

# Technical Perspective

by Chief Warrant Officer 5 David J. Bassili  
Chief Warrant Officer of the MI Corps  
U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence



Springtime greetings to you all from the high desert mountains of southeastern Arizona. This time of year is increasingly important to many of our warrant officers, as it signals the closure of the My Board File application that supports the annual promotion selection board. If you have not already done so, ensure you certify your files and complete any administrative actions, including any complete the record officer evaluation reports and updated Department of the Army photos, no later than 8 April 2020. Best of luck to all who are being considered by the board.



This is also the time of year when many of you will begin the summer permanent change of station move cycle. Fresh out of the inaugural run of the Army Talent Alignment Process (ATAP), many will be reporting to their top choice assignment. ATAP is an exciting change in the Army's transformation from an industrial to an information age personnel management system. As this transition continues to occur, I remind everyone that it is not going to work perfectly for every mover or every unit and that receipt of assignment orders is still the closest thing to a guarantee you can expect. I also think it is extremely important that everyone understand a few points that are not changing within this system.

First, the Army will remain a requirements-focused organization. Both forecasted and unforecasted manning requirements will always drive the assignment environment. Unforecasted requirements not only disrupt individual Soldier preferences in the market but also unit preferences and requisitions. You and a unit may have reached consensus on number 1 picks, but an unforecasted requirement for a unit higher on the Active Component Manning Guidance may have forced Human Resources Command to remove your number 1 choice from the market to meet the unforecasted requirement.

Second, while the Army is giving you greater choice in choosing your next assignment, the choice comes with the possibility for increased risks to your career progression and promotion potential. There is a growing indication that many officers are making geographic and like-unit decisions as opposed to career-enhancing decisions as their top assignment choices. I am not suggesting that Hawaii and

Florida are career enders, but I am suggesting that not seeking positions of increased responsibility and professional growth could affect your promotion potential. Take for example a chief warrant officer 3 with the military occupational specialty 350F (All-Source Intelligence Technician) and previous assignments within a military intelligence brigade-theater (MIB-T), National Ground Intelligence Center, and another MIB-T. This 350F then chooses to preference another U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) assignment higher than a U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) or Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) assignment during his/her upcoming move cycle. A promotion board "COULD" view this 350F as successful only within INSCOM assignments, with limited potential outside of INSCOM. The same scenario could also occur for those staying within FORSCOM, special operations forces, or TRADOC. Performance is normally messaged as the number 1 measure for promotion, so the above example may not always apply for a consistent top performer (Most Qualified). I cannot stress enough the importance of warrant officers seeking diverse assignment paths to expand their base of knowledge and experiences. Personally, I am a huge supporter of this new process, but there are many factors you should consider when making your assignment preferences and assessing the potential impacts of those choices, both personally and professionally.

The topic of assessing factors and impacts lends itself to the theme of this quarter's *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin*—Intelligence Analysis. As one of our warfighting function's four core competencies, intelligence analysis is the function we provide that enables a commander's decision making. As stated in the newest version of ATP 2-33.4, *Intelligence Analysis*, both single-source and all-source analysts participate in intelligence analysis. This is not just a "Foxtrot" mission. Much like your individual role in assessing factors and evaluating choices for a future assignment, intelligence analysis is about evaluating all available data relative to an enemy or threat and the mission of your unit in a timely manner to enable the commander to make the right decision. Military intelligence

analysts perform this role by developing a deep understanding of the enemy/threat, all aspects of the terrain in a given area of operation/interest, and both intelligence and operational doctrine. Applying analytical tradecraft is both an art and a science. The science comes from the use of applying structured analytical techniques (SATs) such as intelligence preparation of the battlefield or more advanced SATs such as analysis of competing hypotheses. The art is achieved through experience and implementation of the appropriate SAT for the right mission or the right time, combined with the individual analyst's understanding of the deep enemy/threat, terrain, and doctrine. Understanding, acknowledging, and attempting to counter your individual cognitive biases further contributes to the art and science of analysis.

The greatest challenge to effective analysis is the ability to process and exploit the growing amount of data we

can access. Technological advances such as artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms will greatly alleviate the cognitive burden of processing and exploiting these large data stores, but they will continue to require analysts to apply their critical thinking skills to assess the data. Even with these new capabilities, analysts and their technology will very likely not have access to all the data they need. This is when analysts apply judgments of probability based upon all available, relevant data and their experience and knowledge—the art and science of analysis.

