



(Photo by Bryan Gatchell, Ansbach PAO)

U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach stakeholders and consultants work through plans for the future of Katterbach District 22 September 2015 in Ansbach, Germany.

Professional Case for Force Management

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There is an unglamorous side of the Army ... which requires your personal attention—that of managing the Army.

—Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, 1952

Officers arrive at the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) with years of great operational experience in the tactical Army. Due to the command- and tactical-driven nature of Army professional development, many students

are concerned about how to succeed as a battalion executive officer, as an operations officer, or in a similar key developmental position, rather than focusing on skills to be successful in nonoperational assignments. Because of this mind-set, many officers miss the point that CGSOC is designed to provide them with basic knowledge in all pertinent subjects, enabling them to succeed during the remainder of their field grade careers—careers that will be mostly spent supporting senior leaders in making important decisions that

have considerable consequences for the future of the Army. Unfortunately, these officers fail to realize the importance of nonoperational topics and show little interest in the one subject they will use most in their future: *force management*.

These officers are very smart individuals, but they generally only see the Army from their company-grade tactical experiences, and they have little exposure to force management in their early careers. This is because much of force management is executed at the operational and strategic levels. Additionally, there has been little recent effort to include force management in unit-level professional development because of higher priorities caused by operational rotations.

The force-management process is the primary means of ensuring that the secretary of the Army and the Army staff meet the requirements set forth by Congress. Title 10 of the U.S. Code states that the secretary of the Army is responsible for “carrying out the functions of the Department of the Army so as to fulfill the current and future operational requirements of the unified and specified combatant commands.”¹ It also states that the responsibility of the Army staff is to “prepare for such employment of the Army and for such, recruiting, organizing, supplying, equipping, training, servicing, mobilizing/demobilizing, and maintaining of the Army.”² Department of Defense-assigned missions and combatant commander requirements to meet wartime needs are the two factors that drive the Army to develop a sufficient force to satisfy both within the context of the operational environment and utilizing available resources. Arguably, the vast majority of the effort of the Army staff and major commands is directly related to force management—the business side of the Army.

Force management, in simplest terms, is the process of providing the most capable Army within available resources by generating forces and providing operational units to combatant commanders in support of national objectives.³ The Army has changed significantly throughout its history while meeting the Nation’s needs, but the requirement for effective force management has remained a constant. From muskets to M4 rifles, horses to tanks, and balloons to unmanned aerial vehicles, Army leadership has developed and managed the Army through these changes. Majors today have lived the effects of force-management decisions such as the “Grow the Force” initiative, modularity, and nearly constant

equipment fielding and distribution, but most do not know or understand the processes that affect change in the Army.⁴ And, the future portends even more change. Testifying before the Senate Appropriations Committee’s defense subcommittee in 2014, then Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno outlined impacts on the force based on maintaining the balance between readiness, personnel, and modernization.⁵

Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22, *Army Leadership*, states, “Competent leadership implies managing change, adapting, and making it work for the entire team.”⁶ The Army helps develop this leadership competence in its field grade officers during CGSOC, which is generally the first formal opportunity to introduce new field grade officers to force management. These officers need to seize on this educational opportunity to succeed in their careers and contribute to their professional responsibility of running the Army. CGSOC is designed to open the students’ eyes to the processes they will utilize over the rest of their career to carry on the legacy and tradition of managing the force as it changes to “Force 2025 and Beyond.”⁷

Business Context

In the private sector, management organizes and coordinates the activities of businesses in order to achieve defined objectives. This includes creating corporate policy and then organizing, planning, funding, controlling, and directing organizational resources in order to achieve the objectives of that policy. The Army is, in essence, a global business that operates with a vision (“Force 2025 and Beyond”), mission (Title 10 and combatant commander requirements), business model (Army operating concept), funding (Army budget), and objectives (Army campaign plan) to meet new and evolving markets (partnerships and threats). Much as leaders move up the corporate ladder and are exposed to the financing, product development, and strategy of the company, leaders in the Army must learn and apply these same business concepts as they are promoted into positions of greater responsibility and gain a broader vision of the Army functions.

The depth and breadth of the management of the Army illustrated in figure 1 should justify to any new field grade officer why they need to have a basic understanding of the “business of the Army.”⁸ No other company in the world can boast the scale of assets and



(Graphic courtesy of James Lowry Kennedy Jr.)

