

After more than twelve 12 years of war, our soldiers, Army civilians, and families have faced extraordinary challenges. Together we have prevailed amidst the complexities of an ever-changing operational environment and learned to adapt to a wide range of hybrid threats. Time after time, Army professionals have performed exceptionally well, demonstrating a genuine commitment and remarkable resilience. Collectively, we have successfully completed our missions and in turn have secured the trust of the American people and our Nation’s elected officials.

To sustain the trust of the American public and the elected officials who represent them, we must all continuously exhibit the five essential characteristics of our Army Profession: trust, military expertise, honorable service, esprit de corps, and stewardship. These must be present in our culture, our professionals, our units, and in our external relationships. Together, these characteristics must represent more than just words. Each one reflects American values embedded in the Army’s approach to protecting our Nation and winning its wars. The Army meets the standards of a military profession when its members remain committed to maintaining these five essential characteristics.

All leaders and trainers should focus on “Trust” in the coming year during professional development sessions, placing emphasis on the importance of—

- Making transparent, values-based decisions and maintaining candid communications.
- Trust between soldiers and Army civilians.
- Promoting a positive command climate where soldiers and Army civilians at all levels are empowered to use their initiative and learn from their mistakes.
- Increasing awareness that in today’s culture of instantaneous information one incident of misconduct, indiscipline, or unprofessionalism can jeopardize trust with the American people.

Leaders should engage soldiers and civilians within their ranks in inspirational dialogue. We must continually self-assess our role as members of this honored profession. We should also discuss and assess the greatest challenges to our Army Profession through the lens of the five essential characteristics. These make for powerful and insightful engagements within your team. Such assessments demonstrate our shared commitment to who we are as professionals and what we are as a profession. These actions are supported by the many excellent resources on the Center for Army Profession and Ethic website at <https://cape.army.mil/aaop>.

The Army will transition to an America’s Army—Our Profession “Stand Strong” campaign for fiscal year 2014. All Army professionals must “Stand Strong” together to eradicate instances of indiscipline and acts of misconduct from our ranks. Our profession demands that every Army soldier and civilian take personal responsibility for their own behavior, for courageously confronting unacceptable conduct, and for resolving any incident that violates the dignity and respect of any individual. All of our actions must result in an Army Profession that demonstrates trust, expertise, honorable service, esprit de corps, and stewardship. When every Army professional fully exhibits their character, competence, and commitment, we can truly say we have resolved these issues.

When our dedicated Army professionals stand strong together, and remain grounded in the five essential characteristics of the profession, we can accomplish anything.



**ARMY STRONG.®**

**Army Strong!**

**Raymond F. Chandler III**  
Sergeant Major of the Army



*Military Review* is a refereed journal that provides a forum for original thought and debate on the art and science of land warfare and other issues of current interest to the U.S. Army and the Department of Defense. *Military Review* also supports the education, training, doctrine development, and integration missions of the Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Headquarters, Department of the Army  
U.S. Army Combined Arms Center  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Volume XCIII — September-October 2013, No.5

website: <http://militaryreview.army.mil>  
email: [usarmyleavenworth.tradoc.mbx.military-review-public-em@mail.mil](mailto:usarmyleavenworth.tradoc.mbx.military-review-public-em@mail.mil)

Professional Bulletin 100-13-9/10

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The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the department. Funds for printing this publication were approved by the Secretary of the Army in accordance with the provisions of Army Regulation 25-30.

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Authorization no. 13222008

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*Military Review* (US ISSN 0026-4148) (USPS 123-830) is published bimonthly by the U.S. Army, CAC, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1293. Paid subscriptions are available through the Superintendent of Documents for \$42 US/APO/FPO and \$58.80 foreign addresses per year. Periodical postage paid at Leavenworth, KS, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Military Review*, CAC, 290 Stimson Avenue, Unit 2, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1254.