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Organizing to Support Wounded, Ill, and Injured Marine Veterans

Thomas Allan Gorry
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Thomas Allan Gorry

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Review Committee

Dr. Joseph Barbeau, Committee Chairperson, Management Faculty
Dr. Marcia Steinhauer, Committee Member, Management Faculty
Dr. Sheryl Kristensen, University Reviewer, Management Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2018

Abstract

Organizing to Support Wounded, Ill, and Injured Marine Veterans

by

Thomas Allan Gorry

MS, National Security Strategy, National Defense University, 2005

MBA, Webster University, 1993

MSA, Central Michigan University, 1989

BSBA, University of North Carolina, 1984

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

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Abstract

As the major combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan fade from headline news, the effect remains a national concern for the 2.6 million post-9/11 veterans. Their hardships form the basis for this qualitative case study, which analyzed the organizational change effort at the Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR). This organization, specifically formed by the U.S. Marine Corps, instituted the necessary programs to meet the needs of Marine wounded warriors. However, the needs of these warriors are different now, and the WWR must adapt to remain relevant. The transformative change model presented by Anderson and Anderson formed the conceptual framework for this case study, which explored the central research question of how the leaders of an organization designed for a special mission effectively transform their operations to respond to new demands in a complex environment. The results from this case study, denoted by 8 themes, were derived from the analysis of the transcripts from 19 interviews conducted with representatives of the WWR. The 19 participants represented the diverse workforce of the WWR and were located at its sections across the country. To identify the emergent themes, structural and pattern coding methods were used as the data analysis process. Two themes from the data analysis were: developing a strategic communication plan and advancing the relevance of the WWR. The results from the case study were intended to help the leaders of the WWR realign their operations to achieve their new strategic objectives. This study is significant because it assessed the organizational change effort at the WWR to gain knowledge about veterans that may promote positive social change by informing the broader community of veteran support agencies about the urgent needs of the post-9/11 veterans.

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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family and fellow Marines. I want to offer a special note of gratitude to my wife, Kim, for her patience, understanding, and most of all her continued support. I also want to thank our four children, Tony, Matthew, Sarah, and Mary, for their encouragement and for being the source of my inspiration. I am proud of your many accomplishments and hope that I can serve as a role model for your continued success. I am elated to welcome my daughter-in-law, Amie, into our family. I am blessed to have my grandchildren, Scoute and Mckinnon, as a wonderful addition to my life.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my many friends and fellow Marines, who serve our Nation and the Marine Corps with distinction. It has been truly an honor to serve with you for the past 32 years. I also dedicate this work and give special thanks to the Veterans who sacrificed so much in the defense of freedom. I truly hope my work can contribute to your medical support and transition assistance. You have my sincere gratitude and utmost respect.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA; 2017) recently released its inspection, *Evaluation of the Veterans Health Administration Veterans Crisis Line*, which named serious deficiencies in multiple areas of the operation of their Veterans Crisis Line. The main problem noted in this report included an inability to meet the organizational demands for responding to more than 500,000 calls per year. A second major problem cited in the report was insufficient training for the Veterans Crisis Line staff to respond to the needs of veterans and family members (VA, 2017a). Among the more serious deficiencies listed in the report were multiple instances of urgent need response failures that resulted in missed opportunities for providing crisis help to veterans in need.

Despite some significant improvements to veteran's access to VA care and benefits over the past 10 years, these inspection results convey the magnitude and complexity of the problems confronting veteran support agencies across the nation. The U.S. Marine Corps' veteran support command, the Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR), is included in this grouping of organizations challenged to meet the difficult demands of an increasing veteran population. The purpose of this research study was to analyze the transformational change program at the WWR as this military command reorganizes to better meet the distinct needs of these Marine veterans.

Chapter 1 will contain my assessment of the background and the main problems addressed in this study. In this chapter, I will present the central research question and

sub-questions examined in the study and explain the conceptual framework, the data collection instruments, and the data analysis process. Additionally, the purpose, scope, assumptions, limitations, and significance of the study will be described. I will conclude the chapter with a summary and transition to Chapter 2.

Background of the Study

In March 2007, in response to critical media reports of deficiencies in the provision of outpatient care at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, President George W. Bush signed the Executive Order 13426, which established the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors and founded the Task Force on Returning Global War on Terror (GWOT) Heroes (Hull & Priest, 2007; Roberts, 2007). Referred to as the Dole-Shalala Commission, this senior executive committee was charged to conduct a comprehensive review of the medical care and transition assistance that was being provided to America's returning GWOT service members (Branigin, 2007; Gates, 2014).

According to their final report, the Dole-Shalala Commission visited 23 Department of Defense (DOD), VA, and private-sector treatment facilities (Dole & Shalala, 2007). In addition, the commission met with health care professionals, injured service members and their families, and the managers of military and veterans' programs to gain first-hand knowledge of the issues (Dole & Shalala, 2007). The commission also read the responses from more than 1,700 wounded veterans to a national survey and reviewed more than 1,250 letters from veterans regarding their medical care concerns (Dole & Shalala, 2007). Moreover, the commission analyzed the recommendations and

resources of previous commissions and task forces on wounded warriors (Dole & Shalala, 2007). Based on these various forms of research, the commission discovered significant inconsistencies between inpatient and outpatient care as well as between the separate DOD and VA health care and disability systems (Dole & Shalala, 2007). Consequently, the commission members recommended fundamental and broad changes in the care management and the disability compensation systems (Dole & Shalala, 2007).

The Dole-Shalala Commission recognized that making significant improvements “requires a sense of urgency and strong leadership” (Dole & Shalala, 2007, p. 4). In their final report, the commission members made several recommendations to resolve the main problems with the medical care and disability systems by concentrating on better ways to:

- *Serve* the multiple needs of injured service members and their families,
- *Support* them in their recovery and return to active duty or to their communities, and
- *Simplify* the delivery of medical care and disability programs (Dole & Shalala, 2007).

Their objective was to create a patient-centered system (Dole & Shalala, 2007, p. 4). In addition, these representatives recommended a complete restructuring of the disability determination process, noting that each branch of the armed forces would retain the authority to determine the suitability for continued active military service for its members (Dole & Shalala, 2007, p. 6).

Subsequently, the U.S. Congress directed the DOD to form the Recovering Warrior Task Force (RWTF) to assess the effectiveness of the programs and policies

developed and implemented by the DOD and by each of the military departments (RWTF Congressional Charter, November 20, 2012). In the annual report submitted in September 2011, the RWTF conveyed that despite the many excellent practices emerging from every effort serving recovering warriors, there were significant disparities in the recovering warrior programs administered by the military services. In addition, the RWTF reported that approximately 1 million servicemembers will leave the military and enter civilian life over the next several years. A majority of these veterans will have medical care needs that “will differ from those of the other 99 percent of the citizenry that did not serve and 42 percent of whom do not use VA health services” (RWTF Annual Report, 2014, p. 8). The RWTF warned that this vulnerable population would present a considerable reintegration challenge to civilian communities.

In April 2007, the Marine Corps sought to address the lack of standardization among the various medical treatment facilities and administrative support agencies caring for inpatient and outpatient Marine casualties, as reported in consecutive Manpower Information Systems Support Activity (MISSA) audits (MISSA Audit Report, January 17, 2006; MISSA Audit Report, January 12, 2007). Conducted in January 2006 and January 2007, the audits revealed that the unpredictable and undetermined nature of the medical evacuation process for injured Marines was resulting in accounting, entitlement, and compensation discrepancies (MISSA Audit Report, January 17, 2006; MISSA Audit Report, January 12, 2007). Consequently, to more effectively track, support, and assist wounded Marine veterans, the Marine Corps established the WWR. The WWR, headquartered in Quantico, Virginia, serves as the Marine Corps’ principal organization

responsible for executing the congressionally mandated wounded warrior recovery programs (Flass, 2015).

As a note of clarity, the Marine Corps' WWR is a distinct military organization. It is not associated with the Wounded Warrior Project, the nonprofit, nation-wide civilian organization established in 2003 to serve wounded warriors (Hundley, 2013; Oprihory, 2016). The Wounded Warrior Project was founded by a group of veterans and sponsors to assist post-9/11 wounded warriors in immediate need (Lopez, 2011; Strupp, 2007). This veteran support organization also helps provide rehabilitation for wounded military veterans (Strupp, 2007). This non-profit organization raises money and awareness for veterans who have been severely injured during military service (Strupp, 2007). The Wounded Warrior Project raises money through personal and corporate charitable donations (Strupp, 2017). In 2016, the Wounded Warrior Project came under investigation for inappropriate spending practices. This resulted in the firing of the CEO and the COO (Reid & Janisch, 2016).

Since its formation, the WWR has developed a broad range of support programs to assist the wounded, ill, and injured Marines and enable them to either return-to-duty or transition-from-the-service (Lanham, 2007). Many of these transitional support programs were in response to the adverse medical and transition experiences reported by injured Marines (WWR, 2016b). Despite many advancements in veteran support, the WWR is at a strategic reflection point. The command must now compete for resources and confront changes in its supported population. Consequently, the WWR must reorganize its operations to better support the noncombat ill and injured patients, while enhancing their

capacity to meet the demands of the combat veterans in times of war; this organization must transform to remain relevant (WWR, 2016b). Effecting organizational change, however, is extremely difficult. Beer and Nohria stated, “The brutal fact is that about 70% of all change initiatives fail” (p. 133).

The transformational change program planned by the WWR served as the basis for this qualitative research study. The WWR reorganization is designed to better align the resources and programs to more effectively provide support to the combat-wounded and the noncombat ill and injured Marines and veterans (Commanding Officer, WWR, 2017). In this qualitative case study, I examined the challenges of leading organizational change from a multidimensional perspective that incorporates both the external strategic drivers of change and the internal dynamics of change. By using a systematic approach to analyze the transformational change program at a military organization, the results of this research study added to the body of knowledge of change management. The extant literature on organizational change does not sufficiently address military organizations; therefore, this study was needed to address this gap. The findings of this research study also provided relevant information to the community of veteran support organizations.

Problem Statement

According to the data presented in the *Profile of Post-9/11 Veterans Report*, this group of veterans represents the youngest cohort served by the VA (2017). This VA report revealed that compared to their counterparts, a higher percentage of post-911 veterans had a service-connected disability, relied on the VA medical system, had no earned income, had no life insurance, used food stamps, and lived in poverty.

Additionally, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), published a report in 2014 that showed that the three main challenges among this cohort were suicide, unemployment, and disability compensation and pension delays by the VA (IAVA Member Survey Report, 2014). Meeting these complex medical and transitional assistance needs served as the general problem I addressed in this study.

The WWR was formed to support the complex needs of the more than 32,000 wounded, ill, and injured post-9/11 Marines; however, due to recent changes to their staffing and financial resources, their programs are in jeopardy (WWR, 2016a). In addition, the demands of the veterans have changed. Consequently, the WWR developed a strategic plan to restructure and reprioritize their support programs (WWR, 2016a). This transformational effort served as the specific research problem I addressed in this qualitative case study. Meeting the medical care and transition support needs of these wounded, ill, and injured Marines contributes to combating the national veteran crisis, which is evident by the high rates of suicides among the military services and the large numbers of homeless veterans.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to better understand the challenges associated with transformational change to enable the WWR to more effectively and efficiently meet the complex medical care and transitional needs of the post-9/11 Marine veterans. In this research study, I explored the process of executing a major operational and cultural change program using the WWR as the case study. Through my research, I gained a more thorough knowledge of the organization and their transformational change

program. I used personal interviews with the leaders and staff members of this military command and a review of their official reports to obtain the research data. For this qualitative case study, the WWR served as the unit of analysis and the bounded system, the two distinguishing attributes of this research design (Merriam, 2009).

Research Questions

The central research question for this qualitative research study was: How do the leaders of an organization designed for a special mission effectively transform their operations to respond to new demands in a complex environment?

Sub-questions 1: What were the internal and external drivers for the organizational change effort at the WWR?

Sub-questions 2: What were the significant leadership challenges and risks associated with effecting the transformational change effort at the WWR?

Sub-questions 3: What were the managerial lessons from the WWR organizational change experience that would be applicable to the broader veteran support community?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this qualitative research study centered on the multidimensional approach to transformational change presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010). In regards to organizational change, Anderson and Anderson (2010) differentiated transformational change, from developmental change and transitional change. The objective of implementing a transformational change program is major reform in the content, the people, and the process of change (Anderson & Anderson,

2010). The scope of this qualitative research study was to analyze the transformational change program at the WWR from a multidimensional perspective, using this conceptual approach with an emphasis on these three interconnected elements. To gain a more comprehensive review into each of these areas, I used the theories of several prominent scholars in the discipline of change management to supplement this model. Since the WWR is a military organization, regarding it as a system rather than a business was more appropriate. Therefore, my study included the organizational systems theory of Rolf P. Lynton.

The conceptual framework for this qualitative case study was based on the organizational change theories of Kurt Lewin and John Kotter and the cultural change model derived by Edgar Schein. Lewin's change theory, comprised of an unfreezing–changing–refreezing process, is widely regarded as the foundational change management approach that serves as the premise for many modern change management models (Cummings, Bridgman, & Brown, 2016). Schein (2017) referred to the unfreezing phase as creating a cognitive disconfirmation that serves as the motivation to change. Schein regarded the unlearning and relearning phases as the critical points for transformative change. The eight-step process for creating organizational change developed by Kotter (2012) was grounded on Lewin's change theory. These scholars stressed the challenge associated with transformational change and emphasized the need for a prolonged, multidimensional process driven by high-quality leadership.

My analysis in this qualitative research study centered on these two important factors. Specifically, I examined the effects that the culture of the Marine Corps has on

the decisions regarding the change program at the WWR and the importance of leadership in promoting that effort. In addition, I used the change process developed by Kotter to assess the organizational challenges that confront leaders when executing transformative change.

According to Lynton (1969), leaders of organizational systems in turbulent environments have the responsibility to not only gauge the need for change but also to guide the differentiation in the system. This research study included a review of the changing veteran support environment and the strategic decisions made by the leaders at the WWR in response to these continual dynamics. In addition, I assessed the integration methods adopted by the WWR in two essential areas: (a) between the command and its military and veteran populations and (b) between the different components within their organization (Lynton, 1968).

Nature of the Study

Merriam (2009) stated that a qualitative case study focuses on a specific program, event, situation, or phenomenon, describing it in a particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic manner that enables an in-depth analysis of that particular case. The nature of qualitative case study research supports a rich descriptive narrative of that case, which provides a comprehensive understanding of the case and an interpretation of its context (Stake, 2006). These defining characteristics of the qualitative case study distinguish it from the other qualitative research methods (Merriam, 2009). The ongoing organizational change effort at the WWR represents a major transformation that served as the unit of analysis and bounded system for my qualitative case study. This reorganization process is

designed to better align the resources and demands of the WWR to more effectively provide support to their combat-wounded and noncombat ill and injured Marines (WWR, 2016a). Given the special assignment of the WWR, the results of this qualitative case study provide relevant information that might contribute to the national veteran support efforts.

Stake (1995) distinguished between an intrinsic case study (the case itself serves as the primary, not secondary interest) and an instrumental case study (the research on a case can gain understanding about something else; p. 3). Based on these definitions, my research study was an instrumental case study in which I examined the transformative change effort at the WWR using the organizational change models developed by Kotter and Schein with a concentration on the leadership and cultural elements.

In this type of research, it is important to understand the perspectives of those involved in the phenomenon of interest, to uncover the complexities of human behavior in a conceptual framework, and to present a holistic interpretation of what is happening. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 244)

Therefore, to develop a comprehensive understanding of the change program at the WWR, I used a purposeful sampling data collection approach that recruited the senior leaders and staff members at the headquarters and the component units across the country for semi-structured, personal interviews.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) contended that “the main purpose of an interview is to obtain special information” (p. 108). For this qualitative research study, the special information best came from the people directly involved in the strategic change program

at the WWR. The WWR has personnel assigned to the military medical centers located in Bethesda, MD, San Diego, CA, and Landstuhl, Germany (Campbell, 2016a). In addition, the WWR has two component battalions: (a) Wounded Warrior Battalion-East located at Camp Lejeune, NC, and (b) Wounded Warrior-West located at Camp Pendleton, CA (Campbell, 2016a). The leaders and staff members at these locations represented the primary candidates for the purposeful sample for this qualitative case. Seidman (2013) asserted that “maximum variation sampling provides the most effective basic strategy for selecting participants for interview studies” (p. 56).

My research strategy included a field test to refine my interview questions and protocol. In the field test, I used a separate purposeful sample of professors with a knowledge of dissertation preparation. These professors were instrumental in providing scholarly expertise and guidance. Galletta (2013) stated “Formulating questions and ordering them requires considerable time and trial and error through the field-testing of the protocol, which is the set of interview questions guiding the interview” p. 45). The field test served as a training opportunity as well as an effective way to improve the interview protocol, recruiting procedures, and analysis techniques. Consequently, the field test should have increased the credibility and trustworthiness of my qualitative research study (Patton, 2015; Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

To promote a greater depth of understanding and gain information about different aspects of the transformational change program at the WWR, I combined multiple data collection sources (Maxwell, 2013). Specifically, I used semi-structured, personal interviews and government document reviews to present a broad awareness of the

complexities associated with the transformational change program under review. In addition, I integrated several data analysis techniques to develop a more comprehensive research study and enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research results (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Being able to report that you engaged in the systematic and conscientious search for alternate themes, divergent patterns, and rival explanations enhances credibility, not to mention that it is simple good analytical practice, and the very essence of being rigorous in analysis. (Patton, 2015, p. 653)

The data collection and analysis methods I used supported the research purpose for this qualitative case study. The selected processes were designed to answer the central research questions through interpersonal exchanges with the study participants. The semi-structured interviews served as the primary method to capture the opinions, experiences, and perspectives of the senior leaders and staff members to produce a detailed report of the transformational change effort at the WWR. Galletta (2013) noted that “Characteristic of its unique flexibility, the semi-structured interview is sufficiently structured to address specific dimensions of your research question while also leaving space for participants to offer new meaning to the topic of study” (p.1). My research strategy for this qualitative study aligned with the findings in the literature review and addressed the important social change issues associated with enhancing the support for wounded warriors and veterans.

Definitions

I am providing the following definitions of terms and concepts used throughout this study to clarify their meanings and enhance reader understanding:

Adaptive leadership: The practice of mobilizing people to tackle complex problems and adapt to changing environments (Northouse, 2016, p. 257).

Agile organization: An organization that designs a culture that is able to continuously change, adapt, and learn (Thames & Webster, 2009).

Business environment: “The business environment describes the external context in which all organizations operate” (Harrison, 2014, p. 21).

Change leader: A leader who has the responsibility and decision-making authority for designing and implementing a transformational change plan (Anderson & Anderson, 2010).

Complex adaptive systems: “Describes systems that are dynamic, and adaptable, much like those found in nature” (Edmondson, 2012, p. 23).

Conscious change leader: Leaders who have a profound understanding and an expanded awareness that enables them to expertly lead people through the process of change to create a future that will enable their organization to succeed in an ever-increasingly competitive business environment (Anderson & Anderson, 2010, p. 4).

Culture: “The culture of a group can be defined as the accumulated shared learning of that group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration; which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (Schein, 2017, p. 6).

Culture of accountability: “A culture of accountability is a culture in which people take accountability to think and act in the manner necessary to achieve the needed result” (Connors & Smith, 2011, p. 87).

Influencer: “A leader with the capacity to create changes in human behavior in order to achieve important results” (Grenny, Patterson, Maxfield, McMillan, & Switzler, 2013, p. 6).

Innovation: “An innovation is not so much the adoption of objects by individuals as it is the acceptance by (people in) an organization” (Lynton, 1968, p. 398).

Insight: “An insight is the combination of two or more pieces of information or data in a unique way that leads to the creation of new value” (Horwath, 2014, p. 25).

Leadership: “Leadership is a set of processes that creates organizations in the first place or adapts them to significant changing circumstances” (Kotter, 2012, p. 28).

Management: “Management is a set of processes that can keep a complicated system of people and technology running smoothly” (Kotter, 2012, p. 28).

Operation Enduring Freedom: The official name used by the U.S. government for the war in Afghanistan, which began on October 7, 2001 and ended on December 28, 2014 (Hooker & Collins, 2015).

Operation Iraqi Freedom The official name used by the U.S. government for the war in Iraq, which began on March 20, 2003 and ended on December 18, 2011 (Hooker & Collins, 2015).

Organizational constitution: “It is a formal document that states the company’s guiding principles and behaviors” (Edmonds, 2014, p. xv).

Patient-centered health care: Health care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values and ensures that patient values guide all clinical decisions (The Institute of Medicine, 2001, p. 7).

Post-9/11 veteran: The cohort of veterans who have served since 11 September 2001 (VA, 2017).

Strategic intent: A definition without precision of the future of the organization (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994).

Strategic thinking: “Strategic thinking is the ability to generate insights that lead to competitive advantage” (Horwath, 2014, p. 25).

Strategy: “Strategy is the intelligent application of limited resources through a unique system of activities to outperform the competition in serving customers” (Horwath, 2014, p. 14).

System: “A system is an interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something” (Meadows, 2008, p. 11).

Transformational change: “Transformation is a radical shift of strategy, structure, systems, processes, or technology, so significant that it requires a shift of culture, behavior, and mindset to implement successfully and sustained over time” (Anderson & Anderson, 2010, p. 60).

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA): The federal agency responsible for providing a wide range of programs and services to Service members and veterans (Title 38, U.S. Code, Veterans’ Benefits).

Value-based leaders: Leaders who seek to inspire and motivate through their actions and example in their pursuit of the greater good and positive change (Kraemer, 2011).

Veterans: Under federal law a veteran is any person, who served honorably on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States (Title 38, U.S. Code, Veterans' Benefits).

Wounded warrior: Any disabled veteran who has served on active duty since September 11, 2001, has fewer than 20 years of military service, and has received a disability rating of 30% or greater (DOD, 2009).

Wounded Warrior Program: The system of support and advocacy to guide and assist the recovering service member and family or designated caregiver through treatment, rehabilitation, return to duty, or military retirement and transition into the civilian community. Each military department has a unique wounded warrior program that addresses its servicemembers' needs (DOD, 2009).

Wounded Warrior Project: Wounded Warrior Project is a nonprofit, charitable organization that helps veterans and active duty servicemembers. (Oprihory, 2016).

Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR): The mission of this military command established by the Marine Corps is "to provide leadership and ensure compliance with laws and DOD instructions related to the support, recovery, and non-medical care of combat and noncombat Wounded, Ill, and Injured Marines, sailors attached to Marine units, and their family members in order to maximize their recovery as they return to duty or transition to civilian life" (Williamson, 2017, slide 2).

Assumptions

The first assumption I made was that the purposeful sample included volunteers who possessed the necessary professional knowledge and experience and were willing to share to enable me to conduct a thorough and detailed analysis. I recruited a purposeful sample of leaders and staff members of the regiment and its component battalions who were directly involved in the WWR's transformational change process. My preliminary meetings with the potential interviewees were positive regarding both their knowledge and willingness to participate. The semi-structured interviews were designed to enable participants to express their experiences, thoughts, and perceptions, and my data collection plan included a field test to refine the interview protocol. To enhance the accuracy and reliability of the data, I sent each participant a copy of their completed interview transcript for review.

My second assumption was that the data collection strategy of personal interviews and document review would provide sufficient research data to conduct a comprehensive analysis. The data collection and document review processes occurred concurrently, and I employed a constant comparison strategy. In the data analysis process, I used a structured coding approach and analyzed the semi-structured interviews to generate a descriptive code hierarchical of themes, categories, and concepts (Gibbs & Taylor, 2005). To ensure sufficient resource data, I annotated the interview transcripts and used my reflective notes in the analysis. I also used extensive document reviews to support my research. The historical records of the regiment provided a lineage of the previous decisions and a progress of specific programs.

Another assumption I made was that organizational change frameworks selected for the research study would enable an effective analysis of the strategic change initiative in the selected military organization. The transformational change models chosen for this qualitative case study underscored the importance of strategic leadership for executing a major adaptive process. This key characteristic aligned with the recommendations of the Dole-Shalala Commission, which recognized the need for strong leadership to make the broad changes necessary to improve the care management and disability compensation system for veterans (Dole & Shalala, 2007). The research design for this qualitative case study addressed the leadership challenges of the transformational change effort at the WWR, a military organization with a distinctive mission and strong culture. In this research study, I analyzed this strategic change program using the conceptual model developed by Anderson and Anderson (2010) and the systems theory presented by Lynton (1968).

Scope and Delimitations

As a veteran experiencing numerous medical issues, I became interested in learning more about my military benefits and the registration process at the VA. My preliminary research led to the WWR and their organizational change initiative, which resulted in the research problem, research design, and objectives for this qualitative case study. Even though the objective of the transformational change initiative at the WWR is to enable better support for the complex demands of their veteran population, the scope of this research study was limited to their strategic change initiative. Therefore, in this

study, I did not evaluate their transition assistance programs or address specific patient care cases.

