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U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

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History. This publication is an expedited revision. The portions affected by this expedited revision are listed in the summary of change.

Applicability. This pamphlet applies to the Regular Army, the Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and the U.S. Army Reserve, unless otherwise stated. During mobilization, the proponent may modify chapters and policies contained in this publication.

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Suggested improvements. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to Deputy Chief of Staff, G–1 (DAPE–MPE), 300 Army Pentagon, Washington DC 20310–0300 or at usarmy.pentagon.hqda-dcs-g-1.mbx.publishing-team@army.mil.

Distribution. This publication is available in electronic media only and is intended for the Regular Army, the Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and the U.S. Army Reserve.

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SUMMARY of CHANGE

DA PAM 600–25

U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide

This expedited revision, dated 11 September 2023—

- Updates Advanced Leaders Course/Senior Leaders Course to capture recent course redesign (paras 2–12e(2) and 2–12e(3)).
- Eliminates Enlisted Personnel Management System language and replaced with updated human resource doctrine (FM 1–0) (para 3–1).
- Updates noncommissioned officer career timeline (fig 3–1 and para 3–5).
- Updates assignment making decision process to support attaining military occupational specialty proficiency (para 3–6).
- Modifies Proponent Board Briefing standards and requirements (app B).
- Updates language to align with current doctrinal changes to The Army Strategy, The Army People Strategy, The Army’s Noncommissioned Officer Strategy, and FM 6–22 (throughout).
- Eliminates use of MilSuite (Smartbook DA Pam 600–25) and replaced with DCS, G–1 DA Pam 600–25 CORE website (throughout).

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Section I

General

1–1. Purpose

This pamphlet serves primarily as a professional development guide for a noncommissioned officer (NCO) within their respective career management field (CMF). This pamphlet should not be construed as a simplified checklist for promotion selection or a guide for NCOs on how to perform their assigned duties. Instead, it describes the full spectrum of developmental opportunities an NCO can expect for a successful career. This document also serves as a mentoring tool for leaders at all levels and in an important human resource (HR) management guide for assignment managers, proponents, and Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) evaluation board members. Its focus is the development and career management of all Army NCOs.

1–2. References, forms, and explanation of abbreviations

See appendix A. The abbreviations, brevity codes, and acronyms (ABCAs) used in this electronic publication are defined when you hover over them. All ABCAs are listed in the ABCA directory located at <https://armypubs.army.mil/>.

1–3. Associated publications

Policy associated with this pamphlet is found in AR 600–3.

1–4. Records management (recordkeeping) requirements

The records management requirement for all record numbers, associated forms, and reports required by this publication are addressed in the Records Retention Schedule–Army (RRS–A). Detailed information for all related record numbers, forms, and reports are located in Army Records Information Management System (ARIMS)/RRS–A at <https://www.arims.army.mil>. If any record numbers, forms, and reports are not current, addressed, and/or published correctly in ARIMS/RRS–A, see DA Pam 25–403 for guidance.

Section II

Overview

1–5. Scope

a. NCOs are the “backbone of the Army.” Ours is a professional corps that reflects America’s diversity and represents the time-honored values that built our Nation—hard work, duty, selflessness, determination, honor, and compassion. Army NCOs represent a true competitive advantage. This advantage is a result of the Army’s institutional commitment to develop a professional corps of NCOs and a capacity to learn faster and adapt more quickly than its adversaries. The Army’s leader development imperatives guide principles that inform policy and actions to develop leaders with the required qualities and enduring leader characteristics. These guiding principles remain constant from initial service affiliation through separation or retirement. They foster an environment to develop NCOs throughout their careers utilizing progressive and sequential processes that incorporate training, education, and experiences across learning domains of institutional, operational, and self-development. The Army’s strategies build on the Army’s experiences since the end of the Cold War through the early conflicts of the 21st century.

b. Officers and NCOs are encouraged to read DA Pam 600–25, regardless of branch, functional area, military occupational specialty (MOS), or CMF held. Unique and valuable lessons in Army culture and NCO professional development (NCOPD) are found in every section. For specific information on officer branches, DA Pam 600–3 is available online at the Army Publication Directorate’s website (available at <https://armypubs.army.mil/>).

1–6. The Army Vision and Strategy

The Army Strategy articulates how the Total Army achieves its objectives, as defined by the Army Vision, and fulfills its Title 10 (10 USC) duties. Its primary inputs are the National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, and National Military Strategy.

a. The Army Mission remains constant. To deploy, fight, and win our Nation's wars by providing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the Joint Force. The Army mission is vital to the Nation because we are the Service capable of defeating enemy ground forces and indefinitely seizing and controlling those things an adversary prizes most—its land, its resources, and its population.

b. Given the threats and challenges ahead, it is imperative the Army have a clear and coherent vision to retain overmatch to deter, and defeat, if necessary, all potential adversaries. As such, the Army Vision provides that the Army will be ready to deploy, fight, and win decisively against any adversary, anytime, and anywhere, in a joint, combined, multi-domain, high-intensity conflict, while simultaneously deterring others and maintaining its ability to conduct irregular warfare. The Army will do this through the employment of modern manned and unmanned ground combat vehicles, aircraft, sustainment systems, and weapons, coupled with robust combined arms formations and tactics based on a modern warfighting doctrine, and centered on exceptional leaders and Soldiers of unmatched lethality.

c. To build the more lethal and effective fighting force outlined in our Army Vision, it is important to understand the key parts of that vision—

(1) Deploy, Fight, and Win—The Army will remain expeditionary. All Army units will be trained and proficient in their ability to deploy, whether it is a strategic deployment from the United States or an operational deployment within a theater.

(2) Joint—The Army will train and fight as a member of the Joint and Multinational Team. Our doctrine, tactics, and equipment must be complementary to and interoperable with our sister services, allies, and partners.

(3) Multi-Domain—The Army must be able to fight not only in the land, sea, and air using combined arms, but also in all domains, including human, cyber, space, information, and the electromagnetic spectrum.

(4) High-Intensity Conflict—The Army must be ready to conduct major operations and campaigns involving large-scale combat with Division and Corps-level maneuvers against near-peer competitors.

(5) Deter—The Army will maintain its conventional deterrence capability with a combination of combat-credible forward forces, robust alliances, and a demonstrated ability to reinforce a region rapidly.

(6) Irregular Warfare—The Army will continue to conduct irregular warfare, whether it is counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, or advise and assist operations, and we must train, exercise, and assess these skills to sustain our competence.

(7) Modernization—The Army must build the next generation of combat vehicles, aerial platforms, and weapons systems, and start fielding them by 2028. These systems must be more agile, lethal, resilient, and sustainable on the future battlefield while under constant surveillance and attack. Our systems must also be upgradeable and incorporate robotics, artificial intelligence, and other technologies as they mature.

(8) Leadership—The Army will prioritize development and promotion of smart, thoughtful, and innovative leaders of character who are comfortable with complexity and capable of operating from the tactical to strategic level.

d. To achieve these objectives, the Army will build readiness for high-intensity conflict; modernize its doctrine, equipment, and formations; and reform the Army to maximize time, money, and manpower. The Army will also take care of its people, live the Army Values, and strengthen our alliances and partnerships to sustain long-term success in wartime and peace. This will ensure our Army remains the most lethal ground combat force in history, capable of dominating any adversary on any battlefield.

e. The strategic environment of today has caused political, economic, social, and technological changes that are creating challenges and opportunities for maintaining the Army's land power dominance. Battlefields are expanding across all domains, geographic scale, and types of actors, while at the same time, decision cycles and reaction times continue to be compressed. Furthermore, our Army will operate on a congested, and potentially contaminated, battlefields while under persistent surveillance, and we will encounter advanced capabilities such as cyber, counter-space, electronic warfare, robotics, and artificial intelligence. These dynamics are changing the character of warfare for which the Army of 2028 must be prepared to face global competitors, regional adversaries, and other threats.

f. The strategic approach to the Army's central challenge is how to use finite resources to remain ready to fight tonight while simultaneously modernizing and preparing for a fundamentally different future to achieve the Army Vision. The Army Strategy established four lines of effort with specific objectives to chart a path of irreversible momentum towards 2028. These lines of efforts are Readiness, Modernization, Reform, and Alliances and Partnerships. Underpinning this strategic approach is an enduring commitment to take care of our people and live the Army values in everything we do.

1–7. The Army People Strategy

The Total Army must remain ready as the world's premier combat force. That readiness relies upon people. Human capabilities such as resiliency, critical thinking, comfort with ambiguity, and the ability to accept prudent risk and adjust rapidly all define our profession. The Army People Strategy describes how we will shift from simply "distributing personnel" to more deliberately managing the talents of our Soldiers. This means creating a 21st century talent management system with policies, programs, and processes that recognize and capitalize on the unique knowledge, skills, and behaviors (KSB) possessed by every member of the Army team, allowing us to employ each to maximum effect.

a. The Army Mission is unchanged – To deploy, fight, and win our Nation's wars by providing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the Joint Force.

b. The Army People Strategy mission and vision are clear – The Total Army will acquire, develop, employ, and retain the diversity of Soldier talent needed to achieve Total Army readiness. Our vision is to build cohesive teams for the Joint Force by maximizing the talents of our people, the Army's greatest strength and most important weapon system.

c. The Army People Strategy is foundational to the readiness, modernization, and reform efforts described in the Army Strategy. With the right people, in the right place, at the right time, our Army will successfully deploy, fight, and win in multi-domain operations and excel in support of the Joint Force. It is our people who provide us with an enduring advantage to remain the world's most ready, lethal, and capable land combat force.

1–8. Army's Noncommissioned Officer Strategy

The Army has transitioned from a focus on counterinsurgency operations to large-scale combat operations and strategic competition. Under the pressure of constant change and rapid technological advances, the NCO Corps developed an enduring and flexible strategy to lead us into the future. The Army NCO Strategy, coupled with This is My Squad, is based on the vision of what an NCO must be, know, and do to compete and win in multi-domain environments. The Army NCO Strategy, nested in the guidance and vision of our leaders, reflects our Army values and NCO core competencies. The concept of the Army NCO Strategy will drive the NCO Guide, and the two will evolve in concert to ensure the NCO Corps remains current, relevant, and the best in the world.

a. NCOs must build cohesive teams that are highly trained, disciplined, and fit that are ready to fight and win, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. They must also develop Soldiers for Life, certified in the Army's Profession of Arms.

b. NCOs must lead, train, and care for Soldiers and equipment while enforcing standards. The Army must have a cohort of competent and committed NCOs of character as trusted professionals who thrive in chaos, adapt, and win in a complex world. The Army's NCO Strategy provides the ways, means, and ends to develop a professional, trained, and ready NCO corps that is essential to remain as the world's premier fighting force.

c. A Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development System (NCOPDS), integrated and synchronized in the development of the next generation of competent and committed NCOs of character is essential. NCOPDS was established to operationalize the lines of effort outlined in the NCO Strategy. The system is designed to develop NCO competencies for the 21st century and to support greater flexibility to when, where, and how Soldiers learn.

d. The desired end state of the NCO Strategy includes the following outcomes:

- (1) Providing the Army with a more adaptable, resilient NCO Corps.
- (2) Improving professionalism, training, and education expertise.
- (3) Providing challenging, relevant, and rigorous leader development training, education, and experiences.

(4) Articulating learning responsibilities and requirements across the three learning domains (institutional, operational, and self-development) and integrating them into a synchronized, effective, and efficient development system.

(5) Improving professional development models (PDM) and learning curricula so Soldiers and leaders can assess progress, track learning events, create goals, and certify professionals to identify and develop NCOs to serve at operational and strategic levels.

(6) Ensuring that the Army, commanders, and NCOs are satisfied with development programs and performance policy.

(7) Ensuring doctrine and programs fully support a lifelong learning environment and the total force.

1–9. The Army talent management strategy

Leader development is further enhanced by recognizing, developing, and maturing talents in Soldiers while simultaneously managing talent to meet the immediate and long-term goals of the Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS). Together, leader development and talent management build on the fundamentals.

a. Talent is the intersection of three dimensions, KSBs—that create an optimal level of individual performance, provided individuals are employed within their talent set. Talent management is a way to enhance Army readiness by maximizing the potential of the Army’s greatest asset—our people. By better understanding the talent of the workforce and the talent necessary to meet capability needs by unit requirements, the Army can more effectively acquire, develop, employ, and retain the right talent at the right time. In Army talent management, “best” equals best fit for the work at hand.

b. The Army optimizes human performance by recognizing and cultivating the unique talent of every Soldier. Effective talent management:

- (1) Is an investment.
- (2) Requires a systems approach.
- (3) Balances the needs of the organization with the balance of the individuals.
- (4) Ensures job-person fit.
- (5) Empowers Soldiers.
- (6) Requires leaders to know subordinates’ goals, strengths, and weaknesses that honestly and effectively articulate these in evaluation report.
- (7) Promotes the development of the Soldier’s capabilities.

1–10. Assumptions

a. The Army operates in an era of uncertainty and persistent conflict against a full spectrum of possible threats.

b. The Army continues to confront unexpected challenges from an adaptive enemy and must respond rapidly in developing doctrine, training, and education.

c. The Army’s learning model must be clear in intended outcomes that are rigorous, relevant, and measurable.

d. Army leaders can contribute their experiences to the body of knowledge throughout their careers.

e. Being a Soldier requires a foundation of comprehensive fitness, the Army Values, the warrior ethos, and technical and tactical proficiency.

f. Fundamental competencies will be reinforced by maximizing time on task.

g. Continually evolving, complex operational dilemmas over an extended time in culturally diverse, joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational (JIIM) operational environments will continue to challenge leaders.

h. Time, workforce, and resources available for learning will continue to be limited.

i. Civilian educational institutions will continue to fulfill a role in the holistic professional development and career-long learning of Soldiers within the institutional and self-development learning domains.

