



“AIRMINDEDNESS”

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The perspective of **Airmen** is necessarily different; it reflects a unique appreciation of **airpower's** potential, as well as the threats and survival imperatives unique to Airmen. The study of airpower leads to a particular expertise and a distinctive point of view that General Henry H. “Hap” Arnold termed “airmindedness.”

Airmen normally think of airpower and the application of force from a functional rather than geographical perspective. Airmen do not divide up the battlefield into operating areas as some surface forces do; airmindedness entails thinking beyond two dimensions, into the dimensions of the vertical and the dimension of time.

Airmen think spatially, from the surface to geosynchronous orbit. Airmen typically classify targets by the **effect** their destruction would have on the adversary instead of where the targets are physically located. This approach normally leads to more inclusive and comprehensive perspectives that favor strategic solutions over tactical ones. Finally, Airmen also think of power projection from inside the United States to anywhere on the globe in hours (for air operations) and even nanoseconds (for space and **cyberspace operations**).

Airmindedness impacts Airmen's thoughts throughout all phases of operations. It is neither platform- nor situation-specific. Airmindedness enables Airmen to think and act at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of war, simultaneously if called for. Thus, the flexibility and utility of airpower is best fully exploited by an air-minded Airman.

“[Airmindedness] is a global, strategic mind-set providing perspective through which the battlespace is not constrained by geography, distance, location, or time. The air-mindedness lens enables Airmen to think about conflict in which force-on-force and armies in the field are only one element. It implies the ability to influence the links between adversary materiel and moral strength. Although Airmen rarely claim to target the enemy's will, they perceive a direct connection between his physical capacity and desire to continue the fight.”

— Dr. Dale L. Hayden, “Air-Mindedness,” *Air & Space Power Journal*, Winter 2008