As a military organization, the WWR reflects the culture and values of the Marine Corps. The WWR was established from a moral obligation and commitment to support Marines scarred from their experiences in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. These wounded veterans returned to a medical support system that was not prepared to treat their physical, mental, and emotional injuries or assist them in their transition home (Tick, 2014). As the demographics and complex care needs of the wounded warrior population evolve, I analyzed the transformational change response of the WWR in this case study.

Even though this qualitative case study included a review of the professional partnerships between the WWR and other veteran support organizations, the scope of the study was restricted to the WWR. The results from the research study, however, are applicable to both the WWR and the broader community of veteran support organizations. The results from this research study are intended to increase the awareness of the special medical and transitional assistance requirements of the post-9/11 wounded veterans.

Limitations

Since the WWR is a Marine Corps organization, focused primarily on providing comprehensive care to post-9/11 Marine veterans, the research findings may not be transferrable to the other military services or applicable to the Vietnam veterans. The leadership challenges associated with implementing transformational change were the

emphasis of the research study, which should have relevance to other veteran support organizations. To lessen the effect of this potential limitation and advance the significance of this study, I assessed the operations of several veteran support organizations during the literature review.

My narrow, purposeful sample of the leaders and staff members of the regiment and its component battalions involved in the strategic change effort presented a limitation for this study, so I conducted personal interviews with the staff members working at the external detachment locations. These interviews expanded the data collection sources and provided a more inclusive research sample. The research study included both current and former members of the regiment to gain additional perspectives. Relying on personal interviews with the workers who are directly connected with the special warrior care programs was a challenge due to their emotional passion for their important mission. The opinions, perceptions, and biases of these participants regarding the purpose of the research study also presented a limitation. At the same time, the professional expertise and experience of the interviewees increased the understanding of the veteran support issues explored in this research study.

Applying the organizational change models developed by Kotter and Schein might present a challenge due to the bureaucratic nature and military culture of the WWR. This may limit the transferability of this research study to civilian veteran support organizations. Developing closer working relationships with nonprofit support agencies might help lessen the chance and reduced the effect of this potential limitation. To further

mitigate this limitation, I discussed the results of my research with representatives from two nonprofit veteran support partners working with veterans.

Significance of the Study

In response to the constraints imposed by the Budget Control Act of 2011, the U.S. Marine Corps executed a systematic reduction in its total force personnel structure, from the wartime level of 202,000 to an affordable number of 182,000 (Wood, 2017, p. 365). The personnel assigned to the WWR are represented and affected by these fiscal realities. As the Marine Corps manages these reductions, the results of this qualitative research study provide valuable information regarding the appropriate structure and resource levels for the WWR to the leaders responsible for allocating these reductions.

Significance to Practice

The timing of this qualitative case study, which coincided with a transformational change program, was intended to assist the leaders of the WWR in their efforts to more effectively serve wounded, ill, and injured Marine veterans. At the same time, I designed this research study to inform these leaders about the effects of organizational culture on their transformational change program. In addition, the research results may present opportunities to enhance the practices and processes that assist the WWR staff members in accomplishing the new organizational goals and objectives (Savage-Austin & Honeycutt, 2011).

Significance to Theory

I designed this qualitative case study to analyze the transformational change program at the WWR using the change management theories presented by Anderson and

Anderson (2010) and Kotter (2012). In addition, based on the context of the case study, the organizational systems theory developed by Lynton (1968) was applied. The WWR represents a system and subsystem construct that functions within the turbulent veteran support environment. These characteristics provided an ideal foundation to assess their innovations and associated procedural changes. The knowledge gained from this research study demonstrated the applicability of these organizational change frameworks in a military structure. The results of this study are significant because they provide scholars, leaders, and practitioners a better understanding of these conceptual change models and validated their use in a public-sector environment.

Significance to Social Change

As noted in the 2014 IAVA survey report, a majority (69%) of the 4,000 nationally-surveyed respondents conveyed perceptions that Congress was doing a poor job supporting their needs, while (52%) thought the secretary of defense and (54%) believed the president were not doing enough to help the post-9/11 veterans. These survey results, taken more than decade after these two wars began, are revealing and shocking and demonstrate the apparent need to better address the complex needs of the post-9/11 veteran cohort. Their struggle and hardship are the basis for this research study, which with I intended to increase awareness of this national crisis through an assessment of the transformational change effort at the WWR.

The insights gained from this research study regarding the organizational change efforts at the WWR may help their leaders to realign their resources, authorities, and processes to better achieve their operational objectives. The results of this research study

may also provide valuable information regarding the support requirements of the post-9/11 Marine veterans. The findings of this research study are significant because with them I intended to use the strategic restructuring efforts of an organization established to coordinate the care for the veterans to gain knowledge that may inform the broader community of veterans' support agencies, such as the VA, which continues to experience leadership problems (Oprihory, 2017), thereby promoting positive social change.

Summary and Transition

In this introduction chapter, I described the background of the study and specified the problems addressed. In addition, I explained the conceptual framework, the nature, the purpose, the scope, and the significance of the study. The assumptions and limitations of the research and the definitions of the main concepts and key terms used in the study were also provided.

In Chapter 1, I presented a depiction of this qualitative case study, which was designed to analyze the transformational change program at the WWR from a multidimensional perspective using the conceptual framework developed by Anderson and Anderson (2010) and the eight-step change model presented by Kotter (2012). In addition, the organizational systems theory offered by Lynton (1968) was applied to demonstrate the interaction between the WWR and the evolving veteran support environment. This strategic effort is required to restructure the WWR and revise its operations to better meet the complex demands of their supported population of wounded, ill, and injured post-9/11 Marine veterans.

The purpose of the research study was to not only inform the leaders of the WWR and the Marine Corps of the challenges posed by implementing a transformational change program but also increase their awareness of the potential opportunities to advance their support to post-9/11 wounded veterans. The results from this study provide justification for the enduring need for the WWR and other veteran support organizations. The results from this study present relevant information that may assist the community of veteran support organizations in addressing the national crisis of providing acceptable medical care and transition assistance to the growing cohort of post-9/11 wounded veterans.

In Chapter 2, I will present a historical review of the WWR based on government records and congressional reports. In addition, I will provide an analysis of the conceptual approaches for transformational change used in this qualitative case study; primarily, the frameworks advanced by Anderson and Anderson (2010), Kotter (2012), and Schein (2017). I will also review the organizational systems theory developed by Lynton (1968). The concept of systems thinking, as developed by Senge (1990), will also be included in the literature review. Additionally, Chapter 2 will include an assessment of the strategic plan of the WWR using the eight-stage process devised by Kotter (2012). The chapter will be concluded with a summary and a transition to Chapter 3.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore and understand the leadership challenges associated with implementing a major organizational change, using the Marine Corps' WWR as the case. With the combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan intensifying, this military organization was established in 2007 to manage the medical care and transition support of the combat-wounded Marines (Karcher, 2007). As the care demands of this warrior cohort changes, from the visible wounds to the invisible wounds of war, the WWR is revising their strategic vision to enhance their support to these wounded veterans (WWR, 2016a; 2017b). The conceptual framework for this research study was the multidimensional approach for transformational change presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010) that centers on the content, people, and processes of change.

I will begin this chapter with an historical review of the WWR based on government records and congressional reports. I will then proceed by exploring the literature on change management, with an emphasis on leadership, organizational culture, and systems thinking. Specifically, I will examine the organizational change theories of Lewin and Kotter and the cultural change and leadership framework developed by Schein. The chapter will also include an assessment of organizational systems theory derived by Lynton and the concept of systems thinking as presented by Senge. I will present my assessment of the complex environments of the WWR with a focus on their

leaders' strategic response to the evolving nature of wounded warrior care. Chapter 2 will be concluded with a summary and a transition to Chapter 3.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature that I reviewed for this qualitative study was drawn from peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and books that focused on the various concepts for organizational change. To gain an historical context, the official documents of the WWR were studied. Using the Gray Research Center at the Marine Corps University and the Walden University Library, I searched the following key terms in the ProQuest and Business Source Complete databases: *organizational change, organizational learning, change leadership, change management, organizational culture, transformational change, organizational behavior, organizational development, business process reengineering, commitment to change, leadership, strategic vision, emergent strategy, and mindfulness*. The Science Citation Index was also used to research the changing character of veterans' medical support with these key terms: *traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, invisible wounds of war, combat stress, severe depression, psychological disorders and suicide*. In addition, I obtained government documents from the Marine Corps' Historical Division and the Marine Corps' Manpower Management Office. Documents and other publications, such as quarterly reports, were downloaded from the WWR homepage.

Conceptual Framework

I used the multidimensional approach to transformational change presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010) as the conceptual framework for this qualitative research

study. In regards to organizational change, Anderson and Anderson (2010) differentiated transformational change, from developmental change and transitional change. According to Anderson and Anderson, “Successful transformation and breakthrough results require competent attention to three critical focus areas: (1) content, (2) people, and (3) process” (p. 24). As explained by Anderson and Anderson (2010), the content of change refers to the structure, strategy, and culture of an organization, while the people facet of change represents the human dynamics (p. 25). The process component of change refers to the leadership decisions and actions that integrate the changes in the content and the people factors into a coherent strategy (Anderson & Anderson, 2010). The successful execution of transformational change requires the astute abilities of a “conscious change leader—a new breed of leader for a new breed of change” (Anderson & Anderson, 2010, p. 3).

The objective of a transformational change program is a major adjustment in the content, the people, and the process of the change effort (Anderson & Anderson, 2010). Consequently, the scope of this qualitative case study was to analyze the transformational change program at the WWR from a multidimensional perspective, using this conceptual framework that stresses these three interconnected elements. To develop more thorough review into each of these three areas, the theories of several prominent scholars in the discipline of change management were used to supplement this model. Since the WWR is a military organization, regarding it as a complex system rather than a business was more appropriate. Therefore, this assessment includes the organizational systems theory of Rolf P. Lynton.

The conceptual framework for this qualitative case study was based on the organizational change theories of Kurt Lewin and John Kotter, and the cultural change model derived by Edgar Schein. Lewin's change theory, comprised of an unfreezing–changing–refreezing process, is widely regarded as the foundational change management approach that serves as the premise for many modern change management models (Cummings et al., 2016). Schein (2017) referred to the unfreezing phase as creating a cognitive disconfirmation that serves as the motivation to change. Schein regarded the unlearning and relearning stages as the critical components for transformative change. The eight-step process for creating organizational change developed by Kotter (2012) is grounded on Lewin's change theory.

The first four stages in the transformation process help defrost a hardened status quo. If change were easy, you wouldn't need all that effort. Phases five to seven then introduce many new practices. The last stage then grounds the changes in the corporate culture and helps makes them stick. (Kotter, 2012, p. 24).

These scholars stressed the challenge associated with transformational change and emphasized the need for a prolonged, multidimensional process driven by high-quality leadership.

Schein (1999) used the fundamental assumptions of change in human systems presented in Lewin's theory as the basis for a conceptual model for managed culture change, which relies on leaders to function as change agents, whether culture change is the primary issue or not. This change management model focuses on the importance of the interaction between leadership and culture in transformative change efforts (Schein,

2010). The analysis for this qualitative research study centered on these two important factors. Specifically, I examined the effects that the culture of the Marine Corps has on the decisions regarding the change program at the WWR and the importance of leadership in promoting that effort. In addition, in this study, I used the change process, developed by Kotter, to assess the organizational challenges that confront leaders when executing transformative change.

Kotter (2012) opened the book, *Leading Change*, with the assertion that the principles for leading organizational change that were described in his article 16-years earlier were actually more relevant today due to the ever-increasing speed of change. In the 21st century, the ability to lead change successfully has become a critical organizational development issue. Anderson and Anderson (2010) stated, “Change leadership is the most coveted skill and a strategic advantage” (p. 19). Kotter (2012) regarded leadership as the primary driver for successful transformational change efforts. Stowell and Mead (2016) affirmed, “Leadership is all about effectively executing short-term responsibilities while also shaping the future” (p. ix). To affect the future, leaders need the awareness to assess complex environments for opportunities and direct the appropriate actions across the network of systems in an organization to achieve the strategic intent (Johansen, 2012, p. 3). According to Johansen (2017), “Leaders must be sense makers in a world that will differ profoundly from what they have experienced before” (p. 13).

According to Lynton (1969), leaders of organizational systems in turbulent environments have the responsibility to not only gauge the need for change but also to

guide the differentiation in the system. Lynton presented two models for assessing rapidly changing environments. In the first construct, the decision makers treated the uncertainty of the environment as a succession of discrete stimuli that required appropriate innovations in the system. Leaders in the second model, however, considered the uncertainty in the environment as a continuous disorder that required their constant engagement with varying responses from the entire system (Lynton, 1969, p. 399). To cope with high levels of complexity, leaders design subsystems to create innovations, defined as the acceptance of new ideas, for the system. Formal devices, such as cross-functional teams, are used to integrate innovations and facilitate organizational change (Lynton, 1969).

This research study included a review of the changing veteran support environment and the strategic decisions made by the leaders at the WWR in response to these continual dynamics. In addition, I assessed the integration methods adopted by the WWR in two essential areas: (a) between the command and its military and veteran populations and (b) between the different components within their organization (Lynton, 1968). In Appendix A, I will present the conceptual map designed for this qualitative research study.

Literature Review

“Once a Marine; Always a Marine” is a quotation that reflects the devoted organizational culture of the U.S. Marine Corps. Whether the Marine serves for 5 years or 20 years, they proudly maintain the title of Marine for the rest of their lives. This cultural attitude connects Marines to their organization and binds them to their fellow

Marines. This belief enables recruits to endure the crucible of entrance into the Marine Corps and drives Marines to maintain the high organizational standards throughout their tenure. The Marine Corps engrains their organizational culture into its members. Ricks (1997) described the culture of the U.S. Marine Corps as “formalistic, insular, and elitist, with a deep anchor in their own history and mythology” (p. 19). This commanding organizational culture commits the organization to its members and serves as the basis for the WWR.

The conception for the WWR originated with two Marines who were wounded in Iraq and sought a more effectual means of recovery for wounded warriors (WWR 2017b). These wounded warriors felt that injured Marines would recover more rapidly and wholly under the leadership of other Marines (WWR 2017b). Prior to the foundation of the WWR, the Marine Corps relied on a multiple tiered system to provide medical and administrative support to Marines wounded in combat, and for many, this meant a separation from their military units and fellow Marines (WWR 2017b). With the casualties from the combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan mounting, the Marine Corps developed an alternative approach that more closely aligned with their organizational culture and created a command with the mission of providing the leadership to promote the recovery for return-to-duty or support for the transition-from-active-service for their wounded, ill, and injured Marines (Karcher, 2007). The strategic intent for the WWR emerged from their interactions within the network of agencies that represent the wounded veterans’ support environment (Brown, 2017). The programs

operated by the WWR evolved directly from the special demands of their combat-wounded and noncombat ill and injured Marines and veterans (WWR 2014, 2015).

As explained by Hooker and Collins (2015), it was not the number of casualties from the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, which paled in comparison to the world wars of the previous century, but the nature of the injuries that increased the complexity of medical care and transition assistance required by for these veterans. Specifically, these casualties included a high number of limb amputations, traumatic brain injuries (TBI), posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), chronic severe depression, and musculoskeletal injuries (Hooker & Collins, 2015). According to Hooker and Collins, the United States lost 6,837 servicemembers in Iraq and Afghanistan, while it suffered over 52,000 military combat casualties. By 2006, approximately 70% of all combat casualties were the result of improvised explosive devices (Clarke, 2008, p. 69). Though I did not examine these combat casualties in-depth in this study, an understanding of their nature provides the context for understanding the social issues covered in this document and the rationale for the new strategic direction of the WWR.

The origin of the WWR can be traced to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where from 2005 to 2007, the concept for a dedicated military command that enabled wounded Marines to recover together was developed (WWR, 2017b). The senior leaders of the Marine Corps wanted to enhance their combat-wounded warrior support system, and they accomplished this by entrusting the resilience derived from their organizational culture (WWR, 2017b). This spirit is reflected in the motto of the WWR, *Etiam in Pugna*, which means, “Still in the Fight” (WWR, 2017b). To capitalize on the positive attributes of their

valued-based leadership philosophy, the 34th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General James T. Conway directed the establishment of the WWR (Conway, 2007a).

Annually, the Commandant of the Marine Corps publishes the *Commandant's Planning Guidance*, which sets the strategic direction and delineates the priorities for the Marine Corps. In his *Commandant's Planning Guidance* for 2006, General Conway ordered the formation of the WWR with a component battalion on each coast, to add discipline and continuity to the wounded warrior support system. According to General Conway, "Marines take care of their own – period." Consequently, the Marine Corps created the WWR in April 2007 aboard the Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Virginia. The Wounded Warrior Battalion-East opened in June 2007 on Camp Lejeune, North Carolina and the Wounded Warrior Battalion-West was founded in August 2007 aboard Camp Pendleton, California (Karcher, 2007; WWR, 2017b).

The WWR adapted its organizational structure and support programs to meet the needs of the wounded warriors and comply with the federal requirements (Flass, 2015). Specifically, the WWR created the Wounded Warrior Call Center to provide a 24-hour crisis helpline. It assumed the management responsibility for the Integrated Disability Evaluation System and the Wounded Warrior Tracking System to enhance coordination among the recovery care teams. The WWR released a command website to more effectively share information. The command opened a Warrior Hope Care and Center at each battalion to enable transition support to the wounded warriors and their families during their recovery process (WWR, 2016a; 2017a; 2017b).

After an executive review, General Conway, the 34th Commandant of the Marine Corps, codified the mission, objectives, and organizational structure for the regiment in a promulgation statement released in December of 2007. The organizational structure and people for the WWR came from the Marine-for-Life Program (M4L), which was subsumed by this newly established military command (Karcher, 2007). The M4L program was started in 2003 to assist the transition efforts of the more than 27,000 Marines who honorably completed their active service each year (Commandant of the Marine Corps, 2003). The intent of the M4L network was to enable the Marine Corps to maintain a connection with their departing Marines (Commandant of the Marine Corps, 2003). Many of these departing veterans had recently returned from combat and were experiencing problems adjusting to civilian life (Commandant of the Marine Corps, 2003).

Although not known at the time, the M4L program would become the precursor to the WWR. This transition support program was based on the same strong organizational culture that represented an institutional responsibility and commitment to their Marines post-deployment and post-service. This mindset was evident in the language of the M4L order; instead of referring to the Marine veterans as “separating from active-service” the document called it “transitioning to civilian life” (Commandant of the Marine Corps, 2003). The application of the M4L program was like to all other Marine Corps programs in that the responsibility fell to the leaders of the various military units across the Marine Corps. This would change with the establishment of the WWR, as the accountability for all veteran transition support would transfer to one designated leader. In essence, the

WWR enabled the Marine Corps to consolidate their disparate efforts for wounded warrior support to the control of a specific organizational leader. This transfer of responsibility for their veterans' transition assistance programs represented a transformational change for the Marine Corps, as described by Anderson and Anderson (2010).

To publicly announce the establishment of the WWR, the Marine Corps held a U.S. DOD news briefing, which enabled Colonel Gregory A. Boyle (the first Commanding Officer of the WWR) to present his vision and answer questions about the command (Lanham, 2007). During his opening statement, Colonel Boyle stated that he envisioned the WWR serving as a resource network for the wounded warriors, including past and present Marines. Colonel Boyle affirmed the requirement to enhance the transition process with the VA. In addition, Colonel Boyle expressed the need for dedicated specialists to manage the complex assortment of programs, such as the physical evaluation board and integrated medical evaluation board processes (Karcher, 2007; Lanham, 2007). Through his initial supervision and direction, Colonel Boyle shaped the organizational culture for the WWR (Schein, 2017).

In addition to taking advantage of on the macro level organizational culture of the Marine Corps, the WWR developed a micro level organizational culture and several subcultures (Schein, 2010). Schein (2010) categorized organizational cultures based on their degree of influence. The micro level culture of the WWR evolved as the military and civilian personnel implemented the initial objectives and developed their support programs. Vik (2013) stated that an organizational culture was comprised of the structure

and the people. According to Vik, the first element encompassed the vision, purpose, and business model, while the second component referred to the routines, thoughts, and commonalities of the people. Vik (2013) stated, “When we are inside a well-constructed and articulated Culture, we can, and should focus on the people creating it, for they are the ones who will support, drive, and enhance an organization or company as it brings the Culture to life!” (p. 3).

The Marine Corps recognized the requirement for a military organization that unites their wounded warrior efforts, under the leadership and authority of a designated commanding officer. The Marine Corps wanted a compassionate leader who embodied the spirit of being a Marine to advocate for their wounded warriors. Schein (2017) stressed that leadership was needed to create the micro culture of a new organization. Through their enthusing character and forward vision, a founding leader defines the direction for the new organization. This creates the conditions for the micro culture to emerge. To be effective, this new micro culture must support the macro culture of the main organization (Schein, 2017). Though distinct in many ways, the micro culture of the WWR reflects the values and norms of the macro culture of the Marine Corps.

In his testimony before the Congressional Appropriations Committee for the DOD, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Conway conveyed the Marine Corps’ commitment to the development of the of the WWR. Specifically, General Conway, and the ensuing Commandants, General Amos, General Dunford, and General Neller, provided an update on the progression of the WWR and expressed their appreciation for the continued support from Congress, the Department of Labor, and the

VA. The testimonies from these General Officers, which spanned the period of 2007 – 2017, present an informative depiction of the evolutionary nature of this military organization. General Conway, in his testimony of 2009, stated that the WWR was constantly assessing and enhancing its services, such as adding a Job Transition Cell and a Charitable Organization Cell. In addition, the WWR strengthened its working relations with the VA by adding a liaison presence in their central office. General Conway further explained that the WWR would continue to add programs in response to the needs of the wounded warriors (DOD, 2008 - 2017). Rather than adhering to a planned strategy, the leaders of the WWR applied an emergent strategy, which effected their business model and organizational structure (Brown, 2017). From the start, the WWR proved it was an agile organization capable of learning and adapting to the changes in their environment (Thames & Webster, 2009).

This emergent strategy enabled the WWR to implement the appropriate support services and functions, some of which were externally mandated while others were internally imposed. For example, Public Law 110-181 (National Defense Authorization Act of 2008) and the DOD Instruction (DODI 1300.24) require a recovery care coordinator for every recovering service member with complex care needs (ratio to be 1:40 or better). In addition, these external sources require each of the military service to provide a nonmedical care manager to coordinate the nonmedical support for each recovering service member and their families. Internally, the WWR requires district injured support coordinators to perform outreach support and transition assistance for the separating veterans.

The WWR developed a dual-support role for two related populations, but with distinctive requirements. The first, and most immediate category, are the combat wounded, ill, and injured Marines, who have the potential to return to an active-duty status. The second segment are those veterans who due to their medical problems have transitioned, or are projected to transition, from the Marine Corps (Lanham, 2007). Over its 10-year history, the WWR has experienced a shift in the numbers and demands for each group. From 2007 to 2011 there was a sharp increase in the number of combat-wounded Marines. Since 2011, the trend has reversed with a dramatic increase in the number of noncombat ill and injured Marines. In fact, the current number of noncombat ill and injured Marines exceed the number of combat-wounded warriors assigned to the regiment (Flass, 2015). Concurrently, the number of the noncombat ill and injured Marines transitioning to civilian life with complex medical care and transition support needs continues to increase (Flass, 2015). These dynamics of the WWR's supported population forms the basis for their transformational change effort (WWR, 2015; 2016).

Though the WWR was established to support both these cohorts, the combat-wounded warriors received the initial priority (Lanham, 2007). This distinct group of warriors received their wounds in combat; primarily, Afghanistan, Iraq, or Syria. As of July 2015, the numbers of combat-wounded warriors from these contingency operations were: Afghanistan (20,104); Iraq (32,246); and Syria (1; Fischer, 2015). The most prevalent medical diagnosis from these wars have been major limb amputations, post-traumatic stress disorder, and traumatic brain injuries (Fischer, 2015).

A total of 1,645 servicemembers have lost a major limb, which includes the loss of one or more major limbs, the loss of one or more partial limbs, or the loss of one or more full and partial hand or foot between the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (Fischer, 2015). The statistics for the total number of servicemembers suffering from TBI and PTSD, however, are reported as 327,299 and 138,197 respectively (Fischer, 2015). The supported patient population of the WWR reflects this national trend. The majority of servicemembers with these types of severe and complex medical care needs are candidates for transition from the active service. Consequently, the WWR has had to increase its transition assistance and support programs. These recent developments present the leaders of the WWR with resource allocation and prioritization challenges for the future.

For a variety of reasons, the departure from military service is difficult for many veterans. The reintegration statistics, such as the high rates of unemployment, homelessness, incarceration, suicide, depression, and substance abuse, denote that this transition has been particularly hard for the GWOT era veterans (Baker, 2014). This lifestyle adjustment has been markedly more challenging for the GWOT veterans suffering from a physical or a psychological disability (RWTF, 2014). Even though their combat wounds were extremely serious, advances in medical practices and technologies have significantly increased the survival rates for the combat-wounded warriors (Baker, 2014). Compared to our nation's wars, the survival ratio of 7 to 1 for the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars far exceeds the injuries per fatality ratios of 2.6 for the Vietnam War and 2.8 for the Korean War (Stiglitz & Bilmes, 2008, p. 61). The modern military

medical system provides wounded warriors about a 98 percent chance of surviving their combat wounds (Gaddo, 2015). Notwithstanding these medical advances, far greater numbers of GWOT veterans are having problems reentering American society upon their return (Junger, 2016).

