2010 CENTER FOR ARMY LEADERSHIP ANNUAL SURVEY OF ARMY LEADERSHIP (CASAL): VOLUME 2, MAIN FINDINGS

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14. ABSTRACT

This report is organized in 4 main sections: quality of leadership, contribution of actions and character to leadership, effects of climate and situational factors on leadership, and quality of leader development. Leadership quality continues to be a strength and most of the Leadership Requirements Model competencies and attributes are effectively demonstrated. A notable and consistent exception is the *Develops Others* competency. While over three-fourths of leaders are confident that their unit can perform its mission, over one half also report that their unit wastes time and energy on unproductive tasks, and only 38% agree that the Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for future challenges. About 20% of superiors are viewed as demonstrating patterns of negative or toxic behavior. Turnover intention levels appear adequate with 66% planning to stay in the Army until retirement eligible. The quality of leader development is mixed. Issues remain regarding lack of support for leader development at the unit level and perceived lack of impact from professional military education (PME). The report concludes with a look at trends and recommendations to improve leadership and leader development in the Army.

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Leadership; Leader Development; Education; Training; Performance Assessment; CASAL; PME; Baseline; Recommendations

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2010 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL): Volume 2, Main Findings

PURPOSE

Since 2005, Army senior leadership has commissioned the Center for Army Leadership (CAL), Combined Arms Center (CAC) to employ the CAL Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL) to assess and track trends in Army leader attitudes of leader development, the quality of leadership, and the contribution of leadership to mission accomplishment. CASAL is the authoritative source for how Army leaders assess the state of Army leadership and leader development. A rigorous scientific approach is used for survey development, data collection, and data analysis. Data are collected from thousands of stratified random officers, warrant officers, NCOs, and Army civilians. In addition, data are collected from deployed personnel so that comparisons can be made between leadership and leader development in deployed situations and in garrison.

CASAL results provide valuable information for senior Army leaders to use for decision-making and the development of policy and programming. The survey includes information related to the institutional, operational, and self-development domains of leader development. Data are collected from a range of military and civilian leaders serving in a variety of situations (e.g., deployed, redeployed, in garrison, at the schoolhouse). Consequently, CASAL is comprehensive in its identification of leader development strengths and gaps. Senior leaders can thus leverage this information to build on the Army's strengths and take action to close the gaps.

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Over 22,000 uniformed leaders in the active and reserve components, along with over 4,500 DA civilian leaders, participated in the 2010 CASAL.

Each year, survey development starts with the identification of issues of importance to leadership and leader development. To adequately track trends and identify patterns, many survey items from past years have been used without change during each administration of the survey. Other items have been dropped, added, or modified in order to balance survey size and respondent fatigue/time required, with the need to cover a wide range of topical leadership issues. In part, this is done to ensure that the survey assesses current issues in the Army that change from year to year. Data are collected through both quantitative (e.g., select a response) and qualitative (e.g., type a brief answer) means. Over 100 items cover topics on the quality of leadership and leader development:

Quality of Leadership

- What is the overall quality of Army leaders?
- How does leader effectiveness differ in deployed and non-deployed environments?
- How effective are current Army leaders for each core leader competency and attribute?

Leader Development

- How supportive are superiors of leader development for their subordinates?
- How effective are current Army leader development practices?
- How effective is unit training for leadership development?

From November - December 2010, over 22,000 uniformed leaders in the active and reserve components, along with over 4,500 DA civilian leaders, responded to the survey. This strong participation in the CASAL provides an overall sampling error of approximately +/- 0.6%. This sampling error, together with the stratified random sampling method used means that the collected perceptions are representative of the Army. Thus, a high degree of confidence can be placed in the findings.

MAIN FINDINGS

- Army leaders report that on average 64% (ranging from a low of 56% for Jr. NCOs and a high of 70% for Sr. NCOs) of leaders in their unit or organization are effective—this is a slight (2%) increase from 2009.

- Half (55%) of leaders at CONUS locations report high morale, which is higher than those in Afghanistan (43%) or Iraq (48%). In comparison to findings from 2009, the percentage of deployed leaders reporting high or very high morale has increased in Iraq (+7%), but decreased in Afghanistan (-4%).

- Only 38% (no change from 2006) agreed that, "The Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years." The number one explanation was a perception of a "lack of discipline" or that the "Army is too soft." While 74% of Jr. NCOs selected lack of discipline, only 35% of company grade officers did. TOE unit members selected lack of discipline (~70%) more often than TDA (~55%) unit members. This item was a follow-up to qualitative feedback obtained in 2006. Comments claimed the Army has become "soft" and discipline and respect are not instilled in new recruits. Some of the comments cited lowered entrance standards (e.g., physical fitness).

- Over 40% agreed that, "The Army no longer demonstrates that it is committed to me as much as it expects me to be committed." This item is indicative of command climate and intention to stay in the Army.

- About one-fourth (24%) of Army leaders believe that honest mistakes are held against them in their unit/organization. Nearly one-third (30%) believe that their unit/organization promotes a zero-defect mentality.

- About one in five Army leaders report that their immediate superior demonstrates toxic leadership behavior. Four out of five Army leaders (83%) report observing a leader who demonstrates toxic leadership behavior in the past year. However, almost all (97%) also observed an extraordinary leader in the past year.

- *Develops Others* continues to be the lowest rated core competency across all levels. Less than two-thirds of Army leaders are rated as effective at developing their subordinates (61%) and at creating or identifying opportunities for leader development (59%). Institutional courses/schools are not seen as effective in preparing leaders to develop their subordinates.

- The percentage of Army leaders who report that their unit/organization places a high priority on leader development is at an *all time low of 46%* (compared to 53% in 2009 and 55% in 2008); only 57% of Army leaders report that they have time to carry out the duties and responsibilities for developing subordinates, down from 63% in 2009.

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ORGANIZATION OF FINDINGS[i]

The survey was administered online to a representative sample of over 22,000 Regular Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard officers (2LT to COL), warrant officers (WO1 to CW5), and noncommissioned officers (SGT to CSM) who were globally dispersed. In addition to Army leaders, for the second year, the survey was also administered to Army civilians (findings for Army civilians are presented in a separate report, CAL Technical Report 2011-4). The survey invitation was sent to a random sample of 140,457 Army leaders within the uniformed cohorts, of whom 22,635 participated, for a response rate of 16.1%. Note that the true response rate was actually higher due to individuals who were out-of-range, or do not regularly check e-mail. The online survey was accessible to participants from November through December of 2010.

The level of sampling precision was adequate for each of five rank groups for the active components (AC) and reserve components (RC) (i.e., within sampling error of +/- .9% to +/- 2.9%, and sampling error for entire survey across components and cohorts is only +/- 0.6%). Essentially this means that 95 times out of 100 the actual percentage will be within 1% of the true percentage (of perceptions).

It was found that the respondent sample closely approximated the population of the Army in terms of component and gender. The sample was also representative of deployed Army leaders; 66% active and 48% reserve had recent deployment experience (in the past 36 months). Further, approximately 16% of active and reserve component respondents were serving on a deployment at the time of the survey. The population, sample, response rate, and sampling error for each rank group are presented in Table 1.

[i] This document summarizes the main findings. In addition to the main findings report, more in-depth analyses and recommendations are offered in topical reports on education (CAL Technical Report 2011-2), toxic leadership and command climate (CAL Technical Report 2011-3), and Department of Army civilians (CAL Technical Report 2011-4).

Table 1. Population, Sample, Response Rates and Sampling Error by Rank Group and Component for Uniformed Personnel.

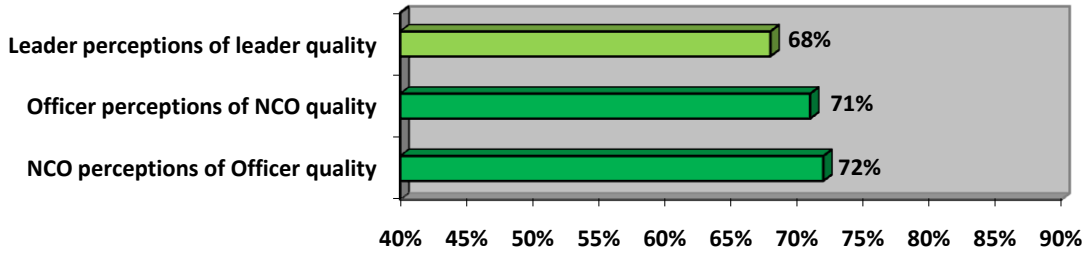
Population Strata	Population	Planned Sample (Invitations)	Returned		Sampling Error
			N	Response Rate	
Active Component					
Field Grade Officer	29,858	5,650	1,794	32%	2.2
Company Grade Officer	45,432	18,000	2,573	14%	1.9
Warrant Officer	15,176	4,050	1,067	26%	2.9
Sr NCO	56,820	12,999	2,762	21%	1.8
Jr NCO	149,371	28,000	3,732	13%	1.6
Total AC	296,657	68,699	11,928	17%	0.9
Reserve Component					
Field Grade Officer	29,620	7,000	1,867	27%	2.2
Company Grade Officer	36,200	18,748	1,848	10%	2.2
Warrant Officer	10,496	4,928	1,368	28%	2.5
Sr NCO	56,518	13,082	2,744	21%	1.8
Jr NCO	162,096	28,000	2,880	10%	1.8
Total RC	294,930	71,758	10,707	15%	0.9
Total Uniformed Personnel	591,587	140,457	22,635	16.1%	0.6

This report is organized into four topic areas:

- Quality of leadership
- Contributions of actions and character to leadership
- Effects of climate and situational factors on leadership
- Quality of leader development.

Within each of these areas, a visual scorecard of the overall area is presented and key findings are underlined in-text and summarized in call-out boxes in the right margin. Trends are reported for items that have been asked in previous years. Where applicable, CASAL data are supplemented with data from secondary sources. Each major section ends with a short summary that provides a recap of the most important findings. Unless otherwise noted, findings for Army leaders represent those currently serving on active duty.

1. Quality of Leadership



The quality of Army leadership was addressed by four key areas:

- Perceptions of leader quality
- Leader quality while deployed
- Contribution of quality leadership to mission accomplishment
- Leader resilience and care for Soldiers

The key findings that relate to each of these areas provide an overall picture of the current quality of leadership in the Army and how well leaders adapt to situational factors, demonstrate resilience and complete the mission. The key findings relating to these four areas are presented in the following sections.

1.1 Perceptions of Leader Quality

Key Finding:
Over 75% of Army leaders view their peers and subordinates as effective leaders; 70% view their superiors as effective leaders.

Without defining effectiveness, Army leaders were asked to estimate the percentage of effective leaders in their unit or organization. The average was up 2% from 2009 to 63% (Median = 70%). However, at a more local level, Army leaders often rate the leaders that immediately surround them more favorably. Of leaders with direct supervisory duties, 79% rate their subordinates as effective leaders. In comparison, Army leaders less often rate their peers (75%) and superiors (70%) as effective leaders, though these findings are still favorable and depict a consistent pattern spanning the past six years. Also consistent with past results is the trend that shows Jr NCOs (SGT-SSG) rate their superiors (60%), peers (63%) and subordinates (67%) as effective leaders.

Favorable perceptions of one's subordinate leaders over other leaders may occur as subordinate performance reflects on their own leadership as well as their accountability to develop subordinate skills. Army leaders may also hold greater expectations for leaders at higher levels (i.e., superiors), which may result in lower ratings. Overall, these findings suggest the quality of leadership in the Army remains largely unchanged over the past several years.

Officer Perceptions of NCO Quality

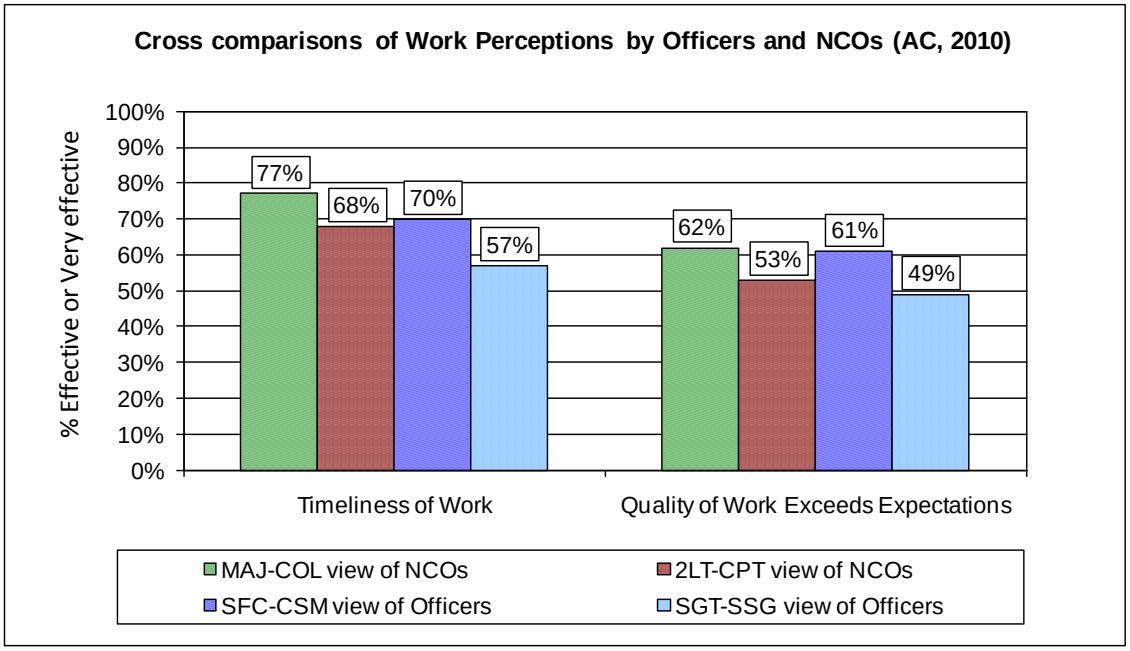
Key Finding:
Officers and NCOs are perceived to be effective in completing their work on time and with high quality.

Another way to examine the quality of Army leadership beyond broad ratings of leader effectiveness is to evaluate how well Army leaders at various levels are performing. Army officers generally hold a favorable view of the work performance of NCOs, and vice versa, though differences between rank levels exist.

Field grade officers (MAJ-COL) perceive NCO leader quality favorably, as most indicate NCOs are effective or very effective in completing their work on time (77%) and, to a lesser degree, completing their work with quality that exceeds expectations (62%). Exhibit 1 displays how perceptions of leader quality differ between these rank groups.

Company grade officers (2LT-CPT) also indicate NCO leader quality is favorable, though less often than field grade officers. About two-thirds of company grade officers (68%) perceive NCOs as effective or very effective in completing their work on time, while just over half (53%) perceive NCOs as effective in completing their work with quality that exceeds expectations. As company grade officers often rely on strong performance from their NCOs to achieve shared results, they may have very high expectations for NCOs and this may be a reason why they also more often rate NCOs lower than do field grade officers in these areas.

Exhibit 1. Comparison of Work Perceptions for Army Officers and NCOs.



NCO Perceptions of Officer Quality

Senior NCOs (SFC-CSM) rate Army officer quality favorably. Most Sr NCOs perceive officers as effective or very effective in completing their work on time (70%) and completing their work with quality that exceeds expectations (61%). Junior NCOs (SGT-SSG) less often perceive Army officers as effective in completing their work on time (57%) and with quality that exceeds expectations (49%). However, this pattern of less favorable perceptions is characteristic of Jr NCOs ratings for their superiors in general.

These findings are encouraging, as leaders at various rank levels generally recognize and appreciate effective performance in the timeliness and quality of work outputs of their counterparts. However, these findings are limited to a short-term focus.

1.2 Leader Quality in Deployed Settings

In some instances, Army leader perceptions of the quality of leadership differ between deployed and non-deployed settings. The following comparisons examine differences between Army leaders who are not deployed with those who are serving on a deployment in a location in S.W. Asia (i.e., Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, and surrounding area).

Key Finding:
Fewer Army leaders view their superiors as effective leaders while deployed (64%) than while not deployed (72%).

The percentage of Army leaders not deployed who rate their subordinates and peers effective or very effective as leaders (79% and 75%, respectively) is comparable to the percentages of leaders who are deployed to S.W. Asia (79% and 72%, respectively) rating subordinates and peers as effective/very effective. However, as has been observed in past years, the effectiveness of one's immediate superior as a leader is less often viewed similarly between the two settings (not deployed, 72%; deployed, 64%). These findings demonstrate a consistent pattern: subordinate and peer effectiveness as leaders show minimal differences between deployed and non-deployed settings, though small differences do exist in perceptions of effectiveness of superiors. Subordinates may have higher expectations for the leadership their superiors provide when they interact with superiors for extended periods and more is 'on the line' during deployed conditions. Overall, these ratings on the quality of Army leadership in deployed environments have remained stable over the past several years.

Army officer and NCO perceptions on the quality of leadership (completion of work on time and with quality that exceeds expectations) also show differences between deployed and non-deployed settings.

- Officers serving on a deployment less often rate NCOs as effective in completing their work on time (67%) and with quality that exceeds expectations (52%) compared to officers who are not deployed (75% and 63%, respectively).
- Likewise, deployed NCOs less often rate officers as effective in completing their work on time (58%) and with quality that exceeds expectations (48%) than do NCOs not deployed (62% and 55%, respectively).

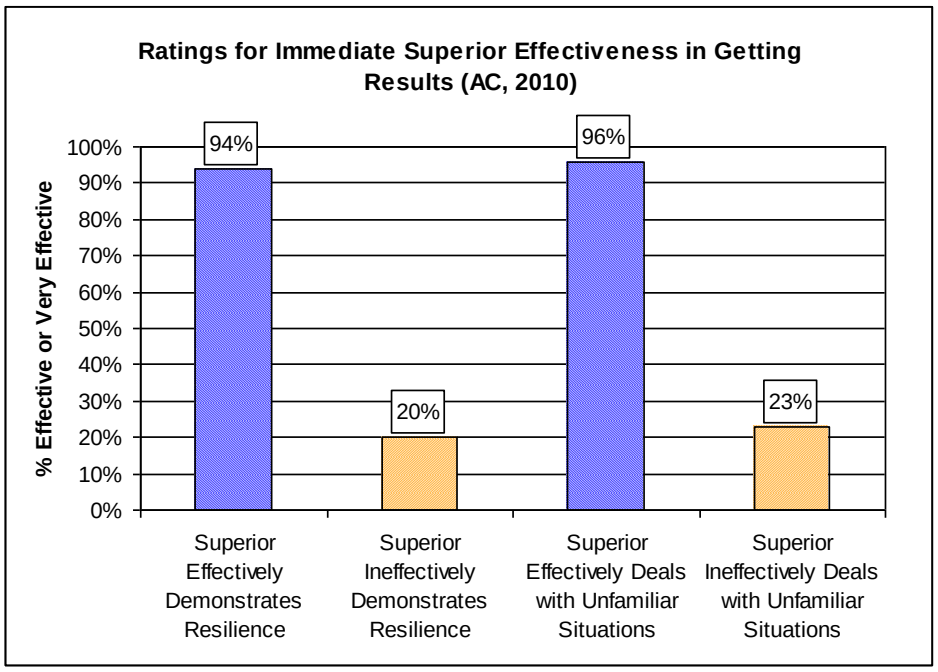
This difference in perception between leaders in the two environments has also been observed in other surveys, including the 2008 Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) Status of the Forces survey, which found that 48% of deployed Active duty members of the Uniformed Services (Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force) were satisfied or very satisfied with the leadership in their unit, compared to 55% of non-deployed Active duty members from the services who were satisfied or very satisfied (Human Resources Strategic Assessment Program, 2008).

1.3 Contribution of Quality Leadership to Mission Accomplishment

Army leaders often encounter unfamiliar situations and challenges that require them to demonstrate resilience to accomplish the mission. A leader's ability to adapt to unfamiliar situations by making sense of the environment and creating solutions is a key factor to mission success (FM 6-22). The unfamiliarity and uncertainty faced by leaders can be a source of stress that inhibits successful leader performance. Findings suggest that Army leaders who are able to effectively demonstrate resilience and the mental strength required to overcome adversity are more likely to successfully accomplish their mission (see Exhibit 2).

Key Finding:
Army leaders who effectively deal with unfamiliar situations and demonstrate resilience are seen as effective in getting results to accomplish the mission.

Exhibit 2. The Relationship between Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating Resilience and Dealing with Uncertainty and Effectively Getting Results.



A majority of Army leaders view their immediate superiors as effective or very effective in dealing with unfamiliar situations (71%) and demonstrating resilience (76%). Army leaders believe that their immediate superiors are effective in *Getting Results to* accomplish the mission and that they are also effective in demonstrating the necessary behaviors to accomplish the mission (i.e., dealing with unfamiliarity and demonstrating resilience).

In addition, the 2010 CASAL findings indicate that leader effectiveness in dealing with unfamiliar situations and demonstrating resilience contribute to successful mission accomplishment, as evidenced by the strong significant positive relationship between these variables. The strength of the relationship is assessed through correlation values, which can range from -1.0 for a perfect negative relationship, to 0.0 indicating absolutely no relationship, to 1.0 for a perfect positive relationship; correlation values greater than +/- .30 are considered moderate to strong. Army leaders who rate their immediate superior as effective in getting results to accomplish the mission also believe their immediate superior demonstrates effectiveness in:

- Dealing with unfamiliar situations (r = .76)
- Demonstrating resilience (i.e., mental strength to endure extreme stress; r = .76)

In other words, there is a strong association between leaders who get results and leaders who demonstrate effective adaptability and resilience.

1.4 Leader Resilience and Care for Soldiers

Army leadership doctrine (FM 6-22) states, "a leader should also maintain a healthy balance between caring for people and focusing on the mission" (p. 8-1), and "resilience is essential when pursuing mission accomplishment. No matter what the working conditions are, a strong personal attitude helps prevail over any adverse external conditions…When things go badly, a leader must draw on inner reserves to persevere" (p. 5-17).

More than two-thirds of Army leaders (70%) believe that their immediate superior is effective or very effective at balancing subordinate needs with mission requirements. Further, 78% of Army leaders believe their immediate superior is effective or very effective at demonstrating empathy (care and concern for Soldiers and others). These findings are supported by results of the 2007 Army Value and Warrior Ethos Survey, which reported that 73% of Soldiers agreed or strongly agreed that leaders in their units put the welfare of their subordinates before their own welfare (USAREUR, 2007). Together the findings indicate that a majority of Army leaders are effective at balancing subordinate needs with mission requirements, and demonstrating *Soldier-first* leader behaviors that coincide with mission completion.

Army Leader Resilience

2010 CASAL findings indicate more than two-thirds of Army leaders (69%) agree or strongly agree that members of their unit or organization effectively demonstrate resilience (i.e., mental strength to endure extreme stress). Further, an even larger percentage of Army leaders view their immediate superior as effective or very effective in:

- Demonstrating resilience (i.e., mental strength to endure extreme stress) when faced with adversity (76%)
- Demonstrating composure and resilience (recovery from setbacks) (79%).

Favorable perceptions of leader resilience at the unit level are positively related to indicators of Army unit or organizational effectiveness including confidence in the ability of one's unit/organization to perform its mission (r = .60) and the belief that one's unit/organization outperforms similar organizations in the U.S. Army (r = .53). Similar results were observed in a recent study that found platoons who collectively rated their officers positively were more resilient than platoons that rated their officers negatively (Mental Health Advisory Team [MHAT] 6, 2009). Taken together, findings indicate that leader resilience is related to unit effectiveness and that leaders who are resilient are seen as effective leaders within their units.

