WAR STORIES

REBUILDING CONFIDENCE IN AMERICA'S MILITARY INSTITUTIONS
THE SITUATION IN 2008
AMERICA WAS ENGAGED IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR
AMERICANS WERE IN COMBAT IN IRAQ & AFGHANISTAN
WINNING ON THE BATTLEFIELD
LOSING THE WAR OF IDEAS
HOW CAN A MAN IN A CAVE OUT-COMMUNICATE THE UNITED STATES?
AMERICA HAD LOST CONFIDENCE IN MILITARY MEDICINE
DOD WAS PREPARING TO CONDUCT THE FIRST TRIALS AT GUANTANAMO
NEW YORK TIMES CHARGES PENTAGON WITH PROPOGANDA
LOST
NUCLEAR MISSILE PARTS
DISCOVERED IN TAIWAN
DISCOVERED SERVICE MEMBER REMAINS CREMATED AT ANIMAL FACILITY
ACCUSATIONS OF MISMANAGEMENT AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETARY
RUSSIAN FORCES INVADED GEORGIA
TEXAS POLICE RAID ZION RANCH
PUBLIC AFFAIRS UNDER INVESTIGATION
COMMUNICATIONS FUNCTIONS
DISCONNECTED & UNCOORDINATED
Assessment

- Public support for men and women in uniform remained strong
- Confidence in the Pentagon institutions was low – and falling
- Public Affairs was under siege and had retreated to tactical – reactionary posture
- Success was measured “day to day”
- Coordination among public affairs voices was nonexistent
- The voice of the Pentagon had lost it’s credibility
- Senior official “DoD public affairs is rudderless & ineffective”
Secretary’s Guidance
• Focus on our primary audience
• Tell the truth
• Admit our mistakes
• Don’t make promises we can’t deliver
Climbed out of the foxhole:

- Re-established a strategic planning capability
- Aligned and synchronized efforts of all communicators
- Partnered with supporting/supported agency leaders
- Addressed the Propaganda charges
- Reached out to news media leadership
- Engaged emerging and non-traditional media
- Expanded direct engagement across sphere of interest
- Addressed the morale and welfare of the PA force
DoD Principles of Strategic Communication
Strategic Communication...

The synchronization of actions, images, and words to achieve a desired effect.
Leadership-Driven. Leaders must decisively engage and drive the Strategic Communication process.

Credible. Perception of truthfulness and respect between all parties.
Principles of Strategic Communication

• **Understanding.** Deep comprehension of attitudes, cultures, identities, behavior, history, perspectives and social systems.

• **Dialogue.** Multi-faceted exchange of ideas to promote understanding and build relationships.
Principles of Strategic Communication

- **Pervasive.** Every action, image, and word sends a message.
- **Unity of Effort.** Integrated and coordinated, vertically and horizontally.
- **Results-Based.** Actions to achieve specific outcomes in pursuit of a well-articulated endstate.
Principles of Strategic Communication

- **Responsive.** Right audience, right message, right time, and right place.

- **Continuous.** Diligent ongoing research, analysis, planning, execution, and assessment that feeds planning and action.
Lessons Learned

• All communication must be strategic
• Strategic Communication is a leadership function
• It must be embedded in business strategy
• Influence is name of the game
• Media isn't the only thing, but it can be everything
• Use every tool, every channel, every opportunity
• Synchronize all communicators and all channels
• Listen, understand, know audiences
• Act first and communicate first - Imagery and speed win
• Credibility and legitimacy are paramount
• Research, assess and measure
• Be prepared for “casualties”