

# Rumsfeld's Rules<sup>1</sup>

Reviewed by *Major Patrick M. McGrath\**

*Lawyers are like beavers. They get in the middle of the stream and dam it up.*<sup>2</sup>

## I. Introduction

There are few recent public figures that are as polarizing as Donald Rumsfeld. Many people blame him for the torture of prisoners by the United States,<sup>3</sup> or for the poor handling of the Iraq war,<sup>4</sup> while others credit him for changing the U.S. military into a more adapt, flexible, and lethal organization.<sup>5</sup> Regardless of one's personal opinion of Rumsfeld, his rules are valuable to any leader. Rumsfeld has a wealth of life experience—in the private sector, the military, and the government—to draw upon for his insights and thoughts about leadership and management. His rules are grounded in personal experience and incorporate truths about basic human nature that are vital to account for when leading people.<sup>6</sup>

Donald Rumsfeld is the only person to have twice served as the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), and has the distinction of having been both the youngest and the oldest SECDEF.<sup>7</sup> In 1977, after his tenure as the thirteenth SECDEF, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of

Freedom, the highest award a civilian can receive.<sup>8</sup> Rumsfeld attended Princeton University where he participated in wrestling as team captain and Naval Reserve Officer Training.<sup>9</sup> He served in the U.S. Navy as a pilot and flight instructor, was elected to the House of Representatives four times, served as President Ford's White House Chief of Staff, and has been the CEO of Fortune 500 companies.<sup>10</sup> Over the course of his life, Rumsfeld has served in some capacity or another for five U.S. Presidents.<sup>11</sup>

This book is not the first time Donald Rumsfeld has collected his rules into a user friendly format. While working for President Gerald Ford, Rumsfeld maintained a collection of quotes and life lessons. Upon discovering and reviewing this collection, President Ford declared them "Rumsfeld's Rules" and directed that they be given to members of his senior staff.<sup>12</sup> Rumsfeld has been jotting down notes of interesting insights, thoughts, life lessons, and sayings for most of his life. It is the fruits of this labor that form the basis for *Rumsfeld's Rules*. Although titled *Rumsfeld's Rules*, he is the first to admit that most of the quotes and insights are not his, but instead belong to others who were inspiring enough to take notes on.<sup>13</sup>

Rumsfeld does not exceed the scope of the book's purpose. Considering that many of the rules can be applied to innumerable situations, *Rumsfeld's Rules* is well organized. Rumsfeld chooses to group the rules based on overarching management or leadership requirements, such as running a meeting or confronting a crisis.<sup>14</sup> This enables

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\* Judge Advocate, U.S. Army. Student, 62nd Judge Advocate Officer Graduate Course, The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, U.S. Army, Charlottesville, Virginia.

<sup>1</sup> DONALD RUMSFELD, *RUMSFELD'S RULES* (2013).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 302.

<sup>3</sup> STAFF OF S. COMM. ON THE ARMED SERVICES, 110TH CONG., *INQUIRY INTO THE TREATMENT OF DETAINEES IN U.S. CUSTODY*, at xxix (Comm. Print 2008) (finding Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Rumsfeld's approval of enhanced interrogation techniques precipitated the eventual abuses that occurred at Abu Ghraib).

<sup>4</sup> *Army Times*: "Time for Rumsfeld to Go," CNN.COM (Nov. 4, 2006), <http://www.cnn.com/2006/POLITICS/11/04/rumsfeld.departure/> ("[Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's] strategy has failed, and his ability to lead is compromised. And although the blame for our failures in Iraq rests with the secretary, it will be the troops who bear its brunt.") (quoting *Army Times* editorial).

<sup>5</sup> Paul C. Light, *Rumsfeld's Revolution at Defense*, *Brookings Policy Brief Series #142*, BROOKINGS INST. (Jul. 2005), <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2005/07/governance-light> (noting Rumsfeld's ambitious reform of the military focused on "four . . . pillars of organizational robustness: (1) alertness to the future ahead; (2) agility in how the department responds to threats and opportunities; (3) adaptability in what the department actually does; and (4) alignment around a clear mission").

