms revealed that myriad factors intervene between the passage of

a statute or the signing of an order that affect, often profoundly, the likelihood that the new policy will be recognizable at the lowest levels. In these systems, the key factors were at the bottom of the organization, among what Weatherley and Lipsky (1977) called "street-level bureaucrats." Here, a sense of ownership of the innovation, some adaptation of the policy to fit local circumstances, and a perception that the policy was tractable and the change would be both do-able and useful for staff and clients (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983) were key determinants of how pervasive the change would be and of the implementation's fidelity to the policy's original intent.

These studies viewed top-down implementation as "the noble lie" that persisted because of the perceived lack of other alternatives (Elmore, 1980). Early implementation studies provided some. For example, Elmore (1980) suggests that while formal authority *is* top-down, many organizations have, as well, a bottom-up system of informal authority or culture. To implement change in such organizations, it is important to find the correct mix of hierarchical control and subordinate discretion (Elmore, 1978). Often, this mix represents a tradeoff between efficiency and flexibility (Elmore, 1980).

But for the most part, the programs examined by early implementation researchers were inducements--policies that seek to achieve their goals by transferring money or authority to an individual or agency in return for something of value (McDonnell and Elmore, 1987). Most often, the agencies given the new funds were loosely coupled educational organizations. Given the nature of the policy instrument and the types of agencies pursuing change, considerable variability in outcomes was expected, and little pressure was necessary or applied.

In some contrast, any policy change with regard to homosexuals serving in the military will be presented in the form of a mandate. The implementation of a mandate involves different dynamics, although the considerable discretion accorded lower-level military leaders argues that the lessons of implementation in loosely coupled educational agencies can be brought to bear as well.

Research on regulatory policy has demonstrated that targets of mandates incur costs from complying or from avoiding compliance. The choice they make to comply with the mandate or attempt to avoid doing so is based on the perceived costs of each alternative. Targets decide whether or not to comply by calculating two kinds of costs: (1) the likelihood that the policy will be strictly enforced and compliance failures will be detected and (2) the severity of sanctions for noncompliance. If enforcement is strict and sanction costs are high, compliance is more likely (McDonnell and Elmore, 1987).[5]

To increase the likelihood of compliance with a mandate, the implementation plan must include enforcement mechanisms and sanctions that lead targets to assess the costs of noncompliance as high, and thus increase the likelihood that they will choose compliance. Such a plan is likely to create an adversarial relationship between initiators and targets, particularly when targets do not support policy goals (McDonnell and Elmore, 1987).

Support. Along with pressure to comply, policy mandates should provide support for implementation. Key aspects of support are a system of rewards that recognize compliance efforts, and room for bottom-level input into the process.

A set of rewards for any movement that supports implementation of the policy is key. The goal of these rewards is for individuals to perceive that their own self-interest lies in supporting the change. Such beliefs represent the energizing force for successful implementation of change (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983; Levin and Ferman, 1986).

Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) note the importance of committed implementors as driving forces for policy change. Conversely, leaders uncommitted to a new policy may restrain change efforts. Indeed, they suggest that the inability of policymakers or organizational leaders to

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[5]Targets essentially employ an expectancy value calculation in making these decisions. Such calculations are a key component of models such as the Health Belief Model (Janz and Becker, 1984; Rosenstock, Stecher, and Becker, 1988) that seek to predict the likelihood that an individual will undertake a particular preventive measure, such as contraceptive use (e.g., Eisen and Zellman, 1992).

choose implementors is a major factor in implementation failures. If implementors cannot be replaced, and often they cannot, the leader's job is to change the perceptions of the implementors concerning the likely outcomes of the new policy. If implementors come to view the new policy as consistent with their own self-interest (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983) and with organizational culture (Schein, 1987), they will be far more likely to support the new policy and act in ways that enhance its implementation.

