2016 Center for Army Leadership
Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL)

Military Leader Findings

The Center for Army Leadership

Mission Command Center of Excellence,
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A separate report from the Center for Army Leadership, 2017-02, provides findings from this survey on Army civilian leaders.

14. ABSTRACT CASAL is the Army's annual survey to assess the quality of leadership and leader development. 2016 findings are based on responses from 11,006 Army leaders, consisting of 7,798 sergeants through colonels in the Regular Army, US Army Reserve, and Army National Guard, and 3,208 Army Civilians. This 12th year of the survey has additional coverage on methods of unit leader development, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB), and integrated professional military education (PME) and unit training. Among uniformed leaders, 11 of 13 leader attributes and 2 of 10 leadership competencies surpass a benchmark of 75% favorable. *Develops Others* and the *Leads* category of competencies warrant the most improvement. Operational experience has the largest percentage of AC leaders rating it as an effective domain of leader development at 75%, followed by self-development at 71%, and institutional education at 61%. While the quality of PME is rated favorably by 77% of recent graduates, smaller percentages believe their course was relevant to their job duties (65%) or improved their leadership (56%). Integration of AC and RC leaders in PME courses and in unit training exercises is well received as having a positive effect on these learning experiences. Only one third of leaders indicate awareness of formal leader development plans and guidance in their unit. The climate in which leadership occurs has mixed indicators. There is high commitment to one's unit and effective collaboration and demonstration of discretionary helping behaviors (i.e., OCBs) in teams and work groups. However, there is insufficient access to resources to accomplish duties to standard and an increase in problems with workload stress. Levels of morale and career satisfaction remain relatively stable and moderate. The intentions of AC captains to remain in the Army reached a 12-year high. Existing leader development resources are designed to address areas that need improvement but remain underutilized. Recommended steps are offered to address the results.

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Executive Summary

Purpose

The Center for Army Leadership's (CAL) Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL) is a recurring, longitudinal study to capture assessments from the field about leadership and leader development. CASAL has been used to inform senior leaders about leadership quality and associated upward or downward trends since 2005. CASAL affords decision makers and stakeholders the option to make informed decisions, course adjustments, or to leverage prevailing strengths. Agencies and individuals may submit data queries to CAL for further analysis of CASAL results. CASAL findings inform groups such as the Army Profession and Leader Development Forum, Human Capital Enterprise Board, Army Learning Coordination Council, as well as special studies and initiatives.

Method

CAL applies scientifically sound methods to survey development, sampling, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting to obtain accurate and reliable information. The survey addresses leadership and leader development as explained by Army regulations and doctrine. Survey items are chosen based on historical tracking of issues, new input from stakeholders in the Army leader development community, and CAL-identification of emerging issues. Sampling practices produce results with a margin of error of +/-4.0% or less for the nearly 600,000 Army leaders represented. Data were collected from October 26 through November 28, 2016. Survey respondents consisted of 7,798 globally dispersed, active component (AC) and reserve component (RC) Soldiers in the ranks of sergeant through colonel and 3,208 Army Civilians. Data analysis includes assessment of percentages by cohort and ranks, analysis of trends, comparisons across experiences and demographics, coding of short-answer responses, correlations, and regressions. Findings from other surveys and data sources are consulted to check the reliability of CASAL responses. This report concentrates on uniformed leaders, and a second report presents findings from Army Civilian leaders.

For most items, percentages are used to convey the relative frequency of respondents who assess leaders or leader development positively and to show trends across time. As an aid in interpretation, favorability levels have been set based on past CASALs and other surveys. A rule of thumb applied to CASAL's assessment of leadership behaviors is the 'three-fourths favorable threshold' whereby item results receiving three-fourths or more favorable responses (i.e., 75% *effective* plus *very effective*) are considered positive. Items where favorable responses fall below this threshold and/or receive 20% or more unfavorable responses are considered areas

for improvement. Across 11 previous years of CASAL results, several consistent patterns emerged that provide a backdrop to aid understanding of specific findings:

- Group percentages indicating favorability of leadership and leader development increase with the rank and length of service of the respondent.

- Ratings on items that have greater personal impact (e.g., agreement that your *immediate superior* is an effective leader) tend to be more favorable than ratings for items that are less specific (e.g., rating the effectiveness of your *superiors* as leaders).

- Results from active and reserve component leaders tend to be similar, within 1% to 3% on many items. Meaningful differences are noted where applicable.

Summary of Findings

Leadership Competencies and Attributes

The Army's expectations for leaders are established in Army leadership doctrine (ADRP 6-22, 2012f) and reinforced in its educational programs, the multi-source assessment and feedback program (MSAF), and performance evaluation systems. The 10 leadership competencies consist of the observable activities that leaders are expected to do and can be improved through development. CASAL results consistently demonstrate that the leadership requirements in doctrine significantly predict effective leader and unit outcomes. CASAL results provide evidence that the Army doctrinal leadership requirements model aptly captures desired leadership characteristics.

Results from the 2016 CASAL show that leadership expectations are generally met across the force. The most favorably rated competencies are *Getting Results* and *Preparing Oneself*. *Getting Results* primarily consists of actions involved in arranging and managing resources that lead to mission accomplishment. *Preparing Oneself* involves assessing one's developmental needs and engaging in self-development. Results for the remaining eight competencies fall below a three-fourths favorable benchmark indicating room for improvement. Missing from the set of most favorably rated competencies are any from the *Leads* category, which are the essence of influence and providing purpose, motivation, and direction. *Leading Others* is considered the most crucial category of competencies for effective leadership. However, only 69% of uniformed leaders are rated effective or very effective, 15% neutral, and 16% ineffective or very ineffective at *Leading Others*. As in past years, the competency *Develops Others* continues to be of concern across all leader cohorts. Findings about competencies are reinforced by results of behaviors that nest within the competencies. The ratings of those

behaviors also show room for improvement, such as building effective teams and helping subordinates manage excessive workload demands.

Leader attributes are characteristics desired of leaders that shape their capability to perform leadership actions. The doctrinal set of leader attributes that supports and enables leadership activities are nearly all met by three-fourths or more of leaders. While assessments of the 13 leader attributes remain near or above the three-fourths level, there is up to a 12% difference between the most and least favorable attributes. Most leaders are rated effective at demonstrating the *Army Values* while fewer leaders effectively demonstrate *Innovation* and *Interpersonal Tact*. *Army Values* are the most direct indicator of *Character,* and the high ratings at 95% (46% effective and 49% very effective) show it is among the least troublesome leadership aspect in the force. In contrast, *Interpersonal Tact* – a skill vital for the successful performance of most other leadership actions, which includes understanding and adjusting ones behavior when interacting with others – is consistently one of the two lowest rated attributes; the other is *Innovation*.

Results indicate 69% to 74% of leaders effectively demonstrate a combination of behaviors supportive of the mission command philosophy, ratings that fall narrowly short of a three-fourths favorable threshold and identify areas for improvement. Leader demonstration of the mission command philosophy is strongly associated with the core leader competencies and attributes, specifically *Leading Others, Sound Judgment, Communicating, Innovation, Empathy*, and *Developing Others*.

Four-fifths of leaders are rated effective in demonstrating *Mental Agility* and are rated favorably on actions that reflect critical thinking, such as developing a quick understanding of complex situations, dealing with unfamiliar situations, drawing inferences from available information or experience, and keeping an open mind to multiple possibilities. While these results are at favorable levels, the Army will continue to face challenges and complexity that will require deep and rapid critical thinking and decision making. Therefore, reinforcement and enhancement of these types of skills is important for future mission success.

Career Satisfaction, Morale, and Intentions to Remain in the Army

Morale is a measure of how people feel about themselves, their team, and their leaders. Morale levels have remained modest and steady since 2009. The current level of morale is high or very high for 51% of AC leaders and 55% of RC leaders, and more than one-fourth rate it as neither high nor low. Career satisfaction represents a compilation of affective and other attitudes regarding characteristics spanning a leader's entire career. High career satisfaction

indicates favorable past experiences and can be a predictor of future attitudes. Of leaders surveyed, 69% report they are satisfied with their Army career thus far. Levels of career satisfaction have rested at or slightly above two-thirds since 2012. Nearly one-fourth of AC junior NCOs, a cohort typically early in their career as Army leaders, report dissatisfaction.

Intentions to remain in the Army is an important factor for Army readiness, as it indicates interest in continued service among the pool of leaders who will be available for promotion. Leader intentions to remain in the Army have also remained fairly consistent since first assessed by CASAL in 2005 and continue to be positive. Of leaders not currently eligible for retirement, 69% in the AC and 76% in the RC intend to stay in the Army until eligible for retirement or beyond 20 years. Of AC captains, 57% intend to remain in the Army until they are retirement eligible or beyond, which is the highest percentage observed by CASAL over the past 12 years (the lowest was 39% in 2007). The current level is similar to that recorded by the Army Training and Leader Panel (ATLDP) study in 2000 (Fallesen et al., 2005). Captains' intentions to remain are stable despite a gradual decline from 2011 to 2014 in the selection opportunities for most basic branch AC captains to the rank of major, before selections returned to previous rates in 2015 and increased in 2016.

Working Environments

Satisfaction with the quality of military and civilian leadership in units/organizations remains the same since first assessed in 2013. Factors that most strongly contribute to satisfaction with military leadership include trust among unit members, the trust shown from senior leaders, upholding standards, excessive workloads actively being addressed, being informed about one's job, having the right resources, and freedom of action. Satisfaction with leadership quality largely depends on how attitudes are shaped by the care shown toward followers and others.

Army leaders hold positive attitudes about the environments in which they operate. Commitment to their team or immediate work group is high—92%. Over four-fifths believe their assigned duties are important to the unit or organization and know what is expected of them in their positions. About three-fourths hold favorable attitudes about the ability of their unit to perform its mission and are proud to identify with their unit. Moderately positive perceptions of mission command implementation in units are reflected by ratings that subordinates are enabled to determine the best ways to accomplish their duties (68%) and that they are allowed to learn from honest mistakes (68%). While 67% of leaders agree that standards are upheld (e.g., professional bearing or adherence to regulations), 28% indicate there is a discipline problem in their unit. Among AC junior NCOs, 35% indicate a discipline problem exists in their unit.

Trust is a quality that serves as a basis for effective relationships between leaders and followers. Of AC leaders, 79% report a favorable level of trust among unit members (40% report high or very high trust, 39% report moderate trust). Response patterns show that trust tends to be greater in units where standards are upheld, unit members are empowered to make decisions pertaining to their duties, and unit members are allowed to learn from honest mistakes. Collectively felt trust, or perceptions that an organization's leaders place trust in its members, is more frequently reported by field grade officers and senior NCOs than leaders at lower levels. These perceptions are associated with operational climates supportive of disciplined initiative. Subordinate leaders who feel they are trusted by their superiors tend to concurrently perceive they are empowered to make decisions pertaining to the performance of their duties and are allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes.

A majority of leaders report that members of their teams or immediate work groups engage in organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), which are discretionary behaviors that promote organizational effectiveness. Examples include helping others in the performance of their duties when needed (83%), showing respect toward one another even under stressful conditions (82%), and willingly performing additional tasks beyond those assigned (73%). These behaviors are associated with high levels of trust among members of units, satisfaction with the quality of leadership in units, and confidence in the ability of the unit to perform its mission.

Stress from a high workload is a persistent problem for leaders and worsening. In 2016, 28% of AC respondents report workload stress is a serious problem (compared to 20% to 27% over the previous seven years). Common sources of workload stress reported include personnel shortages, poor guidance regarding work requirements, and lack of physical resources or materials to accomplish work. Two-thirds of respondents assess their immediate superior as effective in taking action to help subordinates manage excessive workload demands. Results show that effective leaders mitigate workload stress by being proactive in managing task assignments, issuing clear guidance, advocating for resources, acknowledging subordinate contributions, and respecting work-life balance.

Engagement represents the level of commitment leaders have for their organization and the level of initiative they apply to their duties. Army leaders in all rank groups score favorably on engagement as measured by an index score that assesses perceived work conditions, attitudes toward assigned duties, and their development. The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) is the Office of Personnel Management's metric for evaluating organizations. The President's Management Agenda (Donovan, 2014) set goals for all federal agencies to reach engagement index scores on the FEVS of at least 67% in 2016. CASAL's metric for engagement scores tend to be higher for Army Civilians than annual FEVS scores, and CASAL military leader engagement

scores tend to be within a percentage or two of civilian scores. Leaders who score high on engagement in the CASAL tend to view their units and teams favorably, report satisfaction with the quality of leadership in their unit, and perceive high levels of trust among unit members.

Counterproductive Leadership

Counterproductive leadership involves destructive conduct that decreases followers' well-being and undermines unit functioning. This is reflected in any leadership activity or attitude that goes against the desired outcomes of positive leadership actions (AR 600-100, 2017a). The frequency of counterproductive leadership behaviors in the Army remains limited and relatively unchanged since first assessed by CASAL in 2012. At the most detrimental levels, counterproductive behaviors are manifested as toxic leadership.

About 5% of leaders are assessed as displaying more counterproductive than productive behaviors, to the extent their behavior would be considered frequent or severe enough to be labelled as "counterproductive." Analysis of the field's ratings show that leaders who effectively *Build Trust*, live the *Army Values*, demonstrate *Sound Judgment, Lead by Example*, and demonstrate *Empathy* are least often perceived to demonstrate counterproductive leadership behaviors. Counterproductive leadership behaviors run contrary to the *Army Values* and strain bonds of trust in units. Subordinates report low levels of trust in leaders whom they perceive to demonstrate counterproductive leadership behaviors and assess these leaders as less effective in trust-building behaviors. CASAL results continue to affirm that leaders who engage in a combination of counterproductive behaviors are perceived as having adverse effects on command climate; the cohesion, discipline, and capability of the teams and work groups they lead; and the work quality, engagement, and morale of their subordinates.

Leader Development Domains

Leader development practices are established by the Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS, 2013c) and Army Regulation (AR) 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development* (2014a), with three primary domains. The operational domain receives the highest percentage of AC and RC leaders rating it as effective for preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility. Army leaders have consistently rated operational experience favorably, currently at 75%. Informal practices (e.g., opportunities to lead others, on-the-job training, learning from peers, and development from mentoring) are viewed as having the largest positive impact on respondents' development as leaders. Personnel management is a conduit to the highly rated operational experience domain. While 63% of AC leaders believe that their mix of assignments and amount of time in key developmental assignments have been

appropriate for their leader development, less than half agree they have had sufficient input or predictability in their series of assignments.

Effectiveness ratings of the self-development domain have improved to 71% after a notable decline in past years (from 84% in 2010 to 62% in 2013). The drop had been greatest among AC junior NCOs whose levels improved by 12% between 2013 and 2016.

Army leaders (61% of AC and 66% of RC respondents) rate their experiences with professional military education (PME) as effective for their development at levels similar to the previous three years. Resident courses are favored over non-resident, distributed learning in terms of their impact on leader development. An imperative of the Army Total Force Policy (ATFP; see Army Directive 2012-08, 2012a) is integrated PME where AC and RC leaders learn side-by-side in the schoolhouse. Three-fourths of leaders have attended an integrated PME course, a setting that is well received by learners as having a positive effect on the learning experience. While CASAL sampling precision does not permit course-level examination of findings, aggregate results indicate Army education remains a contributor to leader development. Of recent graduates, 77% rate the quality of the education received as good or very good and indicate course cadre provided constructive feedback on leadership. Favorable ratings for the learning challenge presented by courses, the relevance of course content to graduates' next duties, and the effectiveness of courses for improving leadership remain relatively low and unchanged.

An intended outcome of PME is to provide leaders with the attributes and competencies required to operate successfully in any environment (AR 350-1, 2014a). About half of recent AC graduates (56%) rate their most recent course effective or very effective at improving their leadership capabilities, and trend results show only a modest increase in these attitudes since 2009. Developing leadership skills differs from acquiring functional area skills, declarative knowledge, or other learning that occurs in educational settings. Leaders develop skills that support their ability to lead through everything they are exposed to or engage in (e.g., opportunities during operational experiences, learning from good and bad leadership examples, formal training, and education). However, leadership skill attainment can be difficult to trace back to a specific course module or individual event.

Leader's Role in Development

The competency *Develops Others* continues to require the Army's continued focus and attention. Less than two-thirds of leaders are rated effective at developing subordinates or assessing the developmental needs of subordinates, well below a three-fourths favorability threshold. Just over half of respondents indicate their immediate superior has developed them through remaining approachable for the subordinate to seek input and ask questions; providing encouragement or praise; involving the subordinate in a decision-making or planning process; fostering a climate for development (e.g., allow learning from mistakes); and sharing experiences, lessons learned, or advice. All leaders can choose to use any or all of these actions to develop others. Developing others can be improved through practice and, over time, solidified as habits. None of these actions take great amounts of time or special training. Direct-level leaders must balance many demands, including those related to the mission, superiors, and their direct reports. The skills for developing others start as simply as having questions to ask, knowing how to ask challenging questions that are not perceived as criticism, and motivating people to perform well and develop.

The quality and frequency with which performance counseling occurs are low. Less than half of leaders agree performance counseling has been useful for setting performance goals for improvement. Feedback occurring during the normal performance of work is a complementary approach to counseling. From two thirds to one half of leaders report their immediate superior takes time to talk with them about how they are doing in their work (63%), how they could improve their duty performance (53%), and how to prepare for future assignments (51%).

More than half of leaders report they engage in mentoring, either as a mentor, mentee, or both. Most leaders who receive mentoring indicate the need is currently being met with regard to its impact on their development. Leaders with unmet mentoring needs would like more frequent interaction, more in-depth discussions on current developmental needs and career planning, and mentors who are highly knowledgeable and engaged who hold a genuine interest in the mentee's development.

Addressing the *Develops Others* need within the Army requires a multi-pronged approach – deliberate development of oneself and of others must become ingrained in the Army's culture. Senior leaders and senior raters can reinforce the importance of developing subordinates through the leadership example they set, the developmental behaviors they role model, and the questions they ask their subordinate leaders. Subordinate development can be perceived by some as one more important thing to do that competes with an already high operational tempo and workload. However, preparing subordinates for future roles with increased

responsibility and authority can be done while simultaneously meeting today's training requirements.

<u>Unit Training and Leader Development</u>

About half of respondents (47% AC; 49% RC) indicate their unit or organization places a high or very high priority on leader development, while 29% indicate the priority is neither high nor low. These findings are comparable to CASAL's previous assessments since 2008. AC respondents indicate their unit or organization frequently or very frequently uses the following methods to develop leaders: self-development (49%), authorizing resident school/course attendance (45%), leader development programs such as Officer Professional Development (OPD) or Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development (NCOPD) programs (42%), team-building activities or events (33%), collective training in which individual leader development is emphasized (33%), stretch or developmental assignments (25%), and professional reading and/or writing programs (19%). The most prominently used methods are arguably the least resource intensive for a unit. Self-development places primary responsibility on the individual Soldier to plan and execute, and authorizations for school or course attendance often only require a unit to release a leader for a period of time. Despite the occasional to frequent use of these seven activities, only one-third of AC respondents (34%) are aware of a formal plan or published guidance for leader development held by their unit or higher headquarters, the same percentage found in 2015.

The purpose of unit training is to prepare units for operations and to exercise and improve individual skills of *leading* and *developing* in units. Over half of AC leaders favorably assess their unit's training effectiveness (56%) and the degree of challenge (52%) to prepare for unit mission readiness. Results of the 2016 Status of Forces Survey (SOFS; Office of People Analytics, 2016) provide context for these results, as AC respondents tend to hold more confidence in their personal preparation to perform their wartime duties and less certainty in the readiness of their unit as a whole. CASAL results reflect a similar pattern. An imperative for the Army Total Force Policy is for the integration of active and reserve component Soldiers and units in training. One-third of AC respondents (34%) and a slightly larger percentage in the RC (40%) participated in integrated training during the past 12 months. Attitudes regarding the positive effect of the integration on the training experience are uniformly favorable across all rank groups in both components.

Combat training centers (CTCs) are intended to provide a rich environment in which units train and individuals develop. Over half of AC respondents (56%) and 38% in the RC have participated as part of the training audience at a CTC at least once in their career. Respondents who trained

at a CTC within the past 12 months rate the experience effective for improving their leadership skills (71%) and their ability to lead the preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations (79%). Respondents rate the CTC effective for improving their unit's mission readiness (74%), a level that has trended more favorably since 2012 (68%). Two-thirds of AC respondents indicate they received effective feedback about their leadership at the CTC (68%), and 74% noted improvement to their subordinates' leadership skills as a result of the experience.

Conclusions

Army leaders continue to hold favorable attitudes toward their assigned duties, environments in which they serve, and those with whom they interact. Leaders' commitment to their teams and immediate work groups remains very strong. The occurrence of discretionary behaviors by leaders to help and support one another in completing missions is high, and most leaders report positive levels of engagement. The least favorable engagement indicators relate to having access to the right resources to accomplish one's duties and the frequency with which informal performance feedback discussions are occurring. Levels of perceived workload stress, morale, trust, and career satisfaction, especially among junior-level leaders, could be more positive. Workload stress affects 28% of Army leaders as a serious problem and is gradually getting worse.

Less than two-thirds of leaders are rated effective at *Develops Others*, which spans an eight-year trend as the lowest rated competency. The leader's role in subordinate development remains an area for focus and improvement. This conclusion is reflected across several CASAL indicators: about half of leaders receive performance counseling too infrequently, most indicate counseling has only a small or moderate impact on improving their leadership skills, about one-third rarely or never receive informal performance feedback, about half rarely or never receive feedback or guidance on how to improve their performance or how to prepare for future roles, and more than one-third do not have a mentor.

Operational experience remains a strong domain for leader development. Within units, the most frequently occurring leader development methods include emphasizing self-development, authorizing resident school/course attendance, and conducting scheduled leader development programs (e.g., OPD or NCOPD). These methods are arguably the least resource intensive for a unit, and these results help explain why only half of Army leaders perceive leader development as a high priority in their unit. Team-building activities, collective training used concurrently for individual leader development, and stretch or developmental assignments tend to occur only occasionally or rarely in most units.

Professional military education (PME) and self-development also contribute to leader development but do not fill all of the gaps left by operational experience or how leaders choose to engage in the opportunities they have. PME course experiences are rated favorably for their quality of education, though ratings for the effectiveness of courses/schools at improving leadership capabilities are underwhelming and, on average, are not improving.

CASAL results affirm the validity of the leadership competencies and attributes described in the Army's doctrinal leadership requirements model (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). Assessments of the effectiveness of competencies and attributes correlate highly with leadership outcomes, such as perceived levels of trust, absence of counterproductive leadership behaviors, and overall effectiveness. Current leader performance surpasses a three-fourths favorability threshold on nearly all attributes but only two competencies: *Preparing Oneself* and *Getting Results*. It is reasonable to assert that Army leaders should excel at *Leading Others* and exhibiting *Interpersonal Tact*, yet these are not among the highest rated competencies or attributes. The competency of *Leads Others* has remained relatively stable with 69% AC effectiveness ratings since 2009. The *Interpersonal Tact* attribute is at 76% leaders rated effective with a stable trend since 2013.

Character is the highest rated characteristic among all attributes, competencies, and behaviors, and *Stewards the Profession* is the third highest rated competency. These are established patterns that show consistent results across CASAL administrations. By increasing the performance skills in the most critical leadership areas, potential concerns around character, the profession, counterproductive leadership, and developing others should simultaneously be lessened. Performance can be addressed through a concerted Army emphasis on improving critical leadership skills, specifically those within the *Leads* category of competencies (*Leads Others, Builds Trust, Extends Influence Outside the Chain of Command, Leads by Example,* and *Communicates*).

Leading Others and *Developing Others* are skills that can be learned through study, observation, and practice, but some leaders fail to value the process of leadership and its three influencing actions (providing purpose, motivation, and direction). Some discount the process of assessing leadership, providing feedback, and acting on the feedback received. These are the very skills that should set Army leaders apart from other professions. *Developing Others* is stated in doctrine as an action, and unit leader development is to be viewed as a complementary process reflected in everything leaders do. Development should be more than participation in an event or training exercise, or attendance at a course. Mere participation in these activities does not meet the requirement of leaders developing themselves and developing others to enable agility and gain high levels of expertise. Leaders who are proactive in seeking feedback and

development will improve at a faster rate than those who wait to be counseled, coached, mentored, sent to a course, or told what to study. It is the individual leader that has the most to gain or lose through development and the greatest say in what they learn and how much they engage in learning.

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Introduction

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Survey Development, Administration, and Response Rates

Each year, survey development begins with the identification of issues of importance in leadership and leader development. As one purpose of CASAL is to adequately track trends and identify patterns in results over time, many survey items from past years are used without change during each administration of the survey. Other items are dropped, added, or modified in order to balance the coverage of leadership topics with the time required to respond and respondent fatigue. Stakeholders from the Army leader development community are contacted to provide recommendations for new topics. This is done to ensure CASAL assesses relevant and timely issues in the Army. Data are collected from respondents through both quantitative (e.g., select a rating) and qualitative (e.g., type a brief answer) means. In an effort to minimize survey length and respondent fatigue, item skip patterns and branching are employed to tailor sections of the survey to specific ranks or to leaders with relevant experiences. Items are developed and selected to address the survey's essential elements of analysis (EEAs), which is a list of targeted topics, issues, and survey items. A sampling of EEAs includes:

Quality of Leadership

- What is the overall level of quality of Army leaders?
- How effectively do Army leaders demonstrate core leadership competencies and leader attributes?
- How do climate and situational factors affect leadership?
- What is the impact of counterproductive leadership behavior in the Army?

Leader Development

- How effective are Army leader development practices?
- How effective are Army leaders at supporting the development of subordinate leaders?
- How effective is the mentoring that occurs between mentors and mentees?
- How effective are Army institutional courses/schools for preparing leaders?
- What is the contribution of combat training centers in developing quality leaders?

The 2016 CASAL was administered online to a representative sample of Regular Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and Army National Guard officers, warrant officers, and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) who were globally dispersed. In addition to uniformed leaders, Army Civilians have participated in CASAL since 2009 (findings for Army Civilians are presented in a separate technical report). During the last week of October 2016, the survey invitation was sent via e-mail to a random sample of 88,000 personnel within the uniformed and civilian cohorts, of whom 11,006 participated, for a response rate of 12.5%. Data collection spanned four and one-half weeks and ended the last week of November 2016.

The level of sampling precision met the desired standard for all five rank groups (field grade officers, company grade officers, warrant officers, senior NCOs, and junior NCOs) for the active component (AC) and reserve components (RC) (i.e., responses obtained resulted in a sampling error of ± 2.8% to ± 4.0%). The sampling error for the entire survey across components and cohorts is ± 1.1%, meaning that 95 out of 100 times the observed percentage will be within 1.1% of the true value. As the sampling aimed to collect representative data at the rank group level (i.e., within ± 4.0% margin of error), this leads to senior-level ranks being over-represented and junior-level ranks being under-represented in the data in comparison to the true active and reserve component populations. Data were weighted in 2016 using an industry standard process to produce survey estimates that are representative of their respective populations. The weighting adjustment was computed to reproduce known population totals for rank and

component, as junior-level leaders are underrepresented in the CASAL respondent sample in comparison to the true Army population. As junior-level leaders tend to provide less favorable assessments compared to other rank groups, data weighting reduced the percent favorable for most items. The difference between unweighted and weighted results varies by item set and the frame of reference for a rating and ranges from a 2% difference for items on job attitudes to a 10% difference for items on career satisfaction and morale. CASAL trend comparisons to results from previous years are also interpreted using weighted data for each year. The sampling error, together with the stratified random sampling and data weighting methods used, means that the CASAL respondents are representative of the Army population.

In addition to meeting stringent sampling error goals, the respondent sample closely approximated the population of the Army in distribution of gender (within 2%) as reported by the Integrated Total Army Personnel Database (ITAPDB). The sample also included deployed Army leaders—41% AC and 24% RC had deployment experience within the past 36 months. Further, 7% of AC[1] and 6% of RC respondents were serving on a deployment at the time of the survey.[2] The population, sample, response rate, and sampling error for each uniformed rank group are presented in Table 1. Sampling procedures invited comparable numbers of respondents from the U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard for most rank groups.

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[1] As a point of comparison, 5% of the active duty respondent sample for the 2015 Status of Forces Survey reported that they were deployed at the time of the survey.

[2] The percentage of deployed CASAL respondents (i.e., 6-7% of the respondent sample) has remained stable since 2013 and at a level lower than observed in previous years (16% in 2009, 18% in 2010, 16% in 2011, and 11% in 2012). The decline reflects a corresponding drop in the proportion of Army leaders in a deployed status.

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

Population Strata	Population	Random Sample (Invitations)	Returned		Sampling Error
			N	Response Rate	
Active Component (Regular Army)					
Field Grade Officer (major–colonel)	28,929	3,500	682	19.5%	3.7
Company Grade Officer (second lieutenant–captain)	48,656	6,000	594	9.9%	4.0
Warrant Officer (warrant officer 1–chief warrant 5)	14,464	4,500	727	16.2%	3.5
Senior NCO (sergeant first class–sergeant major)	48,662	7,000	1,157	16.5%	2.8
Junior NCO (sergeant and staff sergeant)	119,941	10,000	719	7.2%	3.6
Total Active	260,652	31,000	3,879	12.5%	1.6
Reserve Components (US Army Reserve and Army National Guard)					
Field Grade Officer	25,491	4,500	701	15.6%	3.7
Company Grade Officer	44,581	10,000	766	7.7%	3.5
Warrant Officer	11,931	4,500	784	17.4%	3.4
Senior NCO	52,106	7,000	982	14.0%	3.1
Junior NCO	154,993	15,000	686	4.6%	3.7
Total Reserve	289,102	41,000	3,919	9.6%	1.6
Total Uniformed Personnel	549,754	72,000	7,798	10.8%	1.1

Organization of Findings

This report is presented in two parts:

- The first part, *Quality of Leadership*, includes chapters that cover current levels of leader effectiveness in the Army, the effects of climate and situational factors on leadership, trust, mission command, and counterproductive leadership.
- The second part, *Quality of Leader Development*, includes chapters that cover the Army leader development domains (i.e., operational, self-development, and institutional), Army education systems, the leader's role in the development of subordinates, and unit training and leader development.

Each chapter of this report ends with a summary of conclusions and recommendations. A list of the recommendations proposed to address the findings is also presented in Appendix A.

Results Interpretation

This report contains substantial detail and enumeration of percentages to facilitate precise interpretation of results. Additional statistical analyses are performed to aid in the interpretation of the survey topics and to draw out higher-level meaning across items. Appendix B includes a summary of the range of statistical analyses conducted for CASAL. Accumulated trends reported over the past decade increase the clarity of interpretations. Thus, a high degree of confidence can be placed in the findings.

Within each chapter, key findings are summarized and presented in call-out boxes. Trends are identified and reported for items asked in previous years of survey administration. Where applicable, CASAL findings are supplemented with results from other Army and DoD surveys that have assessed similar topic areas. For accuracy and simplicity, results are emphasized for AC respondents by rank group (i.e., field grade officers, company grade officers, warrant officers, senior NCOs, and junior NCOs). In many cases, findings are comparable between AC and RC rank groups, though exceptions are noted. Results comparisons at more specific levels (e.g., branch or functional area) are not presented due to limitations with data representativeness, but may be available upon request.

Most quantitative items ask participants to respond on a scale of 1 to 5, where "5" is the most favorable (e.g., *very effective*, *strongly agree*, or *very satisfied*) and "1" is the least favorable (e.g., *very ineffective*, *strongly disagree*, or *very dissatisfied*), with a neutral middle point "3". To ease the interpretation of results, the 5-point response categories are collapsed into 3-point scales. For example, responses of "5" (strongly agree) and "4" (agree) are collapsed and

reported as the percentage of participants who "agree or strongly agree." Thus, most charts in this report display the percentage of favorable, neutral, and unfavorable responses for an item or rank group.

