

A TACTICAL GUIDE FOR PERSONALITY TARGETING

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A Familiar Scenario

An improvised explosive device (IED) has just hit a Bradley fighting vehicle on one of the most-traveled routes in your battalion's area of operations. No one has been hurt badly, but the BFV has been damaged beyond repair. The battalion tactical operations center (TOC) spins into action. Immediately, close air support (CAS) and attack aviation are requested. The quick reaction force (QRF) platoon is pushed out to the site with a recovery section. A platoon operating nearby is sent to the site of the IED strike to search the palm groves and low-lying areas for triggermen. A quick plan to search the homes in the surrounding area for high value targets (HVT) is thrown together and within minutes locals are being roused by the crash of combat boot against gate and door. Eight hours later the mission comes to a close. The rollup follows: 1 M2A3 destroyed, 2 anti-Iraq force (AIF) members detained for testing positive for nitrates on the ExSpray kit. The "insurgents" are released the next day for lack of evidence and the probability that the nitrate was just soil.

The scenario may be all too familiar for units participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). Despite operating in the area for several weeks or months, some Soldiers on the ground know very little about what or who they're looking for. Why? Fruitless intelligence gathering and failed raids have not led most units to revise their targeting processes, but, rather, to continue applying event-oriented, terrain-based conventional methods of targeting that are insufficient in the contemporary operating environment (COE) in which we find ourselves.

Where Is the Tactical Level COIN Doctrine?

The Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) Counterinsurgency Center for Excellence recently produced a COIN "Junior Leader

Aide-Memoire," the most recent work in the litany of COIN doctrine that has been disseminated since OIF began in the spring of 2003. The aid is helpful, but, like its predecessors, is more a grab bag of tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) and tips than an organized and fully developed field manual. The United States military has been fighting insurgencies in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere for more than a decade. So where's the beef?

FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*, Dr. David Kilcullen's article "28 Articles: Fundamentals of Company-level Counterinsurgency" (*Military Review*, May-June 2006), the USMC's Small Wars Manual, and others have attempted to address the need for rethinking operations. FM 3-24 specifically discusses the "concentration on elimination of insurgents, not terrain objectives" as an effective tactic against an insurgency. While correctly recognizing the need to focus on people, not terrain, the model is too broad to be

effectively used by tactical units and is weighed down with conventional theory that is not effective against an insurgency.

The "Junior Leader Aide-Memoire" calls for COIN warriors to possess law enforcement tools, intelligence skills, humanitarian skills, peacekeeping skills, and warfighting skills. Not every Soldier in one's formation can be a skilled humanitarian or a brilliant intelligence analyst. Hope lies in the likelihood that a leader will have such individual talents within his platoon and company. The task then becomes building teams within the organization that incorporate each of these skills.

In his article, Dr. Kilcullen advises that company-level leaders "organize for intelligence" and asserts that "rank is nothing; talent is everything." This is where leaders bridge the gap between "what we need" and "what we have." Platoons, squads, teams, and Soldiers must be individually charged with task and purpose



Airman 1st Class Christopher Hubenthal, USAF

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment search a room during a raid in Iraq.

for every mission. The tasks in which the COIN warrior must be proficient span the kinetic/non-kinetic spectrum. Who are your warfighters? Who are your humanitarians? Who are your intelligence collectors and analysts? Rank and position take a backseat to functionality. All counterinsurgency operations, both kinetic and non-kinetic, must be intelligence-driven. Good intelligence must be developed at the lowest levels. Therefore, a premium must be placed on making independent units as effective as possible at intelligence gathering, even if it means keeping a fast-tracking staff sergeant pulling security with the vehicles because his personality is not suited for humanitarian work.

So, the question remains: how are units best task organized in this environment? And, once organized effectively, what must they do to be successful?

A Tactical Guide for Personality Targeting

“A Tactical Guide for Personality Targeting” was developed in order to answer these questions. After talking with countless OIF I and OIF II veterans and reading everything on the counterinsurgency market to prepare himself for deployment to OIF 05-07, then-1st Lieutenant John Ryan concluded that he was on his own in the tactical fight. There was no ARTEP (Army Training and Evaluation Program) to turn to for guidance in dealing with upset village elders or targeting insurgent leaders in the area of operations. After 32 months of combat operations in Iraq and with several hundred thousand OIF veterans, it seemed that no one had published a “how to” manual on engagement and targeting at the tactical level. CPT Ryan strove to fill that gap while serving his tour in OIF 05-07. What ensued in the summer of 2006 was a 160-page tactical guide to engaging and targeting the terrorists operating in platoon, company, and battalion-sized areas of operation. The manual is currently being reviewed by some of the very men who wrote FM 3-24 and may be available in an unclassified form as early as fall 2008.