<sup>6</sup> RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at xiii. Rumsfeld believes his rules work well because they are "insights into human nature—timeless truths that have survived the changes in our culture and even the many efficiencies enabled by modern technology." *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Donald H. Rumsfeld, 21st Secretary of Defense*, U.S. DEP'T OF DEF., <http://www.defense.gov/bios/biographydetail.aspx?biographyid=90> (last visited 21 Feb. 2014). Rumsfeld was forty-three years old when he became the thirteenth SECDEF, and sixty-nine years old when he became the twenty-first SECDEF. *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* See also RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at 170 (discussing his wrestling career).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* Rumsfeld served as Chief Executive Officer for both G.D. Searle & Co., a worldwide pharmaceutical company, from 1977 to 1985, and General Instrument Corporation from 1990 to 1993. *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> *Id.* Rumsfeld has served in numerous public positions throughout his career, to include White House advisor under President Richard Nixon; Chief of Staff and SECDEF under President Gerald Ford; special envoy to the Middle East on behalf of President Ronald Regan; chair of the bipartisan Commission to Assess the Ballistic Missile Threat to the United States under President Bill Clinton; and SECDEF under President George W. Bush. *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at xii ("Truth be told, I don't know if I've had a truly original thought in my life.").

<sup>14</sup> Each chapter consists of a grouping of related rules—e.g., Starting at the Bottom; Picking People; Thinking Strategically; Planning for Uncertainty; The Unknown Unknowns; Meeting the Press; Battling Bureaucracy; Lessons from the World's Most Successful Leadership Organization; and The Optimism of Will.

readers to understand where best to incorporate the rule into their leadership style.

## II. Why *Rumsfeld's Rules* Is Not Your Typical Leadership Book

Rumsfeld's intent is to provide the reader with rules that can be applied by any leader, at any level of management, in any type of organization.<sup>15</sup> He includes some anecdotal examples from his personal experience to illustrate how applying or following certain rules can be beneficial. These stories help to illustrate the application of the rule, but on the whole tend to be very short—the majority are no longer than a single page. However, it is these personal stories that make the book enjoyable and give it substance—and at times more credibility—than other similar works.

For instance, Rumsfeld describes how Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, during a ride in a presidential motorcade, demonstrated the rule that “[p]eople respond in direct proportion to the extent you reach out to them.”<sup>16</sup> During the parade, Rockefeller at first just waved out the window; the few people who saw responded with a similar reserved wave back. Then as he gradually increased his enthusiasm, more and more of the crowd responded in kind.<sup>17</sup> The end result was Rockefeller standing up in the convertible car waving both arms, and the crowd matching his enthusiasm by waving back or flapping their small American flags in a blur of red, white, and blue.<sup>18</sup> This anecdote creates a strong visual image to reinforce the rule that people respond in kind to the level of attention you give them. The more leaders actively and enthusiastically engage their subordinates, the more enthusiasm for the mission they bring to the organization. It is this acute mixture of human insights, visual reinforcement, and quick digestible rules that make this a different kind of leadership book.

## III. Time: The Most Valuable Resource Your Subordinates Have

There are many resources that a leader must consider and balance when determining the priorities for his organization, but few of them are as important or have as much impact as time.<sup>19</sup> Rumsfeld understands the importance that time plays

in an organization's success, highlighting its impact in his chapter, *Running a Meeting*. One of his best recommendations is “whatever the size or purpose of [the] meeting, start and end it on time.”<sup>20</sup> This may seem obvious, but too often in organizations the norm is for meetings to start late or run long. Leaders either tolerate it or worse, are the cause of it. Rumsfeld is able to demonstrate the actual harm this can cause. He uses an example to show how five hours of productive time can be lost when a meeting starts fifteen minutes late and there are twenty people present.<sup>21</sup> Although fifteen minutes does not seem like much in isolation, the cumulative impact—five hours of lost productivity—can cause serious harm to an organization.