A rule of thumb applied to CASAL's assessment of leadership behaviors is the "three-fourths favorable threshold" whereby item results receiving three-fourths or more favorable responses (i.e., 75% agreement or effectiveness) are considered positive. The 75% threshold was derived from results of a supplemental CASAL study that examined the relationship between leadership behaviors and estimates for the level of risk to unit mission readiness. Items where favorable responses fall below this threshold and/or receive 20% or more unfavorable responses are considered areas for improvement. Similarly, a 6% difference in an item's results between years is a useful guideline for identifying meaningful change over time. While these rules of thumb may be applied as general guidelines to data interpretation, each item warrants its own consideration. Several factors affect the interpretation of item favorability and change, including the sampling error for each sub-group, cohort, and component being examined, and in some cases, variation in the way items are worded between years.

Part One: Quality of Leadership

1.1   Army Leader Effectiveness

Leadership in the Army is defined as "the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organization" (ADRP 6-22, 2012f, p. 1-1). The Army's leadership requirements model identifies core leader competencies and attributes to enable leaders to become competent at all levels of leadership. The model describes what is expected of Army leaders and what the Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS, 2013c) aspires to produce or enhance. The practical value of the model is to define the actions and behaviors that are used to guide and assess leaders' performance.

CASAL serves as *the* benchmark in the Army for assessing leader effectiveness in demonstrating the doctrinal core leader competencies and leader attributes (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). Since 2009, CASAL has employed a consistent method of assessing leaders' performance, which enables trend comparisons across years. Specifically, CASAL items ask respondents to assess their immediate superior, supervisor, or first line leader on a range of behaviors, attributes, and outcomes. This approach of capturing upward ratings of a single target leader is effective, as most Army leaders have an appropriate opportunity to observe and become familiar with patterns of effectiveness of their immediate superior's leadership. Findings have demonstrated that Army leaders reflect a relatively stable profile of strengths and developmental areas across the competencies and attributes. Leaders are consistently assessed more favorably in demonstrating the leader attributes compared to the competencies.

Core Leader Competencies

Competencies provide a clear and consistent way of conveying expectations for Army leaders. They apply across all levels of leader positions. An important element of competencies is that they can be developed through focus and effort. As leaders progress throughout their careers, they should aspire to refine and increase their proficiency to perform the core leader competencies and learn to apply them to increasingly complex situations (ADRP 6-22, 2012f).

Since 2009, results have demonstrated a three-tiered established pattern in the relative position of highest, middle, and lowest rated competencies. The highest rated competencies are *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self,* as more than 75% of AC respondents rate their immediate superior either effective or very effective,

> *Gets Results and Prepares Self are the most favorably rated competencies. Develops Others continues to show the most room for improvement.*

while less than 10% rate their superior ineffective or very ineffective (see Figure 1)[3]. Seven competencies constitute the middle ground across the set of 10 competencies, including *Stewards the Profession*, *Creates a Positive Environment*, *Leads by Example*, *Extends Influence Outside the Chain of Command*, *Builds Trust*, *Communicates*, and *Leads Others*. Effectiveness ratings for these competencies are 69% to 74% of leaders, while 13% to 16% are rated ineffective or very ineffective.

The percentage of favorable ratings across the competencies are equally split between effective and very effective. However, 6% more leaders are rated at the very effective level than effective for *Leads by Example* and *Creates a Positive Environment,* while 7% fewer leaders are rated at the very effective level than effective for *Develops Others*. *Develops Others* continues to be the core leader competency that has the most room for improved ratings. In 2016, 61% of AC leaders are rated effective or very effective in developing their subordinates. From 2009 to 2015, favorable ratings for leaders developing their subordinates have fluctuated between 55% and 60% effective or very effective. Ineffectiveness ratings for leaders developing subordinates have been consistent over time, with about one in five leaders rated ineffective.

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[3] Figures 1 and 3 include the results of all 5 response options showing respondent ratings for the 10 core leader competencies and 13 leader attributes to provide a more detailed understanding. The majority of the other charts in this report present results using a collapsed 3-point scale for ease of interpretation.
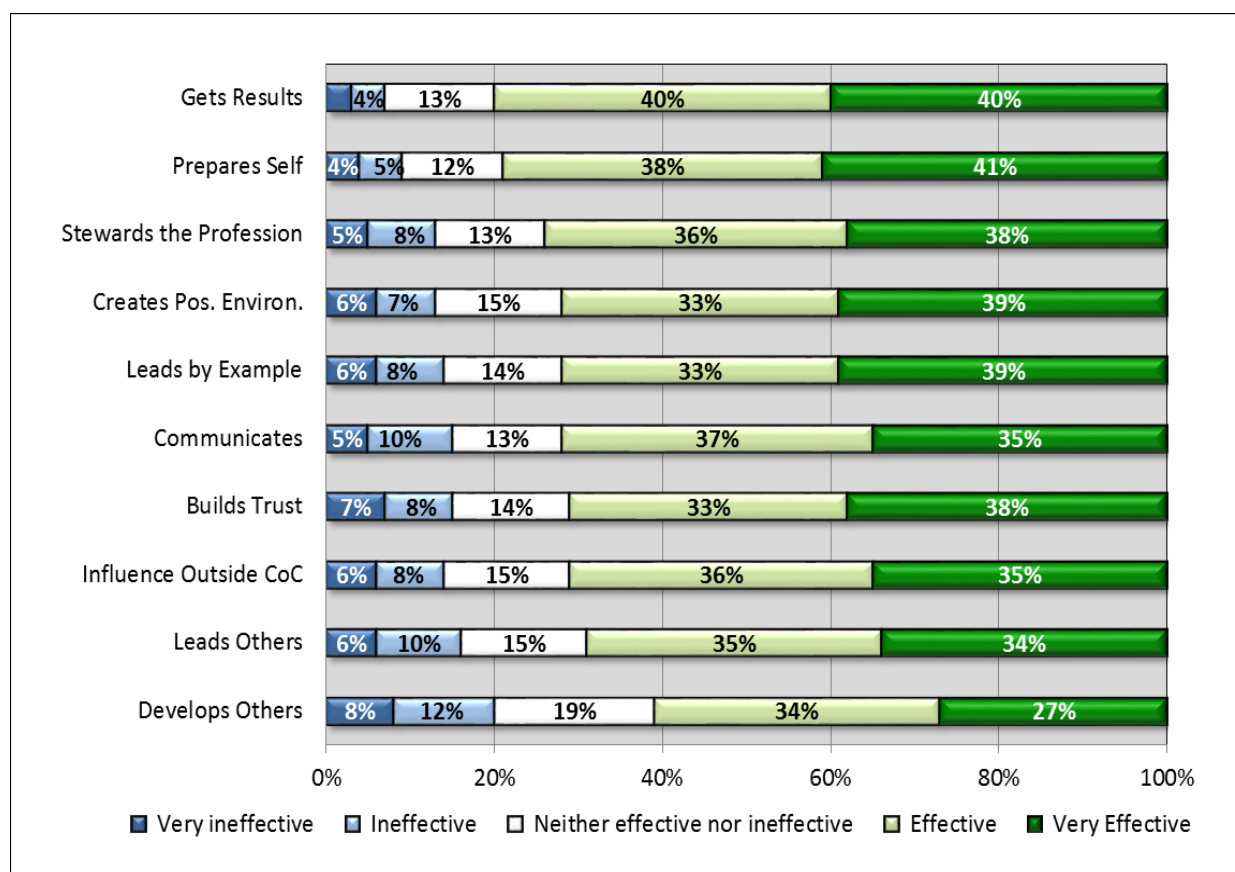
Figure 1. AC Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating the Core Leader Competencies[4]

Overall, assessments of leader effectiveness in demonstrating the core leader competencies have been very stable since 2013 and show a subtle trend of improvement since 2009 (see Figure 2). *Extends Influence Outside the Chain of Command, Leads by Example, Creates a Positive Environment,* and *Prepares Self* are the competencies that show the largest increase in favorable assessments over the past seven years (+8%). The competency *Leads Others* has varied only between 66% and 69%.

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[4] Data labels for values lower than 4% are not included in Figure 1 or subsequent charts in this report due to limited space.
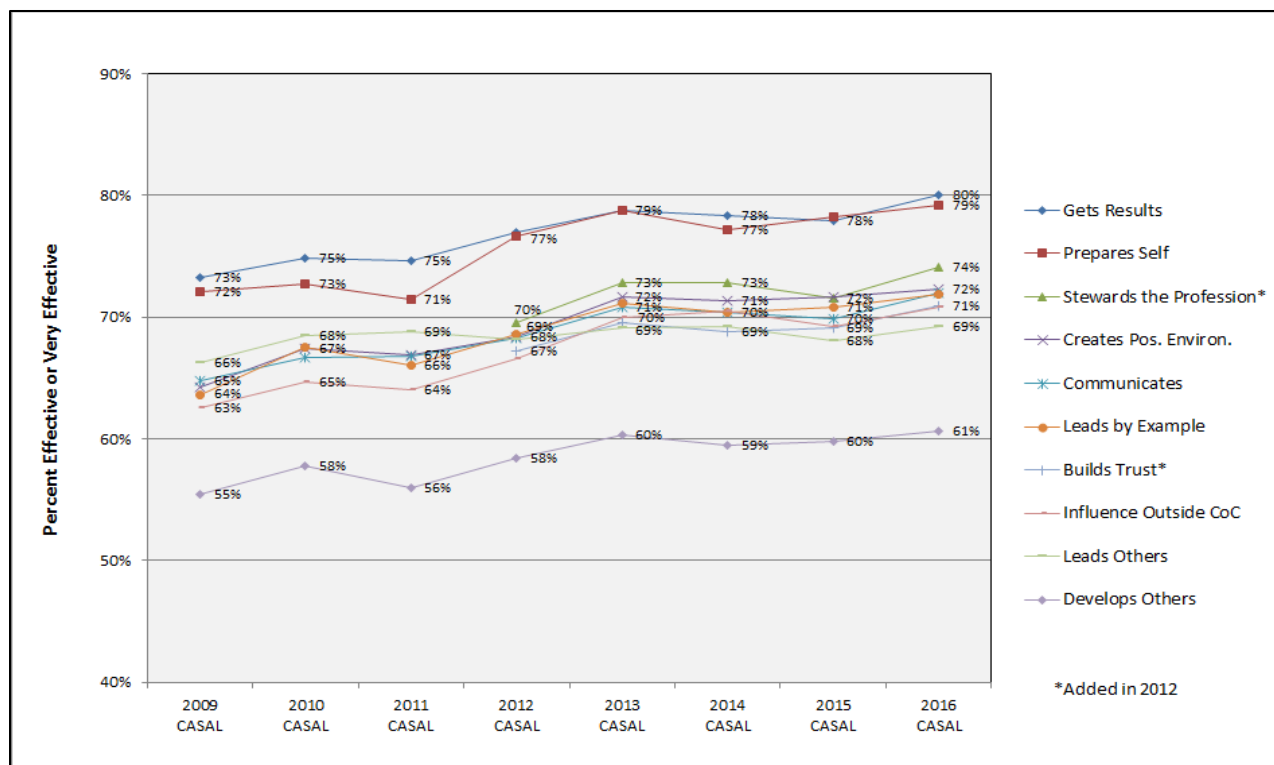
Figure 2. Comparison of AC Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating the Core Leader Competencies from 2009 to 2016

Results show that *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self* are the only competencies in the list of 10 that meet or exceed a three-fourths favorability threshold. This is an indication that there is room for improvement in the Army in eight core areas related to leading effectively. Notably, results of the five competencies that comprise the *Leads* category (i.e., *Leads Others*, *Builds Trust*, *Extends Influence Outside the Chain of Command*, *Leads by Example*, and *Communicates*) are among those assessed in the middle tier, currently at 69% to 74% effective or very effective, and show no substantial change over the past four years.

Leader Attributes

The attributes represent the values and identity of Army leaders (character), how leaders are perceived by followers and others (presence), and the mental and social faculties that leaders apply when leading (intellect). CASAL results have consistently captured favorable assessments of Army leaders across the range of attributes, and overall, findings do not indicate there are widespread deficiencies. CASAL's assessment of the leader attributes has evolved since 2009 to reflect changes to descriptions within the leadership requirements model (ADRP 6-22, 2012f), to better reflect the underlying attributes being assessed, and to limit perceived redundancy in

survey items. The current list of attributes have been included in CASAL since 2012, which provides a consistent means for examining trends.

The most favorably rated leader attributes include demonstrating the *Army Values*, *Military & Professional Bearing*, and *Confidence & Composure* (see Figure 3), which represent a well-established trend in CASAL results. The two attributes that are consistently ranked the least favorably are *Interpersonal Tact* and *Innovation*. Importantly, Army leaders are generally rated effective or very effective in demonstrating all of the leader attributes (73% to 85%). Between 5% and 12% of respondents rate their immediate superior ineffective or very ineffective in demonstrating any of the leader attributes. Similar to the competencies, the level of favorable assessments for the leader attributes were trending upward prior to 2013, and since then have remained high and very stable (± 2%) (see Figure 4).

> *Army leaders are assessed favorably across all of the leader attributes. Army Values is consistently the most favorable, while Interpersonal Tact and Innovation are the least favorable.*
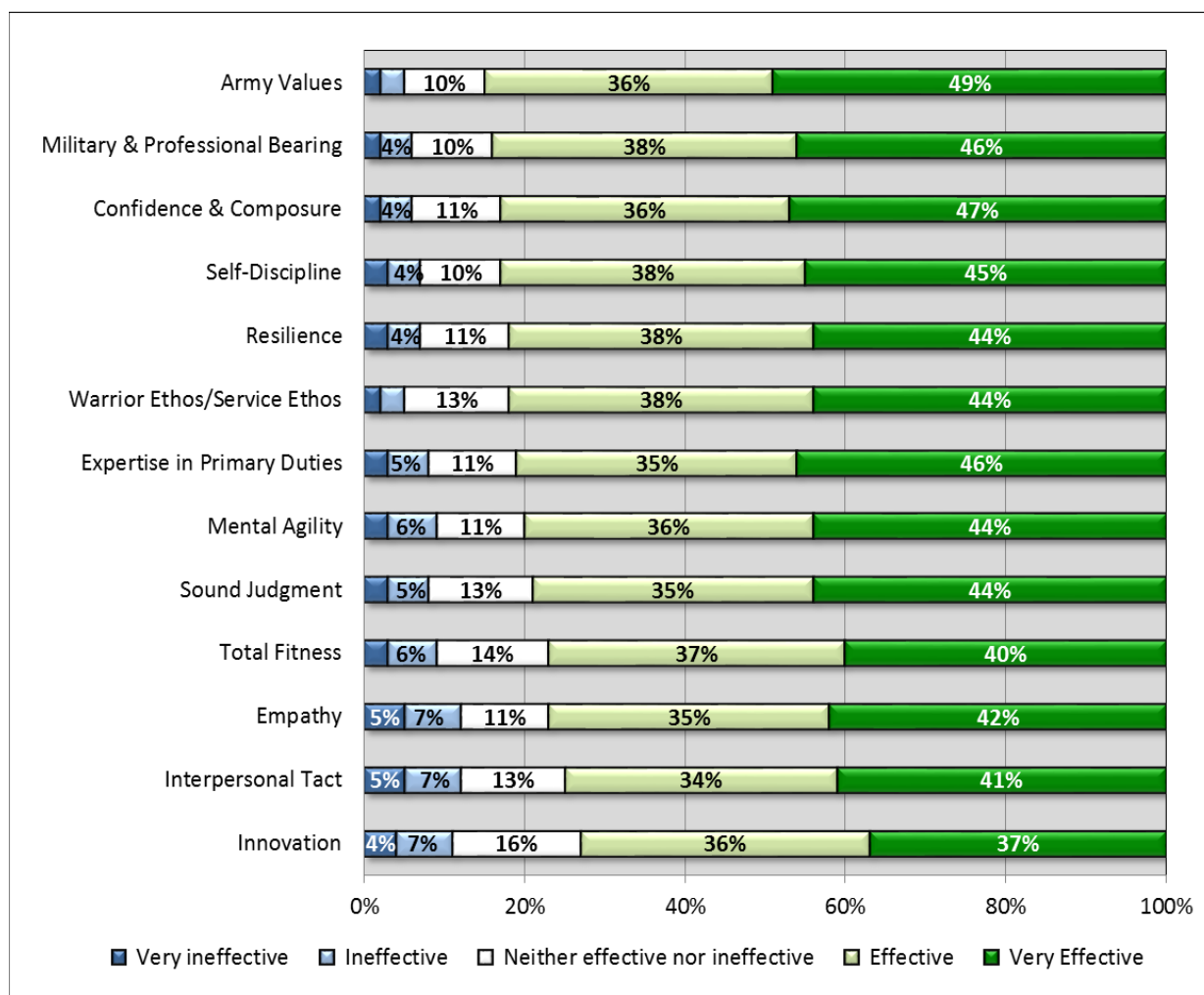
Figure 3. AC Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating the Leader Attributes
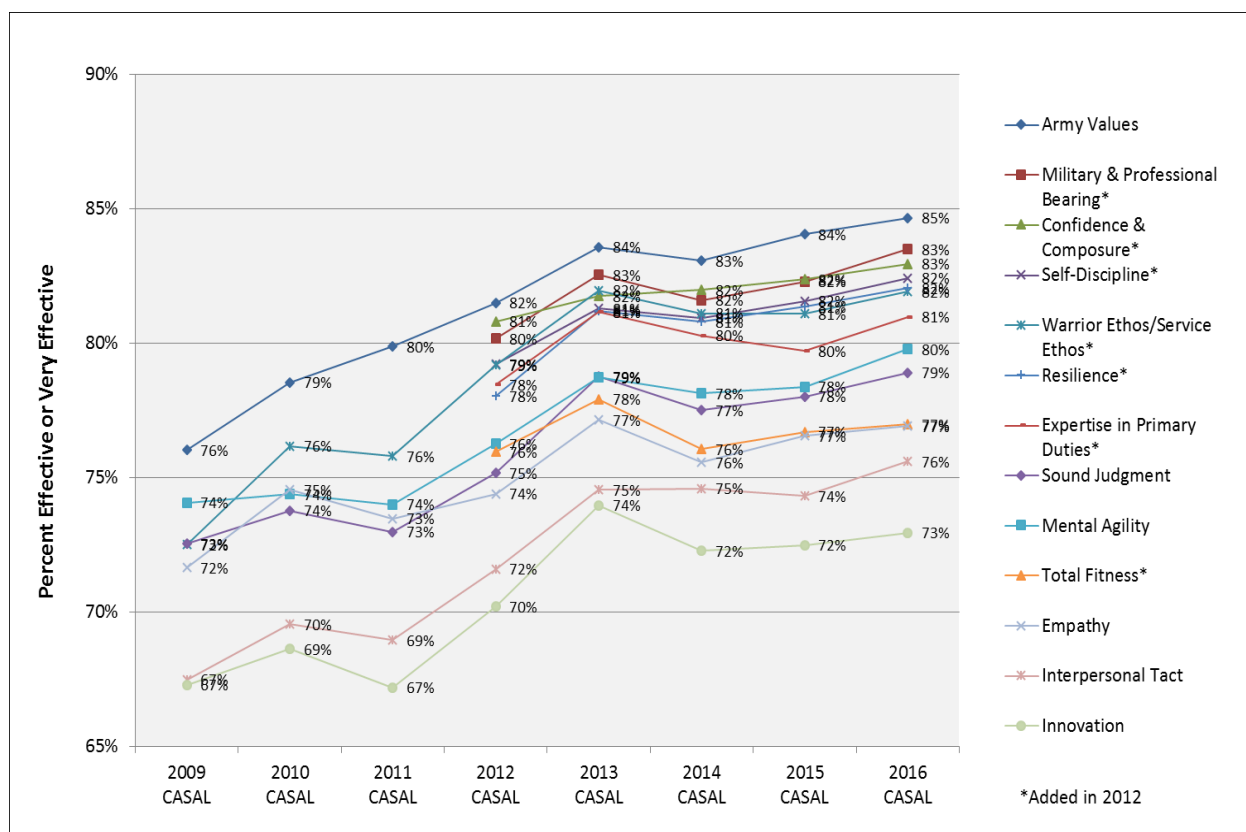
Figure 4. Comparison of AC Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating the Leader Attributes from 2009 to 2016

Leadership Effectiveness Index Scores

An alternative method for examining leader competency and attribute ratings is through leadership effectiveness index scores. An index score is a measure of the proportion of favorable responses across a set of items. Index scores are calculated as the average of the percent positive of each item in a set of items. Leadership effectiveness index scores were calculated for the 10 competencies, the 13 attributes, and for all 23 competencies and attributes together as a more robust measure of leadership effectiveness. A key benefit of an index score is that it allows for examination of change in the level of favorable ratings across a large set of items (e.g., competencies and/or attributes) in a more holistic fashion than trying to interpret individual item results over time. Results of leadership effectiveness index scores are interpreted at the overall component level and for each rank group of assessed leaders (i.e., the rank group of respondent's immediate superior). Figure 5 presents the 2016 results for the overall (i.e., competencies and attributes combined) leadership effectiveness index score by AC and RC rank group of the assessed leader. At the rank group level, the index scores for general

officers are highest while junior NCOs are lowest, which is a stable pattern since first assessed in 2012.
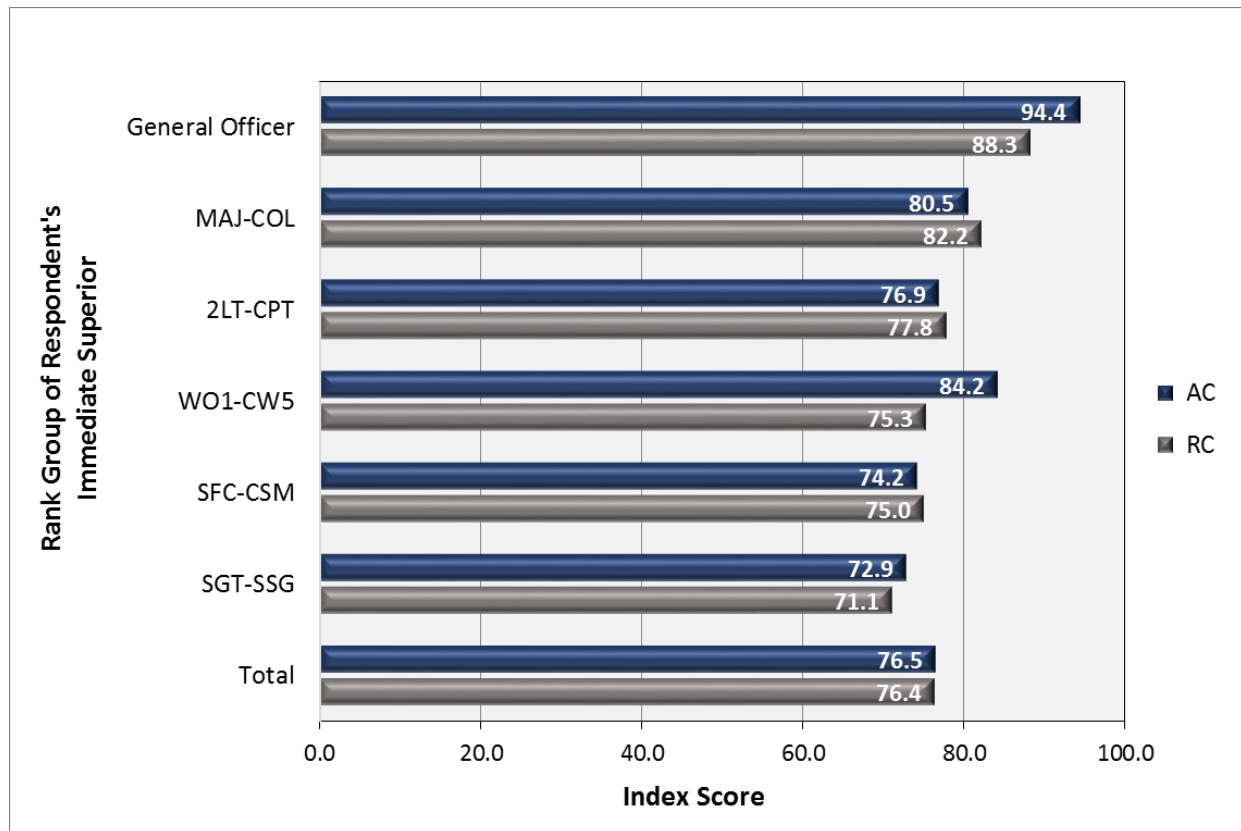
| **Figure 5.** Leadership Effectiveness Index Scores by AC and RC Rank Group

Figure 6 presents the trend for leadership effectiveness index scores at the competency and attribute level for AC and RC leaders.[5] Similar to the item level results, index scores show the stability of ratings since 2013, and the greater favorability in ratings for the attributes compared to the competencies. Results for AC and RC leaders tend to remain within 3.0 points of one another, a small margin.

There are several reasons why leadership effectiveness index scores increase or decrease over time. Throughout the Army, leaders are constantly being developed through training, experience, and education in the operational, institutional, and self-development domains (ADRP 7-0, 2012g). It should be expected that the Army's continuous and progressive process for developing its leaders will lead to an increase in leader effectiveness across the force. In

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[5] For consistency, trend results for leadership effectiveness index scores begin in 2012. This is the year in which CASAL items began reflecting the current competencies and attributes in ADRP 6-22 (2012f).

short, leader development inputs should increase leadership effectiveness index scores over time. At the same time, the Army experiences ongoing turnover in its leaders. Effective leaders at middle to senior levels separate or retire from the Army and subordinate leaders are promoted to new levels of leadership and responsibility. Army leader development must keep pace with these changes in leaders to ensure leadership effectiveness across the force remains high. The trend, which shows a high degree of stability in scores, is an indication that the Army is doing a good job of striking this balance.
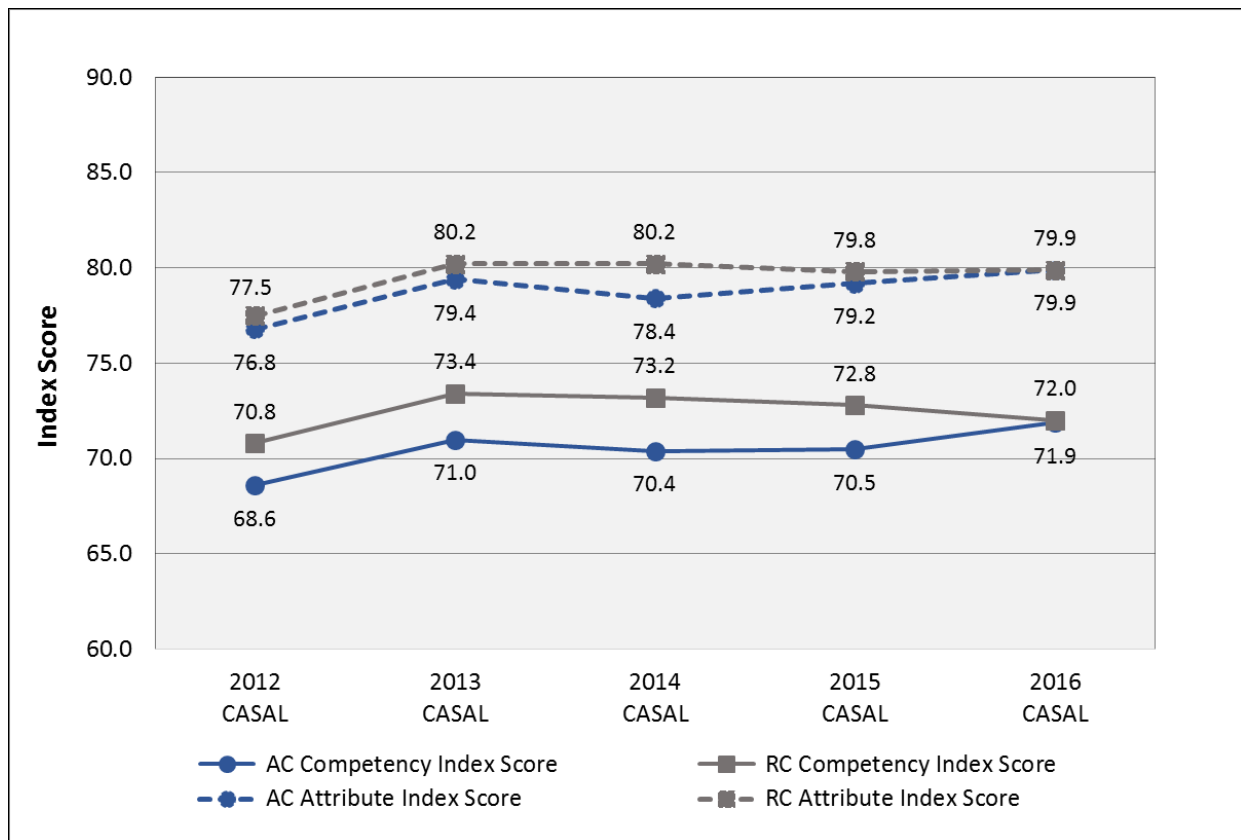
Figure 6. Trends for AC and RC Competency and Attribute Index Scores (2012 to 2016)

Supporting Leadership Behaviors

The 2016 CASAL included additional coverage on leader behaviors that are included as sample behaviors in the competency and attributes summary tables in ADRP 6-22 (2012f). Results for these behaviors are presented in Figure 7. Additionally, a closer examination of behaviors related to *Developing Others* is presented in chapter 2.3 of this report.

The results for two behaviors presented in Figure 7 consistently meet or exceed the three-fourths favorability threshold and, therefore, represent strengths of Army leaders. First, leaders who set the standard for integrity and character model *the Army Values*. The standard-bearers in units and organizations positively influence followers and others through *Leading by Example*. Army leaders are also assessed favorably in conducting the preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations—a critical component of both individual and unit mission readiness. This level of leader proficiency and readiness is supported by effective developmental experiences at combat training centers (CTCs) and through professional military education (PME), both of which are also assessed favorably (79% and 74% effective, respectively) in preparing leaders to perform these functions (see chapters 2.4 and 2.2).

> *Army leaders are strong in setting the standard for integrity and character, and conducting the preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations.*

A majority of Army leaders are assessed as effective on four behaviors in Figure 7 in which the level of favorable results are within the overall margin of error (± 1.6%) of the three-fourths favorability threshold. These behaviors can be considered near strengths. Specifically, leaders who effectively emphasize organizational improvement practice good stewardship of the profession and care about the functioning of the units and organizations in which they operate. Improving one's organization is part of the Army's definition of leadership (ADRP 6-22, 2012f).

Also near the favorability threshold are results for behaviors related to *Mental Agility* and critical thinking, specifically, in developing a quick understanding of complex situations and in dealing with unfamiliar situations. Leaders demonstrate *Mental Agility* through flexibility of mind and when anticipating or adapting to uncertain or changing situations (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). Critical thinking is a thought process that aims to find facts, think through issues, and solve problems. This thought process enables leaders to understand changing situations, arrive at justifiable conclusions, make sound judgements, and learn from their experiences (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). A majority of respondents also indicate agreement their immediate superior keeps an open mind to multiple possibilities.

> *Army leaders are viewed favorably in demonstrating behaviors related to mental agility, critical thinking, and emphasizing organizational improvement.*

How effective is your immediate superior at the following?