CASAL findings indicate that favorable perceptions of one's immediate superiors as leaders contribute to positive indicators of care for Soldiers. Army leaders who rate their superiors as effective leaders also believe:

- Leaders in the unit/organization help Soldiers handle combat stress (r = .55)
- Seeking help for stress-related problems is accepted and encouraged (r = .45)
- Members of the unit/organization effectively demonstrate resilience (i.e., mental strength to endure extreme stress) (r = .43)
- Soldiers know who or where to turn to when they have job or work problems (r = .42)
- Soldiers know who or where to turn to when they are dealing with stress (r = .40)
- Soldiers know who or where to turn to when they have problems in their personal life (r = .39)

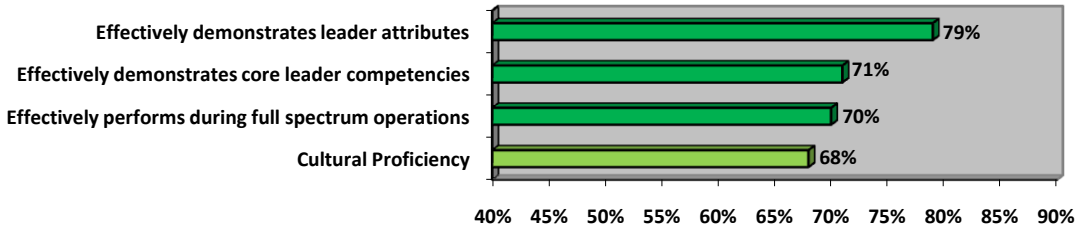
These strong positive relationships between beliefs that one's superiors are effective leaders and positive indicators of Soldier stress management indicate taking care of Soldiers is a significant part of effective leadership. These findings demonstrate that Army leaders are effective at demonstrating care and concern for Soldiers as well as displaying resilience, both of which are key factors in balancing the welfare of Soldiers with mission requirements. The indicators of Soldier stress management identify several leader behaviors associated with resiliency and stress management that are indicative of effective leadership and contribute to demonstrating care and concern for Soldiers.

Summary of the Quality of Leadership

Army leaders generally perceive that the quality of leadership is favorable, with a greater percentage of leaders rating their subordinates and peers as effective leaders than rating their superiors as effective leaders. Officers and NCOs generally view each other as effective in the completion of timely and quality work performance, though it was found that perceptions of leader quality differ slightly depending on deployment status. Officers and NCOs currently serving in operations in and around Iraq and Afghanistan less often view each other as effective in completing work on time and with quality that exceeds expectations (compared to those not deployed). More broadly, while Army leaders serving in these areas view the quality of their peers and subordinates similarly as leaders not deployed, they less often view their superiors as effective leaders compared to those not deployed. Overall, perceptions about the quality of leadership in deployed and non-deployed locations have remained fairly stable over the past several years.

Army leaders are seen as effective in demonstrating empathy and balancing subordinate needs with mission requirements, and also in demonstrating resilience when faced with adversity. Leader resilience is positively linked to care for Soldiers, particularly in helping Soldiers handle combat stress and fostering an environment where seeking help for stress-related problems is accepted and encouraged.

2. Contribution of Actions and Character to Leadership



The contribution of actions and character to leadership was addressed by three key areas:

- The Leadership Requirements Model
- Aspects of leader effectiveness
- Leader performance in full spectrum operations

2.1 The Leadership Requirements Model

Ratings for Immediate Superiors

As reported in previous years, the majority (between 61% and 78%) of Army leaders rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective across all eight core leader competencies (see Exhibit 3). 2010 CASAL findings indicate that the percentage of Army leaders rating their immediate superior as effective or very effective on the eight competencies has continued to increase since 2007; however, the growth appears to have plateaued in 2009. In fact, only *Leads by Example* and *Develops Others* increased from last year. As findings for the active and reserve components have shown great similarity in the current year and past years, only the results for the active component are discussed here. It is important to point out that the same competencies and attributes emerged as most important regardless of deployment status or location.

The three competencies for which the highest percentages of Army leaders rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective in 2010 are:

- *Gets Results* – 78%
- *Prepares Self* – 76%
- *Leads Others* – 72%

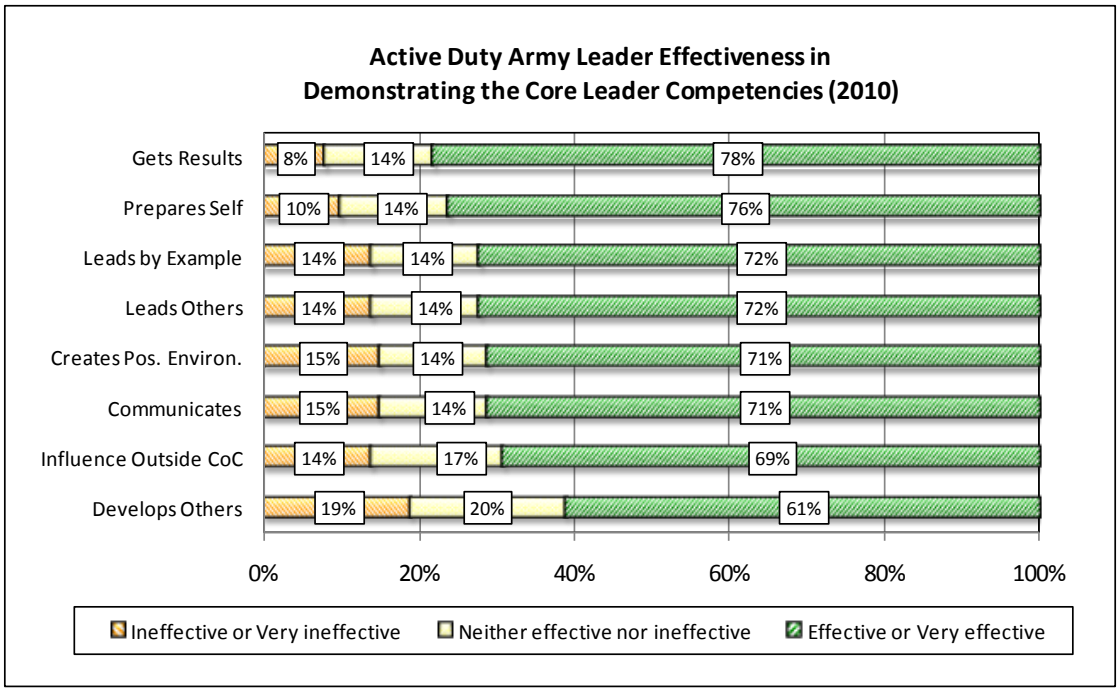
These three competencies have consistently been rank ordered as the most favorable competencies for the past three years, and represent strengths among Army leaders.

The two core leader competencies for which the lowest percentages of Army leaders rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective in 2010 are:

- *Develops Others*- 61%
- *Extends Influence Beyond the Chain of Command*- 69%

Key Finding:
Develops Others is the core leader competency that continues to show the most need for improvement, across all levels of leaders.

Exhibit 3. Ratings of Immediate Superior Effectiveness on the Core Leader Competencies by Active Duty Leaders.



<u>Trends across Survey Administrations</u>

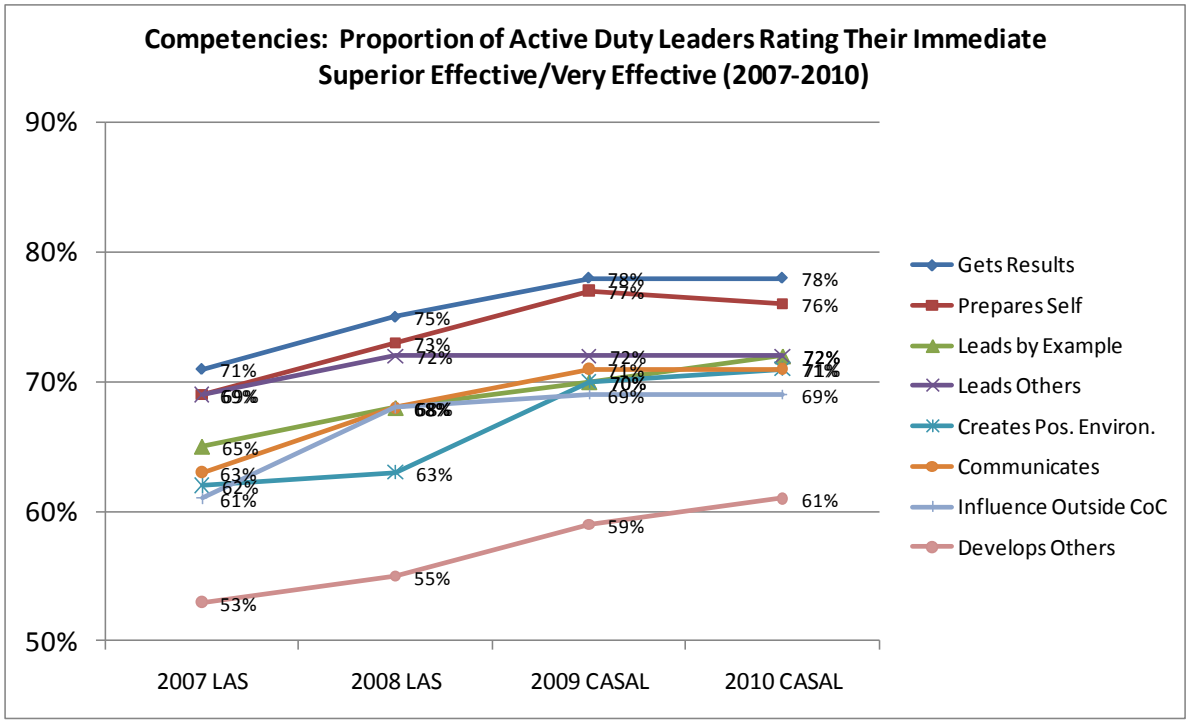
Over the past four years, the aforementioned highest-rated three and lowest-rated two competencies consistently ranked highest and lowest respectively. The one exception observed over the past four years is *Creates a Positive Environment,* which was ranked second lowest in 2008. Though the highest-rated and lowest-rated trends have demonstrated consistency, Exhibit 4 depicts an emerging trend which can be observed beginning in 2008 and continuing on to the present findings from 2010. This trend will be referred to as the *3-tier competency trend*.

CASAL findings indicate an increase in effective ratings for Army leaders from 2008 to 2009 for the competencies *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self*. The 2010 findings concerning effectiveness for these two competencies are similar to the findings in 2009. Exhibit 4 shows that while these competencies have more often been rated favorably than the other competencies across all years, in recent years *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self* appear to have emerged as a top tier. The greater frequency of favorable ratings in 2009 and 2010 distinguish *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self* from other competencies including *Leads Others,* which previously had been rated similarly in 2007 and 2008.

CASAL findings from 2009 and 2010 indicate that between 69% and 72% of Army leaders rate their immediate superiors as effective in demonstrating the competencies in the middle tier (see Exhibit 4). The competencies that form the middle tier (because they do not fit into the top and bottom tiers) include: *Leads by Example, Leads Others, Creates a Positive Environment, Communicates, and Extends Influence Beyond the Chain of Command.*

Across all years, *Develops Others* has clearly distinguished itself from the other competencies as the lowest rated. This distinction is evident in Exhibit 4 and, given its separation from the other competencies, *Develops Others* alone constitutes the lowest tier and the single greatest developmental need of Army leaders.

Exhibit 4. Comparison of Leader Effectiveness in demonstrating the Core Leader Competencies from 2007 to 2010.



As in past years, Army leaders rate their immediate superior higher on the leader attributes compared to the core leader competencies. Between 73% and 83% of Army leaders rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective across all leader attributes. Thus, Army leaders are seen as effective in demonstrating all leader attributes (see Exhibit 5).

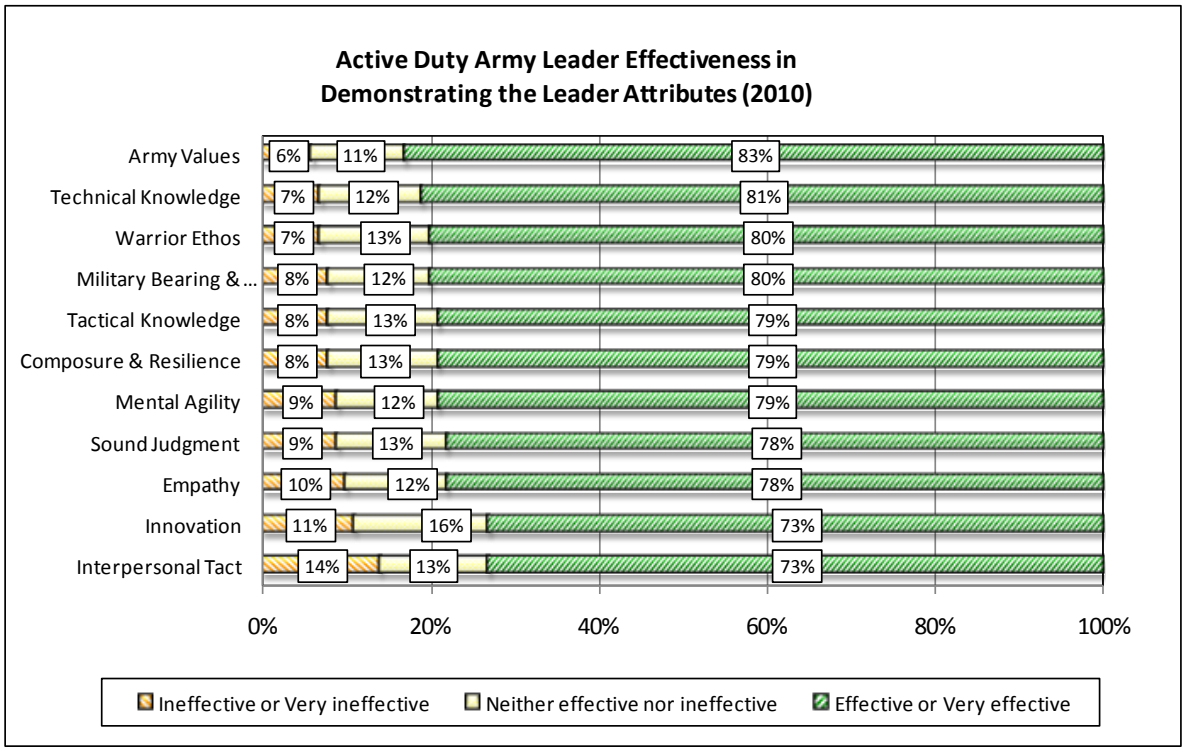
The two attributes for which the highest percentages of Army leaders rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective in 2010 are:

- *The Army Values* – 83%
- *Technical Knowledge* – 81%

The two leader attributes for which the lowest percentages of Army leaders rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective in 2010 are:

- *Interpersonal Tact (interaction with others)* – 73%
- *Innovation* – 73%

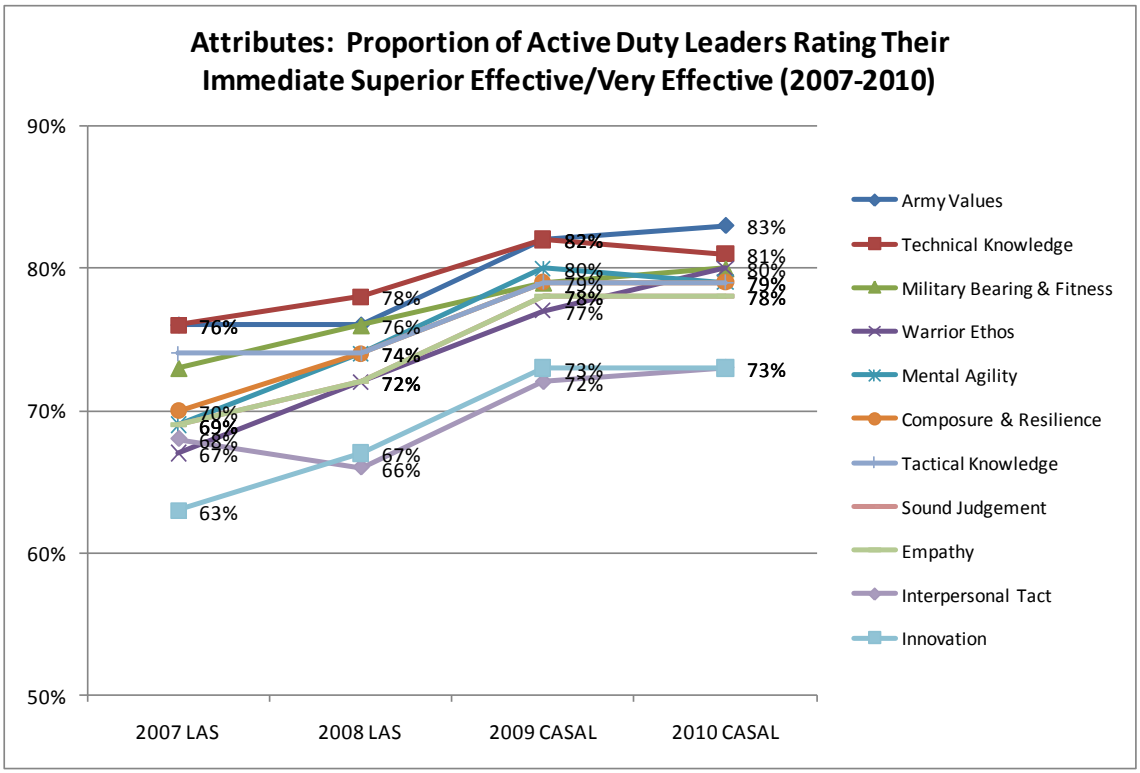
Exhibit 5. Ratings of Immediate Superior Effectiveness in demonstrating the Leader Attributes by Active Duty Leaders.



The top three most favorably rated attributes have varied slightly over the past four years, but *Technical Knowledge* and *The Army Values* have consistently appeared at the top of the list. Exhibit 6 shows a trend from 2008 to 2010 in which *Interpersonal Tact* and *Innovation* are distinctly lower compared to the other attributes. The encouragement of innovative thought, as well as senior leader acceptance of subordinate ideas, tolerance of mistakes, and other perceptions of the working environment are discussed in greater detail in section 3.3.1 of this report. Exhibit 6 also shows that the top and middle tiers of attributes receive comparable effectiveness ratings (between 81% - 83% and 78% - 80%, respectively). It is worth noting that even the lowest rated attributes are relatively more favorable than ratings for most of the core leader competencies. Despite such positive ratings, the lowest tier attributes of *Interpersonal Tact* and *Innovation* are deemed areas for development given their relative placement in the list and relationship with other key issues (e.g., toxic leadership).

<u>Key Finding:</u>
Interpersonal Tact and *Innovation* are the leader attributes that consistently show the most need for improvement across all levels of leaders.

Exhibit 6. Comparison of Leader Effectiveness in demonstrating the Leader Attributes from 2007 to 2010.



Findings by Unit Position

Effectiveness ratings for leaders holding key positions in demonstrating the competencies and attributes were similar to results observed in 2009. High-level commanders (i.e., brigade, battalion) are generally viewed as effective across the competencies and attributes while leaders at the lower levels (i.e., company/battery command, platoon leadership) show more room for improvement. As previously discussed, baseline effectiveness ratings for Army leaders were lowest for the competencies *Develops Others* (61%) and *Extends Influence beyond the Chain of Command* (69%). In comparison, effectiveness ratings for leaders in key positions at the lowest echelons (as rated by their direct report subordinates) are displayed in Table 2.

2010 CASAL findings on highest and lowest rated competencies by cohort indicate officers and NCOs share the same strengths and developmental needs at the macro level. However, Army leaders (in this case direct subordinates) may hold higher expectations for superiors in key leadership (or command) positions and rate them more critically than leaders in other roles.

Table 2. Ratings of Effectiveness for Key Leadership Positions on the Lowest Rated Core Leader Competencies.

	Develops Others	Influence Outside Chain of Command
Baseline for Army Leaders	61%	69%
Company/Battery Commander	60%	66%
Platoon Leader	46%	48%
Platoon Sergeant	55%	58%

Summary of the Leadership Requirements Model

Army leaders are generally effective in demonstrating the core leader competencies and leader attributes.

- Key strengths of Army leaders are *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self* for the competencies and demonstrating *The Army Values* and *Technical Knowledge* for the attributes.
- *Develops Others* continues to be the lowest rated competency and key developmental need for Army leaders.
- *Innovation* and *Interpersonal Tact* have been consistently rated the least favorable leader attributes (though notably more favorable than even middle-tier competencies.
- The strengths and developmental needs of Army leaders in key leadership positions (e.g., company commander, platoon leader) are similar to those of all Army leaders, though a notable trend over the years is that leaders at higher levels (e.g., brigade commander, battalion commander) are more often rated effective in demonstrating competencies and attributes than leaders at lower levels.
- This finding suggests that the focus of developmental efforts should be placed on proactively improving the leadership skills of leaders before they assume positions such as platoon leader, company/battery commander, and platoon sergeant. Training leaders prior to their assuming these positions will better prepare them to effectively demonstrate competencies at these critical levels.

CASAL findings on the core leader competencies are supported by recent results of the Leader Behavior Scale (LBS), an instrument used in the Army's 360-degree multi-source assessment and feedback program (Leadership Research Assessment and Doctrine Division, 2007). Results from LBS data collected in 2010 also demonstrate that Army leaders are effective across the eight core leader competencies as well as a ninth domain covering overall leadership. On a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 is very ineffective and a seven is very effective, average ratings for Army leaders range from 6.31 to 6.48. Overall results confirm *Develops Others* is the lowest rated of the competencies.

The highest average ratings for Army leaders on the LBS are for the competencies *Leads by Example* and *Creates a Positive Environment*, which differs from the consistent relative ordering of highest rated competencies in CASAL (*Gets Results* and *Prepares Self)*. Despite slight fluctuation in the relative ordering of the most favorably rated competencies, the findings from the LBS support the results of the CASAL, specifically in the identification of *Develops Others* as the greatest developmental need. The development of subordinate leaders is discussed in greater detail in section 4.1 of this report.

Key Finding:
Develops Others is also identified in Army MSAF data as the greatest developmental need of leaders.

The 3-tier approach for the competencies and attributes helps classify the trends observed in the data. Notably, the most favorable ratings of immediate superiors are on the competencies, (i.e., *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self*) these tend to be indirectly related to the rater and more indicative of their immediate superior's individual performance. The middle tier, which includes competencies such as *Creates a Positive Environment* and *Communicates*, both directly and indirectly relate to the rater (leader's subordinate). Finally, the lowest tier competency, *Develops Others,* directly relates to the rater. In short, while Army leaders are more often rated favorably in the competency *Prepares Self*, the subordinate providing the rating for that superior has much less of a stake in that leaders' effectiveness in preparing themselves than they do in that leader's effectiveness in developing subordinates.

As 2010 CASAL findings indicate Army leaders more often rate their immediate superior favorably on competencies indirectly related to them (e.g., *Prepares Self*) than competencies directly related to them (e.g., *Develops Others*), it is important to determine if these differences are real or if favorable indirect ratings are subject to rating inflation due to rater unfamiliarity.

Thus, further investigation should examine differences between competency ratings to determine if ratings are due to a respondent's familiarity, or lack thereof, with their immediate superior's performance. No differences were observed in comparisons between Army leader effectiveness on the competencies based on the length of time raters had served under their current immediate superior (whom they rated). However, of greater interest to this issue is 1) the ability of a subordinate to accurately rate their immediate superior's performance on competencies that are indirectly related to the subordinate (e.g., *Prepares Self*), and 2) subordinate familiarity with actual leader behavior of their immediate superior that constitute the core leader competencies (e.g., what does your immediate superior do to develop him/herself?). The frequency, anonymity, and force behind their responses would provide further insight into strengths and developmental needs of Army leaders.

2.2 Aspects of Leader Effectiveness

The Relationship between the Leader Requirements Model and Leader Effectiveness

Ratings for the core leader competencies and leader attributes provide insight into different aspects of Army leadership behavior. The 2010 CASAL also collected a single judgment rating from Army leaders on their immediate superior's overall leadership standing in the unit in terms of effectiveness (i.e., a comparison of one's immediate superior to all leaders in the unit/organization). The characterizations of one's leader included:

- *'Best or among the best'* or *'A high performer'* – 67% (n = 15,567)
- *'Middle of the road'* – 21% (n = 4,927)
- *'Worst or among the worst'* or *'A marginal performer'*- 12% (n = 2,864)

This analysis examines the effectiveness in which the best leaders demonstrate the competencies and attributes, as well as the effectiveness of Army leaders deemed 'worst or among the worst' in doing the same. For the purpose of comparison, ratings for Army leaders for the competencies and attributes were divided into two groups:

- Best Leaders - *'Best or among the best'* and *'A high performer'*
- Worst Leaders - *'Worst or among the worst'* and *'A marginal performer'*
- Baseline – ratings of effectiveness for all Army leaders

As expected, CASAL findings indicate that the worst leaders do not effectively demonstrate the competencies or attributes. Rather, only small percentages of the worst leaders' direct subordinates view them as effective or very effective in demonstrating the competencies (5%-18%) and attributes (12%-35%). Conversely, subordinates frequently rate the worst leaders ineffective or very ineffective on the competencies (51%-80%) and attributes (39%-64%); findings that are notably less favorable than the baseline for ineffective ratings of each (competencies, 8%-19%; attributes, 6%-14%).

