



A change of responsibility ceremony is held in honor of outgoing Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army Gen. Mark A. Milley and Sgt. Maj. of the U.S. Army Daniel A. Dailey, hosted by Acting Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy at Joint Base Myer- Henderson- Hall in Arlington, Va., Aug. 9, 2019. The incoming Chief of Staff of the Army is Gen. James C. McConville and the new Sgt. Maj. of the Army is Michael A. Grinston. (U.S. Army photo by Eboni L. EversonMyart)

Leader Development

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From the birth of our Nation and establishment of the Continental Army there have always been non-commissioned officers. Leaders within our ranks, who are charged with the day-to-day activities that maintain good order and discipline, generate readiness, conduct training, ensure the health and welfare of the force, and carry out a myriad of other duties and responsibilities essential to the success of an organization, our Army and ultimately our Nation. In 1779, Inspector General Friedrich von Steuben formally standardized NCO duties and responsibilities when he published "Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States." This regulation, the beginning of a long "green line" of doctrinal publications, was the first of its kind to formally identify what was required of the NCO Corps and therefore, the first step in the formal

leader development process we rely on today.

Without question, the success of our Army has and will always rest upon the shoulders of its Soldiers and the support of our Nation. As actor and comedian Bill Murray so eloquently stated, "The Army needs leaders the way a foot needs a big toe." Although this analogy may seem funny it couldn't be truer and it also suggests that leaders are an essential part of our Army's physical makeup. Recognizing how important leaders are to our Army and its success, it is imperative that we have processes and systems specifically designed for developing those leaders. So here lie our opening questions: What is leader development? Where does it take place? Quite possibly the most important question, whom is responsible for it?

The Army defines leader development as "the deliberate, continuous, and progressive process-founded in

Army Values—that grows Soldiers and Army Civilians into competent, committed professional leaders of character.” At the macro level, this definition clearly answers the above questions. However, for a direct and/or organizational leader this definition requires elaboration. What do we mean by “deliberate, continuous and progressive,” the “where” and “how” of what we are charged to develop? What do we really mean by “growing competent, committed professional leaders of character,” and the “what” we are developing within that leader? And finally, is our definition really that inclusive, meaning are we in fact charged with developing all Soldiers and Civilians, the “who” we are charged with developing into our future leaders? And we still have the unanswered question from above, “who is responsible for leader development?”

The Leader Requirements Model, what we expect leaders to “be, know and do” and the attributes and competencies which we should expect from all Army leaders, is clearly outlined in Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, Army Leadership and further clarified in its reference publication, Army Doctrine Reference Publication 6-22. These publications and Army Doctrine Reference Publication 1-0, The Army Profession clearly define what it means to be an Army Professional, a person of character who is both competent and committed to the Army Profession, fellow Army Professionals and our Nation. By making the statement that we are charged with developing professionals we then answer the question of “who” we are charged with developing; we are charged with developing all members of the Profession of Arms (Soldiers) and all members of the Army Civilian Corps (Department of the Army Civilians). Therefore, our leader development programs and systems must be inclusive and meet the ends of developing competence, character and commitment. So the tougher questions still remain, that of “where,” “how,” and “who is responsible for leader development.”

Our Army Leader Development Strategy states that “leader development is achieved through the life-long synthesis of training, education, and experiences acquired through opportunities in the operational, insti-

tutional, and self-development domains.” It is quite clear from this statement that leader development is not the sole purview or responsibility of any one organization or entity. Each and every member of our profession has a shared responsibility to not only develop him or herself but also to develop others. It is also clear from this statement that leader development does not occur periodically or sporadically throughout one’s career. It does not solely take place at a particular school, in a particular assignment, or through one’s individual efforts. Leader development occurs throughout all of those examples and many, many more. Unfortunately our current operational environment has created a culture and climate that



A group of U.S. Army Pre-Ranger students look over the route to an objective on a map during Pre-Ranger School at Training Area Echo, Fort Benning, Ga., Oct. 28, 2018. Pre-Ranger School provides guidance and mentorship for students to be successful as they prepare to attend Ranger School. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Austin Berner)

does not completely embrace this view.

A fundamental flaw in many organizations is the premise that leader development is merely made up of a counseling program and a handful of leader professional development sessions. For some organizations this mindset has become further clouded either because of a deliberate view or an inattentive focus on leader development where it has become something that resides solely in the realm of professional military education. Either through deliberate planning or lack of attention, those organizations have in effect abdicated responsibility to develop their subordinates and have become overly reliant on an educational system designed to provide the fundamentals of leadership. In some cases our expectations of each domain (operational, institutional and self-development) have become somewhat skewed. A great organization

places the appropriate amount of focus on training, education and experience in all three of the domains by deliberately planning, preparing, executing and assessing

and Promotion Boards, Qualifications, Certifications, Command Climate Surveys and Inspection Programs are a few of the formal aspects of leader development



Cadet Jack Lacy, of Texas A&M University, negotiates an obstacle during Field Leadership Reaction Course training at Fort Knox, Ky., July 16, 2019. The course challenges cadets' leadership skills while also encouraging squad growth. (U.S. Army photo by Luke Heibert, CST Public Affairs Office)