Leadership Behavior	Ineffective or Very ineffective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Effective or Very effective
Setting the standard for integrity and character (Leads by Example)	9%	12%	79%
Conducting the preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations (Accomplish Mission)	8%	14%	78%
Emphasizing organizational improvement (Stewards the Profession)	10%	14%	76%
Developing a quick understanding of complex situations (Mental Agility)	10%	14%	76%
Agreement immediate superior keeps an open mind to multiple possibilities (Mental Agility)	12%	14%	74%
Dealing with unfamiliar situations (Mental Agility)	10%	16%	74%
Providing resources needed by subordinates to accomplish organizational missions (Gets Results)	11%	16%	73%
Providing sufficient guidance on how to accomplish tasks (Gets Results)	13%	17%	70%
Balancing subordinate needs with mission requirements (Leads Others)	14%	16%	70%
Building effective teams (Develops Others)	14%	17%	69%
Taking action to help subordinates manage excessive workload demands (Leads Others)	18%	16%	66%
Assessing the developmental needs of subordinates (Develops Others)	17%	18%	65%

■ Ineffective or Very ineffective ☐ Neither effective nor ineffective ■ Effective or Very effective

Figure 7. AC Leader Effectiveness in Performing Leadership Behaviors

Finally, six leader behaviors fall below a three-fourths favorability threshold, showing room for improvement. The competency *Gets Results* is reflected by leader effectiveness in providing resources and in providing guidance on how to accomplish tasks. Subordinates are the direct recipients of their superiors' effectiveness in resource and task management. In this way, an individuals' proficiency in these aspects of leading can have a large impact on their subordinates' effectiveness in performing their duties. Similarly, proficiency in *Leading Others* is reflected in how well leaders balance subordinate needs with mission requirements, and take

action to help subordinates manage excessive workload demands. These leader behaviors are of elevated importance, as CASAL trend results have demonstrated an increase in the percentage of respondents reporting stress from a high workload as a serious problem (currently at 28% of AC respondents, see chapter 1.2).

Results for leader effectiveness in building effective teams, which is a component of the *Develops Others* competency, has increased from a low of 61% effective in 2011 to the current level of 69% in 2016. Building cohesive teams through mutual trust is one of six principles of the mission command philosophy, discussed in further detail in chapter 1.1 of this report. Another supporting behavior of *Develops Others* that demonstrates consistently low favorable results is assessing the developmental needs of subordinates

> *Improvement is warranted in leadership skills such as building effective teams, balancing subordinate needs with mission requirements, managing excessive workload demands, and assessing developmental needs of subordinates.*

(see chapter 2.3). In summary, the results for these lowest-rated leadership behaviors align with critical elements of the Army leadership requirements model (ADRP 6-22, 2012f), but are not expected to improve to the acceptable threshold without focused effort in preparing leaders to perform them well.

Builds Trust

All Army leaders are responsible for building a culture of trust where superiors trust subordinates, subordinates trust superiors, and team members trust each other (ADRP 1, 2013a). Leaders build trust to facilitate relationships and to encourage commitment among followers. This starts with respect among people and grows from both common experiences and shared understanding. Trust establishes conditions for effective influence and mission command and for creating a positive environment. The prevailing level of trust is important to each leader as he or she determines the level of rapport with others and the types of influence techniques that are most suitable (ADRP 6-22, 2012f).

For the competency *Builds Trust*, 71% of leaders rate their immediate superior effective or very effective. Results have trended more favorably since first assessed in 2012 (from 67% to 71% effective). The results for behaviors that comprise leader effectiveness in building and sustaining trust among others are also

> *Army leaders are rated effective across a range of trust-building behaviors by 65% to 77% of subordinates.*

favorable (see Figure 8). These indices include levels of agreement that one's immediate

superior honors commitments to others, positively corrects unit conditions that hinder trust, and looks out for subordinate welfare. Results for each of these behaviors are consistent with past results (± 3% agreement).
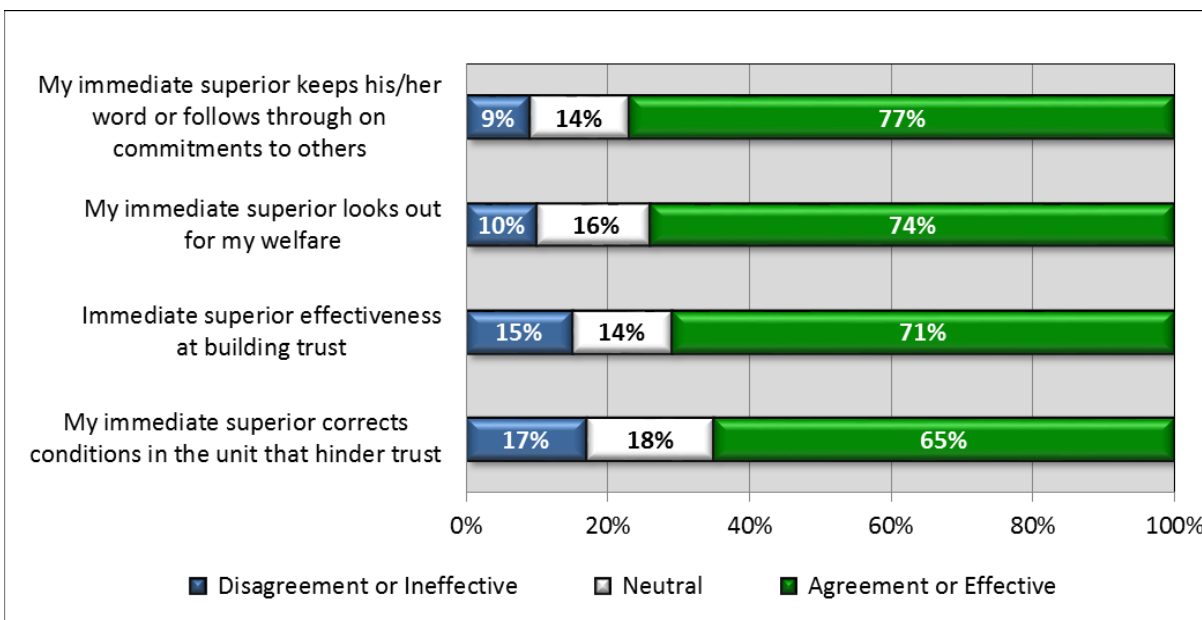
Figure 8. Indicators of Trust in Immediate Superiors by AC Respondents

Three of the four behaviors in Figure 8 fall below the three-fourths favorability threshold, indicating there is room for improvement. The behavior assessed least favorably is agreement that one's immediate superior corrects conditions in the unit that hinder trust (65% agree or strongly agree). Leaders build and sustain climates of trust by assessing factors or conditions that promote or hinder trust and by correcting team members who undermine trust with their attitudes or actions (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). Results of the 2012 CASAL identified poor communication (or a lack of communication), discipline problems, and favoritism (e.g., inconsistent standards) as conditions that commonly exist in units where trust is low. These results also indicated that leaders who demonstrate effective leadership (i.e., character, leading by example, empathy, and care for others) and uphold standards, enforce discipline, and hold others accountable effectively promote trust in environments where negative conditions may threaten it (Riley, Hatfield, Paddock, & Fallesen, 2013).

CASAL uses a composite score to examine relationships between trust-building behavior and organizational outcomes and subordinate attitudes. There is a positive relationship between civilian leader effectiveness in building trust and the leader's effects on their team or immediate work group's cohesion, discipline, capability to accomplish missions, and command climate (r's = .75 to .81, $p < .001$), as well as subordinate work quality,

Leaders effective at Building Trust are also perceived as positively affecting the work quality, engagement, morale, cohesion, discipline, and the capabilities of those they lead.

engagement, and morale (r's = .54 to .76, $p < .001$). These findings are consistent with past CASAL results and continue to reflect the important role of effective leadership in sustaining vertical trust relationships in the Army. Leaders who are effective at *Building Trust* are perceived as having a positive effect on their followers and on mission accomplishment.

Favorable levels of trust in their immediate superior exist for 86% of AC leaders (64% report high or very high trust and 22% report moderate trust). Trust in one's immediate superior is significantly related to the extent the superior exhibits three leadership competencies and one attribute. Specifically, a leader's effectiveness in *Creating a Positive Environment*,

Subordinates trust leaders who Create a Positive Environment, demonstrate Sound Judgment, Communicate effectively, and Develop Others.

demonstrating *Sound Judgment*, *Communicating*, and *Developing Others* explains a significant amount of variance in the level of trust subordinates have in that leader (R^2 = .58, $p < .001$). Results of previous CASALs confirm the importance of *Creating a Positive Environment* and *Developing Others*, but also emphasized demonstrating *Empathy* and *Leading by Example* as significant predictors of trust in one's immediate superior. These behaviors reflect the common element of caring about Soldiers and taking action accordingly. *Sound Judgment* represents a leader's ability to demonstrate good decision making that will not subject Soldiers to unwarranted risks.

Mission Command

Army doctrine on mission command (ADP 6-0) describes the mission command philosophy as "the exercise of authority and direction by the commander using mission orders to enable disciplined initiative within the commander's intent to empower agile and adaptive leaders in the conduct of unified land operations" (2012c, p. 1). The mission command philosophy requires constant adjustments in the level of control, communications, risk, and initiative required of subordinate commanders to accomplish warfighting functions. Mission command

promotes disciplined initiative and empowers leaders to adjust operations within their commander's intent (Perkins, 2012).

Since 2013, CASAL has assessed Army leader effectiveness in demonstrating the six principles of the mission command philosophy as outlined in ADP 6-0, *Mission Command* (2012c). A majority of AC respondents rate their immediate superior favorably across the six mission command behaviors (see Figure 9). At an overall level, these results are positive yet remain narrowly short of the three-fourths favorable threshold, indicating there is room for improvement. An encouraging finding is that relatively small percentages of leaders are rated ineffective on any individual behavior (9% to 14%). The levels of effectiveness for each behavior are stable with trend results showing minimal variation (± 3%) since 2013.

> *A majority of leaders are rated effective at demonstrating the six principles of the mission command philosophy.*
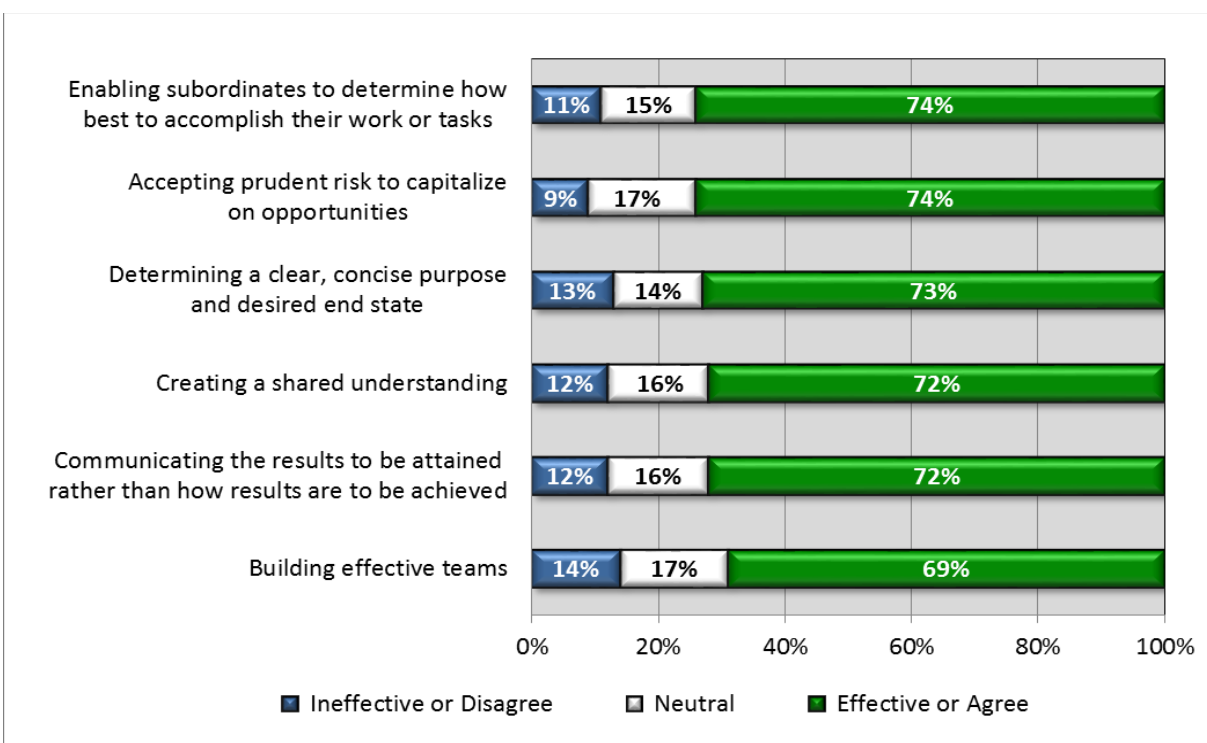

Figure 9. AC Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating the Principles of the Mission Command Philosophy

CASAL uses a composite score to examine the six behaviors that comprise effective demonstration of the mission command philosophy; the composite score continues to demonstrate strong internal consistency for the set of six mission command items (α = .95).

Positive demonstration of the mission command philosophy is strongly related to effective leadership. Leaders who rate their immediate superior favorably across the six behaviors reflecting the mission command philosophy also tend to rate their immediate superior effective in demonstrating the core leader competencies ($r = .91$, $p < .001$) and leader attributes ($r = .88$, $p < .001$), and agree their immediate superior is an effective leader ($r = .85$, $p < .001$).

Ratings for each individual core leader competency and attribute were examined in a stepwise regression to determine the strongest contributors to effective demonstration of mission command. Results indicate three competencies and three attributes explained 87% of the variance in ratings for effective mission command ($R^2 = .87$, $p < .001$). Specifically, leader effectiveness in *Leading Others*, demonstrating *Sound Judgment*, *Communicating*, demonstrating *Innovation*, demonstrating *Empathy*, and *Developing Others* significantly contribute to perceptions that one's immediate superior is effective in demonstrating the principles of mission command.[6]

> *Leader effectiveness in Leading Others, demonstrating Sound Judgment, Communicating, Innovation, Empathy, and Developing Others contribute to perceptions of effective mission command.*

As stated in ADP 6-22, "mission command calls for leaders with the ability to build a collaborative environment, the commitment to develop subordinates, the courage to trust, the confidence to delegate, the patience to overcome adversity, and the restraint to allow lower echelons to develop the situation" (2012b, p. 1-3). If executed effectively, these characteristics of mission command in practice should be evident in Army work settings. There are strong positive relationships between respondent assessments of their immediate superior exhibiting the mission command philosophy and assessments of their superior's impact on their team or immediate work group's cohesion, discipline, capability to accomplish missions, and command climate ($r's = .79$ to $.81$, $p < .001$). Similarly, leader effectiveness in demonstrating mission command also positively relates to favorable subordinate attitudes, such as agreement that unit members are empowered to make decisions pertaining to the performance of their duties and are allowed to learn from honest mistakes; trust in one's immediate superior; satisfaction with the amount of freedom or latitude to perform duties; and subordinates feeling informed about decisions affecting their work responsibilities ($r's = .47$ to $.72$, $p < .001$). Notably, there are stronger correlations between a superior's demonstration of the mission command philosophy and effects on subordinates' states and processes (e.g., cohesion and discipline,

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[6] In CASAL findings, results of stepwise multiple regression include the significant predictors that contribute at least 1% additional variance explained for the outcome. Significant predictors are reported in the order of magnitude according to the amount of variance explained. Stepwise multiple regression is described in greater detail in Appendix B of this report.

engagement, motivation, and trust in that leader) than on subordinate attitudes about broader characteristics of the unit (e.g., the level of trust among all unit members).

Indicators of Leadership Effectiveness

In addition to the list of leadership behaviors, CASAL included two single-item assessments of respondents' immediate superiors' effectiveness as leaders. First, 78% of AC respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement "my immediate superior is an effective leader," a positive indicator of leadership quality in the Army. Figure 10 displays the results of AC ratings by the rank of the leader being assessed. Favorable ratings tend to increase with the level of leadership at which the immediate superior (officer or NCO) serves. When examined by the unit position of the immediate superior, assessments are comparable (±2%) to the results by rank (i.e., captains and company commanders are assessed favorably by 77% of subordinates). A notable exception is that subordinates of brigade commanders (89%) more frequently assessed their immediate superior as an effective leader compared to the overall average assessment for colonels as leaders (83%).

The 10 competencies and 13 attributes assessed by CASAL were examined using a stepwise multiple regression to identify which of the competencies and attributes best explain ratings of effective leadership. Three competencies and one attribute significantly explain 75% of the variance (R^2 = .75, p < .001) in effectiveness ratings for one's immediate superior: *Leading Others,* demonstrating *Sound Judgment*, *Building Trust,* and *Communicating* are most strongly associated with agreement that one's immediate superior is an effective leader. This means that these four factors together differentiate levels of effective leadership. Ratings for the other competencies and attributes, while favorable, explain considerably less unique variance in ratings after accounting for the four leadership requirements model components.

> *Leading Others, demonstrating Sound Judgment, Building Trust, and Communicating are most strongly associated with agreement that one's immediate superior is an effective leader.*

AC Respondent Agreement That Their Immediate Superior is an Effective Leader
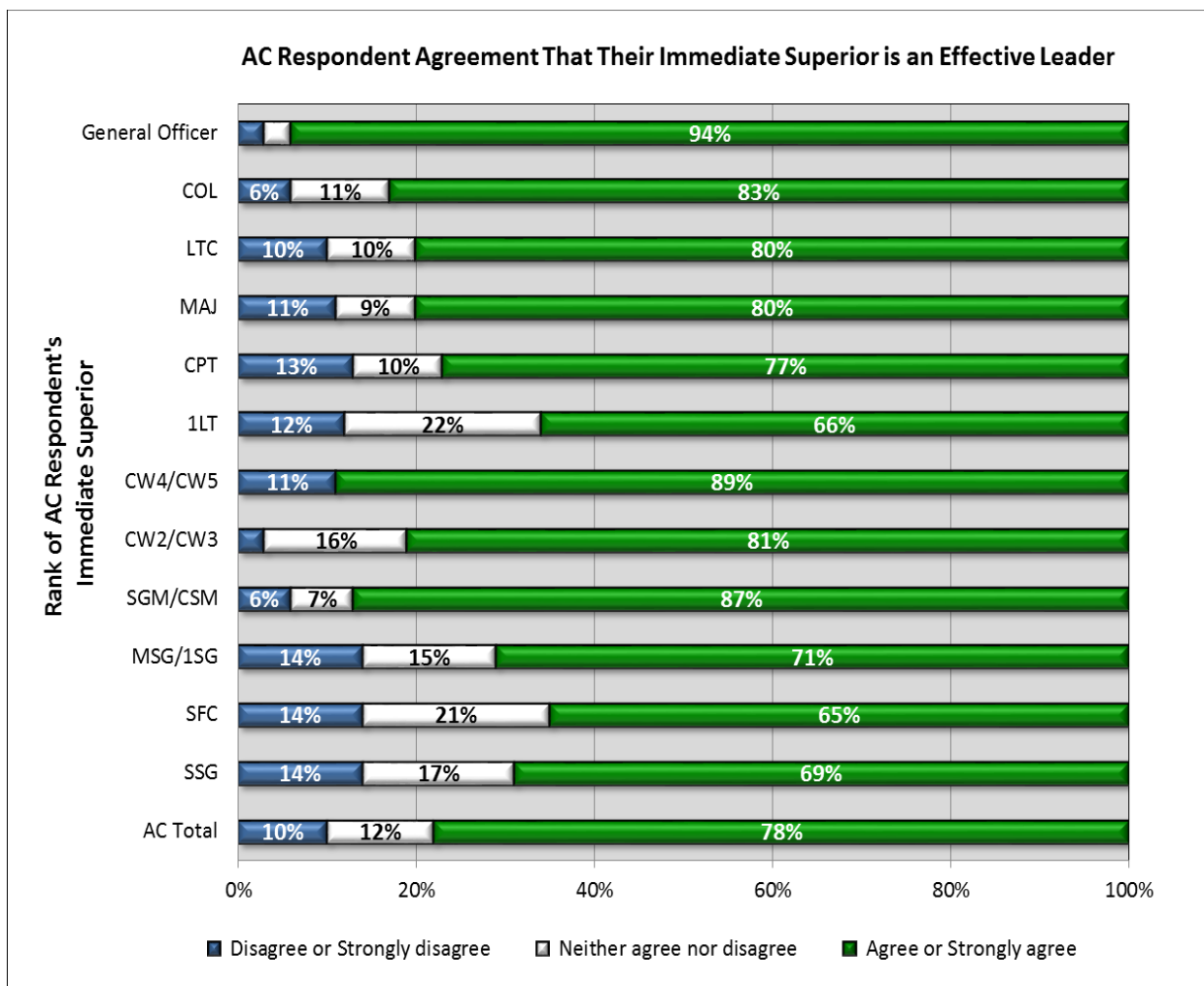
Figure 10. AC Respondent Ratings for Effective Leadership by Rank

The second indicator of leadership effectiveness involved respondents providing a single judgment on how well their immediate superior met their expectations of a leader in his or her position. Overall, these findings are also positive and show that three-fourths (74%) of AC respondents report their immediate superior is either meeting (35%), exceeding (24%), or greatly exceeding (15%) their expectations for leadership. Favorable assessments increase with the rank and length of service of the assessed immediate superior (e.g., field grade officers and senior NCOs meet and exceed expectations of subordinates in greater frequency than company grade officers and junior NCOs). The results by the unit position of the assessed leader, which also follow this general trend, are presented in Table 2. Notably, the lowest assessments of leaders meeting or exceeding expectations is at platoon level and below.

Table 2. AC Respondent Assessments of Their Immediate Superior Meeting Expectations for Leadership

How Well Does Your Immediate Superior Meet Your Expectations of a Leader in His or Her Position?			
Unit Position of Immediate Superior (AC)	Falls short or Falls well short of my expectations	Meets my expectations	Exceeds or Greatly exceeds my expectations
Officers			
Brigade Commander	20%	36%	44%
Battalion Commander	21%	42%	38%
Company Commander	20%	42%	38%
Platoon Leader	34%	43%	23%
NCOs			
First Sergeant	25%	36%	39%
Platoon Sergeant	33%	35%	33%
Squad/Section Leader	30%	41%	28%
AC Total	**26%**	**35%**	**39%**

While CASAL did not assess reasons why leadership expectations are not being met, a stepwise multiple regression determined that leader demonstration of three competencies and one attribute significantly explain 67% of the variance (R^2 = .67, p < .001) in these assessments. *Leading Others, Developing Others*, demonstrating *Sound Judgment*, and *Leading by Example* were the key determinants in whether one's immediate superior falls short, meets, or exceeds expectations for leadership in their position. These results closely parallel the key predictors for whether one's immediate superior is an effective leader, namely in the critical importance of *Leading Others* and *Sound Judgment*.

Other factors not assessed by CASAL also contribute to respondents' perceptions of their immediate superior and could include personality, the history of the superior-subordinate working relationship, and the respondents' career experiences working with other leaders. Implicit leadership theory (Eden & Leviatan, 1975; Yukl, 2013) indicates followers' perceptions of leaders can be affected by followers' own ideas of what effective leadership is and how closely their leader's behaviors and characteristics align to this image. These findings are positive for the Army, as large percentages of leaders overall indicate their immediate superior or supervisor is performing at a high level and/or meeting or exceeding leadership expectations, while small percentages report their superior demonstrates ineffective leadership or falls short of expectations.

Army leadership research by Horey and colleagues (2007) observed that in comparison to leader behaviors (e.g., competencies), leader traits (e.g., attributes) have less impact on leadership outcomes. Other research has estimated that 25-30% of a person's capacity to serve in a leadership role is passed down through genetics, while the rest is influenced by environmental factors and can be developed (Arvey, Rotundo, Johnson, Zhang, & McGue, 2004; Arvey, Zhang, Avolio, & Krueger, 2007; De Neve, Mikhaylov, Dawes, Christakis, & Fowler, 2013). This relationship has been supported by recent CASAL findings. Since 2012, multiple regression analyses utilizing composite scores for leader effectiveness have examined the effect of the competencies and attributes on indices of effective leadership. Results presented in Table 3 indicate the core leader competencies continue to have a stronger effect than the leader attributes on ratings of effective leadership (by nearly 3-to-1). A new insight is that leader effectiveness on the competencies is also better at differentiating whether leaders are falling short, meeting, or exceeding subordinates' expectations for a leader in that position (by 5-to-1).

Table 3. Results of Multiple Regressions Examining the Impact of Leader Competencies and Attributes on Indices of Effective Leadership

	Agreement Immediate Superior is an effective leader	How well does your Immediate Superior meet your expectations of a leader in his or her position?
Core Leader Competency Composite Score	$\beta = .63$	$\beta = .69$
Leader Attribute Composite Score	$\beta = .26$	$\beta = .13$
Model Summary	$R^2 = .76$	$R^2 = .66$

Note. Standardized beta weight (β) and R^2 significant at $p < .001$.

Impact of Leadership on Subordinate Attitudes and Unit Outcomes

A majority of Army leaders are viewed as having a positive or very positive effect on factors (e.g., cohesion, discipline, capability to accomplish missions, work quality, and command climate) affecting their subordinates and the teams or immediate work groups they lead (see Figure 11). Small percentages of respondents (6% to 12%) report their immediate superior has had a negative effect on subordinate or team performance, which is consistent with previous CASAL findings.

Effective demonstration of the core leader competencies and leader attributes is significantly and positively related to organizational and Soldier outcomes that affect mission accomplishment. The strength of the relationship between the competencies and attributes and these outcomes continues to be uniformly high (see Tables 4 and 5). Leaders who

effectively demonstrate the competencies and attributes are viewed as positively affecting the cohesion, capabilities, and discipline of teams and immediate work groups, as well as unit command climate. Similarly, there are positive relationships between effective leadership and subordinates' work quality, level of trust in that superior, engagement, and morale. Results for current levels of leader morale, trust, and engagement are described in greater detail in chapter 1.2 of this report.
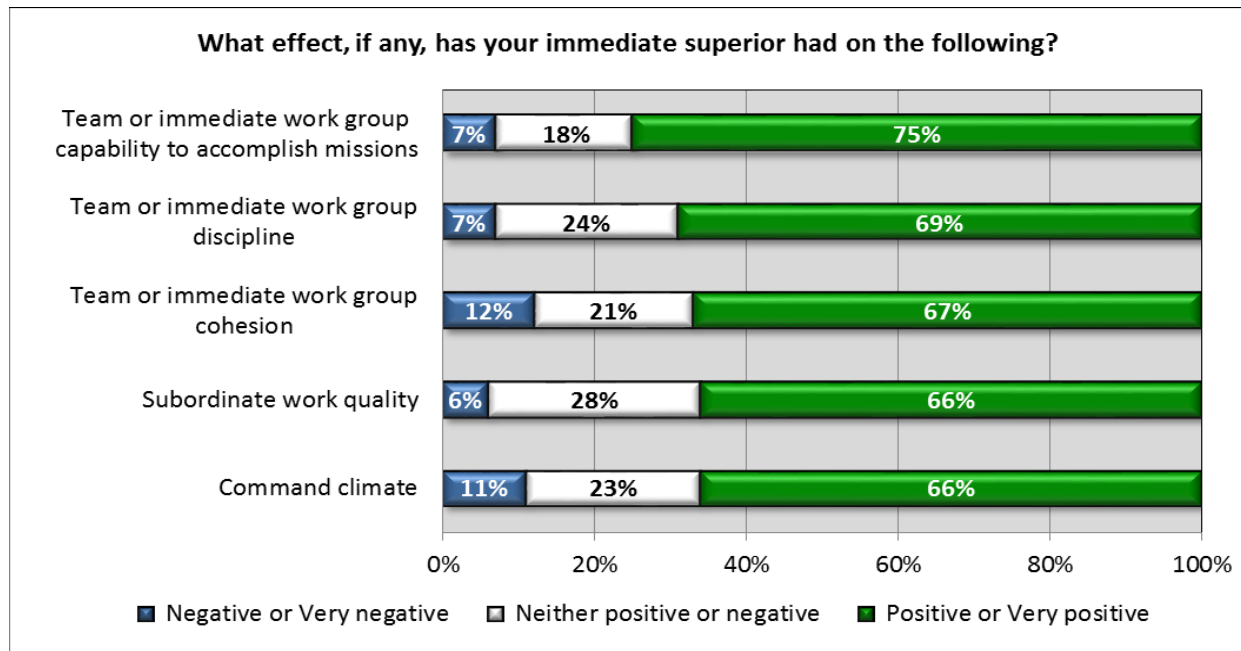
Figure 11. Effect of AC Leaders on Subordinate Attitudes and Organizational Outcomes

Table 4. Correlations between Effective Demonstration of the Leadership Competencies and Attributes and AC Unit Outcomes

Unit Outcomes	Core Leader Competencies	Leader Attributes
Effect on team or immediate work group cohesion	.81	.76
Effect on team or immediate work group capability to accomplish missions	.81	.77
Effect on command climate	.80	.78
Effect on team or immediate work group discipline	.77	.75

Note. All correlations significant at *p* < .001 (2-tailed).

Table 5. Correlations between Effective Demonstration of the Leadership Competencies and Attributes and AC Subordinate Attitudes

Subordinate Attitudes	Core Leader Competencies	Leader Attributes
Effect on subordinate work quality	.78	.74
Subordinate level of trust in immediate superior	.75	.69
Subordinate engagement composite score	.64	.60
Subordinate current level of morale	.52	.47

Note. All correlations significant at *p* < .001 (2-tailed).

Conclusions on Army Leader Effectiveness

Results show that the Army's expectations for leadership are generally met across the force. The guiding benchmark of three-fourths favorability indicates Army leaders are proficient in demonstrating most of the doctrinally defined leader attributes in the categories of character, presence, and intellect. The lone exception is for demonstrating *Innovation*, which is currently assessed at 73% effective and within reach of the favorable threshold.

With the exception of two competencies, fewer leaders are rated effective on the 10 leadership competencies. Competencies are 3 times more predictive of desired leadership outcomes than are leader attributes, and thus warrant greater attention for improvement. The competencies *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self* continue to be rated as strengths. The *Leads* category of competencies represents the essence of the Army's definition of leadership—influence and providing purpose, motivation, and direction. These are the most crucial of leadership competencies. Yet the five competencies in this category (*Leads Others*, *Builds Trust*, *Extends Influence Outside the Chain of Command*, *Leads by Example*, and *Communicates*) are not among the most favorably assessed. *Leads Others* is the second lowest competency, where nearly one-third of AC leaders are rated neutral or ineffective. The competencies and attributes most strongly associated with effective leadership are *Leads Others*, demonstrating *Sound Judgment*, *Building Trust*, and *Communicating*.

Results for supporting leadership behaviors confirm and extend findings on the leader attributes and competencies. Leaders excel in areas such as setting the standard for integrity and character, and in conducting the preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations. While a majority of leaders rate their immediate superior effective in trust-building behaviors, actions such as looking out for others' welfare, building trust, and correcting conditions in units that hinder trust fall narrowly short of a three-fourths favorable threshold. Leader effectiveness in demonstrating the six principles of the mission command philosophy

remain generally positive but fall narrowly short of the favorable threshold. Leadership improvement should focus on the mission command principle *Builds Effective Teams through Mutual Trust*.

CASAL results confirm that measures of attributes, competencies, and supporting behaviors from the Army leadership requirements model have a significant positive effect on desired outcomes. High ratings of the attributes, competencies, and behaviors correspond to positive effects on ratings of command climate; on team or work group cohesion, discipline, and capability to accomplish missions; and on subordinate work quality, trust, engagement, and morale.