Key Finding:
Leaders seen as ***the best*** in the Army are rated effective in all competencies and attributes.

The best leaders effectively demonstrate the competencies and attributes. The best leaders display effective or very effective competency (82%-96%) and attribute (90%-97%) ratings that are far greater than the baseline for each (competencies, 61%-78%; attributes, 73%-83%). Further, the best leaders very rarely are viewed ineffective or very ineffective in demonstrating the competencies (1%-4%) and attributes (1%-3%).

Notably, the worst leaders are rated higher on the attributes than on the competencies (though not as favorably as the best leaders). In other words, the worst Army leaders are more often viewed as effectively demonstrating the leader attributes, whereas across the board, they are seen as ineffective in demonstrating the competencies.

Key Finding:
Leaders seen as ***the worst*** in the Army are rated higher on the attributes than on the competencies.

Thus, these leaders possess the fundamental values for Army leadership, but possess deficiencies that are amenable to change and improvement. It may be the case that leaders have been put into positions or given responsibilities for which they are not prepared, reflected in lower competency ratings. The attributes constitute what an Army leader must *be*, and deficiencies in these aspects of *character, presence and intelligence* may have career-halting or career-ending implications. However, the competencies are behavior-based and can be developed with training and practice. Thus, the leaders identified as the worst can potentially improve. If they continue without improvement, mission readiness may suffer and individually they are less likely to be promoted or retained in the Army.

It is necessary to determine the competencies and attributes that most highly relate to perceptions of leader quality to increase understanding on how leaders can improve their effectiveness. The following analysis identifies the competencies and attributes that most strongly relate to perceptions of one's immediate superior being deemed among the 'best' or 'worst.'

Effective leadership in the Army is demonstrated by positive leader performance in all competencies and attributes. However, not all competencies and attributes are equal in determining how Army leaders are perceived. In fact, CASAL findings indicate **certain competencies and attributes differentiate the best leaders from the worst leaders**. Two multiple regression analyses were conducted, one that used the competencies as predictors, and another that used the attributes as predictors; the outcome variable used was the item classifying one's immediate superior as being among the best/worst leaders.

- Results of the competency regression indicate *Leads by Example* ($\beta = .22$), *Leads Others* ($\beta = .21$), and *Creates a Positive Environment* ($\beta = .09$) are the best discriminators of best and worst leaders.
- Results of the attribute regression indicate that *Sound Judgment* ($\beta = .20$), *Interpersonal Tact* ($\beta = .15$), and *Innovation* ($\beta = .15$) are the best discriminators of best and worst leaders.

Considering the competency and attribute tier structures mentioned in the previous section, none of these effective predictors (i.e., competencies and attributes) are in the top tier. This is likely because most leaders are effective at demonstrating the top tier competencies and attributes, which make them less useful in identifying bad leaders (i.e., there is a lack of necessary variability because too few leaders are ineffective at the top tier competencies and attributes to predict bad leaders). Rather, the effective predictors are in lower rated middle tier competencies and attributes, or the lowest tier. While some of the effective predictors have been mentioned previously as possible developmental areas (i.e., *Interpersonal Tact* and *Innovation*), the results of the regression equations indicate that other competencies and attributes, such as *Leads Others*, *Leads by Example*, *Creates a Positive Environment*, and *Sound Judgment* should also be considered important developmental areas. These competencies and attributes significantly contribute to what differentiates the best leaders from the worst leaders in the eyes of followers. These results suggest that if a leader was to improve in one of these areas, he/she would be likely to improve perceptions of their overall leader quality.

2.3 Leader Performance in Full Spectrum Operations (FSO)

In conducting full spectrum operations (FSO), Army forces combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative, accepting prudent risk to create opportunities to achieve decisive results (Department of the Army, 2011). The complexity of the operational environment demands that Army leaders be capable and prepared to conduct operations across the spectrum of conflict.

CASAL findings indicate Army leaders are generally seen as effective in performing full spectrum operations. While it initially looks like there are differences between years, these differences are insignificant because only a small subsample both years answered these items. Army leaders deployed to OIF/OEF locations (i.e., Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, elsewhere in SW Asia) that are in units or organizations with FSO responsibilities rate their immediate superiors as effective or very effective in demonstrating leadership in the following seven types of operations (2009 findings are shown in parentheses):

- Stability Operations – 75% (75%)
- Joint Operations – 73% (75%)
- Combating Terrorism – 72% (77%)
- Warfighting – 71% (78%)
- Counterinsurgency – 71% (72%)
- Civil Support – 66% (68%)
- Reconstruction Operations – 65% (71%)

Key Finding:
Army leaders are viewed as effective in performing FSO. However, influencing outside the chain of command, especially members of other cultures, shows room for improvement.

The complex nature of full spectrum operations requires a skill set that can address the ambiguity and uncertainty common to FSO environments. Army leaders currently deployed to OIF/OEF locations view their immediate superior's as effective or very effective in the following areas.

- Demonstrating Composure & Resilience (recovery from setbacks) - 74%
- Demonstrating Mental Agility (thinking through consequences, break out of mental blocks) - 73%
- Dealing with unfamiliar situations - 65%

2.4 Culture and Extending Influence

Effectiveness in FSO also relies on how well Army leaders interact with locals in deployed environments and how well they demonstrate an understanding of other cultures. CASAL findings indicate most Army leaders in these (deployed) environments view their immediate superior as effective or very effective in the following (2009 findings are shown in parentheses):

- Interacting with members of another culture – 72% (66%)
- Influencing others outside their chain of command – 64% (65%)
- Influencing members of another culture to do something – 63% (60%)

The overall favorability of interacting with members of another culture combined with the increase of 6% from last year (7% increase from similar data from 2007) may be indicative of progress in infusing culture curriculum into Army training and education. However, these results also indicate a potential skill gap for Army leaders with respect to influencing individuals from other cultures. In fact, a 2007 analysis (Center for Army Leadership CSA #5 initiative) of over 2,600 AC leaders found that only 38% rated their cultural training as effective and only 22% rated their most recent PME course as strongly impacting their ability to effectively interact with people of other cultures. The Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy (ACFLS) highlights cultural knowledge and learning outcomes to be achieved at different career stages for both officers and NCOs, starting with foundational interpersonal skills. Initial research with the ACFLS to specifically meet the cross-cultural demands required by complex operations has been promising (Abbe & Gallus, 2011). The key challenge is to go beyond language-skills and develop socio-cultural understanding, and cross-cultural negotiation skills.

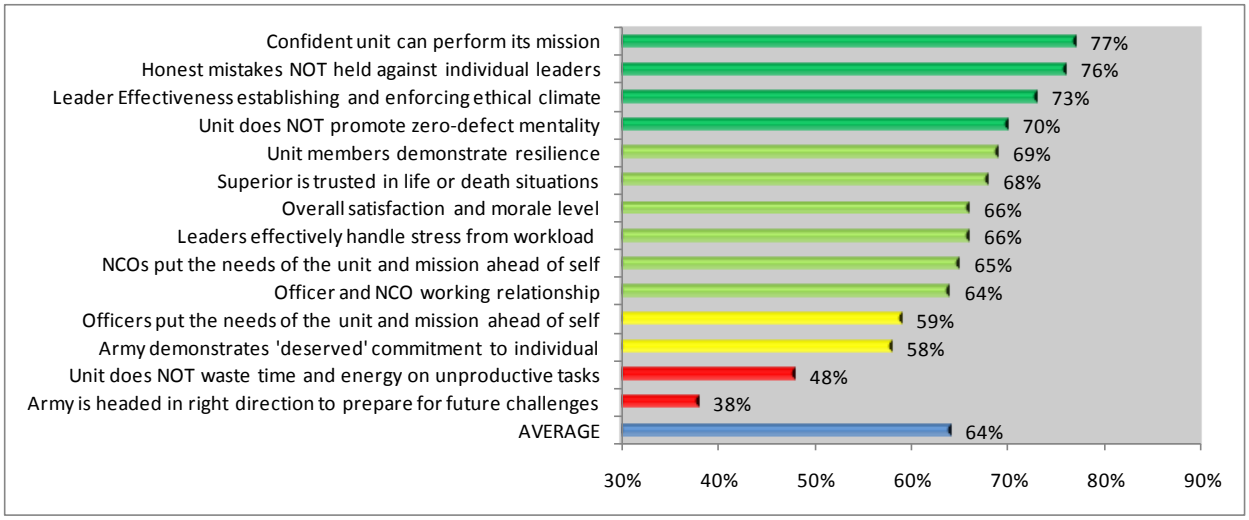
Summary of the Contribution of Actions and Character to Leadership

CASAL findings indicate that the leaders seen as 'best' in units effectively demonstrate the competencies and attributes. The best leaders are almost never rated as ineffective at demonstrating the competencies and attributes. Leaders seen as 'among the worst' rarely effectively demonstrate the competencies and attributes. Findings suggest focusing leader development (especially for leaders deemed 'among the worst') on the competencies. Developmental weaknesses in competencies are easier to improve than the trait-based attribute weaknesses because of the behavioral nature of the competencies.

The regression analyses on the competencies and attributes relationship to perceptions of best and worst leaders suggests several relationships that should be further investigated. For the competencies, *Leads by Example*, *Leads Others*, and *Creates a Positive Environment* display the strongest relationship to leader effectiveness. For the attributes, *Sound Judgment*, *Interpersonal Tact*, and *Innovation* display the strongest relationship to leader effectiveness. A study on what Army leaders believe good and bad performance in these competencies and attributes entails could provide additional detail on the observed relationships, provide insight that could be used in the design of developmental training, and feed recommendations for methods to improve these domains.

To meet the unique challenges in full spectrum operations, Army leaders are effectively demonstrating adaptability, resiliency and the ability to influence in other cultures. An investigation into critical preparatory skill sets for brigade combat team's mission readiness is currently being performed by the Army Research Institute. Survey, interview, and focus group findings support the importance of training leaders to be able to demonstrate flexibility of mind to anticipate or adapt to changes in the environment, demonstrate resilience to recover from setbacks, and address uncertainty to face the challenges in Full Spectrum Operations (Nicely, Bryson, Aude, Keller-Glaze, & Vowels, in preparation).

3. Effects of Climate and Situational Factors on Leadership



The influence of climate and situational factors on leadership was addressed in the 2010 CASAL by three areas:

- **Satisfaction and morale in the Army**
- **Commitment, career intentions, and career goals**
- **Command climate**

Findings in these areas indicate the current level of morale and satisfaction among Army leaders; types of commitment, career intentions and career goals of Army leaders; and special focus on current factors influencing the Army's command climate, including characteristics of the working environment, leader trust, the working relationship of officers and NCOs, and the incidence and impact of toxic leadership behaviors.

3.1 Satisfaction and Morale in the Army

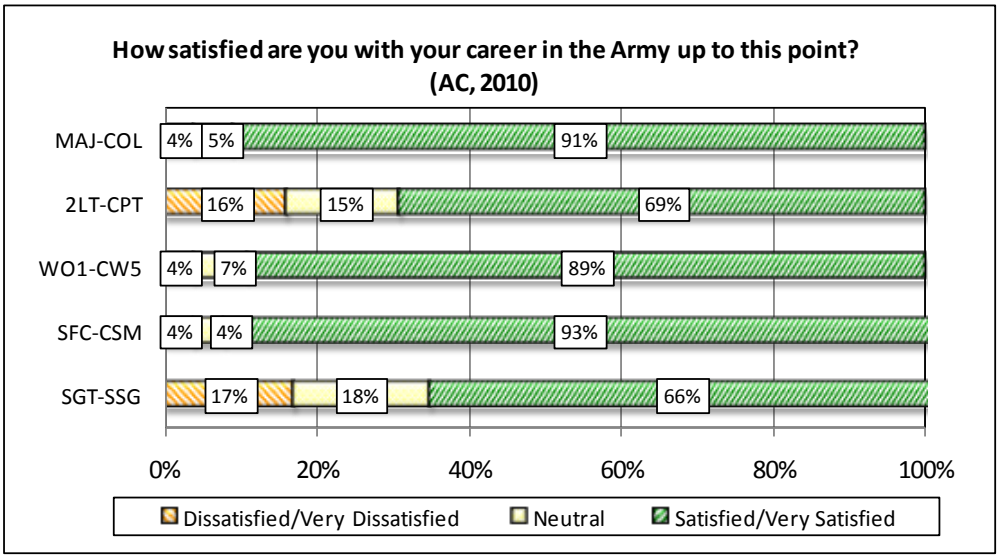
As reported in past years, a strong relationship exists between leaders' current level of morale and their overall satisfaction with their career in the Army (r = .51). **Higher levels of morale and career satisfaction also relate to favorable organizational outcomes**, including favorable unit/organization perceptions:

- Confidence in the ability of one's unit/organization to perform its mission positively correlates with morale (r = .47) and career satisfaction (r = .36).
- Belief one's unit outperforms similar organizations in the Army positively correlates with morale (r = .42) and career satisfaction (r = .31).

Career Satisfaction

More than three-fourths of Army leaders (79%) are satisfied or very satisfied with their career in the Army up to this point. A slightly larger percentage of leaders in the RC indicate satisfaction or strong satisfaction with their careers (84%) than the AC. These findings are fairly consistent with those from 2009, which found 82% of AC and 84% of RC leaders indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their career in the Army up to this point. Junior level leaders (company grade officers and Jr NCOs), who have less tenure in the Army, less often indicate they are satisfied with their Army careers thus far compared to senior level leaders (see Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7. Current Levels of Career Satisfaction for Active Duty Leaders.



Overall CASAL findings on career satisfaction in the Army are supported by results of the 2010 CGSC ILE Resident Student Quality of Life Survey, which reported that:

- 88% of respondents agreed that the Army was meeting their expectations for a career
- 91% of respondents agreed that the Army provides a satisfying career
- 96% of respondents agreed that they personally felt a part of the military profession.

Also notable is that RC company grade officers and Jr NCOs more often indicate satisfaction with their Army careers thus far (76% and 72%, respectively) than do their AC counterparts. Uniformed leaders serving in a reserve status supplement their primary roles of full time employment or education with Army duties. Thus, to these leaders, Army duties may be seen as a source of work variety, whereas the primary role of their active duty counterparts is their Army duties, supplemented with whatever else they find time for.

Morale

Over half of AC and RC leaders (52% and 60%, respectively) report that their current level of morale is high or very high, a finding that shows a slight decline since the 2009 CASAL (59% and 63%, respectively). In comparison, the 2009 ARI Survey on Officer Careers (SOC) found that a comparable percentage of active duty officers (49%) reported their own morale as being high or very high (Army Research Institute, 2009). 2010 CASAL findings also indicate, like past years, Jr NCOs in both the AC and RC (38% and 51%, respectively) report the lowest level of individual morale. A slightly smaller percentage of AC and RC leaders (41% and 48%, respectively) report the level of morale *in their unit or organization* is high or very high.

Similar levels of morale were reported in the results of the ARI Spring 2010 Sample Survey of Military Personnel (SSMP) (Army Research Institute, 2010). Results of this survey indicate 86% of officers and 72% of enlisted Soldiers rated their own morale as moderate, high or very high (2010 CASAL – 80% neither high nor low, high, very high); 83% of officers and 65% of enlisted Soldiers rated the morale in their unit as moderate high or very high (2010 CASAL – 76% neither high nor low, high, very high).

2010 CASAL findings on levels of morale by location reveal that fewer leaders deployed to OIF/OEF locations report high or very high morale compared to leaders at CONUS locations (55% AC; 61% RC).

- In Afghanistan, 43% AC and 51% RC report high morale.
- In Iraq, 48% AC and 55% RC report high morale.
- For AC leaders, 27% in Afghanistan and 22% in Iraq report low or very low morale (19% and 21% for RC leaders, respectively).

Active Duty Leaders Reporting High or Very High Morale

Location	2009	2010
CONUS	63%	55%
Afghanistan	47%	43%
Iraq	41%	48%

In comparison to the 2009 CASAL, the percentage of deployed leaders reporting high or very high morale has increased in Iraq (+7%) but decreased in Afghanistan (-4%). Potential reasons for this shift in morale include the following, as reported in the *New York Times* (Livingston, Cheng, Gephart, 2011):

- A drawdown of manpower in Iraq (from 100,000 troops to fewer than 50,000) as part of the transition from Operation Iraqi Freedom to Operation New Dawn.
- In 2010, total casualties in Iraq were the lowest of any year by a significant margin (56 fatalities).
- The large shift in focus and manpower to Afghanistan included a surge from 100,000 troops to roughly 140,000 in the beginning of 2010.
- 2010 was the deadliest year of Operation Enduring Freedom thus far (696 fatalities).

Overall, a consistent trend observed in CASAL data is that RC leaders rate their morale higher than AC leaders, regardless of location or deployment status. Thus, trends by component are tracked separately.

Outlook on the Future of the Army

As an additional (albeit indirect) indicator of the current level of morale in the Army, CASAL participants were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement "the Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years."

- Overall, only one-third of AC leaders (33%) agree the Army is headed in the right direction, while about another third (32%) are neutral and 35% disagree.
- RC leaders show slightly more optimism than AC leaders, with 43% agreement and 25% disagreement.
- AC field grade officers (40%) most often agree the Army is 'on track' to meet future challenges.
- AC Jr NCOs (41%) and company grade officers (36%) have the most disagreement.
- In the 2007 LAS, a comparable level of overall agreement was found among active duty leaders (35% agree, 27% neither agree nor disagree, 38% disagree) (Riley, Hatfield & Keller-Glaze, 2008).

The 67% of active duty leaders who did not agree (i.e., were neutral or disagreed) the Army is headed in the right direction selected from a list of the reasons for their beliefs. The most frequently selected reasons included:

- Lack of discipline, or "Army is too soft" – 65%
- Unable to retain quality leaders – 58%
- Senior leaders focus on the wrong priorities – 53%
- Long and frequent overseas deployments – 52%
- Junior leader promotions/advancements are happening too soon – 51%

Key Finding:
Of leaders who do not believe the Army is headed in the right direction, nearly two-thirds perceive a lack of discipline or 'Army is too soft' is a reason why.

It should be noted that at least some of these perceptions have been substantiated elsewhere (F. Wenzel & G1/HRC Office, personal communication, May, 20, 2011. For example, first lieutenants on the 4,983-name Army Competitive Category captain list released April 6 2010 can expect to be promoted upon reaching 37 months of active federal commissioned service. In the years before the war on terrorism, promotions to captain normally occurred at about four years of service. The promotion rate to captain is nearly 100% and the promotion rate of captain to major has increased from 80% in 2000 to about 92% in 2010. From 2001 through 2009, the percentage of officers receiving below-zone, or early promotions among all officers selected for advancement to major increased from 5% to 13.2%. Experts in this area (e.g., Wenzel & G1/HRC) also agree that young officers are being promoted too fast, but that will remain a fact-of-life until there is a reduced need to file MTOE slots.

A 2011 report (Falk & Rogers) on junior officer retention challenges and opportunities reported that of the 250 former junior military officers surveyed who left service between 2001-2010:

- 80% reported that the best officers that they knew had left the military before serving a full career.
- The primary reason for their own separation was lack of organizational flexibility (i.e., frustrated with a one-size-fits-all system) that provided limited ability for one to control their own career.
- 60% reported OP Tempo as an important consideration in leaving.
- Close to 85% said that the best officers would stay if the military offered better assignments to the best officers and promoted the best officers more quickly.

Of Jr and Sr NCOs who did not agree the Army is heading in the right direction, 76% & 70% (respectively) selected 'lack of discipline or Army is too soft' as a reason why. In comparison, this reason was selected by 36% of field grade officers. NCOs (especially SGT and SSG) have considerably more interaction with junior enlisted Soldiers than do field grade officers, and are much more likely to be in positions where they must deal with the consequences of a lack of discipline by others (e.g., it reflects poorly on their leadership and they are expected to maintain discipline). This finding first surfaced as a theme to a similar (free response) item in the 2006 LAS; however, that item did not capture level of agreement among all participants (Keller-Glaze, Riley, & Hatfield, 2007).

Other findings by cohort indicate:

- Leaders at lower levels (Jr NCO and company grade officers) more frequently suggest the 'Army is unable to retain quality leaders' as a reason the Army is not headed in the right direction (68% & 64%, respectively). It may be that the perceived departure of quality leaders at these levels requires those that remain to 'pick up the slack.'
- 60% of Sr NCOs indicate 'junior leader promotions and advancements are happening too soon,' a belief less often shared by junior leaders (37% of company grade officers; 50% of Jr NCOs).
- AC Warrant officers (61%) most often report 'long and frequent overseas deployments' as a reason the Army is not heading in the right direction (compared to 49-55% of the other cohorts).
- Less variation between cohorts is observed in the belief that 'senior leaders focus on the wrong priorities' (50-55%), though this, along with 'long and frequent overseas deployments,' is the most frequently selected reason by AC field grade officers (each 55%).

While it is unreasonable to expect all Army leaders to possess thorough knowledge or understanding of current Army practices and how they relate to the unknown challenges of the next 10 years, these findings provide the Army with perspective on important 'here and now' issues that leaders face.

Namely, NCOs most often perceive a 'lack of discipline' (or 'soft Army' approach) as an important issue while senior officers more often view 'long and frequent overseas deployments' and 'senior leader focus on the wrong priorities' as being the top issues of concern.

3.2 Commitment, Career Intentions, and Career Goals

Army leader commitment and intention to remain in the Army provide a point of reference for the overall pulse and stability of the force. If Army leader commitment is high and a large percentage of leaders indicate they plan to serve until they are retirement eligible or beyond, the overall stability of the force can be deemed favorable. Likewise, if commitment and intent to remain in the Army is low, the Army can identify those warning signs and take action.

Army Leader Commitment

Two types of leader commitment in the Army were examined in the CASAL: affective commitment (AC) and continuance commitment (CC). Affective commitment is an emotional or attachment to the Army. Those strongly committed leaders identify with and enjoy working for the Army (e.g., "I am committed to my squad, team, or work group because of my sense of personal loyalty"). Continuance commitment is characterized by going along with the status quo based on the recognition of the perceived costs of leaving the Army (e.g., I am committed to the Army because too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave right now").

Evidence for *affective commitment* among Army leaders is demonstrated by the following:

- 90% of Army leaders agree they are committed to their team or immediate work group because of their sense of personal loyalty.
- 62% of Army leaders agree they feel vested with the problems affecting their squad, team or immediate work group (even if they don't directly affect them).

Key Finding:
Army leaders demonstrate *affective commitment* – identification with and enjoyment in working for the Army.