Outnumbering the GWOT veterans with physical disabilities are those service members suffering from psychological and emotional injuries; most notably, traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder (Fischer, 2015; RWTF, 2014; Tanielian & Jaycox, 2008). Defined as the invisible wounds of war by the National Council on Disability, these mental health injuries have caused considerable political, medical, and social concern. Despite a significant investment by the DOD and the VA to study these cognitive injuries and their effects, there remains a general lack of understanding regarding the mental health needs of servicemembers (Tanielian & Jaycox, 2008). Consequently, the military and civilian medical communities are challenged to effectively treat the large population of GWOT veterans suffering from the invisible wounds of war (Baker, 2014). The distressed families coping with GWOT service members and veterans suffering from the invisible wounds of war represent another huge social problem (Baker, 2014). The disability benefits and medical care costs of the GWOT veterans afflicted with physical and psychological injuries represent two of the most significant long-term costs of our nation for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (Stiglitz & Bilmes, 2008, p. 90). Thus far, the government has not adequately accounted for the scale of these costs (Stiglitz & Bilmes, 2008, p. xiii).

The other segment of the WWR patient population are the Marines who can recover from their medical issues and resume their active-duty military service. As stated in the WWR Leaders Guide, the intent of the Commandant of the Marine Corps is for the wounded, ill, and injured Marines to remain with their primary military unit if their medical support requirements allow. Transfers to the WWR are reserved for those complex cases that exceed the main unit's support capacity. In these extreme cases, the regiment and that prime unit have a shared responsibility for the medical support functions (Miller, 2017). The transfer to the WWR represents an agreement between the military units and is usually considered if the Marine has extremely complex support needs. Regardless of their unit assignment, the care needs of that Marine remain the priority. (See Appendix B for the assignment criteria to the WWR).

As explained by Colonel Boyle, the first Commanding Officer of the WWR, during the DOD News Briefing, the Marines assigned to the WWR are expected to maintain the standards, norms, and values of the Marine Corps, and perform assigned duties within their medical limitations. Besides adhering to the macro culture of the Marine Corps, those Marines assigned to the WWR formed a subculture, as many must contend with complex medical problems that require them to adapt to a new normal life (Schein, 2017). Consequently, the WWR designed special programs that provide physical, psychological, emotional, and moral support, based on the Lines of Operations of mind, body, spirit, and family. The Warrior Athlete Reconditioning Program (WAR-P) is an adaptive competition program that encompasses these four elements.

The WAR-P is a comprehensive program that affords adaptive recreational activities and opportunities to wounded warriors to aid in their recovery and rehabilitation (Williamson, 2017). One such adaptive sports event sponsored by the regiment is the Marine Corps Trials. This is an annual adaptive sports event that brings wounded warrior athletes from across the Marine Corps and from several allied nations (primarily France, Australia, Columbia, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom) together for competition and camaraderie (WWR, 2017b). This WWR sponsored adaptive sports event serves as the main venue to select the participants for the DOD Warrior Games (WWR, 2017b). The WAR-P originated to support the physical wounded combat warriors. Due to their decline in numbers of physically disabled combat warriors and the extensive costs of these events, review efforts have begun to re-align the resources committed to it. This program, however, has enormous visibility, which may make modifications to its format problematic for the leaders of the WWR.

In addition to hosting multiple WAR-P events each year, the WWR manages a spectrum of support sections based on the complex care needs of the wounded Marines. To engage directly with veterans across the country, the WWR sponsors regional support representatives and district injured support coordinators. The WWR operates a transition support section, a charitable giving coordination office, a religious ministry team, and a medical care section. The organization also directs the medical and disability evaluation board advocacy section (Flass, 2015). The leaders of these sections administer programs based on the four lines of effort construct, which reflects the comprehensive nature of the recovery efforts of the wounded warriors (WWR, 2015). These four points are consisted

with the value-based leadership principles adopted by the program mentors. These programs promote a holistic approach to wounded warrior care. They represent the content factor in the conceptual approach presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010). (See Appendix C for a description of the wounded warrior support programs and services).

Implementing these various support programs for the WWR is their diverse workforce, comprised of active-duty and reserve-status military personnel and federal civilian employees. To accomplish their mandated requirements, however, the WWR also relies on contracted care specialists. The human dynamics associated with these members represents the second factor of change in the transformational model developed by Anderson and Anderson (2010). According to Hiatt and Creasey (2012), change in an organization reflects the collective results of individual behavior modifications. To achieve their transformational change objectives, the leaders of the WWR must manage the personal experiences and expectations of their varied members (Connors & Smith, 2011).

Comparable to the content of change, the people component emerged from the special needs of the wounded warriors. The WWR is a distinctive command. There are no organizational models to reference; consequently, its personnel structure evolved from the support demands of the wounded warriors. During the formative years, the WWR competed for its resources with all the other military commands, many of which were involved in the combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a result, the WWR was staffed largely with Marine reservists, who were brought on active-duty for a 12-month

assignment with the organization (Flass, 2015). The Marine Corps committed their combat contingency operations funds to pay for these activated reservists, who served mostly at the detachments and accounted for most of the military members assigned to the WWR (Flass, 2015). In contrast, the active-duty military members served 3-year assignments while the federal civilians provided the continuity (Flass, 2015). The contracted specialists added the necessary expertise to fulfill the command's important mission (Flass, 2015).

Despite their shared macro culture, the active-duty Marines and their activated reservist counterparts had some real differences, in regard to their core needs and career responsibilities. The active-duty Marines and the activated reservists had different career requirements and served in different capacities, which formed occupational groups and subcultures within the command (Schein, 2012). For example, almost all the district injured support coordinators, located across the country to enable a personal interface with the recovering veterans, were activated reservists (Flass, 2015). The active-duty military members, on the other hand, served primarily in the staff assignments at the regimental headquarters (Flass, 2015). The civilian employees, depending on their funding source, served either at the regimental headquarters or worked exclusively with one program. As long-term members of the regiment, the federal civilian employees formed another occupational group and subculture (Schein, 2012).

The transitory nature of the military personnel assigned to the WWR is represented by the senior leadership. During its 10-years of operation, the WWR has had six different commanding officers (WWR, 2017a). The command records covering these

years indicated that each of these officers brought their personal leadership approach to the WWR based on their experiences and assessment of the strategic direction for the command. As a result, the WWR published a new strategic plan for three consecutive years under three different commanding officers. Each of the strategic plans promoted a different set of goals, objectives, and priorities for the organization. The documents were consistent in their call for an assessment of the command to enhance their programs amid changes in their internal and external environments.

All organizational cultures develop in a hierarchical network. Subcultures occur within the micro culture and these cultures coexist within the macro culture of the organization (Schein, 2012). Leaders assume responsibility for ensuring the collective contributions of these internal groups remain aligned with the strategic direction of the organization (Schein, 2012). For the WWR, this means that the commanding officer must synchronize the operational efforts of the different functional groups to successfully accomplish their command goals, and achieve the strategic objectives from the Commandant of the Marine Corps. The complexity of the veterans' support environment, however, requires the WWR to not only integrate their organizational efforts, but also to interact with external agencies that constitute the veteran's support network.

Managing the interactions in an open-system network, enables cognitive leaders to affect changes to systems' structure (Lynton, 1968). Understanding these connections provides the leader with the leverage to shape transformational change (Senge, 1990). Applying systems-thinking to the transformational effort at the WWR would enable the leaders to synchronize the adjustments to their content with the changes to their people,

referred to as the process of change in the conceptual framework developed by Anderson and Anderson (2010). Senge (1990) defined systems-thinking as the mental ability to contemplate the whole system and not just the individual parts of the pattern (p. 7).

Lynton (1968) applied systems theory to organizations, regarding organizations as complete systems comprised of subsystems that interact with their external environment. To respond to complexities in their environments, Lynton asserted that organizational leaders needed to develop appropriate integrative devices to facilitate change between the different parts of the organization. Lynton (1968) stated, “Formal organizational devices for facilitating change in social institutions, particularly institutions in environments characterized by increasing differentiation and complexity, are largely integrative devices” (p. 398). The design of the integrative devices depends on the accuracy with which the leaders in the organizational system assess the uncertainties and complexities of their environments.

Lynton (1968) proposed two basic models for assessing environmental uncertainties. The first model depicted these uncertainties as a succession of discrete variations in the system. In the second model, these uncertainties were regarded as continuous disruptions in the system. In the first scenario, the integrative device was temporary with minimal disruption in the system. In contrast, the response in the second model is a permanent integration device that significantly changes the system. Though the cost associated with the second model is larger, it has a greater potential for more innovation for the system (Lynton, 1968). Given the complexity of the veteran support environment, the second model involving permanent integration of major change directly

corresponds to the transformation program at the WWR. Consequently, the second model served as an important aspect of my analysis.

Anderson and Anderson (2010) defined the process of transformational change as the means adopted by the leadership for planning, designing, and executing adjustments in their content and people to achieve the revised strategic vision. The process focus area of change includes the management of the course corrections to ensure the components remains aligned. Even though these three components are discussed separately, Anderson and Anderson stressed the importance of integrating them into one coherent change strategy. Failing to consider the corresponding people reactions to content changes or implementing a poorly devised strategy could generate resistance to the transformational change process (Anderson & Anderson, 2010). Anderson and Anderson (2010) noted that “approximately two-thirds of all change programs fail to generate the intended return on investment” (p. 26). To enhance the effectiveness rate for of change management efforts, Kotter (2012) developed a multiple stage process for leading and managing transformational change.

Based on a study of over 100 organizational change efforts, the majority of which were semi-successful, Kotter (1995) developed an eight-stage change process. In conjunction, Kotter (2012) compiled a list of the most common errors committed by change managers. The overall lesson learned from this analysis was that an effective transformational change effort requires a multiple-year campaign that addresses the many potential resistance barriers to change (Kotter, 2012). Though there are numerous theories and methods regarding change management, Kotter’s eight-stage process is one

of the most widely recognized (Pollack & Pollack, 2015). By, Hughes, and Ford (2016) noted that with 6,638 citations between January 1, 1978 and December 31, 2014, the original version of *Leading Change* (Kotter, 1996) was the most cited change management and transformational leadership publication during that time frame (p. 10).

The success of Kotter's change management process has been broadly supported in the literature (Calegari, Sibley, & Turner, 2015; Pollack & Pollack, 2015).

Consequently, Kotter's multiple-stage process for creating transformative change served as the standard to evaluate the WWR strategic change program. Kotter (2012) stated, "It is because such change is so difficult to bring about that the transformation process has eight stages instead of two or three, that it takes so much time, and that it requires so much leadership from so many people" (p. 166). This outline consists of a brief explanation for each of the eight-stages in Kotter's process and a description of its application to the strategic change program at the WWR.

Step 1: Establishing a Sense of Urgency

The first step in Kotter's eight-stage process is to create a sense of urgency; an awareness of the need for the organizational change. Kotter (2008) regarded the failure to create a sense of urgency as the predominant error committed leaders trying to achieve a transformational change effort (p. viii). According to Kotter (2008), organizational success often produces a complacency that the change leader must transform into an energetic acceptance of the new strategic direction (p. xi). Understanding the need for the change effort is important for gaining the cooperation and commitment required to transform the organization. Kotter (2012) asserted that leaders routinely underestimate

the exertion required to create the impetus for a transformational change program (p. 37). According to Kotter (2008), “a strong sense of urgency is moving from an essential element in big change programs to an essential asset in general” (p. xi). Organizational change, however, has become the leadership response to the variability in most business environments (Thames & Webster, 2009).

The WWR strategic plan provided the commanding officer’s 5-year vision for the organization and addressed the critical tasks and primary objectives (WWR, 2016a). The document included an introduction section that described the sense of urgency for the organizational change. The commanding officer stressed that the main driver for the new strategy was the changing demographics of their supported population. The commanding officer asserted that despite their past achievements, the WWR needed to take advantage of the current reduction in combat operations to prepare for the anticipated demands of the future. The commanding officer noted the basic changes in their recovering members: a reduction in their number of combat wounded; an increase in their age and seniority; and an increase in the number transitioning to civilian life (WWR, 2016a). At the same time, the commanding officer acknowledged the need to maintain the capacity to care and support combat-wounded Marines (WWR, 2016a).

The WWR strategic plan presented the commander’s assessment of the veterans’ support environment. The document explained the need for a transformational change and described the corresponding modifications to the organization and its components (WWR, 2016a). The shift in the demographics of the supported population is listed as the primary reason for the new strategic direction. The transfer from combat-wounded to

noncombat ill and injured patients represented a dilemma for the WWR and other veterans' support agencies. A large number of these veterans are suffering from mental health issues, primarily traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder (Bouvard, 2012; Schaffer, 2016; Tanielian & Jaycox, 2008). The National Council on Disability defined these injuries as the invisible wounds of war. To affect the necessary internal modifications, the commanding officer of the WWR will need to manage the integration of the innovations into the operational subsystems of the organization to address the specific needs of their patients (Lynton, 1969; Thames & Webster, 2009).

In addition to the variations of their supported population, the new strategic direction of the WWR is affected by political and judicial changes in the veterans' support environment. The proposed Veterans Empowerment Act, which would enable veterans to choose private medical providers without gaining a VA preauthorization, is an example of the reform legislation that could significantly alter the veterans' support environment (H.R. 4457, 2017). Introduced into the House of Representatives by Representative Doug Lamborn (CO), this proposed legislation endorses the creation of a Veterans Accountable Care Organization and provides veterans with the right to private health insurance (H.R. 4457, 2017). Anderson and Anderson (2010) stressed that change leaders needed to have an understanding of their strategic drivers of change because these affect the context of their transformative change program (p. 31). This Congressional Bill would shape the new strategic direction of the WWR. To respond to unexpected changes in the veterans' support environment, the leaders should develop the WWR into an agile organization.

Step 2: Creating the Guiding Coalition

The second stage in Kotter's process involves forming a group of personnel who have the power and authority to lead the change effort (Kotter, 2012, p. 23). This entrusted coalition needs the capacity to integrate their efforts and work together as a team to achieve a common objective (Kotter, 2012, p. 54). Because of the difficulties of pursuing a new vision, Kotter (2012) stressed the importance of using a strong team to overcome the distinctive challenges. Edmondson (2012) promoted the concept of teaming, the active sharing of information and collective learning within an organization. To compete in a complex business environment, the workforce should work and learn together (Edmondson, 2012, p. 1).

To prepare their new strategic plan, the leaders and staff officers of the WWR formed an operational planning team. The operational planning team was comprised of program managers and actions officers from across the WWR. This planning team conducted an assessment of the organizational structure and support programs. The results of the internal audit were incorporated into the new strategic plan. To integrate the new strategic plan, the commanding officer directed the battalion commanders to develop connecting plans. This operational planning team approach produced a network of plans that connected the systems, processes, and operations of the WWR into a coherent strategy (WWR, 2016a).

The increased internal coordination of the strategic plan is consistent with Kotter's call for no unnecessary interdependencies in agile organizations (Kotter, 2012, p. 178). According to Thames and Weber (2009), the complexities of the global business

environment are creating the demand for more agile organizations, which can continuously adapt, change, and learn. Increasing the agility of an organization begins by adopting a systems mindset that capitalizes on emerging opportunities and adapts to unexpected challenges (Kotter, 2014; Senge, 1990). Edmondson (2012) contended that “in this current dynamic environment, successful organizations need to be managed as complex adaptive systems, rather than as intricate controlled machines” (p. 23). With their new strategic intent, the WWR leaders appear poised to leverage their resources to enhance the effectiveness of their support programs by adopting a more decentralized organizational structure and generating a complex adaptive business model (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994; Thames & Webster, 2009, Kotter, 2014).

Step 3: Developing a Vision and a Strategy

The third stage of Kotter’s change process involves creating a vision of the future and a strategy for achieving the vision (Kotter, 2012, p. 23). According to Kotter (2012), an effective vision not only guides the change effort but also motivates people to take appropriate actions in the right direction. The supporting strategy provides the logic and method for realizing the vision (Kotter, 2012). Associated with the leaders’ responsibility for developing the vision and strategy, are the managers’ requirement for developing plans for implementing the strategy (Kotter, 2012, p. 73). According to Kotter, leaders and managers will need to project a realistic vision of the future and develop the capacity to adapt to change rapidly. To create a learning organization capable of adaptive change in complex environments, Senge (1990) emphasized the importance of promoting a

shared vision toward a common objective to encourage genuine commitment and transform the nature and value of work.

In the strategic plan, the WWR leaders addressed several internal and external challenges that require a new direction for the organization (WWR, 2016a). The leaders specified that due to personnel and financial constraints, the command must adjust its content and people practices to better meet their operational objectives. The most important change discussed in the plan, however, relates to the distinction made between the functions of the regiment and those assigned to the wounded warrior battalions. Rather than focusing on their accepted recovery principals of mind, body, spirit, and family, which will remain a priority of the battalions, the headquarters staff plans to redirect their efforts to five innovative critical tasks and subtasks. These critical tasks form the foundation for the new strategic intent of the organization. (See Appendix D for a description of the five critical tasks).

These new critical tasks represented a migration of the existing core competencies of the WWR that corresponded with their new strategic intent (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994). According to Hamel and Prahalad (1994) the strategic intent of an organization conveys a sense of direction, a sense of discovery, and a sense of direction. In regard to a sense of direction, the new strategic intent projects the long-term position of WWR within the overarching strategy of the Marine Corps. In addition, the new strategic intent presents a sense of discovery in that it implies the adoption of resourceful business practices and new support programs. The strategic intent maintains the emotional conviction of the organization, which provides a sense of destiny for the regiment (Hamel & Prahalad,

1994). According to Hamel and Prahalad (2005), “Strategic intent provides consistency to short-term action, while leaving room for reinterpretation as new opportunities emerge” (p. 151).

As reflected in these critical tasks, the new strategic intent envisions an increased external focus for the WWR leaders and staff members, and a greater emphasis on the programs designed for their noncombat recovering warrior and veterans. To affect these changes, the WWR leaders directed some short-term actions while establishing long-term objectives to improve the efficacy of their content and capitalize on the experiences and knowledge of their people (Anderson & Anderson, 2010). The WWR organizational change initiative is targeted at the specific needs of the command and its individual members, which enhances the chances of a successful program (Thames & Webster, 2009, p. 22). The five critical tasks represent a systems-thinking mindset that advances the WWR as a learning organization (Kotter, 2012; Senge, 1990). According to Meadows (2008), systems-thinking enables us to more effectively manage change, because it “gives us the freedom to identify root causes of problems and see new opportunities” (p. 2).

Step 4: Communicating the Change Vision

The fourth stage in Kotter’s process is to utilize multiple methods to announce, broadcast, and publish the new vision and strategy (Kotter, 2012, p. 23). Kotter (2012) asserted that change managers routinely underestimate the amount of communication required to develop a consistent understanding of the new direction. The overarching purpose of promoting the change effort is to build a general commitment to a desirable future from internal and external stockholders (Kotter, 2012). Consequently, the

communication plan should include multiple forums targeted at various audiences, and enable two-way discussions and reaction comments (Kotter, 2012, p. 92). Kotter recommended the use of metaphors, analogies, and examples to create a verbal picture as a means to enhance comprehension (p. 92).

Because of the special nature of its operations, the WWR has significant communication responsibilities, which include informing the U.S. Congress, the DOD, VA, Headquarters Marine Corps, and the American public about its range warrior care programs and support capabilities (WWR, 2016a). Therefore, it was imperative that the WWR coordinate the announcement its new strategic plan to these external audiences with the Marine Corps' Communication Department. In addition, the WWR leaders wanted to utilize upcoming media engagement opportunities to communicate their new strategic direction. The primary reason for adopting the critical tasks expressed in the WWR strategic plan was the dramatic change in the demographics of their supported population (WWR, 2016a). The WWR leaders sought communication opportunities with non-federal veteran support organizations as a means of broadening their programs through external engagement (WWR, 2016a).

Step 5: Empowering broad-based action

The fifth stage of Kotter's process involves removing obstacles and barriers to the change program, which may require changes to the systems, processes, and structures of the organization (Kotter, 2012, p. 23). According to Kotter (2012), procedural and operational barriers often exist within an organization that can prevent and discourage people from accepting the new strategic direction. Effective ways to overcome the

implementation challenges can include supervisor and employee training programs, empowering people to effect change, and aligning information and personnel systems (Kotter, 2012, p. 119). Encouraging nontraditional ideas and actions are other effective ways to encourage acceptance for the new vision and gain support for the change effort (Kotter, 2012, p. 23). Anderson and Anderson (2010) advocated for employee listening sessions and key stakeholder engagement as effective leadership measures to advance a transformational change program (p. 69).

The WWR Strategic Plan registered several content and people barriers that require short-term actions to achieve their long-term process objectives (WWR, 2016a). Specifically, the critical tasks noted the requirement for staffing resource adjustments, and the need for policy changes to extend their working relationships and partnerships with non-federal veteran support agencies. In addition, the WWR leaders specified the need for assistance with suicide prevention and their responsibility for developing a reporting process that conveys accurate and meaningful data (WWR, 2016a). In their strategic plan, the WWR leaders described several external environmental factors, such as policy restrictions, that could impede the progress of their strategic objectives (WWR, 2016a). Removing these institutional and environmental obstacles will enable the WWR to advance the organization toward accomplishing their strategic objectives (WWR, 2016a).

Step 6: Generating Short-term Wins

The sixth stage of Kotter's change process emphasizes the need to recognize visible and explicit improvements in performance, and to reward those responsible

(Kotter, 2012, p. 23). To maintain the credibility and momentum of a transformational change program, the strategy must include methods for recognizing short-term, tangible results (Kotter, 2012, p. 123). According to Kotter (2012), undertaking a change program without planned procedures to report interim gains jeopardizes the entire effort, because many of the reluctant converts require convincing evidence and positive reinforcement to sustain their commitment (p. 123). In addition, short-term wins can provide concrete data to make adjustments to the transformation program (Kotter, 2012, p. 125). Successful change leaders maximize short-term wins to build morale and maintain momentum (Kotter, 2012, p. 127). Kotter (2012) asserted that “the point is to make sure that visible results lend sufficient credibility to the transformation effort” (p. 125).

Even though the WWR Strategic Plan listed several immediate actions to achieve the intended long-range objectives, the report did not include any planned measurement methods to evaluate the progress of the transformational change program (WWR, 2016a). Therefore, showing any visible short-term results could become a problem for the WWR leaders. Because this effort is projected for a 5-year timeframe, and the senior leadership position is a 2-year assignment, the WWR could encounter a significant implementation challenge. Kotter (2012) emphasized the need for a commitment from the change leaders for the duration of the transformation process to sustain the momentum and maximize the results. In addition, Kotter stressed the role of managers in organizing and directing the change effort. Kotter (2012) stated, “Transformation is not a process involving leadership alone, good management is also essential (p. 133). To manage their transformation

program, and integrate the critical tasks across the organization, the WWR leaders will need the support from their staff members and program directors.

Step 7: Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change

In the seventh stage of Kotter's process, the leaders use their credibility to change all the systems, structures, processes, and policies that do not fully align with the transformation vision (Kotter, 2012, p. 23). Kotter cautioned that many change programs failed because success was declared too early. Transformational change involves a prolonged process with a persistent threat of resistance; therefore, successful change leaders need to remain committed to the effort (Kotter, 2012). This requires a diligent leadership effort that continuously assesses the progress and advances the momentum achieved through the earlier change stages (Kotter, 2012). Leaders can minimize the degree of resistance to change by transforming the mindset and culture of the organization (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Thames & Webster, 2009). Successful transformations require a synchronized leadership effort to change both the content and people aspects (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Thames & Webster, 2009).

The WWR Strategic Plan contains a Way Forward section that lists several key dates and short-term actions, which include reviewing, revising, and publishing the supporting operational plans from the two wounded warrior battalions (WWR, 2016a). The document does not present a means to consolidate gains and undertake more changes (WWR, 2016a). However, the strategic plan is reviewed regularly, so there is an opportunity for the leaders of the WWR to make adjustments during the transformational change process. Since the WWR is in the beginning stages of their strategic change

process, there are not any measurable gains registered on their command web-page or the Commanding Officer's Quarterly Updates for 2018 (WWR, 2018a; 2018b).