Figure 1. Scale of the Army in a Civilian Context

variety of responsibilities the Army has as it accomplishes its missions: the sheer size of the budget, the considerable number of employees, the great expanse of land and high number of locations, the enormous amount of equipment, and the formidable scale of health care. As in the business world, all of the areas show change based on the need to meet ever-changing threats. Officers should ask themselves, “If I was being promoted to middle management in a large company, would I need to know how the company makes

decisions on expanding or contracting, finances, personnel management, and adapting to markets to help my company and my career?” The answer would be yes, and it should be no different in the Army.

Why Force Management Is Important

There are many reasons why force management is important and why it should be stressed during CGOSC. The top eight reasons follow:

- Field grade officers do the heavy lifting.
- Managing change in the Army is at a critical point.
 - Army officers are professionals.
 - The future of the Army depends on it.
 - Force management is part of the job.
 - Force management links to every aspect of the Army at every level.
 - Army officers are leaders.
 - Force management will be included in follow-on assignments.

Field grade officers do the heavy lifting. Senior leaders rely on field grade officers to be subject-matter experts to help them run the Army and assist them during decision-making processes. Majors that appreciate the complexity and nuances of how the Army operates will set themselves apart from their peers and will be better prepared to understand, visualize, describe, and direct their organizations. In the Officer Professional Management System (OPMS) XXI Final Report of 1997, Gen. Dennis Reimer, then Army chief of staff, emphasized that “while warfighting must remain the paramount skill of the officer corps, the Army should begin to foster officers who thoroughly understand how the Army works as an institution.”⁹

Managing change in the Army is at a critical point. Gen. David Perkins, commander of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), in a briefing to TRADOC civilians, explained that the problem for the Army is “how to win in a complex world where the future is unknown, unknowable, and constantly changing.”¹⁰ Force management is the process that the Army uses to address that problem. He observed that the Army is structured around the conventional capabilities for heavy combat in the “Big Five” weapon systems—the Abrams tank, the Bradley fighting vehicle, the Patriot surface-to-air missile system, and the Apache and Blackhawk helicopters. However, he noted, the operational environment has changed and with it requirements for different capabilities. Perkins said this operational focus has been replaced by the need for harder-to-measure capabilities of “optimized soldier and team performance: capabilities overmatch, joint/interorganization interoperable, scalable and tailorable joint combined arms forces, and adaptive professionals and institutions to operate in complex environments.”¹¹

Today’s field grade officers must prepare themselves to help build then lead the next Army by ensuring the required capabilities are developed. To assist them, in October 2014, TRADOC published TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The U.S. Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World, 2020-2024*.¹² This doctrine guides future force development through the identification of first-order capabilities the Army must possess to accomplish its missions. It identifies twenty enduring Army warfighting challenges that must be overcome.¹³ Officers at organizations above brigade level should have a good understanding of this document because the Department of the Army is changing the organization of the Army to meet these new challenges with new capabilities.

Army officers are professionals. ADRP-1, *The Army Profession*, published in June 2015, states in chapter 1:

The *Army Profession* is a unique vocation of experts certified in the ethical **design, generation, support, and application** of landpower, serving under civilian authority and entrusted to defend the Constitution and the rights and interests of the American people. An *Army professional* is a Soldier or Army Civilian who meets the Army Profession’s certification criteria in **character, competence, and commitment**.¹⁴ [bold is author emphasis]

As professionals, field grade officers are obligated to understand the basics of force-management concepts so they can better support Army “business” processes and increase their professional character, competence, and commitment. Leaders must understand the force-management systems in order to operate within them effectively no matter what position, branch, or specialty they hold.

The future of the Army depends on it. Fleetwood Mac sang, “Don’t stop thinking about tomorrow, it will soon be here.”¹⁵ In ten years, when the current senior leaders have long-since retired, the majors of 2016 will be the strategic thinkers and planners of the Army, so they need to start understanding the anticipated future Army now. When the Army reaches the goal of “Force 2025 and Beyond,” they will be colonels; they will be the brigade commanders and key staff officers leading the Army being built and designed today.