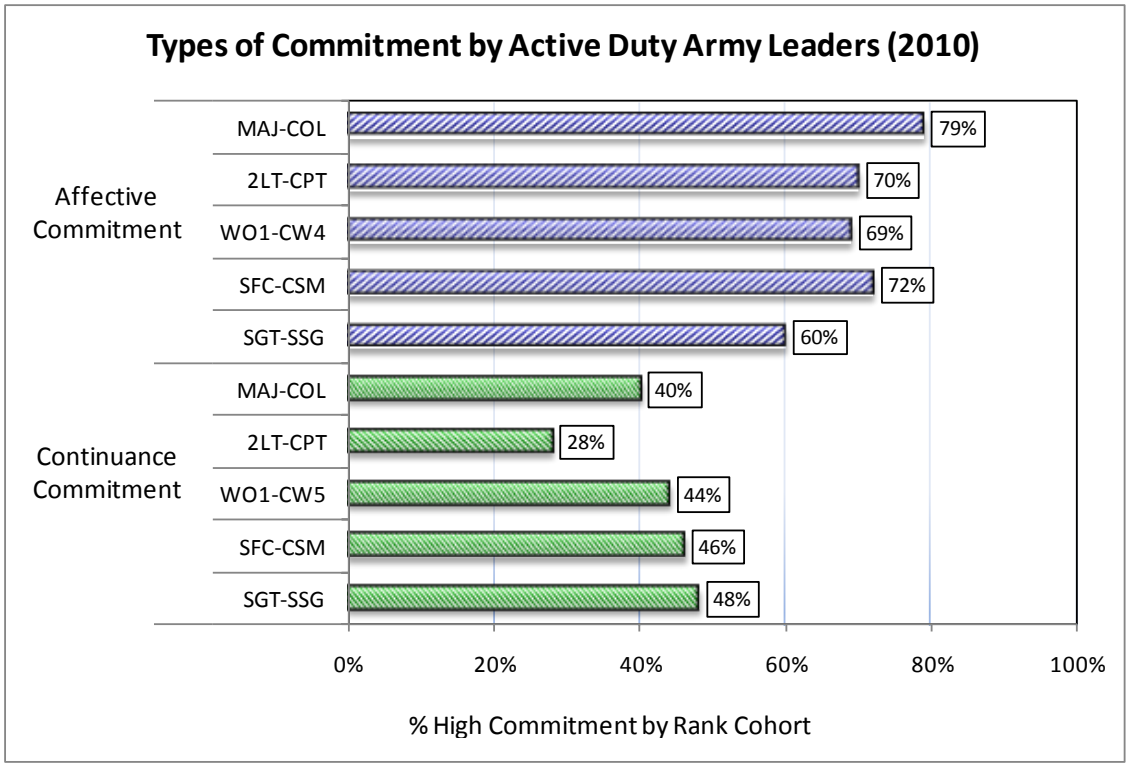
The level of *continuance commitment* among Army leaders is demonstrated by the following:

- 45% of Army leaders agree they are committed to the Army because too much of their life would be disrupted if they were to leave now.
- 50% of Army leaders agree they have invested too many years in the Army to leave now (though only 29% of company grade officers indicate agreement).

Thus, Army leaders demonstrate a stronger sense of affective commitment to the Army than continuance commitment. This is a positive finding, as it indicates most Army leaders identify with and enjoy working for the Army. In fact, over two-thirds (69%) of Army leaders rate high on affective commitment; in comparison, 42% of Army leaders rate high on continuance commitment.

These findings are consistent across cohorts with one notable exception: company grade officers less often indicate high levels of continuance commitment than the other rank groups, meaning they less often view departure from the Army as being problematic (see Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8. Current Levels of Continuance and Affective Commitment in the Army.



Affective commitment and continuance commitment do not represent 'good' and 'bad' types of commitment in the Army; rather both types have important implications as they relate differently to favorable organizational outcomes. For example, affective commitment more strongly relates to immediate, short-term organizational outcomes (e.g., individual morale, confidence in one's unit, and career satisfaction), whereas continuance commitment more strongly relates to long-term outcomes (e.g., intention to remain in the Army and belief the Army is headed in right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years). Correlations between affective and continuance commitment with various individual and organizational outcomes are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparisons of Commitment Type and Relationship to Individual and Organizational Outcomes.

	Affective Commitment	Continuance Commitment
Confidence in the ability of one's unit to perform its mission	.19**	.04**
Belief one's unit outperforms similar units in the US Army	.18**	.05**
Current level of morale	.17**	.06**
Satisfaction with career in Army up to this point	.20**	.13**
Belief the Army is headed in right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 yrs	.09**	.14**
Current career intentions	.17**	.33**

**p < .001

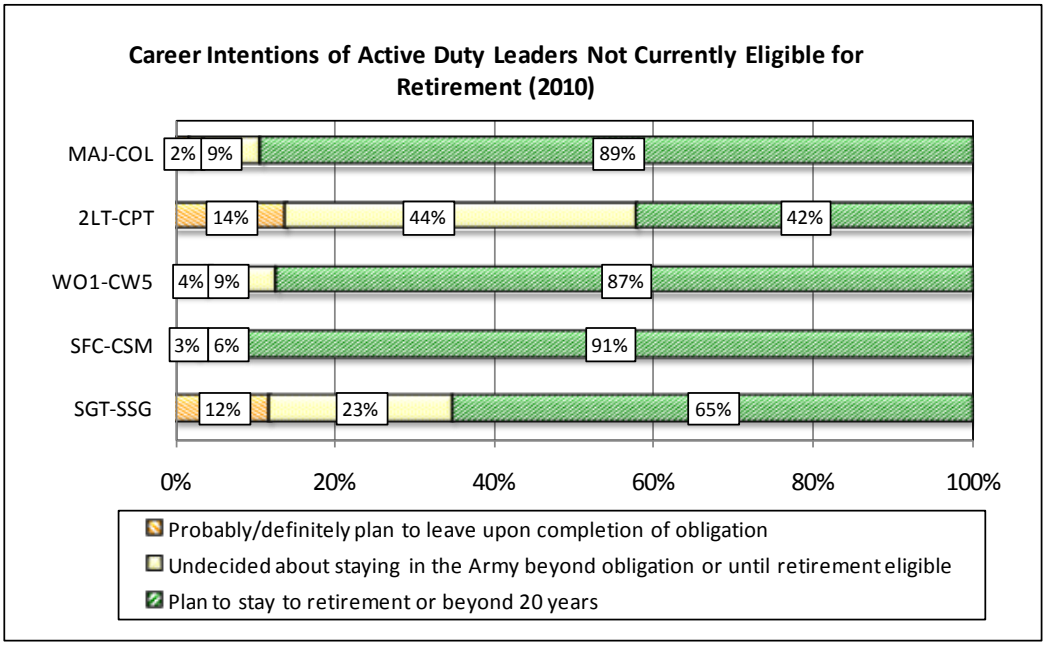
Intentions to Remain in the Army

Army leader intentions to remain in the Army are influenced by both affective and continuance types of commitment. This finding is not surprising, as a leader's feelings of commitment toward the Army should be related to their intentions to want to remain in the Army. Of all Army leaders not currently eligible for retirement, two-thirds in the active component (66%) and three-fourths in the reserve component (78%) plan to stay in the Army until they are eligible for retirement or beyond 20 years. However, there are stark (and expected) differences by rank cohort (see Exhibit 9).

Percentage of leaders who intend to stay in the Army until retirement

Year	AC	RC
2005	65%	71%
2006	66%	70%
2007	65%	70%
2008	67%	73%
2009	70%	79%
2010	**66%**	**78%**

Exhibit 9. Career intentions of Army leader not currently eligible for retirement.

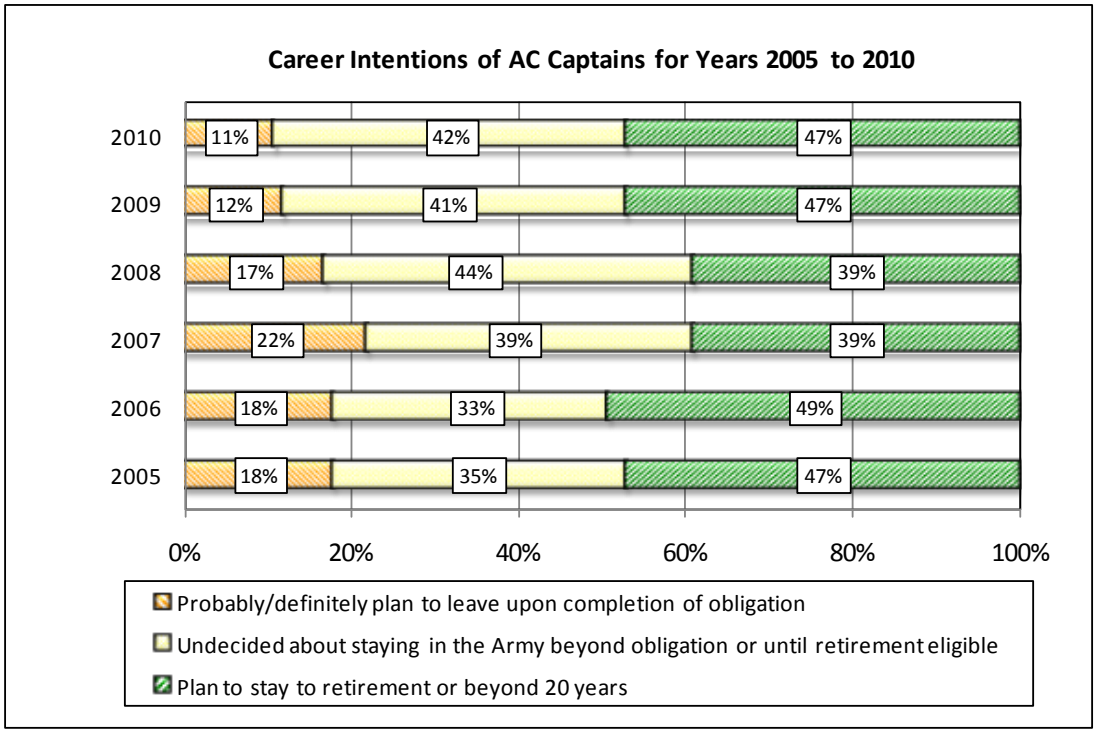


Findings on career intentions of Army leaders show a steady and mostly unchanged level since 2005. Unsurprisingly, senior leaders more often plan to stay in the Army until retirement eligible or beyond, while junior leaders less often indicate current intentions to stay until retirement. Also notable about this trend is that junior level leaders in the reserve component more often intend to remain in the Army until retirement eligible than their AC counterparts.

Key Finding:
Active duty captains continue to show the greatest level of *indecision* about staying in the Army until retirement or beyond.

Attention has long been focused on the career intentions of company grade officers, particularly captains in the active component. Historically, the concern has been around captains leaving the Army for other employment opportunities prior to retirement eligibility, and the Army's loss of talent at this critical rank. 2010 CASAL findings indicate **42% of AC company grade officers (including 47% of captains) plan to remain in the Army until they are retirement eligible or beyond 20 years** (see Exhibit 10). These finding are similar to the results observed in the Spring 2010 Sample Survey of Military Personnel (SSMP), which found **48% of company grade officers** probably or definitely plan to stay in the active Army until retirement (Army Research Institute, 2010).

Exhibit 10. Career Intentions of Active Duty Captains from 2005-2010.



The 2010 CASAL found a larger percentage of AC company grade officers indicating indecision about their career intentions (i.e., undecided about staying past current obligation or staying until retirement), and that these findings constitute a strong and steady trend observed over the past six years.

Further, the 2010 CASAL found that only 14% of AC company grade officers (11% of captains) indicate they will *probably* or will *definitely* leave the Army upon completion of their current obligation. This is notably a smaller percentage of company grade officers than observed in the Spring 2010 SSMP (23% probably or definitely plan to leave upon completion of current obligation). Exhibit 10 displays the trend findings for AC captain career intentions. In 2010, the smallest percentage of captains since 2005 (11%) report they probably or definitely plan to leave the Army upon completion of their current obligation.

Whether Army leaders had the intention to make the Army their career upon first entering the service does not seem to impact their current intention to remain in the Army until retirement eligible. Nearly half of Army leaders (46%) disagree that their initial intent was to make the military their career, while just over one-third (38%) agree. *Despite leader's initial intentions to not make the military their career, many report that they plan to stay in the Army until they are retirement eligible or beyond*. Over three-fourths (78%) of Army leaders (who initially did not intend to make the military their career) indicate that they now plan to stay until retirement eligible or beyond. However, broader consideration for these findings must include the assumption that the most dissatisfied leaders have already left the Army.

Results of the 2010 CGSC ILE Resident Student Quality of Life Survey (Quality Assurance Office, 2010) provide further perspective on the retention of officers in the Army, as findings indicate:

- 56% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Army is taking the necessary steps to retain company grade officers.
- 36% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Army is taking the necessary steps to retain field grade officers.

There is mixed agreement about the level of reciprocal commitment leaders receive from the Army. Forty-one percent of Army leaders agree or strongly agree with the statement 'the Army no longer demonstrates that it is committed to me as much as it expects me to be committed.' Nearly one-third of Army leaders (31%) disagree, indicating they feel the Army is committed to them, but more than one-fourth (28%) neither agree nor disagree. Notably, perceptions about the Army's level of commitment towards leaders are related to intentions to remain in the Army. Active duty leaders who disagree the Army no longer demonstrates commitment toward them more often indicate they plan to remain in the Army ($r = -.24$, $p < .01$).

Key Finding:
Nearly one-third of Army leaders (31%) believe the Army is committed to them as much as they are expected to be committed.

Career Goals

The career goals of Army leaders also provide insight into their motivation and intentions. The primary career goals of Army leaders vary from obtaining a higher rank or grade, to serving in a command or higher leadership position, to becoming a leading expert in one's specialty.

The most prominent career goals by cohort tend to vary, though some patterns are observed:

- Company grade officers most often indicate they aspire to serve in a command or higher leadership position (36%).
- Junior NCOs most often indicate they aspire to obtain a higher rank or grade (40%).
- Warrant officers most often indicate they aspire to become a leading expert in their specialty (56%).

The primary career goals for senior level leaders show a greater distribution across the outcomes, though one in five field grade officers and senior NCOs (21%) are satisfied to stay at their current level, as they have achieved their goals. The career goals of reserve component leaders (presented in parentheses in Table 4) tend to show a greater preference to obtain a higher rank or grade in comparison to AC leaders.

Table 4. Current Career Goals of Army Leaders.

	Obtain higher rank or grade	Serve in a command or higher leadership position	Become leading expert in specialty	Satisfied to stay at current level; career goals met
Field Grade Officer	18% (26%)*	36% (38%)	25% (19%)	21% (16%)
Company Grade Officer	16% (25%)	44% (41%)	37% (30%)	4% (3%)
Warrant Officer	22% (29%)	7% (9%)	56% (51%)	15% (11%)
Sr NCO	23% (26%)	36% (31%)	20% (21%)	21% (21%)
Jr NCO	40% (44%)	24% (21%)	32% (28%)	5% (5%)

*RC favorability is in the parentheses ().

3.3 Command Climate

3.3.1 Characteristics of the Working Environment

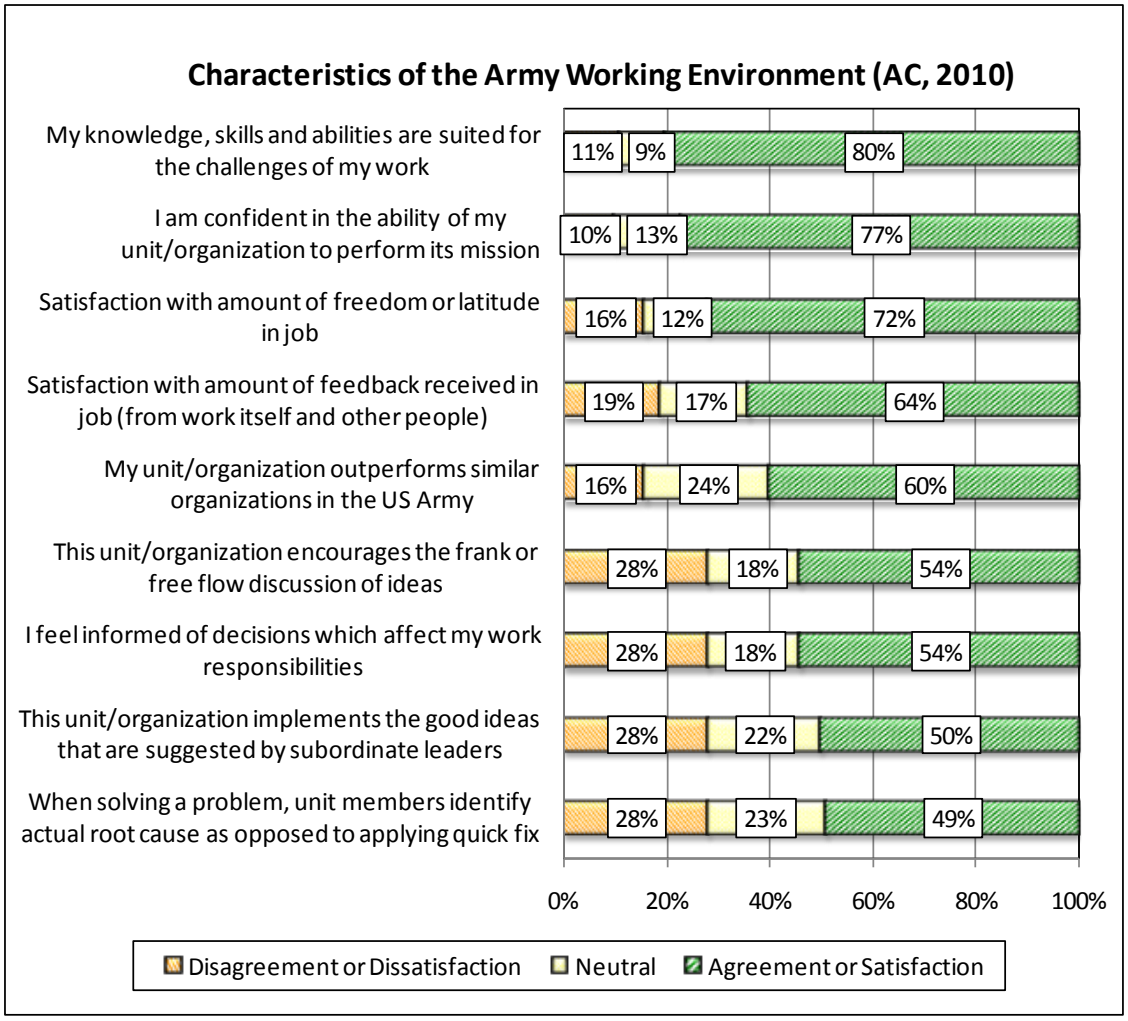
2010 CASAL findings indicate that Army leaders view several characteristics of their current working environment favorably:

- A majority of Army leaders (80%) believe that their knowledge, skills and abilities are suited for the challenges of their work (only 11% disagree).
- There is high (77% agreement) confidence Army leaders place in their unit/organization to perform its mission
- Over half (60%) believe that their unit/organization outperforms similar organizations in the Army

These are positive indications that Army leaders perceive both self- and organizational- efficacy in meeting the challenges and demands of the job and broader mission (see Exhibit 11).

At the individual level, most Army leaders are satisfied with the amount of freedom or latitude in their job (72%). However, less than two-thirds (64%) are satisfied with the amount of feedback they receive in their job, from the work itself and other people.

Exhibit 11. Characteristics of the Current Working Environment in the Army.



Organizational communication items are rated less favorably than other aspects of the working environment. Only about half of Army leaders believe that their unit/organization encourages the frank or free flow discussion of ideas; feel informed of decisions which affect their work responsibilities; and agree that their unit/organization implements the good ideas that subordinate members of the organization suggest. Of the work setting characteristics examined by the 2010 CASAL, the least support is given to the notion that unit members identify actual root causes when solving problems as opposed to applying a quick fix. Overall, more than one-fourth (28%) of Army leaders indicate disagreement with these statements.

Another important aspect of the working environment is stress due to high workload. Eighteen percent of Army leaders rate stress from high workload as a serious problem, while more than half (58%) indicate it is a moderate problem; 25% rate it as not a problem at all. These findings are similar to last year's results (19% a serious problem; 53% a moderate problem; 29% not a problem at all).

Encouragement of Innovative Thought

Army leaders should seize opportunities to think creatively and to innovate in instances where a new problem presents itself or when an old problem requires a new solution (FM 6-22). CASAL findings indicate nearly three-fourths of Army leaders (73%) rate their immediate superior effective or very effective in demonstrating ***Innovation*** (new ideas, creative thinking, and forward thinking). Alone, this finding is favorable, though in comparison to the other ten leader attributes assessed in the CASAL, innovation ranks at the bottom in terms of its overall favorability. This is a trend that spans the past four years.

Key Finding:
73% of Army leaders are effective in demonstrating *Innovation*; however, only 42% of units or organizations are seen as encouraging creative or innovative thought to a great/very great extent.

Results of the 2010 CASAL indicate 42% of Army leaders believe that senior leaders in their unit or organization encourage creative or innovative thought to a great or very great extent; 47% believe this is done to a slight or moderate extent, and 11% believe this is not done at all. Other evidence of creative or innovative thought being promoted at the unit level includes:

- More than half of Army leaders (54%) agree/strongly agree that their unit or organization encourages the frank or free flow discussion of ideas (28% disagree).
- Half of Army leaders (50%) agree/strongly agree that their unit or organization implements the good ideas that are suggested by subordinate leaders (28% disagree)
- Only 38% and 33% of Jr NCOs agree with these statements, respectively.

These findings suggest there is room for improvement in how Army units promote, foster and implement innovation among leaders, especially at the lowest levels of leadership. Units with senior leaders who are perceived to encourage creative or innovative thought are strongly and positively related to the following:

- Confidence in the ability of one's unit/organization to perform its mission (r = .51)
- Perceived current level of morale within unit/organization (r = .59)

Unit leaders can create a climate for innovation by first encouraging the free flow discussion of ideas and, where appropriate, implementing good ideas that are raised from all levels.

Leader Trust

2010 CASAL findings indicate Army leaders hold relatively higher trust in their superiors and peers and least trust in their subordinates. Three items from the Behavioral Trust inventory (BTI: Gillespie, 2003) were used to assess superior, peer and subordinate trust (2009 findings are in parentheses):

"To what extent do you confide in your **immediate superior** about personal issues that are affecting your work?" 4% increase:

- "Great or Very Great Extent" 30% (18%)
- "Slight or Moderate extent" 49% (57%)
- "Not at all" 21% (26%)

"To what extent do you discuss with your **peers** work-related problems or difficulties that could potentially be used against you?" 5% increase:

- "Great or Very Great Extent" 32% (21%)
- "Slight or Moderate extent" 47% (53%)
- "Not at all" 21% (26%)

"To what extent do you discuss with your **subordinates** how you honestly feel about your work, even negative feelings and frustration?" 2% increase:

- "Great or Very Great Extent" 21% (10%)
- "Slight or Moderate extent" 46% (55%)
- "Not at all" 33% (35%)

Gillespie (2003) demonstrated that trust can be conceptualized as both reliance and disclosure. These three items examine the disclosure aspect of trust and indicate about one in five (21%) Army leaders refrain from sharing or confiding in their immediate superiors and peers, though one in three (33%) refrains from such disclosure with their subordinates.

The reliance aspect of trust between an Army leader and his/her immediate superior is evidenced in that **68% of leaders agree they are confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations**. However, 17% of Army leaders (including 23% of Jr NCOs) disagree that they are confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations, and this level of disagreement shows only slight improvement since 2007. Specific reasons for lack of trust in one's immediate superior were not collected. However, leaders who indicate low confidence in their superior more often see their immediate superior ineffective/very ineffective in demonstrating the following areas:

- Interpersonal Tact (54%), Innovation (51%), Sound Judgment (45%), Mental Agility (44%), Tactical Knowledge (43%), and Empathy (41%).
- Most of these leader attributes relate to tactical knowledge, adaptability, and other leader attributes important to mission accomplishment.
- Other attributes such as Empathy and Interpersonal Tact relate more specifically to the importance of displaying care and concern for Soldiers and creating an environment that encourages open and candid communications.

Risk Tolerance

Army doctrine states that as learning comes from both successes and failures, leaders must feel comfortable taking risks and trying new approaches to training, "An **environment that allows subordinate leaders to make honest (as opposed to repeated or careless) mistakes** without prejudice is essential to leader development" (FM 7-0, p. 2-7). In addition, because leaders learn best by doing, superiors should be willing to allow subordinates to take calculated risks and accept the possibility that mistakes will be made (FM 6-22). Findings from the 2010 CASAL suggest this practice requires improvement:

- About one-third (30%) of Army leaders (including 33% of Jr NCOs) believe that their unit or organization promotes a zero-defect mentality; 38% of Army leaders disagree with this statement.
- About one-fourth (24%) of Army leaders (including 36% of Jr NCOs) believe that honest mistakes are held against them in their unit/organization; 50% of Army leaders disagree with this statement.