Step 8: Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture

The eighth stage in Kotter's change process embodies all the actions that incorporate and entrench the new vision as part of the organizational culture (Kotter, 2012, p. 23). To generate an enduring change, it must not only become embedded into the systems and operations, but also in the norms of behavior and shared values of the organization (Kotter, 2012, p. 156). According to Kotter (2012), in some organizations, their norms and values are consistent with the new vision; however, in other cases, a change in the culture is required. In these situations, the change effort is significantly more challenging because it is very hard to manipulate the organizational culture (Kotter, 2012, p. 163). Mueller (2017) contended that a strong culture can represent a formidable mechanism for a status quo bias; "the belief that the status quo is the best and most appropriate process for any company to adhere to" (p. 139). Consequently, to effect transformational change, adaptive leaders need to adopt a culture of accountability, which promotes a communal sense of responsibility for the final results of the change program (Connors & Smith, 2011). Connors and Smith (2011) stated, "Creating an organizational culture where people embrace their accountability toward one another and toward the organization should occupy center stage in any efforts to increase successful organizational change" (p. 1). According to Kotter, anchoring new approaches in the organizational culture depends on the outcomes of the change process; therefore, modifying the culture should come at the end (p. 166).

Despite the critical importance of an engaging and inspiring organizational culture, most leaders do not devote resources to create a productive workplace environment (Edmonds, 2014). Rather, an organizational culture evolves from the interactive human systems that operate within a complex corporate network (Vik, 2013, p. 3). The human dimension occurs at multiple levels in the organization and is expressed from both the individual and collective perspectives (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Thames & Webster, 2009). These multidimensional influences embody the character of the shared learning experienced by the members (Edmondson, 2012; Schein, 2017). Visionary leaders can cultivate an energizing organizational culture through the establishment of a framework that promotes personal and collective accountability (Connors & Smith, 2011).

Connors and Smith (2011) asserted that leaders can transform performance by creating an organizational culture that aligns the experiences, beliefs, and actions of the enterprise to achieve targeted results (p. 11). Thames and Webster (2009) stated, “Rare is the organization that attempts to understand the strategic drivers of change, then link them to specific cause-and-effect actions within the organizational culture on personal and individual levels” (p. 2). According to Connors and Smith, the culture produces the results; therefore, the leaders’ efforts should focus on the creating an organizational culture where people accept their role in facilitating change rather than resisting change. Schein (2010) posited that the organizational culture was a shared phenomenon derived from the collective relation to the environment, as reflected in the assumed core mission, primary tasks, and strategic objectives (p. 91). Consequently, leaders create

organizational change to achieve specific performance outcomes by enhancing the personal awareness of their members to the complexities in the business environment (Schein, 2010; Thames & Webster, 2009). Based on the WWR organizational culture, the leaders should expect acceptance of the transformational effort; however, since the command is in the beginning stages of their change program, assessing any potential resistance is not practical (WWR, 2016a).

Kotter (2012) stressed the importance of leadership in successful transformation efforts, primarily for developing a future vision and the strategies needed to achieve that vision, and for aligning, motivating, and inspiring the people to accept and contribute to accomplishing the new vision (p. 28). Maxwell (1993) succinctly characterized leadership as influence at its basic level. Northouse (2015) defined leadership as the way a person influences other people to achieve a common goal (p. 6). Northouse (2015) differentiated leadership from coercion, arguing that rather than personal influence, coercion implied the use of force to effect change, which runs counter to working with followers to achieve a common objective (p. 13). However, Northouse (2015) related the concept of power with leadership, stating that power, in some capacity, was a necessary aspect of the influence process. Hersey (2004) affirmed that leadership power denotes influence potential (p. 70). Burns (2010) contended that to effect behavior, leadership power had to relate the motives of the leader with those of the power recipient. According to Burns (1978), "Power and leadership become part of a system of social causation" (p. 13). Therefore, adopting a leadership approach that positively influences human behavior

by balancing the power aspects is paramount for a successful transformational change framework (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Grenny, et al., 2013; Kotter, 2012).

According to Anderson and Anderson (2010), conscious change leaders are more aware of their capabilities and potential, which makes them more adaptable. Their greater sense of self makes them better leaders of people, especially during times of change because it translates into a better appreciation of their core human needs (Anderson & Anderson, 2010, p. 140). Adaptive leadership, as the name of the approach implies, is characterized as an approach some leaders use to encourage people to adapt and deal with challenges, problems, and change (Northouse, 2015). Adaptive leadership is focused on the adaptations required of people in changing environments (Northouse, 2015, p. 257). Transformative change creates disorder in the organizational context, which requires the conscious change leader to influence people to adapt and restore order to the complex organizational system (Heifetz, 1994; Northouse, 2015).

Heifetz (1994) referred to the actions required to adapt and resolve complex problems as adaptive work. Heifetz (1994) stated, “Adaptive work consists of the learning required to address conflicts in the values people hold, or to diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face. Adaptive work requires a change in values, beliefs, or behavior” (p. 22). Heifetz (1994) asserted that leadership was a normative concept: “The hardest and most valuable task of leadership may be advancing goals and designing strategy that promote adaptive work” (p. 23). Consequently, Heifetz (1994) contended that most individuals resist the discomfort, anxiety, and conflict that usually accompanies adaptive work; instead, many people

assume work avoidance mechanisms (p. 37). The main challenge for an adaptive or a conscious change leader becomes their ability to counteract the work avoidance mechanisms and encourage people to adapt despite their natural resistance tendencies (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Heifetz, 1994; Kotter, 2012).

Even though Kotter's model is focused on managing the negative effects of complacency, resistance to change can promote adaptation and new learning (Schein, 2010). Organizations are complex adaptive systems, characterized by the communicative interactions among its members. These engagements represent a power-resistance relationship between the change leader and the change recipient (Thomas & Hardy, 2011). Ignoring personal resistance undermines the change process and fails to consider its potential benefits. Resistance expands communication about the change process, which can increase awareness and deepen understanding (Ford & Ford, 2010). These discussions can serve as a valuable information resource for the conscious change leader to enhance the transformative process (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Ford & Ford, 2010).

Leadership is the influential force that can convert complacency to commitment, because uncontrolled resistance to change can sabotage the entire transformational process (Kotter, 2012; Grenny et al., 2013; Rao, 2015). Therefore, the conscious change leader must target resistance and commitment simultaneously, treating them as opposing attitudes on a scale of responses (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald, & Nguyen-Quang, 2015a). Resistance to change encompasses many causal factors, but assuming an adaptive leadership style that mobilizes people to resolve complex problems and face the risk of conversion is an effective method for increasing

their support for the transformational change process (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Northouse, 2016).

Even though Kotter's construct for leading transformational change has achieved prominent recognition as a business management reference, there are some concerns regarding the validity of its conceptions (Appelbaum, Habashy, Malo, & Shaiq, 2012). The most apparent criticism is the lack of supporting empirical research for the eight-phase process (Appelbaum et al., 2012). Kotter (2012) acknowledged that his classic book *Leading Change* (1996) does not include any references or cite other sources; rather, the method is based on personal experiences (p. xii). An examination of the literature on Kotter's organizational change model found that even though the system is extensively referenced, there were very few research studies designed to validate it as a planning framework (Appelbaum et al., 2012). Therefore, this qualitative case study will provide new information regarding the applicability of Kotter's multiple stage approach.

Even though Kotter's procedural format for leading change provides several advantages, the inflexibility of the method presents some implementation challenges that restrict its universal acceptance (Appelbaum et al., 2014; Calegari, et al., 2015). Kotter (2012) advocated for the strict adherence to a multiple stage process and emphasized that an extended commitment was required for an effective organizational change effort. In addition, Kotter maintained that all eight stages should be followed in sequence and that omitting or rushing any of the stages would risk the success of the entire change program (p. 25). In some transformation settings, however, certain stages are neither required nor relevant, which limits the applicability of the model (Appelbaum et al., 2012). At other

times, it is necessary to repeat previous stages before proceeding to the next stage in the process (Calegari et al., 2015). Moreover, Kotter's linear, multiple stage process creates a paradigm that understates the difficulties of integrating the complex network of internal and external systems in a transformational change effort (Appelbaum et al., 2012).

Despite a persistent threat of personal resistance to change, Kotter does not provide any specific interpersonal influence practices in his model, which presents an implementation challenge for change leaders (Calegari et al., 2015). Recognizing these criticisms and limitations, Kotter's multiple-stage model has been credited with facilitating successful transformational change agendas in numerous business environments (Calegari et al., 2015; Pollack & Pollack, 2015). Therefore, it was selected as the assessment instrument for this qualitative case study.

Summary and Conclusions

The focus of this literature review was twofold. To establish a base of knowledge for the research study, an extensive review of the leading organizational change theories was conducted. The conceptual framework for this qualitative case study is founded on the organizational change theories of Lewin and Kotter, and the cultural change model derived by Schein. The multidimensional method for transformational change, consisting of the content, people, and process of change, presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010) provided the structure to assess the organizational change program at the WWR. Kotter's eight step process for transformational change was used to analyze the WWR strategic plan (Kotter, 2012). The organizational systems theory offered by Lynton (1968) was included to demonstrate the interaction between the WWR and the complex

veteran support environment. Complementing the research on organizational change was a comprehensive review of the official records associated with the establishment and development of the WWR, as well as planning documents explaining their strategic direction.

The literature review reinforced the premise that the success of a transformational change process depends on the human dynamics of the organization, at the individual and group levels. The foundation for this understanding originated with Lewin's change model of unfreezing, changing, and refreezing in human systems. The model represents the adverse response that most people have to the experience of unlearning and relearning different thoughts, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors (Schein, 1999). This cognitive preference for the status quo forms the basis for the multiple stage change process developed by Kotter (2012), which emphasizes the need for adaptive leadership to overcome the natural resistance to change. The research indicated that leadership is responsible for creating the new strategic intent and the organizational culture that embraces the transformation (Anderson & Anderson, 2010; Hamel & Prahalad, 1994; Schein, 2017).

The post-9/11 wounded warriors represent the full cost of the combat operations from our nation's Global War on Terror (Gates, 2014, p. 109). Stiglitz and Bilmes (2008) calculated the cost of the Iraq War to exceed three trillion dollars, which includes the federal expenditures required to care for these wounded warriors. These enormous costs signify the unremitting responsibility that these wars carry for the nation; primarily, the DOD, the VA, and the military services. This qualitative research study examined these

costs through the perspective of the Marine Corps' WWR; an organization transforming its structure and operations to meet the changing needs of their supported wounded warriors.

Even though the leaders of WWR assumed the needed sense of urgency to affect the broad changes that the Dole-Shalala commission recommended, implementing their new strategic direction presents some difficult challenges. For example, the leaders are contending with contracting financial resources and waning public interest in veteran's issues. Since the WWR is in the beginning stages of the process, it was not practical to assess their efforts from their command documents. Therefore, this qualitative case study, as outlined in Chapter 3, is designed to assess their approach and progress using semi-structured, personal interviews with the staff representatives of the WWR. The intention for this research study is to assist the leaders of the WWR with their transformational change effort and inform the broader community of veteran support agencies about the numerous challenges confronting the post-9/11 veterans.

The research design and method, as well as the rationale for this research study, are explained in Chapter 3. The role of the researcher and issues of trustworthiness also are addressed in Chapter 3. In the chapter, I describe the alignment between the research methodology and the purpose of the study. I convey the ethical procedures used during the case study. A discussion of the recruitment procedures and the participation selection process used for the research study are included in the chapter. The chapter ends with a summary and a transition to Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to better understand the challenges associated with organizational change to enable the WWR to more effectively and efficiently meet the complex medical and transitional needs of post-9/11 Marine veterans. In this study, I explored the process of implementing a major operational and cultural change within an organization using the WWR as the case. I gained a more thorough knowledge of the WWR and their transformational change initiative through personal interviews with the leaders and staff members of the WWR and an analysis of their historical documents. The WWR served as both the unit of analysis and the bounded system, the two principal distinguishing features of the qualitative case study design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

This qualitative case study capitalized on my professional experience as a military leader, strategic planner, and wounded veteran. I selected the exploratory nature of a qualitative case study design because it enabled me to more fully understand the diverse challenges of leading a transformational change program using a military organizational context. In this chapter, I will provide a thorough description of my research methodology and my role as the researcher to achieve these objectives. In addition, the chapter will include an explanation of my participant recruitment process and selection rationale. I will also present my data analysis plan, the issues of trustworthiness, and ethical procedures applied in this study. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the main points and a transition to Chapter 4.

Research Design and Rationale

The central research question for this qualitative case study was: How do the leaders of an organization designed for a special mission effectively transform their operations to respond to new demands in a complex environment?

Sub-question 1: What were the internal and external drivers for the organizational change effort at the WWR?

Sub-question 2: What were the significant leadership challenges and risks associated with effecting the transformational change effort at the WWR?

Sub-question 3: What were the managerial lessons from the WWR organizational change experience that would be applicable to the broader veteran service and support community?

The strategic organizational change effort planned by the WWR represents a transformation that served as the primary source for my qualitative case study. This restructuring effort is necessary to better align their resources and services to more effectively provide support the combat-wounded and noncombat ill and injured Marines (WWR, 2016a). The multidimensional approach to transformational change presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010) formed the conceptual framework for this qualitative case study. According the Anderson and Anderson, a successful transformational change program integrates the organizational processes, the human dynamics, and the implementation plan into a coherent strategy.

To understand the transformational change initiative for the WWR, I used the qualitative research methodology. This method is mainly used to explore and understand

the personal meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). For this research study, the social problem was the national crisis created by the complex medical and transition assistance needs of post-9/11 veterans. I selected the qualitative case study design because it enabled me to analyze an organizational change program from the perspective of the leaders and staff members most directly involved in the process. This research design also afforded me the opportunity to study the complex challenges confronting the GWOT wounded warriors.

As a military organization, the WWR is required to submit and maintain official reports, records, and documents, which I analyzed as a central aspect of my data collection plan. These documents provided valuable information regarding the history and culture of the WWR and enabled me to conduct a more comprehensive assessment of their organizational change program. These public documents informed my interview questions and created a more complete data collection strategy. Though the personal interviews served as the primary data collection tool, the document review process enhanced the credibility of my study because they represented the use of multiple data sources (Patton, 2015).

Creswell (2014) contended that quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables, which can be measured using statistical analysis methods. Martin and Bridgmon (2012) stated that “at the core of quantitative research is studying and measuring how variables change” (p. 3). Typically, quantitative research includes true experiments and quasi-experiments as well as nonexperimental designs such as correlation research projects, which use statistical

analysis to compare and assess the interactions between variables (Creswell, 2014, p. 12). Based on these characteristics, I deemed a quantitative research format incompatible with the exploratory nature of my research study. Rather than a numerical analysis of the organizational change effort, I determined that the descriptive assessment associated with qualitative research afforded me the opportunity to conduct a more informed research study.

The qualitative research design and data collection methods aligned with the purpose of the research study and allowed me to address the central research question through interpersonal engagements with the research participants. In this study, I explored the leadership challenges of implementing a major operational and cultural change within an organization using the change models designed by Schein (2017) and Kotter (2010) and the multidimensional framework for transformational change developed by Anderson and Anderson (2010). I also incorporated a review of the innovation integration mechanisms adopted by the leaders of the WWR to affect their new strategic intent (Lynton, 1968).

Role of the Researcher

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) listed the primary role of the researcher as one of the four major characteristics for all qualitative research, which also included an inductive process that focused on understanding to convey a rich descriptive analysis of the phenomenon of interest. These four attributes of all qualitative research connote a predominantly human process that presents opportunities and invoke responsibilities on the researcher. For example, the researcher has an obligation to remain cognizant of their

subjective assumptions and perceptions that could negatively affect the results of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). If unmonitored, subjective tendencies have the potential to detract from the trustworthiness of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). On the other hand, adherence to these factors can enable a more thorough analysis of the subject of inquiry.

Based on the purpose and scope of this qualitative case study, my role as the researcher was predominantly that of an evaluator (Patton, 2015). Research observations, however, were not a part of this case study. Assuming an assessor role enabled me to conduct meaningful personal interviews (Patton, 2015). My data collection process concentrated on conducting and interpreting semi-structured, personal interviews with the research participants. The interviewees were informed of my intention for the study and my role as the sole researcher and interviewer. I designed my research study for a specific purpose, with semi-structured interview questions prepared in advance to promote the effective use of available time (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The interview questions were open-ended to promote discovery and flexibility, enabling a more thorough examination of the research subject (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

My professional status as a retired military officer enhanced my access to the leaders, staff members, and records at the WWR. At the same time, my military status may have influenced the responses of some of the participants. Maxwell (2013) referred to this researcher influence as reactivity and listed it as a potential threat to the validity of qualitative research. Though I never had a direct supervisory position at the regiment, my military status promoted a positive rapport with the research participants. Rather than

trying to eliminate these personal influences from my study, I diligently monitored them because they could have shaped my understanding of the research data and affected the outcomes of my study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Maxwell (2013) presented an interactive framework for qualitative research based on the assumption that despite a plan of inquiry, the research design requires the continual reassessment for possible modifications and revisions as the researcher engages in an inductive process. As the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, the qualitative researcher not only shapes but also is affected by these interactions resulting in two fundamental biases: respondent bias and researcher bias (Maxwell, 2013). Miles and Huberman (1994) referred to these biases as Bias A and Bias B respectively, asserting that both biases are natural occurrences in qualitative research. To contend with these biases, I took proactive measures to minimize their negative effects and to promote the validity of my qualitative case study.

In regards to respondent bias, I ensured that the participants received detailed information regarding my intentions for the study. Research candidates received an invitation to participate in the study that fully explained the interview process. Those who accepted were scheduled for an interview at a convenient time. The interviews were conducted in a courteous and cordial manner respecting the rights of the participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I used respondent validations to reduce the chances for misunderstandings and misinterpretations in the research data (Bryman, 2012). To avoid researcher bias, I remained attentive to the purpose of the study and unwavering in the ethical standards of qualitative research (Patton, 2015). I used multiple data collection

and analysis methods to enable a more comprehensive and credible research study. In the remainder of this chapter, I will address these bias concerns and my response to them in more detail.

Methodology

Merriam (2009) stated that a qualitative case study focuses on a specific program, event, situation, or phenomenon, describing it in a particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic manner that enables an in-depth analysis of that particular case. These distinct characteristics of the qualitative case study design support my use of an interpretive, epistemological perspective, which assumes that social realities are constructed and that there are multiple versions of that reality developed through the lived experiences of the participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These special features distinguish this research design from the other qualitative research approaches (Merriam, 2009, p. 42).

The nature of qualitative case study research supports a rich descriptive narrative of that case, which provides a comprehensive understanding and an interpretation of its context (Stake, 2006). To advance the understanding for leading organizational change, I conducted a qualitative case study utilizing the WWR as the unit of analysis and the bounded system (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995). Through personal interviews with the leaders and primary staff members of this military organization and an extensive review of their official records, I produced a detailed report of the organizational change program from the perspective of the research participants.

Participant Selection Logic

The workforce of the WWR is comprised on of a mixed population of Marines (61), Navy medical corpsmen (21), federal civilian employees (115), and contracted specialists (Campbell, 2016b, slide 5). The approved personnel staffing level for the WWR is listed as 197 personnel; however, this staffing level is part of the organizational change program (Campbell, 2016b). Though the contract specialists serve an essential support role, they are not considered employees of the WWR. Therefore, the contracted specialists were excluded from participation consideration. To ensure that the data collection strategy included a representation of this diverse workforce, I recruited a purposeful sample of between 20 to 25 staff members, or approximately 10% of the workforce, to participate in the study.

The participant selection strategy for this research study focused on purposeful sampling as opposed to random sampling. Purposeful sampling refers to the selection of a small group of knowledgeable personnel capable of providing meaningful information (Patton, 2015). The main objective for the purposeful sampling strategy was to select the people most experienced with the organizational change program at the WWR. This subgroup of subject matter experts represented a reliable sample of the workforce (Patton, 2015). For my research study, the purposeful sample included current and former senior leaders and key staff members. The sample was comprised of military personnel and civilian employees. The purposeful sampling consisted of members working at the regimental headquarters, the component battalions, and the different detachments across the country.

The participant selection criteria for this qualitative case study represented a reputational sampling strategy, which relies on a small group of people to share their knowledge, experience, and perspectives on the investigated subject (Patton, 2015). The study participants were invited based on their position within the organization, and screened for their willingness, capability, and availability to contribute to the research study. The purposeful sample recruited the persons with the knowledge and experience to provide the most relevant and accurate information concerning the organizational change program at the WWR. The selected study sample included participants with personal involvement in the organization since its formation.

The participant selection strategy for my qualitative case study aligned with my research problem in that the purposeful sample selected those leaders and staff members who are directly involved with the organizational change program at the WWR. These participants have the most relevant knowledge, experience, and perceptions on the subject of inquiry. Consequently, these respondents were able to provide information to answer the central research question regarding the leadership challenges associated with organizational change and offer advice on the direction for the WWR to more effectively meet its strategic objective of supporting their post-9/11 Marine veterans.

The multidimensional approach to transformational change presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010) formed the conceptual framework for this qualitative case study. This approach is centered on connecting three critical areas for change: the content, the people, and the process. According to Anderson and Anderson, the content factor refers to those tangible aspects of the organization that require change, while the

people facet represents to the human dynamics of change. The process of change denotes the leadership decisions and actions that integrate the content and the people components into a coherent strategy (Anderson & Anderson, 2010). The data collection strategy for this research study focused on selecting those senior leaders and staff members who have the direct responsibility for leading and managing these critical aspects of the organization.

The third research sub-question enquired about the application for the managerial lessons learned from the organizational change effort at the WWR, which are distinct from the leadership lessons learned. Kotter (2012) referred to management as a set of processes designed to effectively integrate a complex system of people and technology within an organization while leadership described the competences required to adapt them for the changing business circumstances and environmental conditions. According to Maxwell (2007), leadership involves influencing people, while management focuses on maintaining systems and processes. Though fundamentally different, these two important factors support the conceptual framework for organizational change developed by Anderson and Anderson (2010). Therefore, the recruited sample for this research study included both the leaders and managers of the WWR.

Instrumentation

The primary data collection instrument for this qualitative case study was semi-structured, personal interviews utilizing an interview guide. This interview procedure combined structured questions that addressed specific topics with open-ended questions that enabled the participants to express their thoughts and perspectives about the research

subject (Patton, 2015). Telephone interviews served as the secondary interview format, while asynchronous text-based interviews were not conducted. Though considered, computer media communication systems that enable a synchronous interface, such as Adobe Connect or Skype, were projected but not used to conduct the interviews due to participant preferences. The interview procedure for both the personal and telephone interviews consisted of three segments; an opening segment, a middle segment, and a concluding segment (Galletta, 2013).

The opening segment of the personal interviews was used to establish a rapport with the participant and set an informal tone for the interview. An active-interview approach was applied to enable the participants engage in a discussion to construct their narrative with background and experience questions (Patton, 2015). The middle segment was devoted to exploring the research subject through the thoughts and perspectives of the participants utilizing open-ended questions. To extend the conversation with the participants, probing and follow-up questions were asked (Galletta, 2013). The conclusion segment transitioned to questions that afforded the participants a chance to clarify their points and make final comments (Galletta, 2013). The interviews ended with an expression of my appreciation and an exchange of contact information. Even though the semi-structured, personal interviews were conducted as one-time engagements, it was imperative that we departed with a means to continue our interaction after the interview (Patton, 2015, p. 470).

According to Patton (2015), “the raw data of interviews are the actual quotations spoken by the interviewees” (p. 471). To capture the responses verbatim, the interviews

for this study were audio-recorded. The recruitment process included a consent request to have their interview audio-recorded and prior approval was granted by each participant. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated that “verbatim transcription of recorded interviews provides the best database for analysis” (p. 131). Initially I planned to transcribe the interview recordings; however, to enhance the timeliness and quality of the interview transcriptions, the audio recordings were professionally transcribed. Despite the use of an audio recorder, I wrote notes during the interviews to stimulate discussion and capture the salient points (Patton, 2015). These written memos not only supplemented the recorded responses, but also facilitated my analysis of each interview.

Patton (2015) asserted that, “the period after an interview or observation is critical to the rigor and validity of qualitative inquiry” (p. 473). Therefore, I devised a post interview practice of checking the audio recordings and reviewing my notes immediately after each interview. This quality control practice included an evaluation of the interview questions, the interview protocol, the information exchanged, and a summary of the interview. These general impressions provided the context for the analysis of the data and shaped the preparation for the subsequent interviews. This post interview routine represented the reciprocity and reflection required by the researcher conducting interviews (Galletta, 2013). Reciprocity refers to a mutual responsibility between the interviewer and the interviewee for an exchange of information, while reflection represents the answerability of the interpretation of that information by the researcher (Galletta).

The secondary data collection instrument for this research study consisted of a document review of the official reports and historical records published by the WWR. The document review provided important information regarding the progression of the regiment, which enabled a more comprehensive assessment of their future strategic direction. In addition, the information from document review shaped the interview questions and permitted an integrated data collection process. The information obtained from these documents contributed to answering the research question and enhanced the meaning of this case study.