Chapter 2

Leader Development

2-1. The Army leader development strategy

Leader development is fundamental to our Army. Leadership underpins everything the Army does, which is why we continuously invest in our people. This investment in our profession ensures we are ready when our Nation calls. The ALDS provides the ways, means, and ends to realize an Army of competent and committed NCOs of character with the skills and attributes necessary to meet challenges of the 21st century and beyond.

a. Leader development is a process that aligns training, education, and experience to prepare leaders for their current position and progressive positions as well. Leader development is a deliberate, continuous, and progressive process founded in Army Values that grows Soldiers into competent, committed, professional leaders of character. Leader development is achieved through the career-long synthesis of training, education, and experiences acquired through institutional, operational, and self-development domains, supported by peer and developmental relationships.

b. Our NCOs must expect complexity and understand they must be prepared to operate interdependent under mission orders. The strategy challenges the Army to enrich leader training and education by leveraging technology and adapting training methodologies to replicate complexity and hybrid threats in the classroom, at home station, and while deployed. Our doctrine describes the leadership qualities we seek; leaders must be:

- (1) Able to demonstrate their core attributes and competencies and ability to lead change in the Army.
- (2) Capable of operating across the range of military operations.
- (3) Able to combine operational excellence, with the ability to operate in JIIM environments, to achieve unity of effort.
- (4) Able to understand the socio-economic environment and be culturally astute, to successfully operate in complex, uncertain environments.
- (5) Courageous enough to see and exploit opportunities in the challenging, complex operational environment.
- (6) Professionals who are grounded in Army Values and the warrior ethos.

c. Army leaders must possess and demonstrate traits such as being adaptable, agile, flexible, responsive, and resilient. Mastering these fundamentals is a professional obligation.

2-2. Field Manual 6-22

a. FM 6-22 provides a doctrinal framework covering methods for how leaders develop other leaders, improve their organizations, build teams, and develop themselves. Army leaders are the competitive advantage the Army possesses that neither technology nor advanced weaponry and platforms can replace. Developing leaders is a complex and complicated undertaking because it is primarily a human endeavor—requiring constant involvement, assessment, and refinement. Today's Army demands trained and ready units with agile, proficient leaders. Developing our leaders and ourselves is integral to our institutional success today and tomorrow. It is an important investment for the Army's future because it builds trust in relationships and units, prepares leaders for future uncertainty, and is critical to readiness and our Army's success. Leader development programs must recognize, produce, and reward leaders who are inquisitive, creative, adaptable, and able to exercise mission command. Leaders exhibit commitment to developing subordinates through executing their professional responsibility to teach, counsel, coach, and mentor subordinates. Successful programs that develop leaders incorporate accountability, engagement, and commitment; create agile and competent leaders; produce stronger teams and organizations; and increase expertise. Developing leaders involves many practices to ensure people have opportunities to fulfill their goals and the Army has capable leaders in position and ready for the future. Practices include recruiting, accessions, training (including coaching, teaching, mentoring, fostering, and advocating self-development), education, assigning, promoting, broadening, and retaining the best leaders, while challenging them over time with greater responsibility, authority, and accountability. Army leaders assume progressively broader responsibilities across direct, organizational, and strategic leadership levels.

b. FM 6-22 integrates doctrine, experience, and best practices by drawing upon applicable Army doctrine and regulations; input of effective Army officers, warrant officers, NCOs, and DA Civilians; recent Army leadership studies; and research on effective practices from the private and public sectors. This manual is about how to develop leaders to become skilled leaders. The Army's broader family of field

manuals develops leaders' technical and tactical expertise. Branches identify the technical and tactical knowledge and skills for specific grades and positions. Talent management and leader development are linked but separate processes. The Army develops individuals to be effective leaders. Talent management is an administrative process that puts the right person in the right job.

2–3. Ends, ways, and means

a. Ends.

(1) The Army requires a process that aligns training, education, and experience to prepare leaders who exercise mission command to prevail in unified land operations. The Army must produce professional leaders of character that practice the mission command philosophy whether conducting unified land operation or Army generating force functions. Army leaders possess emotional intelligence and achieve credibility with external JIIM partners, allies, internal agencies, and stakeholders. The Army strives to develop leaders who are not only prepared for their current position but also prepared for increased levels of responsibility. Doing this requires senior leaders to have an enterprise view, allowing their subordinates to leave their current organization to take advantage of opportunities for further development.

(2) The leadership requirements model illustrates the expectations of Army leaders (see fig 2–1). This model aligns leader development activities and personnel practices to a standard set of characteristics valued throughout the Army. The model covers the core requirements and expectations of leaders at all levels of leadership. Attributes are the desired internal characteristics of a leader—this is what the Army wants leaders to be and know. Competencies are skilled and learned behaviors the Army expects leaders to possess and employ—this is what the Army wants leaders to do.

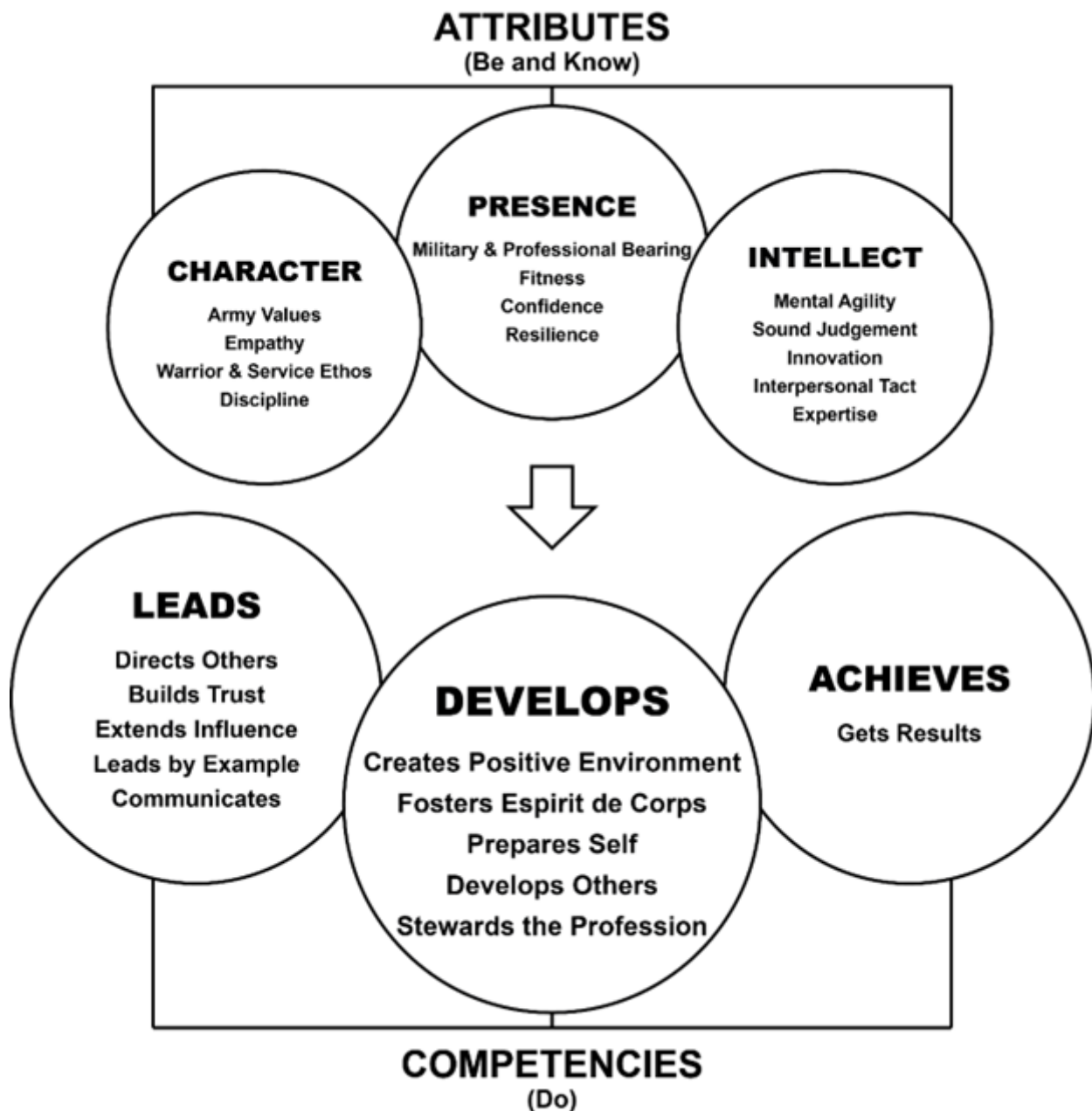


Figure 2–1. Leadership requirement model, Army Doctrine Publication 6–22

b. Ways. Central to this strategy is the ability to achieve a shared understanding across the Army regarding the vital importance of leader development at all levels. This also includes an acknowledgment by leaders at all levels of their responsibility to continually develop leadership competencies among NCOs. Army senior leaders set conditions for the Army to develop leaders. Simultaneously, leaders at all levels create conditions in their organizations that maximize development of subordinate leaders by teaching them, training them, and providing the supporting experiences they need to grow as leaders. Additionally, leaders help individuals realize that individual commitment to career-long learning is essential to development.

(1) Soldiers gain and use their training, education, and experience to develop as leaders across the three learning domains: institutional, operational, and self-development, as illustrated in the Army leader development model (see fig 2–2).

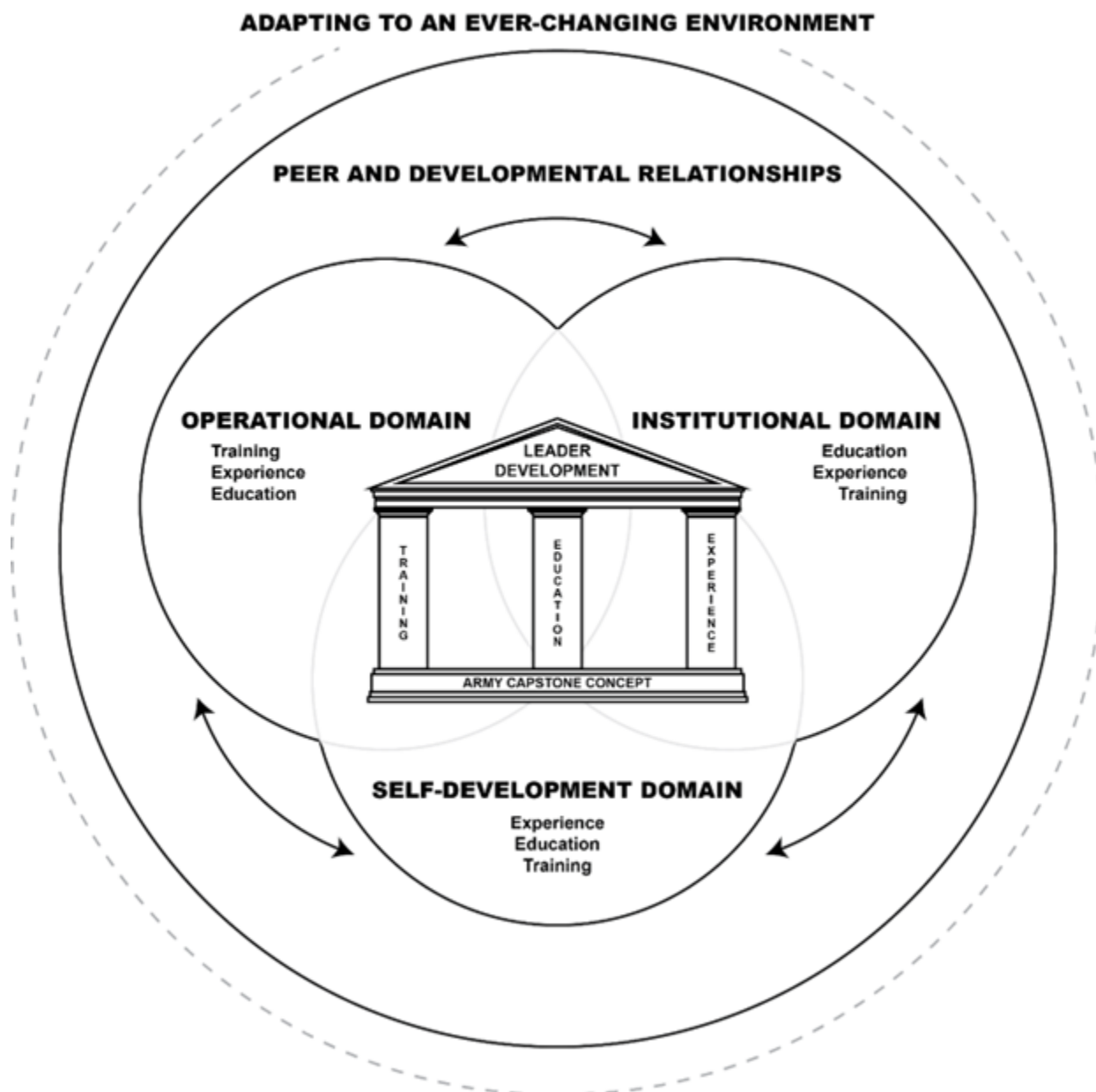


Figure 2–2. Army leader development model

(2) The Army provides, and continually improves upon, leader development processes. This is done by integrating and synchronizing Army policies and programs, and by using premier Army assets such as its Combat Training Center and Army schools. The Army ensures its premier training centers provide opportunities for developing leaders, preparing formations to fight and win, and maximizing home station resources to do the same. This environment instills the essential characteristics of the Army profession and prepares Soldiers to operate in dynamic environments. The system continually develops leaders and manages talent from every command echelon, contributing to the development of adaptive leaders who employ and lead regionally responsive, mission-tailored land power forces to ensure strength for tomorrow.

(3) From an enlisted perspective, the Army continues refining the NCO professional military education (PME), from entry level through the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy and beyond. The Army expands and encourages a broad range of assignment opportunities in academia, industry,

interagency, and multinational settings to prepare leaders for a complex and uncertain operational environment. The Army develops and manages the right blend of talent by identifying required leader skills and then cultivating leaders through experiential opportunities, academic, and developmental programs.

(4) The Army manages talent and provides individual growth opportunities for continued promotion or selection while providing organizations with the right leader, at the right place, and at the right time.