Key Finding:
Units that hold honest mistakes against their leaders have lower levels of morale and lower perceived quality of superiors as leaders.

A command climate where honest mistakes are held against unit members is negatively related to unit morale (r = -.40) and the perceived effectiveness of one's superiors as leaders (r = -.38). A construct highly related to these negative aspects of command climate is toxic leadership behavior, which is discussed in more detail in a later section.

3.3.2 Officer and NCO Relationship and Roles

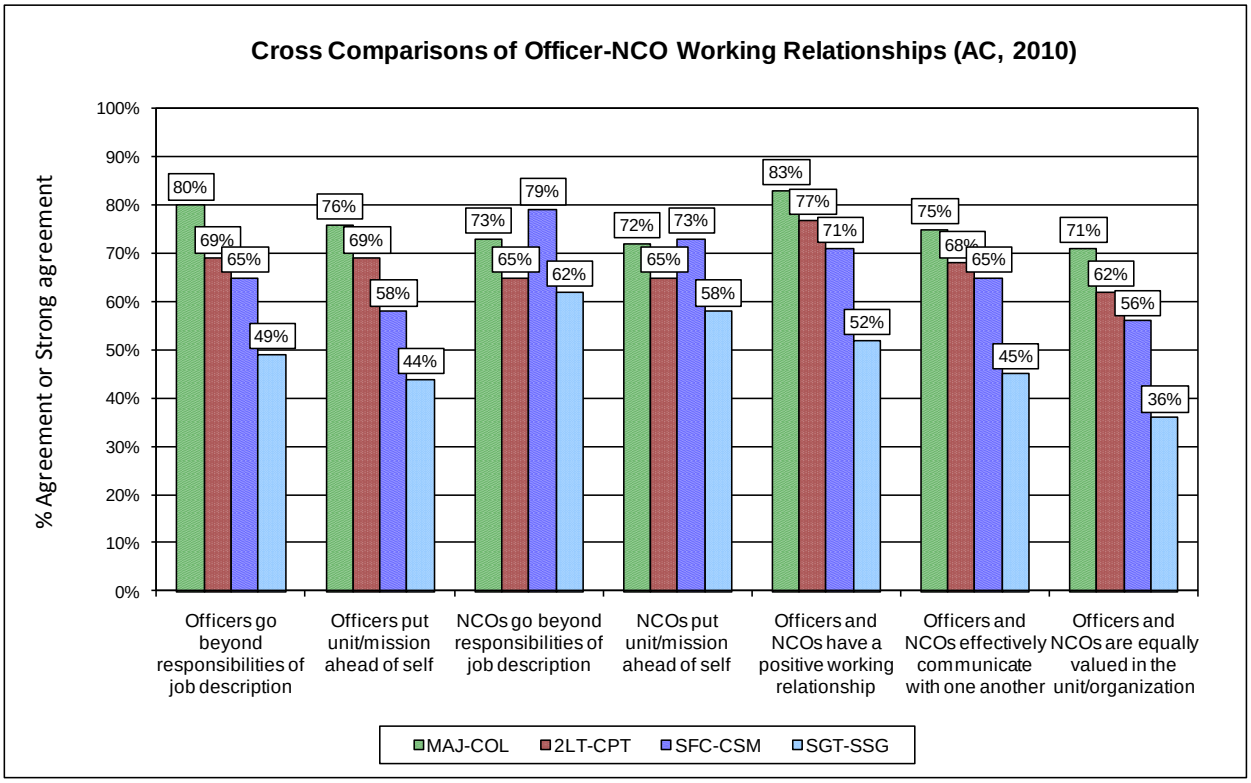
Army leadership doctrine (FM 6-22) states that the roles and responsibilities of Army officers and NCOs are unique, though designed to overlap and complement one another. Collectively, all Army leaders work toward a common goal and follow a shared institutional value system. This complementary working relationship between officers and NCOs is, in some ways, analogous to the relationship between doctors and nurses, whose roles share a common culture, values and objectives, but with differing levels of knowledge, training, authority, and duties. Exhibit 12 presents a cross comparisons of Army leader perceptions about the working relationships of officers and NCOs. With the exception of Jr NCOs, most of the issues examined in the CASAL are viewed favorably by about two-thirds or more of all Army leaders.

Most Army leaders believe that both officers and NCOs in their unit/organization are willing to go beyond the leadership responsibilities as defined by their job descriptions, and that both officers and NCOs put the needs of the unit/organization and mission ahead of their own needs. However, less than half of Jr NCOs agree with either of these points.

About two-thirds of Army leaders (63%) agree that officers and NCOs in their unit/organization have a positive working relationship, though perceptions vary by cohort:

- Field grade officers and company grade officers most often perceive the working relationship between officers and NCOs to be positive (83% and 77%, respectively).
- Most Sr NCOs and warrant officers also view the working relationship favorably (71% and 70%, respectively).
- Only about half of Jr NCOs (52%) agree that officers and NCOs have a positive working relationship.

Exhibit 12. Comparison of Army Leader Perceptions of Officer and NCO Working Relationships.



Overall, about 11% of Army leaders believe that officers and NCOs in their unit or organization do not have a positive working relationship. This perception is held by nearly one in five (18%) Jr NCOs. Leader perceptions about the officer-NCO working relationship in their unit or organization are positively related to the following:

- Morale in unit/organization (r = .54)
- Confidence in the ability of one's unit/organization to perform its mission (r = .49)
- Belief one's unit outperforms similar organizations in the US Army (r = .43)
- Satisfaction with one's career thus far in the Army (r = .31)
- Perceived percentage of effective leaders in one's unit or organization (r = .51)
- Belief members of one's unit/organization waste time and energy on unproductive tasks (r = -.33)

An important aspect of command climate is the degree to which an organization values its members, and only half of Army leaders (53%) agree that officers and NCOs are equally valued in their unit/organization, a finding that is driven heavily by lack of agreement by Jr NCOs (only 36% agree or strongly agree):

- More than one-fourth of Army leaders (27%) disagree that officers and NCOs are equally valued in their organization, most notably 39% of Jr NCOs and 27% of Sr NCOs.
- Officers more often agree that these two groups are equally valued (field grade officers, 71%; company grade officers, 62%).

This issue of perceived equal value shows the lowest level of overall agreement by Army leaders within the subset of officer and NCO working relationship issues examined in CASAL. Differing perceptions of value placed in their respective groups can significantly impair the relationship between officers and NCOs ($r = .71$, $p < .001$).

The nature of the officer and NCO complementary relationship requires effective intergroup communication for organization and mission success. However, less than two-thirds of Army leaders (61%) agree that officers and NCOs in their unit/organization effectively communicate with one another, while 18% disagree or strongly disagree. These findings are consistent with results of the 2009 CASAL exploratory survey (62% agreement; 23% disagreement). Results of the 2010 CASAL indicate:

- Field grade officers most often agree (75%) that officers and NCOs effectively communicate, though less agreement is found among company grade officers (68%), Sr NCOs (65%) and warrant officers (59%).
- Less than half of Jr NCOs (45%) agree there is effective communication between officers and NCOs while more than one-fourth (28%) disagree.

Key Finding:
18% of Army leaders disagree that there is effective communication between officers and NCOs in their unit/organization.

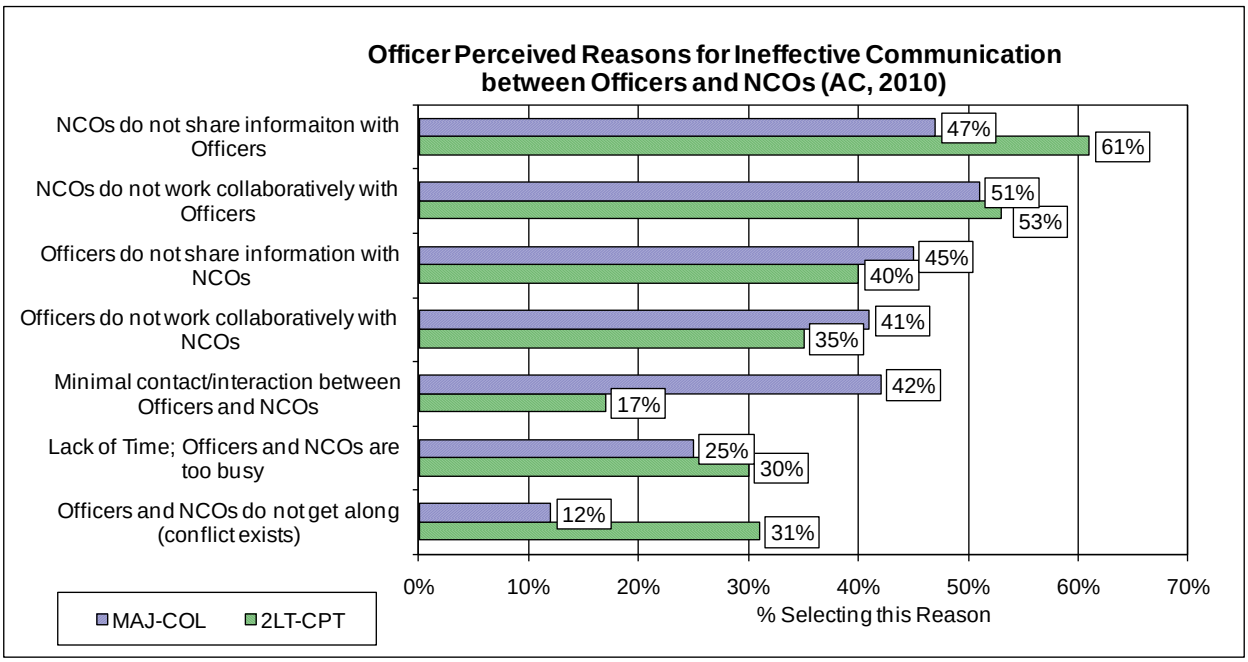
As expected, perceptions of the effectiveness in which officers and NCOs communicate with one another is strongly related to perceptions about the working relationship between officers and NCOs ($r = .82$). As nearly one in five Army leaders (18%) believe a communication problem exists between officers and NCOs in their unit or organization, the issue was further explored to determine perceptions about the severity of and underlying reasons for the problem. Of the Army leaders who believe a communication problem exists, 42% characterize it as a 'serious problem' while 54% rate it as a 'moderate problem.' These ratings show little to no change from those observed in the 2009 CASAL exploratory survey (44% and 52%, respectively). The data indicate a root-cause of this issue is perceived lack of information sharing.

However, the 2010 CASAL also found slight differences between rank groups for the perceived reasons why communication is ineffective between these groups. Notably, the most frequently cited issues by both officers and NCOs include problems with information sharing and collaboration between the groups.

Unit leaders should first identify the importance and complementary-nature of subordinates' roles and positions and consistently demonstrate this understanding to unit members. Second, leaders should work to be aware of and understand faultlines, which divide unit members on the basis of some characteristic(s). These faultlines can splinter the unit, lead to conflict, reduce satisfaction, and negatively impact individual and unit performance (Jehn & Bezrukova, 2010). Third, the leader needs to breakdown these faultlines by focusing the unit on larger, superseding demands, and goals, and celebrating achievements across faultlines and throughout their organization.

Exhibit 13 shows that field grade officers and company grade officers differ slightly in their perceived reasons for the ineffective communication that exists between officers and NCOs. Together, officers most frequently cite issues with NCOs not sharing information or working collaboratively with officers. Company grade officers most often indicate these two reasons. Field grade officers more often indicate minimal contact/interaction between officers and NCOs than do company grade officers. Though to a lesser degree, officers also recognize that their own cohorts are responsible for ineffective communication with NCOs (i.e., officers do not share information with NCOs; officers do not work collaboratively with NCOs). Other reasons selected by officers include a lack of available time and a lack of contact or interaction between the two groups as reasons for ineffective communication. An interesting finding is that company grade officers more frequently indicate that conflict exists between officers and NCOs (31%) than do field grade officers (12%).

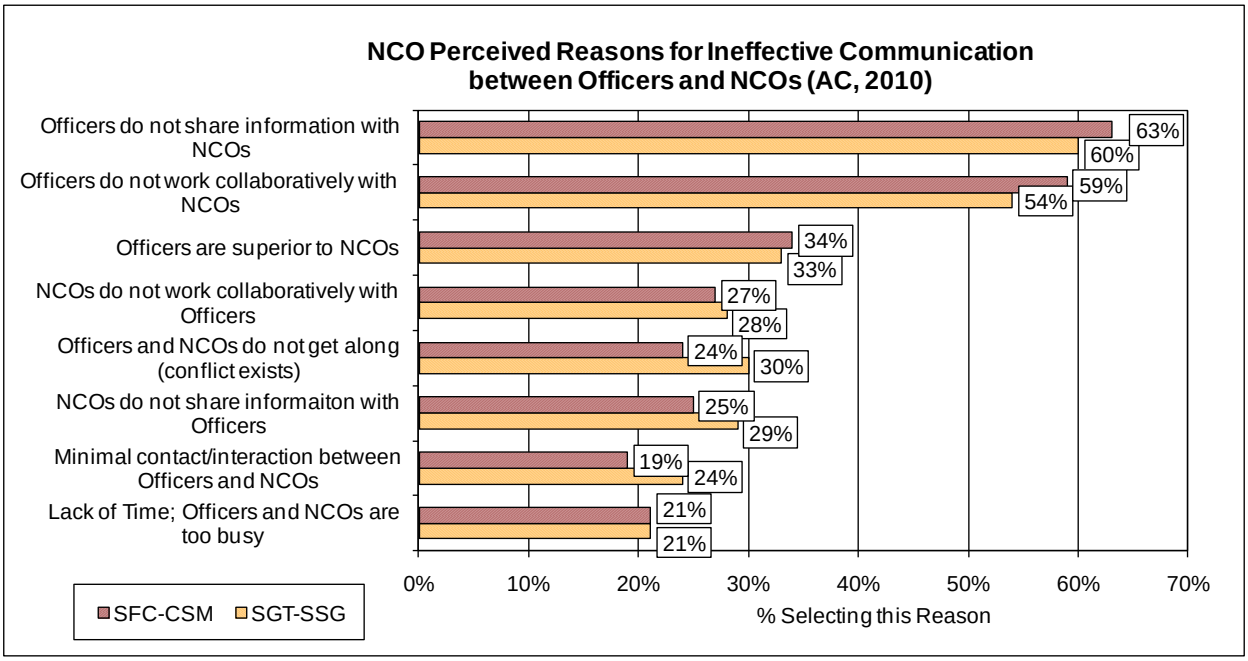
Exhibit 13. Officer Perceptions of Ineffective Communication with NCOs.



A similar (although reversed) pattern of responses is observed for the NCO reasons for ineffective communication between officers and NCOs (see Exhibit 14). NCOs most frequently indicate officers do not share information with NCOs and officers do not work collaboratively with NCOs. However, the third most cited reason is that officers are superior to NCOs, indicating the disparity in rank and authority between the two groups contributes to ineffective communication. The next most frequently cited reasons include NCOs do not work collaboratively with officers, conflict exists between the groups, and NCOs do not share information with officers. Interestingly, perceptions of Sr NCOs and Jr NCOs show more similarity than the perceptions between field grade officers and company grade officers.

In summary, Army officers and NCOs generally have a positive working relationship in units and organizations; most are viewed as willing to go beyond the responsibilities of their job description and willing to put the unit/mission ahead of self. However, in instances where the communication between officers and NCOs is seen as ineffective in units and organizations, these findings suggest information sharing and willingness for collaboration between the two groups are potential areas for improvement.

Exhibit 14. NCO Perceptions of Ineffective Communication with Officers.



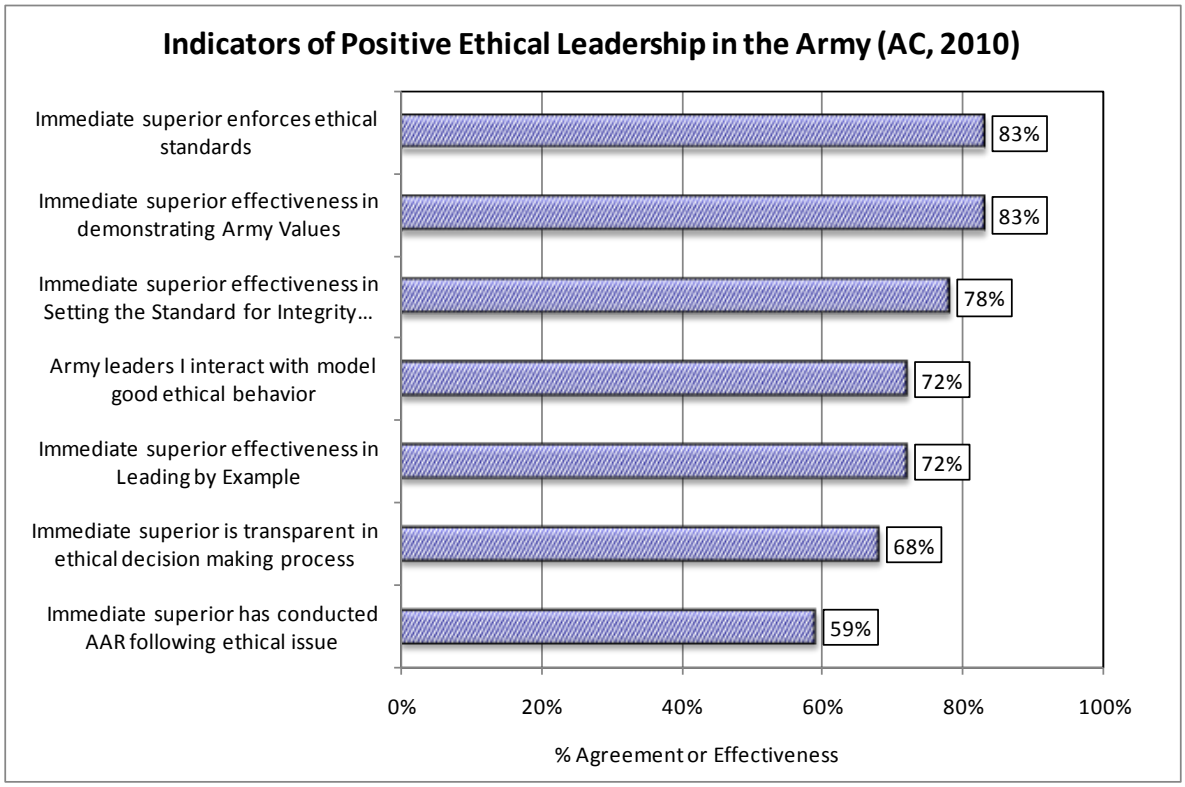
A recent survey of officers attending the Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) found that new lieutenants think that they would benefit from increased training on and understanding of enlisted Soldiers (including NCOs) while at the course. Specifically, new officers suggested training on NCO roles/functions, NCO-officer relations and team building, and enlisted training and tasks as proposed additions to BOLC (Experimentation and Analysis Element Division, 2010).

Similarly, this study found that officers and Sr NCOs who had observed new officer performance at their first unit of assignment suggested that lieutenants would benefit from increased training and exposure on the roles and functions of NCOs, or even receive instruction/training from NCOs while they attend BOLC. These findings support those of CASAL, and indicate new officers and their superiors recognize a gap in knowledge and awareness in new officer understanding of the officer and NCO relationship. Such training implemented in institutional education may have a profound impact on improving the officer-NCO relationship at the unit level, particularly for young officers with minimal operational experience.

3.3.3 Ethical Leadership

Findings from the 2010 CASAL indicate a positive ethical leadership climate. Nearly three-fourths (72%) of leaders agree or strongly agree that Army leaders they interact with model good ethical behavior, while 12% disagree or strongly disagree (see Exhibit 15).

Exhibit 15. Comparison of Indicators of Positive Ethical Leadership.



A more specific way to examine the Army's ethical leadership climate is to examine the three tenets that researchers (Barnes & Doty, 2010) have identified as being essential for ethical leadership. It should be noted that ethical leadership is a reflection of the tone and climate characterized by the actions and behaviors of a leader, not specific ethical transgressions committed by leaders.

Readers interested in occurrence of specific ethical actions and transgressions or a more thorough examination of Army ethics should refer to works conducted by the Army Center of Excellence for the Professional Military Ethic (e.g., Hannah, Schaubroeck, Avolio, Kozlowski, Lord, & Trevino, 2010).

The first tenet of ethical leadership requires leaders to be perceived as **ethical role models** by engaging in unselfish, honest, transparent and fair actions.

- 83% of Army leaders view their immediate superiors as effective or very effective at demonstrating the Army Values (6% ineffective or very ineffective).
- 78% of Army leaders view their immediate superiors as effective or very effective for setting the standard for integrity and character (11% ineffective or very ineffective).
- 68% of Army leaders agree or strongly agree their immediate superior is transparent in his/her decision making process when ethical issues arise (13% disagree or strongly disagree).

Second, ethical leadership requires leaders to **call attention to ethical issues and maintain ethical standards**.

- 83% of Army leaders agree or strongly agree their immediate superior enforces ethical standards (6% disagree or strongly disagree).
- 59% of Army leaders agree or strongly agree their immediate superior has conducted an After Action Review (AAR) following a situation where an ethical issue arose (20% disagree or strongly disagree).

Finally, ethical leadership necessitates a **command climate that sets the tone** for appropriate ethical behaviors. This is done by setting an environment which encourages appropriate actions and reacts to negative or inappropriate actions.

- 72% of Army leaders view their immediate superior as effective or very effective at leading by example (14% ineffective or very ineffective).
- Only 37% of Army leaders agree or strongly agree that senior leaders are more concerned that subordinates achieve results rather than the methods used (63% strongly disagree, disagree, or neither agree nor disagree).

While some of these overt leadership behaviors (e.g., conducting an AAR after an ethical issue, being transparent in decision making process) are positive ways Army leaders can set an ethical tone in units and organizations, **the absences of these behaviors does not necessarily mean that a problem with ethical transgressions exists**. Furthermore, the positive demonstration of the previously mentioned leadership behaviors (e.g., demonstrating Army Values, enforcing ethical standards, setting the standard for integrity and character) provides evidence that Army leaders effectively demonstrate ethical leadership.

A command climate that promotes ethical leadership can improve the interaction between leaders and their subordinates. This improved climate can have positive effects on short-term and long-term organizational goals. For instance, Army leaders with immediate superiors who positively enforce ethical standards are more likely to:

- have confidence in their unit/organization's ability to accomplish the mission (r = .39)
- perceive that members of their unit/organization effectively demonstrate resilience (r = .35)
- believe that their unit/organization outperforms similar organizations in the US Army (r = .35)
- have confidence following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations (r = .66).

Additionally, a positive ethical command climate (i.e., belief one's immediate superior enforces ethical standards) is positively related to Army leader morale (r = .40). Leaders who perceive ethical leadership in their unit also tend to report that they plan to stay in the Army longer than leaders who do not perceive positive ethical leadership (r = .15).

In summary, findings from the 2010 CASAL survey indicate most Army leaders perceive their immediate superiors engaging in behaviors and actions that promote an ethical climate. Although ratings are generally positive, leaders may be able to better foster an ethical climate through overtly demonstrating ethical practices such as increased transparency when making decisions during ethical dilemmas - allowing others to see how and why such decisions are made as a method to promote an ethical environment and develop peers and subordinate leaders to do the same. The same can be said about the conduct of AARs following situations where ethical situations arise. Ethical leadership is an important element for setting an appropriate command climate which, when done properly, can positively impact individual and organizational outcomes.

