



•Empowering Leadership: Understanding and Maximizing the Role of Sponsors in Wargaming

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Where We're Going?

- Setting the Table
- Maximizing Sponsor Effectiveness – Helping them
 - Understand the Definition of Wargaming
 - Understand the Role of Wargaming
 - Define the Purpose, Problem, and Issues (Aims)
 - Promote a culture of Wargaming
- Wrap Up

Today's Focus is on us wargamers helping Sponsors – but future Sponsor's can learn a thing or two today as well.



Colonel (R) Robert Burks, Ph.D.

- 32 years of U.S. Army service
 - Over a decade as Enlisted Infantryman and Infantry & Quartermaster Officer
 - 17 years OR/Systems Analyst
- Currently
 - Associate Professor, Defense Analysis
 - Director NWSI Wargaming Center
- Supporting DoD, Partners and Allies
 - **37 organizations, with 52 workshops, to help grow their wargaming capability.**



Wargame and Sponsors Initiation!

The Three Witches – Avoiding Darkness, Chaos, and Conflict



Defining the Purpose, Problem, and Issues!

What is a Wargame?

A dynamic representation of **conflict or competition** in which **people make decisions** and respond to the **consequences** of those decisions.



Egyptian Border Security



Taiwan MOD –
Crisis Planning



Does the Sponsor Really
Need a Wargame?

What About these ...

Crisis Simulation

Conflict Simulation

Crisis Management

Policy Gaming

Serious Gaming

Peace and Conflict Exercises

Professional Gaming

Operational Planning

An Act of Communication that simultaneously **explores complexity**, **enhances understanding** and **communication**, **stimulates creativity**, and **contributes to a of action**.



The Role of Wargaming

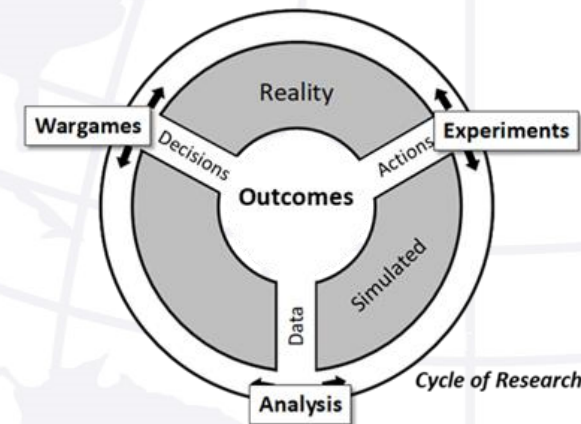
Wargaming is an applied discipline encompassing the creation, use, synthesis and analysis of wargames to **conduct research, explore concepts, develop and test hypotheses**, and dynamically **communicate insights** to inform, educate, and train individuals and organizations.*

Wargaming is **not a “singular solution”** – it **rarely provides the answer** – It is **one tool** to help the Sponsor navigate the complexity and uncertainty of their world.

Your Role ...

- Demonstrate Wargaming’s **Connection to the Cycle of Research/Learning**
- Play to wargaming’s strengths – **an act of communication** that will focus efforts.

The Sponsor cannot make decisions in face of the increasingly complex world they navigate by relying on a singular tool – or even on all of them but in isolated “cylinders of excellence.” Instead, they **need to apply all their tools.***

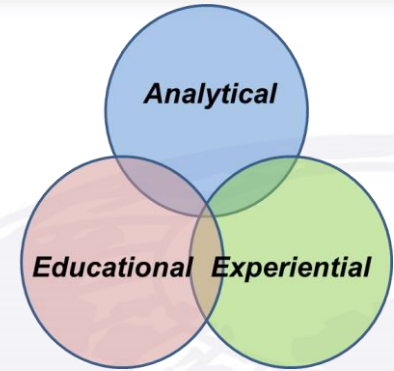


*Modified from Peter Perla (2022).

The Purpose of Wargames

The goal of all wargames is to immerse the players in an environment with the required level of realism to permit the investigation of the human decision-making process.

Three broad purposes (**The Why**) of wargaming:



- **Educational (Player Focused)**
 - **Reinforce learning objectives** while exposing players (students) to situations that they are likely to encounter during their professional careers.
- **Experiential (Player Focused)**
 - Provide players practical experience during training that better prepares them for specific jobs or tasks.
- **Analytical (Sponsor Focused)**
 - **Extract insights and findings** from players to inform organizational challenges and complex problems.



Understanding the Problem

“Problem Definition” You MUST understand what the sponsor's problem is and then get the Issues right.

Sponsors tend to be vague in their requests –

“Examine U.S. synchronization requirements with Allied maritime plans in order to enhance unity of effort, mitigate risk, and inform Allied force allocation and employment decisions.”