Managing your organization's time through effectively-run meetings is vital in today's military when we are facing budget crunches,<sup>22</sup> and the new mantra is “do more with less.” Leaders in the military must be cognizant of how they are employing their most precious resource—Soldiers—and must strive to maximize Soldiers' time and effort.<sup>23</sup> One way to do this is by looking at why, how often, and who participates in meetings.<sup>24</sup> Leaders commonly believe that the more people present during a meeting, the better the

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attend them are not thinking about time as their most valuable resource” or appreciate the finiteness of the resource because “[t]ime is the most perishable good in the world, and it is not replenishable”).

<sup>20</sup> RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at 31. Rumsfeld reinforces his recommendation to start and end meetings on time with the classic quote he attributes to drill sergeants: “[i]f you're five minutes early, you're on time. If you're on time, you're late. If you're late, you have some explaining to do.” *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> *Id.* At the same time, Rumsfeld stresses the importance of knowing when to end a meeting. “There were occasions when I abruptly ended a meeting in progress and advised the participants that we would reconvene when everyone had had time to fully prepare. The response was usually surprised looks all around. In my experience some leaders don't end meetings when it's clear they've become a waste of time. Instead they sit there and let the meeting experience a slow, painful death on its own.” *Id.* at 36.

<sup>22</sup> See Michelle Tan, *U.S. Army Forced Into 'Extreme Tiered Readiness,' Chief Says*, DEF. NEWS (Oct. 23, 2013), <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131023/SHOWSCOUT/310230018/Army-Forced-Into-extreme-Tiered-Readiness-Chief-Says> (discussing the Army's current challenge to train and equip Soldiers due to limited resources caused by the recent government shutdown and fiscal crisis and the fallout from sequestration).

<sup>23</sup> See also U.S. DEP'T OF ARMY, DOCTRINE REFERENCE PUB. 7-0, TRAINING UNITS AND DEVELOPING LEADERS para. 3-38 (23 Aug. 2012) (discussing the one-third/two-thirds rule when it comes to allocating time management between leaders and subordinates). “Leaders at all levels use no more than one-third of the training time available for planning and issuing their operation order (OPORD). They allocate two-thirds of the time remaining for subordinates to plan their own training.” *Id.* Although discussed in the context of training, this rule can be applied to time management involving any task.

<sup>24</sup> Rumsfeld is cognizant of this concern because his “first consideration for meetings is whether to call one at all” and warns to avoid the pitfall of believing that “[t]he act of calling a meeting about a problem . . . be confused with actually doing something” about the problem. RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at 27. See also Colonel Jack F. Lane, Jr., *Managing to Lead*, ARMY LAW., Nov. 1994, at 29 (“Managers should not have meetings just for the sake of meetings . . . [and] do not have people attend meetings if the subject is not of concern to them, because this wastes their time.”).

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<sup>15</sup> RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at xiii. However, he is the first to admit, “[R]ules cannot be a substitute for judgment. That's what makes leadership so difficult and truly outstanding leaders so rare. Tough decisions involve weighing not just benefits and risks, but also competing principles and sometime even conflicting rules.” *Id.*

<sup>16</sup> *Id.* at 151–52.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* at 151.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.* at 152.

<sup>19</sup> See also Reid Hastie, *Meetings Are a Matter of Precious Time*, N.Y. TIMES, Jan. 17, 2009, [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/18/jobs/18pre.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/18/jobs/18pre.html?_r=0) (discussing that “[t]he people who call meetings and those who

information flows; but often this enables a meeting to get bogged down or meander into unintended areas.<sup>25</sup> Rumsfeld is right on point when he notes that “[a]t their worst, meetings can be both useless and mind-numbing,”<sup>26</sup> but that “[w]ell managed meetings can be valuable—indeed, indispensable”<sup>27</sup> to the success of an organization.

