

CIGIE Fellows Cohort Training Activities – October 2020

On October 21 and 22, members of the CIGIE Fellows Program attended a training called “Lincoln Leadership Institute: A Transformational Journey from Gettysburg”. In preparation for this training, CIGIE Fellows read the Pulitzer Prize winning historical novel, *Killer Angels*, by Michael Shaara, which tells the story of the days leading up to the Battle of Gettysburg in the American Civil War.

Using examples from the Battle of Gettysburg, the course explores leadership through the eyes of its military commanders and soldiers, focusing on the concepts of strategic advantage, identifying and addressing organizational vulnerabilities, and courageous communication. Some examples of these leadership strategies are listed below.

An approach called ‘The High Ground’ describes leaders who come to battle prepared and positioned to win. Preparation includes strategic scenario-based planning, which is identified by tactical positioning. This approach identifies positions of strategic advantage in the same way elevation provides a battlefield commander unfettered vision and perspective. Positions of strategic advantage allow the leader to anticipate events and subsequent reactions, as well as monitor for opportunities that can result in significant positive change.

In another example, ‘The Left Flank’ approach identifies management actions as transactional behaviors that produce order and consistency, which include behaviors like planning, organizing, coordinating, directing, and controlling. Leadership actions are the transformational behaviors that produce change and move progress forward, including living one’s values, modeling desired behavior, empowerment, and effective communication. From the high ground, leaders can identify organizational vulnerabilities before they occur and react transactionally. Strong leaders enable their teams to prevent vulnerabilities from ever occurring by transforming the environment to one which fosters vision, integrity, confidence, and action.

The Pickett’s Charge describes an environment that requires courageous communication from strong leaders for teams to thrive. Leaders must commit to lead, communicate all information, whether good or bad, and care for their teams. In doing so, the leader creates a culture of strong followership through shared experience, loyalty, and trust. The result is a leader who can handle predictable surprises, manage professional disagreements, learn from mistakes, and grow beyond past successes.

The CIGIE Fellows Program participants of the Lincoln Leadership Institute’s transformational Gettysburg journey, walked away with new perspectives on effective approaches to leadership that result in loyal followership and effect positive change.