What can be done. Self-assessment programs could be developed for leadership proficiency levels to encourage focused attention on leadership skill improvement. A leader could attain a level of proficiency after completing a prescribed set of criteria. Examples of criteria include being assessed through MSAF (and/or through an assessment center), receiving coaching through the MSAF program, completing certain leadership training materials (e.g., interactive media instruction (IMI) training materials), and providing evidence of actions taken to develop others. The idea of using levels of attained and verified skills would be to motivate individuals to improve their mastery of leadership. The levels would not be used in administrative decisions. Aspects of the program could be similar to a virtual assessment center, in which leaders participate in activities online and their performance is assessed over a short and defined period of time (e.g., 4 hours). Other aspects, such as participating in an MSAF assessment and actions taken to develop others, would be long-term activities that take place over a few months. In addition to promoting the continuous development of leadership skills, the existence of such a program communicates to the force that leadership skill improvement and developing others is valued and rewarded by the Army. Existing developmental resources such as the MSAF assessment and the MSAF Virtual Improvement Center (VIC; Center for Army Leadership, 2012) offer a head start for a progressive skill attainment program.

1.2   The Effects of Climate and Situational Factors on Leadership

CASAL assesses factors related to climate and situational factors because many leadership and leader development topics are a product of the larger Army environment. Specifically, climate and situational factors provide the context within which leadership occurs and can influence the quality of leadership. Climate and situational factors can also influence whether effective leader development is facilitated or inhibited.

CASAL has tracked trends in leader attitudes surrounding morale, career satisfaction, and intentions to remain in the Army, and examined the relationships among these factors. Broader attitudes about the quality of leadership in Army units and organizations serve as a backdrop for the current performance of leadership competencies and attributes. Similarly, leader attitudes and perceptions about job characteristics, the working environment, team efficacy, and unit climate provide context for factors that affect leadership, duty performance, and mission outcomes. Each of these are factors important to a healthy organizational culture.

Morale, Career Satisfaction, and Career Intentions

Morale is a measure of how people feel about themselves, their team, and their leaders. Army units achieve high morale through effective leadership, shared effort, trust, and mutual respect. Competent leaders know that morale holds the team together and sustains it during operations. High morale results in a cohesive team striving to achieve common goals, and units with high morale

Morale levels assessed by CASAL have remained generally stable since first assessed in 2010. Larger percentages of RC respondents report high or very high morale compared to AC respondents.

are usually more effective in operations and respond to hardships and losses better (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). Morale levels reported by CASAL have remained generally stable since first assessed in 2010. A consistent trend in CASAL results is that larger percentages of RC leaders report high morale compared to AC leaders (see Figures 12 and 13). The variation in the percentages of respondents reporting high morale by rank group has also been consistent across the past several years. Levels of morale tend to increase with rank and length of service.

How would you rate your current level of morale?

AC Respondent Rank Group	Low or Very low	Neither high nor low	High or Very high
MAJ-COL	15%	26%	59%
2LT-CPT	22%	30%	48%
WO1-CW5	16%	28%	56%
SFC-CSM	14%	28%	58%
SGT-SSG	28%	26%	46%
AC Total	22%	27%	51%

Figure 12. Current Levels of Morale Reported by AC Respondents

How would you rate your current level of morale?

RC Respondent Rank Group	Low or Very low	Neither high nor low	High or Very high
MAJ-COL	15%	19%	66%
2LT-CPT	14%	23%	63%
WO1-CW5	12%	24%	64%
SFC-CSM	13%	25%	62%
SGT-SSG	20%	32%	48%
RC Total	17%	28%	55%

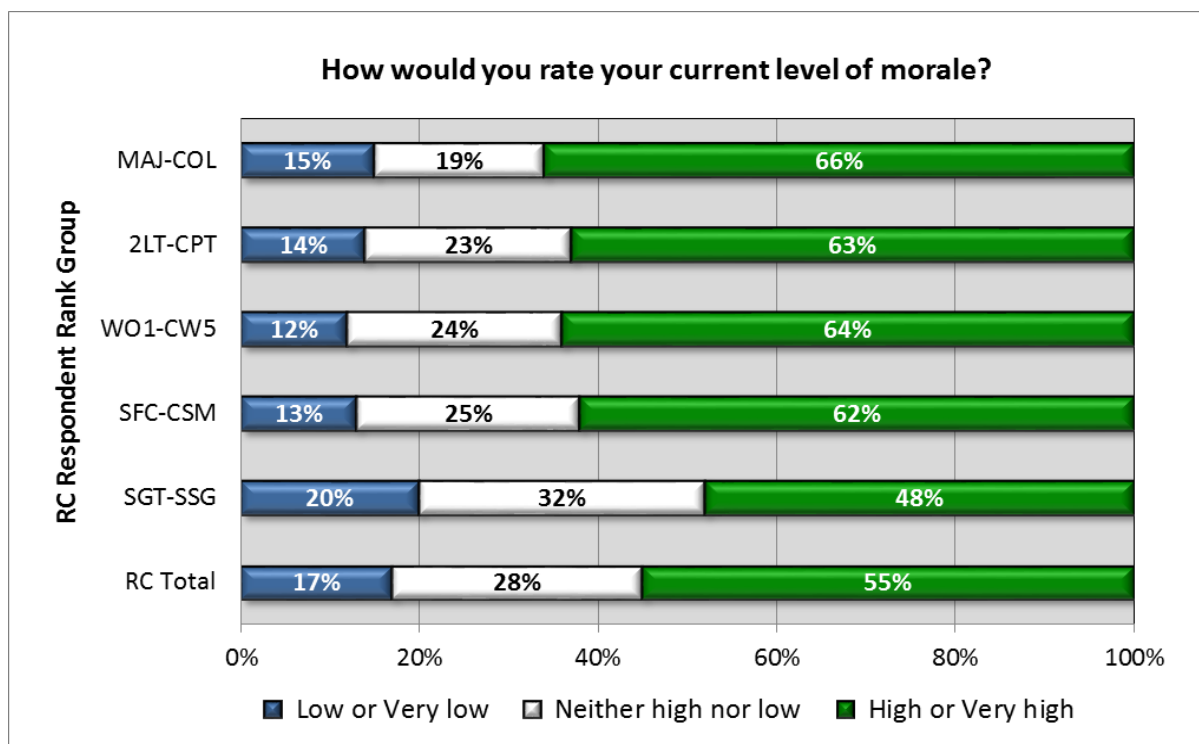*Figure 13.* Current Levels of Morale Reported by RC Respondents

While morale represents leaders' current affective reaction to the environment or job in which they operate, career satisfaction represents an accumulation of attitudes regarding characteristics spanning a leader's career (Locke, 1976; Pinder, 1998). Overall, two-thirds of AC and RC leaders report they are satisfied or very satisfied with their Army career up to this point. As expected, leaders with longer lengths of service tend to report higher levels of career satisfaction than do junior-level leaders (see Figures 14 and 15). Overall levels of career satisfaction among AC leaders continue to be generally favorable and have remained fairly consistent since first assessed in 2012 (see Figure 16). Levels of career satisfaction among RC leaders have declined slightly during these years. Research examining attitudes of military personnel (Thie & Brown, 1994; U.S. Army Research Institute, 2012) has suggested that the key factors that influence career satisfaction assessments and commitment decisions include professional satisfaction (e.g., advancement opportunities), job satisfaction (e.g., challenge or autonomy), economic considerations (e.g., compensation or retirement benefits), family considerations (e.g., spousal support or separation from family), and job security (even when attitudes toward pay and benefits increase).[7]

How satisfied are you with your Army career up to this point?

AC Respondent Rank Group	Dissatisfied or Very dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied or Very satisfied
MAJ-COL	10%	11%	79%
2LT-CPT	18%	16%	66%
WO1-CW5	9%	6%	85%
SFC-CSM	9%	8%	83%
SGT-SSG	23%	18%	59%
AC Total	17%	14%	69%

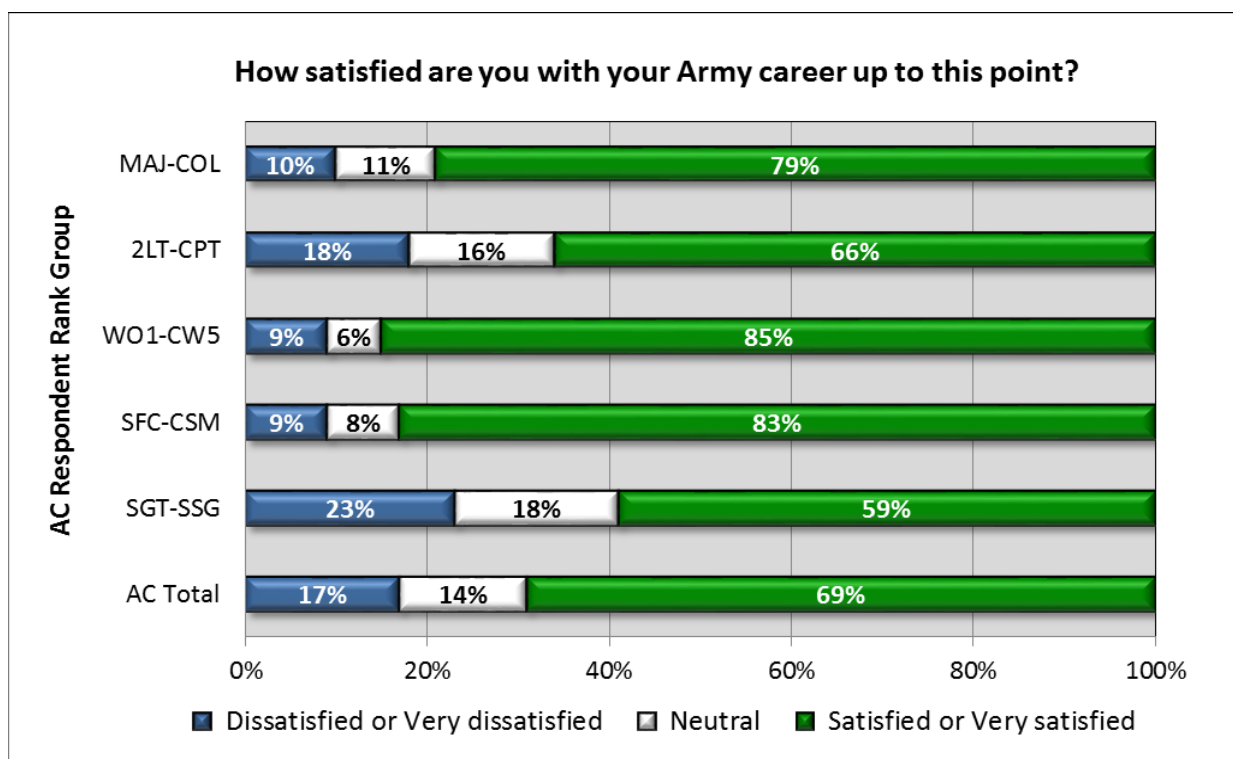**Figure 14.** Current Levels of Career Satisfaction Reported by AC Respondents

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[7] The key factors that influence leaders' assessments of career satisfaction, as identified by existing military research, are not assessed by CASAL.
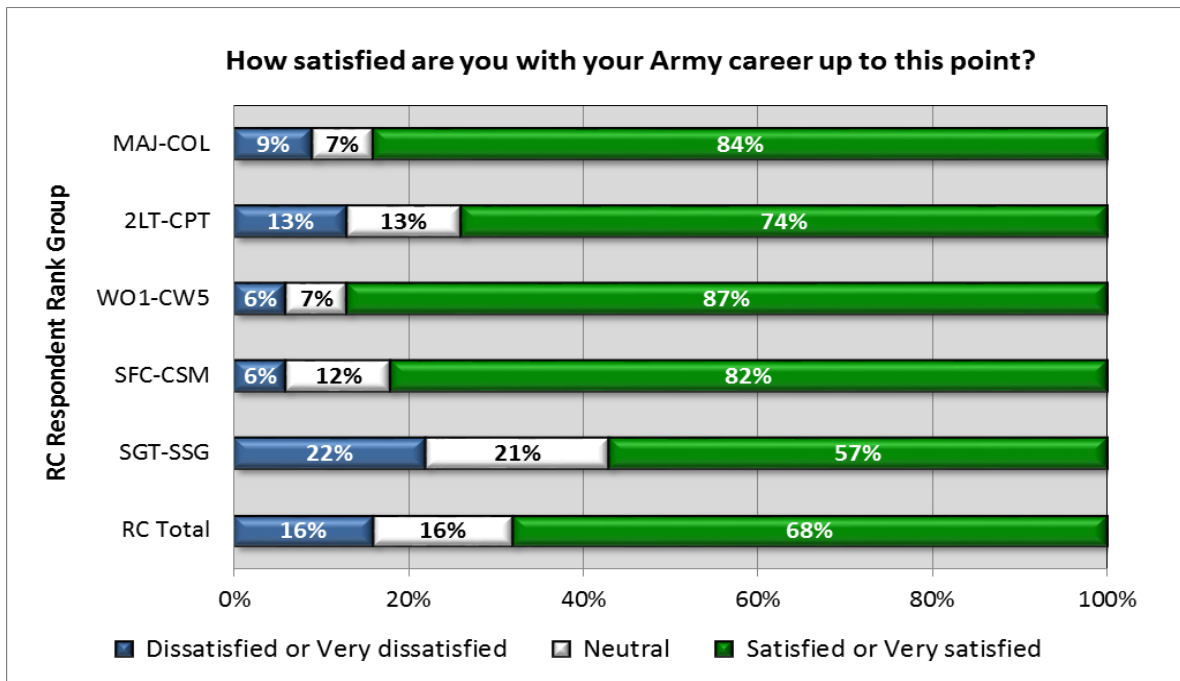
Figure 15. Current Levels of Career Satisfaction Reported by RC Respondents
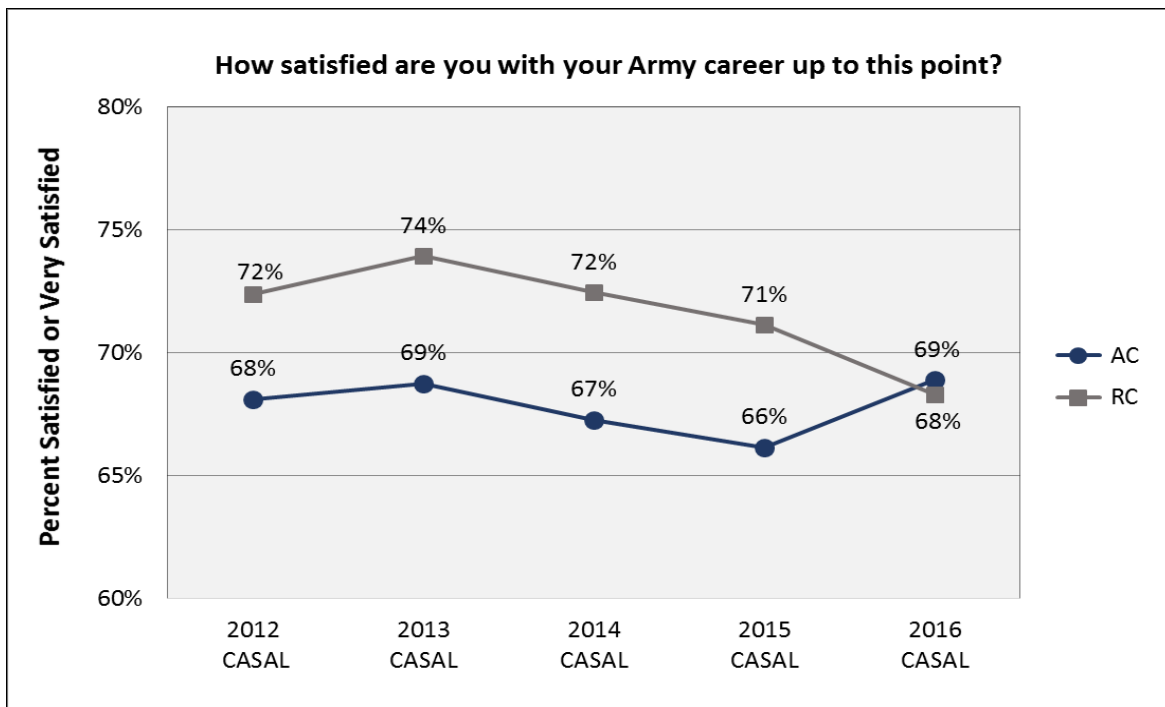
Figure 16. Career Satisfaction among AC and RC Respondents from 2012 to 2016

Intention to remain in the Army is an important factor for Army readiness as it indicates interest among the pool of leaders who will be available for promotion and for continued service. At an overall level, leader intentions to remain in the Army have also remained fairly consistent since first assessed by CASAL in 2005. An additional indicator of commitment to service is that more than one-fifth of

> *Intention to remain in the Army until retirement continues to be strong. Since 2012, more than half of AC captains have indicated they plan to stay until retirement eligible or beyond 20 years.*

AC and RC leaders (20% and 23%, respectively) are eligible for retirement but choose to remain in service to the Army. Importantly, intention to remain in the Army remains strong among junior-level leaders (i.e., company grade officers and junior NCOs; see Figure 17). RC leaders report in higher frequency than AC leaders their intention to remain until retirement eligible or beyond (see Figure 18).

Which of the following best describes your current career intentions?

AC Respondent Rank Group	Leave	Undecided	Stay
MAJ-COL	10%		87%
2LT-CPT	16%	37%	47%
WO1-CW5	7%		91%
SFC-CSM			94%
SGT-SSG	11%	22%	67%
AC Total	10%	21%	69%

- ■ Probably/definitely plan to leave upon completion of obligation
- ▨ Undecided about staying in the Army beyond obligation or until retirement eligible
- ■ Plan to stay to retirement or beyond 20 years

Figure 17. Career Intentions of AC Respondents Not Currently Eligible for Retirement
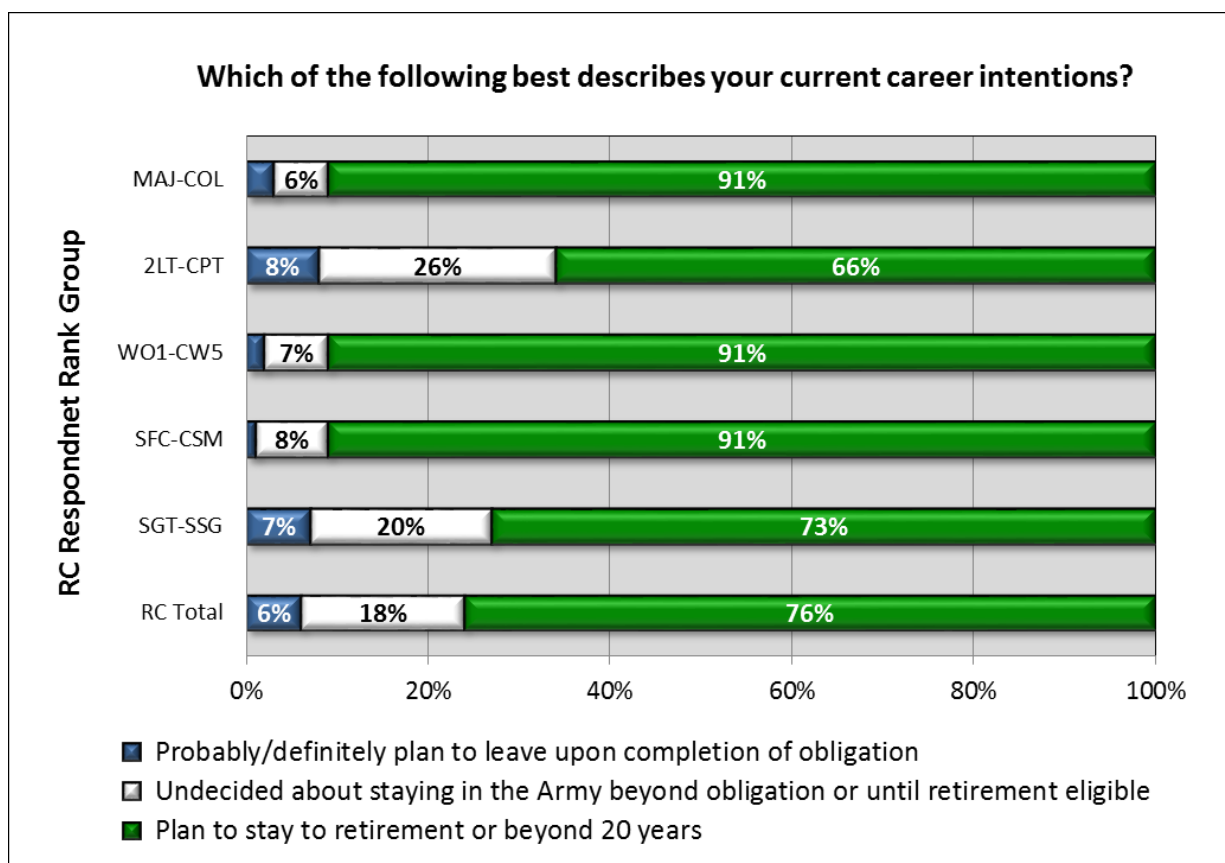
Figure 18. Career Intentions of RC Respondents Not Currently Eligible for Retirement

AC captains have historically reported the highest degree of uncertainty or indecision about their intentions to remain in the Army. The average length of service for AC captains assessed by the 2016 CASAL is 9.7 years. The 2016 results show that AC captain intentions to remain in the Army have remained positive and stable over the past four years, among the highest percentages observed by CASAL studies for this rank (see Figure 19). In 2000, the officer phase of the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) found that 39% of AC captains planned to serve until retirement, while 42% were undecided and 19% intended to leave service (Fallesen et al., 2005). For the purpose of comparison, 2016 CASAL results show 85% of majors (*M* = 15.8 years of service) and 29% of first lieutenants (*M* = 4.3 years of service) intend to remain in the Army until retirement or beyond 20 years.

Which of the following best describes your current career intentions?

Year	Probably/definitely plan to leave upon completion of obligation	Undecided about staying in the Army beyond obligation or until retirement eligible	Plan to stay to retirement or beyond 20 years
2016	14%	29%	57%
2015	13%	32%	55%
2014	14%	31%	55%
2013	13%	31%	56%
2012	13%	37%	50%
2011	14%	41%	45%
2010	12%	41%	47%
2009	12%	41%	47%
2008	17%	44%	39%
2007	21%	40%	39%
2006	18%	33%	49%
2005	17%	36%	47%

Percent of Active Component Captains

- ■ Probably/definitely plan to leave upon completion of obligation
- □ Undecided about staying in the Army beyond obligation or until retirement eligible
- ■ Plan to stay to retirement or beyond 20 years

Figure 19. Career Intentions of AC Captains (2005 to 2016)

In FY16, promotion rates for most basic-branch AC captains to the rank of major showed improvement (Army Times, 2017). Basic branch refers to officer career fields that do not require specialized civilian training before appointment (e.g., infantry, signal, military police, or quartermaster). The primary zone of consideration included selection rates of 70% for operations officers, 70% for operations support, and 71% for force sustainment, with an average of 71% (exceeding the 2015 average of 70% and 2014 average of 65%). The primary zone of consideration for promotion to major typically occurs when an officer's cohort year group reaches nine years of service (DA Pam 600-3, 2014c). The Army strives for 80% selection opportunities from captain to major during normal times when a build-up or drawdown in end strength are not occurring, such as prior to September 11, 2001 (Tice, 2015). In 2012, the Army

announced preparation to return to selection opportunity levels that were in place prior to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to correctly size and shape year groups (Joyner, 2012). The gradual decline in the calculated selection opportunities for captains occurred in recent years, from 108% from 2001 to 2011, to 99% in 2012, to 94% in 2013, to 70% in 2014, before returning to nearly 80% in 2015. Regardless of the reduction in selection rates, captains' intentions to remain in the Army are at a positive level and stable.

Favorable intentions to remain in the Army are also reflected by the results of the 2016 Status of Forces Survey (SOFS; Office of People Analytics, 2016). Direct comparisons of results between CASAL and SOFS cannot be made due to the differing response options used. However, these results support the CASAL finding that company grade officers report a greater degree of uncertainty about their intentions to remain in the Army than do field grade officers and NCOs (see Table 6).

Table 6. 2016 Status of Forces Survey Army Results on Likelihood and Intention to Remain in the Military

2016 Status of Forces Survey of Active Duty Members (Army Results)		
Active Component Rank Group	**Likely or very likely would be allowed to stay on active duty service at the end of current term or service obligation**	**Likely or very likely would choose to serve in the military for at least 20 years**
MAJ-COL (O4-O6)	82%	90%
2LT-CPT (O1-O3)	87%	62%
SGT-CSM (E5-E9)	78%	85%
PV1-CPL (E1-E4)	75%	49%
AC Total	78%	70%

Perceptions of Leadership Quality in Army Units and Organizations

Leader attitudes about the quality of leadership in units and organizations remain at generally positive levels. A majority of AC respondents view their superiors and peers as effective leaders. Large percentages of respondents with supervisory responsibilities rate their subordinates as effective leaders. The results presented in Figure 20 serve as holistic and generalized assessments of the current quality of leadership in the Army. The consistent relative pattern of these results, with only

The quality of leadership in Army units and organizations continues to be strong. A majority of respondents view their superiors, peers, and subordinates as effective leaders.

subtle change over the past 11 years, provides evidence that attitudes toward the quality of leadership across the Army are generally positive and stable.
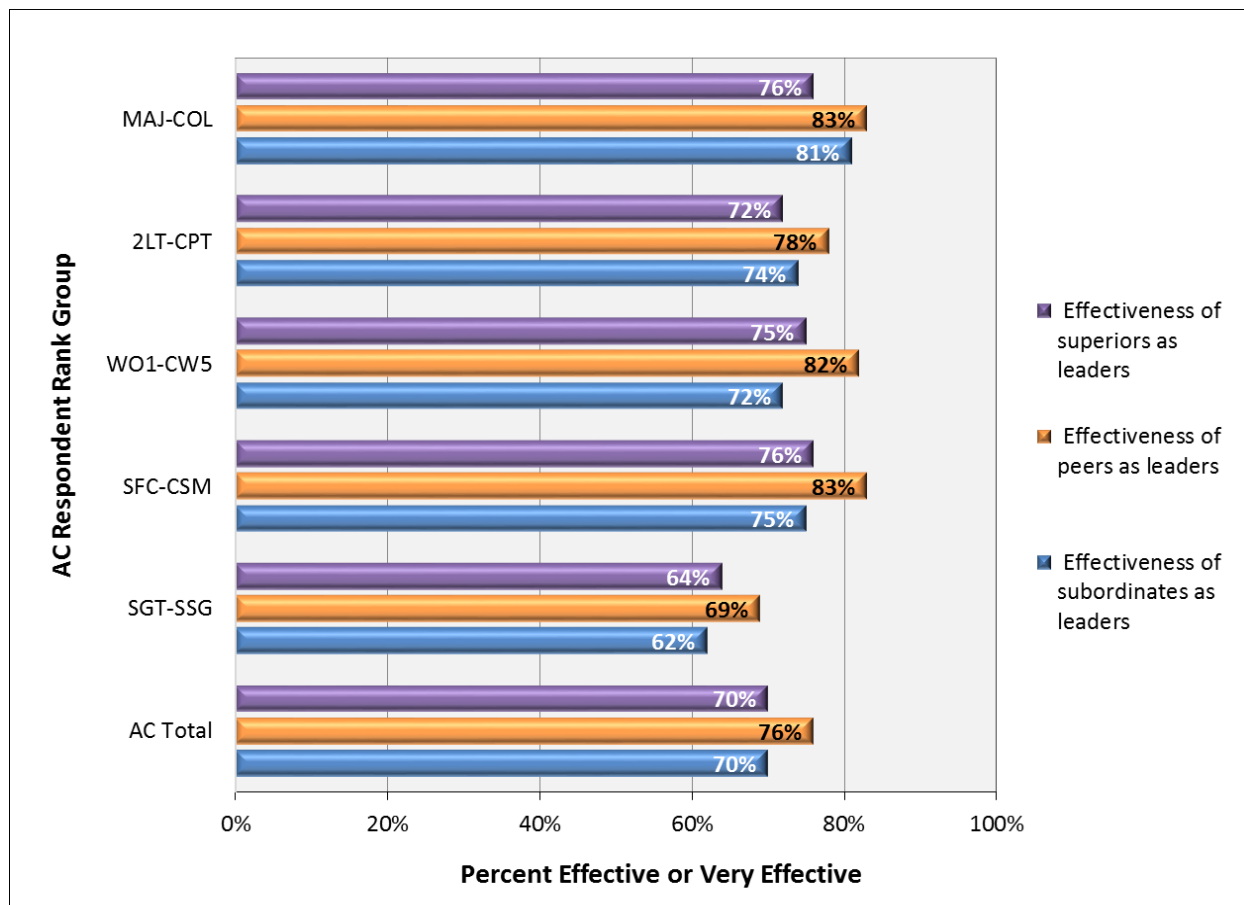

Figure 20. Effectiveness Ratings of Superior, Peers, and Subordinates as Leaders, by Respondent Rank Group

Respondent satisfaction with the quality of leadership in units and organizations provides an indication of how leaders are performing and working together. Specifically, CASAL assesses levels of satisfaction with the quality of leadership in Army units and organizations both within and across cohorts (i.e., uniformed respondent satisfaction with Army civilian leadership and vice versa). Levels of satisfaction by uniformed and civilian respondents show only slight variation since first assessed in 2013 (see Figure 21).[8] Larger percentages of civilian leader

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[8] Levels of satisfaction with the quality of military and civilian leadership were asked of all CASAL respondents regardless of assignment type. Respondents were instructed to select the response option "No basis to assess" as appropriate in instances where their unit/organization did not consist of military or civilian leaders. The No basis to assess response was selected by 32% of AC uniformed leader respondents with regards to the quality of civilian leadership, and 15% of civilian leader respondents with regards to the quality of military leadership.

respondents than AC respondents report satisfaction with the quality of military and civilian leadership in their unit or organization.
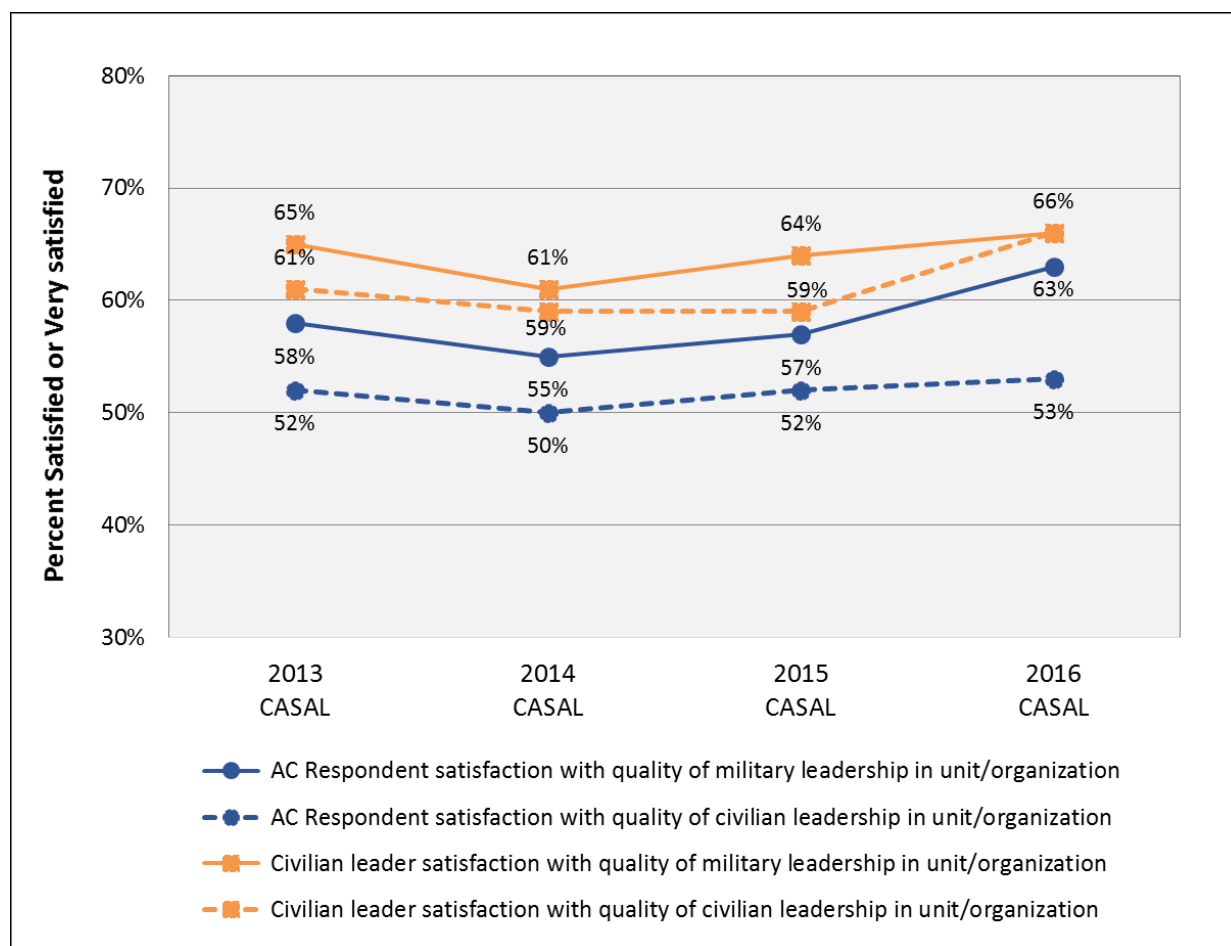
Figure 21. Satisfaction with the Quality of Military and Civilian Leadership in the Army

A useful method for interpreting satisfaction with the quality of leadership is by identifying the relevant factors with the strongest associations to respondent satisfaction. Since 2013, multiple regression analyses have been conducted to examine respondent attitudes toward several characteristics of their working environment, including attitudes toward other members of their unit or organization. Results have consistently indicated that trust is a central factor, having the largest contribution to AC and civilian leader satisfaction with the quality of military and civilian leadership. Specifically, the key factors are the overall level of trust among unit

Trust is a key factor that strongly contributes to respondent satisfaction with the quality of leadership in units and organizations.

members and respondent agreement that senior leaders place trust in their subordinates. Of both AC and civilian leader respondents, 79% assess trust among members of their unit/organization as moderate, high, or very high, while smaller percentages agree senior leaders demonstrate trust in their subordinates (64% AC; 66% civilian leaders).