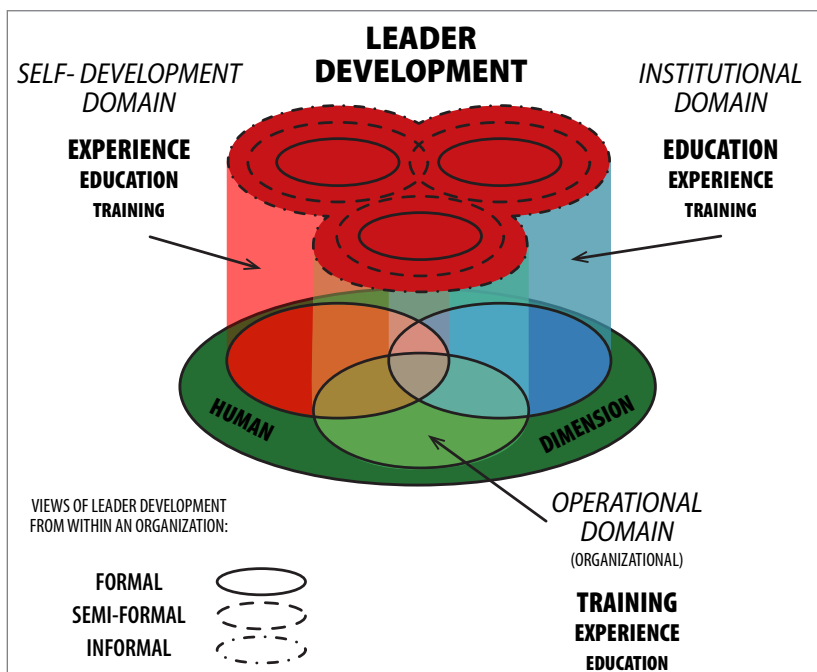
that should be articulated in a leader development plan. We then have less prescriptive processes that are equally as important to a leader development plan and should be linked accordingly. Items such as the Unit Training Management System, Field Training Exercises, the Organizational Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback, Standard Operating Procedures, Ceremonies, Organizational Certifications such as Team Leader and Squad Certifications, Reception and Integration Activities, Functional Training and talent management within an organization are all semi-formal processes (items that may not be specifically mandated, but

their organization's leader development program.

So what does this mean to you and your organization? You need to turn this strategy into a mission and that mission into a plan; so start with what you know. Across our Army and within your organization we execute a myriad of programs that directly influence leader development. A way to synchronize our efforts is by categorizing our activities as formal, semi-formal, and informal processes, programs, procedures and systems. You, as a direct and organizational leader, can start by taking the time to codify each of these in your leader development plan.

Using these categories as a method to articulate a leader development plan, we have formal processes which are prescribed and often mandated in Army Regulations, Doctrine, etc. that should be clearly identified in your plan. Counseling, Evaluations, Feedback and Assessments, Professional Military Education, Structure Self-Development, Recognition

are highly encouraged) which directly relate to leader development. And finally, there are countless informal activities (items that are routinely conducted in high performing organizations but are not directed). These



often have the greatest impact on leader development, yet many organizations fail to formally recognize and include them in their leader development plans. Items such as mentorship, additional duties, team-building exercises, sensing sessions, professional reading programs, and succession planning are all examples of informal processes, systems, and programs that should be included in a leader development plan. Again, this is merely a way to view leader development within an organization. Below is a graphical depiction of the interrelated nature of a leader development program. The key is taking the time to articulate the significance of leader development and your plan to the members of your organization.

Some will argue that many of these formal and informal activities already take place within an organization and therefore need not be spelled out in a leader development plan. The rationale behind this statement, in many organizations, may be true. However, by not codifying these type of items in a deliberate manner within your leader development plan the organization's leadership will miss out on an opportunity to highlight the significance of leader development, and to demonstrate how many that are done on a regular basis and directly link to leader development. Again, keep in mind that leader development is "achieved through the life-long synthesis of the training, education, and experiences acquired through opportunities in the operational, institutional, and self-development domains". A plan is beyond an idea, it is the "why, how, and what" we intend to do. Therefore, it is important that we take the time to plan for leader development. Otherwise, we will be forced to rely on happenstance as our method for developing our future leaders.

In the end, the Army is dependent upon itself, upon



U.S. Army Spc. Kenneth Safford, 184th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Mississippi Army National Guard, graduates Camp Buehring, Kuwait's, Basic Leader Course, March 19, 2019. Basic Leadership Course helps develop and prepare future noncommissioned officers to sustain and maintain readiness within the Army. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Arielle Lugtu)

leaders, to develop leaders. We cannot simply advertise to hire an Army Leader in our local newspaper or in an online job listing, nor can we wait to develop a leader as the need arises. Each and every day every one of us is charged with developing the leaders of today and tomorrow. As an Army Professional, you are charged with planning, preparing, executing, and assessing leader development at your level in order to grow Soldiers and Army Civilians into competent, committed professional leaders of character. Developing leaders who are role models, who possess the attributes and competencies as described in the Leader Requirements Model, is absolutely essential to the Army's mission and future strength responsibility as Leaders.

If you would like to learn more about this topic, I recommend you read the "Army Leader Development Strategy 2013," the Army Doctrine and Doctrine Reference Publications 6-22, Army Leadership, and the Army Doctrine Reference Publication 1-0, The Army Profession. ■

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