Recognizing the need to develop the current field grade officers to meet the challenges of the future, the Army produced *The Army Leader Development Strategy 2013 (ALDS)*.¹⁶ The ALDS aims to develop agile, adaptive, and innovative leaders who thrive in conditions of uncertainty and chaos, and are capable of visualizing, describing, directing, leading, and assessing operations in complex environments and against adaptive enemies. Appendix A of the ALDS states that officers are given additional educational and training opportunities “to allow them to understand areas such as Congress, the Army budget, systems acquisition, research and development ... and Army operations as a complex enterprise.”¹⁷ Understanding the basic processes of force management allows officers at all levels to then adjust quickly to defeat an evolving enemy. Field grade officers develop company grade officers into future leaders of the Army. Therefore, as professionals, majors and lieutenant colonels need to understand the “corporate” business management of the Army so they can develop their subordinates.

Force management is part of the job. Many new field grade officers have a huge misconception that force management does not apply to them or their careers, and that it is instead the purview of the roughly 250 functional area (FA) 50 force-management officers in the Army. This is far from the truth.

FA50 officers manage Army force development, force integration, and global force management. They participate as subject-matter experts, along with basic-branch officers, in strategic planning, requirements determination, capability development, new-equipment training, force integration, materiel acquisition, recruiting and manning the force, Army force generation, budgeting, and execution or prioritization of requirements.

However, simultaneously, and of principal importance to the CGSOC demographic, basic-branch officers often serve in key generating-force roles alongside FA50s. As an example, it is common for the brigade combat team organizational integrator at G-37 Force Management to be an armor or infantry officer, or for basic branch officers to serve as doctrine writers or capability developers at the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate.

While the force-management professional performs a critical part within the business of the Army,

commanders and directors are the instruments of actual change in Army organizations given force-management decisions. If a commander leaves force management to his FA50, he might as well leave discipline to his lawyer or medical readiness to his combat medic. Force management is commander’s business.

Force management links to every aspect of the Army at every level. Arguably, force management is the one CGSOC subject officers will use most during the remainder of their careers. In tactical assignments, officers will experience force-management decisions mainly through new equipment fielding, modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) changes, and resource management.

In strategic assignments, they will be the ones developing new capabilities, doctrine, tactics, and cost estimates. They will be measuring risk and providing options and information to senior leaders so those leaders can make decisions and run the business processes of the Army.

Field grade officers are leaders. Soldiers deserve leaders who understand the process of how and why decisions are made that impact a unit’s organization, personnel, equipping, and funding. And, junior officers and NCOs look to field grade officers for answers during times of change. As a professional the answer cannot be, “Those people in the Pentagon do not know what they are doing.” Or even worse, “I don’t know.”

Field grade officers must understand the force-management system to effectively manage and influence change inside and outside their organizations. They cannot resource, train, mentor, deploy, or sustain their organizations effectively without a thorough knowledge of where they fit into the bigger picture. They need to know how decisions made many levels up will impact them, such as when MTOEs change, budgets are lowered, or new equipment is fielded.

Force management will be included in follow-on assignments. One officer recently wrote his force-management instructor at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and told him that he had not been concerned with the force-management instruction while he was in CGSOC because he did not see any linkage to the battalion S3 and XO positions he would fill immediately after the course. However, after those two jobs, he was assigned to his branch

capabilities-development directorate and wished he had paid more attention during CGSOC.

Army careers are more than just at the brigade level and below. As figure 2 illustrates, the odds are likely that a field grade officer will spend much of his or her career outside the tactical environment.¹⁸ Often, after majors successfully complete key developmental positions within their branch, they are moved to developmental assignments within the generating force where they will utilize force-management processes.

A recent Army War College report on senior officer talent management made a quite compelling point:

Because advancement requires a “warrior” career profile, officers studiously avoid non-operational assignments. These are universally regarded as hazardous to one’s career, even though such assignments can develop the specialized expertise demanded by the majority of senior officer duty positions, which are predominately nonoperational.¹⁹

It is important to have leaders with experience in developing the force to meet the challenges of uncertain future operating environments as well as to bring those operational experiences to the generating force to help ensure the Army captures the proper requirements. These institutional assignments would not end a career but develop future leaders of the Army. For example, Gen. Raymond Odierno was the director of Force Programs, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, before he was the 4th Infantry Division commander and, eventually, the chief of staff of the Army. While knowing these key points is important, how the Army trains new field grades is critical to them obtaining a better doctrinal understanding of the processes.