Additional factors that explain a significant amount of variance in respondent satisfaction include agreement that standards are upheld, perceptions of senior leader effectiveness at lessening or limiting the effects of workload stress, feeling informed about decisions affecting work responsibilities, having access to the right resources to accomplish one's duties to standard, and satisfaction with the freedom or latitude to perform one's duties.

Attitudes Toward Assigned Duties

Periodic assessment of leader attitudes toward assigned duties is important for several reasons. Research has demonstrated that attitudes about one's job positively relate to motivation, job performance, job satisfaction, and turnover (Campion & Berger, 1990; Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Muchinsky, 2003). Leaders in both components continue to hold favorable attitudes toward the performance of their current duties (see Figure 22 for AC results). The most favorable attitudes (exceeding three-fourths favorability) include attitudes toward the importance of one's assigned duties and knowing what is expected of them in one's current position. In comparison, smaller percentages of leaders perceive they are informed of decisions that affect their work responsibilities or feel they have access to the right resources (e.g., people, materials, or budget) to accomplish their duties to standard.
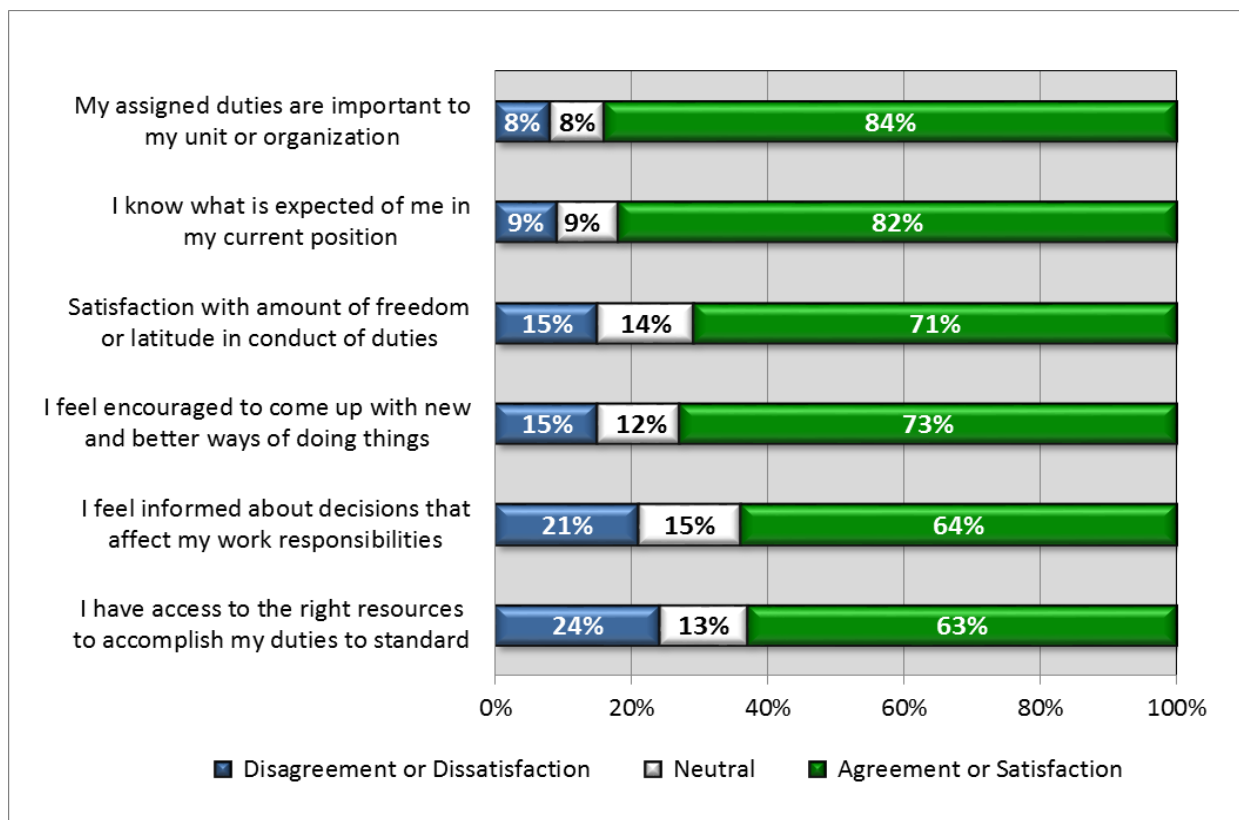
Figure 22. AC Respondent Attitudes toward Assigned Duties

Attitudes toward Teams and Working Groups

Army leaders overwhelmingly report commitment to their teams or immediate working groups, and this is among the most favorable indicators assessed by CASAL (consistently above 90% agreement for all rank groups). In ADRP 6-22, commitment is described as "...willing dedication or allegiance to a cause or organization" (2012f, p. 6-1). Commitment reflects loyalty, one of the seven Army values. Leaders earn loyalty from subordinates by training them, treating them in a fair manner, and looking out for their well-being.

Collaboration and helping others are signs of a positive working environment. Effective teams collaborate to achieve results and work together as a team rather than as a group of individuals. Three-fourths of AC leaders view these characteristics of their current team or immediate work group favorably (see Figure 23). Teams also thrive when members are willing to go above and beyond to support one another. Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) are discretionary behaviors (i.e., not required or explicitly rewarded) that promote organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988). Research in military settings (Ehrhart, Bliese, & Thomas, 2006) has found positive associations between the demonstration of OCBs and various

measures of unit effectiveness (e.g., physical fitness, M-16 marksmanship scores, unit member confidence, or perceptions of combat readiness). OCBs contribute to unit effectiveness because unit members who demonstrate OCBs show others how to be helpful and productive, contribute to an overall sense of readiness, establish high performance norms, and allow resources and energy to be focused on other, more important priorities (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997).

CASAL assessed OCBs in terms of unit member willingness in performing additional tasks beyond their assigned duties; showing respect toward one another, even under stressful conditions; and helping others in the performance of their duties, when needed. Results offer a positive indication that Army leaders currently exhibit each of these discretionary behaviors to support members of their teams and immediate work groups. Respondents who report the positive occurrence of OCBs also report high levels of trust among members of their unit, satisfaction with the quality of leadership in their unit, and confidence in the ability of their unit to perform its mission ($r's$ = .47 to .57, $p < .001$). The positive association between effective leadership and OCBs should not be understated. Respondents who report members of their team or immediate work group exhibit OCBs also tend to frequently assess their immediate superior as effective in demonstrating the core leader competencies, the leader attributes, and the principles of mission command ($r's$ = .39 to .42, $p < .001$). Multiple regression results reveal that the effectiveness of one's immediate superior in demonstrating trust-building behaviors is a significant predictor of the occurrence of OCBs among teams and immediate work groups (R^2 = 0.20). Deluga (1995) suggests that building a climate of trust may inspire norms of reciprocity, such as OCBs.

> *73% to 83% of AC respondents indicate members of their team or immediate work group exhibit discretionary behaviors that promote organizational effectiveness.*
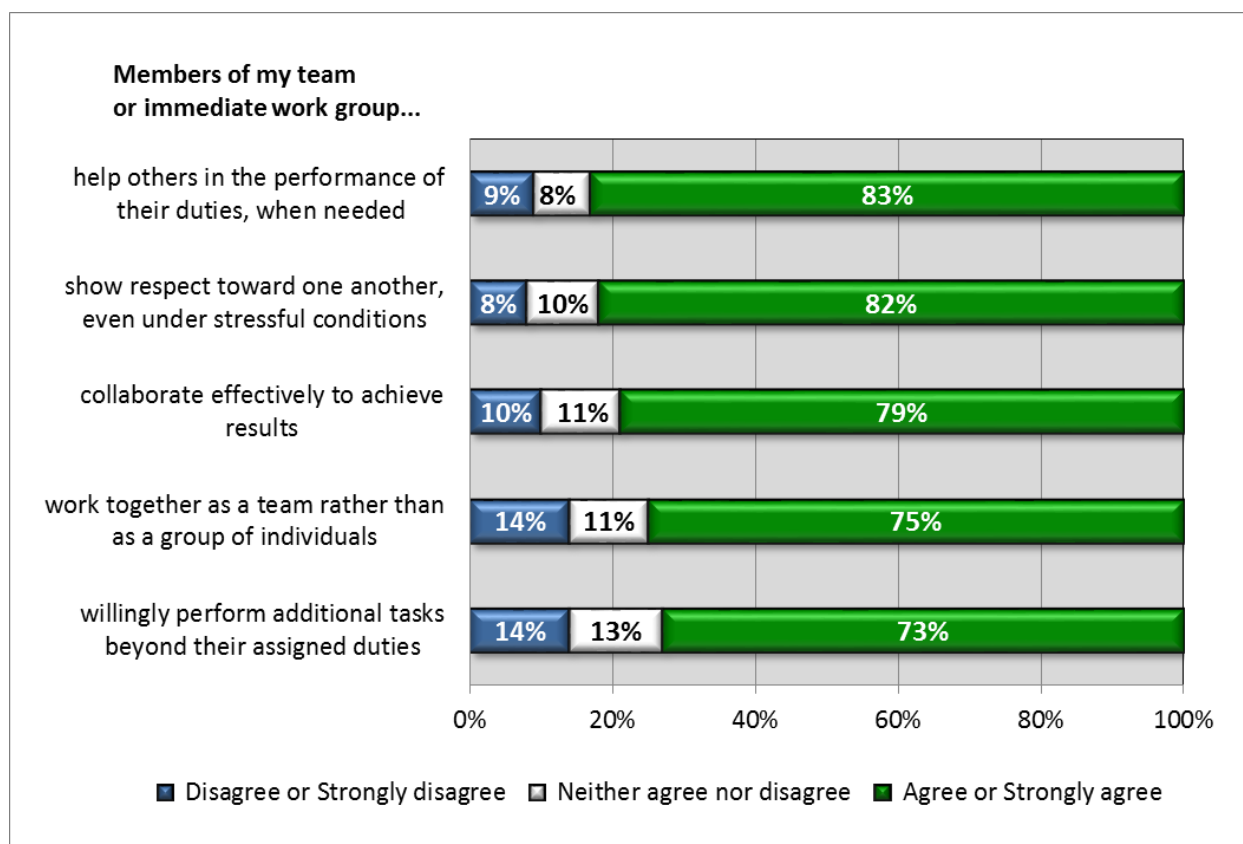
Members of my team or immediate work group...

	Disagree or Strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree or Strongly agree
help others in the performance of their duties, when needed	9%	8%	83%
show respect toward one another, even under stressful conditions	8%	10%	82%
collaborate effectively to achieve results	10%	11%	79%
work together as a team rather than as a group of individuals	14%	11%	75%
willingly perform additional tasks beyond their assigned duties	14%	13%	73%

Figure 23. AC Respondent Attitudes toward Their Teams and Work Groups

Unit Climate

AC respondents hold favorable attitudes toward several characteristics of the units and organizations in which they perform their duties (see Figure 24). A majority of respondents in both components report confidence in the ability of their unit or organization to perform its mission and pride in telling others that they are a member of their unit or organization. Two-thirds of AC respondents agree that members of their unit or organization are allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes and agree that unit members are empowered to make decisions pertaining to the performance of their duties. These are favorable indicators of unit climates that are conducive to learning and the exercise of disciplined initiative. Overall results for each of these indicators have varied slightly since first assessed in 2013 but remain near two-thirds agreement for both AC and RC respondents.
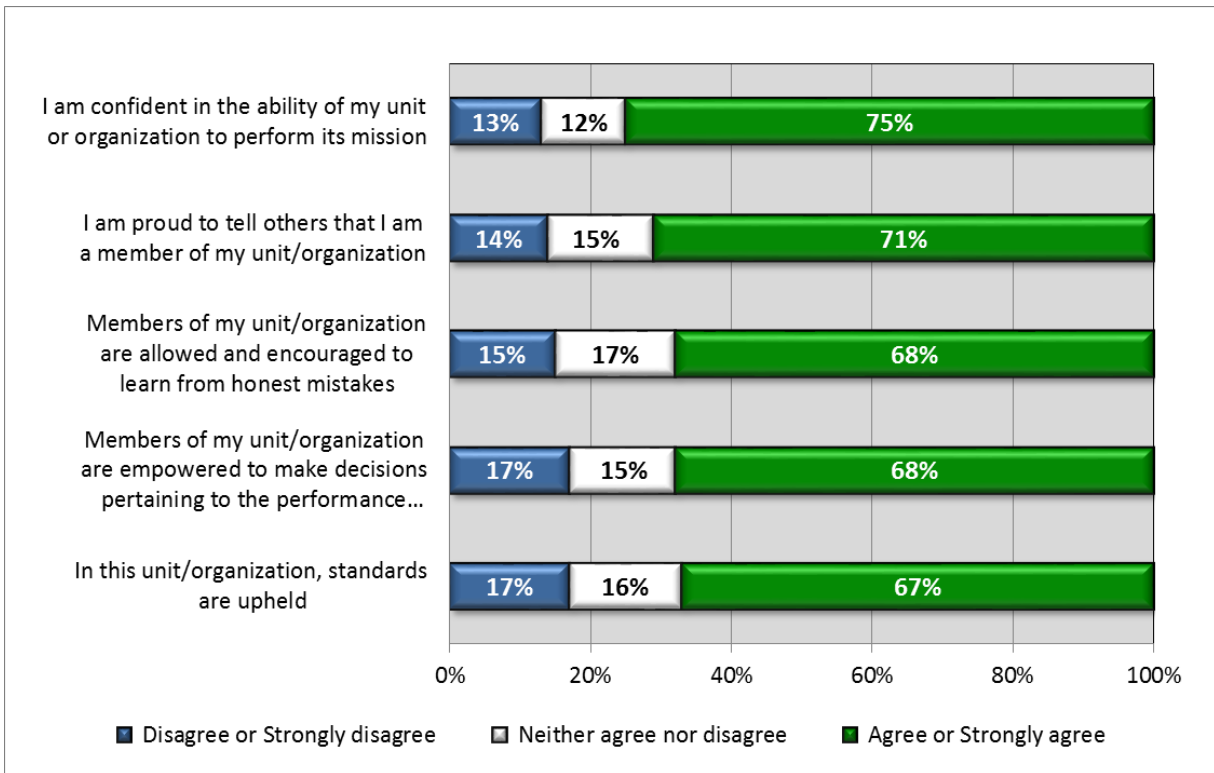
Figure 24. AC Respondent Ratings for Climate Indicators in Units and Organizations

Standards are formal, detailed instructions that provide a mark for gauging performance. Effective leaders know, communicate, and enforce high but realistic standards, and empower subordinates to enforce them (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). Standards range from the professional bearing that unit members exhibit, to adherence to formal policies and regulations. Leaders who consistently enforce standards will simultaneously instill discipline in their units. Effective leaders instill discipline by training to standard, using rewards and punishment judiciously, instilling confidence, building trust among team members, and ensuring their teams have the necessary tactical and technical proficiency (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). CASAL results show a positive relationship between upholding standards and a lack of discipline problems in units (r = .38, p < .001).

In units where standards are upheld, leaders report pride and confidence in their unit, report satisfaction with the quality of unit leadership, view their superiors as effective leaders, and assess a favorable level of trust among unit members ($r's$ = .56 to .66, p < .001). Units and organizations that fail to uphold standards fare poorly on these characteristics. Current findings indicate two-thirds of AC respondents agree that standards are upheld in their unit or organization. Yet, more than one-fourth of AC respondents (28%) indicate a discipline problem exists in their unit or organization (53% disagree). Results for RC respondents are consistent

with AC respondents in 2016. Trend results for both adherence to standards and discipline problems in units have varied slightly since 2011 (see Figure 25). Results consistently indicate junior NCOs experience the greatest challenges regarding standards and discipline issues. The relatively low ratings likely reflect the proximity and responsibility junior NCOs have over junior enlisted personnel.
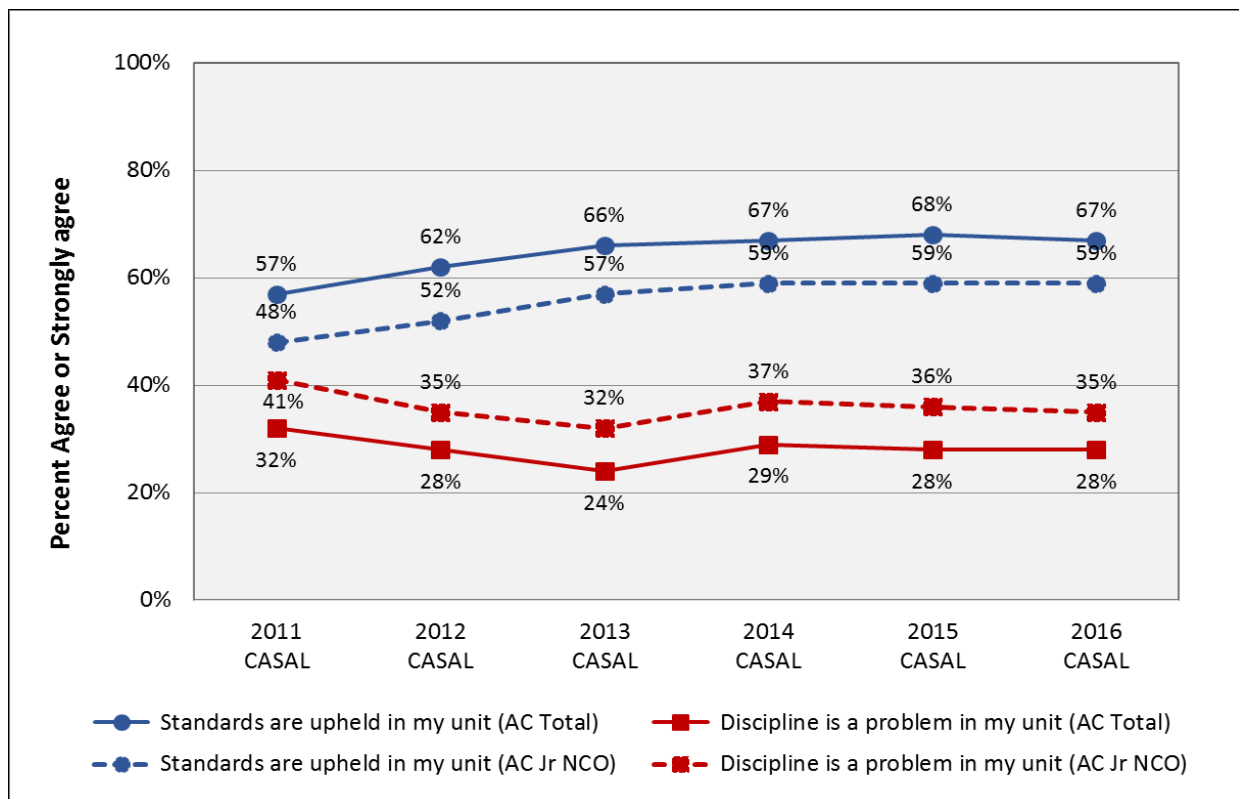
Figure 25. Trend Results for Standards and Discipline in AC Units and Organizations

CASAL responses collected in 2013 identified the types of discipline problems that exist in Army units and organizations (Riley, Hatfield, Freeman, Fallesen, & Gunther, 2014). Similar problems are expected to occur presently. The most frequently cited issues regarding poor discipline were poor application and enforcement of existing standards (e.g., relaxed environments, lack of accountability, or inconsistent enforcement); ineffective leadership (e.g., leaders setting a poor example, self-focused, or poor communication); unfavorable unit climate characteristics (e.g., low morale, lack of cohesion, or lack of respect for others); and perceived hindrances to leader action (e.g., unable to appropriately correct conditions or lack of support from the organization). Specific problem areas included a lack of adherence to customs, courtesies, and professional bearing; infractions (e.g., drugs and alcohol, fighting, or crime); laziness or a poor work ethic; Soldiers failing to meet physical fitness standards; and policy violations.

A majority of respondents in both the AC and RC assess the current level of trust among members of their unit or organization (inclusive of everyone) as favorable.[9] In 2016, 40% of AC respondents report high or very high trust and 39% report moderate trust in their unit or organization. Overall, assessments of the level of trust among members of units and organizations have remained stable since first assessed by CASAL in 2013. Results from the 2016 CASAL confirm that assessments of trust in units vary by the respondent's rank and length of service (see Tables 7 and 8). Results for RC respondents follow a similar pattern as AC respondents but are slightly more favorable for each rank group.

Table 7. AC Respondent Perceptions on the Level of Trust among Unit Members

Overall, how would you describe the current level of trust among members of your unit or organization?	Active Component Respondents				
	SGT-SSG	SFC-CSM	WO1-CW5	2LT-CPT	MAJ-COL
Level of trust among unit members is **"High or Very high"**	33%	46%	51%	43%	53%
Level of trust among unit members is **"Moderate"**	39%	38%	34%	40%	34%
Level of trust among unit members is **"Low or Very low"**	28%	16%	15%	17%	13%

Table 8. RC Respondent Perceptions on the Level of Trust among Unit Members

Overall, how would you describe the current level of trust among members of your unit or organization?	Reserve Component Respondents				
	SGT-SSG	SFC-CSM	WO1-CW5	2LT-CPT	MAJ-COL
Level of trust among unit members is **"High or Very high"**	37%	50%	53%	53%	58%
Level of trust among unit members is **"Moderate"**	39%	36%	35%	33%	30%
Level of trust among unit members is **"Low or Very low"**	24%	14%	12%	14%	12%

As expected, there are positive associations between the level of trust among unit members, command climate, and other characteristics of the working environment. Specific

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[9] CASAL uses a trust scale with a midpoint of 'moderate trust', which is included in the percentage of favorable ratings (i.e., moderate, high, or very high trust). Results of a 2012 CASAL follow-up survey indicated that ratings of moderate trust levels can be interpreted positively. The survey results indicated respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that unit members trust one another also frequently reported the level of trust among unit members to be moderate, high, or very high.

characteristics that have strong positive relationships with high levels of trust in units relate to leader empowerment and a climate for learning:

- Trust tends to be high in units where members are empowered to make decisions pertaining to the performance of their duties (r = .64, p < .001). This measure of job latitude reflects the intent of mission orders, whereby subordinates are provided with maximum freedom of action to determine how best to accomplish missions.

- Similarly, trust is positively associated with units in which members feel informed about decision that affect their work responsibilities, feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things, and report satisfaction with the amount of freedom or latitude in the conduct of their duties ($r's$ = .48 to .54, p < .001).

- Trust tends to also be high in units where honest mistakes and failure are underwritten as part of the learning process (r = .61, p < .001). In this way, units capitalize on the leader development and learning that occurs in the operational domain.

- Finally, high levels of trust among unit members is positively related to high morale, esprit de corps (i.e., pride in identifying with one's unit), and confidence in the unit's ability to perform its mission ($r's$ = .54 to .62, p < .001). Units with low trust lack these characteristics.

Collective felt trust refers to shared feelings by unit members who work together and agree on the extent to which they feel they are trusted by senior leaders. The collective perception is likely to be prompted by procedures or systems implemented in the organization as well as by leadership behavior (Deutsch Salamon & Robinson, 2008). Collective felt trust addresses unit members' global perception regarding the extent that the organization trusts them (i.e., *they* trust *us*) as opposed to more proximal perceptions of trust (i.e., *my immediate superior* trusts *me*) or broader, generalized perceptions of trust in units (i.e., *we all* trust *each other*). Levels of collective felt trust in the Army remain at moderate levels, consistent with findings first observed in 2015. Again, levels of agreement vary by rank and length of service of respondents (see Figure 26). Results for RC respondents (68%) are slightly more favorable than for AC respondents (64%), particularly for company grade officers (67% AC; 78% RC).

> *64% of AC respondents favorably perceive collective felt trust, the shared feelings among unit members that they are trusted by senior leaders.*

Senior leaders in my unit or organization place trust in their subordinates.

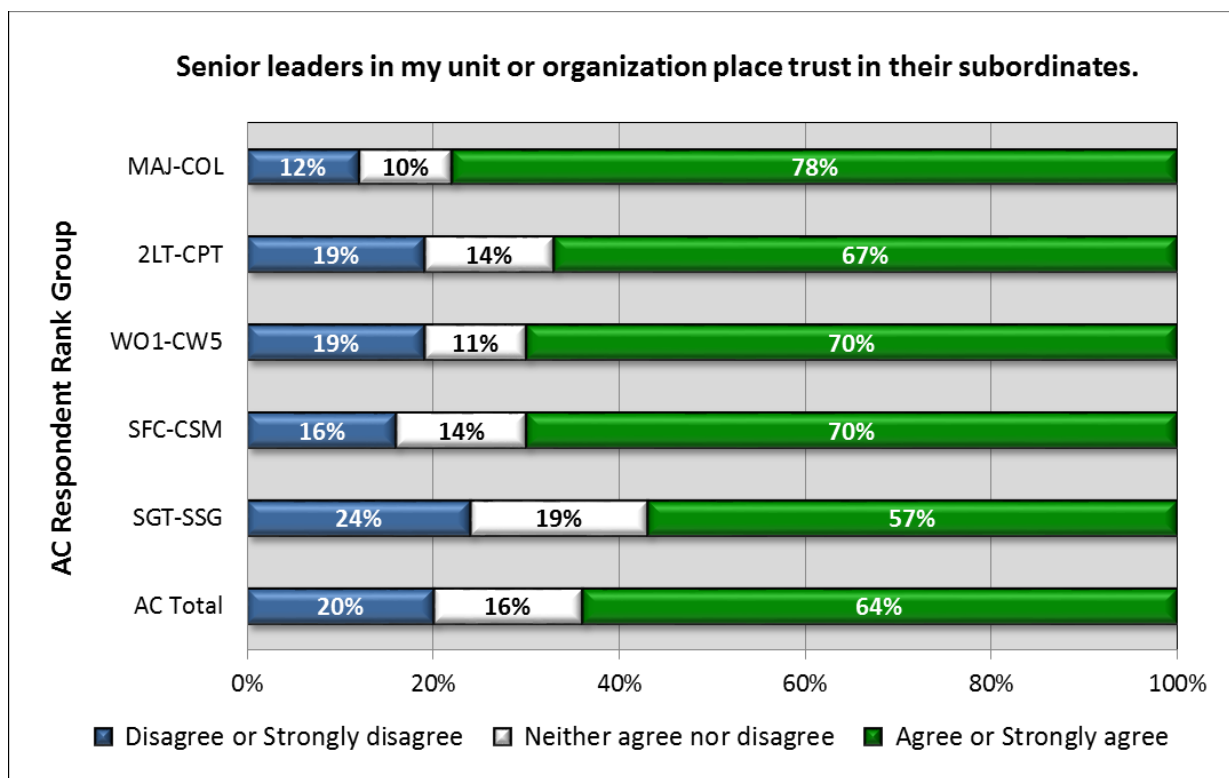| AC Respondent Rank Group	Disagree or Strongly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree or Strongly agree
MAJ-COL	12%	10%	78%
2LT-CPT	19%	14%	67%
WO1-CW5	19%	11%	70%
SFC-CSM	16%	14%	70%
SGT-SSG	24%	19%	57%
AC Total	20%	16%	64%

Figure 26. Perceptions of Collective Felt Trust in Units and Organizations by AC Rank Group

Respondent perceptions of collective felt trust, like perceptions of trust among unit members, are positively related to several characteristics of effective working environments. Worthy of note are the strong correlations between collective felt trust and perceptions that unit members are empowered to make decisions pertaining to the performance of their duties (r = .72, p < .001), are allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes (r = .66, p < .001), and that standards are upheld in the unit (r = .61, p < .001). Collective felt trust also relates positively to individual job characteristics conducive to disciplined initiative, including satisfaction with the freedom or latitude to perform one's duties, feeling encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things, feeling informed about decisions that affect work responsibilities, and pride and confidence in one's unit (r's = .52 to .60, p < .001).

Workload Stress

High levels of work stress can negatively affect morale and effectiveness. Stress from overwork has been found to be a reason why employees decide to leave an organization (Branham, 2005; Partnership for Public Service, 2010). Workload stress of subordinates presents an issue to leaders, further adding to their own workload. Army leaders are expected to mitigate workload stress by shaping an environment where subordinates can focus on accomplishing critical tasks

(ADRP 6-22, 2012f). Leaders assess the capabilities of their organization and set priorities or seek relief when demands exceed capacity. Effective leaders balance mission focus with the welfare of their followers. Ineffective leaders are likely to contribute to problems by poor scheduling of work, unmetered workload, not addressing role and interpersonal conflicts, and overlooking the effects of stress on subordinates (Committee on the Department of Homeland Security Workforce Resilience [Committee], 2013).

The percentage of AC respondents reporting workload stress as a serious problem (28% in 2016) has increased gradually since 2013 following a period of relative stability (2009-2012) (see Figure 27). Also notable is that the percentage of AC respondents reporting workload stress as not a problem at all (15%) has fallen to half of what it was in 2009 (29%). RC respondents continue to report a lower incidence of stress from high workload (see Figure 28).