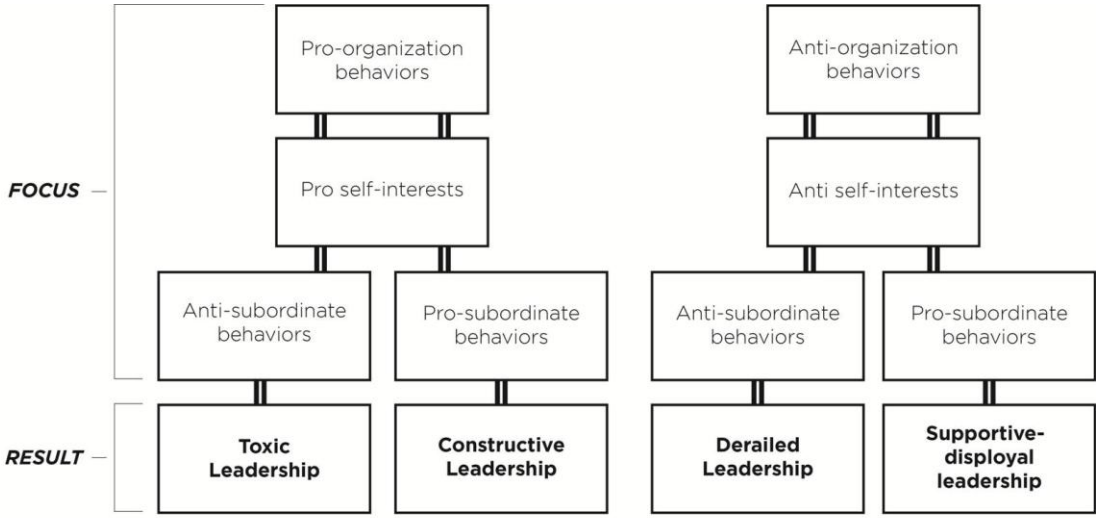
3.3.4 Toxic Leadership

The main points on toxic leadership examined in the 2010 CASAL are discussed in this section. However, a more in-depth examination of the CASAL findings on toxic leadership is provided in CAL Technical Report 2011-3 (Steele, 2011).

Researchers in the area of leadership are hard pressed to present a simple, unified definition of what constitutes toxic leadership. However, researchers and those who have experienced toxic leadership can easily discuss the attributes and characteristics (i.e., behaviors) of a toxic leader. The 2010 CASAL primed participants to "think of a time at work when you interacted with a superior who you perceived to be over-controlling, discouraging of innovative thinking, self-promoting or narcissistic, or generally created a negative working environment" prior to responding to specific items on toxic leadership. While toxic leadership can manifest itself in these behaviors, the definition of toxic leadership is certainly not limited to only these descriptions.

For this report, toxic leadership behaviors are best defined as actions which are positive for the organization and self-interests, but negative for subordinates. The focus and result of these behaviors in comparison to other leadership behaviors is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Classification Matrix of Leadership Behaviors



<u>The Incidence of Toxic Leadership in the Army</u>

Based on several leader-level and unit-level data points, it is estimated that roughly 1 in 5 leaders are viewed negatively:

- not putting unit needs ahead of their own (22%)
- seen as "a real jerk" (25%)
- do things and behave in a way that is positive for the organization and themselves, but negative for subordinates (18%)
- do things and behave in a way that is negative for the organization, themselves, subordinates (5%)
- unit holding honest mistakes against them (21%)

On a 1-7 scale of how much of a problem these negative types of behaviors are only 11% selected 1 or 2 (13% in 2009) indicating few see this as not much of a problem of all, and 42% selected a 6 or 7 (57% in 2009) indicating that many perceive this as a serious problem.

Eighty-three percent of Army leaders indicate they have observed one or more leaders demonstrate negative leadership types of behaviors (e.g., over-controlling, narcissistic, self-promoting) in the past year:

- 44% have observed between 2 and 4 leaders who behaved in this way
- 17% have observed 5 or more of these leaders in the past year
- Findings are comparable to the results of the 2009 CASAL exploratory survey (Steele, 2011) that found 83% of leaders had observed toxic leadership first hand in the past year, while 35% had observed 3 or more leaders display these negative types of behaviors.

With regard to the severity of the problem of toxic leadership behaviors in the Army, 42% of Army leaders view this as a 'serious problem' while another 47% indicate it is a 'moderate problem' In the Army. Despite the use of negative behaviors, some leaders who behave in this way still tend to accomplish their missions and goals. In fact, 20% of Army leaders believe leaders who demonstrate toxic leadership behaviors accomplish their missions and goals to a great or very great extent, while another 46% believe they accomplish their missions and goals to a slight or moderate extent. Only a small percentage of Army leaders (7%) believe leaders who demonstrate these negative behaviors do not accomplish their missions and goals.

Key Finding:
42% of leaders believe toxic leadership behavior is a serious problem in the Army.

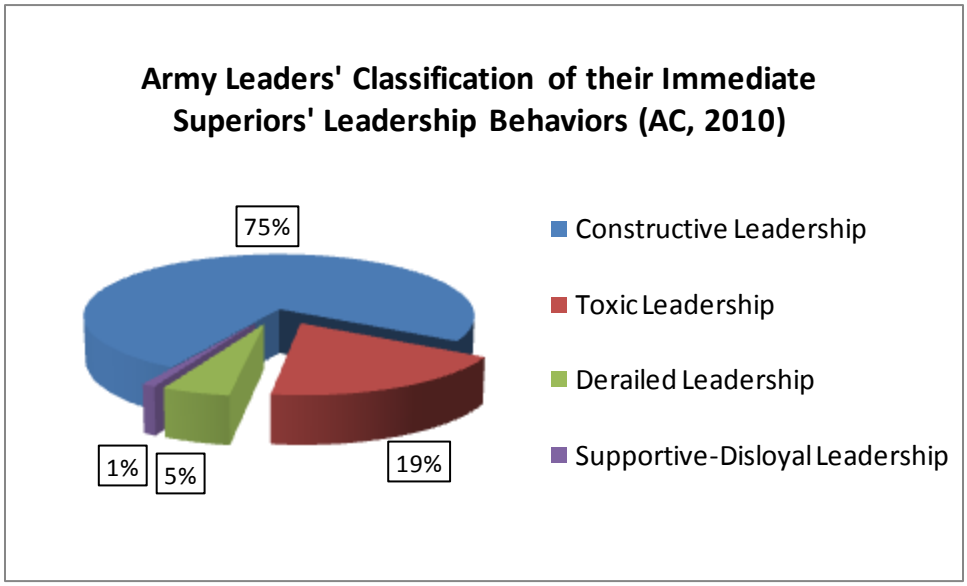
Toxic Leadership Behaviors Demonstrated by Army Leaders

Findings from the 2010 CASAL demonstrate that the quality of leadership in the Army is favorable, that Army leaders generally view their immediate superiors as effective leaders, and that leaders demonstrate numerous constructive leadership behaviors (e.g., the Army core leader competencies and leader attributes). More specifically, about three-fourths (77%) of Army leaders agree or strongly agree that their immediate superior puts the needs of the unit or organization and mission ahead of their own needs, and another three-fourths (74%) believe their immediate superior is on a path to achieving a higher level of leadership responsibility.

Based on the classification matrix presented earlier, the majority of Army leaders (75%) classify their immediate superior as demonstrating constructive leadership (see Exhibit 16):

- Constructive behaviors (75%) are the prototypical set of behaviors that are tied to effective leadership (FM 6-22).
- Nearly one in five Army leaders (19%) characterize their immediate superior's behavior as toxic leadership.
- A small percentage of Army leaders (5%) indicate their immediate superior demonstrates derailed leadership behaviors.
- A very small percentage of leaders (1%) indicate their immediate superior's behavior is supportive to subordinates but disloyal to the organization.

Exhibit 16. Army Leader Characterizations of Leadership Style by Subordinates.



Not surprisingly, leaders who perceive their immediate superior to demonstrate constructive leadership behaviors also view their superior more positively than leaders whose immediate superior demonstrates toxic leadership behaviors. For example, leaders who demonstrate constructive behaviors are viewed as being a *real star* more frequently than superiors who demonstrate toxic behaviors (see Table 5).

Table 5. Percentage of Army leaders responding 'definitely' or 'often' to two items based on classification of immediate superior's leadership behavior.

	Constructive Leadership Behavior	Toxic Leadership Behavior
My immediate superior is a *real star*	70%	23%
My immediate superior is a *real jerk*	1%	30%

<u>Impact of Toxic Leadership on the Army</u>

Over 80% of Army leaders have observed leaders who demonstrate negative leadership behaviors and nearly 20% believe their immediate superior demonstrates toxic leadership behaviors. These <u>negative leadership behaviors have a detrimental effect on individual outcomes as well as organizational outcomes</u>. Army leaders who indicate that their immediate superior demonstrates toxic leadership behaviors are more likely to report the following compared to leaders whose immediate superior demonstrates constructive leadership:

- Less confidence in following immediate superior into life-or-death situations (-36%)
- Lower individual morale (-24%)
- Lower unit morale (-27%)
- Less confidence in unit's ability to perform its mission (-14%)
- Less satisfaction with the freedom and latitude in their job (-16%)

A finding with troublesome implications is that Army leaders who see their immediate superior as toxic are less likely to agree they are confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations (compared to leaders who indicate their superior demonstrates prototypical leadership behaviors). Specifically, about one-half (41%) of leaders who indicate their immediate superiors' leadership behavior is toxic disagree or strongly disagree they feel confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations (compared to only 5% of leaders who indicate their superior demonstrates prototypical leadership). Thus, toxic leadership in the Army has negative implications for unit readiness. Table 6 displays a comparison for Army leader perceptions (in terms of the percentage of unfavorable responses) associated with two conditions for numerous individual and unit outcomes.

Key Finding:
Toxic leadership in Army units negatively relates to morale, leader trust, and confidence in one's unit to perform its mission.

Table 6. Comparison of Individual Leader Outcomes between Conditions of Leadership Style.

	Immediate Superior Demonstrates:	
	Toxic Leadership Behaviors	Prototypical Leadership Behaviors
Confidence in following immediate superior into life-or-death situations (% Disagree or Strongly disagree)	41%	5%
Leaders' current morale levels (% Low or Very low)	38%	14%
Current morale level of unit (% Low or Very low)	42%	15%
Confidence in my unit's ability to perform its mission (% Disagree or Strongly disagree)	16%	6%
My unit outperforms similar organizations in the U.S. Army (% Disagree or Strongly disagree)	24%	10%
How satisfied are you with amount of freedom or latitude you have in your job (% Dissatisfied or Very dissatisfied)	26%	10%

There is no indication that the toxic leadership issue will correct itself. The data show that the offending leader does not receive feedback suggesting a need to improve their behavior. Unfortunately, feedback such as reduced individual productivity/effectiveness, confrontation, or hearing it from others is not occurring. In fact, toxic leaders accomplish their goals (66%) to a greater extent than constructive leaders (64%). Additionally, half (50%) of subordinates of a leader who does things and behaves in a way that is positive for the organization and themselves, but negative for subordinates (i.e., toxic leader) expect that leader to achieve a higher level of leadership responsibility, and 18% say they emulate that (toxic) superior. This may create a self-perpetuating cycle with harmful and long-lasting effects on morale, productivity and retention of quality personnel.

Summary of the Effects of Climate and Situational Factors on Leadership

More than three-fourths of Army leaders are satisfied with their career in the Army thus far. Leaders with longer tenure and those in the reserve component more often indicate satisfaction with their career in the Army. More than half of leaders report their current level of morale as high or very high, though morale is lower for leaders currently deployed. Large percentages of leaders demonstrate affective commitment, meaning they identify with and enjoy working for the Army.

More than two-thirds of leaders plan to make the Army their career and serve until retirement eligible or beyond 20 years. The increase in the percentage of active duty captains who intend to remain in the Army until retirement observed in 2009 has held steady in 2010; this cohort continues to show the greatest percentage of indecision about remaining in the Army.

Several favorable aspects of the current command climate within the Army include leader agreement that they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the challenges of their work, confidence in one's unit's ability to perform the mission successfully, and satisfaction with the amount of freedom or latitude afforded in the job. However, negative influence on the Army's command climate, including toxic leadership behavior, intolerance for honest mistakes, and ineffective communication between officers and NCOs, have adverse effects on individual and organizational outcomes, including morale, quality leadership, and unit readiness.

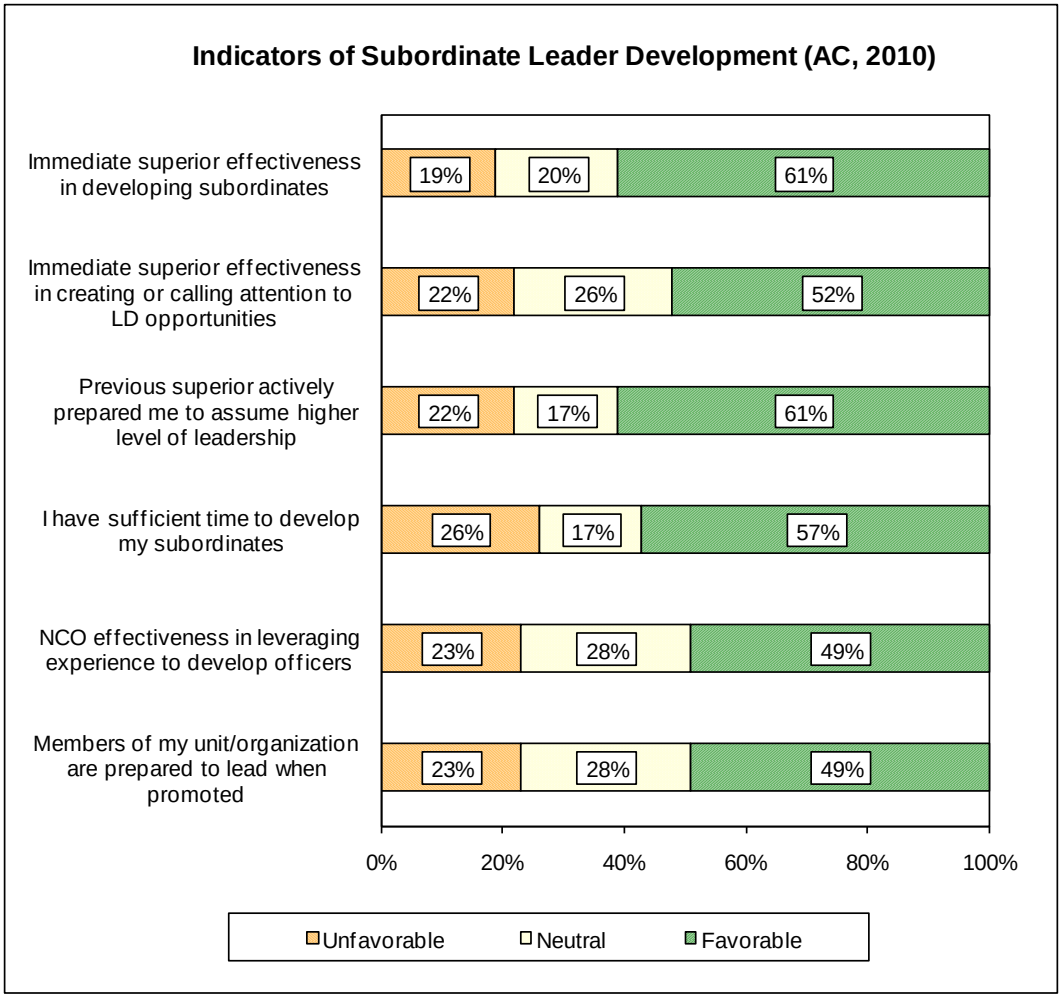
4. Quality of Leader Development

The quality of leader development scorecard shows both strengths and weaknesses. Overall, operational experiences and self-development are seen as strongly impacting leader development; however, development at the unit-level is perceived to be lacking. Note that a more in-depth review of Army education is available (CAL Technical Report 2011-2).

4.1 Subordinate Development

Army guidance (AR 600-100) states that, "***all leaders have a responsibility to develop those junior to them to the fullest extent possible"*** (p.5). Exhibit depicts the effectiveness of the Army and its leaders in fulfilling this responsibility. These seven items from the 2010 CASAL, along with trend analyses of data from past years, indicate that the Army continues to show room for improvement in this area. The core leader competency *Develops Others* has consistently been the lowest leader competency. Thus, subordinate development is an area that requires the Army's focus and effort in both enabling leaders and holding them accountable for this leadership responsibility.

Exhibit 17. A 2010 Scorecard for Subordinate Leader Development in Units and Organizations.



Subordinate Development

2010 CASAL findings show that the development Army leaders receive from their immediate superiors needs improvement, especially for the development received by leaders at junior levels (i.e., company grade officers and Jr NCOs). Less than two-thirds of all Army leaders (61%) rate their current immediate superior as effective/very effective in developing subordinates. Company grade officers and Jr NCOs least often rate their immediate superior effective (58% and 55%, respectively) and most often rate their superior ineffective (21% and 23%, respectively) compared to other cohorts. Another indicator of this need is that only about half (52%) of Army leaders rate their immediate superior as effective in creating or calling attention to leader development opportunities in their current assignment, while 22% rate them ineffective.

Key Finding:
61% of Army leaders are rated effective at developing their subordinates; 52% are rated effective at creating or calling attention to leader development opportunities.

Army leader perceptions of the effectiveness of past superiors in providing development largely mirror those of current superiors, as less than two-thirds of Army leaders (61%) agree their previous immediate superior actively prepared them to assume a higher level of responsibility or leadership (22% disagree). Trends for these items show fairly stable ratings over the past six years, indicating there continues to be room for improvement in Army leader demonstration of the competency *Develops Others*, as this continues to be the lowest rated competency of the eight.

Other indicators of development suggest that leaders value learning from their superiors as well as their peers through informal methods:

- 64% of Army leaders rate "learning from my superiors (e.g., observing, job shadowing, receiving feedback)" as having had a large or great positive impact on their development (21% believe this has had a moderate impact).
- 70% rate "learning from my peers (e.g., observing, collaborating, receiving feedback)" as having had a large or great positive impact on their development (22% believe this has had a moderate impact).

These findings suggest that while subordinate development needs improvement, Army leaders do value the opportunities for development that are received from others, when those opportunities occur. Of a list of 13 practices, learning from superiors and learning from peers rank 4th and 3rd, respectively, in terms of their positive impact on development (behind deployment operations and duty assignments/on-the-job training). Further, trend analyses show that the percentage of Army leaders that indicate learning from superiors and peers had a large or great impact on their development has increased since 2009 (from 59% and 66%, respectively).

Key Finding:
Learning from Peers and *Learning from Superiors* are seen as having a large or great impact on leader development.

Thus, learning from superiors and from peers (e.g., observing and receiving feedback) are desired methods of development; when they occur, they are seen as being 'impactful' on development. However, Army leader effectiveness in providing deliberate subordinate development (i.e., through creating or calling attention to opportunities, and actively preparing subordinates) continues to show room for improvement.

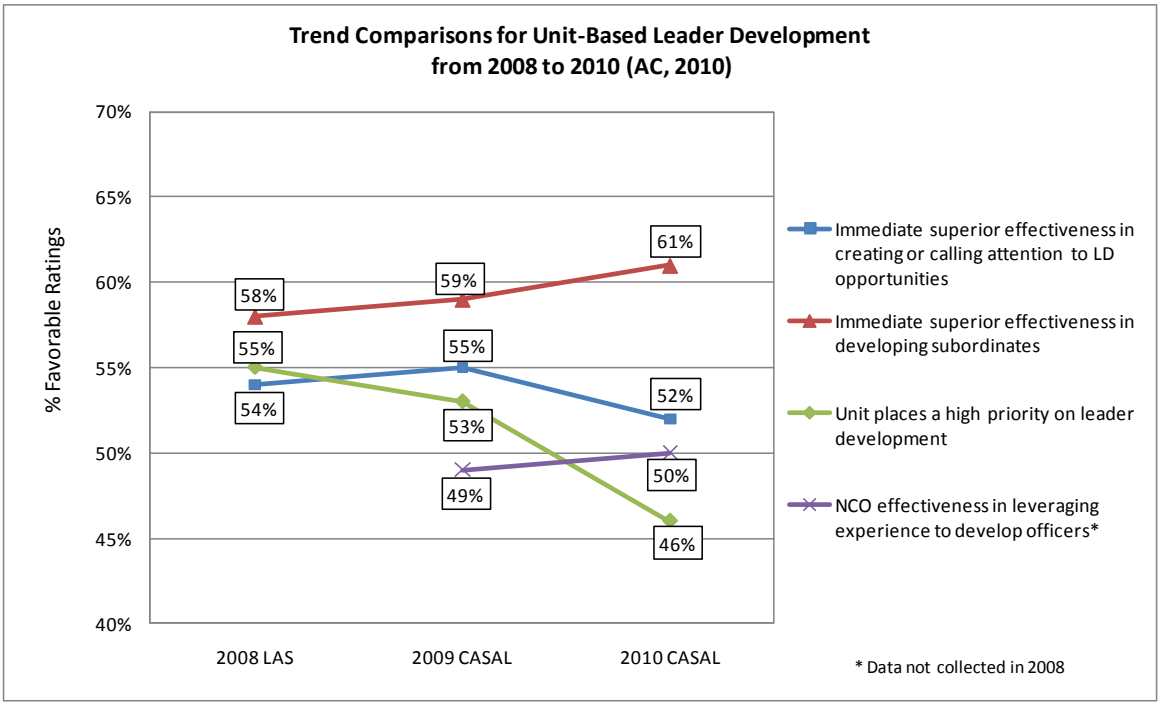
Priority and Time for Leader Development

Another indication of the effectiveness of leader development at the unit level is the priority it is given by senior leaders and whether leaders feel they have sufficient time in their current role to carry out the duties and responsibilities for developing subordinates:

- Less than half of Army leaders (46%) indicate that the priority their unit or organization places on leader development is high or very high (24% indicate it is low or very low). The trend for this finding shows a decline from the past two years (see Exhibit 18).
- In 2009, 53% rated this high or very high and 20% rated this low or very low.
- In 2008, 55% rated this high or very high and 16% rated it low or very low.

Key Finding:
24% of Army leaders think that their unit places a low or very low priority on leader development; 30% of junior level leaders do not believe they have time to develop subordinates.

Exhibit 18. Comparisons of Unit-Based Leader Development from 2008-2010.



In 2010, Senior NCOs more often indicate their unit's priority for leader development is high (57%) compared to Jr NCOs (37%). Additionally, more than half of Army leaders (57%) believe that they have sufficient time to carry out the duties and responsibilities for developing their subordinates. However, as much as 30% of junior level leaders (company grade officers and Jr NCOs) disagree they have sufficient time to do this.

Findings also suggest that units less often place a high priority on leader development when in deployed settings compared to non-deployed settings (42% and 51%, respectively).

- This finding is somewhat expected, as deployed environments include other priorities that do not exist in garrison, so it is not surprising that formal leader development may more often go by the wayside while deployed.
- However, findings also suggest that deployed operations offer unique and valuable developmental opportunities for Army leaders. 'Deployment operations' has consistently been ranked at the top (1st in 2010) of a list of 13 leader development practices in terms of its positive impact on development.

Therefore, while some units may not explicitly position leader development as a priority during deployed operations, most Army leaders still view the experience gained during deployments as valuable and developmental.

Army leaders more often believe that they have sufficient time to develop their subordinates while deployed (64%) than when not deployed (55%). The reason for this perception may be due to the increased opportunities for development in deployed environments, whereby leaders may not need to exert as much time and effort to find ways to develop their subordinates in real world conditions.

Other Organizational Indicators of Leader Development

Other evidence of the quality of unit leader development includes the frequency and extent to which it occurs, the perceived impact it has on leaders, and perceived outcomes of its occurrence. Just under two-thirds of Army leaders (61%) believe leaders in their unit or organization develop the leadership skills of their subordinates to a slight or moderate extent, while 30% believe this occurs to a great or very great extent. These findings mirror the results of the 2009 CASAL.

About half of Army leaders (52%) indicate that their unit or organization regularly conducts leader development training (e.g., OPD, NCOPD, leadership meetings) 'monthly' or more often (daily, weekly, 2-3 times per month). Another 19% of leaders indicate that this occurs 'quarterly', while 21% indicate that this occurs 'almost never.' Compared to results from two years ago, these findings indicate no change in the frequency in which leader development training is conducted at the unit level. The 2008 Leadership Assessment Survey (LAS) found that 52% of leaders indicate their unit conducts leader development training monthly or more often, 18% quarterly, and 22% 'almost never' (Riley et al., 2009).

As previously mentioned, learning from superiors and peers through observation, job shadowing and collaboration are seen as effective and impactful methods of development in the Army. However, the more general practice of 'leader development from within my unit' is rated toward the bottom of a list of 13 leader development practices in terms of its positive impact on Army leaders.