(5) Successful leaders recognize that continually developing their subordinate leaders is the key to the long-term health of the Army. Subordinates are the ones who will guide units and organizations through the challenges of tomorrow. If today's leaders do not adequately develop their subordinates, then today's leaders have not succeeded in accomplishing tomorrow's mission. Senior leaders must hold subordinate leaders accountable for leader development and talent management rewarding those who take this to heart.

c. *Means.* Means includes the deliberate effort to employ the resources of will, time, people, and funding. The essential means for successful leader development are will and time. The Army's Leader Development Program is the Army's program to administer, manage, and integrate leader development initiatives. Funding for leader development initiatives continues to be supported by program evaluation groups operating within the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution (PPBE) process.

(1) Army senior leaders must emphasize leader development at all levels, from junior NCOs to the Sergeant Major (SGM) of the Army. Closely connected to the will to develop leaders is providing the time to execute holistic organizational leader development programs. Finally, the strategy produces optimum results if it is adequately prioritized and properly resourced.

(2) PPBE informs implementation plans and supports the provision of detailed guidance by commanders, supervisors, and leaders of all components in Army command, Army service component commands, direct reporting units, HQDA, and other activities involved in the planning, programming, preparation, and execution of developing Army leaders.

2-4. Army learning concept

The Army learning concept meets the Army's need to develop adaptive, thinking Soldiers and leaders of character capable of meeting the challenges of operational adaptability in an era of persistent conflict. It describes a learning continuum that blurs the lines between the operational Army and the generating force by meshing together self-development, institutional instruction, and operational experience. It is a learner-centric continuum that begins when an individual joins the Army and does not end until transition. The learning model enhances the rigor and relevance of individual learning, through routine assessment of 21st century Soldier competencies that enable success across the range of military operations. It is a learning model that adapts to fluctuations in learning time and maximizes opportunities to master fundamental competencies. It is open to inventiveness, input of learner knowledge, and advances in learning technologies and methods. Lastly, the learning model ensures Soldiers and leaders receive a level of preparation equal to the value of their service to this nation.

a. The Army learning model must be adaptive on several levels if it is to support the qualities of operational adaptability in the force. First, the Army learning model must develop adaptable Soldiers and leaders who have the cognitive, interpersonal, and cultural skills necessary to make sound judgments in complex environments, from the tactical to strategic levels. Second, the Army must have an adaptive development and delivery system, not bound by brick and mortar, but one that extends knowledge to Soldiers at the operational edge, can update learning content rapidly, and is responsive to operational Army needs. Finally, the learning model must be capable of sustained adaptation. Routine feedback from the operational Army on Soldier performance will drive adjustments to curriculum content and learning products. Also, a capacity to routinely explore and integrate advanced technologies and learning methods to remain competitive and engage learners is key.

b. The continuously adaptive learning model provides a comprehensive framework that transforms the current learning model into one that strengthens three areas. First, it supports the development of adaptable Soldiers and leaders. Second, it provides an adaptive development and delivery system that will meet Soldiers' learning requirements at the point of need. Third, the learning model can continuously adapt to persistent conflict and exponential change. It will require coordinated efforts across the Army to build a sustainable learning environment that is essential to support operational adaptability.

c. The Army Learning Concept for Training and Education (Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pam 525-8-2) lays out an educational approach to training and education that horizontally and vertically aligns training and education outcomes across personnel cohorts (officer, warrant officer,

NCO, and the Army Civilian Corps) and leader development domains (operational, institutional, and self-development). This education framework consists of four Army learning areas: Army leadership and the profession, human dimension, mission command, and professional competence. The Center of Excellence and proponent cohorts in turn are developing general learning outcomes to link their training and education strategy's outcomes within the self-development, institutional, and operational domains. Learning content provided to Soldiers should be outcomes-based and associated with the Army learning area and/or the general learning outcomes individual competencies framework.

2-5. Leader development imperatives

The Army will adhere to seven leader development imperatives that will guide policy and actions, to develop leaders with the required qualities and enduring leader characteristics. These guiding principles remain constant and consistent from initial Service affiliation to retirement, creating a leader development process that is deliberate, continuous, sequential, and progressive. These obligations will drive the synchronization and implementation of the ALDS. They are to:

- a. Commit to the Army profession, lifelong learning, and development.
- b. Balance the Army's commitment to the training, education, and experience components of leader development.
- c. Manage military talent to benefit both the institution and the individual.
- d. Select and develop leaders with positive leader attributes and proficiency in core leadership competencies for responsibility at higher levels.
- e. Prepare adaptive and creative leaders capable of operating within the complexity of the operational environment and the entire range of military operations.
- f. Implement mission command principles in leader development.
- g. Value a broad range of leader experiences and developmental opportunities.

2-6. Leadership requirements model

a. An Army leader, by virtue of assumed role or assigned responsibility, inspires and influences people to accomplish organizational goals. Army leaders motivate people both inside and outside the chain of command to pursue actions, focus thinking, and shape decisions for the greater good of the organization (see ADP 6-22). These occur through leadership—the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission and improve the organization (see ADP 6-22).

b. The Army requirements leadership model illustrates expectations of every leader (see fig 2-3). The model covers the core requirements and expectations of leaders at all levels of leadership. Attributes are the desired internal characteristics of a leader—what the Army wants leaders to be and know. Competencies are skills and learnable behaviors the Army expects leader to acquire, demonstrate, and continue to enhance what the Army wants leaders to do.

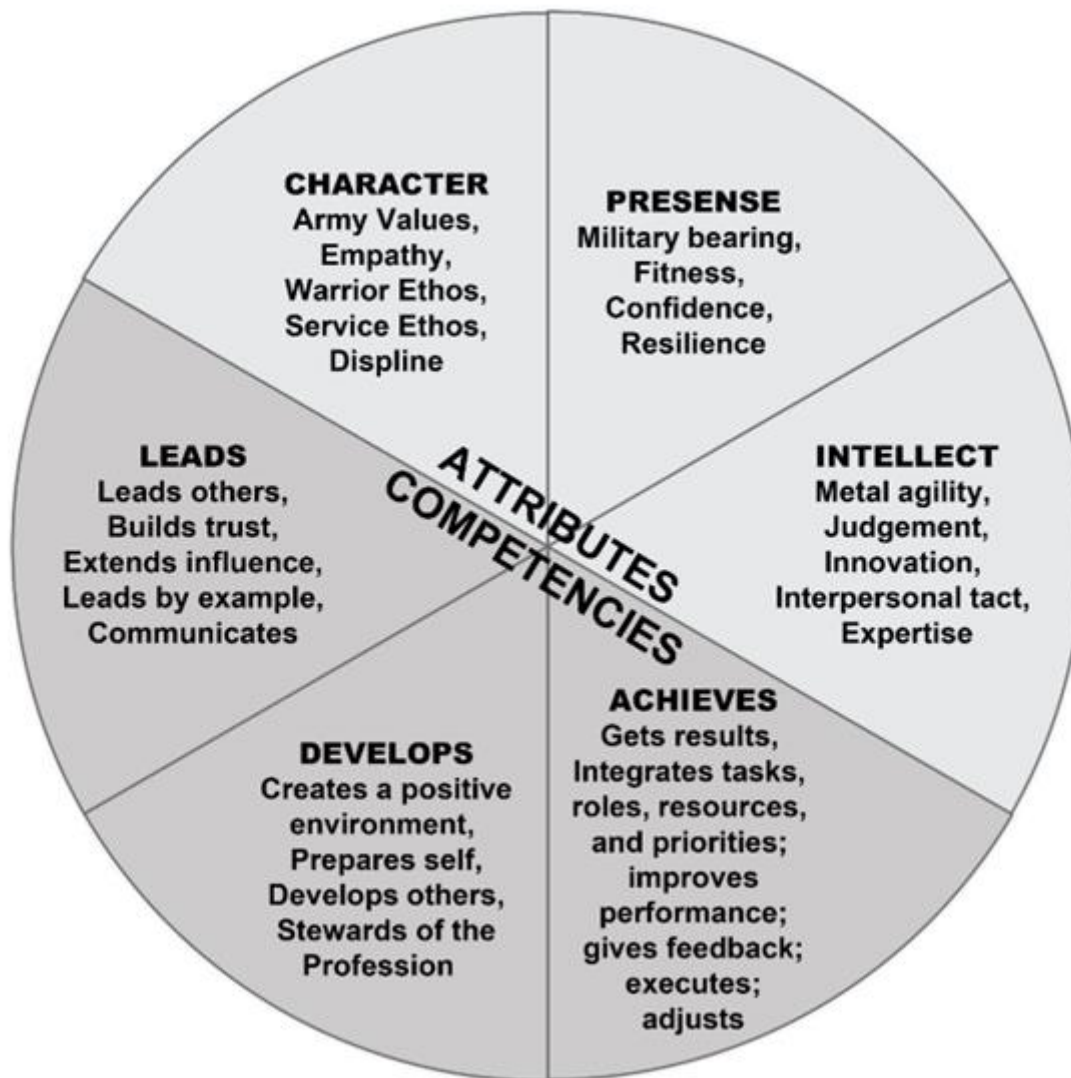


Figure 2–3. Army Requirement Development Model

2–7. Leadership development domains

a. The institutional/generating domain generally includes all the Army—other than deployable units. This includes the Army Staff and supporting organizations, and Army centers and schools that provide initial training and subsequent functional training and professional education for Soldiers. The institutional domain includes advanced civil schooling, training with industry (TWI), and fellowships to supplement leader education. The institution uses technology that enables Army professionals to connect with resources, faculty, cohort peers, leaders, and mentors to enable lifelong learning. The institution provides the knowledge and develops the leadership attributes and competencies at the right time necessary for increased responsibility at the current and future rank or grade.

b. The operational domain is where leaders undergo the bulk of their development. It encompasses all training and experiences in deployable units. It is where junior leaders achieve technical and tactical

competence; mid-grade leaders further develop their ability to lead units and organizations; and senior leaders contribute to the development and implementation of national and geopolitical strategy. All training, education, and self-development activities conducted during training, planning, preparing, executing, and assessing unified land operations are essential parts of developing leaders in the operational domain. After-action reviews, coaching, counseling, sharing, and mentoring are important parts of developing leaders in accordance with FM 6–22.

c. The self-development domain includes planned and goal-oriented learning that reinforces and expands the depth and breadth of an individual's knowledge base and self-awareness. Self-development bridges learning gaps between the operational and institutional domains and sets conditions for continuous learning and growth. There are three variations: Distributed Leader Course (DLC), which consist of mandatory learning modules to meet specific learning objectives and requirements; guided self-development (GSD), which is recommended, but optional learning that may include academic and vocational credentialing intended to enhance one's professional competence; personal self-development, which is self-initiated learning to meet personal training, education, and experiential goals (such as enrolling in off-duty college classes or earning an academic degree or technical certification). Reading books and articles by, and about, combat leaders can give good insight into improving leadership skills, as stated in TC 7–22.7.

d. Training is an organized, structured, continuous, and progressive process based on sound principles of learning, designed to increase the capability of individuals, units, and organizations to perform specified tasks or skills. The objective of training is to increase the ability of leaders to competently perform in training and operational situations. Individual task training builds individual competence and confidence to perform these tasks in support of collective training and operations.

e. Education is the process of imparting knowledge and developing the competencies and attributes Army professionals need to accomplish any mission the future may present. Education contributes to the development of Soldier and leader competencies focusing on fundamentals that are later practiced, expanded, and improved in training and experience. Education occurs in the institutional, operational, and self-development domains. As a component of leader development, education contributes to the growth of the three leader attributes of character, presence, and intellect. Education focuses on intellect and moral character of leaders to improve judgment, reasoning, and critical thinking: agility, adaptability, empathy, intellectual curiosity, and creativity. Education in the Army is primarily PME but may include studies within civilian academia. PME is progressive and sequential across a career continuum, to ensure that Soldiers are successful at each stage of their professional service, while continually growing in the competencies and attributes needed for higher levels of service.

f. Experience is the continuous progression of personal and professional events. It begins before an individual joins the Army and continues after separation. Experience includes war and peace; the personal and the professional; the private and the public; leading and following; training and education. Life-long learners reflect on all experiences, develop lessons learned from those experiences, and apply those lessons in future experiences. The Army uses talent management fundamentals across all learning domains including assignment progression, development opportunities, broadening opportunities, and outside influences to provide leaders with the experiential opportunities required to reach full potential.

(1) *Self-development domain.* Soldiers are ultimately responsible for developing their talents and displaying their unique KSBs to their leadership. Soldiers should express their interests to their leaders and seek out developmental opportunities, to mature their talents, making the Soldier and organization stronger. Leaders can better talent manage and mentor Soldiers appropriately when Soldiers express their interests and display their talents.

(2) *Institutional domain.* Through education, credentialing, and certification Soldiers will display their cognitive, physical, and technical talents. Leaders will develop Soldiers and ensure Soldiers have the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) for talent management in the operational domain to be effective.

(3) *Operational domain.* Soldiers will develop their KSAs through developmental assignments and experiences. Leaders will talent manage Soldiers by placing the Soldier with the appropriate KSAs in the right position at the right time optimizing organizational performance and preparing Soldiers for more challenging assignments in the future.

2–8. The noncommissioned officer

a. NCOs are accomplished military professionals who are the Army's preeminent body of leadership. NCOs are known as the "backbone of the American Army" and are the standard bearers responsible for

training, leading, coaching, and mentoring Soldiers. They are an invaluable and essential part of the Army. The NCO always leads from the front. The NCO exemplifies the warrior ethos, is a champion of continuous learning, and is capable of leading, training, and motivating diverse teams.

b. NCOs often work in complex environments that require them to possess a variety of knowledge, skills, and attributes to lead and manage the day-to-day operations of the military. NCOs must first learn and then demonstrate that they can translate the commander's intent into actionable plans and manage the organization while those plans are executed. Executing these fundamental responsibilities is key in allowing the officer corps to perform their strategic role within the military.