#### IV. Leaders Must Not Only Learn and Share from the Good, But Also from the Bad

What could have been a great book on leadership is instead only a good one because Rumsfeld chooses not to incorporate more of his personal experiences of what worked and what did not work during his time as SECDEF during the war on terror. The closest he comes to evaluating possible mistakes in leadership is a general statement that some mistakes occurred in Iraq and Afghanistan, but then minimizes any personal leadership fault by stating, “In the fog of war, miscalculations are of course inevitable.”<sup>28</sup> As a generalization, this is a true statement. However, the problem with dismissing any mistakes related to Iraq or Afghanistan so curtly is that some of those decisions had to have occurred outside the “fog of war.” While learning how to lead from the successes of others is valuable, often just as valuable, if not more, is learning from others’ mistakes or missteps. Good leaders learn from their mistakes, but excellent leaders enable *others* to learn from those same mistakes.

Through his book, Rumsfeld had an opportunity to share his mistakes and allow others to learn from them, but he chose not to. Although this book was not intended to focus on Rumsfeld’s time as SECDEF or to examine the war on terror, such a complex and difficult experience from both an intellectual and moral standpoint undoubtedly provided valuable leadership lessons to learn from. One of the only discussions about leadership mistakes involving the war in Iraq is when Rumsfeld offered his resignation to President George W. Bush following the disclosure of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib.<sup>29</sup> However, Rumsfeld uses this example to focus on subordinates’ communication failures concerning the extent of prisoner abuse.<sup>30</sup> By glossing over any

<sup>25</sup> See RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at 28–30. Rumsfeld counsels finding a balance because “[y]ou want those who need to be there to contribute substance to the discussion. But it can also be useful to have people who may not be in a position to directly offer substantive input but will benefit from hearing how and why certain decisions are being reached.” *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> *Id.* at 21.

<sup>27</sup> *Id.* at 22.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.* at 284.

<sup>29</sup> *Id.* at 10.

<sup>30</sup> *Id.* Rumsfeld explains that it was “known” that some prisoners had been abused during the midnight shift at Abu Ghraib and that some photographs had been taken, but were being held as part of the investigation. Once he became aware that some of the photos were going to be aired on television he took the initiative to review them. It was not until this time that he

leadership issues or failures, he misses an opportunity to discuss unintended consequences and how decisions can take on a life of their own in a large organization. The Senate Arms Service Committee released a report on 21 April 2009 that concluded:

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s December 2, 2002, authorization of aggressive interrogation techniques and subsequent interrogation policies and plans approved by senior military and civilian officials conveyed the message that physical pressures and degradation were appropriate treatment for detainees in U.S. military custody. What followed was an erosion in standards dictating that detainees be treated humanely.<sup>31</sup>

The report discusses how detainee treatment that was initially authorized for use only at Guantanamo Bay migrated out through Afghanistan, into Iraq, and eventually implemented in a twisted way at Abu Ghraib by personnel who did not understand what was in fact authorized.<sup>32</sup>

The Department of Defense is like no other organization in that the majority of its members are constantly moving from one unit and duty location to another. This level of turnover creates unique leadership issues not experienced elsewhere. Rumsfeld could have discussed the difficulties that arise when personnel turn over often and how it can create the opportunity for new personnel to incorporate norms from their previous unit into their new unit—norms that were never intended to be implemented somewhere else. Leadership does not occur in a vacuum. Leaders must

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became aware of the “sadistic behavior of a few prison guards wearing U.S. military uniform[s] . . .” He states that “had [he] been told about the abuse the photos depicted when the investigation was first initiated, [he would have] informed the president . . . and been prepared with a more effective response. Instead [they] were blindsided.” *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> STAFF OF S. COMM. ON THE ARMED SERVICES, 110TH CONG., INQUIRY INTO THE TREATMENT OF DETAINEES IN U.S. CUSTODY, at xxix (Comm. Print 2008).