CGSOC Curriculum

Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*, states that one of the goals of the officer education system is “to produce a corps of leaders who ... understand how the Army runs.”²⁰ To support this goal, CGSOC provides an eighteen-hour block of instruction titled “Force Management” in its core curriculum. The intent of this instruction is to familiarize the students with the basic principles and processes of force management. It is not designed to

make them force-management experts but to provide an overview of the many interrelated processes, terms, and procedures used by the generating force to manage change within the Army so they can communicate within the profession.

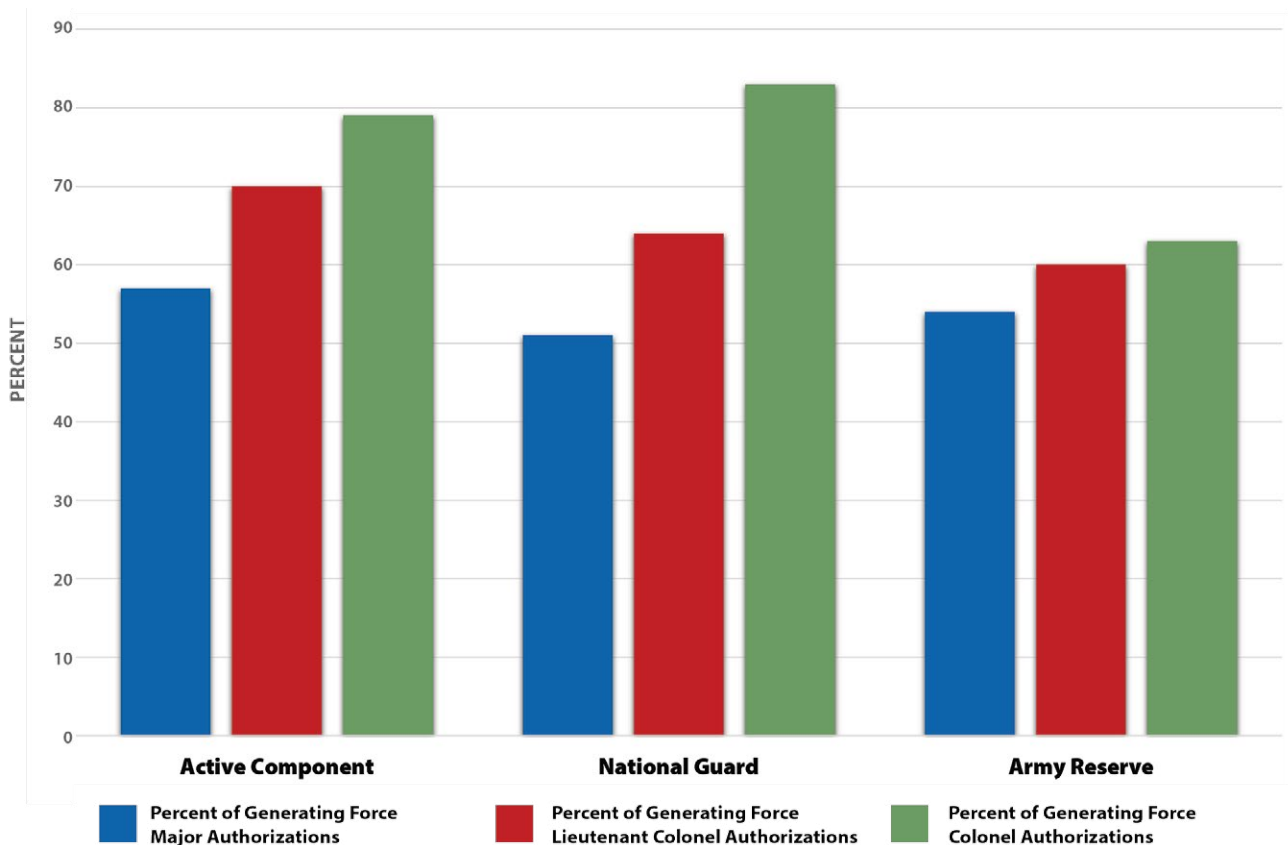
The block begins by laying a foundation with a discussion of documents such as *Title 10, The Army Plan*, and the *Army Operating Concept*, three strategic guidance documents that few CGSOC students have heard of and even fewer have read, and explains how these drive the development of the Army force. Next, students are exposed to the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS) to learn how the Army and joint staff develop capabilities by looking at future needs and current capabilities and identifying gaps for which TRADOC then develops solutions within the doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P) framework. Students then learn how those different solutions are prioritized within the Army and become tables of organization and equipment or tables of distribution and allowances.