Local Context for Change

To achieve successful implementation of any policy, the change process has to be both understood and carefully managed. When an organization's culture appears inconsistent with a new policy, leaders must attempt to create driving forces by drawing on aspects of the existing culture that are compatible (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1985; Schein, 1987). This requires a clear understanding of the organizational culture (Allaire and Firsirotu, 1985), the perceived self-interest of participants (Mazmanian and Sabatier, 1983), and the extent to which the change is likely to be perceived as consistent with both. It also requires that efforts be made to present the change, and the change process, as fair. Procedural fairness has been found to increase compliance with the ultimate outcome of a decision process. Tyler and Lind (1992) report that fairness judgments make compliance more likely even when the final decision or new policy is perceived to be incompatible with individual beliefs or self-interest.[6]

A new policy is most likely to *clash* with organizational or participant culture when it is imposed from the outside, a common occurrence in government agencies. In such cases, the new policy may

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[6]A key goal of the implementation process is to promote perceptions of procedural fairness. Tyler and Lind (1992) identify four factors that promote such perceptions. These include *voice*, a belief that one's views can be expressed freely and are being considered, *even if the decision has already been made* (Lind, 1993); *trust*, a belief that the decisionmaker is *trying* to be fair; *standing*, a belief that one has been treated respectfully by policymakers; and *neutrality*, a belief that those making policy are driven by facts rather than emotions or opinion (Tyler and Lind, 1992; Tyler, 1989; Lind, 1993).

reflect the demands of constituencies outside the implementing organization, for example, the Supreme Court's requirement that local school districts desegregate. Or it may be based on research findings or opinions that the organization could be accomplishing its goals more effectively. For example, the Military Child Care Act of 1989, which promulgated new, more structured standards for child development programs on military installations, reflected Congressional concerns about the military's ability to deliver adequate amounts of high-quality, developmentally appropriate child care. But whatever its source, the very fact that the change is imposed from the outside creates significant challenges to successful implementation.

An externally imposed policy may be resisted as well because of perceived *inconsistency* with organizational or participant culture. Most commonly, a new policy threatens the premium put on history and learning from experience in the organization (Schein, 1987; Levitt and March, 1988). In some cases, such policy changes are perceived to threaten the organization's very survival. The policy can also threaten deeply held beliefs concerning organizational autonomy, a key feature in the widespread resistance of school districts to desegregation orders. A new policy can also threaten the *participant* culture. School desegregation posed such a threat to many school personnel in the Deep South, who were personally offended by the idea of integrated education.

Change may be inconsistent with organizational *structure* as well as culture. Allaire and Firsirotu (1985) note that innovations that depend on a particular organizational structure are likely to fail if those structures do not exist in the organization. For example, it would be futile, they argue, to exhort the employees of a regulated monopoly offering a public service and requiring large capital investments to manage with a lean staff and simple form. Or a top-down structure like the military's may make mutual adaptation between an innovation and the smallest units problematic. Such organizations trade adaptability for efficiency and increased likelihood that the change will spread throughout the system (Ledford, Mohrman, Mohrman, and Lawler, 1989).

A key finding of implementation studies is that change is best accepted and institutionalized when at least some people within the

organization perceive the need for the change and are persuaded that it is good for the organization and for themselves. Much of the literature on large-scale organizational change focuses on change arising from organizational need, such as declining market share or reduced profits (e.g., Mohrman et al., 1989; Kanter, 1983).

Change imposed from without lacks these built-in advantages. The process of change must be much more carefully planned and managed if widespread implementation that is consistent with policy goals and processes is to occur. Even when policy, culture, and structure are consistent, implementation is far from assured. The natural conservatizing forces at work in most organizations tend to resist change. People often have to be persuaded that the new policy will not be harmful to the organization or to themselves and may even result in gains.

IMPLEMENTING A POLICY TO END DISCRIMINATION

How might the Armed Forces implement a policy that is based on clear standards of conduct, strictly enforced, and that considers sexual orientation, by itself, as "not germane" to determining who may serve in the military? The nature of military organizations and our knowledge about the implementation process suggest a number of actions that can facilitate the implementation of such a policy. These actions are discussed below.