Field Test

For this qualitative case study, I conducted a field test of the interview protocol to refine my procedures and revise my interview questions. According to Galletta (2013), “Formulating questions and ordering them requires considerable time, and trial and error through field-testing of the protocol, which is the set of questions” (p. 45). Though similar in function, and commonly used interchangeably, pilot studies and field tests are different methods for checking the validity of the data collection instruments (Brewer, 2015). Due to the exploratory nature of this qualitative case study, a field test using a small number of respondents, three to five people who have adept knowledge about research studies, were asked to provide feedback regarding the appropriateness of the projected interview questions. Since their main purpose was to assess the data collection instrument and not to participate in the research study, their responses were not included in the data analysis (Patton, 2015). These subject matter experts were not associated with the WWR or part of the purposeful sample for this case study.

The proposed reviewers were the former commanding officers and senior leaders of the WWR. These former leaders would have an extensive knowledge of the WWR without a personal commitment to the organizational change program, which would enable them to present objective and substantive responses. However, after further consideration, I decided to include these former members in the purposeful sample and recruit them as research participants. Consequently, I asked professors with experience in doctoral research to assess my interview guide. These experts came from sources external to the Marine Corps and the WWR. In addition to reviewing the data collection instruction, the professors were able to provide new dimensions and conceptions for consideration (Maxwell, 2013). Revisions to the interview guide and research study were made based on the feedback received from these experts. (See Appendix E for a copy the interview guide).

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

For qualitative research, Galletta (2013) contended that “the design is most faithful to the research question when you have formulated criteria for the selection of participants” (p. 33). For this research study, my recruitment strategy concentrated on the senior leaders and staff members of WWR knowledgeable about their organizational change effort. This recruitment approach provided a sample of participants with relevant information regarding the research question (Patton, 2015). This recruitment method rationally correlated with the data collection plan of personal interviews and directly supported the qualitative case study approach. This research design facilitated a descriptive narrative of the case study from the perspectives of the participants.

According to Patton (2015), “The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich cases* for in-depth study” (p. 264). Patton regarded information-rich cases as those that can provide the most relevant information about the research subject (p. 264).

The recruitment strategy for this research study began with a series of meetings with the commanding officer of the WWR to establish access and receive contact permission for potential research candidates (Seidman, 2013). The data collection plan consisted of semi-structured, personal interviews with senior leaders and staff members of the WWR and a document review of their official records. The documents review occurred during the literature review and the information attained from the official records of the WWR shaped the interview guide. The documents review was an important source for background information and operational context, which enabled more comprehensive and thorough interview questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

From the WWR, I obtained contact information for the leaders and staff members of the regimental headquarters, the battalions, and the detachments. I invited a sample of these representatives to participate in this research study through personal interviews to discuss their experiences and perspectives about their organizational change program. I sent an electronic invitation and received acceptance e-mails from a majority of the recruited candidates. I telephoned these volunteers to answer questions about the study and to schedule their interview (Seidman, 2013). I forwarded each interview candidate a copy of the interview consent form that described the interviews procedures and discussed the potential risks and benefits of participating in the research study. Prior to

their interview, each participant signed the consent form agreeing to the protocol. These recruitment procedures generated a sufficient number of participants with the relevant knowledge to achieve data saturation. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), “saturation occurs when continued data collection produces no new information or insights into the phenomenon that you are studying” (p. 199).

The purposeful sample from these representatives of the WWR supported the data collection plan for 20 to 25 semi-structured, personal interviews to achieve data saturation. The interviews used an interview guide format that combined structured questions that address specific subjects with open-ended questions that enable the participants to provide their thoughts, perspectives, and opinions (Patton, 2015). These interviews were planned as single events with a targeted time of 45 minutes for each interview. Each participant received a copy of the interview transcript for their review. The participants were afforded 3 business days to review their transcript and respond by e-mail either to the confirmation its accuracy or to request edits. This e-mail correspondence became part of the official records of the research study. After the transcripts were verified, an official thank-you letter was sent to the participants with my contact information for any follow-on comments, questions, or concerns (Patton, 2015).

My preliminary discussions with the Commanding Officer and the Assistant Commander of the WWR were very positive and resulted their approval of the research study as planned. These meetings not only presented an excellent understanding of the research study but also established a tremendous rapport with the organization (Seidman, 2013). As part of the exit strategy for the qualitative case study, a review of the research

findings with the commanding officer and the assistant commander of the WWR is scheduled. In addition, the participants of the research study can request a copy of the completed report. These actions are planned to enable me to conclude the qualitative case study professionally and gratefully (Seidman, 2013).

Data Analysis Plan

A content analysis approach was used to analyze the narrative texts from the personal interviews and researcher notes to determine the central themes and meanings (Patton, 2015). The process for managing the data involved the formation of a descriptive coding hierarchical structure of categories and subcategories that represented the dominant themes, concepts, and patterns (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). During this phase, I immersed myself in the research data and manually transcribed written notes from the semi-structured interviews to summarize their main points (Yin, 2016). To verify my comprehension, a draft of the completed transcript was sent to the participants for their review. Prospective themes derived from the literature review regarding organizational change concepts were part of the data analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The data analysis included researcher memos as a means of gaining meaning and understanding from the data (Janesick, 2016).

According to Stake (1995), “Good research is not about good methods as much as it is about good thinking” (p. 19). To enhance the data analysis process, written notes that captured my thoughts and perceptions about the data were examined. These researcher memos not only generated new ideas but also provided direction to the review process (Yin, 2016). Saldaña (2016) compared analytic memos to a researcher journal. Janesick

(2016) stressed the need for the qualitative researcher to develop the practices of reflection, observation, and description through journal writing. Analytic memos were used to capture both the positive and negative aspects of the data collection process and served as a resource for procedural revisions (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

This data analysis plan complies with the five analytic phases expressed by Yin (2016), which involve compiling, disassembling, reassembling, and arraying, interpreting, and concluding. Even though the formal data analysis began during the first phase, informal data analysis started with the data collection and continued throughout the entire process (Yin, 2016). The first phase involved organizing the interview transcriptions, analytic memos, and document review records into a useful database. The second phase consisted of disassembling the data into segments using codes to capture main themes. The third phase included reassembling the segments into a useful structure, which enabled the interpretation of the material to create meaning. In the final phase, I described the conclusions based on my objective analysis of the information produced during the five phase process. Though these phases were presented in a sequential manner, the data analysis was not a linear process (Yin, 2016).

The data analysis process started with a preliminary interpretation of the research data to form initial impressions. Subsequently, an extensive assessment of the interview transcripts and analytic notes was conducted to develop a structure of codes and themes. This coding structured was advanced through multiple readings of these research documents. The data analysis included an interview transcript review by the participants. This interactive phase was conducted to ensure that the final research report contained

only verified and vetted information. The objective of the data analysis was to answer the research question, which for this study centered on the leadership challenges of implementing an organizational change program.

The coding method for this qualitative case study consisted of two phases. The initial list of codes was derived from the documents review, interview transcripts, and analytic memos. A revised record of interpretive or analytic codes that represented a higher degree of understanding of the research data comprised the second coding phase. Saldaña (2016) defined a code as a word or short phrase that assigns relevant and collective meaning to textual or visual data. The revised codes reflected the themes associated with research questions regarding transformational change; such as, organizational culture, complex environment, leadership challenges, strategic intent, and management principles. The second level of codes advanced from descriptive to analytic coding, which enabled the generation of meaning from the data based on my reflection and interpretation (Richards, 2015). Conclusions were not made from the initial assessments; instead, the research results were based off a rigorous process and an adherence to validation measures (Patton, 2015).

For this qualitative case study, I used the NVivo computer software to support the data management and analysis processes; primarily, to store, manage, organize, and report the data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2014). NVivo was used to enhance the coding and categorizing processes and enable a more comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the research data. The NVivo software provided a means to connect concepts and themes with the source references. Through these actions, NVivo supported more informed

decisions that strengthen the credibility of this research study. Research data were exported into Microsoft Excel to produce spreadsheets. This dual approach to data analysis, which combined manual and computerized measures offset the potential for becoming detached from the research data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2014).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

The credibility, or internal validity, of a qualitative study reflects to the degree to which the research findings match reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Because of the holistic nature of qualitative research, gaining congruence with reality can present a significant challenge for the researcher. According to Maxwell (2013), “Validity is generally acknowledged to be a key *issue* in research design, and I think it’s important that is be explicitly addressed” (p, 121). As a result, the researcher has to incorporate certain strategies into the research design that gain confidence in the research findings. One of the most commonly used strategies to promote credibility is triangulation. The use of multiple data collection instruments is a form of triangulation that I embedded into my research design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

As the primary data collection method, I used semi-structured, personal interviews with the senior leaders and staff members of the WWR to capture their thoughts and perceptions about the reality of their organizational change program. A document review of the official records of the regiment served as the secondary data collection method. These procedures enabled an examination and evaluation of the collected data, which enhanced the credibility of this research study through the

procedure for triangulation. According to Patton, “Triangulation, in whatever form, increases the credibility and quality by countering the concern (or accusation) that a study’s findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator’s blinders” (p. 674).

The second strategy to promote the credibility of the collected data that I implemented in my research study was respondent validation or member checks (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This process involved soliciting feedback from the interview participants as a means of validating my interpretations of the data. The field test of the interview questions provided another opportunity to solicit feedback on my research study. Adequate engagement is a third strategy that I applied in my research design. This credibility development strategy reflects my personal commitment to the data collection process by spending sufficient time with the participants to understand their perspectives (Maxwell, 2013). Related to adequate engagement is the fourth credibility strategy that involves “looking for data that support alternative explanations” (Patton, 2015, p. 653). My reflection, dedication, and devotion as the researcher are other measures adopted to promote the credibility of my qualitative case study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Transferability

Miles and Huberman (1994) related the concern for transferability in qualitative research with the degree to which the conclusions of the research study have a broader importance and are applicable for other settings. Maxwell (2013) referred to this challenge in qualitative research as generalization and made the distinction between internal generalization (variation in the subject of inquiry for the study setting) and

external generalization (extension of the research results and outcomes to settings outside the study). Patton (2015) preferred the term extrapolation because it more clearly connotes the extension of the outcomes to other applications beyond the confines of the research study.

To support the transferability and generalization of this qualitative case study, I ensured that the purposeful sample was representative of the diverse workforce of the WWR. Specifically, I interviewed participants from across the WWR, including the personnel assigned to their different detachments located across the country. I used the document review of the official records of the WWR as a resource of the interview questions. These data collection methods promoted the variation in the research sources and the internal generalization of the research study. Since the organizational change program at the WWR was mainly driven by a dramatic shift in the demographics of their supported military and veteran populations, the research results should have transferability to other veteran support organizations.

Dependability

To promote a sense of dependability in the outcomes for this qualitative research study, I maintained a comprehensive audit trail of the entire research process to support and explain the research outcomes. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) compared the need to authenticate records and justify findings between the qualitative researcher and the business accountant. Richards (2015) preferred the term log records to signify the journey that a research study takes. To advance the dependability of my study, I kept a reflective

journal and reflective memos on the entire research process, to include the key decisions made throughout the research study (Janesick, 2016).

To enhance the consistency and dependability of the research results, I applied multiple data collection instruments as a form of triangulation (Patton, 2015). The primary data collection method was personal interviews from a representative sample. I used member checks to validate the accuracy of the interview transcripts and increase the dependability in the research results. The interview protocol consisted of three connected segments that standardized the interview approach. The opening section was used to establish a rapport with the participant and set an informal tone for the interview. The middle segment was devoted to exploring the research subject through the thoughts and perspectives of the participants utilizing open-ended questions. The conclusion section transitioned to questions that afforded the participants a chance to clarify their points and make final comments. Through these strategies, I conveyed a consistent and dependable research process that supports the research outcomes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Confirmability

The concept of confirmability is comparable to the qualitative researcher's concern for objectivity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Patton (2016) stressed the importance of the researcher's ability to understand how their perspectives shape their research study. Maxwell (2013) regarded researcher bias and their reactive effect on the participants as potential threats to the validity of a research study. To contend with these inevitable pressures, I incorporated these six strategies into the research design for this study: extensive data, comprehensive records, explicit comparisons, intensive engagement,

respondent validation, and triangulation (Maxwell, 2013). In addition, I remained aware of any personal opinions that could shape the objectivity of my interpretations. (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Janesick (2016) considered qualitative research as a contemplative activity. To document my judgments and decisions during this research experience, I maintained a reflective journal. The justification for incorporating these procedures into my research design was to ensure that the research results can be confirmed through my actions as the researcher and corroborated by the participants.

Ethical Considerations

In addition to receiving approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this research study (IRB Approval No.: 03-23-18-0428677), I obtained permission from the Marine Corps' IRB. Even though I had a brief involvement with the WWR during my career in the Marine Corps, this research study was conducted after my retirement from the military to avoid any conflict of interests. This qualitative case study reflects my interpretivist orientation. Throughout the study, I focused on projecting the perspectives of the participants regarding the subject of inquiry. This qualitative study complied with the ethical principles established by the *Belmont Report*, which must be observed in all research with human beings:

Respect for Persons: Respect for the participants' autonomy and the need to protect those whose human condition results in reduced autonomy.

Beneficence: The Hippocratic Oath imperative to do no harm, and a stricture to maximize benefits and minimize risks.

Justice: Research must involve the equitable selection of participants and must be fair to all who participate. (Seidman, 2013, p. 61)

The personal interviews with the senior leaders and staff representatives of the WWR were conducted in a respectful manner. The research sample represented the diverse workforce of the regiment. The data collection plan relied on volunteers from across the organization. Each participant was sent an e-mail explaining the purpose of the study and inviting them to participate in the research inquiry. In addition, each participant was forwarded a consent form describing the procedures for their interview and addressing any perceived risks associated with participating in the research study. Strict adherence to privacy procedures, such as assigning an alpha numeric code to the interview responses, was maintained throughout the research study.

The informed consent consisted of eight sections that explicitly explained the purpose and significance of the study, describe in detail the data collection and analysis processes, specify the procedures to protect the rights and privacy of the participants, apprise the participants that there is no cost or compensation for participating in the study, and notify the participants that they may withdraw from the study at any time (Seidman, 2013). The consent form listed the storage and destruction arrangements for all research documents, transcripts, and audiotapes. (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015).

Throughout the data collection and analysis phases, I secured all research documents in a locked location. All the research data stored on electronic devices are password protected. I must maintain strict control of these records for 5-years following the completion of this qualitative study. I have made arrangements to shred, destroy,

delete, and dispose of all research materials after the mandatory 5-year storage period. I am the only person that has access to the research materials in perpetuity. The participants received a copy of their interview transcript but are not authorized access to any other research data. The participants, however, may request a copy of the completed dissertation.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented a comprehensive description of the research methodology selected for this qualitative case study; to include, my role as the single researcher and primary instrument for data collection and analysis. The purpose of this chapter was to articulate the rationale for my decisions and explain the procedures for this research study. In addition, the chapter was devoted to conveying the alignment between the research methodology and the purpose of the case study. I also showed the connection between the research questions and the data collection instruments; specifically, the interview protocol, interview questions, and the official documents review. The issues of trustworthiness and the ethical procedures for the study were addressed in this chapter. A discussion of the recruitment procedures and the participation selection process for the study was included in the chapter. To refine the interview procedures and enhance my skills as an interviewer, the use of a field test was mentioned as an important facet of this research study.

Another central objective for this chapter was to explain how my interpretive philosophic perspective shaped this qualitative study. This paradigm assumes that social reality is constructed through the experiences of others, which I intend to convey through

a narrative description of the transformational change effort of a veteran support organization as expressed by the participants of this case study—their senior leaders and primary staff members. In addition, I have addressed my personal biases and conceptions that form the theoretical framework for this case study: “All aspects of the study are affected by its theoretical framework” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 86). This framework directly relates to the purpose of the research study and indicates the substance of the subject of inquiry, which is depicted in the sections of Chapter 3.

In Chapter 4, I describe the research processes for my qualitative case study that explored the leadership challenges of implementing an organizational change program using the WWR. I present the text-driven results from the semi-structured, individual interviews with current and former staff members of the WWR. I explain the procedures used for the field test of the interview guide and questions. In Chapter 4, I also address the notification of the procedural changes to the research study due to unexpected circumstances experienced during the data collection. In the results section of the chapter, I provide a discussion of the central research question and three sub-questions through emergent themes and categorical findings. I conclude the chapter with a summary and a transition to Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to better understand the challenges associated with organizational change to enable the WWR to more effectively and efficiently meet the complex medical and transitional needs of the post-9/11 Marine veterans. In this qualitative research study, I explored the process of implementing a major operational and cultural change within an organization using the WWR as the case study. I gained a more thorough knowledge of the WWR and their transformational change initiative through personal interviews with the leaders and staff members of the WWR and an analysis of their historical documents. The WWR served as both the unit of analysis and the bounded system, the two principal distinguishing features of the qualitative case study design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

In this chapter, I will present a review of the results of the case study, organized into the following descriptive sections: (a) research questions, (b) field test, (c) research setting, (d) demographics, (e) data collection, (f) data analysis, (g) evidence of trustworthiness, and (g) qualitative results. The section on the field test will contain an explanation for the key respondents selected to assess the interview protocol. In this chapter, I will also describe the notification of the procedural changes to the research study due to unexpected circumstances experienced during the data collection phase. The results section will provide a discussion of the central research question and three sub-questions through the emergent themes and categorical findings. The results section is arranged by themes supported by direct quotes from the participants. Even though I will

provide remarks for context, the emphasis is placed on the perspectives of the participants. My interpretations will be presented in the next chapter. The chapter will conclude with a summary and a transition to Chapter 5.

Research Questions

The central research question for this qualitative case study was: How do the leaders of an organization designed for a special mission effectively transform their operations to respond to new demands in a complex environment?

Sub-questions 1: What were the internal and external drivers for the organizational change effort at the WWR?

Sub-questions 2: What were the significant leadership challenges and risks associated with effecting the transformational change effort at the WWR?

Sub-questions 3: What were the managerial lessons from the WWR organizational change experience that would be applicable to the broader veteran service and support community?

Field Test

For this qualitative case study, I conducted a field test of the interview protocol and questions to refine my procedures and revise my interview guide. Due to the exploratory nature of this qualitative case study, the field test used a small number of key respondents. Eight people, who had expert knowledge with dissertation research, were asked to provide a review of the appropriateness of the interview protocol and questions. These key respondents were not part of the purposeful sample; rather, they were professors with subject matter knowledge in doctoral studies. Since their purpose was to

assess the data collection instrument and not participate in the study, their responses were not included in the data collection and analysis. As proposed, I did not ask former commanders and staff members of the WWR to participate in the field test. Because of their knowledge and experience with the regiment, they were recruited to participate in the study; consequently, their informative contributions were included in the data collection and analysis phases of this research study.

The professors asked to participate in the field test were faculty members at the National Defense University and the Marine Corps University. I had worked with these professors during my career in the Marine Corps. From my experience, these professors had an excellent reputation for guiding research and mentoring students. Each professor was aware of my research study and had offered to lend their expertise and assistance. I provided these professors with the abstract, the purpose statement, and the research questions for this study. Of the eight professors asked to review the interview protocol, four responded and provided valuable feedback. Based on their comments, the relevance and importance of the interview protocol was confirmed and modifications to the interview protocol and questions were not necessary. Two of the professors provided me with useful advice on conducting semi-structured interviews and transcribing the interview notes. One of their recommendations was to have the audio recordings of the research interviews professionally transcribed. Accepting this recommendation required me to submit a procedural change request that was approved by the Walden IRB.

Research Setting

The purposeful sample that I selected for this qualitative case study was senior leaders and staff members of the WWR with a knowledge of the transformational change program. The participants included both former and current members of the command, which represented a variation in the proposed plan presented in Chapter 3. Including former members in the data collection broadened the scope and depth of the interview discussions, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the organization and its operations, programs, and culture. Though the participants had varying degrees of experience with the regiment, they were able to express the importance of maintaining the relevance and permanence of the organization.

Demographics

The purposeful sample for this qualitative case study included both current and former military personnel and federal civilian employees of the WWR. I sent 27 people from this sample population an e-mail invitation to participate in this study. From this population, 22 (81.5%) accepted the invitation, while two people (7.4%) declined the invitation and three people (11.1%) failed to respond to the invitation. Of the 22 willing participants, 19 (86.4%) were scheduled for an individual, semi-structured interview. The remaining three willing participants (13.6%) were not available for a personal interview due to work commitments. I conducted 17 (89.5%) interviews during business hours and two (10.5%) interviews after business hours.

The sample population for this study represented the diverse workforce of the WWR. Of the 19 interview participants: 10 (52.6%) were military personnel and nine

(47.4%) were civilian employees; 16 (84.2%) were men and three (15.8%) were women; and 14 (73.7%) were current members and five (26.3%) were former members of the WWR. I conducted 11 (57.9%) of the semi-structured interviews over the phone and eight (42.1%) in-person. The experience level differed among the study participants, who were assigned to the regiment's various offices, centers, and sections located across the country. Three (15.8%) of the participants had been with the regiment since it was established in April 2007, while one (5.3%) participant had less than a year's experience with the WWR.

Data Collection

I used semi-structured, open-ended interview questions to solicit the participants' thoughts and perspectives on the transformational change program at the WWR. The research questions were addressed through personal interviews with the leaders and staff members of the WWR. I conducted the 19 research interviews from May 1 to May 22, 2018 and audio recorded each interview. The research interview times ranged from 30 minutes to 61 minutes in length with an average interview lasting 49 minutes. The total recorded time for the 19 research interviews was 925 minutes (15 hours and 25 minutes).

In the proposed research strategy, I indicated that I would transcribe the audio recordings. However, to enhance the timeliness and quality of the transcriptions, I had the audio recordings professionally transcribed. This represented a procedural change in the research strategy that required preapproval from the Walden IRB. Each participant was sent a copy of their transcript as a Microsoft Word document via e-mail to review and edit as necessary. Each participant was afforded three business days to complete their

review. Of the 19 participants, eight (42.1%) returned their transcript with minor edits, which were incorporated into a final version for data analysis. I deleted the name of each research participant from their transcript and replaced it with a designation code to protect their privacy. Any reference to a particular participant used their assigned alphanumeric designation code.

The period for the data collection phase coincided with my back-surgery recovery, which prevented me from traveling. As a result, I conducted the 19 research interviews from my residence. Though this was a variation in the data collection plan presented in Chapter 3, this change in venue provided a private and relaxed setting. In addition, computer media technology was not used in the data collection phase because the telephone interviews were more convenient for the participants. All the interviews were conducted as a one-time event, though each participant was receptive to answering follow-up questions. I forwarded each research participant the consent form via e-mail, which they signed and returned prior to their interview. All correspondence with the research participants was accomplished through personal e-mail. Paper copies of these e-mails and the interview transcripts are safeguarded in accordance with the approved privacy protective measures for this study.

I addressed the research questions through semi-structured, personal interviews with the participants. Though the discussion was guided by the interview protocol, the questions were open-ended to enable the participants to express their perspectives based on their knowledge and experience. The personal interviews were respectfully and thoughtfully conducted with no unusual circumstances encountered. The research

participants were candid, offering cognizant responses to the interview questions. These personal interviews enabled a comprehensive assessment of the research subject that achieved data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Data Analysis

Stake (1995) distinguished between an intrinsic case study (the case itself serves as the primary, not secondary interest) and an instrumental case study (the research on a case can gain understanding about something else; p. 3). Based on these definitions, my research study was an instrumental case study that examined the transformative change effort at the WWR. Stake asserted that there were two strategic methods for deriving new meanings about cases: categorical aggregation or direct interpretation. Even though case studies depend on both methods, the categorical aggregation method is more applicable to instrumental case studies (Stake, 1995, p. 77). Therefore, my research analysis strategy involved a categorical aggregation of coded data developed from the 19 interview transcripts and my annotated notes.

According to Maxwell (2013), the categorizing strategy most often applied in qualitative research is coding. Coding depicts a process for organizing the text of transcripts and discovering patterns or themes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Saldaña (2016) stressed that coding required several readings of the transcripts and described several particular first-cycle and second-cycle coding methods. For my research study, I used the structural coding method for the first-cycle and the pattern coding method for the second-cycle (Saldaña, 2016). The structural coding method enabled me to apply a conceptual phrase approach to capture the salient points and ideas from the interview

transcripts (Saldaña, 2016). Pattern codes are explanatory codes that identify the emergent categories, concepts, and themes from the coded data (Saldaña, 2016). The pattern codes enabled me to condense the coding structure into analytical units and develop themes from the coded data (Saldaña, 2016).

The structural coding method involved several readings of interview transcript examining for salient ideas, phrases, and concepts, which were captured in annotated notes in the margins of the text documents. The transcripts were uploaded into NVivo-11 Computer-Assisted Qualitative Analysis Software (CAQDAS). The CAQDAS enabled me to organize the interview transcripts by interview question and query the documents for key words and phrases. From these searches, a conceptual diagram of parent and child nodes was generated. The conceptual diagram was used as the initial hierarchical coding structure. (See Appendix F for a copy of the Conceptual Coding Diagram).

The initial coding hierarchy was refined as I connected participant responses to the parent and child nodes. The NVivo CAQDAS enabled me to compute the number of references for each participant transcript and for each interview question. I exported this information into Microsoft Excel to generate spreadsheets. (See Appendix G for a diagram of the references for participant transcript and Appendix H for the references for each interview question). From this foundation, I completed the categorical aggregation of coded data adding an explanatory description for each parent and child node. (See Appendix I for a copy of the Codebook for the Coded Data). I used the aggregated data to conduct second-cycle coding using the pattern coding method to develop categorical themes and subthemes. (See Appendix J for a copy of the Themes and Subthemes).