2–9. Noncommissioned officer roles

NCOs serve four core roles: trainers, mentors, advisors, and communicators. They conduct the daily operations of the Army. They are relied on to execute complex tactical operations, make intent-driven decisions and operate in JIIM operational environments. They are responsible for maintaining and enforcing standards and a high degree of discipline. Among many other duties they process Soldiers for enlistment, teach basic Soldiers skills, are accountable for the care of Soldiers, and set the example. The ALDS focuses on a trained and educated quality NCO corps while expanding the NCO corps' role and professionalism, by improving performance today and building the force for tomorrow. The NCO must be fully capable of executing unified land operations and adapting in an era of unpredictability. The Army's vision for the NCO corps blends its past heritage with emerging future characteristics: "An innovative, competent, professional, enlisted leader grounded in heritage, values, and tradition that embodies the Warrior ethos; champions continuous learning, and is capable of leading, training, and motivating Soldiers." The NCO must be an adaptive leader proficient in the full range of joint and combined expeditionary warfare and operations.

2–10. Noncommissioned officer learning areas

a. Integrated throughout and supporting the four core roles are six vital learning areas in which NCOs must develop knowledge and skills. These outcomes broadly define the expected performance level and, when combined with critical tasks, serve as a basis for building a lifelong learning curriculum. Learning outcomes are progressive, and Soldiers should fully achieve competency at their current rank prior to promotion to the next. The supporting skills for each learning area are not an exhaustive list of all the knowledge, skills, attributes, and behaviors required to become competent; rather the skills listed represent areas of current emphasis. The six learning areas are:

(1) *The Army profession.* NCOs exemplify the professional Soldier by demonstrating competence, moral character, and commitment while fulfilling their duty to the Nation. NCOs develop, maintain, and uphold the traditions of the profession through discipline and ethical application of combat power. As professionals, NCOs continuously assess and improve the competence, moral character and commitment of themselves and their Soldiers. NCOs develop understanding and empathetic application of the seven Army Values and exemplify the characteristics of servant leadership. The warrior ethos and NCO Creed serve as the basis for their actions. They serve as role models and standard bearers, and hold themselves, peers, and subordinates accountable for their actions. NCOs influence and sustain positive, ethical command climates and cultures that allow open discussion; they embrace new ideas and instill Soldiers' professional identities.

(2) *Professional competence.* NCOs employ appropriate technical, tactical, operational, and strategic skills in unified land operations to accomplish the mission and support the commander's intent. NCOs understand the tenets of mission command philosophy, are experts on weapons systems and train their subordinates to be tactically competent as well. They are technical experts in their occupational specialties and continue to develop technical skills in themselves and in their subordinates. As NCOs progress in their careers, they focus less on technical and tactical skills and place more emphasis on a broader set of leader skills applied at operational and strategic levels.

(3) *Team building.* NCOs create high performing groups by leading and motivating individuals, and by collaborating to work toward common goals. NCOs earn the trust of their superiors, peers, and subordinates and encourage trust among others. They model and reward behavior that sustains the trust of the American people. NCOs understand team dynamics and take appropriate action to foster cohesion and cooperation and to use principles of group facilitation to develop subordinates. NCOs express themselves clearly and succinctly both orally and in writing and use social skills including interpersonal tact that

allows them to work effectively with other Soldiers and civilians in varied cultural and JIIM contexts. NCOs are sensitive to social behavior patterns, and beliefs of individuals from other communities and countries.

(4) *Fitness and resiliency.* NCOs develop and maintain their physical, emotional, social, Family, and spiritual fitness and foster these attributes in their subordinates. NCOs display confidence, physical, mental, and emotional persistence as well as moral courage when faced with adverse conditions. They are resilient in recovering from difficult situations.

(5) *Learning.* Certification in the Army profession is a lifelong learning process. NCOs must maintain technical expertise within their MOS and strive to develop themselves and their subordinates. NCOs facilitate effective training and instructional environments for individuals and groups, train, and coach Soldiers in acquiring “how to” knowledge and skills, and strive to instill values associated with competence, character, and commitment while encouraging professional and personal growth. NCOs understand the fundamentals of how to help Soldiers learn and the technologies they can leverage to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training and education. As coaches and mentors, NCOs have open and honest discussions with Soldiers that lead to setting and achieving personal and professional goals. As self-learners, NCOs know when they need to learn and use methods that help them efficiently and effectively acquire new knowledge and skills.

(6) *Adaptability.* NCOs solve complex problems by using work and life experiences, training, and education, critical questioning, initiative, sound judgment, and collaboration. They provide opportunities for subordinates to develop problem-solving skills, especially proficiency in critical, creative, and adaptive thinking. While NCOs are trained to use problem-solving models, they are also trained in critical thinking—evaluating their thought processes as they solve problems. With respect to creative and adaptive thinking, NCOs recognize when a standard procedure is not an effective solution to a situation, and when they must innovate to solve a problem. As NCOs develop, they are comfortable operating in unexpected situations, scanning the environment, identifying unique or unexpected conditions, and adjusting plans and procedures to adapt to the conditions.

b. The four core roles and six learning areas are illustrated as the NCO 4x6 model (see fig 2–4). The NCO 4x6 model ensures NCOs do not lose sight of their primary roles and is intended to serve as the foundation for developing the NCO corps.

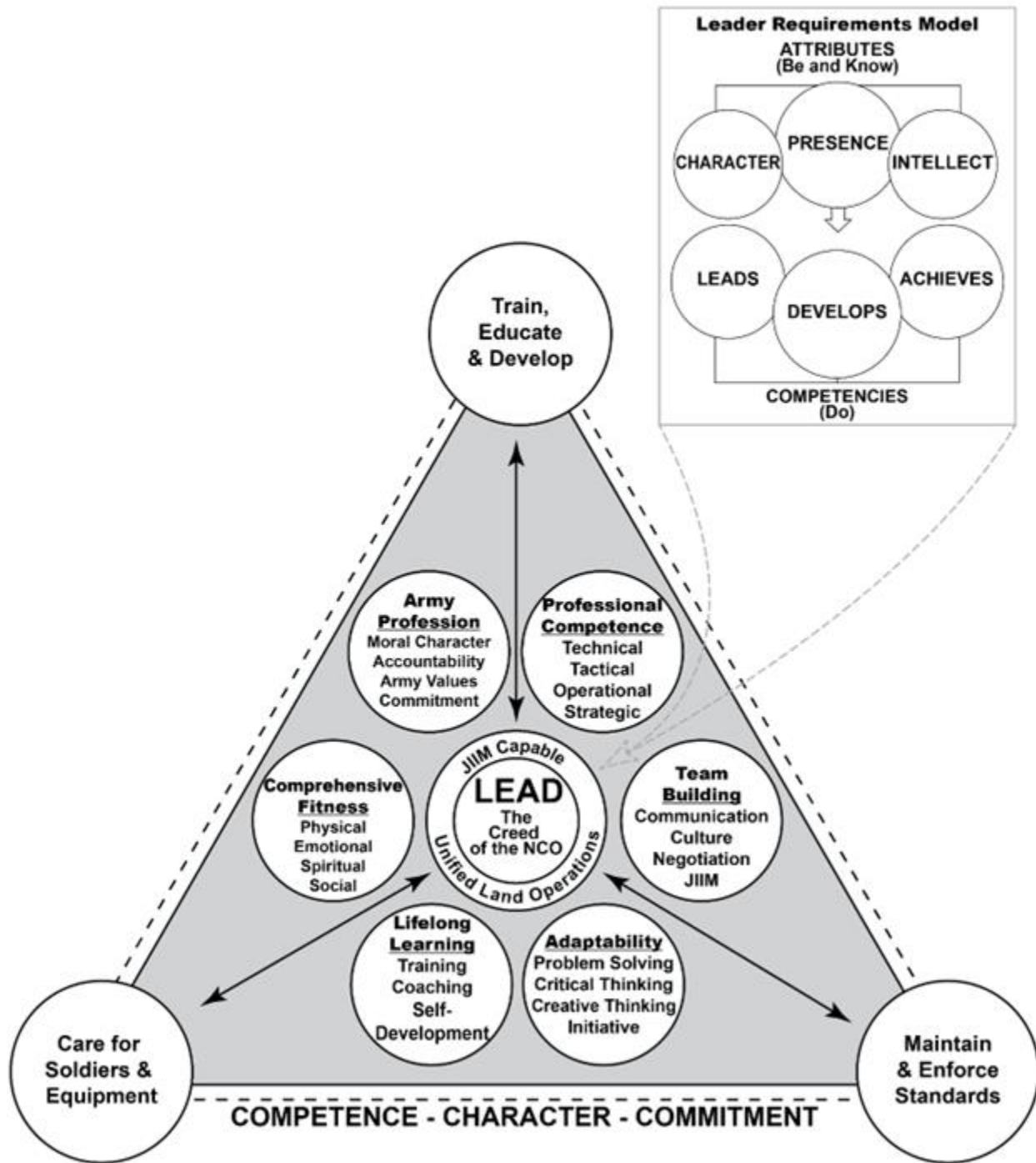


Figure 2-4. The noncommissioned officer 4X6 model

2-11. Noncommissioned officer scope of duties

a. The U.S. Army has a professional NCO corps that prides itself in its responsibility to train Soldiers, crews, and small teams. NCOs are responsible for conducting standards-based, performance-oriented training. The heart of what it means to be an NCO is a function of moral and professional identity. An NCO must be a values-based leader with impeccable character, professional competence, presence, and intellectual capacity, who leads, develops, and achieves results. The traditional activities of NCOs include taking care of Soldiers; communicating; supervising; training; teaching; advising; and mentoring. All of

these remain at the core of their roles and responsibilities. This requires adapting and learning new roles; solving problems, analyzing, or synthesizing information; and managing resources. The operational context in which many of these activities take place has evolved and adds complexity to some kinds of tasks and adds to the importance of others.

b. Technological advancements in equipment and weapons are designed to allow Soldiers to see, understand, and take decisive action. NCOs must train Soldiers to quickly synthesize information at hand, relate the product to the commander's intent, and take the appropriate and decisive action. Tailored situational training is repeated, until tasks are mastered, under increasingly complex conditions. Consequently, Soldiers will develop intuitive actions, exploit the full capabilities of their equipment, and accomplish the mission as intended by the unit commander.

2-12. Institutional training

a. Institutional training and education is the foundation used to develop future leaders. The NCO must be trained and educated continuously, building the expertise that requires a learn-ahead approach. The NCOPDS is a combination of the educational processes and gates of leader development for the Army's largest cohort, the NCO corps. Designed to be progressive and sequential, it provides the self-development and resident roadmap for developmental success of the NCO from initial transformation from the led to a leader to the final gate of strategic management at the nominative SGM level.

b. The One Army School System (OASS) is a set of processes designed to provide relevant and realistic training to units and personnel within multicomponent training centers by utilizing existing resources. The OASS allows Army components to meet the various challenges of operating training environments by increasing technical and specialized functional development. The OASS function is to provide standardized education, optimize training capacity, improve instructional development, reduce temporary duty costs, and integrate the Regular Army, U.S. Army Reserves (USAR), and Army National Guard (ARNG) into a multicomponent training environment.

c. The "select train educate promote" (STEP) framework is a component of an NCOPDS that assigns and balances training and education responsibilities across learning domains while synchronizing training, education, retention, and promotion policies to provide all Soldiers an opportunity for development and advancement. STEP ensures Soldiers possess the appropriate training, education, and experience prior to promotion to the next higher grade, to best prepare them for the unknown and the unknowable amid constant change.

d. STEP is a framework for executing the NCOPDS, supported by three other NCOPDS components: career learning content; learning environment; and a systemic approach to self-awareness.

e. Institutional learning is the formal military training and education NCOs receive throughout a military career. Attending the PME and DLC courses are critical learning experiences that prepare NCOs to apply learned knowledge during unit training, other learning activities, and during mission execution. AR 600-8-19 identifies a progressive, sequential training path for enlisted Soldiers required to attain eligibility for promotion. AR 350-1 identifies required and desired levels of training by enlisted rank. The purpose of institutional learning is to develop the values, attributes, critical warfighting skills, and actions that are essential to quality NCO leadership. When these same values, attributes, skills, and actions are tested, reinforced, and strengthened by follow-on operational assignments and meaningful self-development programs, NCOs attain and sustain competency and confidence in their profession of arms. The NCOPDS and other functional courses (for example, the Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer Course (BSNCOC) form the institutional training pillar of NCO leader development). Knowledge learned in NCOPDS contributes to building the unique identity of the NCO corps that is critical to having an effective partnership among Soldiers, NCOs, and officers. Numerous courses support both Army requirements and the professional needs of individual NCOs. It is difficult to anticipate and specify the many combinations of courses that apply to both Army and individual needs. However, representative courses particularly suitable for various MOS are discussed in detail in the Smartbook DA Pam 600-25 (available at <https://www.army.mil/g-1#org-g-1-publications>). The NCOPDS is designed to prepare NCOs to lead and train Soldiers who work and fight under their direct leadership, and to assist their assigned leaders to execute unit missions. The NCOPDS does this through progressive and sequential learning, using small group instruction throughout six levels of schooling: basic, advanced, senior, master, Sergeants Major Course (SMC) and Nominative Leader Course (NLC). Functional courses are based on specific skills required for special assignments or duties. The Army uses resident and distance learning instruction to deliver institutional training.

(1) The Basic Leaders Course (BLC) is a non-MOS specific, field-oriented leadership course built around basic leader tasks. The BLC trains eligible Soldiers. The training focuses on values, attributes, skills, and actions needed for team and squad leadership responsibilities at the rank of sergeant.

(2) The Advance Leaders Course (ALC) consists of technical training. Technical training is “hands-on,” performance-oriented, and specific to the MOS. The level of training received at ALC progressively and sequentially improves on the previous instruction received in the BLC and operational assignments. Recent course redesign incorporates new virtual learning requirements. Soldiers are scheduled for the course 90–120 days prior to the start date by priority (MOS requirements and promotion points). Soldiers are required to complete a mandatory virtual learning phase prior to attending the follow-on resident phase.