Design a Policy That Facilitates Implementation

It is very important to convey a new policy that ends discrimination as simply as possible and to impose the minimum of changes on personnel (Levin and Ferman, 1986). Further, the policy should be decided upon and implemented as quickly as possible and should include both pressure and support for change.

Make the Policy Simple. Military experience with blacks and women argues for a simple policy under which homosexuals are treated no differently in terms of work assignments, living situations, or promotability. Indeed, the documented capabilities of homosexuals to perform all military tasks enable the policy to be simple.

In contrast, the policy message about women has been complex. This complexity has resulted in continuing strong doubts about the capability and appropriateness of women to perform certain tasks, which are evident in military member attitudes and in rules that constrain women's full military participation. (See the chapter on military opinion for additional information.) Combined with separate living accommodations that often are viewed as plusher (largely because the small numbers of women lower ratios for toilets, etc.), these rules keep gender highly salient. Lower training standards, better assignments (to safer, non-combat jobs), and better accommodations have continued to feed resentments among men. These problems in integrating women argue for equal treatment of homosexuals. They should be assigned to serve in all positions and at all levels, according to their skills; those who serve with them will be expected to treat them equally as well.[7]

Act Quickly. Lessons from the implementation literature suggest that the new policy regarding homosexuals in the military should be decided upon and implemented as quickly as possible, for three reasons. First, the waiting period is one in which military personnel are unsure, and therefore anxious about, what the final outcome will be and how it will affect their personal military experiences. The change in policy will not appreciably affect the vast majority of heterosexuals, who will not be working or living with an open homosexual. (See the chapter on cohesion for a discussion of the probabilities of there being acknowledged homosexuals in groups of varying sizes.) Once they discover that nothing has changed for them, they will feel more comfortable and the issue will be less disruptive generally. That

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[7]It has been suggested that, given the need for a smaller force, those who would find it abhorrent to serve with open homosexuals should be given an option to leave. This will, by implication, make those who stay more committed to the new policy because they chose to serve under the new policy. However, such a policy departure creates two problems that could impede implementation. First, an escape policy signals that the policy is abhorrent, which contradicts any messages of leadership support. Second, those who leave for other reasons but claim they left because of moral objections to homosexuals may swell the ranks of those who appear to object to the policy.

outcome, however, will require that instances of open homosexuality not be allowed to result in serious, rumor-inspiring conflicts.

Second, any waiting period also permits restraining forces to consolidate. Until the policy is decided upon and implementation has begun, those opposed will feel free to speak out against it, increasing the perceived strength of military objections.

Third, fast and pervasive change will signal commitment to the policy. Any incremental changes would likely be viewed as experimental; commitment to the new policy would therefore be weakened (Lawler, 1989). In addition, phased-in implementation might allow enemies of the new policy to intentionally create problems to prove the policy unworkable.

Convey the Change in Terms Compatible with Military Culture. To the extent possible, the policy should be conveyed in terms compatible with military culture. For example, leadership should focus on the organizational culture of hierarchy and obedience and minimize discussion of the inconsistency between the new policy and a very conservative participant culture. Leaders can become role models by conforming behaviorally to the new policy because the President is the Commander in Chief, who must be obeyed. Other consistencies between successful implementation of the policy and organizational culture can also be stressed. For example, the military sees itself as a strong organization with a "can-do" attitude. Military culture stresses the dominance of mission over individual preferences and characteristics. Such successful submersion of more visible differences such as race can be pointed to as an example of the military's ability to keep its collective eye on the prize. And the military's norms of inclusion and equality can be brought to bear as well.

Build in Sanctions and Enforcement Mechanisms. Any new policy about homosexuals will come in the form of a mandate. Consequently, compliance is the goal. To increase the likelihood of compliance, sanctions and enforcement mechanisms must be established.