How Personality Targeting Works

Personality targeting avoids generalities that skew the commander’s perception of the insurgency and instead focuses on specific individuals. The Junior Leaders Aide-Memoire states that, “As a result [of many factors], each insurgency organization is unique.” Personality targeting asserts that this is so largely because each individual insurgent is unique — a free-thinking person who makes decisions and takes action based on relationships, feelings, monetary gain, and personal interest, not just because of his/her membership in a village, religious sect, or insurgent cell. Only after considering the individual insurgent and his relationships, attributes, and environment is he placed into a larger group. By applying objective scrutiny to individual insurgents, the personality targeting process acts as a

filter against vague and erroneous umbrella assessments and should limit the number of unproductive tactical operations.

A Tactical Guide to Personality Targeting was written with the junior leader in mind, and attempts to fill existing doctrinal gaps. The manual provides new or revised guidance on personality targeting priorities and parameters, the battalion targeting officer’s duties, responsibilities, and task organization, the personality targeting process and ensuing products, and personality and cell analysis. The implementation of a decisive targeting strategy pursuant to an aggressive vision and commander’s intent allow an organization to build a winning mentality through targeting.

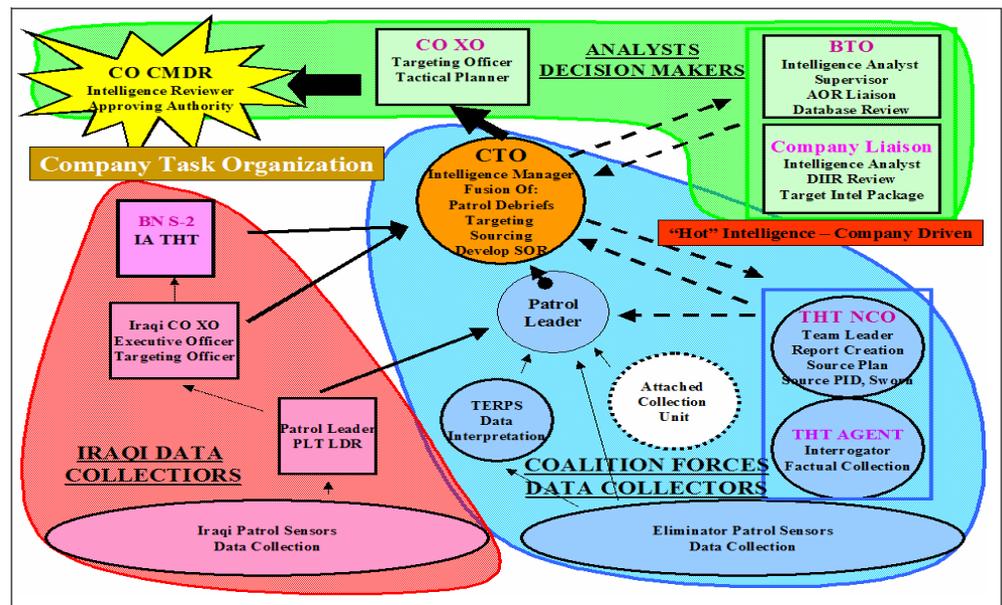
The Personality Targeting Priorities and Parameters

The seven personality targeting priorities highlight the procedural goals of personality targeting and the specific effects that personality targeting achieves for tactical units. They are:

1. Individual personality target apprehension;
2. Decentralized information gathering and data basing; “bottom-up intelligence;”
3. Detailed processes to filter natural flaws in a human intelligence (HUMINT) based procedure;
4. Fusion and interfacing of assets and sensors;
5. Confirmation and denial of intelligence through tactical operations;
6. Incorporation of doctrinal counterinsurgency fundamentals and contemporary operating environment realities; and
7. Soldiers’ and leaders’ ownership of the personality targeting process.

These topics form the foundation of the personality targeting process. The process considers all of the aspects of combating the insurgency, to include self-inflicted systemic obstacles. Understanding the premise behind instituting a personality targeting process will enable its executors to better integrate its intricacies and assertions. A “battle drill” will never effectively combat the insurgency, but analytical tactical leaders and Soldiers can make sound decisions if they understand COIN fundamentals and targeting priorities.