(3) The Senior Leaders Course (SLC) is structured like ALC and prepares NCOs to assume duties and responsibilities needed to lead a platoon or company-sized element. The SLC has proponent phases that include hands-on and performance-oriented training, emphasizing war fighting skills. Recent course redesign incorporates new virtual learning requirements. Soldiers are scheduled for the course 90–120 days prior to the start date by priority (MOS requirements and Order of Merit List (OML) standing). Soldiers are required to complete a mandatory virtual learning phase prior to attending the follow-on resident phase.

(4) The Master Leader Course is designed to challenge and educate selected Sergeants First Class in the areas of professional writing, communication skills, public speaking, critical thinking, organizational and command leadership, management skills, joint and operational level of war fighting, discipline, readiness, health, and administrative requirements. In addition, students will be exposed to topics like national security, JIIM environments, and strategic thinking.

(5) The SMC prepares selected master sergeants to perform duties of a SGM and a command sergeant major (CSM) in staff and troop assignments. This course provides training to senior NCOs (SNCOs) in the range of military operations, the contemporary operational environment, and the JIIM environment.

(6) The NLC, executed by the Center for Strategic Leadership and Development of the U.S. Army War College, directly supports the ALDS. The course addresses an institutional development void for Army executive level CSM and SGMs at the one- and two-star nominative level. NLC provides a unique opportunity for the senior Army NCO leadership to engage these NCOs, ensuring they understand the Army's current strategic message(s), goals, and objectives and enlisting their efforts to promote or accomplish them. NLC presents material that encourages personal and professional reflection, critical assessment, and consideration of the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous issues that currently dominate the JIIM environment.

f. Each NCOPDS course is a blend of training and education activities. Early courses in the NCOPDS are comprised primarily of activities designed to train individual tasks, while courses for SNCOs will be comprised primarily of educational topics designed to broaden NCOs' management and leadership knowledge. Functional courses such as drill sergeant, recruiter, instructor/facilitator, and attaché training are required for special assignments. Other functional courses, such as the BSNCO and the Company Commander/First Sergeant Pre-Command Course, provide specific skills required for duties in operations and leadership areas of responsibility. CSMs attend the Pre-Command CSM Course to prepare them for their initial duty as a CSM.

g. Army warrior training maintains Soldier proficiency performing warrior tasks and battle drills (WTBD). All Soldiers must be ready to fight and complete the mission by applying the warrior skills learned through the fundamentals of WTBD. Proficiency in WTBD is enhanced through the execution of tasks in the following categories: shoot; move; communicate; first aid; chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear; and battle drills.

2–13. Assignments

Assignments facilitate the accumulation of experiences over time; providing opportunities to employ and further develop those skills and knowledge attained through the process of institutional training. Experience gained through a variety of challenging operational assignments prepares NCOs to lead Soldiers in combat.

a. *Operational assignments.* Primarily a modified table of organization and equipment assignment with duties in your MOS or CMF to numbered armies, corps, divisions, brigades, and battalions that conduct decisive action as part of unified land operations, expeditionary in nature and deployable worldwide.

b. Institutional/Generating assignments. Primarily a table of distribution and allowances (TDA) assignment, with duties in your MOS or CMF focused on supporting the operational Army. Institutional/Generating organizations provide the infrastructure necessary to raise, train, equip, deploy, and ensure the readiness of all Army forces, as well as provide installation and area support.

c. Critical leader developmental billets and assignments. Critical leader development positions are deemed fundamental to an NCO's development within their CMF. Operational or generating MOS and CMF positions are identified by a respective proponent and revised periodically to develop critical technical and leadership skills and experience that advance the capabilities of the CMF and Army profession. Positive performance in these positions provides the greatest potential for advancement.

d. Key (nominative) billets. A CMF may further optimize the distribution of NCO talent by selecting best qualified NCOs based on their KSBs to key positions across the enterprise. These positions are designated for experience leaders of character who demonstrate potential and have proven their competence in a broad range of environments. Positive performance in key billets should signal superior performance and potential.

e. Broadening opportunities and assignments. Operational or generating positions in a command or agency where duties are outside of one's MOS or CMF, or duties are at the operational or strategic levels. These assignments offer a purposeful expansion of an NCO's core MOS proficiency and leadership, resulting in agile and adaptive leaders capable of operating in complex environments. Broadening opportunities are crucial in developing leaders with a wider range of experiences and skills who can operate in ever-changing global environments. The intent is to allow NCOs to explore and learn through broadening experiences (depth and breadth) as leaders, through more challenging assignments, over time. The end state is to support the development of leaders who are broad enough to operate with a global mindset and across the range of military operations. Broadening assignment guidance for NCO ranks:

(1) *Broadening developmental opportunities.* Examples of broadening through developmental assignments are Joint, NATO, drill sergeant, recruiter, instructor, Reserve Officers' Training Course, inspector general NCO, brigade level sexual assault response coordinator or sexual harassment/assault response and prevention coordinator, and equal opportunity advisor assignments. Mostly, these assignments are MOS-immaterial and challenge the NCO to increase their knowledge of Army policy and programs, increase skills beyond their CMF by performing the required duties of the assignment, and encourage growth as well as mentorship of these key attributes: character, presence, and intellect.

(2) *Broadening education opportunities.* Examples of broadening through education are fellowships with degree completion, attending other DoD leadership academies, professional reading, and completing college courses leading to a degree. Education beyond the required PME for promotion increases the potential for leaders to serve in diverse assignments while enhancing growth in both leadership attributes and competencies.

(3) *Broadening training opportunities.* Examples of broadening through training opportunities are TWI, credentialed functional training within and outside the CMF, strategic broadening seminars, and training in Joint and multinational environments. Continuous pursuit of training enhances lifelong learning and increases broader development of the key leader competencies *leads*, *develops*, and *achieves*.

(4) *Other broadening opportunities (experiences).* Examples of other broadening experiences are working in JIIM environments, congressional fellowship, working as a defense attaché, the White House Transportation Agency, selection—or working with—Special Operations forces and Special Mission Units, and future opportunities requiring a broader understanding not currently defined. Other opportunities and experiences enable the NCO cohort to remain adaptive and flexible in recognizing broadening opportunities that develop leadership competencies.

2–14. Self-development

a. NCOs follow self-development, which is a planned, progressive, and sequential program. This program is comprised of individual study, education, research, and a professional reading list. Self-development also includes practice, self-assessment, and ideally, is synchronized with institutional training and operational assignments. Self-development programs should complement and expand on advancements and accomplishments gained during institutional training and operational assignments, and they require a lifelong commitment to learning. Self-development is a personal responsibility and focuses on maximizing leader strengths, minimizing weaknesses, and achieving individual leader development goals. Self-development requires a joint effort between the individual Soldier and their leadership to be effective. The use

of the individual development plan (IDP) helps to facilitate this process and provides leaders and Soldiers a means to document, track, and monitor self-development.

b. Initially, self-development is narrow in focus, but broadens as NCOs become more familiar with their own strengths and weaknesses, determine their specific needs, and become more independent. An NCO's knowledge and perspective increases with maturity, experience, institutional training, and operational assignments. Unit leadership is responsible for building a functional self-development program tailored to NCO and unit needs.

c. Self-development focuses on maximizing strengths, improving weaknesses, and achieving individual development goals. All Soldiers must accept their personal responsibility to develop, grow, and commit to professional excellence. The Soldier must commit to a lifetime of professional and personal growth focused on staying at the cutting edge of their profession.

d. The success of self-development is tied to regular self-assessment and performance feedback. Individuals must regularly conduct honest assessments of their strengths and weaknesses. First line leaders must regularly provide feedback on performance and help individuals develop and refine a developmental action plan to guide performance improvement. A second critical component of success is ensuring uniform access to current learning materials and programs, regardless of assignment or Army component. The self-development domain must be a robust component of the PDM, providing every Soldier a clear understanding of career enhancing recommendations throughout their career.

e. The NCO uses self-development to complement and enhance the knowledge and experience gained through institutional training and education and operational assignments. The NCO self-development program is comprised of a guided, structured component.

(1) *Distributed Leader Course*. DLC is required learning that continues throughout a career and that is closely linked to, and synchronized with, classroom and on the job learning. DLC is a prerequisite for corresponding levels of NCOPDS (below) that sets the conditions for continuous growth both as a warrior and a warrior leader. Each level of DLC is a centrally managed set of specified content that must be completed within 3 years at specified career points as a prerequisite for continued advancement. DLC builds knowledge and skills through a defined sequence of learning approaches to strengthen formal education and experiential learning. DLC focuses on a set of common cognitive skills that prepare and enhance the individual's ability to lead Soldiers and competence as a warrior.

(a) *Distributed Leader Course 1*. This course prepares the specialist to improve basic communication skills to message ideas and thoughts clearly; recognize the need for strong character and values; demonstrate tactical and technical competence in leading teams; and take initiative to become a lifelong learner by exploring interests and executing measures to pursue civilian education. DLC I is a prerequisite for the Basic Leader Course (BLC).

(b) *Distributed Leader Course 2*. This course prepares the sergeant to react to cultural dynamics in the JIIM environment; develop self and subordinates to use sound and ethical judgement; be an agile and a multi-skilled leader in the operating environment when information is ambiguous and uncertain; and be accountable with moral and ethical character when managing programs. DLC II is a prerequisite for the ALC.

(c) *Distributed Leader Course 3*. This course prepares the staff sergeant by providing an opportunity to improve as a leader, a professional, and as an individual in the human dimension. The course develops the leadership skills needed to lead a platoon size element and to make quick, accurate decisions that are in the best interest of the mission and Soldiers. DLC III is a prerequisite for the SLC.

(d) *Distributed Leader Course 4*. This course prepares the sergeant first class to lead at the unit and organizational level by developing the Leader Core Competencies and attributes associated with the Leader Requirements Model. Learners will develop the skills necessary to ensure the unit is ready, trained, proficient, disciplined, and motivated. In addition, the course will prepare the learner for unit-level administrative and staff roles to ensure successful operations. In addition to DLC IV being a prerequisite for the Master Leader Course.

(e) *Distributed Leader Course 5*. This course prepares the master sergeant to lead at the unit, organizational, and operational level; it is designed to close the gap between strategic and tactical planning. Learners analyze and apply knowledge, which will assist them in carrying out policies and standards on the performance, training, appearance, and conduct of enlisted personnel. The course further develops the Leader Core Competencies and attributes associated with the Leader Requirements Model resulting in senior leaders who are ready to advise and initiate recommendations pertaining to the local NCO support channel. DLC V is a prerequisite for the SMC.

(f) Distributed Leader Course 6. This course educates "7" series positions to perform senior-level duties at brigade level and higher positions throughout today's operational environment. This course provides the Army with self-aware, adaptive leaders of character and competence with the skills to shape and overcome the friction created by uncertainty and operate in an operational environment. DLC VI is a prerequisite for the NLC.

(2) *Guided self-development*. GSD is a defined set of recommended, optional content and topics as set forth by a proponent. They are progressively sequenced across the career, influencing and encouraging the continuous growth of the individual, but not specifically linked to the other two learning domains. The GSD, while encouraged, is not required for continued advancement. The GSD focuses on a recommended set of common individual development goals that challenge the individual to continue to expand their competence across a wide spectrum of topics related to, but not limited to, the military profession. The GSD includes academic and vocational pursuits, licensure and certification, an expanded understanding of world languages and culture, governance, the history and evolution of conflict, Army and unit-level reading lists, and participation in relevant communities of practice. The GSD provides guidance to participants while reinforcing their persistence and commitment to lifelong learning. The appropriate proponent determines academic disciplines that support each MOS. See specific information in the Smartbook DA Pam 600–25 (available at <https://www.army.mil/g-1#org-g-1-publications>).

f. NCO self-development is a meaningful, competency-based program that supports a lifelong learning approach to individual development and encourages individual initiative; results in an improved Soldier focus on the profession of arms; links the operational, institutional, and self-development domains of development into a cohesive strategy; and enables a train-ahead approach to development. This allows high performers to shape their speed of advancement. Self-development must—

- (1) Meet the needs of all components.
- (2) Support a lifelong learning strategy.
- (3) Leverage all existing programs (military and civilian).
- (4) Provide individual assessment and feedback.
- (5) Support the needs of both the Soldier and the Army, by balancing personal and professional goals.

2–15. Educational activities in support of self-development

The Army's goal is for every Soldier to become an "adaptive learner" who is continuously learning and growing in their tactical, technical, and educational competencies and skills. Civilian education and military professionalism are not mutually exclusive, they are mutually supporting. Many self-development activities recommended in a PDM come from programs and services offered through the Army Continuing Education Systems (ACES), which operates education and learning centers throughout the Army. The ACES assists Soldiers with self-development as described below:

a. Army education counselors provide academic and vocational counseling to help Soldiers establish professional and educational goals. Counselors help Soldiers select appropriate courses and find alternate methods to achieve goals when operational assignments prevent regular course enrollment.

b. Functional academic skills training offers instruction in reading, mathematics, and communication skills to help Soldiers function on the job, prepare for advanced training, and meet prerequisites for continued education. Through the Basic Skills Education Program, selected Soldiers achieve the current recommended reading grade levels and the Army's recommended writing standard. This is an on-duty commander's program to ensure Soldiers possess the necessary reading and writing skills to succeed in their occupational specialty.

c. College level courses are available through installation education centers that partner with participating colleges to provide on-post and online programs that lead to a degree or certificate. Most institutions operating on-post are part of the Service members Opportunity Colleges Army Degree (SOCAD) Degree Network System program, which guarantees Soldiers' transfer of credits and acceptance of nontraditional credits such as military experience and College Level Examination Program tests. Additionally, College of the American Soldier offers two distinct degree programs, the Career NCO Degree Program, and the Enlisted Education Program, to expand existing civilian higher education degree choices. They provide Soldiers and NCOs in CMFs 11, 13, 14, and 19 with college credit for specific NCOPDS courses taken throughout their careers. The Career NCO Degrees Program offers associate and bachelor's degrees, whereas the Enlisted Education Program offers associate degrees to first-term Soldiers. The programs are open to Soldiers in all MOSs. Degrees selected for the program are offered both through distance learning and in traditional classroom settings on, or near, military installations. Degrees will be identified

as part of this program within the SOCAD Degree Network System Handbook and in TRADOC professional development materials. All Soldiers across all components apply for tuition assistance and may also enroll in college courses through GoArmyEducation (available at <https://www.armyignited.army.mil>), a virtual gateway for requesting tuition assistance online, anytime for both classroom and distance learning college courses. Tuition assistance is authorized to pay for voluntary off-duty education programs that support Army educational objectives and Soldiers' self-development goals. These programs help Soldiers earn undergraduate degrees that are recommended on various PDMs. Education counselors help Soldiers apply for tuition assistance. Army Reserve Soldiers should contact their servicing Reserve Component Education Center for assistance.

d. Education centers offer testing for a wide range of academic and vocational tests. These tests include the Test of Adult Basic Education—a reading comprehension test for NCOPDS, the Scholastic Aptitude Test, and American College Test for college entrance, and the College Level Examination Program/DANTES (Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support) Subject Standardized Tests for college credit.

e. The ACES provides language training for non-linguists through host-nation orientation and instruction in basic language skills. Soldiers assigned to an overseas location are eligible for host-nation training. These courses enhance language skills of Soldiers whose primary duties require frequent contact with host-nation counterparts. Materials are also available for maintaining language skills.

f. Soldiers competing for promotion may receive promotion points for college courses. Promotion points for technical certifications must be listed on the approved Army University credentialing strategy.