The data analysis strategy was methodical and analytical. The procedure included reading the interview transcripts multiple times to capture the meaning of each participant's response. In some instances, the audio recordings were replayed to assess the essence of the answers. The use of NVivo-11 and Microsoft Excel software programs assisted in the data analysis. My annotated notes were also incorporated into the process. This comprehensive analysis resulted in the development of eight themes with numerous subthemes. The themes were mapped to the interview transcripts, which provide text-driven research support to the analysis. The subthemes were included to provide context to the themes. (See Appendix K for the Theme and Subtheme Reference Data).

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

The credibility (or internal validity) of a qualitative study reflects to the degree to which the research findings match reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Because of the holistic nature of qualitative research, gaining congruence with reality can present a significant challenge for the researcher. Consequently, I incorporated several approaches into the design of my case study to gain confidence in the research findings. One of the most commonly used strategies to promote credibility is the use of multiple data collection instruments, referred to as triangulation (Patton, 2015).

As the primary data collection instrument, I used the semi-structured interviews with the senior leaders and key staff members to gain their perceptions, thoughts, and opinions about the reality of the organizational change program at the WWR. As a complementary process, I used a comprehensive document review of the official records

of the WWR and organizational change theories during the literature review as the primary resources in the development of the interview protocol. I conducted a field test of the protocol to confirm the appropriateness of the interview questions. Multiple methods were used to validate and enhance the credibility of the study data. Patton (2015) asserted that “triangulation, in whatever form, increases the credibility and quality by countering the concern (or accusation) that a study’s findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator’s blinders” (p. 674).

I used respondent validation or member checks of the interview transcripts as the second recognized strategy to enhance the credibility of the collected data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I sent each participant a copy of their interview transcript for review to ensure that the documents accurately captured their responses. Adequate engagement with the collected data was the third recognized strategy that I applied in my research design. Related to adequate engagement was a fourth recognized strategy that involved “looking for data that support alternative explanations” (Patton, 2015, p. 653).

Maintaining annotated notes during the interviews and reflecting on my perceptions of the data was another credibility strategy employed. The comprehensive nature of this data collection process reflects my personal commitment to enhancing the credibility of the research findings of my case study.

Transferability

Miles and Huberman (1994) related the concern for transferability in qualitative research with the degree to which the conclusions of the research study have a broader importance and are applicable for other settings. Maxwell (2013) referred to this

challenge in qualitative research as generalization and made the distinction between internal generalization (variation in the subject of inquiry for the study setting) and external generalization (extension of the research results and outcomes to settings outside the study). The transferability of this research study is derived from its instrumental nature (Stake, 1995). The study utilizes the WWR to explore the dynamics and challenges of implementing an organizational change program. By using the WWR, a military organization that specializes in complex wounded warrior care, the research results are applicable to a business audience as well as the veteran support community.

The interview questions focus on the leadership challenges and managerial processes of an organization that needs to adapt its wounded warrior care programs to remain relevant. This military organization was created in a time of war, and its programs emerged in response to the immediate needs of the combat wounded. Changes in its strategic environment and its supported population have caused the organization to examine its future and adjust accordingly. The needs of the noncombat veteran population addressed by the WWR point to a larger social awareness. Therefore, the research results of this instrumental case study have a broader importance than the organization of inquiry. Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) referred to this potential contribution to social action as the why of qualitative research (p. 126).

Dependability

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) compared the requirement to authenticate records and justify findings between the qualitative researcher and the business accountant.

Therefore, to promote a sense of dependability in this qualitative research study, I

maintained a comprehensive audit trail of the entire research process to record, support, and explain the results. All correspondence with the participants was conducted via personal e-mail to create an electronic record. These e-mails were printed and individually filed to generate a duplicate record. The same data collection procedures were used for each participant to preserve the consistency and integrity of the research process. I also kept a reflective journal of the assumptions and decisions made during the research process (Janesick, 2016).

To enhance the consistency and dependability of the research outcomes, I applied several data collection instruments as a form of triangulation (Patton, 2015). For the research interviews, I used a field-tested interview guide comprised of semi-structured interview questions to address specific topics while maintaining an open-ended nature to enable the participants to provide their perspectives. The interview protocol consisted of three connected segments that standardized the interview approach. The opening section was used to establish a rapport with the participant and set an informal tone for the interview. The middle segment was devoted to exploring the research subject through the thoughts and perspectives of the participants utilizing open-ended questions. The conclusion section transitioned to questions that afforded the participants a chance to clarify their points and make final comments. Through these strategies, I conveyed a consistent and dependable research process that supports the research outcomes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Confirmability

The concept of confirmability is comparable to the qualitative researcher's concern for objectivity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Patton (2016) stressed the importance of the researcher's ability to understand how their perspectives shape their research study. Maxwell (2013) regarded researcher bias and their reactive effect on the participants as potential threats to the validity of a research study. To contend with these inevitable pressures, I incorporated these six strategies into the research design for this study: extensive data, comprehensive records, explicit comparisons, intensive engagement, respondent validation, and triangulation (Maxwell, 2013). In addition, I remained aware of any personal opinions that could shape the objectivity of my interpretations (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Janesick (2016) considered qualitative research as a contemplative activity. To document my judgments and decisions during this research experience, I maintained a reflective journal. The justification for incorporating these procedures into my research design was to ensure that the research results can be confirmed through my actions as the researcher and corroborated by the participants.

Study Results

Eight themes and 18 subthemes emerged from this qualitative case study that explored the organizational change program at the WWR. The eight themes provide relevant information that answers the central research question and three sub-questions. The first three themes address the strategy drivers of change. The next four themes relate to the managerial lessons of implementing organizational change. The last theme pertains to the organizational cultural and human dimension of change.

Theme 1: Develop a Strategic Communications Plan

Fifteen (78.9%) of the participants indicated that the WWR needed to develop a strategic communications plan to reach their internal and external audiences. The high percentage of participants who mentioned the requirement for improved communication suggests that this theme is particularly important to their organizational change effort. To receive the necessary support, the new strategic direction of the WWR must be clearly conveyed so that is understood by all the stakeholders. As noted by the participants, this theme included the need to use the strategic communication plan to convince the senior leaders of the Marine Corps of the enduring relevance of the regiment.

Participant K11K stated that a leadership challenge confronting the WWR was: Continuing to convince leadership above that there is a need. A lot of people get the idea that there's no more combat wounded, and Wounded Warrior Regiment was built around combat wounded. But there are still Marines that signed the contract, knew the risk, and have since either gotten cancer, or been in a vehicle accident, or had a mental breakdown, or whatever the case might be, they are still Marines. And they still require assistance.

Participant T00T stated during their tenure with the regiment, “It seemed like the big thing that we focused on was reminding the institution, the Marine Corps that we still exist and there are still populations that we're supporting.”

Participant T00T further explained that:

There has always been an ill and injured population, but what necessitated the regiment and the other warrior care units was that increase in the combat

wounded from Iraq and Afghanistan. So, reminding people that the regiment exists to support these three distinct, but related populations, and just because there's a decrease in active duty of the combat-wounded doesn't mean we don't have a veteran population that still requires support. The majority of your combat wounded, that you have a veteran and active duty ill and injured population, so maintaining the relevancy, if I had to boil it down early on in my time at the regiment, was what it seemed like we were doing.

According to Participant F66F,

If you want to do organizational change, you've got to get stakeholders on-board. My biggest fear, to be honest with you, is that the organization, as money gets tight and people start looking at other priorities, is to see this organization either dwindle down to nothing or broken apart.

When asked about the strategic drivers of change, Participant U11U responded:

I do not think it's necessarily communicated well; probably not as well as it should be. Internally, the message gets out very well. Externally, there is still a lot of misunderstanding of what the regiment does, the changes it has made going from 90% combat-wounded to 90% noncombat wounded, and the role it provides.

Regarding the new strategic direction of the WWR, Participant W33W noted that:

I think it's the communication internal to the staff, to ensure that everyone is on board, and understands the direction of the change moving forward, and I think it's always going to be a challenge to balance the needs of our three distinct groups of staff: the active duty, government employees, and the contractors. That

is a leadership challenge, to meet folks where they are, and provide them what they need to excel within the confines of the law, the contract, the requirements, while still treating everyone equitably as persons. Leading change is leading people, and people are stubborn, sometimes. That's okay but only if we recognize that and try to engage them through communication.

Participant R88R provided an alternate view regarding the relevance of the WWR stating that:

I think I will cover that in one statement. The regiment's time has passed, and that the institution takes care of its own. It's how we take care of our own that is in question. We have to look at the best organizational method to do that. I think that is where we are at. We are at that dilemma. We are at that cross roads.

Participant E55E explained the dilemma confronting the senior leaders regarding the relevance of the WWR:

I'd have to preface that by saying that in order for an organization like this to exist, there needs to be senior leadership buy-in in order to make it happen; they need to be bought-in to this idea because it takes man-power, it takes facilities, it takes money, these things are taken away from the operating forces, the other supporting elements, in order to make an organization like Wounded Warrior Regiment successful. That is exactly what they did and need to continue to do.

Theme 2: Advance the Relevance of the Organization

The premise of the strategic communication message is that through their organizational change program, the WWR can remain relevant and add value to the

Marine Corps. Fourteen (73.7%) of the participants described various methods that enhance the relevance of the regiment. According to Participant A11A, “The Wounded Warrior Battalion has the ability to relieve that stress on those active duty training and operational units.”

In addition to relieving the difficulty of managing patient care from the operating forces, Participant V22V noted the capacity of the regiment to expand during combat:

I agree, I think both for the individual Marines and the value that we bring to the units is to relieve the burden of caring for someone who has complex medical issues. Caring for someone who has complex medical issues is really not the individual unit’s mission. Who is going to take on this mission if the Wounded Warrior Regiment does not exist? What is going to happen to these Marines? I think, having the Regiment, having the Battalions there in a steady state, and the value of them if a major conflict or war comes about is hard to overestimate. The ability to quickly mobilize what we have and stand up. I think that's what the vision is.

Participant S99S explained several options to advance the relevance of the WWR: One is structuring the regiment for steady state operations, with the realization that we are not always going to be involved in heavy kinetic combat operations, so we need to best position the regiment to be a sustainable and responsive organization when we withdraw from those combat operations and we just have normal deployments.

Participant Y55Y stated that, “I think that is why the enduring presence side of the regiment is not going anywhere because commanders are able to utilize the regiment to take care of their Marines and then continue to focus on their primary mission.”

Participant Y55Y added, “The ability to surge is key and that is really where the reserve side is going to come in and help, but you also need to have the mechanisms in place to expand the regiment’s capabilities.”

When asked about the relevance of the regiment, Participant W33W responded:

I think there's a couple of different things that are driving change right now. The first is, based on the world as it is today, and maintaining our relevancy as the combat casualties have dropped to around the 10% mark of our patient or our population, the money that flowed so easily in 2007 and 2008, when the Regiment was first stood up, now we are now competing on a more even playing field with other important programs. I think us trying to prove our relevancy for the long-term sustainable mission, which I believe is there, and then also, the other half of it is readying ourselves for the world as it may be, so for future operations and preparing for either sustainment of continued complex care for our most severely wounded and ill Marines from any causal factor, and preparing for surge operations and receiving a large group of combat casualties from any future major conflicts, and making sure we're prepared for that as well.

Participant W33W commented on the new direction and relevance of WWR:

I see the Regiment being driven towards becoming the premiere institution for complex care recovery, so when a Marine is injured or becomes ill, no matter

what the underlying cause, combat training, weekend accident, cancer, it doesn't matter, when that Marine's required care overwhelms the resources at their parent unit or their local medical facility, we are there. We're there with the brain trust, the subject matter experts, the resources, to step in either 100 percent and take ownership of that Marine, or to give guidance, but we are the experts, and that all the units know to come to us with those kinds of problems.

In the Marine Corps, the statistical record of Transient, Training, Prisoners and Patients (T2P2) refers to the Marines not available for operational commitments, which represents a manpower cost. Marines assigned to the WWR constitutes a large portion of that figure. In fact, the WWR was established to enable Marines to recover and return to duty or to transition out of the Marine Corps in an efficient manner.

To reduce the T2P2 manpower cost for patients, Participant A11A recommended that:

The organizational change that needs to occur, and I think that the leadership has made a concerted effort for that to be understood is, you come here, you get treated medically and then you start your med-board process. There's a much larger push to determine early on if you are a candidate to return to duty or if you are a candidate that is going to be found unfit and move on and potentially even get surgery that's required for maybe an orthopedic issue. It's not life-threatening, life-changing, well let's go ahead and do your med board and you go get that surgery within the VA system. Now I'm processing you out instead of being here for two to three years, this now can be potentially under a 12-month cycle.

To enhance the patient recovery process, Participant Y55Y explained that:

There are things that the regiment is looking at, from the strategic level, are where to best put the wounded, ill, and injured Marines to facilitate the fastest, best recovery for them. I think the regiment is also looking at the ability to expand capabilities at the detachments. And that is going to take the regiment at the strategic level to engage with the general officers to ensure that there is funding, there are resources, there are facilities, and other things, to allow for that opportunity.

Theme 3: Adjust Resources, Capabilities, and Programs

According to 15 (78.9%) of the participants, the changing demographics of the supported patient population and the constrained funding were the two most noticeable strategic drivers for the organizational change effort at the WWR. The change in the supported population was not just in the number of the combat-wounded; rather, it also involved a change in the types of the injuries and the seniority of the patients.

Participant C333 captured this point stating that:

The biggest thing was our demographic was changing, we were no longer dealing with the combat wounded. Our numbers of these supported recovering service members that we supported were decreasing, and we realized that number one, we had to change from that perspective.

Participant A11A described these patient characteristics as follows:

It is an evolving patient population that has to be treated differently; Has to be managed differently; Has to be respected differently from a ranked leadership

perspective. We still have a lot of Sergeants and below, just due to sheer numbers, but most of the patients that we currently have are traumatic car crashes. Mental health cases, instead of being PTSD, they are more suicide ideations, and more traditional mental health problems rather than combat-related mental health cases. It's an evolving patient population, and the regiment has to continue to evolve as well, because you have to manage these patients differently.

Participant E55E described the changes in the patient demographics as follows:

When I first got to the Battalion and for the first few years, our population was about 80% combat-wounded, 20% others. And the majority of the population were sergeants and below, with still quite a few staff noncommissioned officers and very few officers. That population basically did a 180 very quickly once armed conflict ceased to where we quickly went to 20% combat-wounded, 80% noncombat. And the categorization was a little bit fuzzy because if you have traumatic brain injury due to numerous IED blasts, or post-traumatic stress disorder to where you can't function in your unit, a lot of times those weren't immediately coded as combat-wounded. What are called invisible wounds, and our population now is primarily these invisible wounds: PTSD and TBI. But it doesn't mean that they get any less support from the Regiment, the Battalion, or our staff.

Participant U11U explained the effect of the operational environment as follows:

I think the biggest driver of change for the Regiment comes from...I guess, external, it's whether we are going to be in combat or not going to be in combat,

because populations are managed differently. They come with a different set of problems. Obviously, time of war or time of peace is going to make a dramatic difference.

Participant U11U also stated that “financial constraints are a change driver in any business, but in the Regiment, specifically. I think we will see that really start to affect us in the future if we don't go back into combat.”

Regarding the financial constraints, Participant B22B expressed that:

I would say one of the main contributors is funding. It's particularly a driver because the available resources you have to address any issues are based off of funding. That will set what your pipeline is or the sizes of pipe of what type of services you can provide. Based off your budget, and what your strategic plan is, it is also going to be what clientele you are going to serve, and how that clientele is either detailed to or assigned to the regiment, this includes both internal and external clients.

Participant C33C described the need to change the priority of their patient support programs:

From an organization stand point, we looked at ... and again, this two-fold. I'll start with what our focused programs were. When I first arrived, we put an incredible amount of effort in the Warrior Athletic Reconditioning Program, what we call our WAR-P. There were numerous events. We had, obviously, the Marine Corps Trials, the Warrior Games. We were holding numerous training camps. I would say we'd have a track and field camp, an archery camp, a shooting camp, a

seated volley ball camp, because those were the nature of the injuries that people needed recovery from loss of limbs and things along those lines. Then we decided that, about 90% to 95% of the patients that we had that were supported by the regiment, were going to be medically retired. Their end state was going to be life in the civilian sector, and that we needed to put more effort into the transition vice the athletic reconditioning programs. We de-emphasized that, even though it's still a very important part of their recovery process. We added positions that helped in our transition program. These were people who would do resume building and entrepreneurship, and things along those lines. From an organizational standpoint, that's what we really focused on.

Participant X44X described an opportunity to enhance the regiment's transition process:

I think that currently, because the demographics have changed over time, obviously based on political events, but currently we're working on the transition, so the main effort seems to be at the moment of transitioning Marines into the VA. That is where there is a huge systematic issue, because the VA itself is not very efficient in how they run, and there is a huge opportunity for improvement.

Participant E55E stressed the need of the regiment to remain an adaptable organization:

I think from a strategic aspect, it really takes senior leadership buy-in, but it also requires the ability to be flexible enough to pivot, in order to organize, train, and equip based on the ever-changing needs of our different population of wounded,

ill, and injured patients, as well as different geographic areas where conflict exists.

Theme 4: Align Staff functions

An essential facet of managing the operations of an organization is clearly defined staff functions. The participant responses indicated a need to segregate the focus of effort between the regiment and the two battalion staffs. According to Participant Y55Y, “The organizational change program adopted by the WWR required the headquarters staff to focus their efforts at the strategic level.” Nine (47.7%) of the interview participants made comments regarding this new intent for the regimental staff.

Participant U11U explained the change in focus for the regimental staff as follows:

At the Regiment, because we do not have wounded, ill, and injured at the regimental level, that is not what we were focused on, what we need to look at are the policies, and drive the policies, but we have to have hard numbers to justify our program and to make corrections to our program.

Participant T00T expressed the effect of the new strategic direction for the WWR on the headquarters staff:

At the regiment, we are the headquarters of them and so our job is to facilitate the two battalions doing their job; at the headquarters level, we moved away from the Lines of Operation model and let the two battalions just own those and use that model as their recovery care model. The lines of operation facilitate supporting the recovering service members and that belongs at the battalions.

Participant W33W commented that:

I see the regiment's focus is on maintaining the core mission of holistic care of Marines. "Keeping the Faith," I think, is a very common phrase that we use, and so we do depend on the two battalions to take the lead and an ownership of the Lines of Operation, and we expect the battalions to know their Recovering Service Members inside and out, whether they are physically joined to the battalion and residing there at Camp Pendleton or Camp Lejeune, or they are externally supported and still remaining with their parent unit, or in a civilian facility in a distant location. I think of it as a return to basics of the core mission; taking care of Marines.

Participant G77G described the Lines of Operation adopted by the regiment as:

Well the medical, mind, body, spirit and family are what we call the Lines of Operation because everything is associated with a line of operation and that each Marine has these different parts of their recovery plan that is their medical, mind, body, spirit, and family. And we targeted those, and yes, we did manage those from a regimental level. Now we do need to emphasize those because at the regimental level we do not join wounded, ill, or injured. We need to man, staff, educate, train and run top fire so that the battalions can actually do, the taking care of wounded ill and injured hands-on...it is going to give them more bandwidth to do their job, without the regiment being as much micromanagement, and it gives everybody working at the regiment staff the opportunity to do what

they were supposed to have been doing all along, which is managing those programs, not executing those programs.

Participant L22L warned against creating too much of separation between regiment and the battalion staff functions:

And then in terms of in the regiments' role and battalions' role, I used to always say that the Marine Corps often says it, you know, mission first, Marines always. In this case, in the Wounded Warrior Battalion and Regiment by extension, the mission is the Marines. That is the care and welfare of the wounded, ill, and injured Marines. I am not sure how that fits with what you are seeing right now with the strategic plans and possibly dividing the roles and responsibilities, but I would definitely caution about going too far down the delineation between the strategic and operational staff levels.

Theme 5: Design Process Improvement Metrics

An essential aspect of process improvement is effective measurement. This includes both using the correct instrument and selecting the right factors to measure. Kotter (2012) stressed the importance of maintaining the commitment to the change effort through measured improvement. Lynton (1968) affirmed the need to effectively integrate innovations within the subsystems of an organizational system. This theme embodies these concepts and relates them to the regiment. As noted by the participants, notwithstanding the extensive use of surveys, the leaders of the WWR need to develop measures of effectiveness to assess their programs and services.

Eight (42.1%) of the participants discussed the importance of assessments and surveys in the organizational change process at the regiment. Participant F66F stated that “To be able to go in there and get that feedback on those programs, that's what's going to give you the ability to do process improvement. That is from a managerial perspective.” Participant T00T affirmed that “I think change has been a constant throughout the history of the regiment, and I think that it's something we're continuing to do, so the two things being, we're taking care of marines and then we're constantly trying to do it better.”

Participant F66F commented that:

To me, that is critical, because you can't really know where you're going, unless you do an assessment of your organization. You need to sit down and look at every facet of your organization, your operations, your logistics, and all the different programs that you have. You need to do a legitimate assessment and ask, “How am I going to look at the metrics? What are the metrics of this? What are we doing right? What are we doing wrong?” The stuff that you're doing right, you reinforce it, the stuff that you're doing wrong, you fix it. And you figure out how to do it better.

Participant T00T explained an advantage of the surveys for the regimental staff: I think we are at a loss at the headquarters element, at the regiment, because we don't interact a lot with recovering service members. We have specific sections within us that do, but we're not the battalion that has that day on to stay on ability to touch Marines and interact with Marines every day. Relying on those surveys at

the headquarters element to guide the strategic actions of the regiment and then sanity checking that against what the battalions are hearing and seeing and doing. Participant G77G addressed some of the challenges with conducting the surveys: Surveys are extremely important. The surveys we send down to the patient population are invaluable. You are always going to get the 10% that whine, whine, whine, because they didn't get what they wanted but, I think we at the regiment take them very seriously. We are diligent in reading 100% of them. And it is a good tool even though some people say they get survey fatigue, it's our society, it's what we do. People don't ask other people questions, they send a survey.

Participant I99I described the importance of the patient surveys as follows:

I think feedback is the most important part. Not knowing how our customers that we're servicing feel about the service we're providing I think is pointless, because we don't know how well we're doing. I think the most important part of that is, making sure we understand what their needs are and whether they're being met, whether we surveyed them when they're done. From a Commander's standpoint, I think it would be relatively easy; especially, if the feedback is consistent because if the feedback is consistent, then obviously it's a reality. With that, modifications, processes, or information flow can be made from that. Over time what we had to do is look at our processes then and look at processes now... what we could do during peace time and during war time. Make sure that one, we are not having

extra personnel on staff or being manned at a certain staff level during peace time verses war time.

Theme 6: Document Managerial Processes, Procedures, and Policies

A key component of promoting the future direction for the organization is the ability to create the capacity to learn (Senge, 1990). Part of the learning process involves developing the ability to critically assess the performance of the subsystems and make the necessary system adjustments (Lynton, 1968). This theme indicates that the regiment relies on the expertise and knowledge of their long-term members as the repository of information. This trend has negative consequences for the regiment's current operations and their change program.

Despite its emergent and adaptive nature, 14 (73.7%) of the participants indicated that the regiment had not documented many of its processes, procedures, and policies. Participant W33W expressed that, "I don't know where they would be kept. Right now, I think we depend a lot on oral history; some of our employees that have been with the Regiment since the beginning." Participant T00T affirmed that, "I think probably the best thing we could do, and continue to do, would be to codify things in writing and that seems to be, at least in my time a strong emphasis on updating the orders and policies."

Participant T00T discussed the problem of publishing multiple strategic plans at the WWR:

There wasn't necessarily much syncing between the two documents unfortunately, and we moved away from the first model that was put forth in the Strategic Initiatives Plan in terms of the four or five things that the regiment headquarters

does, but we're still doing those things, but I guess just not thinking about them within that same model. In contrast, the second strategic document laid out a very specific initial strategic intent, but it wasn't necessarily published as a five-year plan.

In addition to documenting its future direction, Participant H88H stressed the importance of recording the history of the regiment:

If I may, did you look at the drivers that forced the regiment to stand up? Yeah and why it's important because it's a driver right there, war, massive combat injuries. Injuries that we have never seen before because people didn't survive the battlefield, amputations and traumatic brain injury. In previous wars because of the body armor, important structures were protected, but they might lose limbs or have traumatic brain injuries. But we hadn't really seen that until these two wars, these are major drivers. These were major drivers because we didn't have anything. We didn't have anything to take care of these Marines. That to me, is the interesting part as to why the regiment even stood up, and the two battalions on either coast, which have grown exponentially in their facilities.

Participant X44X explained the requirement for maintaining historical documents as follows:

I think if there were some type of document, a historical document to read how things happen. That we stopped this particular contract because this need went away, or we did this for this reason, then I think that people would have better perspective to make more effective decisions from the higher level.