<sup>32</sup> *Id.* at xxiv. See George R. Mastroianni, *Looking Back: Understanding Abu Ghraib*, 43 PARAMETERS: THE U.S. ARMY WAR COLL. Q. 2, 54 (Summer 2013) (outlining two competing narratives for what occurred at Abu Ghraib). One is the “bad apples” narrative, where what occurred was the actions of “a few bad Soldiers whose misconduct was their own invention and not a part of any officially sanctioned method of interrogation.” The second, and more accepted one, is the “bad barrel” narrative, where “the abuses were the result of migration of ‘enhanced interrogation procedures’ from Guantanamo Bay to Iraq.” *Id.* See also Lieutenant General Anthony R. Jones, Army Regulation 15-6 Report of Investigation of the Abu Ghraib Prison and 205th Military Intelligence Brigade (n.d.), available at <http://www.defense.gov/news/aug2004/d20040825fay.pdf> (“Confusion about what interrogation techniques were authorized resulted from the proliferation of guidance and information from other theaters of operation; individual interrogator experiences in other theaters; and, the failure to distinguish between interrogation operations in other theaters and Iraq. This confusion contributed to the occurrence of some of the non-violent and non-sexual abuses.”).

consider the second-, third-, and fourth-order effects before making a decision and understand how that decision is implemented and how it can evolve based on the organization and the environment.<sup>33</sup>

## V. Conflicting Rules

Rumsfeld posits that leadership within a large bureaucracy cannot be accomplished by issuing directives alone, but generally requires consent and persuasion as well.<sup>34</sup> He advocates for the use of the Socratic method, which he implemented most often through memos.<sup>35</sup> During his second stint as SECDEF, he was known for issuing twenty to sixty memos a day to subordinates<sup>36</sup>—what amounted to over 20,000 during his second tenure.<sup>37</sup> These memos became known as snowflakes because of the frequency with which they were issued.<sup>38</sup> Some of these were as short as two lines and provided little guidance to subordinates on what exactly was needed or wanted.<sup>39</sup> For example, one such memo asked about reducing troop commitments, stating that he needed to “understand stability operations better.”<sup>40</sup> However, other memos provided valuable insight. In an October 2002 snowflake known as

the Parade of Horribles, Rumsfeld listed potential problems subordinates needed to consider when planning the war with Iraq, such as the failure to find weapons of mass destruction or the possible ethnic strife among Sunnis, Shia, and Kurds.<sup>41</sup>

Rumsfeld believes that by issuing less orders and instead asking more general questions, leaders allow subordinates to feel they are involved in the process and “own” the changes.<sup>42</sup> In fact, when he did make a specific assertion, he would follow it with a question like “What do you think?” or “Why isn’t this right?”<sup>43</sup> There is debate as to how well his “Socratic method” worked,<sup>44</sup> but it is likely that it did not have the intended effect within the military.

Rumsfeld’s Socratic style of leadership would not be effective in the Army because it is counterintuitive to the way we train our leaders and execute our mission—to fight and win the Nation’s wars.<sup>45</sup> The U.S. Army defines leadership as “the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission and improve the organization.”<sup>46</sup> Leaders at every level of the military must communicate a “clear understanding of what needs to be done and why.”<sup>47</sup> Adopting wholesale Rumsfeld’s Socratic approach in the Army would wreak havoc. A mission statement must clearly define the objective and its purpose for subordinate leaders to properly prepare their units to accomplish the mission.<sup>48</sup> A company commander receiving a mission

<sup>33</sup> See U.S. DEP’T OF ARMY, FIELD MANUAL, 6-22, ARMY LEADERSHIP: COMPETENT, CONFIDENT, AND AGILE para. 9-12 (Oct. 2006) (“Leaders should think through what they can expect to happen because of a plan or course of action. Some decisions may set off a chain of events that are contrary to the desired effects. Intended consequences are the anticipated results of a leader’s decisions and actions. Unintended consequences arise from unplanned events that affect the organization or accomplishment of the mission.”).