Key to promoting compliance is the adoption or revision of a code of professional behavior that clarifies the criteria for behavioral compliance. The code must include some general principles and general behavioral criteria and some language that explicitly makes people

responsible for exercising discretion in determining whether behaviors
not explicitly included in the code of conduct are acceptable (Burke,
1990).[8] The code should explicitly recognize the need to respect the
feelings and concerns of others in defining acceptable and unacceptable
behaviors.

Although the military's strong hierarchical control might suggest
to some that policy can be successfully implemented with only limited
discretion (Burke, 1990), providing some degree of discretion to the
smallest unit in terms of how to bring about behavior change captures an
important tenet of the implementation perspective. Lawler (1989)
suggests that subunits be given a "conceptual box" that defines the
boundaries of acceptable behavior within which unit members can work.
In addition, awarding discretion is consistent with the military's
informal operations, where much discretion is practiced (Watman, 1993).
Indeed, the military mission order, a widely used way of directing
subordinates, builds in considerable lower-level discretion. Such
discretion increases individual and unit commitment to the change.

The code of professional conduct must also describe the sanctions
for behavioral noncompliance. These sanctions essentially define
accountability and thus set parameters around leader discretion. Too
much discretion concerning sanctions risks the possibility that
uncommitted leaders will send a signal that inappropriate behavior will
be tolerated.

The enforcement system must be made explicit (Elmore, 1978).
Organization members must understand that their behavior will be
observed and noted and that actions inconsistent with the code of
behavior will be called to the attention of higher-ups and dealt with
according to the explicit sanction policy. But military experience in
the area of sexual harassment demonstrates that a code of professional

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[8]Exercise of discretion in support of a new policy requires strong
leadership and unambiguous signals that the policy is to be carried out.
Otherwise, leadership discretion may serve to undermine policy
implementation. For example, "the atmosphere created by Reagan
appointees who headed the EPA discouraged civil servants from serious
enforcement of social environmental laws. They were encouraged to use
their discretion to reduce the scope of effective enforcement" (Palumbo
and Calista, 1990, p. 8).

conduct *by itself* is not enough to ensure change when the change is
inconsistent with organizational culture.

From the point of view of those with expertise in sexual
harassment, the military has set in place the appropriate policies and
structures to minimize the problem.[9] Yet, there is substantial evidence
that sexual harassment remains a serious problem in the military even
after the formal adoption of a code of behavior.[10] The high incidence
of sexual harassment reported in military surveys suggests that those
expected to comply with sexual harassment policies have concluded that
noncompliance is unlikely to be detected, and if detected, is unlikely
to result in severe sanctions. Information from the field supports this
conclusion. Many sexual harassment complaints are apparently ignored.
If they come to light, those who choose to ignore them are rarely
sanctioned, which sends a signal that the policy need not be taken
seriously. Indeed, in many cases, it is the complainant who suffers
(Gilberd, 1992).

What the military's experience with sexual harassment demonstrates
is that a code of professional conduct alone cannot bring change.
Rather, it is just one part of an intensive implementation effort if
change is to occur. The behavioral compliance expected in response to

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[9]According to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), "each
service requires every officer and enlisted member to be trained in the
prevention of sexual harassment at initial service entry points, and
periodically thereafter. . . . [E]ach service policy clearly states
that the prevention of sexual harassment is a principal responsibility
of the chain-of-command. All service members must be cognizant of the
policy and enforce the standards required by the policy. . . . Service
members who have sexual harassment complaints are encouraged to use the
chain-of-command. Equal opportunity/Human Relations Advisors,
Chaplains, Inspector General, and Judge Advocate General are recommended
as alternate channels. . . . [E]ach service's policy refers commanders
to a number of specific articles in the UCMJ when considering punishment
for sexual harassment offenders" (Martindale, 1990, pp. iv-v).