(1) Soldiers interested in a certification that is not included on the Army University credentialing strategy should contact their proponent SGM.

(2) The certification must be current as required by the certifying authority.

(3) Soldiers must ensure certification documents are submitted to their unit for permanent entry into their records to be awarded promotion points.

g. Technical certifications and licenses promote Soldiers' professionalism, competence, and readiness while in uniform, and prepares Soldiers for civilian post-service.

(1) Army Credentialing and Continuing Education Services for Soldiers (ACCESS) (<https://www.armyuniversity.edu/access/ca>) provides information about civilian certifications and licenses, to include credential description, relatedness to MOS and additional skill identifiers, agency contact information, eligibility requirements, exam requirements, and exam preparation resources.

(2) Soldiers who earn a certification or license listed on Army ACCESS may submit certification documentation to their unit to be added to their military records.

(3) Soldiers competing for promotion to sergeant and staff sergeant receive additional promotion points for completing approved technical certifications and licenses (see AR 600–8–19).

2–16. Professional development model and career maps

Each proponent defines the appropriate mix of education, training, and experience needed by NCOs at each grade level within the context of the overarching requirement to develop adaptive leaders. The demands of each specialty balanced with broadening opportunities are reflected in the proponent sections in the Smartbook DA Pam 600–25 (available at <https://www.army.mil/g-1#org-g-1-publications>). While the Human Resources Command (HRC) primary role is to sustain Army readiness at the unit level, a secondary role is to support professional development of NCOs in line with these models. HRC distributes Soldiers in accordance with the Army manning guidance; utilize market mechanisms to match a specific NCOs talents and preferences against an Army requirement at the brigade level, ensuring the right Soldier is in the right formation at the right time in support of Army readiness. Ultimately, commanders in the field assign Soldiers to specific positions, evaluate performance and potential, and provide counseling and training to further develop talents and manner of performance. A Soldier's shared responsibility is to seek self-improvement and opportunities for their own professional development. To facilitate the professional development of NCOs, HRC operates in concert with various responsible agents to include: the individual; the Army and branch proponents; the DCS, G–3/5/7; commanders in the field and the senior Army leadership. NCO professional development is a responsibility shared by all. Life cycle development models portray the full range of training, education, and experiences for the development of our future leaders. The PDM/career maps serve as the professional reference for a successful military career while providing information and guidance on assignments, education, and training. PDMs are created by the Army proponents in the Army Career Tracker (ACT) (available at <https://www.actnow.army.mil>). The PDM

is web-based, interactive and supports the three core domains that shape critical learning experience throughout the Soldier's career: operational, institutional, and self-development domains. PDM capabilities include some of the following:

- a. Outline institutional training and operational assignments in relation to CMF recommended self-development activities. NCO self-development is an individual responsibility and the only leader development phase over which NCO have direct control. It may not be feasible for a Soldier to complete all recommended activities as some duty assignments may preclude off-duty education; however, alternate methods of achieving recommendations (for example, examinations, distance learning, and learning center activities) are available.
- b. Provide Soldiers greater control over their careers while affording leaders the opportunity to educate and train the right Soldier, for the right task, at the right time.
- c. Emphasize self-development; however, Soldiers should not emphasize PDM activities to the point where self-development takes precedence over duty performance. Any self-development activities undertaken will require personal sacrifice of off-duty time if the Soldier is to achieve the desired goal.
- d. List operational assignments as examples of career development. Soldiers should consult with their first line leader/supervisor and career advisors for their CMF progression.
- e. Guide Soldiers through CMF proponent recommended activities to become more proficient at current and next higher level duty positions.
- f. Identify courses and training that complement and supplement institutional training and operational assignment experiences.
- g. Focus on broad recommendations that address the values, attributes, skills, and actions successful NCOs have found to be beneficial to their career progression. Each PDM lists recommended self-development activities to complete prior to attending NCOPDS and specific MOS skill levels. Activities include Army Correspondence Course Programs (ACCPs), computer-based instructions, post-secondary courses, professional readings, and learning center activities. In addition, assignments to broaden a Soldier's scope and perspective of the Army from a strategic mindset are incorporated to enable resiliency.
- h. Recommend goals to include professional certification, credentialing, and degrees related to the Soldier's CMF.
- i. Offer a series of planned, progressive, and sequential broadening assignments and activities that leaders can follow to enhance and sustain military leadership competencies and develop Soldiers throughout their careers.

2-17. Individual development plan

The Army continually challenges Soldiers to set goals and progress from the initial phase through transition. Army experience. The development of a culture of lifelong learning coupled with professional and personal goal setting is mutually beneficial to the Army and its Soldiers. Under the Army's life cycle approach all Soldiers will receive counseling within 30 days of arrival to their first permanent duty station. As part of this counseling process, Soldiers will create an IDP in the ACT with the assistance of the first line leader. The IDP will identify the Soldier's career (military and civilian), education, and training goals as well as milestones for each. The IDP will be reviewed annually by leaders and/or counselors as needed. Progress on the Soldier's goals will be documented in writing, and these will be revised and/or referrals will be made to service providers (for example, education or financial assistance counselor), as appropriate.

- a. Identify courses and training that complement and supplement institutional training and operational assignment experiences.
- b. Focus on broad recommendations that address the values, attributes, skills, and actions successful NCOs have found to be beneficial to their career progression. Each PDM lists recommended self-development activities to complete prior to attending NCOPDS and specific MOS skill levels. Activities include ACCPs, computer-based instructions, post-secondary courses, professional readings, and learning center activities.
- c. Recommend goals, to include professional certification, credentialing, and degrees related to the Soldier's CMF.
- d. Contain recommendations for self-development. It may not be feasible for a Soldier to complete all recommended activities, as some duty assignments may preclude off-duty education; however, alternate methods of achieving recommendations (for example, examinations, distance learning, and learning center activities) are available.

e. Offer a series of planned, progressive, and sequential developmental activities that leaders can follow to enhance and sustain military leadership competencies throughout their careers. Any self-development activities undertaken will require personal sacrifice of off-duty time if the Soldier is to achieve the desired goal.

f. Provide the recommended activities Soldiers can take to better prepare themselves for each phase of the NCOPDS and to perform in each duty assignment.

g. Provide Soldiers greater control over their careers while affording leaders the opportunity to better manage talent educating and training the right Soldier, for the right task, at the right time.

2–18. Army career tracker

a. *General.* The ACT tool serves as a single point-of-entry for career and leadership development that provides an integrated approach to supporting military and civilian personnel's personal and professional development that capitalizes on the mutual (personnel and Army) need for lifelong learning. ACT allows users to manage career objectives and monitor progress towards career requirements and goals. ACT will provide the capability to organize, collect, collate, plan (or schedule), and arrange individual developmental opportunities into a plan that enables soldiers to satisfy individual goals and objectives over time. ACT assists users with their career development and planning through all phases of the Soldier life cycle.

b. *Soldier role.* As ACT users, Soldiers access a single site that consolidates career information and data from various Army data sources. Users must designate a leader in ACT and can select as many mentors as they want. Soldiers can read the latest news profiled for their CMF and evaluate their comparative career metrics on graphical career dashboards from the ACT home page. The dashboard highlights progress through the PME, civilian education, and professional goals. Additionally, ACT brings the Soldier's PDM to life by associating their accomplishments with PDM recommendations, and presenting those items not yet accomplished as potential goals to enhance the Soldier's professional development and provide a basis to establish short and long-term goals for their IDPs. ACT also provides an unofficial transcript that represents the accumulation of all assignment, training, and education accomplishments by the Soldier.

c. *Leader/mentor role.* Leaders and mentors can see their Soldiers' information, including complete assignment history, completed, and pending training, earned certifications, and MOS related career recommendations. Visibility into this data helps leaders and mentors to track their Soldiers' career progress toward goals and empowers leaders and mentors to send targeted career and training notices to their Soldiers through ACT. These notices might reference specific training courses or serve to remind Soldiers of upcoming milestones. Notices can be sent individually or to multiple Soldiers at once. The added advantage is the system gives leaders a way to create relevant recommendations to select as part of their IDP strategy. Mentors can see their mentees ACT profile but are restricted from the IDP workflow that occurs between the first line leader and Soldier.

d. *Professional development model administrators and community owners.* The PDM administrator and community owner are two roles, designated by the proponent office, who are responsible to populate career information in the ACT. The performance of these roles requires special privileges. References and guidelines pertaining to these specific roles are available at <https://www.actnow.army.mil>.

(1) ACT PDM administrators populate and maintain PDM recommendations for the career maps. Using these recommendations, Soldiers can create professional and personal goals for a short or long-term basis that guide them throughout their careers. These administrators ensure that Soldiers have accurate PDM recommendations relevant to their CMFs and skill levels to aid exploration and discovery of career possibilities.

(2) Community owners create CMF-specific news articles, blogs, and bookmarks to provide important communication and identify regulatory and functional resources for their personnel. Their role is essentially to keep their respective career fields abreast of the timely and relevant information pertaining to their field.

Chapter 3

Human Resource Support

3–1. Purpose

HR support uses a competency-based and performance-oriented strategy guided by enduring principles that assure a higher quality, more diverse and ready Total Army enabled by effective HR systems and

agile policies. It includes all activities and functions executed within the eight Army personnel development system life cycle management functions:

a. Structure. Structure describes the personnel developer dimension of the Army's force development function. Force development defines military capabilities and creates the force structure required to provide those capabilities. It then produces the personnel authorizations for each of the Army's units. These authorizations are referred to as "personnel structure".

b. Acquisition. Acquisition describes the function of managing the total Army end strength. This function ensures that the Army is staffed with the proper number of people in the right grades and skills within the manpower budget to meet the Army's requirements. It is significantly more complex than simply recruiting personnel. Acquisition has three important and interrelated dimensions.

(1) *Manpower management.* The first dimension of acquisition develops forecasts and establishes manpower targets for accession, attrition management, retention, and promotion.

(2) *Accession, attrition, and retention management.* The second dimension converts the accession and retention targets to missions and ensures that they are effectively executed by the responsible agency.

(3) *Training integration.* The third dimension establishes training programs and ensures an efficient flow of trainees and students.

c. Distribution. Distribution describes the function of distributing available personnel to units based on the Army requirements and in accordance with HQDA priorities. It includes the distribution of newly trained Soldiers and the redistribution of Soldiers who are ready for a new assignment. A major focus of the distribution function is to maximize personnel readiness within the Army's combat units and to support the development of Soldiers.

d. Development. Development describes the process of developing people mentally, morally, and physically. This includes both character and leadership development, education, and training. The developmental process begins with initial military training, which provides an orderly transition from civilian status to military life. Thereafter, the institutional training system and chain of command develops individuals through training, education, and both professional and self-development programs. A major focus of the function is on shaping values, attributes, skills, and minimizing dysfunctional behavior. As such, development makes a significant contribution to the promotion of the Army's culture. Development also includes the supporting processes of evaluations, as well as selections for promotion, command opportunity, and advanced education.

e. Deployment. Deployment describes the movement of troops, civilians, cargo, weapon systems, or a combination of these elements to a theater of operations using any or all types of transport. It includes mobilization, deployment, redeployment, and the evacuation and repatriation of non-combatants.

f. Compensation. Compensation describes all the functions associated with the pay, entitlements, and benefits for Army personnel.

g. Sustainment. Sustainment describes how the Army attends to the well-being of its people. It includes programs directed specifically at the quality of life and the well-being of Soldiers, civilians, retirees, their Families, and the employers of Reserve Component (RC) members. It prepares Soldiers for the rigors of military operations and Family separation and encourages them to remain in the Army as a means of sustaining the force. Well-being programs have a direct impact on recruiting, retention, and the performance of Army personnel.

h. Transition. Transition describes an integrated function focused on assisting Soldiers, Army Civilians, and their Families through changes associated with moving among components or to the private sector.

3-2. Concept

Enlisted HR support is an evolutionary system that balances the needs of the Army with the developmental requirements of the enlisted force. Modified by the external factors of the environment, as well as the dynamics of force structure and leader development principles, it remains inherently flexible and responds to a variety of proponents, commanders, and individual initiatives to meet emerging needs. This flexibility is embedded in interrelated subsystems composed of:

a. Strength management. This involves accessing, promoting, distributing, retaining, and moving Soldiers through their transition, to meet force structure requirements. These activities are very dynamic, with Soldiers across all MOS's continually moving through the personnel life cycle. Army force structure

continues to fluctuate as the Army's needs change, and the enlisted inventory requires active management to meet future force structure needs.

b. Career development. Personnel proponents must determine the appropriate mix of institutional training, self-development, and operational assignments needed for sustained development by Soldiers at all grade levels in each MOS.

c. Evaluations. Evaluations are necessary for developmental feedback and are important tools for evaluation boards to identify NCOs with the most promising potential. The Army enlisted structure is like a pyramid, where ideally, the top contains fewer NCOs in relation to the wider base. Promotion to more responsible positions is based on assessments of performance and potential. The tools used to evaluate the performance and potential of Soldiers are the DA Form 2166–9–1 (NCO Evaluation Report (SGT)), DA Form 2166–9–2 (NCO Evaluation Report (SSG–1SG/MSG)), DA Form 2166–9–3 (NCO Evaluation Report (CSM/SGM)), hereafter referred to collectively as DA Form 2166–9 (noncommissioned officer evaluation report (NCOER)) series, and the DA Form 1059 (Service School Academic Evaluation Report). Promotion, selection for school, retention in service, career development opportunities, and assignments are strongly influenced by the information contained in NCOERs.