Figure 1 — Company Level Intelligence Flow and Organization



The Battalion Targeting Officer's Duties and Responsibilities and Task Organization

The battalion targeting officer (BTO) is responsible for the battalion's personality targeting process and products, creation and management of the battalion's database, and dissemination and reception of company-level information. The BTO is also the director of battalion intelligence collection and recommends direction of the battalion's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets to "fill in" intelligence gaps. The BTO is the primary officer-in-charge of the battalion intelligence collection team (BICT). Specific duties and responsibilities are deduced from the battalion targeting task organization, BTO battle rhythm, and BICT mission statement. For example, the battle rhythm determines timelines for information dissemination and reception, intelligence report reviews, database building, database management, and personality target recommendations.

Figure 1 illustrates both the intelligence flow and organization for company-level personality targeting and combat missions. Information discovered by the company is "new" or "hot" intelligence. "Hot" intelligence is defined as intelligence developed at the company-level from combat missions or their tactical HUMINT team (THT) representative. "Hot" intelligence requires the company targeting officer (CTO) to complete a target intelligence package (TIP) on the discovered personality targets. Complexity mounts when a company decentralizes operations. Decentralization of company operations will increase the frequency of patrols and the amount of targets that are collected upon. An influx of intelligence will force the CTO to maintain a well-organized database to conduct later analysis. Lastly, the company commander (CO) determines the mission through discussion with the CTO and company executive officer (XO).

The Personality Targeting Process and Products

Database building, database management, database analysis, personality targeting assessments, and all necessary iterations of the personality targeting cycle comprise the personality targeting process.

The process begins with intelligence collection and database building and is not completed until the insurgency is neutralized. One insurgent at a time, the personality targeting process defeats the insurgency.

Current U.S. Army doctrine discusses targeting processes in broader terms. FM 30-60.1, *Multi-Service Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Targeting Time-Sensitive Targets*, uses "find, fix, track, target, engage, and assess" as its approved process. FM 6-20-10, *Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for the Targeting Process*, recommends "decide, detect, deliver, assess" as a suitable process. Personality targeting specifies its process in much greater detail. The other techniques can be used for large scale targeting, but are not designed to accurately depict personalities.

An example of the targeting cycle would be to update a personality tracking matrix (PTM) then transfer that information and any supporting data to a TIP in which specific orders and requests (SOR) would be inscribed. The TIP would be given to THT for interrogations and revisions, if more information was revealed, then passed to a tactical operations unit for direct action (raid) against the target that included follow-on investigations at the insurgent site, or avoid direct action altogether, and complete passive data collection (PDC) on the target location — around and around you go.

For the personality targeting process, overarching themes and assets need to be determined through the commander's intent before the personality targeting initial assessment begins. To ensure that assessments and course of action (COA) development are as accurate as possible, analysts must filter large databases to determine the most reliable information. This information (religious and tribal boundaries, centers of gravity, HVI in the

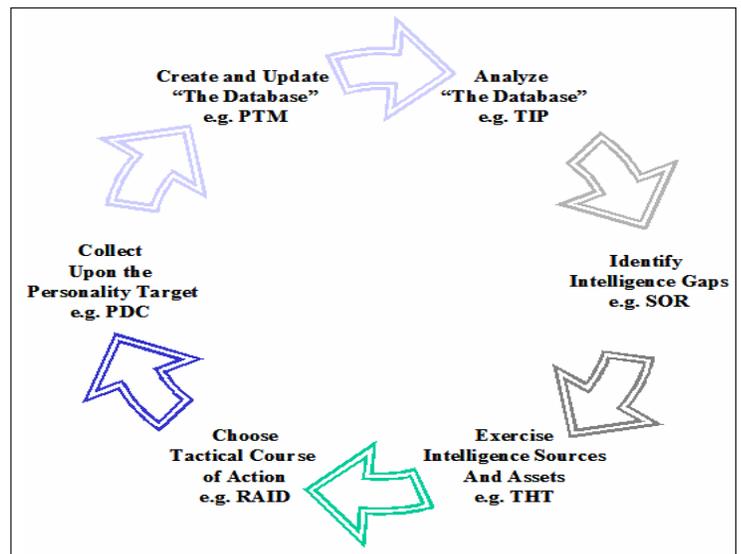


Figure 2 — Personality Targeting Cycle

AO) will have been inherited from the previous unit or disseminated from higher. After preliminary and periodic assessments are completed to capture the most current and realistic battlefield depiction for commanders, the assessments steer analysts and tactical units into "pockets" of the insurgency. Lastly, parameters and constraints determined from the assessment provide the battalion an educated direction for tactical operations — focal points for execution.