The total Army analysis process is introduced and discussed to demonstrate that there is a quantitative and qualitative process behind Army decisions. The next topic—planning, programming budgeting, and execution—provides an overview of the process that develops the budgets for each program, adjusts and approves them within the Army priorities, justifies the requests to Congress, allocates funds received, and manages the expenditure of funds to ensure missions are accomplished.

Discussion and readings then focus on how the Army acquires materiel using the Defense Acquisition System (DAS). While few officers in the Army are actually involved in the DAS directly, all need a basic understanding because they are impacted by the products.

The final topic of instruction is force integration. Students learn how the Army prioritizes requirements, and some of the key points of manning and equipping the force. Key Department of the Army guidance is discussed along with how the Army manages units within the new sustainable readiness process.

While not directly a force-management topic, operational contract support (OCS) is also covered to explain how the Army fills in the gaps in capability



(Graphic courtesy of James Lowry Kennedy Jr.)

Figure 2. Percentage of Generating Authorized Positions by Component

when operations occur. OCS planning is critical but often overlooked by leadership because of a lack of understanding on their part, the complexity of OCS, and a lack of ownership on the part of staffs. A working understanding of OCS is essential for officer development since contractors will be a part of the total force in operations for the known future, complementing uniformed forces in myriad situations with their specialized capabilities.

Evaluating student learning. For Academic Year 2017, the major formative assessments of the force-management block of instruction are three one-page discussion papers and three quizzes. The discussion papers require the students to read doctrine or a senior leader speech and then develop a one-page argumentative paper where they apply critical thinking to link the reading to the class subject matter. The three quizzes test the students’ comprehension of the classroom discussions and materials.

Professional Development beyond the Classroom

To ensure continuity of force-management skills within the force after formal schooling opportunities, leaders should plan professional development sessions on force-management issues for their subordinate leaders. Discussion topics might include the budget submission in February, budget negotiations in Congress, or leader speeches. Leaders could invite program managers to discuss new acquisition programs or representatives from contracting support brigades to teach requirements determination and requiring activity responsibilities.

A resource manager from the G8 (financial management staff section) could provide a briefing on the budget-requirements development process, or an FA50 officer could give a corps- or division-level brief on the MTOE or force-management system website (FMSWeb) training. Commanders should not forget

to include reading and discussions of high-level strategic documents such as the *Quadrennial Defense Review*, the *National Security Strategy*, and the *Army Operating Concept*, and what they mean for the future of the Army.

Additionally, commanders must ensure force-management instruction is provided to NCOs. NCOs must not be overlooked in any force-management training opportunities since they are often the ones implementing, testing, evaluating, and providing feedback to force-management solutions. They need to understand the importance of their roles in the force-management processes more than anyone else.

Finally, two recommended readings are the U.S. War College's *How the Army Runs: A Senior Leader Reference Handbook* and *Kevlar Legions: The Transformation of the U.S. Army, 1989–2005* by Gen. John S. Brown.²¹ *How the Army Runs*, available on the Army Force Management School and Army War College websites, explains many of the key Army force-management processes. *Kevlar Legions* traces the development of the Army structure and major equipment from 1989 through 2005.

Conclusion

A recent CGSOC graduate serving in West Africa wrote to his Fort Leavenworth force-management instructor urging him to “tell students to study force management and OCS hard, because division and above is where majors go to ‘row the boat.’” He said, “I am always referring to my class slides.”²² CGSOC graduates cannot escape being part of the force-management process as they serve in field grade positions across the force in operational and strategic positions regardless of specialty or branch. The effort they put into being a competent professional within the business of the Army will determine not only how successful their career is but, more importantly, how well the Army changes to prevent, shape, and win in a complex world. ■

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Biography

Col. James Lowry Kennedy Jr., U.S. Army, retired, is an assistant professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College campus at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, teaching force management and sustainment. He holds a BS in chemistry from Presbyterian College, an MS in logistics management from the Florida Institute of Technology, and an MMAS in military history from the Command General Staff College. He is working on a master of education degree from George Mason University.

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