

NCOs learn about changes in leadership development

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NCO Journal

November 16, 2016



Putting the spotlight squarely on leadership development, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey warned senior noncommissioned officers early last month of the “tough changes” coming as part of NCO 2020 and the updated NCO Professional Development System during an NCO and Soldier forum at the Association of the U.S. Army annual meeting in Washington, D.C.



“What it’s really about is getting our noncommissioned officers to a place we need them to be for 2025 and beyond, and maximizing the equivalency in the education we get in both the academic field and credentialing perspective so that we can sustain the all-volunteer force for the future,” Dailey said. “There are some tough changes coming ahead in the Army. Some of those affect Soldiers both positively and negatively. What I can assure you, though, is [that there is] a very good, comprehensive plan for the future.”

NCOs and Soldiers gathered Oct. 3-5 to not only tell the Army’s story and share it with the public and corporate supporters, but also to educate and share leadership development strategies with Soldiers, Dailey said. Gen. Mark A. Milley, chief of staff of the U.S. Army, has called readiness the Army’s No. 1 priority, and Army leaders agree that leadership development is central to building readiness.

“We have to sit back, take our blinders off and ask ourselves what it takes for every single Soldier in the Army to be ready,” Dailey told NCOs.

Dailey said Army downsizing is still underway to reach the goal of 450,000 Soldiers by 2018. Talent management will play a large part in deciding future promotions.

“We’re going to keep people based upon talent,” Dailey said. “We are going to promote people based upon talent, and we will slot people for advancement in the United States Army based upon talent. That is exactly what we are going to do to make sure we maintain the quality of Soldiers and noncommissioned officers who are in place to fight our nation’s wars.”

Command Sgt. Maj. David Davenport, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, told NCOs about changes on the horizon to enhance professional military education.

“We are looking at all the programs of instruction, with all of the proponents, and we are integrating common core standards,” Davenport said. “We’re investing in our facilitators, our instructors. We are going to consolidate all the

various instructor courses into one. Just like we advise to grow noncommissioned officers based on experience and education, same goes for our instructors.”

Davenport also trumpeted the release of three applications to help guide Soldiers through PME — Army Career Tracker, the Digital Job Book and the Digital Rucksack.

Davenport encouraged NCOs to take a look at Army Career Tracker online, a leadership development tool that integrates training and education on one website. Career maps have been updated and follow the five lines of effort — military life cycle, education, assignment/experience, credentialing/experience and self-development. Lines of effort link multiple tasks and missions to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions.

Davenport praised the Digital Job Book app for its ease of use.

“What is really important about it is [it] allows organizations — commanders and sergeants major — to add up to 10 tasks that are specific to your organization so that you can battle track it,” he said.

The highly touted Digital Rucksack app will work with tablets and smartphones Soldiers bring into classrooms, Davenport said.

“Our Soldiers scan a QR code, and it puts all the material that they are going to need for the PME,” he said. “We think [the apps] are really going to help us connect Soldiers and organizations to leader development.”

Retired Gen. Carter Ham, president and chief executive officer of AUSA, thanked noncommissioned officers during the forum for their continued and sustained leadership and acknowledged their vital role in the Army.

“Sergeants major are what makes the United States Army the strong power that it is,” Ham told senior NCOs. “We should never lose sight of that, and the investment in you, the investment in those Soldiers who aspire to be noncommissioned officers, we owe them the best possible development that we can afford them. So that when they follow you to lead this Army, they will build on all you have achieved to keep the United States Army as the premier land force on this planet. That is only possible because of the people in this room.”