<sup>34</sup> RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at 198.

<sup>35</sup> *Id.* at 199. Rumsfeld’s method was to ask “a series of questions that help to move toward the preferred outcome.” Usually when he would make “a specific assertion it tended to be followed by something like ‘Would you let me know what’s wrong with this?’ or ‘Why isn’t this right?’ or ‘What do you think?’” as opposed to issuing a direct order. Rumsfeld states he “could probably count on two hands the number of times [he] issued a direct order other than an explicit command from the President of the United States” over his almost six years as SECDEF from 2001–2006. *Id.*

<sup>36</sup> Keach Hagey, *Rumsfeld Memo Laments Lazy Muslims*, CBS EVENING NEWS (Mar. 6, 2010), [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-501203\\_162-3439642.html](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-501203_162-3439642.html).

<sup>37</sup> RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at 199 (“Contained in those memos and notes was a great many more questions than instructions.”).

<sup>38</sup> Hagey, *supra* note 36.

<sup>39</sup> See, e.g., Memorandum from Sec’y of Def. Donald Rumsfeld (July 18, 2005), available at <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/4104/2005-07-18%20Re%20Mobilizing%20Moderate%20Muslims.pdf>. The memo, with the subject line Mobilizing Moderate Muslims, consisted of one sentence: “We need a plan to mobilize moderate Muslims now—in the U.S. and around the world.” *Id.*

<sup>40</sup> Memorandum from Sec’y of Def. Donald Rumsfeld (May 13, 2005), available at <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/4108/2005-05-13%20Re%20Troop%20Commitments.pdf>. The memo, with the subject line Troop Commitments, consisted of one line: “I’ve got to talk to somebody about pulling down troop commitments so they don’t last forever, and understanding stability operations better.” *Id.*

<sup>41</sup> Memorandum from Sec’y of Def. Donald Rumsfeld (Oct. 15, 2002), available at <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/310/Re%20Parade%20of%20Horribles%2010-15-2002.pdf#search=2002-10%20iraq>. Other potential problems Rumsfeld listed included: “[i]f U.S. seeks UN approval, it could fail, and without a UN mandate, potential coalition partners may be unwilling to participate;” “Syria and Iran could decide to support Iraq, complicating the war;” “U.S. could fail to find Saddam Hussein;” “[r]ather than having the post-Saddam effort require 2 to 4 years, it could take 8 to 10 years, thereby absorbing U.S. leadership, military and financial resources;” “[r]ecruiting and financing for terrorist networks could take a dramatic upward turn from successful information operations by our enemies, positioning the U.S. as anti-Muslim;” and “Iraq could successfully best us in public relations and persuade the world that the war is against Muslims.” *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at 198.

<sup>43</sup> See Hagey, *supra* note 36.

<sup>44</sup> BOB WOODWARD, STATE OF DENIAL: BUSH AT WAR, PART III, at 34 (2006) (noting that Director of Joint Staff could not properly track all the memos issued by Rumsfeld that impacted the Joint Chiefs and the Joint Staff).

<sup>45</sup> ARMY MISSION STATEMENT, <http://www.army.mil/info/organization> (last visited Feb. 21, 2014).

<sup>46</sup> U.S. DEP’T OF ARMY, DOCTRINE PUB. 6-22, ARMY LEADERSHIP 1 (1 Aug. 2012) [hereinafter ADP 6-22].

<sup>47</sup> *Id.* at 7.