> *28% of AC respondents rate stress from a high workload as a serious problem. Levels have ranged between 20% and 27% since 2009.*
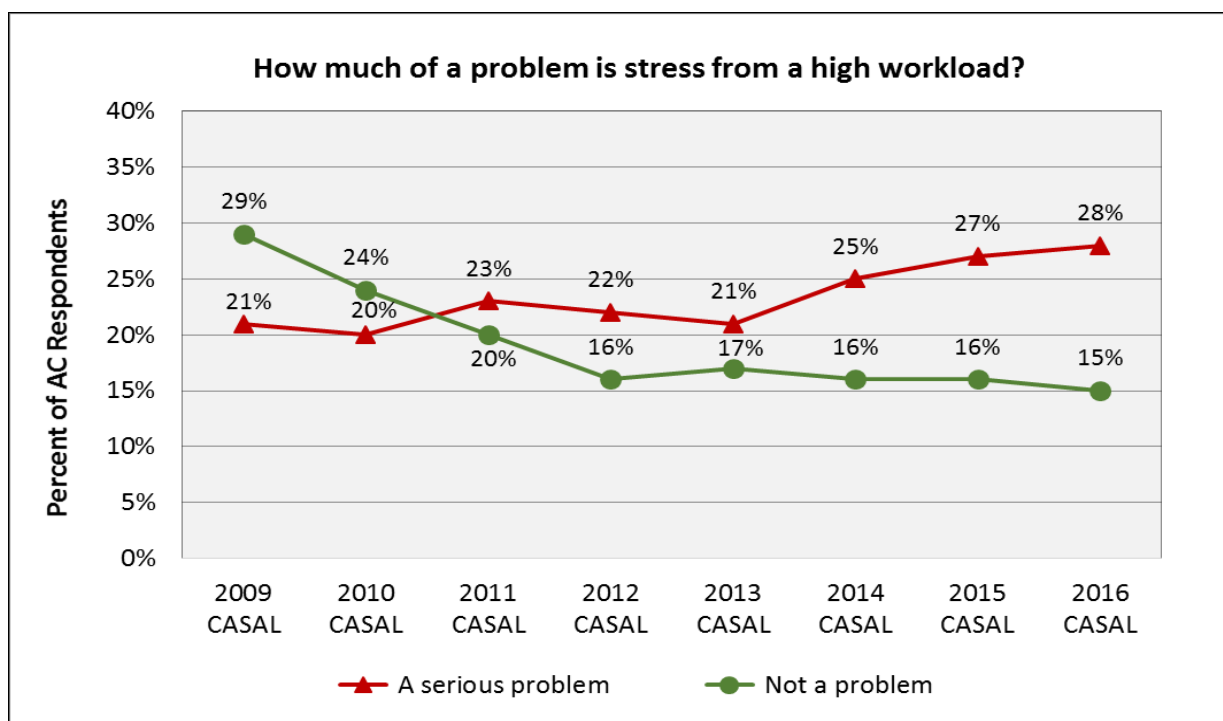

Figure 27. AC Respondent Ratings for Stress from High Workload (2009 to 2016)

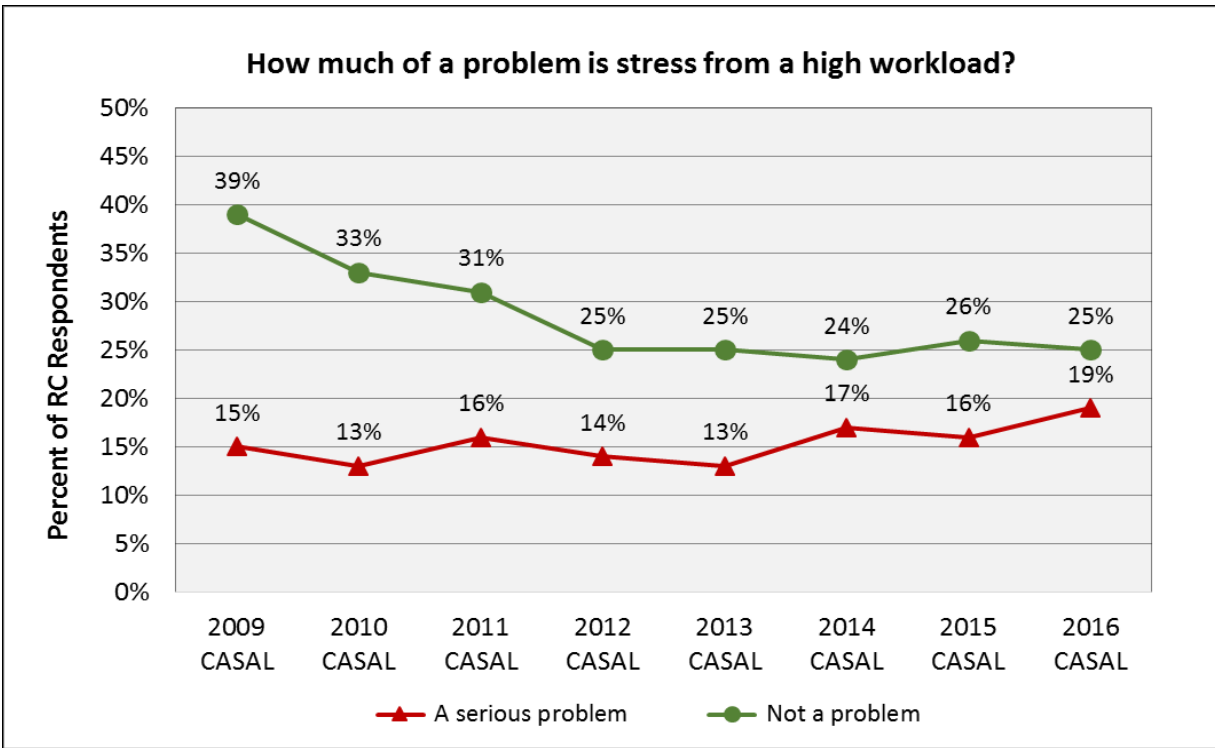**How much of a problem is stress from a high workload?**

Figure 28. RC Respondent Ratings for Stress from High Workload (2009 to 2016)

Previous CASAL results have demonstrated that leaders who perceived workload stress as a moderate to serious problem also tended to indicate the stress had a moderate to great negative impact on their well-being and work quality (Riley et al., 2014). Workload stress is negatively related to several indicators of effective leadership in Army units and organizations. Leaders who report stress from a high workload are less likely to be satisfied with the quality of leadership in their unit (r = .24, p < .001), view unit leaders as ineffective at lessening or limiting the effects of workload stress in subordinates (r = .47, p < .001), and rate their immediate superior ineffective at taking action to help subordinates manage excessive workload demands (r = .24, p < .001).

Results of the 2016 Status of Forces Surveys (SOFS) serve as additional indicators for the current stress levels experienced by active duty personnel (Office of People Analytics, 2016). More than half of field grade officers, company grade officers, and NCOs reported working longer than their normal duty day on more than 60 occasions in the past 12 months (see Table 9). In addition, 46% of Army respondents indicated they were experiencing more stress than usual in their work life, which is comparable to the percentages of respondents in the other uniformed Services (48% in the Navy, 48% in the Air Force, and 43% in the Marine Corps). SOFS trend results indicate that from 2003 to 2008, between 49% and 53% of DoD respondents (all

Services) reported more stress than usual in their work life. From 2009 to 2016, the percentage of Service members reporting more stress than usual shows modest decline, ranging from 43% to 47%.

Table 9. 2016 Status of Forces Survey Army Results on Overtime Days and Work Life Stress

2016 Status of Forces Survey of Active Duty Members (Army Results)			
Active Component Rank Group	**Worked longer than their normal duty day on more than 60 occurrences in the past 12 months**	**Average number of overtime days worked per year**	**Experiencing more stress than usual in their work life**
MAJ-COL (O4-O6)	59%	125 days	38%
2LT-CPT (O1-O3)	62%	128 days	45%
SGT-CSM (E5-E9)	53%	115 days	48%
PV1-CPL (E1-E4)	31%	68 days	45%
AC Total	46%	98 days	46%

Results from the 2015 CASAL identified the leading contributors to workload stress as insufficient personnel (61%), time constraints (47%), poor guidance from senior leaders (37%), lack of physical resources or materials (31%), and poor organizational climates (30%) (Riley, Cavanaugh, Fallesen, & Jones, 2016). Respondents also commented on organizational factors affecting workload stress including a high operational tempo, funding or budget issues, challenges with communication or information flow, last minute planning or changes, and taskings in addition to mission requirements. Also cited were leadership factors such as leaders holding unrealistic expectations; ineffective, inexperienced, and unqualified leaders; toxic leaders; micromanagement; and leaders overcommitting to new taskings from higher levels. These results indicate many leaders are not executing their leadership responsibilities to adapt to changing demands and to lessen the negative effects on subordinates (ADRP 6-22, 2012f).

Common sources of workload stress include personnel shortages, time constraints, poor guidance regarding work requirements, a lack of physical resources or materials, and poor organizational climates.

Unit leaders can respond to high workloads by taking action to mitigate or alleviate demands associated with subordinate stress. The role of leaders is especially important given that personnel shortages and time constraints are perceived to be the key drivers of workload stress

in current Army work settings. Effective leader intervention currently occurs to a moderate extent (see Table 10). About two-thirds of respondents rate their immediate superior effective at taking action to help subordinates manage excessive workload demands, a stable finding since 2014. However, less than half of respondents in any rank group provide a favorable holistic assessment of their unit's leaders in terms of lessening or limiting the effects of workload stress in subordinates. AC junior-level leaders (company grade officers and junior NCOs) report the least favorable attitudes regarding their experience with workload stress.

Table 10. Indicators of Stress from High Workload in Units and Organizations

Indicators	AC Respondents				
	SGT-SSG	SFC-CSM	WO1-CW5	2LT-CPT	MAJ-COL
Stress from high workload assessed as a "serious problem" (6 or 7 on a 7-pt scale)	30%	26%	24%	33%	22%
Stress from high workload assessed as a "moderate problem" (3, 4, or 5 on a 7-pt scale)	56%	55%	59%	55%	61%
Stress from high workload assessed as "not a problem" (1 or 2 on a 7-pt scale)	14%	19%	17%	12%	17%
Effectiveness of leaders in unit/organization at lessening or limiting effects of workload stress in subordinates	34% (34%)	43% (27%)	43% (27%)	35% (32%)	45% (24%)
Effectiveness of immediate superior at taking action to help subordinates manage excessive workload demands	61% (20%)	74% (12%)	70% (14%)	65% (21%)	67% (16%)

Note. The percentage of respondents rating items ineffective/very ineffective are given in parentheses.

The 2015 CASAL reported that leaders mitigate workload stress in subordinates by enacting problem-focused solutions (e.g., spreading the task load, prioritizing and planning, or fostering effective communication) and attending to subordinates morale and well-being (e.g., showing appreciation or respecting time away). In contrast, workload stress is higher in organizations with ineffective and disengaged leadership, where care and concern are not shown to unit members, and where personnel and physical resource deficiencies are not addressed (Riley et al., 2016).

The actions or inactions taken when high levels of workload are present can clearly be seen as issues to address through leadership. As presented previously in this report, 82% of leaders are rated effective in demonstrating the leader attribute *Resilience* (recovery from setbacks, adversity, and stress), and 83% effectively demonstrate *Confidence & Composure*. These skills should equip leaders to help mitigate the effects of workload stress both for themselves and for

their subordinates. Resilient and composed leaders must also be empathetic and care about how stress can affect Soldiers and intervene when necessary and to the extent possible.

Engagement

Engagement is the individual involvement, satisfaction, and enthusiasm for work, stemming from day-to-day experiences of job involvement, organizational commitment, and intrinsic motivation (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). More simply, engagement represents the level of commitment one has for their organization and the level of

> *Engagement represents the level of commitment one has for their organization and the level of initiative they apply to their duties.*

initiative they apply to their duties. When measured, items assessing engagement reflect employees' effort directed to their work and organization (Macey & Schneider, 2008), feelings of responsibility and commitment to job performance (Britt & Adler, 1999), and their physical, cognitive, and emotional experiences during work (Kahn, 1990). Research has shown that engagement is associated with a range of important positive outcomes that effective organizations work to improve, such as reduced turnover, increased safety, increased overall satisfaction (Harter et al., 2002), less sick leave used, fewer EEO complaints, less time lost due to work-related illness or injury (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board [MSPB], 2012), increased performance (Harter et al., 2002; Schneider, Macey, Barbera, & Martin, 2009), and reduced burnout (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). Thus, a force with high levels of engagement can save the Army valuable resources, increase the capacity of leaders to address peak work demands or stress, and ensure mission accomplishment.

CASAL assesses engagement through 10 items chosen for their relevance to engagement constructs in the research literature and their similarity to items on existing validated engagement measures (Harter et al., 2002; Schaufeli et al., 2006). The 10 engagement items and their respective facets (i.e., categories) are presented in Table 11. Results for these individual items are also discussed in more detail in their respective section of this report.

Table 11. Facets of Engagement and Associated CASAL Items

Engagement Facet	CASAL Item
Perceived work conditions	I know what is expected of me in my current position.
	I have access to the right resources (e.g., people, materials, budget) to accomplish my duties to standard.
	Members of my team or immediate work group collaborate effectively to achieve results.
	How effective is your immediate superior at balancing subordinate needs with mission requirements?
Attitudes toward assigned duties	I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.
	How satisfied are you with the amount of freedom or latitude you have in the conduct of your duties?
	My assigned duties are important to my unit or organization.
Leader development	How often does your immediate superior take the time to talk with you about how you could improve your duty performance?
	How often does your immediate superior take the time to talk with you about how you are doing in your work?
	How effective has your operational experience (work experience) been in preparing you to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility?

AC respondent results for these 10 indicators of engagement are presented in Figure 29. CASAL uses varying response option scales to assess engagement items, as noted for each set of items. The least favorable indicators are agreement that respondents have access to the right resources (e.g., people, materials, budget) to accomplish their duties to standard, and the frequency with which respondents' immediate superiors talk with them about how they are doing in their work and how they can improve their duty performance. In comparison, indicators with the largest percentages of favorable responses include agreement that respondents' assigned duties are important to the unit or organization, respondent agreement that they know what is expected of them in their current positions, and agreement that members of respondents' teams or immediate work groups collaborate effectively to achieve results. The general pattern of results for engagement indicators is consistent with findings from 2015.

	Ineffective or Very Ineffective	Neutral	Effective or Very Effective
Operational experiences for preparing me to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility	10%	15%	75%
Immediate superior balances subordinate needs with mission requirements	14%	16%	70%
	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Agree or Strongly Agree
My assigned duties are important to my unit or organization	8%	8%	84%
I know what is expected of me in my current position	9%	9%	82%
Members of my team or immediate work group collaborate effectively to achieve results	10%	11%	79%
I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things	15%	12%	73%
I have access to the right resources (e.g., people, materials, budget) to accomplish my duties to standard	24%	13%	63%
	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied or Very Satisfied
Satisfaction with the amount of freedom or latitude I have in the conduct of my duties	15%	14%	71%
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally, Frequently, or Very Frequently
Immediate superior takes time to talk with me about how I am doing in my work	14%	23%	63%
Immediate superior takes time to talk with me about how I could improve my duty performance	20%	27%	53%

Figure 29. AC Respondent Results for Engagement Items[10]

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[10] The size of the circles depicted in Figure 29 correspond to the relative proportion of respondents who selected a response option or category. The three percentages for each item total to 100%.

A useful method for examining and tracking levels of engagement across the federal workforce is through the use of index scores. Index scores report the proportion of favorable responses across a set of items. CASAL engagement index scores were calculated as the average of the unrounded percent positive of each engagement item. Results are interpreted for each rank group and at the overall component level.

Figure 30 displays a comparison of 2016 engagement index scores for AC and RC respondents by rank group. Results show that two-thirds or more of respondents in each rank group report favorable levels of engagement. At the rank group level, AC junior NCOs rate lowest on engagement while AC senior NCOs rate the highest. In comparison to 2015 engagement index scores, current engagement levels are slightly lower for most rank groups but within the margin of error (within 3.0 points).
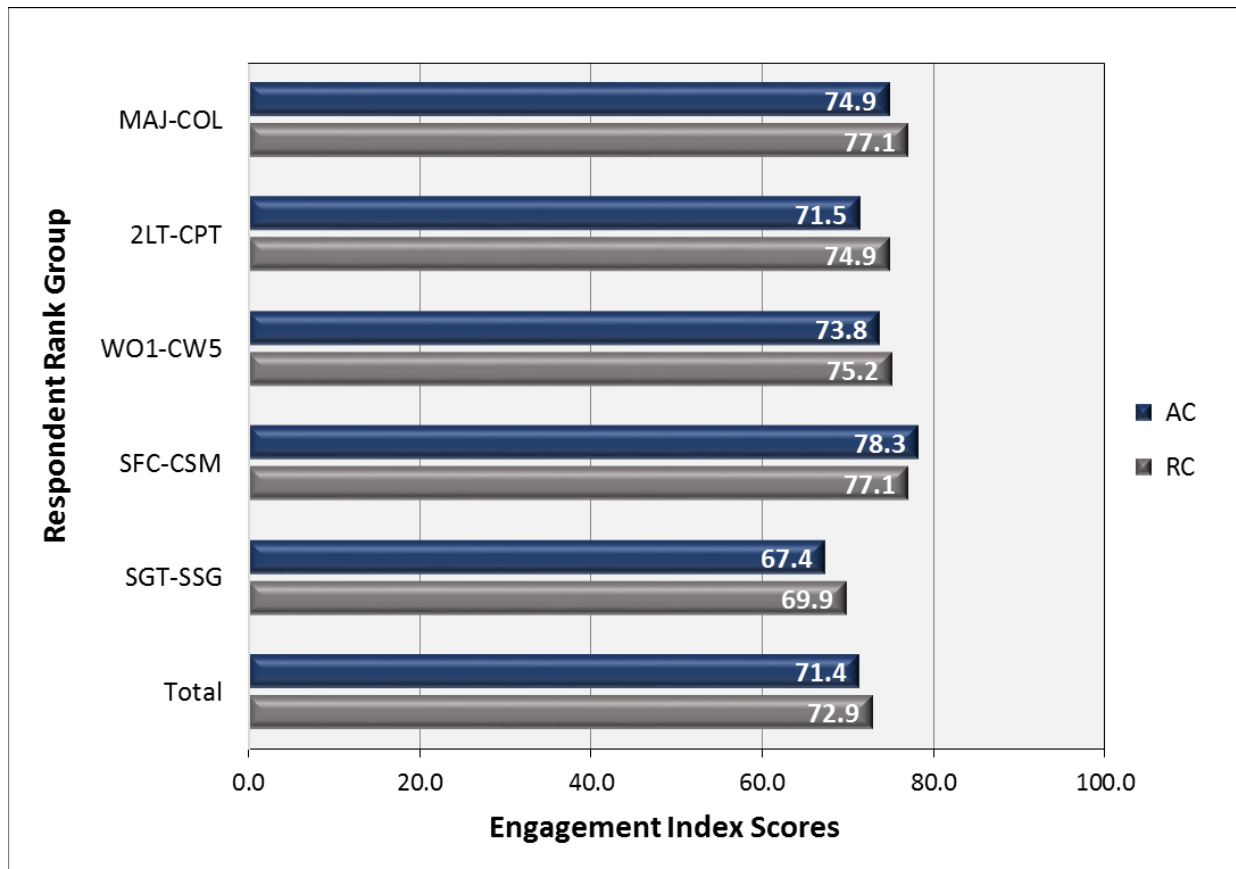

Figure 30. Engagement Index Scores for AC and RC Respondents by Rank Group

CASAL uses a composite score for engagement to examine interrelationships between engaged leaders and other characteristics of Army working environments. The composite variable, used in analyses in previous years, continued to demonstrate strong internal consistency for the set of 10 engagement items ($\alpha = .85$). Leader engagement

> *Engagement is associated with effective leadership, mission command, trust-building behavior, leader development, and a positive unit climate.*

positively and significantly relates to important outcomes such as an individual's morale ($r = .69$, $p < .001$) and career satisfaction ($r = .53$, $p < .001$), but also to a range of other relevant factors. As expected, engagement is strongly related to leader attitudes toward their assigned duties and conditions within their units/organizations (e.g., feeling informed about decisions affecting work, confidence in unit, satisfaction with the quality of leadership, trust among unit members, the demonstration of organizational citizenship behaviors by members of one's team or immediate work group, and standards being upheld).

Importantly, engagement is also strongly related to a respondent's assessment of his/her immediate superior's demonstration of leadership (e.g., core leader competencies, leader attributes, mission command, trust-building behavior, and lack of counterproductive or toxic leadership) and other attitudes toward his/her superior (e.g., level of trust). Tables 12 and 13 display the strength of these positive relationships and thus the importance for the Army to foster and sustain an engaged force of leaders.

Table 12. Correlations of Engagement Composite with Assessment of Immediate Superior

Relationships between Respondent Engagement and Assessment of Immediate Superior as a Leader	AC	RC
Immediate superior demonstrates core leader competencies	.67	.64
Immediate superior demonstrates mission command philosophy	.66	.66
Immediate superior exhibits trust-building behavior	.65	.63
Effectiveness of immediate superior at developing subordinates	.62	.62
Immediate superior demonstrates leader attributes	.60	.61
Current level of trust in immediate superior	.59	.62
Agreement immediate superior is an effective leader	.56	.57
Immediate superior does not exhibit counterproductive leadership	.53	.51

Note. All correlations significant at $p < .01$, 2-tailed.

Table 13. Correlations of Engagement Composite with Attitudes toward Job and Unit

Relationships between Respondent Engagement and Attitudes toward Job and Unit Characteristics		
	AC	RC
Feel informed about decisions that affect work responsibilities	.73	.72
Satisfaction with the quality of military leadership in unit/organization	.68	.60
Confident in the ability of unit or organization to perform its mission	.66	.67
Senior leaders in unit or organization place trust in their subordinates	.64	.62
Current level of trust among members of unit or organization	.64	.61
Members of team/immediate work group demonstrate organizational citizenship behaviors	.64	.60
Standards are upheld in unit or organization	.61	.60
Effectiveness of leaders in unit or organization at lessening or limiting the effects of workload stress in subordinates	.58	.54

Note. All correlations significant at *p* < .01, 2-tailed.

Conclusions on the Effects of Climate and Situational Factors on Leadership

Morale, Career Satisfaction, and Career Intentions

Morale levels have remained modest and steady since 2009. The high percentage of leaders who are committed to their duties and report good morale indicates favorable conditions for being conscientious and resilient. Levels of career satisfaction have rested at or slightly above a two-thirds level since 2012. High career satisfaction is a result indicating the favorability of past experiences and can be a predictor of future attitudes. While more than two-thirds of leaders overall report they are satisfied with their Army career, nearly one-fourth of AC junior NCOs, a cohort typically early in their career as Army leaders, report dissatisfaction.

Leader intentions to remain in the Army continue to be favorable and relate positively to leaders' career satisfaction. Of leaders not currently eligible for retirement, more than two-thirds in the AC and three-fourths in the RC intend to stay in the Army until eligible for retirement or beyond 20 years. These results serve as another positive indication of commitment across the force. Also positive is that 57% of AC captains intend to remain in the Army until retirement or beyond, the highest percentage observed by CASAL over the past 12 years.

Perceptions of Leadership Quality in Army Units and Organizations

Levels of satisfaction with the quality of military and civilian leadership in units/organizations remain generally positive and stable since first assessed in 2013. Factors within the working environment that most strongly contribute to uniformed leader satisfaction with military leadership in their unit include the level of trust among unit members, perceptions that senior leaders place trust in subordinates (collective felt trust), standards being upheld, senior leader effectiveness at lessening or limiting the effects of workload stress, feeling informed about decisions affecting work responsibilities, having access to the right resources to accomplish one's duties to standard, and satisfaction with the freedom or latitude to perform one's duties. Satisfaction with leadership quality largely depends on how much a leader is perceived to care for the well-being of followers and others.

Working Environments

CASAL findings indicate Army leaders hold positive attitudes about the environments in which they operate. A high level of leaders (92%) are committed to their team or immediate work group and report the positive occurrence of OCBs, which are associated with high levels of trust among unit members, satisfaction with the quality of leadership in their unit, and confidence in the ability of their unit to perform its mission. Perceptions of trust at the unit or organization level continue to be moderately favorable and show no notable change since first assessed in 2013. Overall, trust tends to be greater in units where standards are upheld, where unit members are empowered to make decisions pertaining to their duties, and where unit members are allowed and encouraged to learn from honest mistakes. This is important, as these are conditions of working environments supportive of disciplined initiative. Subordinate leaders who feel they are trusted by their superiors also perceive a climate that allows learning from honest mistakes and empowerment to perform their duties.

Respondent ratings also confirm that adherence to standards is positively related to favorable perceptions about the absence of discipline problems in units and organizations. While two-thirds of respondents agree that standards are upheld (e.g., professional bearing or adherence to regulations), more than one-fourth indicate there is a discipline problem in their unit—levels that show no notable change since 2011. Characteristics of working environments that leaders assess less favorably include feeling informed about decisions affecting work responsibilities and having access to the right resources (e.g., people, materials, budget) to accomplish their duties to standard.

Workload Stress

Stress from high workload is a persistent problem for Army leaders that has gradually increased. In 2016, 28% of AC respondents report workload stress is a serious problem (compared to 20% to 27% over the previous seven years). Stress can act as either a motivator or a distractor. Knowing the level of stress created by missions or the amount of work tied to those missions helps to identify complicating factors that leaders and subordinates must address. Unabated workload stress leads to lowered well-being levels and poor work quality. Effective leader intervention to mitigate workload stress in subordinates is warranted. However, results indicate this is only occurring to a moderate extent, as two-thirds of respondents assess their immediate superior as effective at taking action to help subordinates manage excessive workload demands. Previous CASAL findings have indicated effective leaders mitigate workload stress in subordinates by enacting problem-focused solutions and attending to subordinates' morale and well-being. In contrast, workload stress is higher in organizations with ineffective and disengaged leadership, where care and concern are not shown to unit members, and where personnel and physical resource deficiencies are not addressed. The actions or inactions taken when high levels of workload are present can clearly be seen as issues to address through leadership.

Engagement

CASAL findings indicate many Army leaders in all rank groups are engaged in their duties and organizations. Leaders who score high on engagement are more likely to view their units and teams favorably, report satisfaction with the quality of leadership in their unit, and perceive high levels of trust among unit members and demonstration of organizational citizenship behaviors by their teams or immediate work groups. Higher levels of engagement also positively relate to effective leadership by one's immediate superior (i.e., core leader competencies, leader attributes, mission command, and absence of counterproductive leadership).

What can be done. Continue through CASAL and other Army surveys to assess and track levels of morale, career satisfaction, and intentions to remain in the Army, to monitor changes and potential effects on conditions in units and organizations and to examine the relationship between leadership and these other constructs.

Promote the use of the new Army training circular on how to improve engagement in Army units and organizations (TC 6-22.6, *Employee Engagement,* 2017b). This resource was developed to provide doctrinally-based techniques for enhancing employee engagement, for use by all personnel and their supervisors (military and civilian) with an application focus at the

direct level of leadership. The circular integrates experiences and best practices by drawing upon Army doctrine and regulation, recent Army leadership studies, and research on effective practices from the private and public sectors. The resource describes each factor affecting employee engagement and provides assessments to determine team strengths and needs in each area, as well as actionable methods to set conditions for enhancing employee engagement. The resource is available through the Army Publishing Directorate website. It is up to leaders and managers to implement the guidelines to realize improvement.

1.3   Counterproductive Leadership

Counterproductive leadership is the consistent or extreme abuse of authority that inflicts serious and enduring harm on individuals, the organization, and the mission. The term counterproductive conveys that a given behavior or absence of a behavior will be counter to productive results, processes, and attitudes. Counterproductive behaviors can take

> *Counterproductive leadership involves destructive conduct contrary to the Army Values that decreases followers' well-being and undermines unit functioning.*

many forms, and include bullying, distorting information, refusing to listen to subordinates, abusing authority, withholding encouragement, showing little or no respect, and taking credit for others' work (AR 600-100, 2017a). Counterproductive leadership involves destructive conduct that unnecessarily increases stress, consumes mental and emotional energies without gain, and prevents a climate conducive to mission accomplishment. It is often marked by leaders who misuse their authority, pursue self-serving motives, have an unstable identity, lack competence, or make corrupt choices. These behaviors undermine confidence in leaders and are contrary to the *Army Values*.

A label previously used to describe counterproductive leadership behaviors is toxic leadership. Toxic leadership is a combination of self-centered attitudes, motivations, and behaviors that have adverse effects on subordinates, the organization, and mission performance. Counterproductive behaviors are classified as toxic when they become recurrent and have a damaging effect on the organization's performance or the welfare of subordinates (AR 600-100, 2017a). Toxic leaders tend to use compliance-driven techniques that involve coercion, demeaning or threatening messages, and where followers respond to the positional power of the leader to avoid negative consequences for themselves. While toxic leaders may attain results in the short-term using these techniques, other important productive competencies are ignored or diminished. Effective leadership is characterized by encouragement and inspiration, while coercive techniques run counter to the Army's leadership principles (ADP 6-22, 2012d). Descriptions used to identify toxic leaders fit within the scope of counterproductive leadership behaviors. However, the term counterproductive leadership is more comprehensive as it emphasizes observable behaviors and effects rather than intent.

Prevalence of Counterproductive Leadership Behaviors in the Army

In 2010, CASAL's foray into the assessment of toxic leadership used a gross indicator where the presence of any one of a small set of negative behaviors would define toxic leadership (Steele, 2011). This approach estimated that up to 20% of Army leaders demonstrated one or more

negative behaviors but did not take into account the severity of behaviors or multiple negative behaviors. Since 2012, CASAL has used a refined approach that has produced estimates nearer 5% or fewer leaders demonstrating counterproductive leadership behaviors. Assessments are based on subordinate ratings of their immediate superior in demonstrating counterproductive behaviors that reflect leadership outcomes. This method inhibits respondents from making holistic assessments about their immediate superior that associate negative intentions with the observable behaviors.

The presence of counterproductive leadership behaviors in the Army remains limited but they do occur. The reported occurrence of several negative behaviors shows little to no change from 2012 to 2016. Results show that the proportion of leaders who indicate their immediate superior demonstrates any specific counterproductive behavior has remained about one-fourth or less (see Table 14) over the past five years. The most commonly displayed counterproductive leadership behavior reported is setting misplaced priorities that interfere with accomplishing goals, which is reported to be slightly more prevalent in 2016 compared to recent years. Importantly, these behaviors individually do not constitute counterproductive leadership. All Army leaders are susceptible to demonstrating counterproductive behaviors, and many who do have good ideas and accomplish their missions, though their achievements often come at the expense of others and the overall organization. Similarly, the prevalence of positive leadership behavior continues to be another strong indication that counterproductive leadership is limited. A majority of leaders engage in productive behaviors related to ethical conduct, selfless service, and communication that fosters teamwork (see Table 15). These results have also remained generally stable since 2012.

Table 14. AC Respondent Ratings of Their Immediate Superior's Demonstration of Counterproductive Leadership Behaviors (2012 to 2016)

My immediate superior…	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree				
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Sets misplaced priorities that interfere with accomplishing goals	20%	23%	22%	21%	26%
Does little to help his/her team be more cohesive	21%	22%	21%	22%	23%
Berates subordinates for small mistakes	19%	19%	17%	18%	19%
Blames other people to save himself/herself embarrassment	20%	20%	19%	19%	17%

Table 15. AC Respondent Ratings of Their Immediate Superior's Demonstration of Productive Leadership Behaviors (2012 to 2016)

My immediate superior…	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree				
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Upholds ethical standards	*	81%	81%	81%	83%
Puts the needs of the unit/organization and mission ahead of self	75%	77%	76%	76%	76%
Is an effective leader	70%	72%	71%	71%	73%
Promotes good communication among team members	68%	72%	71%	70%	72%

Note. * Item was not assessed in 2012.

