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Lessons Learned in Viet-Nam

1. Nothing works in VN unless it is simple and clear.
2. Courtesy plus homework plus "ruthlessness" = a productive advisory relationship.
3. The advisor should arrive at a relationship with his counterpart of mutual respect and courteous interaction. Friendship in a deeper sense may also result, but this is based on the accident of personality and is not a sine qua non.
4. In Viet-Nam, plans are a dime a dozen. The real problem lies in the execution phase. This must be monitored constantly.
5. In Viet-Nam, what the Americans do may be either helpful or harmful, but is not crucial. What the Vietnamese do is crucial.
6. We should aim at quality, not quantity.
7. It is better to do something well rather than fast. U.S. bureaucratic pressures must often be resisted in this regard.
8. In launching a new program, one must first analyze the problem to determine
  - (a) doctrine - what must the program consist of to accomplish the end desired
  - (b) methodology - how does one implement the program.

Then one must recruit U.S. advisors who are or can be motivated to do the job. Then these people must be trained in the doctrine and methodology already established, so that each man has a clear concept. Finally there must be reporting and evaluation of results at each stage, keyed to the established doctrine.

9. Before resources are poured into a program, it is necessary to face and solve the problem: Who are the Vietnamese who are willing and able to carry it out. If they don't exist, they must be found and trained.
10. In running a U.S. advisory team, the chief must assume responsibility for all failures. Conversely, all successes must be credited to the personnel who actually did the work, by name.

11. The program manager should try to divide up the tasks so that each man on the team has a clearly defined area of responsibility and authority. In this way each man can measure his own performance and derive a sense of accomplishment which makes for job satisfaction and good morale.

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