<sup>48</sup> See U.S. DEP’T OF ARMY, TACTICS, TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES 5-0.1, COMMANDER AND STAFF OFFICER GUIDE para. 4-65 (14 Sept. 2011) (“A mission statement is a short sentence or paragraph that describes the organization’s essential task (or tasks) and purpose—a clear statement of the action to be taken and the reason for doing so. The mission statement

statement that states, “Take hill X” followed with, “Why isn’t this right?” would cause confusion and lack the required clarity of what needed to be done and why.

Another reason Rumsfeld’s Socratic leadership style may not have had the desired effect is because military personnel are trained to react quickly to inquiries from superior officers. A Rumsfeld rule points out that subordinates respond to the urgent issues—the boss’s need—to the detriment of the important issues—the primary mission of the unit or staff.<sup>49</sup> Simply scattering snowflakes with aplomb inside the Department of Defense would not seem to provide a clear mission statement and direction for the organization, especially when many of the memos are nothing more than thoughts or questions without context or a commander’s intent.<sup>50</sup>

## VI. Why These Rules Matter to Judge Advocates

Leadership skills are the unifying element of combat power.<sup>51</sup> Such skills are a force multiplier that every Army leader is capable of honing. Leadership enables and enhances other elements of combat power—information, mission command, movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, and protection—by motivating unit personnel, giving focus to the mission, and ensuring that resources are properly allocated so that units can accomplish their assigned tasks.<sup>52</sup> The Army does not believe that leadership is solely an innate ability that one either has or does not have.<sup>53</sup> Instead, the Army considers leadership to be a skill that can be nurtured and developed in anyone.<sup>54</sup>

Judge advocates straddle two professional spheres—one of the law and the other of the profession of arms—both of which are demanding and require specialized skills that are perishable if not properly maintained and improved upon.

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contains the elements of who, what, when, where, and why, but seldom specifies how.”).

<sup>49</sup> RUMSFELD, *supra* note 1, at 14 (“Don’t let the urgent crowd out the important.”).

<sup>50</sup> See JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, JOINT PUB. 3-0, JOINT OPERATIONS, at II-8 (11 Aug. 2011) (defining commander’s intent as “the commander’s clear and concise expression of what the force must do and the conditions the force must establish to accomplish the mission. It is a succinct description of the commander’s visualization of the entire operation and what the commander wants to accomplish. It provides focus to the staff and helps subordinate and supporting commanders act to achieve the commander’s desired results without further orders once the operation begins, even when the operation does not unfold as planned.”). See also WOODWARD *supra* note 44, at 34 (stating Rumsfeld would send snowflakes to anyone in the Pentagon regardless of rank or position, which created confusion for the Joint Staff when trying to respond).

<sup>51</sup> U.S. DEP’T OF ARMY, DOCTRINE REFERENCE PUB., 3-0, UNIFIED LAND OPERATIONS, COMBAT POWER 3-1 (16 May 2012).

<sup>52</sup> ADP 6-22, *supra* note 46, at 1.

<sup>53</sup> *Id.*

<sup>54</sup> *Id.*

This means that as leaders in the Army, judge advocates have a responsibility to maintain and develop their leadership skills in the same way they train to develop their skills for the courtroom. Reading and discussing books about leadership is one way for judge advocates to draw out new approaches and perspectives that will enable them to tackle future challenges.<sup>55</sup>

## VII. Conclusion

*Rumsfeld’s Rules*, despite some of its flaws, is a leadership book that judge advocates at every level will benefit from reading. Rumsfeld has effectively blended his unique personal experiences from the military, private sector, and government into an effective style of leadership worth examining, even if all the methods might not be worth adopting. The lessons he learned can provide valuable insight for judge advocates who must advise and interact with senior leaders and can enhance judge advocates’ ability to be force multipliers for their commanders.

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<sup>55</sup> See U.S. DEP’T OF ARMY, PAM. 600-3, COMMISSIONED OFFICER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER MANAGEMENT 39-3 (1 Feb. 2010) (noting judge advocates should “dedicate time to professional reading to gain a historical perspective on tactical, legal and leadership challenges”).