All of the products rely upon the building and maintenance of a database, and no single product can explain the direction of the battalion's vision and the complexity of the insurgency. Some of the products are the result of a systematic process and some originate from free thought. The users and analysts have to understand the necessity of both mindsets. The similarity of some products establishes a redundancy in the system. During production, the analyst conducts cross-references to add validity. Intelligence gaps will, at times, have to be filled with "leaps" in analysis, and other times will be answered from detailed research. The redundancy mitigates human error in a HUMINT system. The process requires constant developments and encourages the creation of new products. The importance of free thought and critical analysis cannot be overstated, and no system could replace their worth.

Personality and Cell Analysis

Many units throughout the campaign have lost sight of aging targets and have

not appropriately developed them. Tactical units that fail to develop targets allow the insurgents to continue operations. Units that have stopped targeting because of stagnated reporting are wrong to infer that insurgents have been neutralized and are no longer operating in their AO. Usually, ceased reporting indicates “exhausted” sources or the tactical unit’s lost ambition to continue targeting insurgents. Targets do not arbitrarily stop conducting insurgent activity and CF has no metric to measure insurgents’ “quitting rates.” The only available evidence to determine attrition is HUMINT. Unless reliable HUMINT becomes available to prove otherwise, tactical units must assume that insurgents are continuing operations.

The failure of conventional processes goes beyond operations and includes traditional military intelligence products like pattern analysis. Pattern analysis products are reactive by nature and do not lead to the apprehension of insurgents. Therefore, they have little value except as general FYI. Simplistic traditional products focus on standard military procedure rather than on the many complex factors that govern an insurgent’s actions. These methodologies have plagued attempts to rethink operations within COIN. For example, intelligence personnel assign prefabricated roles to the insurgents in a cell — financier, leader, assassin, etc. Vague, generalized conceptions scarcely represent the reality of the insurgency and distort the commander’s perception of the conflict. Intelligence sections should generate products that focus on the personalities comprising the insurgency and provide tactical leaders with a course of action.

The target intelligence package (TIP) allows tactical units to

maintain the initiative by encapsulating everything that is known about a specific target and providing tactical leaders user-friendly resources. Because of the TIP’s impact on personality targeting, analysts must critically evaluate each package and produce sound recommendations. The BTO is ultimately responsible for these products and must review each and every TIP after completion. It is imperative that tactical units develop and maintain this “living” product. Lastly, the TIP is a platform for critical thinking in order to capture personality targets.

A cell intelligence package (CIP) is a consolidation of all the TIPs associated with a specific cell (insurgent organization). After an appropriate cell is chosen, the analyst must avoid listing every insurgent connection, especially for those who don’t live near the rest. This will only serve to increase confusion, while failing to develop a greater understanding of the insurgency. The cell intelligence package provides the same information that a TIP does, for both the individuals of the cell and the cell as a whole.

Cell assessments will be requested, but ensure that the individual personalities are explored before a cell assessment is completed. A cell assessment will be broad and vague, but at times can be beneficial if an operation calls for a large sweeping recommendation. Analysts must remember that CIPs are only accurate after all the individuals have been discovered, investigated, and then analyzed.

Building a Winning Mentality

The personality targeting process begins with a battalion

U.S. and Iraqi soldiers escort a detainee following a raid in Iraq.

Staff Sergeant Russell Bassett





Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Sandra M. Palumbo, USN

Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, write down information during a mission in Karbala, Iraq, in September 2006.

commander's intent, which incorporates counterinsurgency fundamentals and unit decentralization. The commander's intent must embrace truly unconventional thinking while eschewing standard terrain-based approaches. Commanders at both the battalion and company levels should determine task organization prior to deploying and shape decentralized command and control elements. A decentralized operating structure encourages decision-making by junior leaders, promotes a sense of ownership in Soldiers, and facilitates "bottom-up" intelligence reporting. Leaders and Soldiers must be empowered to make decisions and participate in the process. This allows small units to critically evaluate situations, develop plans, and then execute their "own" operations within the confines of the commander's intent.