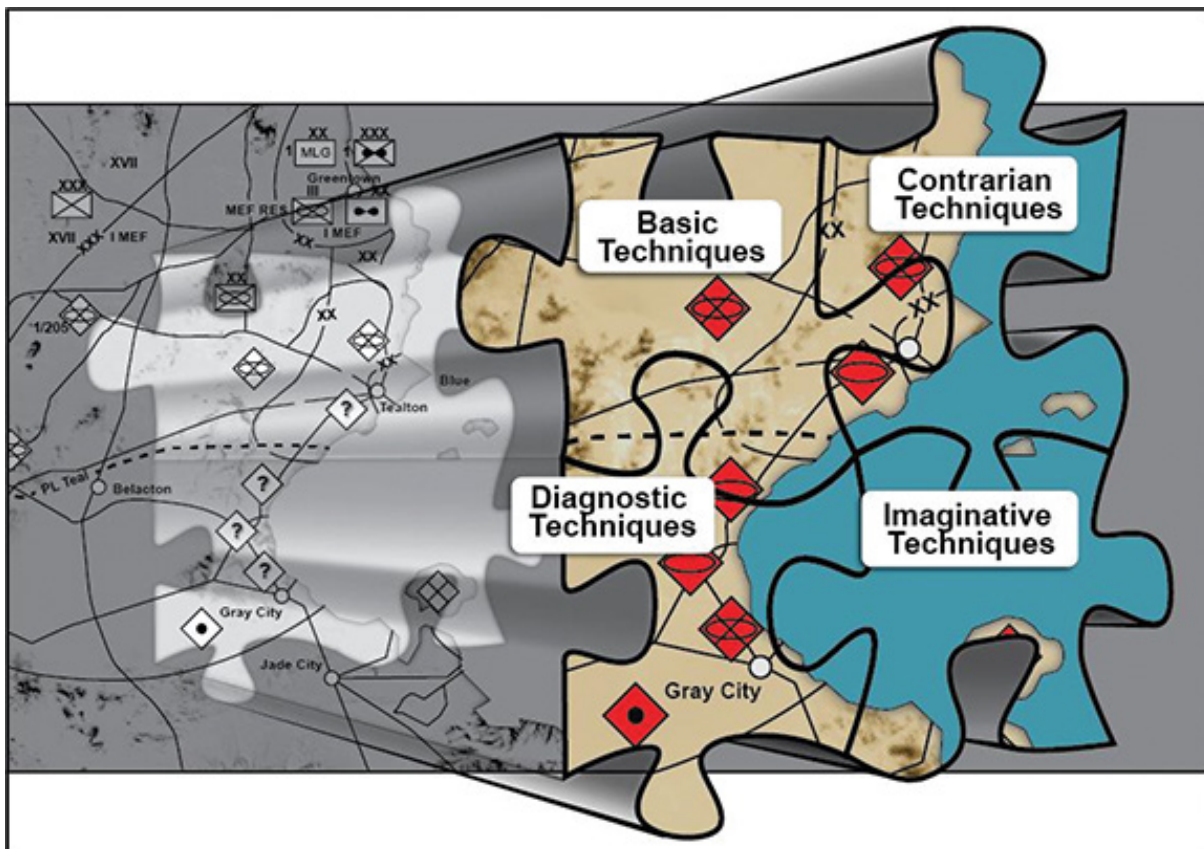
I encourage all military intelligence professionals to give ATP 2-33.4 a few good reads, become aware of your biases, and test out a few of the SATs when you need to make a timely, relevant, and important decision. Thank you all for what you do for our Army each and every day. 🌟

### Always Out Front!

#### Structured Analytical Techniques

Structured analysis assists analysts in ensuring their analytic framework—the foundation upon which they form their analytical judgments—is as solid as possible. It entails separating and organizing the elements of a problem and reviewing the information systematically. Structured analytic techniques are categorized as the following:

- ◆ Basic—provide insight that supports problem solving.
- ◆ Diagnostic—make analysis more transparent.
- ◆ Advanced:
  - ◆ Contrarian—challenge current thinking.
  - ◆ Imaginative—develop new insights.



Applying analytic techniques to understand the operational environment