An important policy implemented by the WWR involves their assignment criteria. Participant B22B stated that, “I think it always needs to be reviewed. I mean, as we first stood it up, the protocol was designed one way. Over the years, it has adjusted, but there is some subjectiveness in the assignment protocol.”

Participant U11U expressed that the assignment policy to the regiment requires a constant review:

I think it absolutely has to change. We have to review it. We have to educate them on who we should be sending, who they should be sending to us. It's a constant drive of what numbers do you want to support at the regiment and how complicated the cases can be.

Participant S99S explained that the assignment policy as follows:

As far as criteria go, it has not really changed. Our basic acceptance is still about the complexity of medical care that will translate into the number and type of appointments and the location of appointments, the more they have the more complex their care. And that is why the referral process always has been, and remains to be, a commander to commander referral process.

Theme 7: Advocate for Military Personnel Assignment Standards

In conjunction with documenting policies and procedures, 15 (78.9%) of the participants mentioned the need for refining the staffing policy. Participant A77A stated that, “Well, with the Regiment, you have so many new people who come in, at least every three years or so. And just with the new change, I think that we've gathered -- or actually lost a lot of the continuity that we had in the past.” According to Participant I99I,

“I think the biggest challenge that we have is that the regiment is managed by civilians and military personnel. With the civilian personnel, we have continuity. However, with the military population there is a constant rotation.” Participant T00T remarked that, “I would say at the headquarters element, the strangest thing I've seen is the amount of turnover.”

Participant X44X expressed that:

I have found that the continuity at the regiment has been, I would think, a real downfall in the sense that when you are talking about some of these policies changing over time, and processes changing over time, having longevity in that knowledge is important, because it is the accumulative knowledge, it is really important, and that has not happened.

Most military commands contend with the routine rotation assignments of their military personnel. However, the participants of the study revealed several reasons why high turnover is particularly problematic for the WWR. Participant C33C stated that, “I think the biggest leadership issue is, number one, our mission was, and is, completely unique from anything else anyone has ever done in their Marine Corp career. Participant S99S observed that, “Probably one of the biggest leadership challenge always has been and continues to be, they don't train Marines for this type of work.”

Though characterized as a positive change program, Participant K11K recommended a closer look at the staffing ratios in military personnel:

So, I think that it's been... What's the word I'm looking for? It's been productive, I mean, we've done a lot of changes along the lines of staffing, because of the

population changes, I think it probably needs to be looked at a little more closely.

I think that there should be more consideration given to the relation of section leaders to recovering Marines. In the sense of having those staff ratios be much smaller. One to 10 is probably more realistic, depending on the environment you're in.

Participant H88H pointed to another problem regarding the military personnel assigned to the WWR:

We get burnout, too. The folks who take care of wounded, ill, and injured can suffer from their own secondary stress just hearing it all the time, hearing the different issues that come up, hearing that suicide attempts and actual suicides. I think that that's probably one of the bigger changes that's happening now.

Participant G77G stressed that the military personnel assigned to the regiment needed to have certain leadership traits:

As long as you have caring, compassionate leadership. The compassion is as important as the caring, because the good leader has to be able to build a bond of empathy with that individual Marine yet hold them to the standards. Sometimes that is extremely hard to do.

Participant K11K expressed that “this goes back to my other comments in regards to being able to screen the military people. Because I think that it is important that the leaders that come here, have to have a vested interest in being here.” Participant B22B succinctly stated, “Well, the regiment needs to have credible leaders.”

Theme 8: Cultivate the Organizational Culture

The transformational change theories of Schein (2017) and Kotter (2012) emphasized the importance of organizational culture in the change process. Sixteen (84.2%) of the participants made comments regarding the culture of the WWR and its connection to the culture of the Marine Corps. Participant L22L remarked that, “So, our culture that we have as a service and not just one regiment but across the entire service becomes a key enabler I think for the wounded, ill, and injured Marines, because it provides them with these same driving factors.” Participant C33C asserted that, “The culture there is one of 100% dedication, 100% commitment, and high reward for the job that you're doing and what you do.”

Participant E55E described the culture at the WWR as follows:

I think the positive aspect is that you have an entire organization, the Wounded Warrior Regiment, the Battalions, and the detachments, whose mission it is to provide leadership and non-medical care to wounded, ill, and injured, and their families. And to assist them in developing a comprehensive transition plan, they have section leaders that every single Marine and Sailor assigned to the Battalion has a Recovery Care Coordinator, that I look as the civilian subject matter expert in all things transition.

Participant S99S explained the connection between culture of the regiment and the culture of the Marine Corps as follows:

We fit the overall Marine Corps culture because we are here to demonstrate to the public and to the Marines that "we are always faithful." No matter the mode of

your injury, your wound or illness, the regiment has been designed to take care of you, and we have your back. You don't need to be worried about if you're training hard and something happens to you, we have this safety-net for you. So, you know, always faithful. We embody that for the Marine Corps. Internally, our battalion culture and the regimental culture, I think our motto, *Etiam in Pugna*, it says it all, "still in the fight." Not necessarily kinetically, but, "the fight is life."

Participant U11U discussed the differences in their macro and micro cultures: The culture of the Marine Corps is the unit, the whole. No one is bigger than the organization. The culture of the Wounded Warrior Regiment, it is the individual. We have to take care of the individual and prepare that individual for their following role. The focus is much different.

Participant V22V stated that, "I think it takes what already exists in the Marine Corps culture as far as taking care of Marines. But, I'd say, perhaps deeper to greater commitment." Participant B22B noted that, "I think WWR does a great job in establishing a new normal for the patients and setting these people up for success in transition."

Summary

In this chapter I described the research process for my qualitative case study that explored the leadership challenges of implementing an organizational change program using the WWR as the case. I presented the text-driven results from 19 semi-structured, personal interviews with current and former staff members of the WWR. I conducted the interviews using an interview guide, which was field tested to ensure its appropriateness

for the subject matter. The interview questions were derived from my research in the literature review, which focused on the organizational change theories of Schein (2017), Kotter (2012), and Anderson and Anderson (2010). My research for the interview questions included an extensive review of the government records for the WWR. The interview questions were focused on assessing the three sub-questions, which were designed to review the primary drivers of change, the leadership challenges of change, and the managerial processes of change in the context of the organizational change program at the WWR.

To advance my credibility as a researcher, I utilized several strategies (Morse, 2015). The justification for incorporating these approaches into my research design was to ensure that the results for this case study can be confirmed through my actions and that data saturation could be reached (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I engrossed myself in the research process and adhered to ethical standards to promote the validity and reliability of the research results. Rigorous procedures were maintained throughout this qualitative research study. This report contains my objective analysis of the documentation to assure the trustworthiness in the results.

In Chapter 5, I interpret the research results in relation to the central research question and present the implications of the study for the WWR and the broader veterans support community. Additionally, I discuss the effects of their organizational change program for the Marine Corps. In the next chapter, I will review the limitations of my study and present some recommendations for further research. Chapter 5 ends with my conclusions for the research study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to better understand the challenges associated with leading organizational change to enable the WWR to more effectively and efficiently meet the complex medical and transitional needs of the post-9/11 Marine veterans. In this study, I explored the process of implementing a major operational and cultural change within an organization using the WWR as the case study. I gained a more thorough knowledge of the regiment and their transformational change initiative through personal interviews with the leaders and staff members of the command and an analysis of their historical documents. The WWR served as the unit of analysis and the bounded system, the two principal distinguishing features of the qualitative case study design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Eight themes and 18 subthemes emerged from the data in this qualitative case study in which I explored the transformational change program at the WWR to address the central research question of: How do the leaders of an organization designed for a special mission effectively transform their operations to respond to new demands in a complex environment? These text-driven themes and subthemes were derived from 19 semi-structured, personal interviews with current and former members of the WWR.

In this chapter, I will interpret the results in relation to the central research question and present the implications of the study for the WWR as well as the broader veterans' support community. In addition, I will discuss the effects of the results for the

Marine Corps, describe the limitations of the research study, and make recommendations for further research. I will end the chapter with my conclusion for this study.

Interpretation of Findings

The eight emergent themes represent the text-driven results from my 19 semi-structured, personal interviews with current and former staff members of the WWR. Though I conducted the research interviews using an interview protocol, the questions were open-ended to enable each participant to express their perspectives based on their personal knowledge and experience (Patton, 2015). The participants were candid and provided cognizant responses to the questions. To enhance the understanding from these respondents, the interviews included probing questions (Galletta, 2013). The interview questions were developed from my research during the literature review, which focused on the organizational change theories of Schein (2017), Kotter (2012), Anderson and Anderson (2010), and Lynton (1968). The personal interviews captured the perceptions of the participants and provided a comprehensive assessment of the research subject. The following discussion represents my interpretation of these findings.

I have arranged the findings by the eight themes. These themes correspond with the three research sub questions that I examined in this qualitative case study: the central drivers, the leadership challenges, and the managerial lessons associated with organizational change. The first three themes relate to the strategy drivers of change and support the conceptual model presented by Kotter (2012). The next four themes pertain to the managerial lessons of organizational change, and these are addressed by the systems approach to organizational change offered by Lynton (1968). The last theme relates to the

organizational cultural and human dimension of change, which is discussed by Schein (2017). These themes provide relevant information that answers the central research question explored in this study. Consequently, the results of this research study add to the literature on organizational change.

Theme 1: Develop a Strategic Communications Plan

The fourth stage in Kotter's (2012) process is to utilize multiple methods to announce, broadcast, and publish the new vision and strategy (p. 23). Kotter asserted that change managers routinely underestimate the amount of communication required to develop a consistent understanding of the new direction. The overarching purpose of promoting the change effort is to build a general commitment to a desirable future from internal and external stockholders (Kotter, 2012).

The results of this study indicated that the future direction of the WWR was not clearly understood by the workforce or the senior leaders of the Marine Corps. Fifteen (78.9%) of the participants mentioned a lack of a shared vision and a need to remind the institution of their relevance. The dramatic change in the supported population, constraints in the resources, and competing demands of the Marine Corps are contributing factors to this negative aspect of the organizational change program. The frequent turnover of the WWR leaders and the publication of numerous strategic plans within a short timeframe are preventing the WWR from promoting a consistent message to its internal and external stakeholders. Without agreement and support from these audiences, the WWR cannot fully achieve the objectives of its organizational change program.

Theme 2: Advance the Relevance of the Organization

When asked about the primary objective of the organizational change effort at the WWR, 14 (73.7%) of the participants responded that the regiment wanted to advance its relevance and solidify its permanence as a military command in the Marine Corps.

Probing questions revealed that by assuming responsibility for the seriously wounded, ill, and injured Marines, the WWR relieved pressure from the operational forces during the current peacetime environment. During wartime, the regiment was positioned to expand its operations and assume responsibility for the complex care of the expected combat-wounded Marines. Through these two important functions, the WWR could defend their financial and manpower expenses.

However, to direct the change effort, the leaders of the WWR need to create a vision and develop strategies to achieving that vision (Kotter, 2012). The participants expressed that the WWR was exploring ways to decrease the recovery time for the returning Marines and reduce the processing time of the transitioning members. In addition, the participants stated that the regiment was reviewing the medical capabilities at the polytrauma centers to ensure patients were assigned to the medical complex that facilitated their fastest and best recovery. The leaders at the regiment were looking at their capability to extend their subject matter expertise to assist with the complex care to wounded, ill, and injured Marines retained by their primary command. These strategic actions were designed to enable the WWR to more effectively compete for the Marine Corps' limited financial and manpower resources. This theme supports the third step in Kotter's change model.

Theme 3: Adjust Resources, Capabilities, and Programs

According to 15 (78.9%) of the participants, the changing demographics of the supported patient population and the constrained funding were the two most noticeable strategic drivers for the organizational change at the WWR. In fact, the research data revealed that approximately 97% of the current patients were transitioned from the Marine Corps due to their medical issues. Despite these statistics, the WAR-P, which involves a minority of the patients, receives a majority of the WWR resources. This misrepresentation of resources presents a strategic dilemma for the leaders of the regiment as they adapt to changes in their complex environment. The WAR-P supports the DOD Warrior Games, which has national recognition. Consequently, changes to this highly visible program are likely to create resistance from some internal and external stakeholders. This complex leadership problem illustrates a barrier to organizational change as reflected in Kotter's (2012) multistage change model.

Theme 4: Align Staff Functions

This qualitative study included an assessment of the changing veteran support environment and the strategic decisions made by the leaders at the WWR in response to these continual dynamics (Lynton, 1968). The organizational change program adopted by the WWR requires the headquarters staff to refocus their efforts at a more strategic level. Nine (47.7%) of the participants made comments regarding the new strategic direction for the headquarters staff. According to the strategic plan, the regiment needs to focus on advancing the organization's core mission of holistic care for patients and veterans. The most referenced staff realignment involved the transition of the lines of operation model

from the regimental-level to the battalion-level. This operational construct is comprised of the mind, body, spirit, and family components, and these four interconnected factors form the foundation of their patient recovery care program, which is focused on establishing a meaningful transition and the achievement of realistic goals. The staff realignment reinforces the regiment's new vision by enabling the organizational headquarters to assume more strategic roles and responsibilities.

The realignment of staff functions represents a permanent response by the leaders of the WWR to the continuous state of turbulence in the complex veteran support environment (Lynton, 1968). To effectively implement these changes, the wounded warrior battalions and detachments must revise their procedures. From an organizational system perspective, these subsystems must develop integration devices to effect the changes (Lynton, 1968). The integration devices would enable the leaders of the WWR to better integrate responses within the regiment and enhance the relevance of the organization (Lynton, 1968).

Theme 5: Design Process Improvement Metrics

In Step 6 of the multiple-stage change model, Kotter (2012) instructed change leaders to generate short-term gains and plan for visible improvements in performance to foster credibility in the change process. In Step 7, leaders should capitalize on these short-term gains to create more change opportunities (Kotter, 2012). Implied in these two steps are a legitimate method for measuring the effectiveness of an organizations programs and processes. Even though the leaders of the WWR direct immediate actions to achieve their long-range objectives, their strategic report does not include any planned

measurement methods to evaluate the progress of the transformational change program. Eight (42.1%) of the participants indicated that their programs involved intangible effects, so they relied on the patient surveys for feedback. Consequently, demonstrating visible short-term outcomes for the change program could become a problem for the WWR leaders.

The new strategic plan of the WWR advances five critical tasks that form the basis for the organizational change effort. To manage this change program and embed the critical tasks across the organization, the leaders will need to develop integrative devices. These mechanisms provide the leaders with the means to connect the critical tasks with their supported population as well as their component units (Lynton, 1968). In addition to promoting internal coordination, the integration devices facilitate reporting to external agencies within the veteran support network (Lynton, 1968). This directly supports one of the five critical tasks.

Theme 6: Document Managerial Processes, Procedures, and Policies

The organizational change program at the WWR involves a restructuring of the staff processes and support programs for the current noncombat operational environment. In conjunction with this transformation, the regiment needs to retain the capacity to support a combat operational environment. Fourteen (73.7%) of the participants commented that the institutional knowledge required to support an increase in their combat-wounded patients had not been well documented. Therefore, recording the previous processes, procedures, and policies that were developed during the combat timeframe should become a priority for the regiment. The research of the official records

of the regiment that I conducted during the literature review revealed an inconsistent historical record of the past decisions, practices, processes, and policies. Advancing a new vision for an organization requires an understanding of its past.

Capturing the lessons from their past is extremely important for the WWR. A significant part of their mission is to support combat-wounded Marines. This organization was formed as the Marine Corps' response to the unforeseen casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan. The relevance of this military command largely depends on their ability to effectively adapt to the uncertainties of their complex environment. Accurately assessing these system variations will enable the leaders of the WWR to integrate the necessary changes into the subsystems of the organization (Lynton, 1968).

Theme 7: Advocate for Military Personnel Assignment Standards

A significant component of the organizational change program at the WWR involves their people. Even though managing the human dynamics of change is considered one of the three critical focus areas in the multidimensional organizational change model presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010), the application has an added distinction for the regiment. In addition to the cultural and behavioral aspects, the change program at the WWR includes an important training course. Because of their special mission, the Marines assigned to the regiment must apply a balance between empathy and accountability when working with their patients. Although the patients transferred to the WWR have serious medical issues, they must comply with the standards of professional conduct expected of Marines. It takes a trustworthy leader to effectively mentor, counsel, and motivate a military patient experiencing a difficult situation. Therefore, the regiment

has implemented a mandatory training program to educate all assigned military personnel. The training program represents a discrete innovation with a minor effect on the organization (Lynton, 1968). Despite this effort, 15 (78.9%) of the participants advocated for assignment criteria and compensation for their military personnel. As the regiment progresses in its organizational change program, staffing requirements for the military personnel could present a difficult challenge for its leaders.

The requirement for military personnel assignment standards represents a turbulence in the Marine Corps' human resource system (Lynton, 1968). To affect this change, the leaders of the WWR must coordinate with the Marine Corps' Manpower and Reserve Affairs Department. Amendments to the current policy, however, would require the personnel assignment managers to assess the needs of the WWR against the broader demands of the Marine Corps. In terms of systems, these two military agencies represent subsystems and any emergent assignment criteria would denote a discrete innovation in the Marine Corps' human resource system as well as their internal management systems (Lynton, 1968).

Theme 8: Cultivate the Organizational Culture

Schein (2017) regarded organizational culture “as the accumulated shared learning of that group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration” (p. 6). This extract from Schein epitomizes the dedicated culture of the WWR. Sixteen (84.2%) of the participants described the organizational culture of the WWR as positive. The regiment was formed to resolve the serious problems the Marine Corps was having in caring for the combat-wounded warriors returning from Iraq and

Afghanistan. The culture of the WWR evolved from these difficult experiences. The people initially assigned to this emergent military command had to bond as a group and learn about wounded warrior care. Over the past 10-years, the staff members of the regiment have gained an expert-level of knowledge, understanding, and experience. The strong culture that emerged can be used to promote support for the future vision of the regiment and counter any resistance to the organizational change process. Emphasizing the special mission, objectives, and outcomes of the regiment will sustain their internal integration.

Limitations of the Study

Because the intent of this research study was to analyze the challenges associated with leading organizational change, using the WWR as the case study, the purposeful sample focused on their current and former staff members for personal interviews. Even though these semi-structured interviews provided a detailed description of the change effort the regiment, their assessment offered only an internal perspective. Despite including alternative perspectives, the narrow purposeful sample of the current and former staff members of the WWR represented a limitation for the qualitative research study. To lessen the effects of this limitation, the purposeful sample was representative of the diverse workforce of the WWR.

Since the WWR is a Marine Corps organization focused on providing comprehensive care to post-911 Marine veterans, the research findings may not be transferrable to the other military services or applicable to the Vietnam veterans. The leadership challenges associated with executing organizational change were the focus of

the research study, and the related outcomes should have relevance to other veteran support organizations. To lessen the effects of this limitation, the research study used leading organizational change theories explored during the literature review.

Even though the interview questions were carefully written, open-ended, and field tested, the participant responded based on their understanding of the question. Several times during the interviews, I had to rephrase an interview question to ensure its meaning was clearly conveyed. Despite this limitation, the participants were candid offering cognizant responses to the interview questions. The personal interviews were respectfully and thoughtfully conducted with no unusual circumstances encountered. Overall, they provided a comprehensive review of the research topic.

Recommendations

For Action

Approximately 70% of all organizational change efforts fail to achieve their goals, or when their objectives are achieved, the change endeavor exceeds the proposed period and budget (Kotter, 2008). To increase the chance for success, Kotter (2008) stated that a majority of the employees, over 75% of the management team, and almost all of the executives need to support the organizational change program. Developing an effective communication plan for the strategic vision through multiple forums is a critical element in the organizational change process (Kotter, 2012). Even though the most recent WWR strategic plan includes a communication task, the research data suggests that the WWR needs to reassess this instruction to ensure that their new vision is conveyed to their internal and external stakeholders. Therefore, to enhance the effectiveness of their

organizational change program, I recommend the leaders of the WWR develop a revised strategic communications plan to better explain the future vision to their internal members and external stakeholders.

Like many private companies, a primary objective of the organizational change program at the WWR is to adjust to new challenges in their complex environment. The conversion of their supported patient population, from combat-wounded to noncombat ill and injured, is the leading strategic driver of change for the regiment. These fundamental changes in the patient population also serves as the main source for questioning the necessity of retaining the WWR. Therefore, to advance its relevancy and compete for the limited resources in the Marine Corps, the leaders of the WWR should continue to examine their processes, procedures, and operations. The research data suggests that the WWR could extend their medical complex care expertise to the operational commands to assist in their patient recovery and promote resiliency through an application of the Lines of Operation Model. The data also suggests that the WWR should expand planning efforts for surge operations and explore the requirements for Individual Mobilization Augmentee personnel to support wartime mobilization.

To generate continued internal and external support for their organizational change effort, the leaders of the WWR should consider creating process improvement metrics for their systems, programs, and processes. Participants in the study stressed the importance of the patient surveys and recommended expanding the practice. Periodic exits surveys for the transitioning patients at the 1-month, 6-month, and 12-month points for example, could provide a more complete assessment of the transition process.

Incorporating regular assessments of the staff and program directors could assist the WWR leaders in identifying problem areas and making adjustments to their change process.

Even though the organizational change frameworks presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010) and Kotter (2012) provide an appropriate instrument to analyze the change program at the WWR, these business models do not fully correlate with the context of this military organization. The systems approach to organizational change advanced by Lynton (1968) offers an alternative. The WWR represents a system that operates within the complex veterans' support environment. This military command also serves as a subsystem within the Marine Corps. Consequently, the regiment is susceptible to turbulences in the national security environment. Therefore, the leaders of the WWR must create permanent integration devices to contend with the continuous nature of change in this second complex environment. The integration devices must be formally organized and consist of cross-functional teams that connect the subsystems of the organization and enable the regiment to respond as a system to the turbulence in this environment (Lynton, 1968).

For Further Research

Because the WWR represented the unit of analysis and the bounded system for my qualitative case study, the purposeful sample was restricted to the current and former staff members. Though this was a limitation of this research study, it also provides an opportunity for further research. Broadening the targeted research population to include external stakeholders, primarily transitioned veterans from the regiment and senior

leaders in the Marine Corps, would expand the perspectives regarding the organizational change program at the WWR. A mixed-methods research study that included a survey of transitioned veterans is recommended to capture their assessment of the WWR support programs. Expanding this qualitative case study to include semi-structured interviews with the senior leaders in the Marine Corps is suggested to gain their views of the future direction of the WWR within the context of the strategic intent of the Marine Corps.

The data from this research study indicated that there was a lack of cooperation among the military services regarding warrior care efforts. Therefore, to explore opportunities to share resources, facilities, and best-practices, a comparative research study is suggested. This research study could assess the different applications of federal policies governing warrior care among the military services to advance complex care. The results from this research study could potentially expand support programs, reduce expenses, and enhance care across the DOD. Sharing the research results from this study with the VA might improve interdepartmental cooperation and support; a significant problem noted by Gates (2014) during his tenure as the Secretary of Defense (p. 142).

Implications

The WWR was established in 2007 by the Marine Corps to facilitate the complex care for combat wounded, ill, and injured Marines returning from the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since its inception, this military command instituted the necessary programs to meet the care needs of these wounded warriors. However, the requirements of their supported patient population are different now, and the regiment must adapt to remain relevant. Consequently, the WWR has initiated a strategic assessment to restructure,

redesign, and refocus their support operations. The organizational change program at the WWR served as the basis for my qualitative case study. Enhancing their capacity to support wounded, ill, and injured Marines during noncombat periods, while maintaining their capability to meet the complex care demands of combat remains the primary challenge of the WWR and the focus of this study. My analysis of the organizational change process at the WWR has implications for the leaders and employees of the regiment, the supported patient population of seriously wounded, ill, and injured Marines, the senior leaders of the Marine Corps, and other veteran support organizations. The results from this study regarding the organizational change experience at the WWR provides relevant information to change leaders of organizations across the public and private business sectors.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the challenges associated with leading an organizational change process using the WWR as the unit of analysis and bounded system. These two defining characteristics of the case study design enabled me to concentrate my research on the WWR and produce a detailed descriptive analysis of their efforts to adapt to the changes in their complex environment (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Semi-structured, personal interviews with current and former staff members of the WWR served as the primary data collection source for the study. The transcripts from these interview sessions allowed me to evaluate the regiment through the perspectives of the workers directly involved in the change process (Patton, 2015). The comprehensive results from this research study supports the qualitative case study design as a valuable research methodology for a specific program and complex entity (Stake, 1995).

Based on the exploratory nature of the central research question, semi-structured, personal interviews with open-ended interview questions proved an effective data collection strategy for this qualitative case study. The interviews sessions enabled an in-depth discussion of the subject of inquiry, as evidenced by the 925 minutes of audio records from the personal interviews with current and former staff members of the WWR. From my rigorous analysis of these source documents, eight themes emerged. These text-driven themes represent the thoughts, opinions, and perspectives of the workers directly involved with the organizational change program. These comprehensive and informative results provide relevant information that answered the research question regarding the challenges of leading change and added to the body of knowledge relating to the organizational change theories of Schein (2017), Kotter (2012), and Anderson and Anderson (2010). This study is significant because it might provide practitioners, leaders, and scholars a deeper understanding of these conceptual models and validate their use in different organizational environments.