[10]A 1988 Defense Manpower Data Center survey of 20,250 randomly
selected personnel (response rate = 60 percent) revealed that 64 percent
of female and 17 percent of the male personnel experienced at least one
form of sexual harassment while at work in the year before the survey;
15 percent of female and 2 percent of male respondents reported one of
the most serious forms, pressure for sexual favors; and 5 percent of
female and 1 percent of male respondents reported the most severe form,
actual or attempted rape or sexual assault.

mandates cannot be assumed. Strong monitoring and sanctioning must
occur for targets to conclude that compliance is worth the effort.
Steps that the Navy has taken since 1989 identify ways to reinforce a
code of professional conduct. In particular, since 1992, the Navy has
reinforced its zero-tolerance policy toward sexual harassment with a
mandatory processing for separation policy following either the first
substantiated incident of aggravated sexual harassment or the repeated
occurrence of less serious incidents of sexual harassment (Culbertson et
al., 1992).

Ensure Leadership Support at All Levels

Military leaders can and must become a major driving force for
change. They take on this role when they are perceived to be supportive
of the change and to be concerned that it be successfully implemented.
Such a stance is sometimes difficult to achieve, especially when the new
policy has been criticized by these same leaders early in the
implementation process, when debate was occurring about the policy's
value and form. Ideally, leaders' early criticisms are acknowledged and
responded to during the policy formulation process in a way that enables
them to emerge from the debate appearing convinced of the value and
importance of the new policy. Such beliefs present leaders as committed
to the change and consequently eager to see it implemented (Allaire and
Firsirotu, 1985).

If lower-level commanders and troops do not believe that their
superiors support the policy, they will have little motivation to abide
by it. At the very top, the President must reaffirm his commitment to
the new policy in language consistent with cultural norms of inclusion
and equality for all. If senior military leaders do not believe in the
change, efforts must be made to present leaders as *behaviorally*
committed to the policy (even if they remain attitudinally opposed).

Such behavioral commitment requires that leaders send a strong,
consistent signal of support for the new policy. Lack of attitudinal
support makes behavioral signaling all the more important. Such
signaling must include strict adherence to an existing or new code of
professional conduct, with public sanctioning of personnel at all levels

who fail to comply with it. It must also include smaller actions, such
as allocation of time to the new policy and keeping the change before
members through video or other messages such as talks at lunches and
meetings (Peters, 1978). This message of support must include a message
of continuing involvement by high-level leadership. The assignment of a
high-ranking individual with direct access to top management to oversee
the implementation process conveys the message that this policy is to be
enforced at all levels.

    While top-down change is the norm in military organizations, the
lessons of implementation research that implementing change is a problem
of the smallest unit should be heeded. Indeed, it is particularly
important to convey an understanding of what matters at the bottom of
the organization to the top so that members feel heard. It is
important, as well, to convince leaders at all levels, including the
bottom, that it is in their own and the organization's interest to work
to support the new policy. Their effective involvement depends on six
key efforts: (1) signaling the military's commitment to the new policy;
(2) convincing them that active monitoring and support for the new
policy will be noticed and rewarded; (3) stressing the importance of
reducing anxieties and creating a sense of perceived fairness for
members; (4) training them to be good implementors; (5) empowering them
to use their discretion within clear constraints; and (6) providing
guidance.

    Signaling Commitment. Lower-level leaders are the key to
enforcement efforts at the bottom of the military hierarchy. Unless the
seriousness of the military's commitment to the policy is effectively
conveyed to them, they will exhibit great variability in their
enforcement efforts. Treatment of the same issue can be expected to
differ considerably from base to base, and unit to unit, in the absence
of a strong message of conformity from superior officers.

    Identifying Rewards. The enforcement system must be made explicit
(Elmore, 1978). Leaders must be persuaded that their enforcement of the
new policy will be monitored by those above them and that their
behavioral support of the new policy will be rewarded. This will
encourage leaders to believe that successful implementation of the new

policy accords with their own self-interest, a key aspect of leadership (Levin and Ferman, 1986).