Only 40% of leaders indicate leader development from within their unit has had a large or great positive impact on their development. It is important to note that while leader development within the unit is not perceived to have a large impact by many leaders, less formal methods of development that occur within the unit/organization (including duty assignments/OJT, learning from peers, and learning from superiors) are among the highest rated in terms of their positive impact on development (64-77% 'large' or 'great' impact). The relative ordering and favorability of these development methods have remained stable over the past six years. The Army should continue to look for ways to leverage informal methods to develop leaders.

Key Finding:
Informal practices such as duty assignments/OJT, learning from peers, and learning from superiors are seen as more impactful than formal leader development from within the unit.

Another important indicator of unit-based leader development is how effectively NCOs leverage their experience to develop officers. Army doctrine (FM 6-22) describes the importance of the role of seasoned NCOs in training and molding young officers. This type of development mostly occurs between Sr NCOs and company grade officers, and these two cohorts frequently view NCOs as effective or very effective in providing this development (55% and 53%, respectively).

- Field grade officers and Jr NCOs less often rate NCOs as effective in developing officers (49% and 46%, respectively).
- Warrant officers most frequently indicate NCOs are ineffective in developing officers (32%). As warrant officers are both technical experts and officers, they may not recognize or value the contribution of NCO expertise in the development of their fellow officers.

Key Finding:
53% of company grade officers rate NCOs effective in leveraging their experience to develop officers.

An important outcome of subordinate development is the degree to which leaders are prepared to lead once they are promoted and have new responsibilities. Two-thirds of field grade officers (66%) and 57% of Sr NCOs agree that members of their unit or organization who are promoted are prepared to lead in their new assignment. However, only about half of company grade officers and warrant officers (52% and 49%, respectively) and one-third of Jr NCOs (33%) agree or strongly agree. Findings from past years of the LAS (LAS was the previous name of CASAL) indicate mixed agreement to a similar item assessing agreement with the statement "Soldiers who are promoted are prepared for leadership in their new assignment."

Key Finding:
The priority and practice of unit leader development is positively related to leader preparedness upon promotion to new responsibilities.

In the 2005 LAS, 54% of leaders agreed; in 2006, only 35% of leaders agreed (Aude, Riley, Harvey, Mitchell, & Horey, 2006; Keller-Glaze, Riley, & Hatfield, 2007).

In 2010, the perceived level of leader preparedness for leadership in new assignments upon promotion is positively related to the following (correlations are provided in parentheses):

- The level of priority current unit/organization places on leader development (r = .52)
- The extent leaders in unit/organization develop the leadership skills of their subordinates (r = .54)

These findings indicate that when units prioritize and actually develop their leaders, these leaders are perceived as being more prepared for new leadership assignments and roles. This demonstrates the practical utility of prioritizing and dedicating time to leader development.

4.2 Preparing Leaders and the Army Leader Development Model

Army doctrine (FM 7-0) outlines the Army's Leader Development model, which specifies that leader development is leveraged across three overlapping domains: operational, self-development, and institutional. The operational domain includes training activities conducted at home station, during training events (e.g., CTCs), and while operationally deployed. Self development is the continuous, life-long process that is used to supplement and enhance knowledge and skills gained through operational experiences and institutional education and training (Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009). The institutional domain includes schools that provide knowledge, skills, and practice to Soldiers, leaders, and Army civilians to ensure they can perform critical tasks to a predefined proficiency. In addition, the institutional domain instills key competencies, values, and skills needed by Soldiers to succeed in any circumstance. Thus, Army leaders must utilize and balance these three domains to become proficient across the Army core leader competencies (FM 6-22).

Effectiveness of leader development domains for preparing leaders to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility (% Effective/Very effective)

	2008	2009	2010
Self Development	82%	84%	85%
Operational Experience	81%	84%	80%
Institutional Education	60%	51%	58%

The positive impact each of the three domains of development on Army leaders has been tracked by CAL annually since 2006. Of the three domains, Army leaders have consistently viewed operational (work) experiences (i.e., duty assignments and on-the-job training) as having the greatest positive impact on their development, followed by self development.

Over 80% of Army leaders have consistently rated both operational experience and self development as being effective or very effective in preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility. However, Army institutional education has consistently been rated as effective or very effective by less than two-thirds of Army leaders in the past three years, and has lagged behind other leader development practices in terms of its perceived positive impact on development.

Operational Experience

DA Pamphlet 600-3 (Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management) describes operational experience as *the linchpin component of leader development from which officers learn "what right looks like"*. Army leaders value operational (work) experience as a method for developing leadership skills. Field grade officers and Sr NCOs most often perceive operational experiences as effective or very effective for preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility (88% and 87%, respectively), though no more than 11% of any rank group rate this method of development as ineffective.

Key Finding:
Operational experience is positively valued by 88% of Army leaders.

Most Army leaders are satisfied with the variety of experiences provided by the Army thus far in their career. Unsurprisingly, leaders that are more advanced in their careers (field grade officers and Sr NCOs) are more satisfied with the variety of experiences they have in the Army (89% and 87%, respectively) than leaders at junior levels (company grade officers, 69%; Jr NCOs, 67%).

Self Development

Army leaders (85%) see self development as effective or very effective in preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility, and view self development activities as having a large or great positive impact on their development (61%). Furthermore, about three-fourths of Army leaders (73%) believe that they know specifically what they need to do to develop as a leader. Company grade officers less often indicate they know what they need to do to develop themselves (61%) than do other cohorts.

Key Finding:
Self development is seen as effective in preparing leaders and having a large impact on

While self development appears effective, support for self development at the unit or organizational level varies. About two-thirds of Army leaders (64%) agree that their unit or organization expects them to participate in self development (other than mandatory training). Company grade officers most often agree (70%) and Jr NCOs most often disagree (17%) that their organization expects them to self develop beyond mandatory training. There is less agreement by Army leaders that units and organizations make time available for leaders to engage in self development (41% agree or strongly agree). With the exception of Sr NCOs, more than one third of Army leaders disagree or strongly disagree this is the case in their unit or organization.

Recent findings from the 2010 CGSC ILE Resident Student Quality of Life Survey (Quality Assurance Office, 2010) provide additional insight into perceptions of Army self development, notably that:

- 70% of (ILE) respondents agreed that the Army supports the pursuit of self-development.
- 95% of respondents agreed that they personally embraced lifelong learning.
- 96% agreed that officers must be committed to lifelong learning.

4.3 Institutional Education

Army regulation states the purpose of the institutional domain is to provide *"Soldiers, leaders, and Army Civilians the key knowledge, skills, and attributes required to operate successfully in any environment"* (AR 350-1, p. 47). A major finding in the 2009 CASAL results was that Army institutional education courses showed room for improvement in effectively preparing leaders for the challenges of the operational environment. As mentioned previously, Army institutional education is less often viewed favorably by Army leaders than the other two domains of Army leader development. In 2009, leader perceptions of the effectiveness of institutional education were at an all time low. While findings from 2010 show an increase in favorable perceptions, ratings for education continue to lag behind those for operational experience and self development.

The main points on Army education from the 2010 CASAL are discussed in this section. However, a focused and in-depth examination of institutional education is presented in the CAL technical report 2011-2, *2010 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL): Army Education* (Hatfield, Steele, Riley, Keller-Glaze, & Fallesen, 2011). It is important to clarify that survey findings are subjective perceptions and not test results of knowledge and skills. That being said, the data are important because perceptions affect behavior, learning processes, learning outcomes and, ultimately, mission accomplishment.

Perceptions of Army Institutional Education

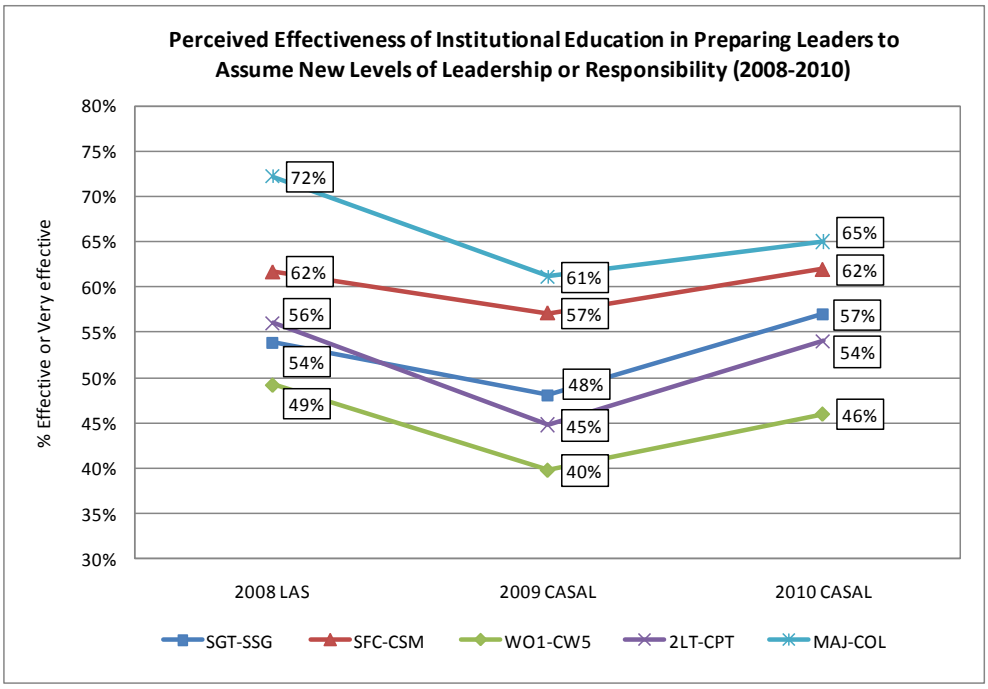
Less than two-thirds (58%) of Army leaders rate institutional education courses or schools as effective in preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility. Field grade officers and Sr NCOs more often perceive courses and schools as effective in preparing them (65% & 62%, respectively) than do other cohorts (46-57%). Company grade officers and warrant officers least often perceive institutional education as effective in preparing them for new levels of leadership or responsibility (54% & 46%, respectively).

Key Finding:
Too few (58%) leaders agree that their most recent institutional education course effectively prepares them for new levels of leadership or responsibility.

Exhibit 19 displays the increase in favorable perceptions observed from 2009 to 2010 after the downturn observed from 2008 to 2009, across all cohorts.

Further, a fairly consistent finding across CASAL items on institutional education is that leaders in the reserve component more often provide favorable ratings (+10%) compared to the active component.

Exhibit 19. Comparisons of Perceived Effectiveness of Institutional Education for Preparing Leaders from 2008 to 2010.



Further, Army-provided institutional education, both resident and distance/distributed learning, continues to be rated among the lowest as a method for development in terms of its positive impact on Army leader development. In 2010, resident course attendance is rated as having a large or great positive impact on development by 41% of Army leaders (21% rate non-resident course attendance as having a large/great impact on development). These perceptions remain unchanged over the past several years.

<u>Perspectives from Senior Officers</u>

<u>Two-thirds (68%) of CW5s, LTCs and COLs agree that completion of Army institutional courses or schools should be tied to promotion and assignment decisions</u> (18% disagree). Compared to the active component, senior officers in the RC more often agree (80%) that completion of courses and schools should be tied to promotion and assignment decisions (9% disagree).

Although most senior officers agree completion of courses or schools should be tied to promotions and assignment decisions, less than half (48%) of the overall AC sample agree that their superior would support their attendance at an institutional course/school if the opportunity required that they miss a key unit or organizational event such as a rotation at a combat training center (CTC) or a mission rehearsal exercise (MRE).

In fact, for senior leaders only, there is essentially no relationship between the two data points (r = .06, p = .21), which underscores the disconnect.

A 2008 study on Army officer education (Riley, Hatfield, Keller-Glaze, Fallesen & Karrasch, 2008) found that nearly 70% of AC COLs and LTCs believe OES courses (in general) are effective or very effective at providing well-educated graduates to their unit or organization. In the 2010 CASAL, LTCs and COLs provided comments on the skills or abilities that they thought should be learned at courses or schools but were lacking in course graduates who arrived at their unit or organization. A majority of the comments covered a wide range of specific skill sets rather than just a few broad dimensions. These specific skill sets were categorized into the following seven themes; values in parentheses indicate the percentage of senior officers who provided a comment on a skill or ability in that theme:

- Critical thinking and problem solving skills (21%)
- The ability to apply skills in an operational setting (21%)
- Leadership skills – mentoring and developing Soldiers (20%)
- Knowledge of tactics and technical skills (18%)
- Communication – effective written and oral (17%)
- Management and administrative abilities (16%)
- Interpersonal skills (13%)

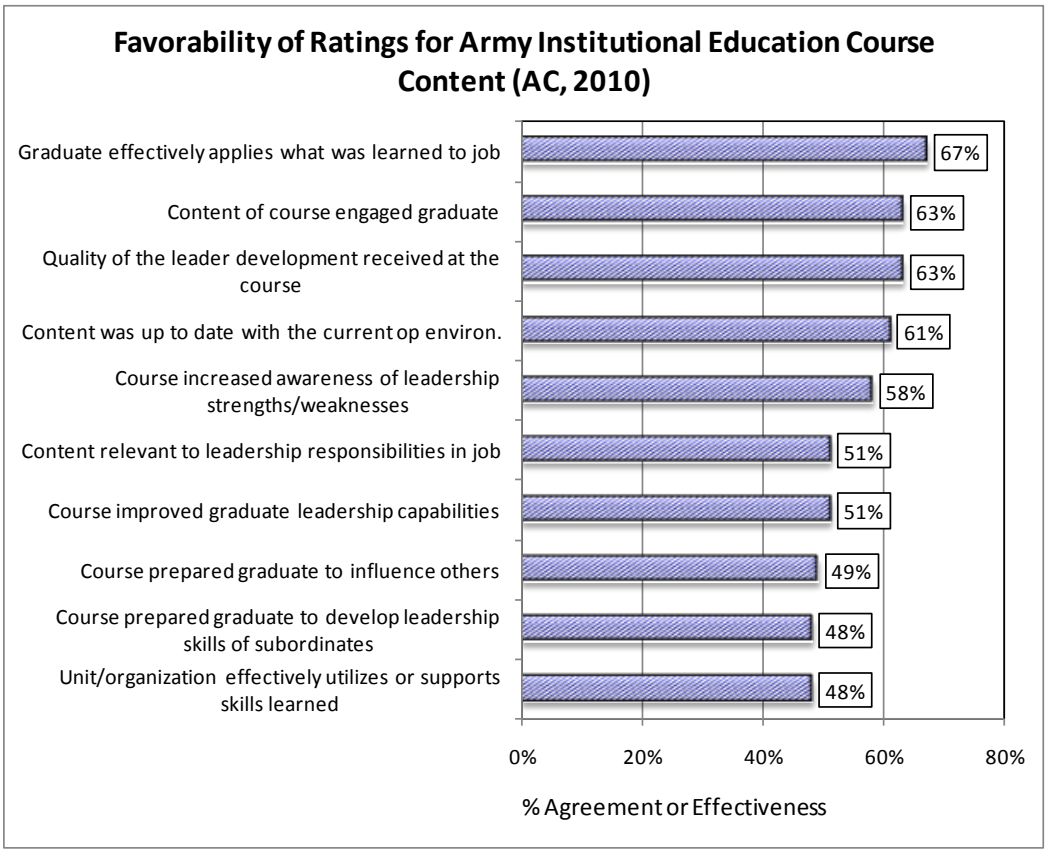
Perceptions of the Institutional Experience

Quality of Course Content

Of the items assessing institutional education in the 2010 CASAL, the most favorably rated item was leaders' self-assessment of their own ability to apply what is learned in courses/schools (see Exhibit 20). Over two-thirds (67%) of Army leaders believe they are effective at applying what they learned in their most recent Army course or school to their job. The next most favorable findings indicate that nearly two-thirds (63%) of leaders agree that the content of their course or school engaged them, and 63% of leaders believe that the quality of the leader development they received was good or very good. Items that demonstrated the lowest level of favorable ratings related to course effectiveness in developing specific leadership skills in learners and the perception that units effectively utilize and support the leadership skills learned once the learner returns from their course or school.

2010 CASAL findings indicate about half (51%) of Army leaders believe their most recent course or school was effective at improving their (overall) leadership capabilities. Company grade officers and warrant officers least often view their most recent courses as effective in doing this (46% & 47%, respectively) compared to other cohorts. While these findings are less than favorable, these results (2010) show a 7% increase over 2009 results.

Exhibit 20. A 2010 Scorecard for the Quality of Army Course Content.



At a more specific level, about half (49%) of Army leaders believe that their most recent course or school was effective in preparing them to influence others in their unit or organization. Company grade officers least frequently believe their most recent course was effective in preparing them for this (43% effective/very effective) compared the other cohorts. Ratings in 2010 are slightly more favorable (+4%) than those observed in 2009.

Findings also indicate that only about half (49%) of Army leaders believe their most recent course or school was effective in preparing them to develop the leadership skills of their subordinates. Company grade officers least often view their most recent course as effective in doing this (38%) compared to other cohorts. Overall, this area is rated favorably by about 10% more Army leaders than in 2009. Despite the improvement observed from 2009 to 2010, the perception by only half of recent graduates that courses are effective in preparing graduates to develop the leadership skills of their subordinates aligns with a systematic finding observed throughout the CASAL, namely that Army leaders show room for improvement in effectively developing their people.

Key Finding:
Courses/schools are not generally seen as effectively preparing leaders to develop the leadership skills of their subordinates.

As previously mentioned, comments by some senior officers indicate course graduates lack various leadership skills, including the ability to develop and mentor others.
These points support broader findings on the need for improvement of subordinate development in general (e.g., *Develops Others* has been consistently the lowest rated core leader competency).

Preparation aside, the utility of the knowledge and skill Army leaders gain from courses and their subsequent application to the job are also key areas of concern. Transfer of knowledge/skill to the jobs Army leaders do is of critical importance to ensure Army leaders are both acquiring the knowledge and skills they need and are able to apply them effectively in an operational setting. However, less than half (48%) of leaders believe that their unit or organization is effective in utilizing or supporting the leadership skills they learned in their most recent course or school. Findings for the reserve component are more favorable (57%), though notably these findings (2010) are also about 10% more favorable than those observed in 2009 for both AC and RC leaders.

Key Finding:
Less than half of Army leaders believe their unit effectively utilizes or supports leadership skills they learned in their most recent course.

Despite the improvement observed, the issue of transferring knowledge and skill from the classroom to an operational setting remains an important area in need of attention. In the 2009 CASAL Report on Army Education (Hatfield & Steele, 2010), the authors suggested that the lack of transfer could be due to a mismatch between course content and the leadership requirements and demands of the current operating environment.

Two considerations at the forefront of the knowledge transfer issue are the Army's ability to keep the content of courses both up-to-date with the current operating environment as well as relevant to the responsibilities that leaders face in their job. If the Army loses focus of these two considerations, efforts to develop leaders through institutional education will less often be viewed as an investment in human capital as opposed to a tax on their time.

- About half (51%) of Army leaders believe that the content of their most recent course or school was relevant to the leadership responsibilities they faced in their job; one-third of company grade officers (33%) and more than one-fourth of warrant officers (28%) and Jr NCOs (27%) disagree.
- Less than two-thirds (61%) of Army leaders believe that the content of their most recent course/school was up-to-date with the current operating environment at the time they attended; nearly one-fourth of recent graduates (24%) disagree.

The Army must determine the knowledge, skills and abilities that leaders need to attain at each level through formal education, and convey these through learning objectives in courses and schools. Doing so helps to standardize the base knowledge of the Force. The lack of favorable ratings in these areas that indicates that Army leaders expect to gain other knowledge, skills and/or abilities they are not currently receiving through Army education.

Quality of Instructors

A strength of current Army institutional education is the quality of instructors at schoolhouses. Nearly 80% of recent course graduates rate the quality of instructors at their most recent course or school as good or very good. Most recent graduates (74%) also agree that their course instructor provided useful feedback in a timely manner, though notably, there is less agreement that instructors provided autonomy by allowing choices and options for course work and activities (53%). However, the latter finding is driven heavily by disagreement among company grade officers (37%), warrant officers (23%) and Jr NCOs (23%).

Course-Level Ratings

Indices for key Army institutional education courses are presented below. Table 7 displays the percentage of course graduates who view each of the five course-level criteria favorably (i.e., ratings of agreement or effectiveness).

Table 7. Favorable Ratings for Army Course-Level Criteria.

	Effectiveness in preparing you to influence others	Effectiveness in preparing you to develop the leadership skills of subordinates	Effectiveness in improving your leadership capabilities	Agreement course content is relevant	Agreement course content is up to date
ILE	65%	51%	61%	54%	71%
CCC	40%	38%	44%	46%	56%
BOLC B	48%	42%	47%	45%	68%
WOAC	37%	35%	34%	59%	51%
WOBC	58%	47%	57%	52%	64%
SMC	63%	59%	60%	60%	60%
SLC	49%	53%	50%	52%	59%
ALC	48%	54%	50%	50%	61%
WLC	48%	56%	53%	47%	60%

As mentioned earlier, the views of leaders at senior ranks are generally more favorable than those at lower levels. More than half of the recent Intermediate Level Education (ILE) graduates believe that their course effectively prepared them to influence others in their organization (65%), prepared them to develop the leadership skills of their subordinates (51%), improved their leadership capabilities (61%), and that the course content was relevant to leadership responsibilities faced in their jobs (54%) and was up-to-date with current operating environment at the time they attended (71%).

Compared to ILE graduates, recent graduates of the Captains Career Course (CCC) and Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) B less often view the courses as effective in:

- preparing them to influence others in their organization (40% CCC; 48% BOLC B),
- preparing them to develop the leadership skills of their subordinates (38% CCC; 42% BOLC B),
- improving their leadership capabilities (44% CCC; 47% BOLC B).

Further, in comparison to ILE, graduates of CCC and BOLC B less often agree the course content was relevant to the leadership responsibilities faced in their job (46% CCC; 45% BOLC B) and was up to date with the current operating environment at the time they attended (56% CCC; 68% BOLC B).

Recent graduates from Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC) provide more favorable ratings that their course was effective for improving their leadership skills (i.e. leadership capabilities, ability to influence others, and preparing to develop subordinates) compared to warrant officers who recently graduated from Warrant Officer Advanced Course (WOAC). Further, WOBC graduates more frequently agreed their course was up to date with the current operating environment than WOAC graduates.

There is more similarity in the perceived effectiveness of courses in these areas among recent graduates of NCO courses. The Sergeants Major Course (SMC) is more often viewed effective in preparing graduates for leadership and consisting of relevant and up to date content than other NCO courses. Perceptions of the Senior Leader Course (SLC), Advanced Leader Course (ALC), and Warrior Leader Course (WLC) show a great deal of similarity in ratings.

In summary, 2010 CASAL findings on Army education indicate:

- Leader perceptions of Army institutional education are more favorable in 2010 than observed in 2009.
- Overall, low levels of favorable perceptions toward various aspects of institutional education indicate this area should remain at the forefront of the Army's attention.
- A continuous trend is that reserve component leaders more often view Army institutional education favorably (about 10%) than leaders in the active component.
- Instructors are viewed positively and believed to provide useful and timely feedback.
- There is room for improvement in the effectiveness of course/school content in developing the leadership skills of learners (i.e., preparing them to develop subordinates, preparing them to influence others, improving their leadership capabilities).

