



Dichtomatik Americas  
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## **“Fire in the hole!”**

### **Innovation, research and faith in the oil & gas sector...**

When will the oil & gas sector bounce back? This, a seemingly common question, is leaving companies dry at the well and in their pocket books. With the exception of a few economic forecasts, it is difficult to answer. Even from topline economists, the international oil & gas market is far too volatile to make definite predictions. ]

However, what we can forecast with precision are our own courses of action. Drawing on my combat experience as a Marine in Afghanistan, our enemy was far too unpredictable and our intel was so unreliable that the majority of our operations were reactive. This resulted in a farce. In response, we took matters into our own hands and became more proactive in all aspects of operations.

As a result, our intel became more accurate, local populaces showed greater support for coalition forces and enemy activity decreased significantly. Similar to the oil & gas sector, we as business professionals can continue to play a game of hide-and-seek chasing leads to fractional sales. Or, we can make adjustments to develop strategic offensive operations for profitable wins.

### **Leveraging Innovation and Research**

Although we had the advantage of armament against our enemies in Afghanistan, they had the upper hand playing in their home turf. To counter this, we leveraged every tool we had to gain control – air surveillance, ground reconnaissance, and regular meetings with village elders.

In the industrial distribution market, we need to utilize research, leverage new innovative tactics, and invest time in relationships to: 1) make better informed business decisions, 2) better understand the market climate and 3) develop strong connections with customers. By investing in research, we have the ability to become more precise with our targeting efforts on new clients. Likewise, such information will provide competitive insights on our targets and their operations. Similar to meeting with village elders, actively developing new relationships and investing quality time into current ones will pay dividends.

### **Have a little “strategic” faith**

In an ideal world if we conduct proper research, focus on a particular target, and leverage our competitive advantages, mission success should come easy, right? Wrong.

Unfortunately today’s global market place is far too complex to allow that to happen.

However, as a part of the research process, we can plan strategically to develop contingencies for when things go wrong – and they probably will.



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“Plan for the worst, hope for the best,” is a motto that I’m sure expands past the boundaries of Marine Corps combat operations. None-the-less, this was a creed instilled in every stage of planning and execution on, and off, the battlefield that saves valuable time and resources crucial for mission success.

One instance in particular involved two platoons simultaneously engaged in combat in separate locations within the same area but with only one air support resource to provide assistance.

With both platoons engaged in equally as difficult situations and only one aircraft able to provide support, a “little strategic faith” was the only solution at the time. As a result, one platoon received air support while the other maneuvered itself to safety during the attack. Enemy fire stopped because of the aircraft’s overt presence. As a result, everyone returned unharmed and the mission was a success.

Parallel to the oil & gas market, we can plan for the worst, while still hoping for the best by being strategic and versatile. The flipside is having faith and confidence that our plans go accordingly. Obviously, we can’t predict the future, which is why strategy is so important. Where strategy ends, hope begins. Vice-versa. Where hope ends, strategy picks up the slack.

We, as sophisticated and versatile professionals, can no longer solely rely on customers coming to us for help. We need to become more proactive to ultimately adapt and overcome in order to maintain mission success.

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