Counterproductive Leadership by Rank and Position

Leaders who demonstrate a combination of counterproductive leadership behaviors on a consistent basis tend to do the most damage to their organizations and to their subordinates and other personnel. CASAL examines the prevalence of counterproductive leadership by calculating the percentage of leaders who exhibit more negative than positive behaviors in regards to the eight behaviors[11] listed in Tables 14 and 15 (i.e., respondents who perceive their immediate superior engages in a negative manner in five or more of the eight behaviors). As stated previously, all Army leaders are susceptible to exhibiting one or a few negative behaviors from time to time. This analysis aimed to identify the proportion of leaders who are perceived as exhibiting a pattern of counterproductive behaviors that outweigh their productive behaviors.

> *About 5% of AC leaders are assessed as exhibiting a combination of counterproductive behaviors, a level that has declined slightly since 2012.*

Results confirm that the percentage of respondents reporting that their immediate superior exhibits counterproductive leadership has remained low since first assessed in 2012 (see Figure 31). The slight decline in percentages observed for AC respondents (-3%) is a positive finding. The minimal decline in percentages for RC respondents across these years remains within the margin of error (± 1.6%) and indicates no meaningful change. Further, the stability in the

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[11] In unpublished research by the Center for Army Leadership, the eight behaviors (four negative and four positive) presented in Tables 14 and 15 were empirically identified from a set of over 100 items as the ones that best differentiated (predicted) positive and negative outcomes, such as unit efficacy, leadership effectiveness, and subordinate morale.

reported prevalence of counterproductive leadership in the Army is also supported by results of an analysis comparing the distributions of subordinate ratings across recent years. Three pairwise Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests of equality of distributions were conducted to investigate the consistency in reported counterproductive leadership across CASAL years 2014, 2015, and 2016. All three tests (2016 versus 2015, 2015 versus 2014, and 2016 versus 2014) were non-significant ($p's$ = 0.34, 0.17, and 0.40, respectively), indicating the distributions of ratings have remained consistent across these years.
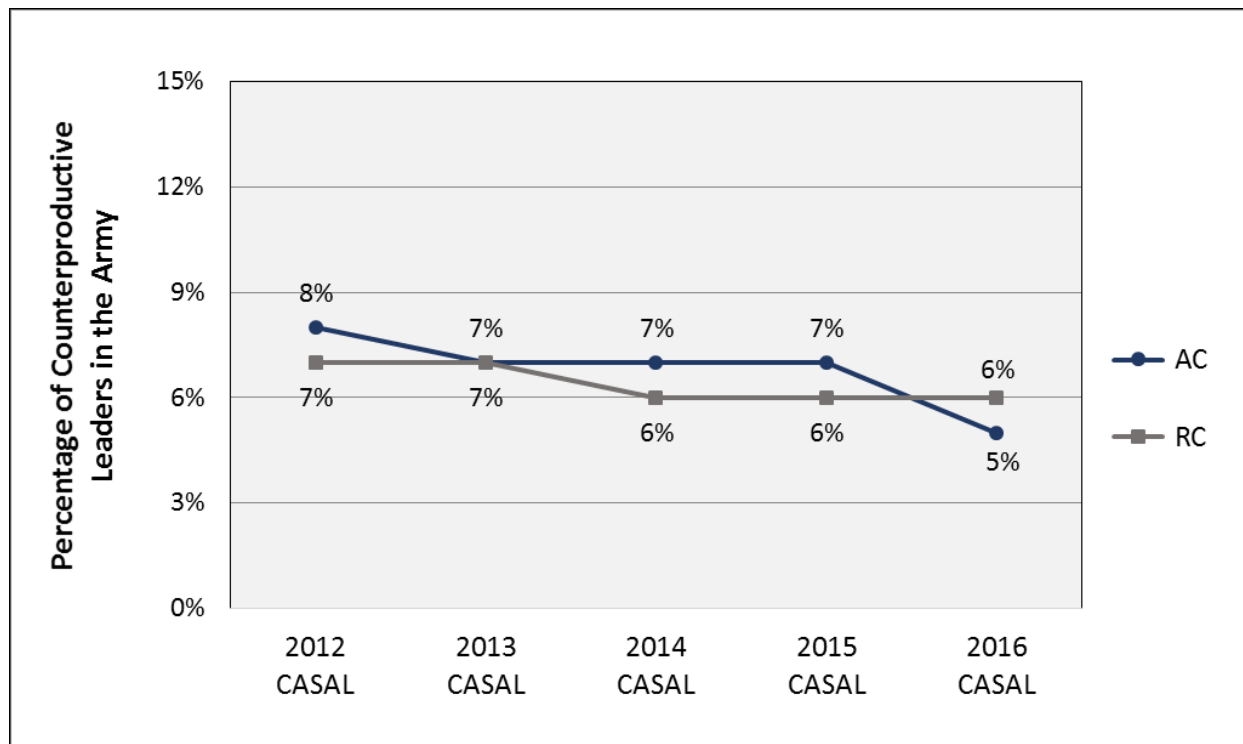

Figure 31. Trend in the Percentage of AC and RC Respondents Reporting Their Immediate Superior Exhibits a Combination of Counterproductive Leadership Behaviors (2012 to 2016)

Table 16 displays the prevalence of counterproductive leadership (i.e., a leader engages in a negative manner in five or more of the eight behaviors) by the rank of the respondents' immediate superior. Similarly, Table 17 displays results by the unit position of the respondents' immediate superior. The two most notable findings based on these results are that counterproductive leadership remains limited across ranks and unit positions and that the total percentage of Army leaders demonstrating counterproductive leadership shows gradual decline from 8% in 2012 to 5% in 2016 (the margin of error in 2016 is ± 1.6%). Results at the rank and unit position level have a margin of error that exceeds ± 4.0%, which hinders the precision of these estimates and limits the meaningfulness of the comparisons. One notable finding is the increase in the percentage of battalion commanders reported to exhibit counterproductive

leadership (from 4% in 2015 to 9% in 2016) as well as the similar increase noted in ratings for the rank of lieutenant colonel (from 4% in 2015 to 7% in 2016). While it is possible that the 2016 results for battalion commanders represents a true change in perceptions toward leaders in that position, the result may also be an anomaly due to a change in the level of sampling precision (i.e., from n = 473 in 2015 to n = 224 in 2016).

Table 16. Percentage of AC Leaders Exhibiting Counterproductive Leadership by Rank (2012 to 2016)

Rank of AC Respondent's Immediate Superior	Percentage of Leaders Exhibiting More Counterproductive Than Productive Leadership Behaviors				
	2012	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
Officers					
General Officer	6%	1%	1%	1%	2%
COL	4%	4%	4%	3%	2%
LTC	5%	4%	4%	4%	7%
MAJ	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%
CPT	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%
1LT	6%	6%	5%	5%	3%
NCOs					
SGM/CSM	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%
MSG/1SG	7%	6%	10%	7%	6%
SFC	9%	9%	11%	9%	6%
SSG	12%	11%	7%	10%	6%
Total AC	8%	7%	7%	7%	5%

Table 17. Percentage of AC Leaders Exhibiting Counterproductive Leadership by Unit Position (2012 to 2016)

Unit Position of AC Respondent's Immediate Superior	Percentage of Leaders Exhibiting More Counterproductive Than Productive Leadership Behaviors				
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Brigade Commander	4%	4%	4%	2%	3%
Battalion Commander	6%	5%	4%	4%	9%
Company Commander	7%	7%	8%	6%	6%
First Sergeant	8%	8%	11%	7%	5%
Platoon Sergeant	10%	10%	9%	10%	5%
Squad/Section Leader	8%	9%	10%	10%	4%

Further analyses were conducted using a composite score for counterproductive leadership that included the four positive and four negative leader behaviors, the latter being reverse coded to align favorable ratings across the eight items. A score of 5.00 indicates strong disagreement that superiors demonstrate counterproductive leadership behaviors. A score of 3.00 serves as a mid-point indicating subordinates neither agree nor disagree that their superior demonstrates the behaviors, or are balanced between demonstrating some negative and some positive behaviors. Composite scores are described in more detail in Appendix B.

Ratings for each individual core leader competency and attribute were examined to identify the strongest contributors to leaders' demonstration of positive leadership behaviors regarded as not counterproductive. Results indicated two competencies and three attributes accounted for 61% of the variance in ratings of the absence of counterproductive leadership behaviors (R^2 = .61, p < .001). Specifically, the effectiveness of one's immediate superior in *Building Trust*, living the *Army Values,* demonstrating *Sound Judgment, Leading by Example*, and demonstrating *Empathy* significantly contributed to perceptions that the superior does not demonstrate counterproductive leadership behaviors. These results are supported by CASAL findings for this analysis since 2012. The competency *Builds Trust* has consistently been the key factor explaining variance in ratings for the absence of counterproductive leadership behavior. The *Army Values* and *Sound Judgment* have also consistently been significant factors in the results since 2012.

> *Leaders who effectively Build Trust, live the Army Values, demonstrate Sound Judgment, Lead by Example, and demonstrate Empathy are least often perceived to demonstrate counterproductive leadership.*

Impact of Counterproductive Leadership

CASAL results have consistently demonstrated that counterproductive leadership is associated with unfavorable subordinate attitudes and organizational outcomes. There are strong positive relationships between respondents' assessment of their immediate superior exhibiting positive leadership behavior (i.e., the favorable end of the composite score) and their assessment of their immediate superior's effect on organizational outcomes, such as those presented in Table 18. The presence of a combination of counterproductive leadership behaviors is associated with negative subordinate perceptions about their immediate superior's effect on command climate; the cohesion, discipline, and capability of teams and work groups to accomplish missions; and the overall level of trust among members of the unit or organization.

Table 18. Correlations of Counterproductive Leadership Behaviors with Organizational Outcomes

Relationships Between the Extent of Immediate Superior Not Demonstrating Counterproductive Leadership Behaviors and Unit or Organizational Outcomes		
	AC	RC
Effect on command climate	.69	.71
Effect on team/immediate work group cohesion	.69	.71
Effect on team/immediate work group capability to accomplish missions	.67	.71
Effect on team/immediate work group discipline	.63	.68
Perceived level of trust among members of unit/organization	.44	.44

Note. All correlations significant at $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

Similarly, the presence of counterproductive leadership behaviors is associated with unfavorable subordinate attitudes (see Table 19). The strongest correlations indicate that leaders who are viewed as demonstrating a combination of counterproductive behaviors tend to not meet their subordinates' expectations for leadership nor be trusted by their subordinates. This is supported by a meta-analysis by Schyns and Schilling (2013) which found that destructive leadership behaviors were negatively correlated ($r = -.57$, $p < .001$) with how employees felt about their leader. Whether due to incompetence or some other combination of counterproductive behaviors, ineffective leaders can lose the confidence and trust of their subordinates. CASAL findings also indicate subordinates perceive counterproductive superiors to have an adverse effect on their work quality and report lower levels of engagement and morale.

Further, the absence of counterproductive leadership behavior is positively associated with multiple indices of trust-building behavior (r's = .70 to .72, $p < .001$), meaning leaders who demonstrate productive leadership are viewed favorably on behaviors such as building trust, looking out for their subordinates' welfare, keeping their word, and following through on commitments to others.

Table 19. Correlations of Counterproductive Leadership Behaviors with Subordinate Attitudes

Relationships Between the Extent of Immediate Superior Not Demonstrating Counterproductive Leadership Behaviors and Subordinate Attitudes	AC	RC
Meeting expectations for leadership	.69	.70
Subordinate level of trust in immediate superior	.67	.67
Effect on subordinate work quality	.63	.63
Subordinate engagement (composite score)	.53	.51
Subordinate level of morale	.44	.45
Subordinate satisfaction with freedom or latitude in conduct of duties	.39	.33
Subordinate feels informed of decisions affecting work responsibilities	.36	.32
Subordinate feels encouraged to come up with new/better ways of doing things	.36	.25

Note. All correlations significant at $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

Results indicate fairly weak associations between the presence of counterproductive leadership behaviors and subordinate career satisfaction ($r = .28$, $p < .001$) and intention to remain in the Army ($r = .17$, $p < .001$). This is not unexpected, as career satisfaction and career intentions represent attitudes regarding characteristics spanning a leader's entire career (Locke, 1976; Pinder, 1998) as opposed to a leader's affective reaction to their current leader. For this reason, counterproductive leadership has stronger associations (r's = .36 to .69, p's < .001) with subordinates' attitudes toward their current assigned duties and the current operating climate, such as those presented in Table 19.

Conclusions on Counterproductive Leadership

The frequency of counterproductive leadership behaviors in the Army remains low and relatively unchanged since first assessed by CASAL in 2012. Small percentages of leaders (about one-fourth or less) are viewed as demonstrating specific behaviors associated with counterproductive leadership or toxic leadership. The percentage of leaders assessed as demonstrating more counterproductive than productive leadership behaviors is about 5%.

As in past years, CASAL results reinforce that leaders who engage in a combination of counterproductive behaviors are perceived by subordinates as also having negative effects on command climate; the cohesion, discipline, and capability of the teams and work groups they lead; and the work quality, engagement, and morale of their subordinates. Leaders who effectively *Build Trust*, live the *Army Values*, demonstrate *Sound Judgment, Lead by Example*, and demonstrate *Empathy* are less often perceived to demonstrate counterproductive leadership behaviors. Counterproductive leadership runs contrary to the *Army Values;* it is not surprising that these behaviors strain bonds of trust in units. Subordinates report low levels of trust in leaders who they perceive to demonstrate counterproductive leadership and assess these leaders as less effective in trust-building behaviors.

What can be done. Continue research on the antecedents, causes, and occurrence of counterproductive leadership and toxic leadership in the Army. The Army and the Center for Army Leadership have developed an understanding of the types of behaviors that can be classified as counterproductive. More needs to be learned about what causes leaders to engage in or demonstrate these negative behaviors or outcomes. CAL is currently developing interactive media instruction (IMI) to address counterproductive leadership. The instruction includes how to define and identify counterproductive behaviors, how to assess the causes and effects of the behaviors, and how to apply strategies and techniques to address counterproductive behaviors. The instruction will allow a leader to identify any of his or her own behaviors that are counterproductive. It will also provide strategies for individuals who are experiencing or witnessing the effects of counterproductive leadership and guide them in identifying, assessing, and addressing the behaviors.

Part Two: Quality of Leader Development

2.1   Army Leader Development

This chapter provides findings on the methods the Army uses to develop its leaders. Subsequent chapters of this report provide detail on specific methods of leader development including Army education systems, the leader's role in developing subordinates, and unit training and leader development.

Leader development is a continuous and progressive process and spans a leader's entire career. The Army's leader development model comprises training, education, and experience gained through three mutually supporting domains: operational, self-development, and institutional (see Figure 32). By design, a majority of leader development occurs in operational assignments and through self-development, as limited time is allotted for schoolhouse learning (ADRP 7-0, 2012g).
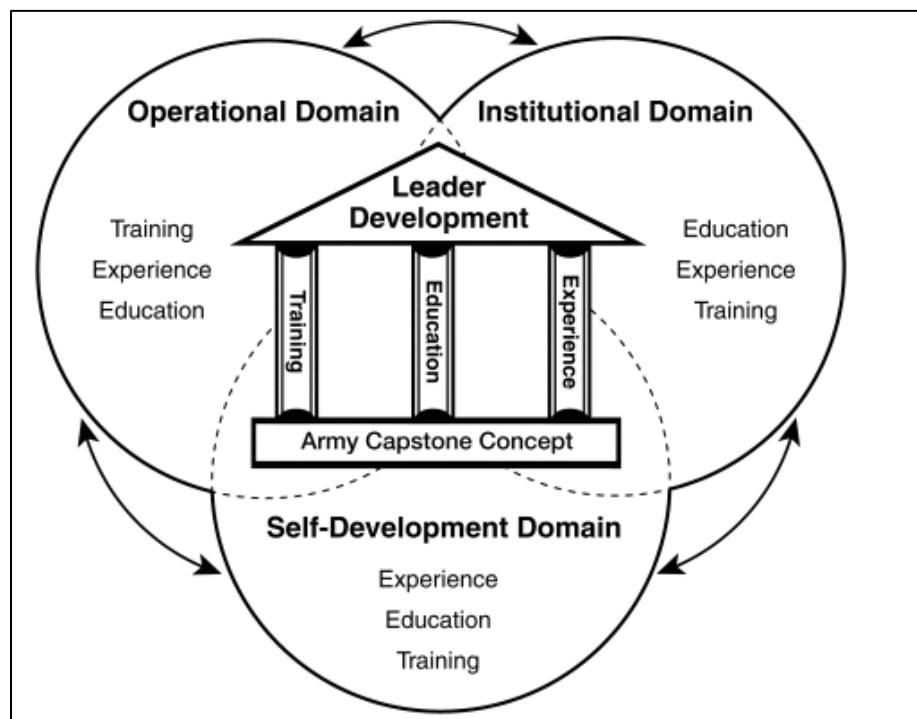

Figure 32. The Army Leader Development Model (ADRP 7-0, 2012g)

CASAL assesses leader attitudes on the effectiveness and relative positive impact of the three leader development domains. Findings consistently show that the model is well supported and that AC leaders' independent ratings favor the operational and self-development domains over the institutional domain based on the perceived contribution of each to their development.

Since 2014, RC leader ratings of the effectiveness of the self-development and institutional domains have been at similar levels. Leader attitudes on the effectiveness of self-development were on a downward trend starting in 2011 for the AC and in 2012 for the RC (see Figures 33 and 34). Since 2014, attitudes toward self-development have trended more favorably in the AC. A closer examination (presented on the following pages of this report) shows that changes at the component level have been driven heavily by NCO ratings for self-development effectiveness.

The pattern of ratings by AC leaders shows that attitudes toward the effectiveness of the institutional domain consistently lag behind operational experiences and self-development. These relatively lower favorable ratings do not necessarily indicate systemic problems with Army education. Rather, leaders spend less time in formal educational settings and spend more time in operational work settings that offer experiential learning opportunities. It can be difficult for a leader to associate improvement in their leadership skills with a specific course experience, even if introduced or reinforced there, as opposed to repeated opportunities to practice their leadership skills in an operational setting.
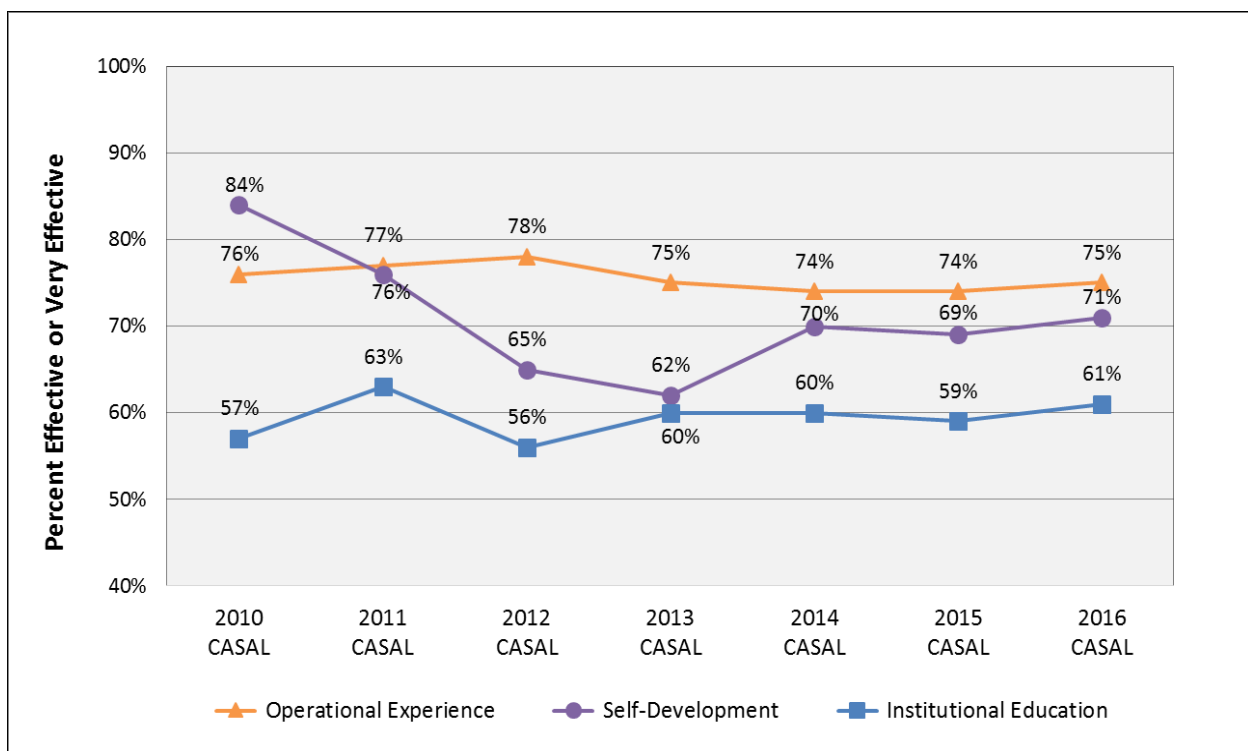

Figure 33. AC Respondent Ratings for the Army Leader Development Domains (2010 to 2016)
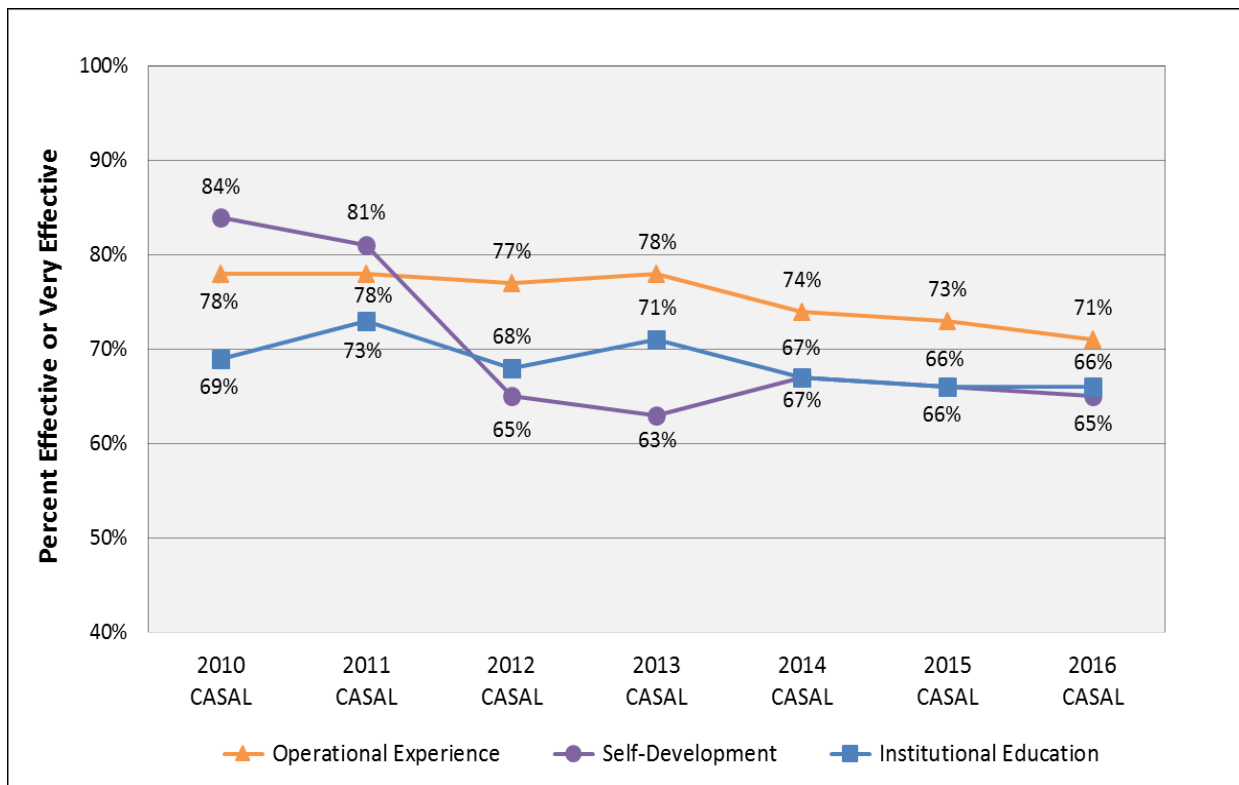
Figure 34. RC Respondent Ratings for the Army Leader Development Domains (2010 to 2016)

Operational Experience

Operational experiences continue to be assessed as the highest impact method for Army leader development. A large percentage of leaders at all levels and in both components report operational work experiences have been effective or very effective in preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility. Favorable ratings by rank group generally run parallel over time (see Figure 35), though a notable change since 2012 is a gradual decline in favorable ratings by company grade officers and junior NCOs. While still at favorable levels, the percentages of leaders in these rank groups rating operational experience as effective are currently 6% and 4% lower than values in 2012. Favorable ratings by field grade officers, warrant officers, and senior NCOs tend to vary over time but remain at relatively strong levels.
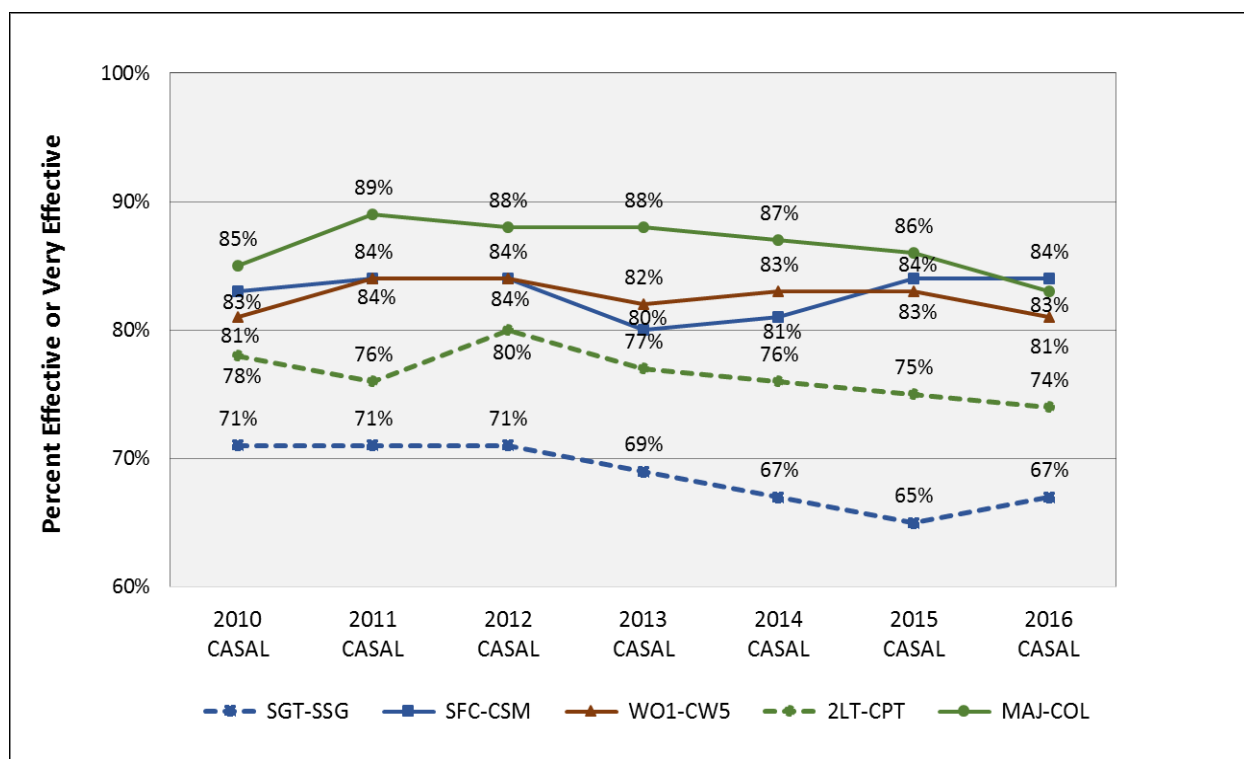
Figure 35. AC Respondent Ratings for the Effectiveness of Operational Experiences (2010 to 2016)

Development through Operational Assignments

The Army's assignment process serves as a mechanism to utilize leadership talent and deliberately develop leadership skills in the operational domain. Assignment decisions can be made to ensure leader development occurs through an appropriate mix of assignments and through serving in assignments for an adequate duration to prepare leaders for future responsibilities. For example, the officer assignment process is based on several factors and considerations, including the needs of the Army, force stabilization, and availability, but also an officer's professional development needs. As each branch and functional area has a life-cycle development model, a typical officer's career needs are examined to ensure the next assignment is progressive, sequential, and achieves professional development goals for that grade (DA PAM 600-3, 2014c).

A pattern of CASAL results shows that AC leaders tend to agree they have served in an appropriate mix of assignments and for a sufficient amount of time in key developmental assignments. However, assignment predictability and leader input into the selection of assignments are aspects of the process assessed less favorably (see Figure 36). Overall, the

levels of positive agreement toward each of these considerations have fluctuated since 2013 but remained within a 6% range.
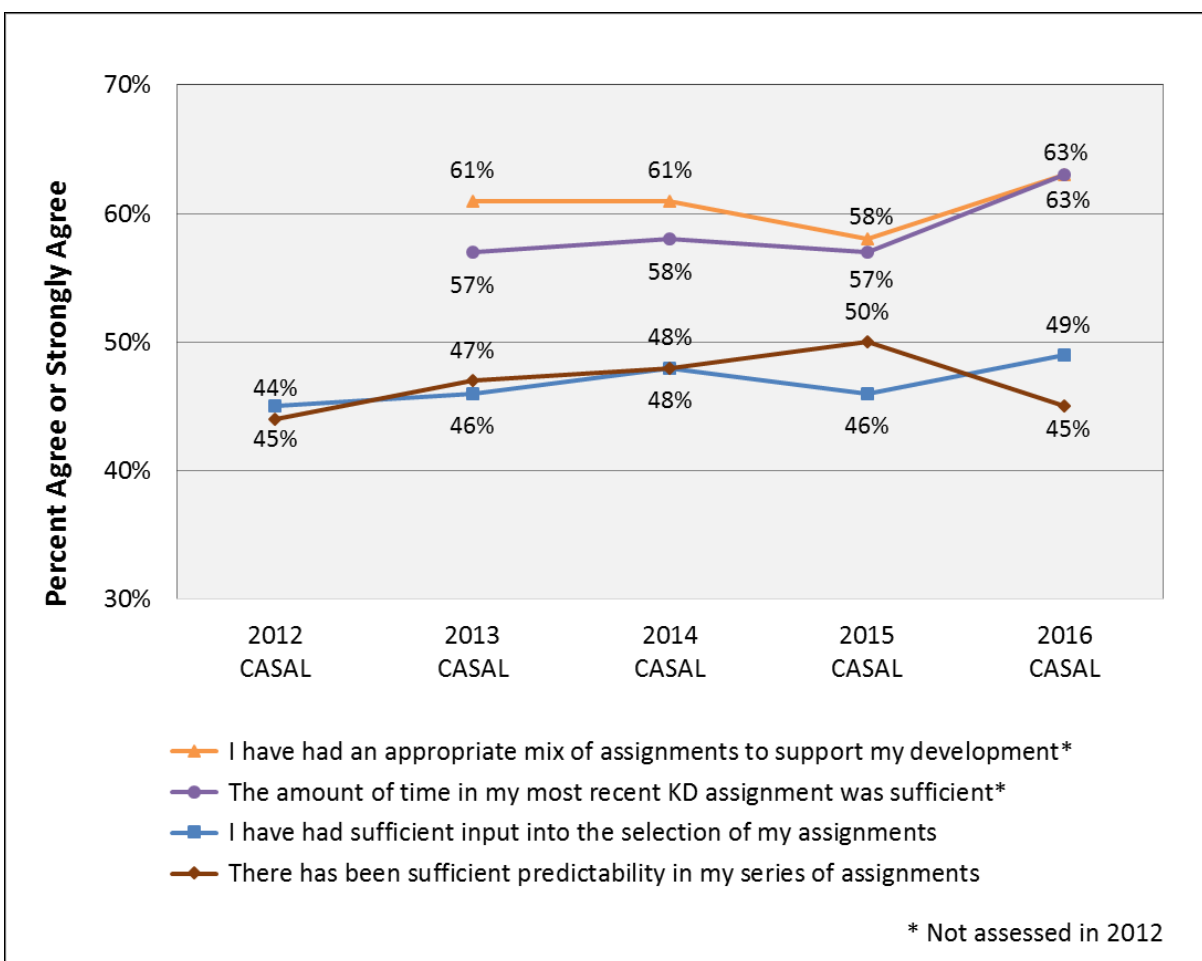

Figure legend:
- I have had an appropriate mix of assignments to support my development*
- The amount of time in my most recent KD assignment was sufficient*
- I have had sufficient input into the selection of my assignments
- There has been sufficient predictability in my series of assignments

* Not assessed in 2012

Figure 36. AC Respondent Ratings for Assignment Histories (2012 to 2016)

As should be expected, favorable attitudes regarding the developmental nature of assignments tend to increase with rank and length of service (see Table 20). With the exception of junior NCOs, two-thirds or more of AC leaders agree they have had an appropriate mix of assignments and have spent a sufficient amount of time in their most recent key developmental assignment. Leaders at junior levels have served in fewer assignments and thus have fewer experiences from which to base favorable attitudes (i.e., sequencing, dwell time) than do leaders with more extensive assignment histories. As leaders progress in rank and experience in the Army, they are afforded more opportunities to base their assessment regarding the mix of assignments, time spent in assignments, and the developmental value of these experiences.