An important consideration is the relevance of what is learned and the applicability of the new knowledge and skills to the operational domain, as many leaders do not perceive their units or organizations to be effective in utilizing or supporting what they learn. The inability to transfer

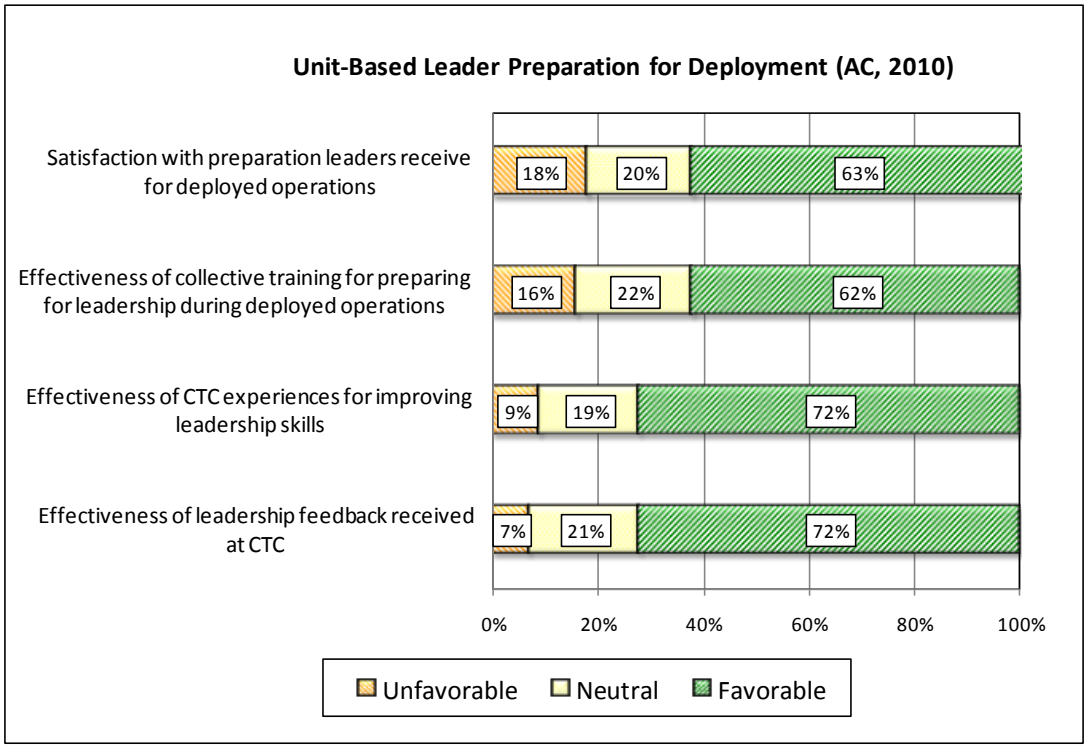
knowledge and skills to the job may be a result of out-dated or no longer relevant course content that is being taught.
Due to the high demands placed on today's leader, the Army should evaluate institutional education systems to ensure leaders are properly prepared for the challenges they will face.

4.4 Unit-Based Leader Development and Training

Pre-Deployment Training and Combat Training Centers

Pre-deployment leader preparation continues to be an area that shows room for improvement (see Exhibit 21).

Exhibit 21. Indicators of unit-based and pre-deployment leader preparation.

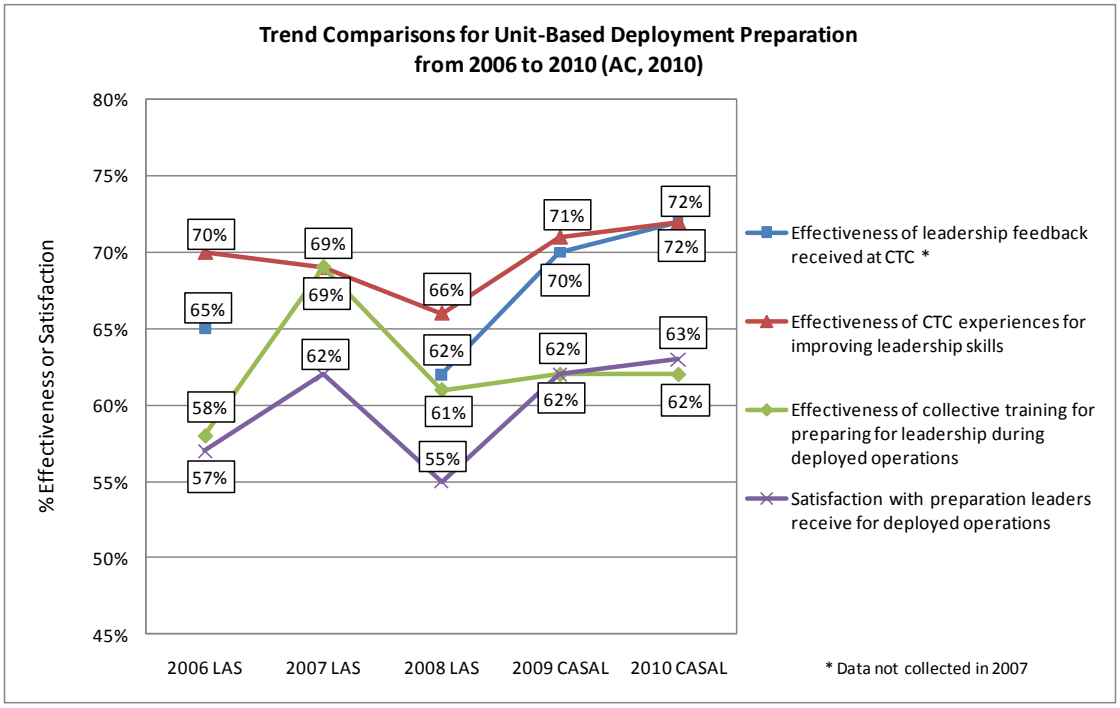


Less than two-thirds of Army leaders rate pre-deployment training favorably:

- 63% are satisfied/very satisfied with the preparation leaders receive for deployed operations.
- 62% of Army leaders rate collective training (e.g., company and higher training events) effective/very effective in preparing them for leadership during deployed operations.
- Company grade officers and Jr NCOs indicate greater levels of dissatisfaction and rate collective training less effective than other rank groups.

Favorable ratings for both of these items show slight fluctuation over the past 5 years (see Exhibit 22 for comparisons of trends).

Exhibit 22. Comparisons of Unit-Based Pre-Deployment Leader Training across Recent Years.



Many units attend a rotation at a combat training center (CTC) as part of pre-deployment preparation. Sixty-one percent of AC leaders (47% RC) indicate that they have attended a CTC at some point in their career. Of those who have attended, 72% rate their CTC experiences as effective or very effective for improving their leadership skills, while 72% rate the leadership feedback received at the CTC as effective or very effective. These findings show an increase in ratings since 2008.

Of leaders who recently attended a CTC (within the past year), about two-thirds rate the experience as effective for improving their leadership skills (68%) and another two-thirds rate the leadership feedback they received as effective (69%). It is possible that leaders do not always immediately perceive or value their CTC experience after they attend, until they have had an opportunity to utilize the information in an operational setting and reflect on it.

CTC Outcomes Over Time for 2010 AC CASAL Participants (% Favorable)

Domain	2+	1-2	<1	<6 mo
Improving Leadership Skills	75%	62%	66%	66%
Collective Training Deployment Prep	64%	63%	62%	59%

CTC Outcomes Over Time for 2009 AC CASAL Participants (% Favorable)

Domain	2+	1-2	<1	<6 mo
Improving Leadership Skills	74%	64%	64%	67%
Collective Training Deployment Prep	71%	59%	59%	66%

Further, of those who attended CTC, 65% report satisfaction with the preparation leaders receive for deployed operations, and that collective training effectively prepares them for leadership during deployed operations. Examining outcomes over time (i.e., how long it had been since they attended CTC) shows about a 12% drop in perceived benefit after 2 years; however, decreases over time appears to be reflecting the half-life of the training, as opposed to an actual decrease in the effectiveness of CTCs. There were no significant differences between deployment status and CTC favorability.

It is important to note that these findings provide a general indication of the effectiveness of the CTC experience for developing leaders. It is not possible to make a direct inference to the effectiveness of CTC cadre in providing leader development and effective leadership feedback. Leaders who attend CTC may also (or only) receive feedback from their unit superiors or other members of their chain of command that positively impacts their development, and thus influences their perception of the CTC experience.

4.5 MSAF Army-360 Feedback Program

This year was the first year that CASAL examined the MSAF Army-360 program in-depth. MSAF provides users a validated approach to garnering feedback from subordinates, superiors, and peers, and comparing that feedback to the leader's self-assessments on a variety of leadership behaviors based on the Army Leadership Requirements Model (FM 6-22). The MSAF program also provides coaching, and a virtual improvement center with leadership instructional materials has been added. The MSAF Army-360 program is well received by those who participate and its effectiveness is improved by increasing program engagement such as sharing results with others, and using the pool of trained coaches. Only slightly more than half (56%) of MSAF participants took full advantage of the program. A little more than half (60%) reported sharing their feedback with at least one other person, but only 38% discussed their results with an MSAF coach.

- 89% of participants concluded that MSAF had at least a small positive impact on their leadership development (72% moderate impact or greater)
    - 53% improvement to self-awareness
    - 47% improvement to readiness to learn
    - 46% improvement to leadership
    - 43% improvement to mission effectiveness

Of those who noted improvement in leadership from MSAF, 36% felt the results lasted more than a year. Even those who have not participated also see MSAF as useful. In fact, 91% of non-participants indicated that they thought MSAF could be an important tool in assisting leader development.

One of the major goals of MSAF is to help increase leaders awareness of their own abilities and to help them to change if necessary. Eighty-two percent of participants indicated that

completing the MSAF helped them to increase their self-awareness, while 73% of participants indicated that completing the MSAF inspired them to improve their leadership abilities.
A future direction of this research should be to examine the factors that really impact leadership development. Current data does not allow us to determine what factors are driving perceived improvements.

Summary of the Quality of Leader Development

Subordinate development continues to lag behind other methods of leader development. One outcome of this is the perceived low level of preparedness of leaders who are promoted, especially at the lowest levels of leadership, which are critical. Of the leader development considerations discussed in this research, it is recommended the Army prioritize its focus on this area.

Operational experience and self development continue to be viewed as strong methods for developing Army leaders. Perceptions of institutional education currently has strengths and weaknesses; course instructors are seen as effective but courses/schools are much less often seen as valuable sources for improving leadership skills. The Army's priority for institutional education should be on improving in the area of knowledge/training transfer to the operational setting, or more plainly, providing Army leaders with the knowledge and skills and enabling them apply it to their jobs.

Perceptions of unit-based pre-deployment training are generally favorable, especially with the preparation that occurs at CTC. Satisfaction and ratings of effectiveness for other unit-based collective training and leader preparation continue to be less than optimal and show room for improvement. However, deployments are often ambiguous and challenging endeavors, and no level of training can prepare leaders for every possible challenge they will face. Thus, current Army doctrine (FM 7-0) aimed at developing agile and adaptive leaders to conduct full spectrum operations in an era of persistent conflict is supported.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Findings from the 2010 CASAL provide the Army with several new insights on leadership and leader development issues and the current working environment of the Army. The increased sampling of Army leaders in 2010 compared to 2009 provides even more assurance of the representativeness of the data and the ability to generalize findings to the Army as a whole. The following points highlight new insights, important trends observed across multiple data collections, and key areas that warrant further consideration.

New Findings and Insights

- Work perceptions by officers and NCOs are generally favorable, but differ by rank levels. Commissioned officers more often perceive the work performance of officers and NCOs to be both timely and of quality that exceeds expectations. Most NCOs also perceive both officers and NCOs to generally be effective, though Jr NCOs less often rate both officers and NCOs as effective in these areas.
- The relevance and usefulness of the content taught at Army institutional courses/schools and leaders' abilities to *transfer* new knowledge and skills show room for improvement.
- About one in five Army leaders views their immediate superior as demonstrating toxic leadership behaviors.
- Leader effectiveness in certain core leader competencies were found to distinguish the best leaders from the worst leaders (*Leads by Example*, *Leads Others*, and *Creates a Positive Environment*).

Key Findings across Years (Trends)

- The leader development that occurs between Army leaders and their subordinates continues to show room for improvement.
- Institutional education continues to be rated less favorably than operational experience and self development, both in its impact on development and its effectiveness in preparing leaders for new leadership responsibility.
- The career intentions of active duty captains remain unchanged from the past year; this cohort continues to show the greatest level of *indecision* about their intentions to make the Army a career and serve until retirement eligible or beyond 20 years. 2010 data show the smallest percentage of AC captains (11%) in recent years that probably or definitely will leave the Army upon completion of their current obligation.
- Army leaders are generally rated favorably across the core leader competencies and the leader attributes.

Considerations for Improvement

As with the 2009 CASAL, three areas emerged in 2010 findings that most warrant further examination: *leader development within units* (specifically subordinate development) and *Army institutional education, and toxic leadership*. Additionally, new findings on the incidence and impact of toxic leadership behaviors in the Army also warrant attention.

- Extend and test applicability of ACFLS throughout the Army educational system to more fully address the scope of foundational socio-cultural skills necessary for successful cross-cultural influence and negotiation. This includes emphasizing non-regionally specific capabilities such as using cultural knowledge in planning and conduct of operations.
- Obtain information on leader developments specifics including strong identification of what behaviors to develop, to what extent they must be developed (i.e., setting standards for success in both proficiency and mastery), how this development (i.e., self-development, OTJ, schoolhouse) will occur, and when it will occur (i.e., before taking new position, after taking new position, based on levels of other skills, unique to branch, obtaining rank, etc.).
- Increase lieutenant education in BOLC on NCO roles/function, ideally with instruction provided by NCOs, in order to reduce the gap between NCO-Officer perceptions (Experimentation and Analysis Element Division, 2010).
- Modify unit climate assessments so that they focus on components most useful to commanders, and extend the company commander climate survey requirement to the battalion level. "Nested climate surveys from battalion, brigade, and division would allow consistent checks on climate and give an opportunity for command initiative on climate" (Keller-Glaze et al., 2010, p. XII). Changes can include support and use of innovative problem-solving, interpersonal trust, and perceived leader toxicity.
- Evaluate and promote leaders based, in part, on their responsibility to foster and maintain a positive command climate. Focus on long-term success by recognizing legitimate concerns about subordinate input, applying a top-down approach, reinforcing chain of command responsibilities of providing feedback instead of relying on centralized selection boards, and minimizing the administrative load by leveraging web-based technology (Reed, 2004).

Subordinate Development. Special focus for the improvement of leader development in units is placed on the direct subordinate development that occurs between Army leaders and their direct reports. Current findings (along with trends) from several survey items indicate this area shows room for improvement:

- *Develops Others* has consistently been the lowest rated core leader competency. Only 61% of Army leaders are rated as effective in developing their subordinates; 59% of Army leaders have rated their immediate superiors as effective in creating or calling attention to leader development opportunities in their assignment.
- In 2010, the percentage of leaders that report their unit/organization places a high/very high priority on leader development is at an all time low at 46% (compared to 53% in 2009; 55% in 2008).

- Only 57% of Army leaders believe they have time to carry out the duties and responsibilities for developing their subordinates, down from 63% in 2009. Additionally, 30% of company grade officers and Jr NCOs disagree they have time to do this.
- 30% of Army leaders report that Army leaders in their unit/organization develop the leadership skills of their subordinates to a large or great extent.

The following are considerations and sources of additional information for improving subordinate development within units:

Senior Leader Communication of the Priority for Leader Development.

- Create an organizational vision that makes leader development a priority in the unit. Research (Stam, Knippenberg, & Wisse, 2010) suggests that a vision explicitly involving subordinates is more likely to cause followers to align with the vision than visions not involving subordinates. This translates to a top-down promotion of an organizational priority for leader development in units, whereby commanders integrate leader development into their vision for the organization and as part of their measure of success.

Challenging On-the-Job Assignments Paired with Developmental Counseling.

- DeRue & Wellman (2009) conducted an empirical study of 60 managers and found that on-the-job (OTJ) experiences promoted skill development if they were challenging, but that as experiences became too challenging, skill development diminished. However, the effect was mitigated by developmental feedback. Thus, even the most challenging of OTJ experiences proved useful in skill development as long as developmental feedback was present. These findings suggest that Army leaders should engage in subordinate development that captures each of these methods: the favored method of learning from superiors (and receiving feedback) and the positive impact of OTJ experience. Leaders should assign challenging OTJ experiences to subordinates and follow-up with performance feedback through developmental counseling sessions. The Center for Army Leadership Commander's Handbook for Unit Leader Development provides tools and methods for leaders to use in making job assignments, and conducting developmental counseling.

Day-to-Day coaching and Communication with Subordinate Leaders.

- Army War College students cited the day-to-day interaction and coaching they received from their superiors as key to their leader development (Aude, Keller-Glaze, Riley, & Fallesen, 2007). Coaching refers to a leader specifically observing and intervening to guide or improve a leader's performance in a given skill or ability. Thus, leaders can improve leader development by increasing their engagement with subordinate leaders and providing them opportunities to practice leadership skills while being coached on how to improve. The Center for Army Leadership Commander's Handbook for Unit Leader Development details specific ways to engage leaders in this way.

- Designate a field grade officer that is not part of the rating chain as a trained coach or mentor and to hold unit accountable for leader development. Candidates for this might be the S1, S3, or XO. This experienced and well-trained leader would be able to provide a seasoned perspective that is more developmentally-focused than the day-to-day guidance that a junior leader receives from their immediate superior. In addition, the mere designation would send a clear message that leader development is truly important.

Create Training Support Packages (TSPs) for the Center for Army Leadership Commander's Handbook for Unit Leader Development. Create Institutional, Unit and Self Development Versions of the TSP. Integrate into Training Requirements across the Three Domains.

- The Center for Army Leadership's Commander's Handbook for Unit Leader Development identifies what are known to be the key activities associated with leader development. The handbook does not so much teach the concepts of leader development, however, as provide them along with appropriate application tools. To further inculcate and implement leader development, the tenets of this handbook should be converted into TSPs and aligned with institutional, unit, and self development learning requirements at various phases of a leader's development in the Army.

Institutional Education. Findings from the 2009 CASAL showed a sharp decline in favorable perceptions of the effectiveness of Army courses and schools. In 2010, these negative ratings are less pronounced, but still indicate an overall decline from when the data were first collected. Key findings and trends that provide evidence for the perceived holistic contribution of institutional education in developing leaders include:

- Institutional education continues to be the lowest rated domain for preparing leaders to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility (3 year trend).
- Institutional education is rated among the lowest in terms of its positive impact on leader development (6 year trend).
- The content of courses is perceived by many as not meeting their needs. One-half (51%) of recent course graduates in the AC believe the content was *relevant* to leadership responsibilities they faced in their job, and 61% agree the content was *up-to-date* with the current operating environment at the time they attended.
- Transfer of knowledge and skill gained in courses/schools to the leadership responsibilities leaders face shows room for improvement. Less than half (48%) of AC leaders rate their receiving unit or organization as effective in utilizing or supporting the leadership skills they learned in their most recent course.

The following are considerations and sources of additional information relevant to the improvement of Army institutional education:

Improve the Transferability of Course Content to the Job.

- Conduct a pilot program of selecting attendance method that is consistent with leader development principles and Soldier preference. Ratings of the effectiveness of the educational experience were similar among resident, distance, and blended methods, which suggests further emphasis on matching attendance method with Soldier choice and Army demand.
- Ensure engagement is occurring and that students are ready to learn. In order for students to be interested the content of the course must be perceived relevant and be up-to-date. Instructors could have a real impact by making sure that they teach enduring principles that are relevant to the demands leaders face in day-to-day activities and Army leadership requirements. Steele and Fullagar (2009) demonstrated a link between 3 primary course characteristics and student engagement, namely that students have clear roles and expectations, that instructors provide support for autonomy (a previously noted deficiency), and that instructors provide timely and high-quality feedback (a previously noted strength).
- Blume, Ford, Baldwin, and Huang (2010) conducted a meta-analytic review of training transfer. Their review examined past research to identify the variables that have the greatest impact on transfer of training. They found that trainees' characteristics were moderately related to training transfer outcomes:
    - General cognitive ability (.37)
    - Voluntary participation (.34)
    - Conscientiousness (.28)

  In addition, environmental variables were shown to be low to moderately related to training transfer:
    - <u>Positive transfer climate</u> (.27)
    - <u>Support from superiors and peers</u> (.21)

  Further, the researchers found that the impact of trainee characteristics and environmental factors were more important when training open skills (e.g., leadership, conflict resolution) versus closed skills (e.g., steps to operate machinery). They suggest that through open skills training, trainees have more choices which allows them to more easily apply what they learned compared to the prescribed steps delivered in closed skills training. While there is not much a commander can do about general cognitive ability and conscientiousness, the 2010 CASAL shows a need to improve things that the commander can improve including command climate and supporting newly-acquired knowledge and skills.

Consideration of Course Pedagogical Methodologies.

- A recent review by Dunst, Trivette, & Hamby (2010) of four specific adult learning methodologies examined how to increase the effectiveness of learning methods based on specific teaching practices. Although an examination of pedagogical methodologies is beyond the scope of the CASAL, the review found that courses that engaged in at least 5 of the 6 following learning characteristics demonstrate the highest learner outcomes (i.e., skill and knowledge acquisition):
    - Introduce – Engage students in a preview of the materials early in the learning process.
    - Illustrate – Illustrate the applicability of the content.
    - Practice – Engage students in the use of the knowledge or skills through practice (during the course).
    - Evaluate – Engage students in a process that evaluates their knowledge against outcomes and consequences.
    - Reflection – Engage students through self-assessments of their understanding to identify next steps in the learning process.
    - Mastery – Engage students in a process to assess their experiences across specific situations or a set of standards.

Toxic Leadership Behavior. Findings from 2010 CASAL indicate a majority of Army leaders have observed a leader who demonstrated toxic leadership behaviors in the past year. These behaviors are viewed as a serious problem and have detrimental effects on unit, individual, and organizational outcomes.

- About one in five Army leaders report that their immediate superior demonstrates toxic leadership behavior. Four out of five Army leaders (83%) report observing a leader who demonstrates toxic leadership behavior in the past year. However, almost all (97%) also observed an extraordinary leader in the past year.
- Leaders with superiors who demonstrate toxic leadership behavior report lower levels of morale and trust in their immediate superior (i.e., confidence following him/her into life or death situations) compared to leaders whose immediate superiors demonstrate constructive leadership behavior.

Improve Existing OER / NCOER Systems to Identify Negative Leadership Behaviors.

- Currently, the U.S. Army is considering how to update or improve current evaluations (i.e., modify OER and NCOER). Results of the 2009 CASAL (Keller-Glaze et al., 2010) led to the recommendation to reinforce what's important by modifying the OER and NCOER to reflect Army leadership doctrine (p. XII):

  > "At a minimum, Part IV of Form 67-9 of the OER should be updated to align with the Army leadership competencies and attributes of Army Leadership, FM 6-22. Leader development and leadership development are most effective when systems and processes are aligned. The objective of adopting a competency model for leadership in FM 6-22 was to set a consistent, enduring model of leader development. This model that includes creating a positive environment should be extended to full implementation and practice."

  Keller-Glaze et al. (2010) went on to recommend extending the company commander climate survey requirement to the battalion level, arguing that (p. XII), "Nested climate surveys from battalion, brigade, and division would allow consistent checks on climate and give an opportunity for command initiative on climate." They went on to advise evaluating and promoting leaders based, in part, on their responsibility to foster and maintain a positive command climate.

Utilize Multiple Perspective Feedback to Assist Identifying Negative Leadership Behaviors.

- The Army's Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) program is a tool that incorporates insights from one's superiors, subordinates, and peers and compares with self-ratings. The goal is to provide unbiased feedback from multiple perspectives so that the leader can gain the personal insight needed to maintain leadership strengths and address leadership developmental needs. The additional benefit is that followers are given a voice, and an opportunity to discuss difficult subjects in a safe, anonymous, and productive way. This is especially important given the low rate of those whom will confront, and the high prevalence of leaders perceived as being toxic.

  Certainly, some toxic leaders (particularly many in the aggressive/mean-spirited category) may be uninterested in developmental feedback, but others may for the first time learn that their positive intentions or zealous actions are actually having counterproductive effects on their subordinates. It is also much easier for the leader to consider that a single assessor is biased or inaccurate, but it is much more difficult to be dismissive when there is recurring information provided by multiple assessors from each source (Steele & Garven, 2009). This approach should be comfortable for the assessed leader because they may pick their Army 360-MSAF raters, the data is not archived, not releasable, and not included in any formal evaluations or management practices, and data is aggregated so that the leader (and only the leader unless they decide to discuss with others) learn how they are being perceived by the group as a whole.

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