The results from this research are planned to provide relevant information to the leaders of the WWR and assist them with their efforts to respond to the changes in their complex. The research outcomes for this qualitative case study are depicted by eight themes that emerged from my objective evaluation of the interview transcripts from the participants. The sample population was comprised of current and former staff members of the regiment with direct knowledge and experience regarding the organizational change effort. The themes reflect their thoughts regarding potential enhancements and possible problems areas regarding the future direction of the regiment. Their perspectives

may enable the WWR leaders to make adjustments to their organizational change program and achieve greater strategic gains. The overarching objective of the WWR organizational change program is better support to their patient population of wounded, ill, and injured active-service Marines and transitioned veterans.

As a military command established by the Marine Corps to facilitate the complex care for wounded, ill, and injured active-service and veteran Marines, the new direction for the WWR must fully support the strategic vision and future forces of the Marine Corps. Therefore, the results from this research study are intended to inform the senior leaders of the Marine Corps about the organizational change efforts of the WWR to increase their relevance as a special supporting command. As described in several of the emergent themes, decreasing the processing time for patients, reducing the stress for the operating commands, and maintaining the capacity to expand operations during wartime represent realistic opportunities for the regiment to achieve their organizational change objectives. These potential actions should enable the WWR to more effectively compete for resources and strengthen its position in the Marine Corps' future plans.

According to the research data, the abrupt transition in the demographics of the supported patient population, from primarily combat-wounded to mainly noncombat ill and injured, forced the WWR to initiate an organizational change program to respond to the different needs of their postwar members. The change in the supported population was not just in the number of combat-wounded; rather, it also involved a change in the types and severity of the injuries, as well as the rank structure of the patients. As a result, the regiment has adjusted their support programs, staff functions, and manning

requirements with the primary objective of enhancing their capacity to support their patients regardless of the source of their medical issues. The research data revealed that despite any internal changes, the mission and focus of the WWR has remained on promoting the welfare of their patients and their families. By contributing to this noteworthy purpose, this research study can positively affect social change through the improved lives of these recovering service members and suffering veterans.

Conclusions

The multidimensional approach to transformational change presented by Anderson and Anderson (2010) was the conceptual framework for this qualitative case study. This conceptual framework is centered on three critical focus areas: the content of change, the people in change, and the process of change (Anderson & Anderson, 2010, p. 25). This research study involved an analysis of these pivotal aspects for the organizational change program at the WWR to inform their leaders of potential enhancements and problems. The analysis for this qualitative case study used the multiple-step organizational change model developed by Kotter (2012) to conduct a more detailed evaluation of these different facets of this change effort. The research data was derived from semi-structured interviews with current and former members of the WWR that captured their personal account of the change process. A rigorous process was maintained throughout this research study to endorse the trustworthiness in the results (Morse, 2015). Based on my evaluations and judgments, I offered three recommendations for action and two recommendations for further research. This final report contains my

objective analysis of the research documentation. The research study answers the central research question and adds to the literature on organizational change.

The secondary objective of this research study was to increase the awareness of the issues associated with the recovering service members suffering from military traumas. Bouvard (2012) classified these traumas as the invisible wounds of war and discussed the stigma associated with these postwar mental issues. According to Tick (2014), the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have caused epidemic levels of PTSD, TBI, and Military Sexual Trauma among returning servicemembers. As presented in my research study, this cohort of military members presents a significant challenge for the veterans' support agencies, including the WWR. The complex needs of this group of patients was a primary driver of the WWR organizational change effort, as this military command adapts to remain relevant. My analysis of the WWR change process may provide some pertinent information to other veteran support organizations and assist in addressing the national crisis posed by this category of veterans, which is projected to increase to more than 3.6 million by 2020 (VA, 2017). Their hardships, reflected by the alarming rates of unemployment, homelessness, and suicide, formed the substance for this research study.

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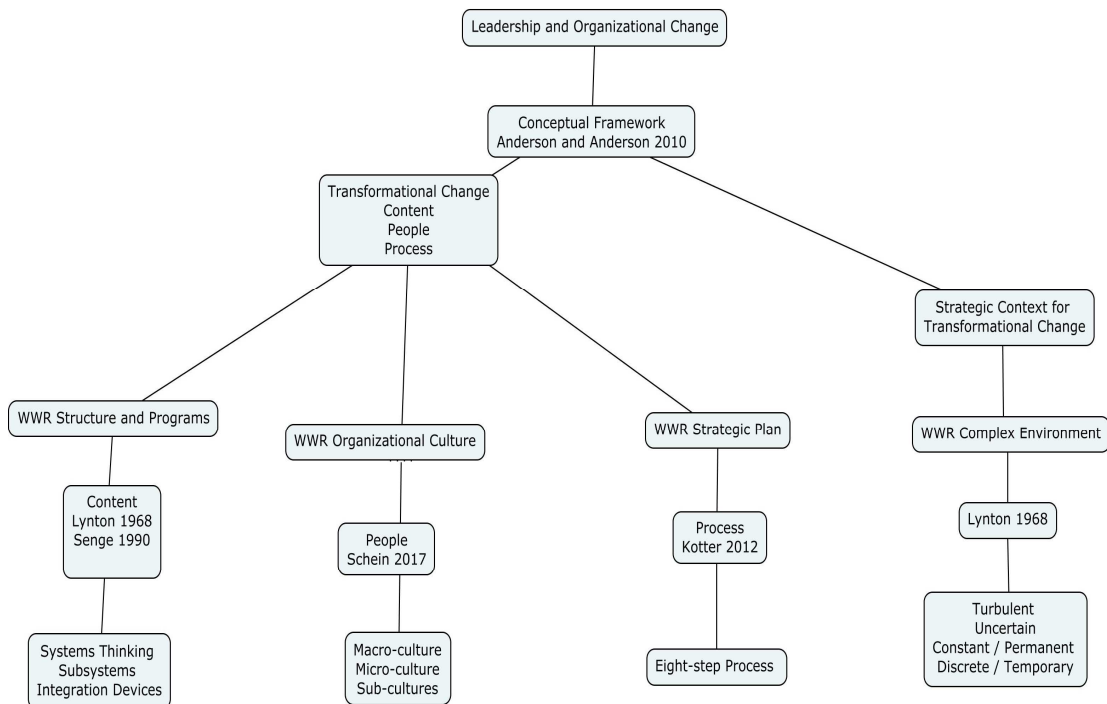
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Appendix A: Conceptual Map



Appendix B: Wounded Warrior Regiment Assignment Criteria

(1) Marines should remain with their parent commands so long as their medical conditions allow, and their parent commands can support them.

(2) Assignment to the WWR is typically considered if the Marine has complex needs such as:

- Has injuries or an illness that will require more than 90 days of medical treatment or rehabilitation.
- Has three or more medical treatment or rehabilitation appointments per week.
- Has transportation requirements to appointments that the prime military command cannot support.
- Is unable to serve a legitimate military function due to their injuries or illnesses

(3) Assignment to the WWR is typically **not** considered if the Marine

- Is already at the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) step in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process.
- There are pending military or civilian legal issues, or a misconduct investigation.
- Requires a level of monitoring or observation that cannot be provided by the WWR (e.g. cases of extreme psychological and/or behavioral conditions that require 24-hour observation).

Source: Miller, 2017, slide 5; Campbell, 2016a, slide 7; and Williamson, 2017, slide 9.

Appendix C: Wounded Warrior Regiment Support Programs and Services

Marine leaders: valued-based leaders play a key role in motivating, inspiring, and mentoring their Marines to meet their established recovery goals. The WWR ensures its leaders at the different levels of the command have the specific training and information they need to help their wounded, ill, and injured (WII) Marines make sound decisions.

Recovery Care Coordinators (RCCs): RCCs serve as the WII Marine's resource expert to help the WII Marines and their families define and meet their individual goals for recovery via the comprehensive recovery plan for rehabilitation and reintegration.

Medical Section: The WWR headquarters has a Medical Section that advises the commanding officer regarding medical issues and emerging technologies and treatments impacting WII Marines. The section provides subject matter expertise, advocacy, education, and liaison to the medical community.

Administrative Support Section: this section supports the commands through comprehensive administrative and financial administration support.

Warrior Athlete Reconditioning Program: this program challenges WII Marines to engage in both physical and cognitive activities outside the traditional therapy setting. Activities are individualized to the WII Marines' needs and encompass a wide range of adaptive sports and recreation activities. Both in individual or team

settings, this adaptive sports program greatly improves WII Marines' overall physical and mental fitness.

Religious Ministry Services: the command chaplain provides spiritual, moral, and emotional care to the WII Marines, their families, and the staff. The WWR has chaplains located at the regiment, its battalions, and in Landstuhl, Germany.

Transition Specialists: to enhance community reintegration for WII Marines by proactively identifying employers and job training programs to ensure WII Marines are competitive in the job market.

Sergeant Merlin German Wounded Warrior Call Center: the call center conducts outreach to post-9/11 WII Marine veterans and provides a 24/7 operation to assist WII Marines and families with support and information on issues ranging from employment opportunities, education assistance, financial management, housing adaptation, transportation, and VA benefits. The outreach efforts have expanded to include Facebook and Twitter.

District Injured Support Coordinators (DISCs): DISCs are mobilized Reserve Marines who are located throughout the country to conduct face-to-face visits and telephone outreach to WII Marines and their families who are recovering within their assigned region.

Family Support Staff: assigned family readiness officers and family support coordinators provide assistance and support to the families of WII Marines throughout the multiple phases of their recovery.

Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) Legal Support: regional coordinators help WII Marines through the IDES process, while attorneys provide legal assistance, support, and counsel to WII Marines going through the IDES process.

Wounded Warrior Hope and Care Center: Located at each of the wounded warrior battalions, these facilities provide a comprehensive array of services, such as counseling, education, training, and physical therapy for WII Marines and their families.

VA Liaison and Veterans Service Organization Coordinator: provide information, education, and assistance on services available through the VA and veterans service organizations.

Wounded Warrior Battalion Contact Centers: these centers conduct regular outreach to WII Marines who remain with their parent commands. Contact center staff members offer immediate and typically short-term support on benefits information and access to care.

Source. U.S. Marine Corps, Wounded Warrior Regiment (n.d.). *A leader's guide to supporting wounded, ill, and injured Marines*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.woundedwarrior.marines.mil/LeadersandStaff/>

Appendix D: Wounded Warrior Regiment New Critical Tasks and Subtasks

Resources:

- (1) Develop an appropriate manning model for the WWR headquarters staff
- (2) Reorganize the staff and resources to support current demands and initiatives

Authorities:

- (1) Advocate for policy changes that allows for expanded relationships with non-federal veteran support agencies
- (2) Coordinate with the Marine and Family Programs Office to expand efforts in support of suicide prevention

Expertise:

- (1) Develop all aspects of the transition program to better serve recovering warriors
- (2) Maintain regiment staff expertise and operating documents to provide guidance and capture lessons learned for future demands
- (3) Align Warrior Athlete Reconditioning Program with changing demographic demands

Supervision:

- (1) Develop, implement, and assess training programs and supported population demands to enable coordination, information sharing, and procedural standards
- (2) Develop meaningful reporting requirements based on programs and initiatives

Communication:

- (1) Communication is the foundation of each critical tasks

Source: U.S. Marine Corps, Wounded Warrior Regiment (2016). *WWR Strategic Plan FY 2016-2021*.

Appendix E: Interview Guide

This interview guide was developed using the following open-ended interview questions that are aligned with the research questions (*shown below in italics*) and explore the research problem:

Research Sub-question 1: What were the strategic drivers for the organizational change effort at the Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR)?

How are you involved in the organizational change effort at the WWR?

How would you describe the organizational change process adopted by the WWR?

What are the main reasons for the organizational change program at the WWR?

What is the primary objective for the organizational change program at the WWR?

Research Sub-question 2: What are the significant leadership challenges associated with effecting the transformational change effort at the Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR)?

What leadership challenges are occurring with the organizational change program at the WWR?

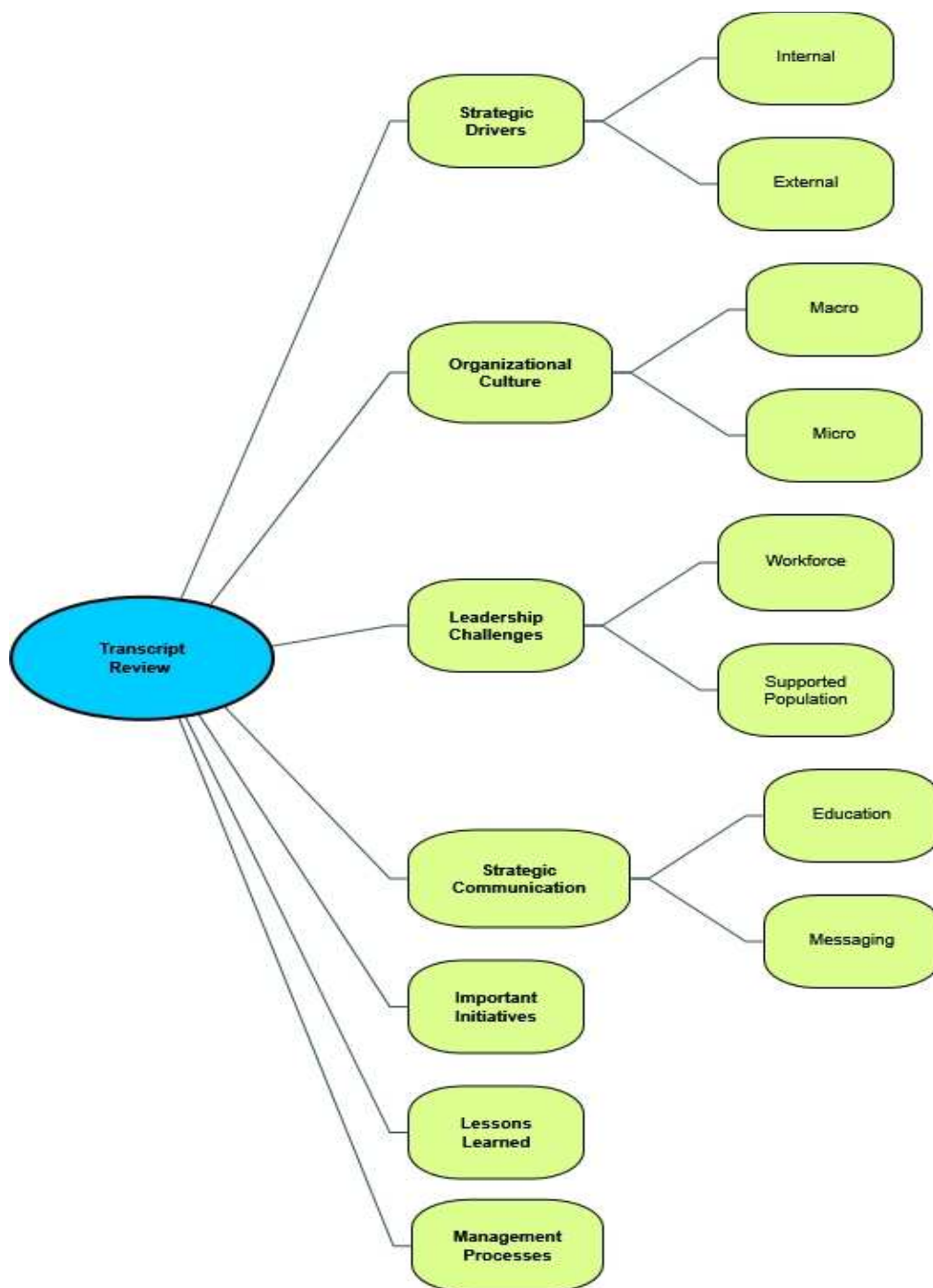
How are the leaders of the WWR working through these challenges?

Research Sub-question 3: What are the managerial lessons from the Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR) organizational change experience that would be applicable to the broader veteran service and support community?

What are the most important managerial lessons learned from the organizational change program of the WWR?

What aspects of this organizational change experience at the WWR could benefit other veteran support organizations?

Appendix F: Conceptual Coding Diagram



Appendix G: Coding Data per Participant Interview

Name	Nodes	References
Y55Y	39	102
X44X	38	81
W33W	40	105
V22V	24	43
U11U	45	132
T00T	41	135
S99S	40	109
R88R	24	91
L22L	38	103
K11K	34	111
I99I	34	121
H88H	30	111
G77G	36	121
F66F	34	148
E55E	39	99
C33C	34	106
B22B	36	88
A77A	24	35

Appendix H: References per Interview Questions

Interview questions	Sources	References
How are the leaders of the WWR working through these challenges?	4	4
How does the organizational culture of the WWR affect the change process?	8	8
How would you describe the organizational processes currently going on at the regiment?	7	7
What are some of the key lessons learned that the regiment could use as it looks forward?	1	1
What are the main leadership challenges occurring with the organizational change program?	18	20
What are the main reasons for the organizational change program at the WWR?	8	8
What are the most important managerial lessons learned from the organizational change program?	17	17
What are your closing comments regarding the organizational change program at the WWR?	2	2
What is the primary objective of the organizational change program at the WWR?	14	18

Appendix I: Codebook for Structural Coded Data

Name	Description
Transcript Review	Structured coding hierarchy from my reading on all the interview transcripts and annotated notes.
Important Initiatives	Important initiatives that enable the WWR to enhance operations.
Assessments and Surveys	Staff and supported populations on a recurring process.
Assignment Criteria Review	Continual review of the assignment criteria for the WII population. Commander to Commander.
External Stakeholder Support	Veteran Support Agencies and Non-profit role.
Patient Assignment Decisions	Assigning patients to the most appropriate medical facility to ensure best treatment and enhance their recovery.
Section Leader Training	Regiment implemented mandatory section leader training for all personnel.
Staff Support	Efforts to enhance the resiliency and educational of the diverse staff components.
Leadership Challenges	The most pressing challenges confronting the WWR leaders as they implement an organizational change program.
Credible Leaders	Being able to recruit, train, and supervise leaders in the WWR that have a sense of "compassionate accountability" - the nature and ability to demonstrate empathy and motivate WWI Marines in their recovery process while maintaining the

Name	Description
	professional standards as reflected by the WWR Motto (Still in the Fight).
Extended Commands	Ensuring the proper relations with those commands not assigned at Camp Lejeune and Camp Pendleton.
Patient Attitude	Promoting the Comprehensive Recovery Plan (CRP) for WII patients based on the four Lines of Operation - Mind, Body, Spirit, and Family. The goal of the CRP is to establish a meaningful life path, reinforced by mental, moral, and physical strength and courage; and achievable goals for the future.
Resilience of the Staff	Implementing programs that address "care giver fatigue" and promote resiliency in the diverse staff of the WWR.
Shared Vision	Internal staff communication to ensure that everyone is on board and understands the direction of the change moving forward.
Staff Turnover	The WWR is managed by civilians and military personnel - the civilian personnel provide the continuity, while there is constant turnover of the military personnel.
Unique Mission	The mission of the WWR is completely different from the other commands in the Marine Corps, which creates a steep learning curve for new active duty members.
Lessons Learned	The most salient lessons learned by the WWR as it has evolved and changed.
Adaptive Nature	The WWR needs to remain adaptive to meet the complex needs of the supported population, and to remain a relevant organization for the Marine Corps.

Name	Description
History of Organization	It is important to remember the reasons why the organization was founded to implement the necessary changes to remain relevant.
Right-size the Organization	The continual review of the organizational structure and staffing requirements for the current and future operational environments to best support the Marine Corps and our supported population.
Management Processes	The most important management process to implement the organizational change program at the WWR.
Alignment of Staff Functions	Alignment the regiment at strategic level and enable the battalions to perform at the operational level.
Assessment Metrics	Assign program assessment to measure the effectiveness of each program to meet the future vision.
Balanced with Leadership	Ensuring that the leadership and managerial aspects of the organizational change process are aligned to support new strategic direction.
Change in Processes	The transition from a wartime to a peacetime operational environment has forced the organization to change some of its administrative processes.
Codify Processes	Ensuring that the managerial processes are codified in legislative policies and captured in all internal documents and procedures.
Diverse Workforce	Ensuring that the organizational change program addresses the needs of each segment of its diverse workforce.
Re-prioritize Programs	Better match the programs and resources to better meet the needs of the current supported population.

Name	Description
Organizational Culture	Assessing whether the WWR has an organizational culture receptive to adapting to changes in their operational environment and supported population.
Disparate Actions	Identifying aspects of the organizational culture that are inconsistent with its operations.
Macro	Assessing the connection between the organization (WWR0 and the institution (Marine Corps).
Micro	Assessing the internal dynamics of the WWR as it continues to evolve and change.
Primary Objective	The primary objective or vision of the organizational change program at the WWR.
Enhance Value to Marine Corps	The organizational change program has to reduce processing time and improve the transition readiness of transitioning wounded warriors.
Premier Institution for Wounded Warrior Care	Promote a continual learning culture within the organization to enhance its ability to advance wounded warrior care.
Reduce Organizational Filters	Improve internal and external communication channels to reduce filters and enhance transparency.
Relevance of the Organization	The organization has to adapt to present noncombat environment while maintaining the capacity to surge for potential combat operations.
Strategic Communication	Promote a strategic communications plans that educates the organization (WWR) and the institution (Marine Corps) of their new strategic intent.

Name	Description
Advocate for Wounded Warrior Care	The WWR serves as the advocate for wounded warrior care within in and for the Marine Corps.
Oppose Alternate Views	The WWR has to confront leaders within the Marine Corps believe that the time has come to transition to an alternate model.
Remind the Institution	The WWR has to remind the Marine Corps on its mission, purpose, and capabilities.
Right Organizational Model	The WWR has to demonstrate that it has the right organizational structure and programs to facilitate wounded warrior care, in both peacetime and wartime, for service members and veterans.
Strategic Drivers	Determining the internal and external drivers for the organizational change program.
External	Evaluating those strategic drivers of change external to the organization.
Competing priorities and Demands	The WWR must remain relevant in an environment of competing priorities within the Marine Corps, as it prepares for the future.
Non-Profits	This category includes all the non-profits, which have had a significant effect in the care of wounded warriors; these agencies are evolving to meet the complex needs of the changing veteran population.
Operational Environment	Assessing how the organization responds during times of combat and noncombat.
Policy and Legislation	Assessing how the organization responds to changes in government policy and law.

Name	Description
Internal	Evaluating those strategic drivers of change internal to the organization.
Budget	The organizational change program adopted by the WWR was driven in part by a reduction in its financial resources; it must now adapt programs within the confines of a budget.
Constant Change	The WWR is an emergent organization that has continuously evolved its programs to meet the demands of its supported population and operational environment.
Different Patient Population	The organizational change was a direct result of a change in its patient population, from a majority of combat-wounded to a majority of noncombat ill and injured.
Personnel Structure	One of the facets of the organizational change program is a transition from a large population of reservists to an organization comprised mostly of active-duty Marines.
Significant Leadership Change	The organizational change program reflects the vision, experience, and personality of the leader, which changes frequently at the regiment.
Technology	Advances in technology have enhanced information access, which has enabled the organization to change its internal processes and explore new opportunities.

Appendix J: Themes and Subthemes

Theme 1: Develop a Strategic Communications Plan

- (1) For internal audiences – shared vision; transparency
- (2) For external audiences – remind institution; continual education.

Theme 2: Advance the Relevance of the Organization

- (1) Reduce transition time – systematic processes;
- (2) Improve operational readiness – subject matter expertise;
- (3) Extend Comprehensive Recovery Plan (CRP) Concept
- (4) Refine surge operations – combat operational planning

Theme 3: Adjust Resources, Capabilities, and Programs

- (1) Focus on transition
- (2) Expand facility capacity
- (3) Refine budget requirements

Theme 4: Align Staff functions

- (1) Core mission (complex care)
- (2) Lines of Operation

Theme 5: Design Process Improvement Metrics

- (1) Assessments and surveys (invaluable feedback, problems areas, adjustments)

Theme 6: Document Managerial Processes, Procedures, and Policies

- (1) Review assignment criteria
- (2) Capture history and lessons learned

Theme 7: Advocate for Military Personnel Assignment Standards

- (1) Active-duty – screening and incentives; continuity of military leadership
- (2) Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) Reserve Force

Theme 8: Cultivate the Organizational Culture

- (1) Diverse workforce
- (2) Unique mission

Appendix K: Theme and Subtheme Reference Data

Name	Sources	References
Themes	19	285
Adjust Resources, Capabilities, and Programs	15	43
Advance the Relevance of the Organization	14	32
Advocate for Military Personnel Assignment Standards	15	38
Align Staff Functions	9	21
Design Process Improvement Metric	8	26
Develop Strategic Communication Plan	15	55
Document Managerial Processes, Procedures and Policies	14	32
Promote the Organizational Culture	16	38