We suggest three Sponsor Interactions to help the Sponsor:

- Initial Interaction (**Listen**): Sponsor presents Purpose, Problem, and Issues.
- Second Interaction (**Confirm**): Conduct Problem Decomposition and **confirm restated Problem and identified Issues** (Questions) with the Sponsor.
- Third Interaction (**Scope**): Scope the effort to what can be accomplished based on Constraints and Limitations.

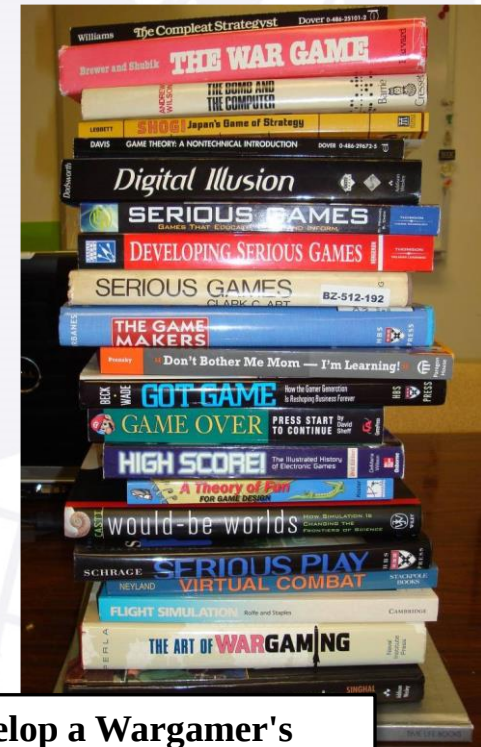


Demonstrate Growth and Value

Most organizations have a small window of opportunity to demonstrate the value of wargaming.

Look to seize opportunities to demonstrate value from the beginning.

- Avoid trying to do too much with one wargame ...
- **Demonstrate success soon** – do not let too much time pass between the beginning of your program and its first success.
- **Focus on many smaller wargames/successes.**
- Incorporate wargaming as part of the **Cycle of Education/Research.**
- Develop opportunities to generate value both inside and outside your organization.

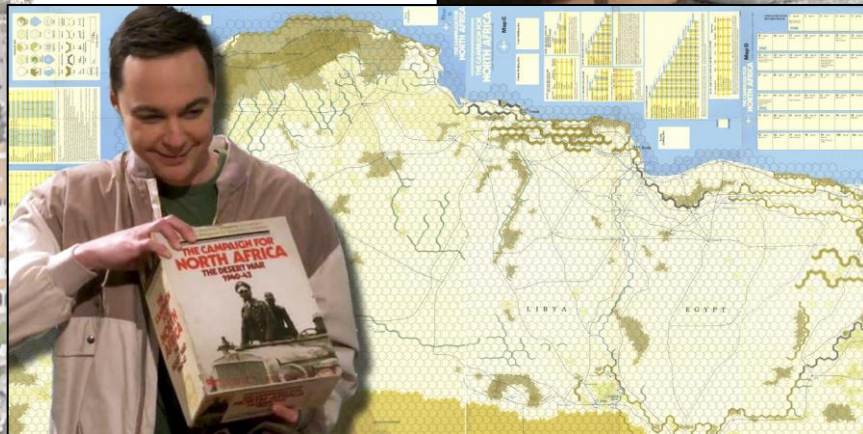


**Develop a Wargamer's
Library of Books and Games**

Don't try to start at your end goal/objective but build towards it.



**The Campaign for North Africa:
The Desert War 1940-43, SPI**



Playing time 1,000 Hours



Questions?

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Cultivate a Wargaming Culture

A major challenge: Overcoming inertia and moving past resistance!

Biggest obstacles Time and Skepticism

Essential steps in the process ...

- **Don't start at your end goal/objective but build towards it.**
- **Start slow** but continuously pick up speed to maintain momentum.
- Involve and **empower everyone.**
- **Develop** and grow a **Knowledge Base.**
- **Promote continuous learning** and improvement.

Top Down

- Communicate a clear vision of the purpose for wargaming.
- Set the priority, expectation and communicate the benefits and value of wargaming.

Middle Out

- Create internal wargaming supporters to promote its value.

Bottom Up

- Establish regular education opportunities – with hands on wargaming.

A Culture does not happen overnight and will not succeed without cultivation.



The Role of Wargaming

Wargaming is **not** a “singular solution” - **rarely provides the answer** – It is **one tool to** help the Sponsor navigate the complexity and uncertainty of their world.

Your Role ...

- Demonstrate Wargaming’s **Connecting to the Cycle of Research/Learning**
- Play to wargaming’s strengths – **an act of communication** that will focus research efforts. It will help us understand and work through (Perla’s 4Ws) ...
 - **What we really know**, helps confirms our knowledge base;
 - **What we don’t know**, when we are surprised or we discover we require knowledge to act in a situation confronting us;
 - **What we don’t know that we know**, working with diverse individuals with different knowledge bases and experiences;
 - **What we don’t know we don’t know**, confronted with a problem we have not explored before.