These rewards should hold at all levels of the military and should be explicit. For example, unit leaders should know that they will be judged in part on the ability of unit members to work effectively together. For example, units would be considered well-led when members comfortably absorb newcomers. This evaluation will positively affect both group members and their leader. However, writers on procedural justice (e.g., Tyler and Lind, 1992) present cautions about the limits of outcome incentives to ensure compliance. They stress that another, compatible route to compliance lies in an implementation process that gives group members voice, conveys the impression of fairness and concern for individuals' rights, and describes the final policy as based on fact and egalitarian concerns.

Communication upward about compliance failures should be actively encouraged (Dalziel and Schoonover, 1988). Since "snitching" violates a tenet of military culture that only good news should be communicated, it is important to both redefine "snitching" as important, valued professional behavior and to set up monitoring procedures so that people are *asked* about problems, for example, through regular implementation surveys (e.g., Gottlieb et al., 1992).

Leaders must also understand that failure to actively support the new policy will be noticed and sanctioned. Military members must be held to high standards of conduct with regard to abiding by and enforcing the new policy. Any officer who violates the behavioral guidelines associated with the new policy should be dealt with severely. This message--that the military takes the new policy seriously--will quickly be conveyed to those lower down and contribute to behavioral compliance.

Moreover, breaches of policy by subordinates will be viewed as leadership failures. This two-pronged approach makes every leader responsible for the behavior of those below. More generally, commanders must be responsible for morale and behavior within their units, including all incidents of discrimination. It must be made clear to them that if they permit an environment in which homosexuals can be

discriminated against or harassed, it will have an effect on their likelihood of promotion. Failure to pursue instances of unacceptable behavior should, in itself, be considered a leadership failure. This latter point is key: Perceptions about what happens when these responsibilities are ignored can drive or derail implementation (Davidson, 1993).

The implementation leader must clarify the complaint process and, with the monitoring group, ensure that complaints are actively addressed. Moreover, efforts should be made to simplify the complaint process. The Army Equal Opportunity Office (EOO) is currently implementing two promising approaches: (1) a hot line that provides procedural information on filing EO complaints, and (2) a complaint form that can be reproduced easily on a photocopier (Clement, 1993).

Strengthen the Local Context for Change

Change will be facilitated by leaders who are trained and motivated to address and solve implementation problems. A new organizational structure should be helpful as well in enabling implementation and change. Finally, monitoring criteria should be developed and widely communicated.

Increase Leadership Capacity. A key task of leaders at all levels is to minimize subordinates' anxieties and create a sense of procedural justice for them. Reduced worry and feelings of justice are enhanced when leaders are prepared to absorb the anxiety of change, including challenges and anger, when leaders demonstrate dedication and commitment to the organization as a whole, and when leaders encourage members to express their anxieties and concerns and when they acknowledge these concerns (Schein, 1987; Tyler and Lind, 1992).

Leaders should also act to enhance feelings of efficacy by conveying their beliefs that personnel are capable of implementing the change and conforming to behavioral expectations. The critical distinction between behavior change and attitude change should be emphasized, with a clear message that the organization will limit its concern exclusively to behavior.

Leadership capacity will be enhanced by several means, including training, support for the use of discretion, and guidance.

Conduct Training. Training of leaders should be designed to create "fixers"--people who both care about successful implementation and have the skills necessary to anticipate and identify implementation problems and to make adjustments to improve the implementation process (Bardach, 1980; Levin and Ferman, 1986).

It should be noted that "fixer training" is distinctly different from sensitivity training. Fixer training is practical and meshes well with the strictly behavioral approach to implementation most likely to yield success. In contrast, sensitivity training attempts attitude change and is widely scorned by military personnel. Bringing in sensitivity trainers who are perceived to be very costly in a context of drawdown is as likely to increase resistance and anger as it is to reduce it.

Encourage Use of Discretion. Becoming a good "fixer" implies the possibility of action. Leaders at all levels must be accorded sufficient discretion so that they can act to correct implementation problems. But, as noted above, this discretion must be bounded by behavioral monitoring and strict enforcement of a code of professional conduct. Such a code is discussed in the chapter on legal issues and in Appendix A, which presents a code that would be appropriate for the "not germane" option.