Soldiers *must* become sensors and contribute to the apprehension of insurgents. Personality targeting offers options and guidelines, and does not arbitrarily direct actions or predetermine operations; it instead prompts action, justified by the commander's intent. Successful personality targeting processes breed "a winning mentality." Soldiers will accept discomfort because they are involved in all facets of operations. The process perpetuates itself in order to combat a naturally strong insurgent will.

Personality Targeting in Action

During OIF 05-07 routine combat patrols incorporated passive data collection (PDC) on deliberately selected locations. In February 2006, E Co, 1-67 CAB conducted PDC on a rural portion of the company's area of responsibility (AOR). Before the combat patrol was initiated, 1LT Ryan reviewed past intelligence reports to gain a better understanding of the insurgent operations in what was, at the time, determined a "pocket of denial" – an area or population center that opposed Coalition forces' (CF) ideals. His research revealed important intelligence gaps that were critical to converting the area to a "pocket of compliance."

NOTE: The authors included a narrative discussing CPT Ryan's implementation of personality targeting during a combat patrol and the subsequent operation spurred by the information collected. Due to the sensitivity of the techniques, however, the narrative is only included in our web-version. Names and locations were changed for security reasons.

On the 15th of February 2006, PDC in Al Lil Beyt, IZ revealed the possibility of a small, family-based cell. During the patrol, we collected a name of great interest: Kareem Yusif Hassan al Janabi. To ensure that we did not create more intelligence gaps for succeeding patrols, a data

collection team (DCT) cross-referenced Kareem with documentation in his "supposed" home. The DCT used his birth certificate, ID, and car purchase receipts to determine the validity of his name. At the time, I did not recognize Kareem's name connection to the prospering sub-cell in Al Lil Beyt. Despite a review of an on-hand link diagram and area specific high value target (HVT) listing, I did not notice the potentiality of his insurgent involvement. In total, 37 names, pictures, and various forms of documentation were retrieved.

On March 7, while reviewing the previous month's collections, I noticed the similarity of Kareem's family and tribal names to a family-based cell that had been targeted by the unit that preceded our own. The Al Lil Beyt family-based cell incorporated the Hassan Yusif al Janabis. Three brothers – Ali Hassan Yusif, Hussein Hassan Yusif, and Achmed Hassan Yusif – were implicated in various insurgent activities through extensive reporting that met CF judicial requirements. Intrigued by the reports, I reviewed outdated cell link diagrams that showcased their direct contact with the cell leader (operational commander), Khudair Rehan Sabah al Janabi. This connection immediately sparked a reevaluation of the case. E Company's battalion intelligence liaison, conducted database searches and consolidate the insurgents' basic information, reports, and analysis in a target intelligence package (TIP).

Completed on March 8, the TIP illuminated a name variation, but confirmed locations, insurgents' descriptions, native naming conventions of the area, and other subtleties of the case. Notably, the TIP stated that the brothers were frightened into a sanctuary near their old residence. Though the TIP was meticulously produced, name variations often deterred CF operations. The natural flaws of human intelligence would not allow me to accept the TIP as truth. Specifically, the naming convention mistakes were unnerving. I also considered the local nationals' propensity to eliminate parts of their names in order to confuse CF during tactical questioning before I regarded any report as accurate.

I deliberated over the potential facts, mistakes, and assumptions for some time. My initial apprehensions of the intelligence led me to cross-reference the information

with our partner Iraqi Army intelligence officer, who supported the reports of the insurgent sanctuary. Following my meeting with the IA officer, I conducted hasty mathematical analysis based on timing of the reports and past prosecution attempts. Still uneasy about the probability of capture, I referenced my interpreter who said, "Many of the insurgents do not think the Americans know they are in an area after units switch out." I assessed an error in the reports and accepted the risk of assuming a last and middle name mix-up; Hassan Yusif al Janabi as opposed to Yusif Hassan al Janabi. The operation was a "go." To mitigate the errors in reporting, the target area was widened and alternate target locations were selected.

The direct action operations order was issued, but due to administrative constraints, the raid was postponed. Finally, on the evening of March 15, the operation was conducted. Direct action was effectively executed on the target locations and we pursued and captured four local nationals running from the objective area. Follow-on collections also included an attached tactical human intelligence team (THT) that conducted interrogation using information from the TIPs. Augmenting the THT, the DCT utilized our interpreter to tactically question local nationals at the primary site, while I used broken Arabic to collect at the alternate site. In total, we corralled 26 local national males into a consolidated TQA at the primary target location. Since the conglomeration of local nationals was different than the group on February 15, we were forced to deliberately question the unfamiliar faces.