3–3. Factors affecting human resources support

Many factors influence the environment in which HR support operates. Changes in the environment necessitate continuous adjustments and changes in policies by the DCS, G–1; the Chief, National Guard Bureau; and the Chief of Army Reserve. Some factors that influence HR policy are—

a. Policy is the purview of the Executive Branch, which acts through the DoD and the Department of the Army. Policies are published in DoD directives and translated into Army regulations for implementation. Policies are the guidelines used to access, train, professionally develop, promote, assign, and complete transitions in the enlisted force.

b. The annual defense budget has a major impact on the career development of enlisted Soldiers. Funding limitations and allocations imposed by Congress affect the entire spectrum of enlisted personnel management, which includes the force structure allowance of the enlisted force, accessions, strength management, promotion rates, schooling, education programs, and permanent change of station timing. The defense budget reflects the will of Congress to meet any perceived military threats as well as global and national economic challenges.

c. Personnel proponents, generally school commandants, have designed a CMF based on Army requirements and supervise the development of the enlisted force within that CMF. Personnel proponents project future requirements for their CMFs and sustain or modify elements of force structure and inventory to meet future needs. Personnel proponents prescribe the requirements under the three pillars of leader development (for example, institutional training, operational assignments, and experience) to attain qualification standards in each grade required by the enlisted force. These patterns of leader development are embodied in leader development templates, diagrams, or PDMs used by the assignment branches (HRC), to execute the proponents' career programs.

d. The Army and HR Support must be responsive to the individual needs of Soldiers, as well as to the mission and requirements of the force. This force represents a reflection of the society from which it comes and spans five decades of age groups. Career expectations, job satisfaction, discipline, leader abilities, educational abilities, importance of Family, and cultural values vary widely among enlisted Soldiers.

e. In addition to the obvious advancements science and technology have made in the Army's war fighting equipment, the quantum increases in information and decision-making demands of modern doctrine and warfare call for broader technological competencies within most enlisted career fields. Complex and lethal weapons, Joint and combined organizations, and global political and economic connectivity require the utmost competence from the enlisted force. NCOs receive progressive and sequential education, training, and experience through institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development to meet these requirements.

3–4. The Army noncommissioned officer career development timeline

a. The Army NCO career developmental timeline identifies a typical Army career. Some individual CMFs vary based on structure design.

b. The intent is to show a correlation between training, education, and experiences over time, synchronized to foster development of a professional corps of NCOs. The typical NCO's career developmental timeline is presented in figure 3–1.

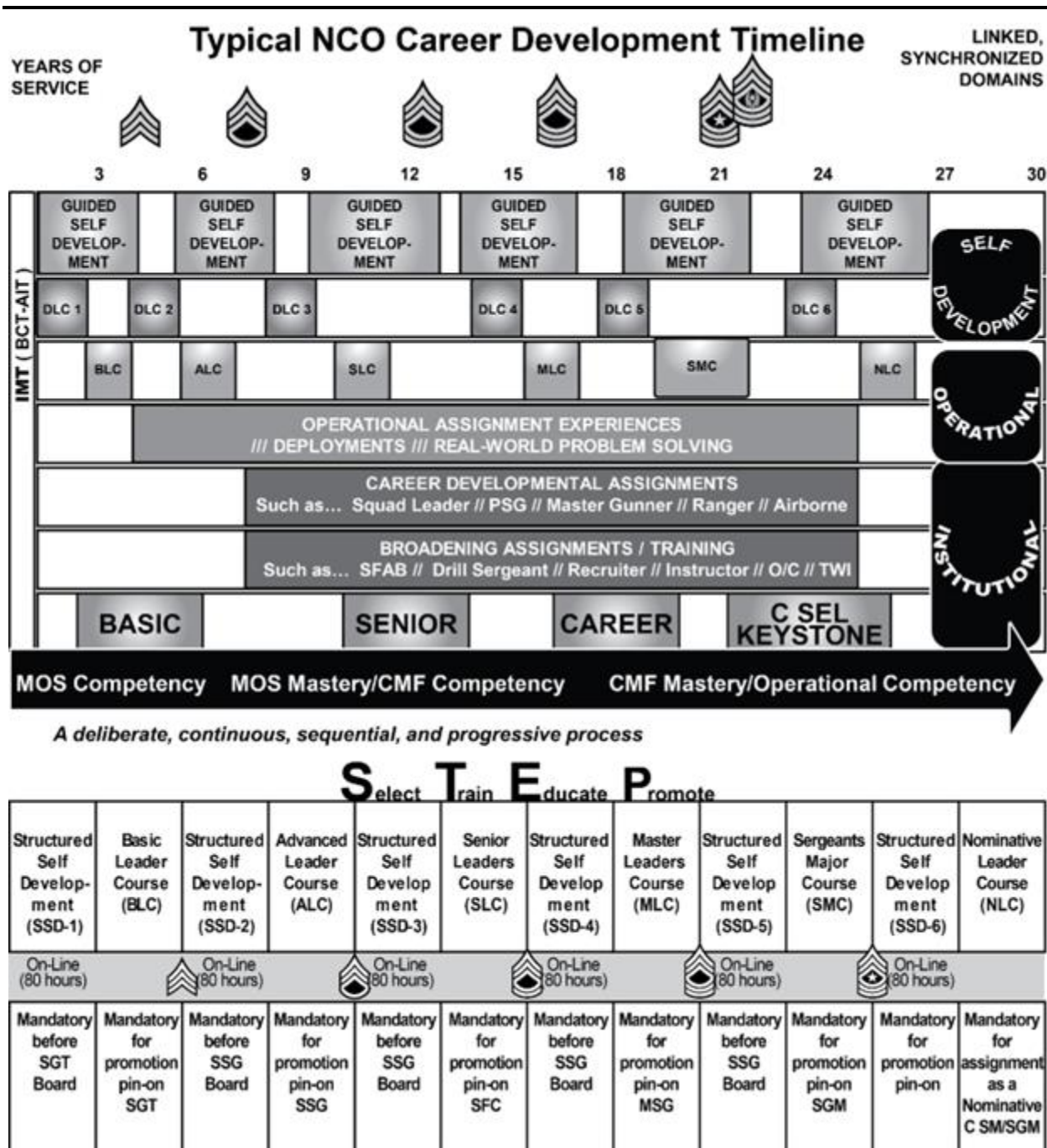


Figure 3–1. Typical Regular Army noncommission officer developmental timeline

3–5. Individual career development

a. *General.* The development of the professional attributes and technical capabilities of enlisted Soldiers to meet the needs of the Army is accomplished through activities identified on proponent designed PDMs. These PDMs combine operational assignments, institutional training, and proponent recommended self-development goals that define branch-qualified Soldiers in each grade by MOS. Career

models are based on Army requirements, indicating the numbers and types of enlisted Soldiers to be accessed, retained, promoted, trained, and assigned. Proponents monitor the Army documents pertaining to their CMFs, since any change to the force structure requires a change to the enlisted force inventory. Career branches (HRC) within the Talent Alignment Development Directorate (TADD) or Reserve Personnel Management Directorate (RPMD) (HRC) develop Soldiers' careers by using these templates, while balancing Army requirements with policies for enlisted management. To ensure the career development of all enlisted Soldiers, TADD/RPMD (HRC) shares responsibility, and operates in concert with, various stakeholders (for example, individual Soldiers, the personnel proponents, and commanders in the field).

b. Career management field structure. The size of the enlisted force inventory is limited by the factors affecting the Enlisted Personnel Management System. As requirements change over time, HR support realigns the strength and professional development goals of each CMF to meet new challenges. As the strength and professional goals of the CMF change, Soldiers may require additional training, or retraining, to qualify in the realigned CMF.

c. Philosophy. The CMF is the center of HR support and is necessary to meet changing requirements within the enlisted force. The basic philosophy is that enlisted Soldiers can complete their careers in a variety of assignments centered on their CMF developmental goal, such as TDA units, versus table of organization and equipment units. A major objective of HR support is to professionally develop enlisted Soldiers in their primary military occupational specialty (PMOS) and CMFs through the combined efforts of the Soldier, the proponent, the field commander, and the TADD/RPMD (HRC) career branch managers. These combined efforts help the Army execute a total enlisted Soldier development program, which includes:

- (1) Development of skills and knowledge in Soldiers' MOSs through training and experiences as they advance in rank and time in service. At each level, Soldiers learn the necessary skills and demonstrate the potential for advancement to the next higher rank. The culmination of this progression provides Soldiers the opportunity to serve at the SNCO grades of the Army.

- (2) Resident and nonresident instruction, on the job training, and self-development.

- (3) Career development counseling and mentoring provided by the unit commander, SNCO, career counselors, state area commands, or regional support commands.

- (4) Assignment managers using the proponent designed leader development templates and PDMs in determining potential assignments to enhance a Soldier's career development. These assignments may vary between troop and staff assignments.

- (5) The MOS reclassification is a major career decision and should be discussed thoroughly with unit leaders and assignment managers of both MOS career branches involved so Soldiers may make informed decisions. As the Army progresses towards implementing a modular force design, it is increasingly apparent that reclassification of our enlisted force, predominantly within the NCO ranks, will serve as a necessary bridge to shape the force for immediate structure requirements. Soldiers who change their MOS (either through voluntary or involuntary means) later in their careers may find it more difficult to compete for promotions and duty assignments. However, in the long run, promotion opportunities should be better, in that the MOS Soldiers are reclassified into are generally not already filled to authorized levels. USAR and ARNG Soldiers may consider changing their PMOS, based on the availability of positions within their unit or geographical area, or based on changes in their unit's mission. All Soldiers should fully understand all consequences of making this major career decision.

d. Individual career management. Soldiers, commanders, TRADOC, HRC, and the Office of the Chief of Army Reserve Senior Leader Development Office all play an important part in the career development of enlisted Soldiers and the enlisted force as a whole; however, Soldiers are the true stewards of their careers.

- (1) Ultimately, Soldiers manage their own careers. While Army requirements dictate the outcome of all career development actions, including assignments, enlisted Soldiers can participate in such decisions in most cases. Participation in the career development process is possible when enlisted Soldiers reenlist or volunteer for training and education programs, complete assignment preferences, apply for entry into broadening opportunities such as drill sergeant and/or recruiter, and plan long-range career goals. The key to being involved in career development is to make informed and logical decisions, and act on them. One important element of an enlisted Soldier's involvement is the accurate reflection of capabilities in the Soldier Talent Profile. The Soldier Talent Profile contains data from which important career development decisions are made. These decisions include selection, advancement, assignment, and retention. Enlisted Soldiers must review, update, and maintain their Soldier Talent Profile throughout their careers. To

remain informed and focused on career goals, Soldiers should request periodic advice and counseling from their NCO support channel, chain of command, CMF proponent, and career management branch.

(2) Commanders and SNCOs play key roles in personal and professional development by ensuring that Soldiers are provided opportunities for professional development in their units and receive the necessary training to increase their tactical and technical competence. Enlisted Soldiers look to their SNCO and commanders for advice and career counseling. Some counseling is formal, and required by regulation, to prepare and submit DA Forms 2166–9 (NCOERs) series, and to create and maintain IDPs. Other counseling is less formal and relates to career patterns, advice about assignments, and duty positions. Enlisted Soldiers have a great career counseling asset available to them: Their unit's career counselors (CMF 79), who are trained on a variety of Army programs that benefit the professional development of Soldiers.

(3) Personnel proponents also play a key role in Soldier development by designing CMFs, monitoring the career development of enlisted Soldiers within those CMFs, and establishing the proficiency requirement at each grade level. Through training and education, proponents ensure that Soldiers understand logical and realistic career patterns, qualifying objectives, and have a thorough understanding of attrition and promotion flows that are vital ingredients in each career field. Proponents are responsible for PDMs needed to meet overall requirements, as well as CMF objectives. Communication between enlisted Soldiers in a CMF and the career branch managers of TADD/RPMD (HRC) assignment branches are necessary to communicate goals and objectives for the career field. This communication helps to ensure Soldiers develop professionally as designed by the proponents for each CMF. The CMF proponent guidance is reflected in the PDM located in subsequent chapters of this pamphlet.

(4) Career management branches have talent managers and talent management NCOs at TADD/RPMD (HRC) who are responsible for meeting current and future Army requirements and career development needs of Soldiers within the various CMFs. Additionally, NCOPD must balance the best interests of the Soldier against Army requirements. NCOPDs provide candid, realistic advice to enlisted Soldiers about their developmental needs. Enlisted Soldiers should establish a dialogue with NCOPDs to receive this guidance and advice on their professional development.