Provide Guidance. Any code of professional conduct, no matter how prescriptive, cannot hope to identify all potential problem areas. A new code of professional conduct that describes behavioral principles and goals will identify few. Yet lower-level leaders need guidance. Therefore, codes should be supplemented with active guidance in the form of "question and answer" documents, which should be widely disseminated. These questions and answers could also include information about sexual behavior and health issues.

Create a Monitoring Structure. In the implementation literature, there is much debate about the desirability of creating a new organizational structure to lead and monitor implementation. Much depends on where such structures are located in the organization. If

central to the organization, and if led by a person with considerable formal authority who has the ear of top management, such structures can be effective (Schein, 1987). They create a place where complaints may be lodged outside the chain of command; their presence conveys organizational commitment to the change; and, if properly staffed, they can become expert at dealing with problems that arise. However, such structures are sometimes used to divert implementation concerns from key leaders and to "ghetto-ize" the new policy. In these cases, such structures send a signal of nonsupport from top managers that is likely to undermine successful implementation. Moreover, in the current climate of downsizing, the creation of apparently costly new structures is likely to be resented.

Instead, monitoring should be carried out by using the chain of command. Monitoring would begin among low-level leaders who are close to and can convey the views and behavioral problems of those who work under them. They should report on a periodic basis to their superiors up the chain and should be provided incentives, as described above, to report in a timely manner about incipient problems so that they can be remedied before they become serious. Such reporting up the chain will depend upon the development of clear reporting instruments and on creating among leaders up and down the chain a sense that accurate information about implementation problems is valued and that failures of leadership reside in refusals to comply, not in compliance difficulties.

This process should be supported by a small group in each service charged with overseeing implementation of the new policy. The group may comprise people already responsible for other similar policies, e.g., sexual harassment and racial integration.[11]

Kilmann (1989) suggests that a shadow track--a group of 5-15 people representing all levels of a large organization, which meets regularly to monitor the implementation process and develop ways to improve it--is a good idea in very large organizations. In this case, a shadow track might receive reports from all levels as well as conduct its own monitoring process, e.g., personnel surveys.

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[11]Training for these overseers may strengthen their efforts in these other areas as well.

Develop Monitoring Criteria. Few homosexuals are likely to reveal their sexual orientation even if a policy that allows them to do so openly is mandated. Consequently, monitoring criteria used to assess the progress of more visible groups, e.g., blacks and women, cannot be used. Numbers of promotions, distribution across pay grades, and other measures of a group's progress that depend on the ability to detect group numbers are not feasible.

However, it is possible and important to monitor other outcomes of the implementation process. These outcomes should include key areas of concern, including incidents of violence, numbers of open homosexuals who serve, and measures of unit performance.

Monitoring efforts should include assessments of performance reports, the conduct of implementation surveys, and analysis of the nature and disposition of complaints. Monitors should examine written documents for their signaling messages; analyze surveys of military member attitudes; track the incidence of violence, harassment, and exclusion, and the incidence of sanctioning; and track numbers of homosexuals who disclose their orientation or whose orientation is revealed by others, and numbers of military members who leave the service because of the new policy or its implications.

A set of objective measures of unit performance must be devised. These measures should, to the extent possible, build on current efforts (e.g., National Training Center performance) and be supplemented by policy-specific measures (e.g., number of harassment complaints filed, number of instances of violence or abuse directed toward open or suspected homosexuals).

To the extent possible, monitoring measures should depend on existing, ongoing assessments. Unfortunately, however, ongoing assessment measures are not as available or as appropriate as those charged with monitoring of the new policy might hope. Measures of key military outcomes--readiness and cohesion--are flawed. Surveys of member attitudes are conducted too infrequently to be of much value.

The military does employ some measures of cohesion, although none are used on an ongoing basis. Such measures might be adapted for use in monitoring of the new policy. Such adaptation would, however, require

careful research, thought, and development. (See the chapter on
cohesion for detail on these measures.)