At the TQA, we never asked for the suspected insurgents by name; the local nationals would remain quiet and present false IDs if they knew our intentions. Our staged interpreter monitored local nationals. While we used the applicable steps of EPW treatment, an interpreter gathered the identities of all suspects by first asking names, and then inspecting identification cards. The interpreter annotated the names in the correct sequence so that they corresponded with pictures. The accurate collection of the names and pictures was written in our PDC notebook. Following the collection of local national information, the interpreter and a Soldier reviewed the names on an AO specific HVT list. The Soldier and interpreter determined name and area references, possible false identification, and suspected individuals; however, the local nationals never witnessed the review of the HVT list. Our trusted interpreter had the liberty to make conversation with the local nationals, further develop information about the area, and profile individuals. When false identification was detected, the interpreter yelled 'Kareem!' and looked for any nonverbal responses from the local nationals. In the past, reports had discussed that many insurgents did not memorize their false identification information. The technique gave us a direction to further investigate a local national. Because of an odd non-verbal response, we re-inspected the residence of a different man named Kareem.

The name mix-up proved correct after we apprehended a man by the name of Kareem Yusif Hassan al Janabi at the target location and cross-referenced his identity with documentation. The operation did not produce a successful capture; however, situational awareness of the area and information for future operations was gained. From the information collected on the site, we concluded that the Hassan that we apprehended was the

second cousin to the persons in question. Through tactical questioning we gathered a corroborating description and the location of Hassan Yusif Hassan al Janabi, who was the father of the three suspected insurgents. The location was one kilometer north and our understanding of the Iraqi tribal structures in rural areas confirmed the possibility of the location. At the forward operating base, I conducted a pictorial debrief and synthesized the follow-on PDC with the prior information from the TIPs. Unfortunately we were unable to conduct another operation before an area of operations transition occurred for our company, but we were on their trail.

Conclusion

Many of the problems with targeting insurgents are systemic and not merely the fault of commanders and intelligence analysts. Conventional targeting methods do not provide the level of detail necessary to confront the complexities of a COIN operation. The current systems do not obstruct commanders from making rational decisions, but neither do they provide a sensible platform from which to do so. Personality targeting aims to fix the problems with conventional targeting and provides the commander with multiple courses of action and a reasonable position from which to make decisions. Discussions about methods and techniques are meaningless if leaders and Soldiers cannot think or use a flexible approach that critically evaluates and filters, and realistically analyzes information.

Captain John Ryan was commissioned in 2003 from the United States Military Academy at West Point with a bachelor's degree in systems engineering. His assignments include serving as combat engineer platoon leader and engineer reconnaissance team leader in the 588th Engineer Battalion at Fort Hood, Texas; support platoon leader in 2nd Special Troops Battalion at Fort Hood; combat engineer platoon leader in 1-67th Armor Battalion at Fort Hood; and battalion targeting officer in 1-67th Armor Battalion. While assigned to the 588th, he served as a platoon leader during OIF 1 in Khalis, Diyala Province, Iraq, and while assigned to 1-67th, served as a platoon leader during OIF 05-07 in central Iraq. As a platoon leader, he conducted more than 200 raids and passive data collection missions, and developed the company's small unit targeting doctrine. Utilizing the personality targeting during a five-month period of OIF 05-07, he meticulously developed areas and detained eight personality targets through precise operations. Thirty months as a platoon leader and five months as a battalion targeting officer enabled CPT Ryan to develop and refine the personality targeting process that culminated in this publication while stationed in central Iraq.

Captain Brian Elliott was commissioned in 2002 from the United States Military Academy at West Point with a bachelor's degree in general management. His assignments include serving as a combat engineer platoon leader and company executive officer with the 588th Engineer Battalion at Fort Hood, Texas, and battalion logistics officer in 1-67th Armor, also at Fort Hood. While assigned to the 588th, he served as a platoon leader during OIF I in Ba'Qubah, Diyala Province, Iraq. His platoon in Iraq conducted over 300 raids in less than seven months, resulting in the detention of more than 150 insurgents. CPT Elliott's interest in the counterinsurgency fight was spawned from his authorship of the TTP portion of the continuity book his company provided to elements of the 1st Infantry Division for their OIF II rotation. His studies of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and successful TTPs utilized in OIF and OEF keep him focused on maintaining the initiative through a better understanding of defeating the insurgency at the lowest level – the individual.