3–6. Assignment making decision process

The assignment decision process should take the following guidance into consideration to develop NCOs with leadership and technical expertise, both generating and operating forces experiences, and ultimately, an ability to manage the Army enterprise:

a. The contemporary operational environments and proponents establish CMF leader development guidance. Attaining MOS proficiency in critical MOS-specific, developmental positions as determined by the proponent, is essential. The assignment making decision process should strive to ensure NCOs become MOS proficient before assignment to broadening/special duty positions.

b. DA Pam 600–25 serves as the medium to provide guidance to the talent manager and talent management NCO in TADD (HRC) and the commander in the field. Proponents have outlined developmental standards in their respective sections of this pamphlet located on the DCS, G–1 DA Pam 600–25 CORE website (available at <https://www.army.mil/g-1#org-g-1-publications>).

c. A more appropriate and necessary balance of time spent between operational and institutional assignments.

d. Manage unique capabilities and talent of individuals to develop a pool of broadened and deepened strategic warfighters, enterprise leaders, and advisors to the leaders of our Nation.

e. Manage leaders' training and education and provide them qualitative experiences while in the operating and generating forces that prepare them for positions of increased responsibility.

f. Predictability in assignment timelines for key developmental assignments is a requirement.

g. Tour lengths must contribute to the effort to win the fight, develop leaders, and allow Soldiers to balance personal and professional obligations.

h. The ability to link training and education experiences with the right follow-on assignment (developmental experience) creates a synergy of all three Army leader development pillars (training, education, and experience) components, facilitates depth in an NCO, and best serves the needs of the Army.

i. NCOs gain experience through a multitude of assignments in different units, different job conditions, rotations, and deployment.

j. Select NCOs with demonstrated potential to gain experience as drill sergeants, recruiters, instructors, Joint staff, and as trainers for multinational partners.

- k.* The assignment decision process must contribute to the accrual of skills, at each level, over time.
- l.* Broadening assignments should not generally exceed one tour for each NCO rank through sergeant first class.
- m.* Leaders must identify high performing NCOs to facilitate their broadening experiences for potential future service as senior leaders. The NCOER is one avenue for leaders to convey input with the assignment decision process taking leaders' recommendations into consideration.

3–7. Cross-component elements

Active Component (AC) NCO assignments in USAR and ARNG units, and USAR and ARNG NCO assignments in AC units, are career enhancing, broadening opportunities that expand an NCO's knowledge of the total Army's capabilities, training, and manning. NCOs from the AC serving in RC units and RC NCOs serving in AC units synchronizes cross-component understanding, career development, and future operations for both components. The Smartbook DA Pam 600–25 is available at <https://www.army.mil/g-1#org-g-1-publications>.

Appendix A

References

Section I

Required Publications

Unless otherwise indicated, all Army publications are available on the Army Publishing Directorate website at <https://www.armypubs.army.mil/>.

AR 600–3

The Army Personnel Development System (Cited in para 1–3.)

Section II

Prescribed Forms

This section contains no entries.

Appendix B

Proponent Guidance and Board Supplement

B-1. Proponent slides-board briefs (presentation purposes and submission requirements)

a. Proponents will supplement information (Proponent Guidance) approved for posting to the DCS, G-1 DA Pam 600-25 CORE website with a Proponent-based board brief as outlined within this appendix. The purpose of the board brief is to extract and capture critical information as a quick-reference guide for HQDA Evaluation Boards, leaders, and Soldiers across the force; establishing from the proponent's perspective what assignments, tour lengths, broadening opportunities, and other factors should be used to identify what most-qualified and highly qualified careers look like. These board briefs are authorized supplements to the HQDA evaluation board memorandum of instructions and will be authorized for use/review by board members when evaluating NCOs for placement on an OML.

b. Each Board Brief will include a Talent Development Model. Proponents will prepare and submit for approval and posting to the DCS, G-1 DA Pam 600-25 CORE website. Board briefs will be formatted as outlined in this pamphlet and deviations will not be accepted. Board briefings must be submitted and posted to the DCS, G-1 DA Pam 600-25 CORE website not later than 60 days prior to a scheduled NCO evaluation board in order for that board to use them. The intent is to sustain relevant and accurate information over time, enabling leaders and Soldiers alike to understand what it takes to succeed within an MOS or career field.

B-2. Approved board briefing format

a. All slide presentations must be submitted to the DCS, G-1, Directorate of Military Personnel Management (DAPE-MPE-PD) for approval prior to posting to the DCS, G-1 DA Pam 600-25 CORE website. The DCS, G-1 (DMPM), Military Personnel Enlisted Division posts approved products.

b. The formats below will be used for all board briefs (see fig B-1, fig B-2, fig B-3, fig B-4, fig B-5, fig B-6, and fig B-7). All board briefs will be unclassified as they will be posted online, with public access authorized, to comply with Public Law 79-404.

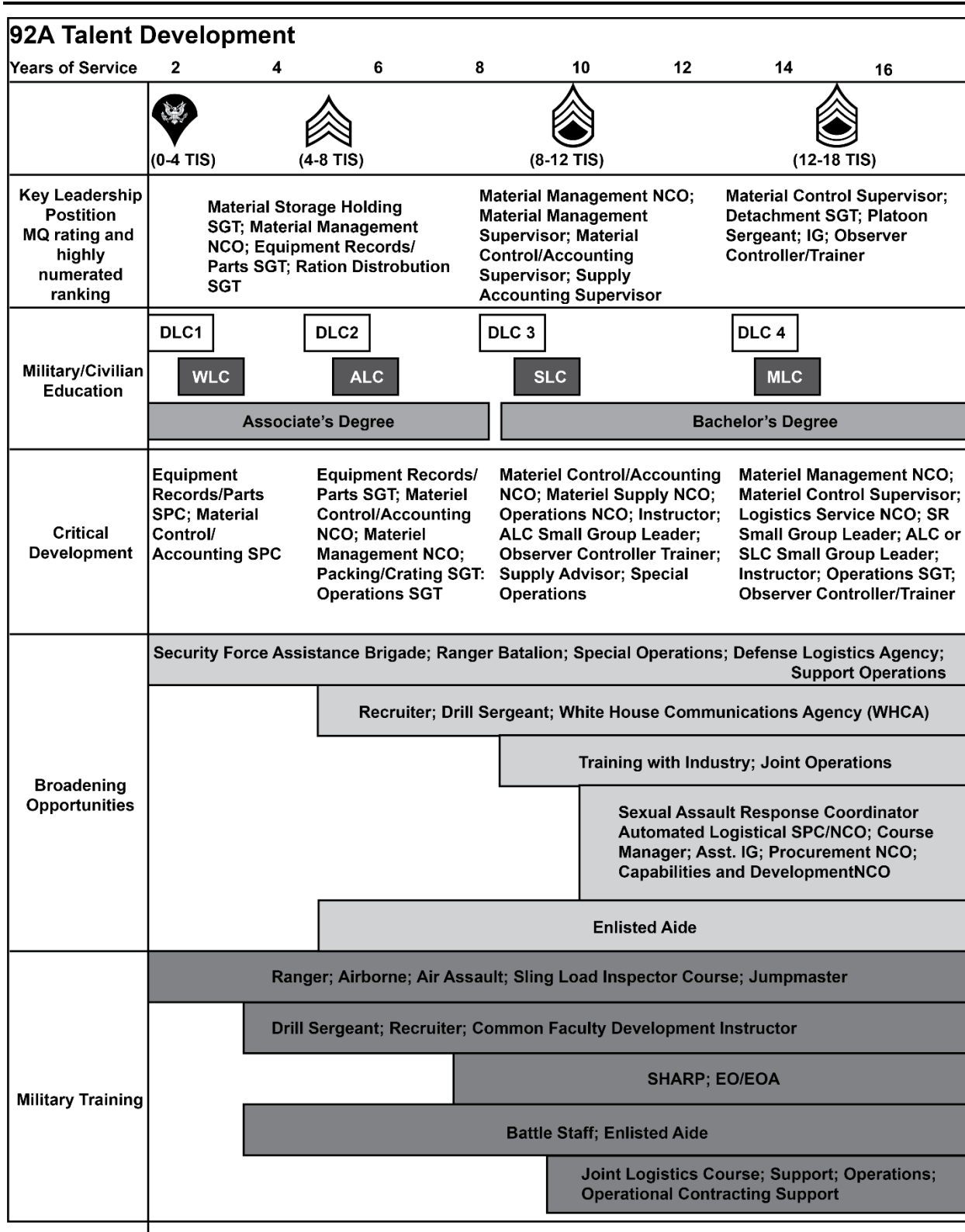


Figure B–1. Talent Development Model





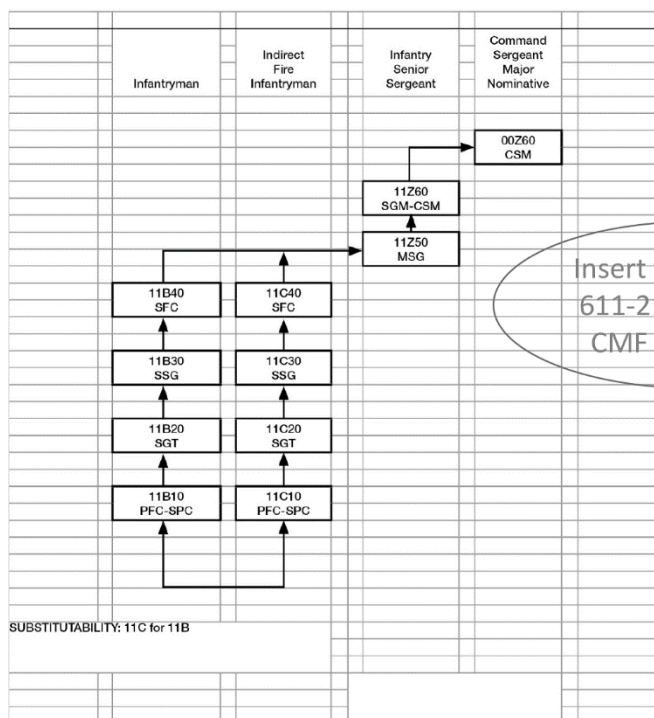
92A Talent Development cont.								
Years of Service	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30
	 (12-18 TIS)		 (18-22 TIS)		 (22+ TIS)		 (22+ TIS)	
Key Leadership Position MQ rating and highly numerated ranking	Material Control Supervisor; Detachment SGT; Platoon Sergeant; First Sergeant; IG; Observer Controller /Trainer		First Sergeant; Logistics NCO; Operations SGT		MOS 92A converts to 92Z at the rank of SGM / CSM			
Military/Civilian Education	DLC 4		DLC 5		DLC 6			
	MLC		SMC		Nom			
	Bachelor's Degree				Master's Degree			
Critical Development	SR Career Management NCO; Chief Instructor; Logistic Service NCO; Observer Controller/Trainer; Special Operations						Chief of Enlisted Personnel Development	
Broadening Opportunities	Security Force Assistance Brigade; Ranger Batalion;Special Operations; Defense Logistics Agency;Support Operations				Materiel Control NCO; Senior Leader DLA; Contingency Support NCO; Senior EO Advisor			
	Recruiter; Drill Sergeant; White House Communications Agency (WHCA)							
	Training with Industry Joint Operations							
	Sexual Assault Response Coordinator Automated Logistical SPC/NCO; Course Manager; Asst. IG; Procurement NCO; Capabilities and DevelopmentNCO							
	Enlisted Aide							
Military Training	Ranger; Airborne; Air Assault; Sling Load Inspector Course; Jumpmaster							
	Drill Sergeant; Recruiter; Common Faculty Development Instructor							
	SHARP; EO/EOA							
	Battle Staff; Enlisted Aide							
	Joint Logistics Course; Support; Operations; Operational Contracting Support							

Figure B–1. Talent Development Model (continued)



UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

CMF 11 Progression Chart



Insert from DA Pam
611-21 a complete
CMF progression

UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

Figure B-2. Career management field progression chart



UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

MOS 11B



The Infantryman serves, leads, or supervises as a member of an Infantry organization that employs individual small arms weapons or heavy anti-armor crew-served weapons, ~~either mounted or~~ dismounted, in support of offensive and defensive combat operations.

One sentence –
comprehensive
definition of MOS

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Most Qualified looks like:

SSG:

SFC: e.g., xx months Infantry Platoon

MSG: Sergeant

CSM/SGM:

Highly Qualified looks like:

SSG:

SFC:

MSG:

CSM/SGM:

Leader-specific
positions the
Proponent feels
makes Soldiers best-
qualified candidates
(timeframes are
acceptable)

UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

Figure B–3. Leadership: board guidance



UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

MOS 11B



PHYSICAL FITNESS	
SSG: SFC: MSG: CSM/SGM:	Most Qualified looks like:
SSG: SFC: MSG: CSM/SGM:	Highly Qualified looks like:
	ACFT scores, PT Badge, extended scale scores, best- Ranger competition, etc.

<u>MILITARY/CIVILIAN EDUCATION</u>	
SSG: SFC: MSG: CSM/SGM:	Most Qualified looks like:
SSG: SFC: MSG: CSM/SGM:	Highly Qualified looks like:
	MILITARY: Distinguished Honor Graduates, Leadership Graduates, etc. CIVILIAN: level of college achieved

UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

Figure B-4. Fitness and education: board guidance



UNCLASSIFIED//FOUO

MOS 11B



ASSIGNMENTS (Broadening and Critical Development) **PROPONENT SPECIFIC CHALLENGING / HIGH RISK**

SSG:

SFC:

MSG:

CSM/SGM:

When successfully
done, the Proponent
feels these
broadening and
developmental jobs
makes the Soldiers
best-qualified
candidates

Army Wide Special Duty Assignments are specific and defined/provided
within an Annex to each Board MOI

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Figure B-5. Assignments: board guidance



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TRAINING

Most Qualified looks like:

SSG:
SFC:
MSG:
CSM/SGM:

Highly Qualified looks like:

Master Gunner,
Ranger, Airborne,
etc.
(as appropriate for
the MOS)

SSG:
SFC:
MSG:
CSM/SGM:

OTHER INDICATORS

Most Qualified looks like:

SSG:

SFC:

MSG:

CSM/SGM:

Audie Murphy, SGT
Morales, NCO
Quarter/Year,
Special
Recognitions, etc.

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Figure B-6. Training and other indicators: board guidance



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FULLY-QUALIFIED (MANDATORY)

Formally established requirements stemming from Federal/ DOD/Legislative Authorities

SSG:

SFC:

MSG:

CSM/SGM:

This slide is only authorized when requirements exist such as Federal certifications, advanced degree requirements, etc., that are tied to the next higher grade.

When Proponent uses this slide, the specific authority must be fully identified/listed for verification/authentication.

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Figure B-7. Fully qualified (mandatory): board guidance

Glossary of Terms

This section contains no entries.

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