Surveys of member attitudes toward the new policy and experiences
with it could be a valuable monitoring device. However, the
approximately five-year intervals between DoD personnel surveys (which
survey about 5 percent of active-duty military members, spouses, and
members of the reserves) limit the surveys' value. Tracking of attitude
change with this survey is difficult because of the many secular changes
during the long intersurvey period. A monthly survey effort that
included a much smaller percentage of the population would, in contrast,
be extremely valuable for tracking attitudes. A set of questions
focused on the implementation of the new policy toward homosexuals would
allow the monitoring group to examine key issues, e.g., behavioral
compliance, reporting behaviors, and for commanders, the extent to which
implementation of the policy coincided with other duties (Gottlieb et
al., 1992). The opportunity to track implementation over time through a
mix of unchanging attitudinal and changing implementation questions
would be invaluable.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite widespread antagonism within the military to a policy that
would end discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, lessons
from organization theory, implementation research, procedural justice
theory, and the military's own experiences with blacks (see the chapter
on racial integration) suggest that a new policy could be successfully
implemented. Success depends on understanding the military as a large
organization with a unique culture, on a carefully developed and
actively monitored implementation plan, and on a sense of the importance
of perceived fairness in the development of the policy and in its
implementation.

To date, the implementation context has not supported a new policy
that would allow homosexuals to serve. Widespread views both within and
outside the military that homosexuality is immoral translate into
concerns that removing the ban would appear to condone a homosexual
lifestyle. Drawdowns, base closings, and reductions in benefits have

created considerable anxiety among military members and have fueled widespread beliefs that the military has violated its psychological contract between the organization and its members. The resulting anger and resentment have made members even less inclined to tolerate new threats to military culture. The policy debate surrounding such a policy change is occurring in a context in which norms of deference are significantly eroded. Consequently, highly placed military leaders have actively criticized the proposed policy.

In addition, a number of other factors restrain change. These include the fact that the policy will be externally imposed, which will increase the likelihood that it will be perceived as inconsistent with organizational and participant cultures. *The military's uneven experience in fully integrating another sexual outsider group, women, will be used to bolster resistance.* Perceptions that the policy is going forward for reasons other than the direct needs of the military contribute to a feeling that the policy is unfair to those serving.

These factors make change harder and must be considered in designing a plan for implementing the new policy. To promote change, planners should:

- Convey the policy as simply as possible and build in supports for change. The most important support for change is a code of professional conduct that clarifies the criteria for behavioral compliance and stresses universal responsibility for respecting the feelings and sensitivities of others. In addition, high-level individuals should be designated as responsible for successful implementation.

- To the extent possible, convey the change in terms compatible with military culture. These terms might include a focus on the submersion of individual preferences, the obligation to follow orders, and the military's "can-do" attitude.

- Stress behavioral compliance and create sanctions for compliance failures. Policy messages should make clear that leaders are responsible for their own behavior and for the

behavior of their subordinates. Communication upward about compliance failures should be encouraged.

- Create a change process that allows members to voice their views and concerns and to know that these have been heard, even if they do not agree with the ultimate policy. The change should make clear that leaders have developed the policy and the implementation plan in a fair manner.

- Ensure top leadership support, at least behaviorally. Set in place the means through which top leadership can send signals of support for the new policy, including continuing involvement in implementation, and frequent messages about the implementation process.

- Involve leaders at all levels. Even in a top-down organization, implementation remains a problem of the smallest unit. Leaders at all levels must come to see that successful implementation is in their self-interest, and their ability to lead will be assessed in part by their own compliance with the new policy and the compliance of those under their command. They must also be provided with training designed to make them successful implementors. Such training should include practice in identifying threats to implementation, guidelines for behavior, and sufficient discretion so that they can begin to feel some ownership for the change.

- Set up monitoring mechanisms, including oversight committees, that will assess the implementation process. Monitoring efforts should capture as many aspects of the change as possible.