Attitudes regarding the assignment process tend to be less favorable overall, especially among junior NCOs. Consider that for newer leaders, processes that allow leaders input into assignment selection can especially enhance the leaders' sense of control over their careers. Likewise, assignment predictability can allow leaders to better plan and prepare for their next assignment(s) and may mitigate leaders' stress associated with balancing commitments to family and work.

Table 20. AC Respondent Attitudes Regarding Assignment Practices

% Agree or Strongly agree	I have had an appropriate mix of assignments to support my development	Amount of time in most recent key developmental assignment was sufficient	I have had sufficient input into the selection of my assignments	There has been sufficient predictability in series of assignments
MAJ-COL	75%	77%	64%	53%
2LT-CPT	67%	69%	48%	47%
WO1-CW5	72%	67%	52%	51%
SFC-CSM	72%	70%	54%	51%
SGT-SSG	53%	53%	43%	40%
Total	63%	63%	49%	45%

Self-Development

Self-development encompasses the planned, goal-oriented learning that reinforces and expands the depth and breadth of an individual's knowledge base, self-awareness, and situational awareness to enhance professional competence and meet personal objectives (ADP 7-0, 2012e). Self-development is a continuous, life-long process that focuses on maximizing strengths, overcoming weaknesses, and achieving individual development goals. All Soldiers and Army Civilians are expected to accept personal responsibility to develop, grow, and commit to professional excellence (AR 350-1, 2014a).

Recent CASAL findings have shown a shift in attitudes toward the effectiveness of self-development. A decline in the level of favorable attitudes was first observed in 2011. In the years prior to 2012, more than three-fourths of leaders rated self-development effective. In 2012 and 2013, that proportion fell below two-thirds of leaders. In more recent years, attitudes toward self-development have trended more favorably, as about two-thirds of leaders in both components have rated self-development as effective

Favorable attitudes toward self-development have shifted since 2010, especially for NCOs. After a notable decline starting in 2011, ratings have gradually improved since 2013.

since 2014 (see Figure 37). Despite the noted decline, no more than 13% of leaders (at the component level) assessed their self-development as ineffective during this range of years.
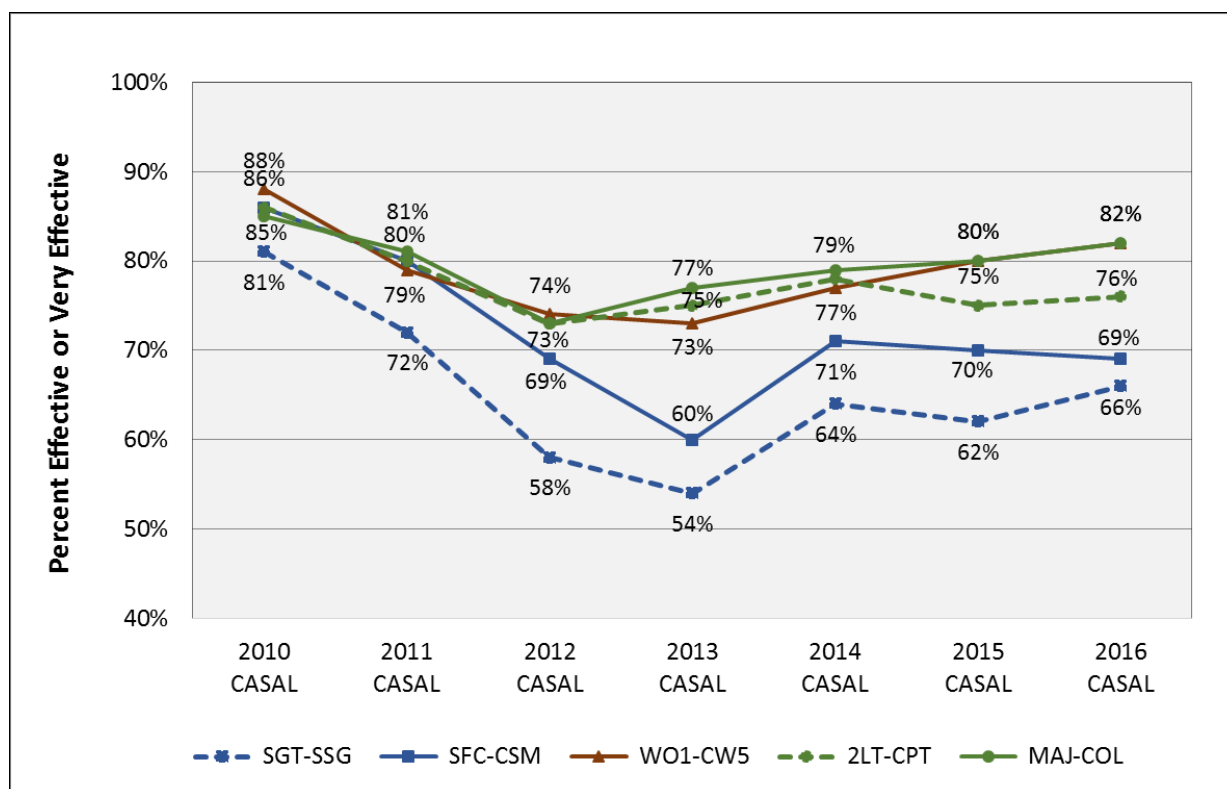

Figure 37. AC Respondent Ratings for the Effectiveness of Self-Development (2010 to 2016)

Closer examination of these trends suggests that the less favorable ratings of self-development by NCOs have heavily influenced the overall trend. The observed decline in favorable ratings for officers and warrant officers was more subtle, and ratings for these rank groups have remained at or above three-fourths favorability since 2013. One potential reason for the decline was due to the new and expanded requirements for self-development that were enacted during these years. This explanation is particularly relevant for the NCO Corps, which introduced a mandatory program of Structured Self-Development with levels aligned with professional military education and career progression objectives. For officers, the subtle downturn in effectiveness ratings may be a result of the broader conceptualization of self-development in the Army. Self-development has historically consisted of developmental activities at the discretion of the individual leader. Officer opinions about what constitutes self-development may have been shaped by the rollout of the Army-prescribed methods for NCOs.

Despite the fluctuation in ratings, self-development has consistently been rated by a majority of leaders as having a moderate to strong positive impact on their development. More than half of

leaders (54% AC; 52% RC) indicate self-development has had a large or great positive impact on their development as a leader, while more than one-fourth (28% AC; 29% RC) rate the impact as moderate. A persistent challenge with self-development is available time. Since self-development is primarily an activity at the discretion and initiative of the individual leader, it is easily set aside or delayed when other demands compete for leaders' time. It is not surprising that only about half of leaders report having sufficient time for self-development in their current assignment, while one-third indicate they do not have time.

Institutional Education

As mentioned previously, favorable attitudes toward the institutional domain consistently lag behind operational experiences and self-development. At an overall level, 61% of AC leaders rate institutional education effective or very effective in preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility, while 17% rate it ineffective. In comparison, 69% of RC leaders rate institutional education effective and 12% rate it ineffective.

Ratings for the effectiveness of institutional education by rank groups generally run parallel over time (see Figure 38). Field grade officers tend to report favorable assessments, while warrant officers consistently report the least favorable assessments for the effectiveness of education. It is important to note that these results represent global assessments by respondents regarding the effectiveness of the institutional domain across their career and do not reflect attitudes about the quality or effectiveness of any individual course or school experience.

Favorable attitudes toward institutional education in preparing leaders for increased responsibility continue to lag behind operational experiences and self-development.
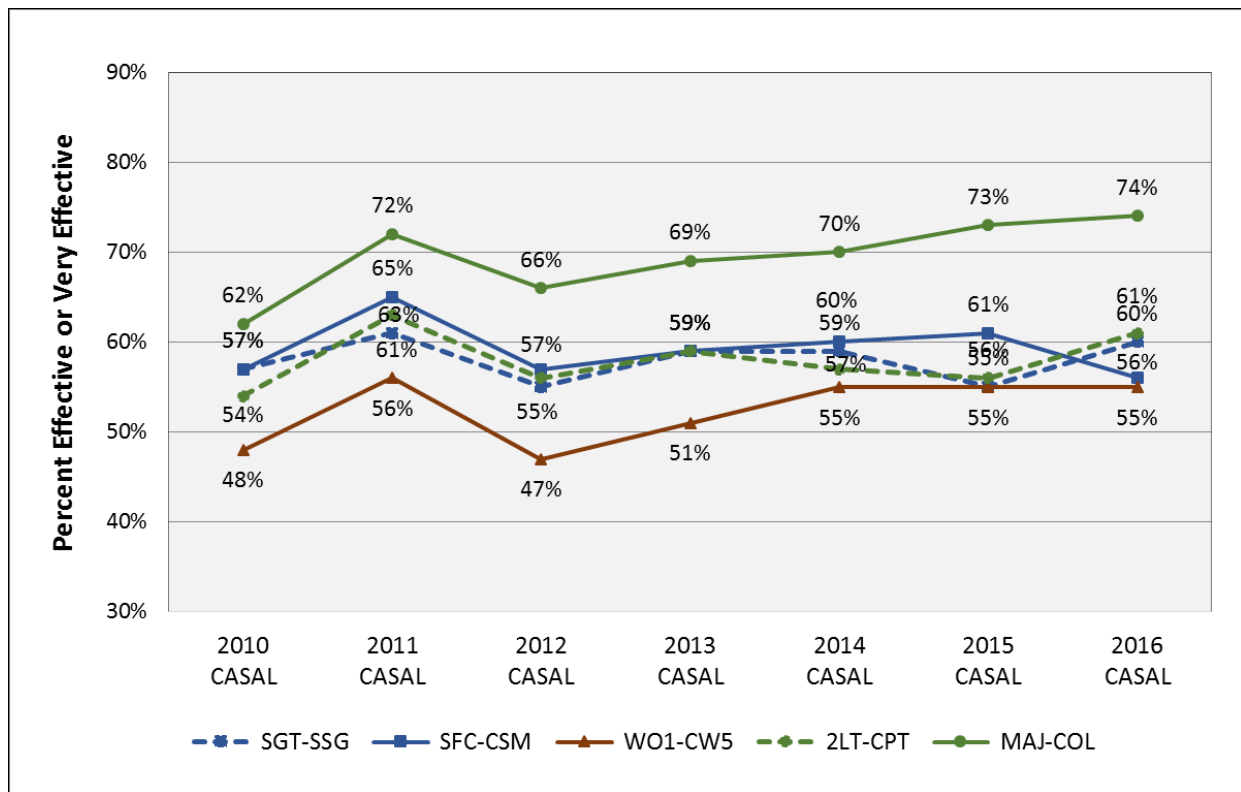
Figure 38. AC Respondent Ratings for the Effectiveness of Institutional Education (2010 to 2016)

A consistent pattern observed in CASAL results is that Army leaders in both components favor the learning that occurs at resident courses over non-resident distributed learning (DL). Half of respondents (43% AC; 49% RC) rate resident course attendance as having a large or great positive impact on their development, while about one-third (31% AC; 29% RC) indicate the impact has been moderate. For Army-provided DL (nonresident courses), about one-fourth of respondents (23% AC; 27% RC) rate the impact as large or great, while slightly more (28% AC; 31%) rate the impact as moderate.

Integrated PME

The Army Total Force Policy (ATFP; Army Directive 2012-08, 2012a) establishes policy for the integration of the Army's active and reserve components as a "Total Force." The intent of the ATFP implementation is the seamless blending of Active Army, Army National Guard, and U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers into a globally available, regionally aligned, multi-component Army that synergistically supports the National Military Strategy. One imperative of the ATFP is integrated PME where AC and RC leaders learn side-by-side in the schoolhouse.

Nearly three-fourths of respondents in both components report that they have attended a PME resident course or school (i.e., OES or NCOES) that included a mix of AC and RC students. Findings indicate this integration is well received, as a majority of respondents in both components believe the mix of AC and RC students in the same course had a positive or very positive effect on the learning experience. Larger percentages of RC respondents than AC perceive positive benefits of this integration in courses (see Figure 39), and small percentages in any rank group (7% or less) perceive a negative or very negative effect of the integration on the learning experience. CASAL did not assess the specific PME courses in which the integration occurred.
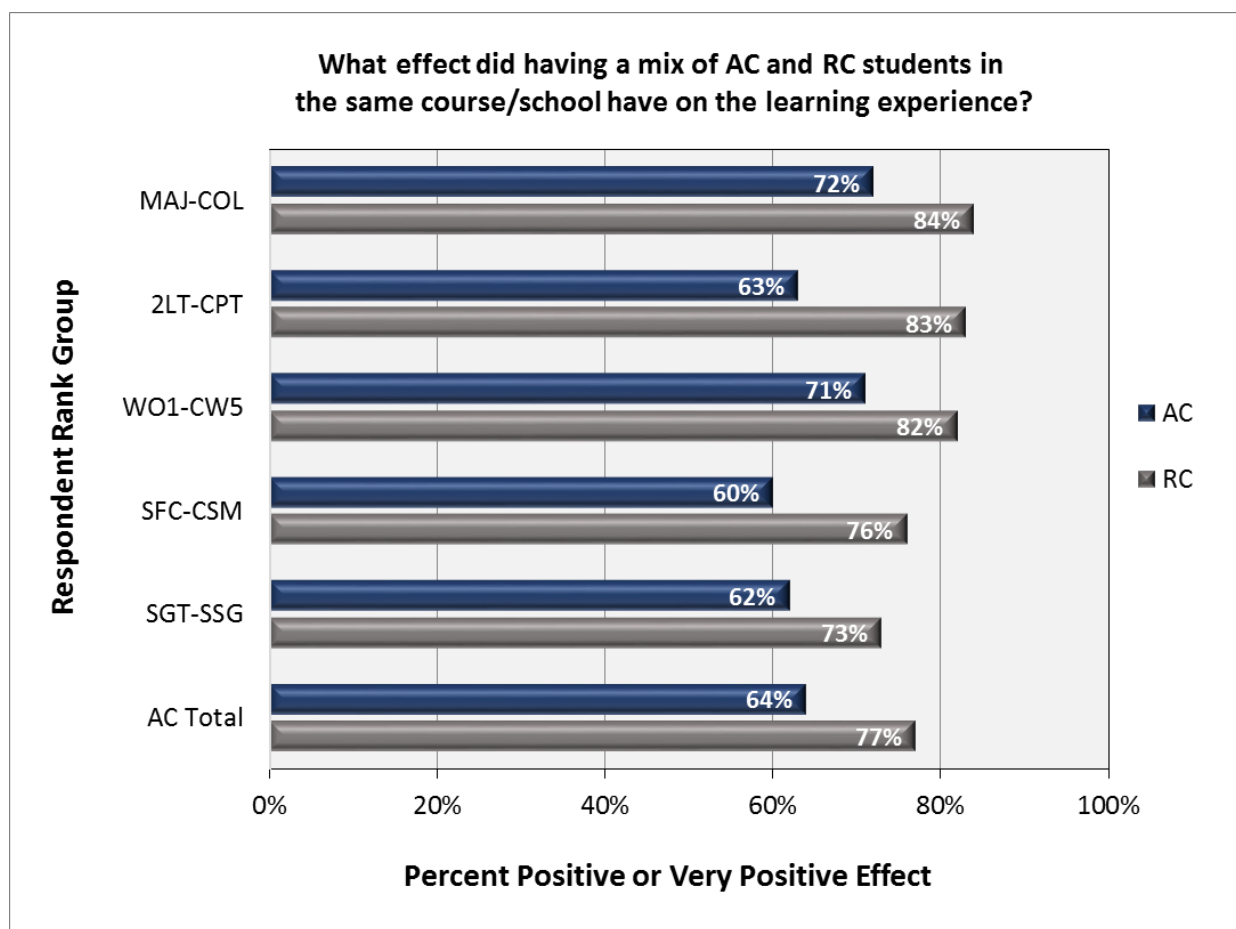

What effect did having a mix of AC and RC students in the same course/school have on the learning experience?

Respondent Rank Group	AC	RC
MAJ-COL	72%	84%
2LT-CPT	63%	83%
WO1-CW5	71%	82%
SFC-CSM	60%	76%
SGT-SSG	62%	73%
AC Total	64%	77%

Percent Positive or Very Positive Effect

Figure 39. AC and RC Respondent Perceptions Regarding Integrated PME

Leader Development Practices

Since 2005, CASAL has assessed the relative contribution that various practices have had on leader development. In 2016, respondents rated a list of 14 developmental practices in terms of the positive impact each has had on their development as a leader. As the findings on the

positive impact of these practices are integrated into results discussions throughout this report, this section provides a brief overview and summary of findings across practices.

Leader development practices span all three leader development domains and include activities such as on-the-job training, opportunities to lead others, formal leader development from within one's unit, and broadening experiences with outside organizations (operational domain); self-development activities (self-development domain); and resident and nonresident

> *The leader development practices assessed as having the highest impact on development align with the operational domain.*

course attendance (institutional domain). CASAL findings show a relatively stable rank ordering of leader development practices in terms of the positive impact each practice has on leader development. Findings are also generally consistent between the active and reserve components. 2016 results support an established pattern that the perceived positive impact of leader development practices fall within three tiers[12], determined statistically through pair-wise comparison of means:

- Highest impact – practices include mentoring, opportunities to lead others, on-the-job training, deployment operations, and learning from peers. Each of these practices aligns with the operational domain for leader development.

- Moderate impact – practices include learning from superiors, self-development, broadening experiences, unit training activities/events, and resident (military) institutional education.

- Lowest impact – practices include developmental counseling from immediate superior, formal leader development programs within units, nonresident education (distributed learning, DL), and multi-source 360 assessment feedback.

Results of AC leader ratings for the 2016 CASAL are presented in Figure 40. The trend in the relative ordering of these practices (lowest to highest impact) has remained generally consistent across years. The results show the relative impact of the practices on leader development, but do not address other important factors that differ, such as required supporting activities (e.g., a curriculum, faculty, trainers, or online resources), required time (e.g., 15 minutes or 9 months) or cost (e.g., no direct costs, $50 per leader, or $25,000 per leader).

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[12] In Figure 40, the leader development practices are categorized into three tiers of positive impact (highest, moderate, and lowest) which are separated at break points where there is a 9% difference in comparisons of adjacent ranked items of large or great impact.
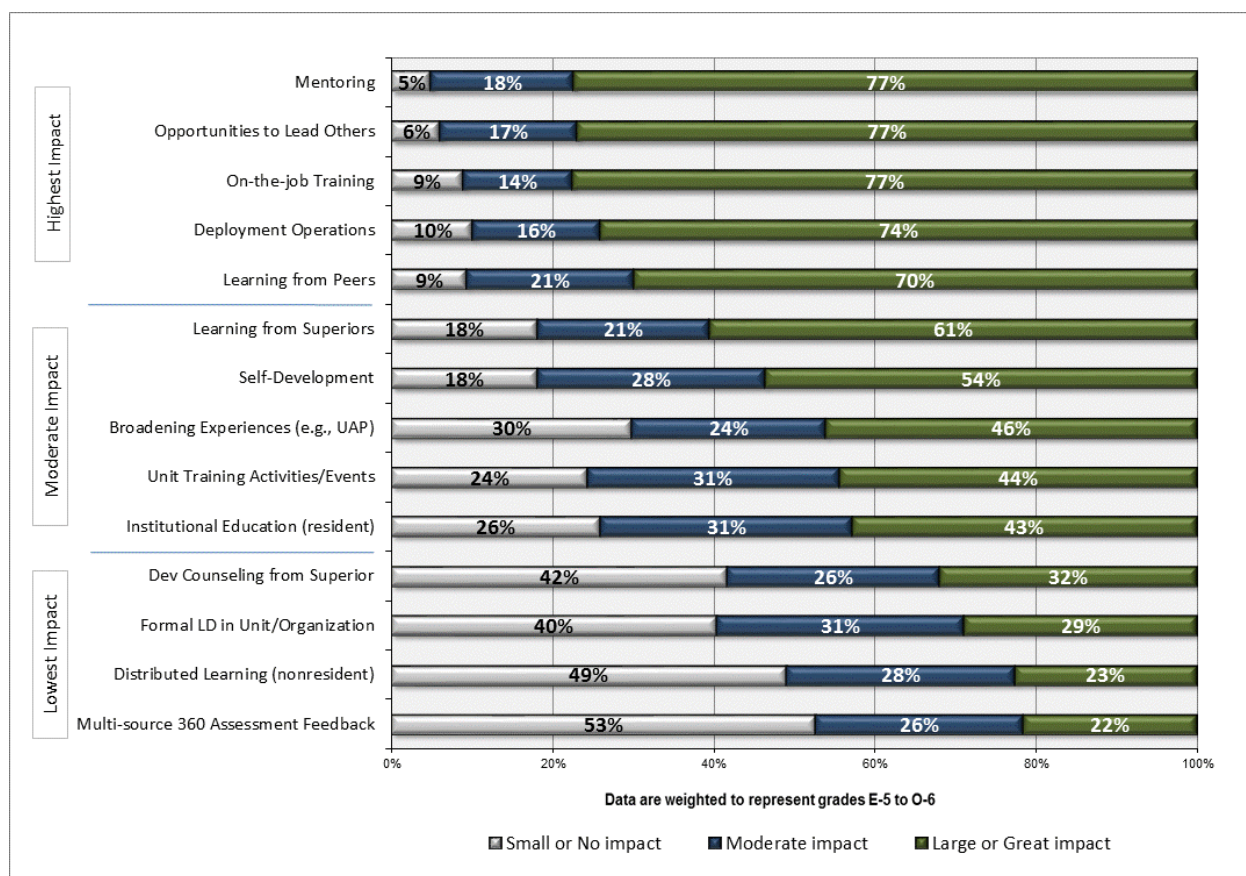
Figure 40. The Impact of Various Practices on the Development of AC Respondents

Conclusions on Army Leader Development

The operational domain consistently receives the highest percentage of AC and RC leaders rating it effective (75% currently) for preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility. Informal practices (opportunities to lead others, on-the-job training, learning from peers, and development from mentoring) are viewed as having the largest positive impact on the respondents' development as leaders. Personnel management practices are a conduit to the highly rated operational experience domain. While a majority of AC leaders believe that their mix of assignments and amount of time in key developmental assignments have been appropriate for their leader development, fewer agree they have had sufficient input or predictability in their series of assignments.

Self-development effectiveness ratings have improved, currently at 71%, after a notable decline in past years (from 84% of leaders in 2010 to 62% in 2013). The drop had been greatest among AC junior NCOs whose levels improved by 12% between 2013 and 2016. Favorable attitudes toward the contribution of the institutional domain toward leader development, currently at

61%, consistently lag behind operational experiences and self-development. Resident courses are favored over non-resident distributed learning in terms of their impact on leader development. Three-fourths of leaders have attended a PME course that included a mix of AC and RC students. This integration is well received by learners, especially in the RC, as having a positive effect on the learning experience.

2.2   Army Education

The Army institutional training and education system provides leaders the attributes and competencies required to operate successfully in any environment (AR 350-1, 2014a). The Army education system is comprised of a network of schools and training centers, and is designed to complement the learning that occurs in operational assignments and through self-development (ADRP 7-0, 2012g). CASAL assesses the contribution of the institutional domain in the development of Army leaders. In this chapter, the effectiveness of Army education systems and contribution of education to leader development are examined at a broad level.

In prior years, CASAL has reported findings for officer, warrant officer, and NCO professional military education (PME) systems at the individual course level. However, a persistent challenge for these analyses has been the requirement to obtain representative data from recent graduates of each course (i.e., completed a course within the past two years). The methods for the 2016 CASAL included a deliberate reduction in sampling, a change that inhibited the available data for reliable examination of individual PME courses. CASAL findings are discussed in this chapter in the aggregate and at the rank group level, as opposed to the individual course level, for recent PME graduates. For context, CASAL's assessment of Army education only includes consideration of PME courses specified in AR 350-1 (2014a) and does not include functional training. Only respondents' assessments on PME items who had completed a PME course in the calendar year 2015 or 2016 are presented in this report. This same standard approach of looking at the current year of survey collection plus one past year was used in item trend analyses and presentation (e.g., Figure 43).

The Course Experience

The quality of the education received at Army courses and schools is perceived as favorable. A majority of respondents in both components and across rank groups rate the quality of the education they received in their most recent course as "good" or "very good" (between 6% and 15% rate the education quality as "poor" or "very poor"). As a holistic metric, these results provide evidence that Army leaders generally hold favorable perceptions toward the courses they attend. Results for recent AC graduates (i.e., completed their course in 2015 or 2016) are presented in Figure 41.
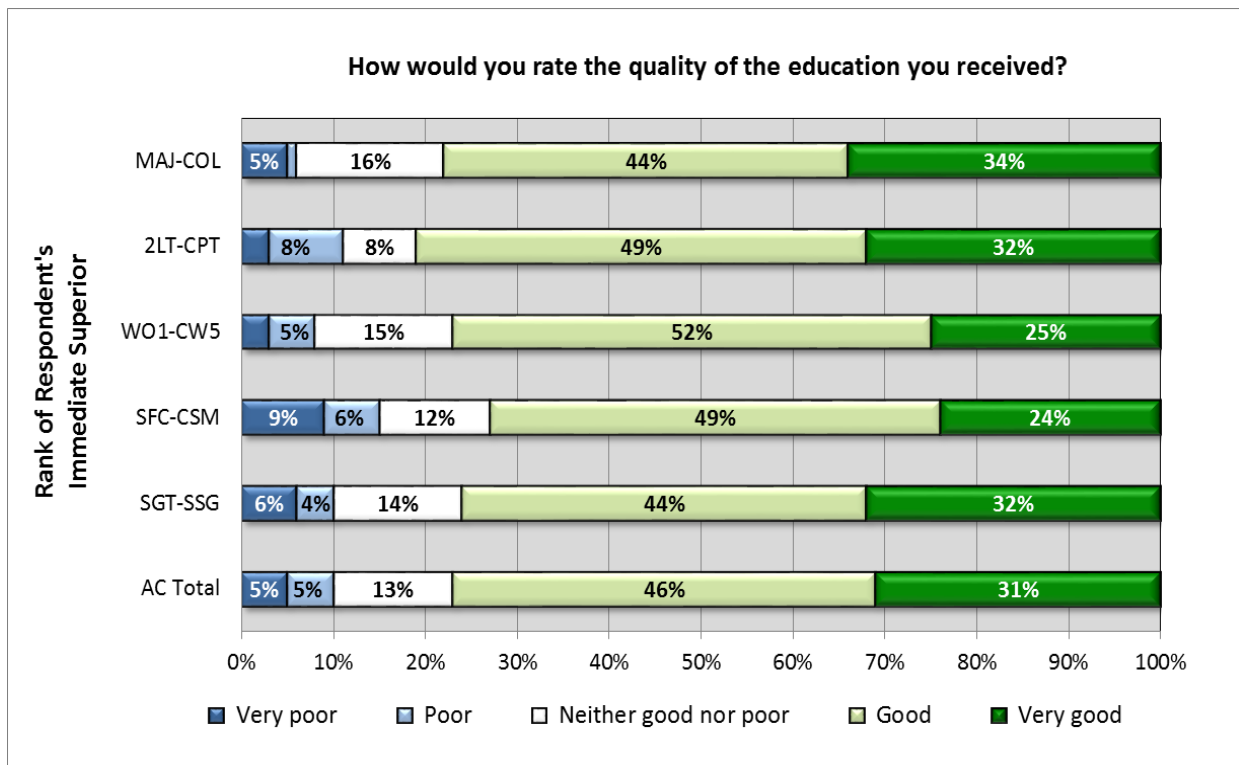
How would you rate the quality of the education you received?

Rank of Respondent's Immediate Superior	Very poor	Poor	Neither good nor poor	Good	Very good
MAJ-COL	5%		16%	44%	34%
2LT-CPT	8%		8%	49%	32%
WO1-CW5	5%		15%	52%	25%
SFC-CSM	9%	6%	12%	49%	24%
SGT-SSG	6%	4%	14%	44%	32%
AC Total	5%	5%	13%	46%	31%

Figure 41. AC Respondent Perceptions Regarding the Quality of Education Received at PME Courses/Schools

Two additional indicators useful for examining leader attitudes regarding course experiences include the quality of the instructors and the degree of challenge that courses offer (see Figure 42). Ratings for instructor quality remain at a positive level and have trended more favorably since 2013. Three-fourths of recent graduates (74%) agree course instructors and faculty provided them with constructive feedback on their leadership capabilities (13% disagree). Resident course settings are learning environments whereby course instructors, faculty, and staff have opportunities to observe learners demonstrate a range of leadership skills (e.g., leading and influencing others, communicating, team building and teamwork, decision making, and judgment). Course cadre are thus well positioned to provide feedback on student leadership capabilities, both in the context of coursework as well as classroom interactions that occur as part of the experience. It is therefore a positive finding that large percentages of recent graduates rate course instructors and faculty as effective at providing this leadership feedback and it is encouraging that ratings are on an upward trend.

The degree of challenge that courses pose to learners has previously been identified by CASAL findings as an area for improvement. Course challenge can help to differentiate high performing and low performing students, and can help to dispel negative PME attitudes such as "everybody

passes." Notably, CASAL results from 2012 to 2016 show that attitudes toward course challenge have steadily increased (see Figures 43 and 44 for trends). AC warrant officers and NCOs continue to rate course challenge least favorably and show the most room for improvement.
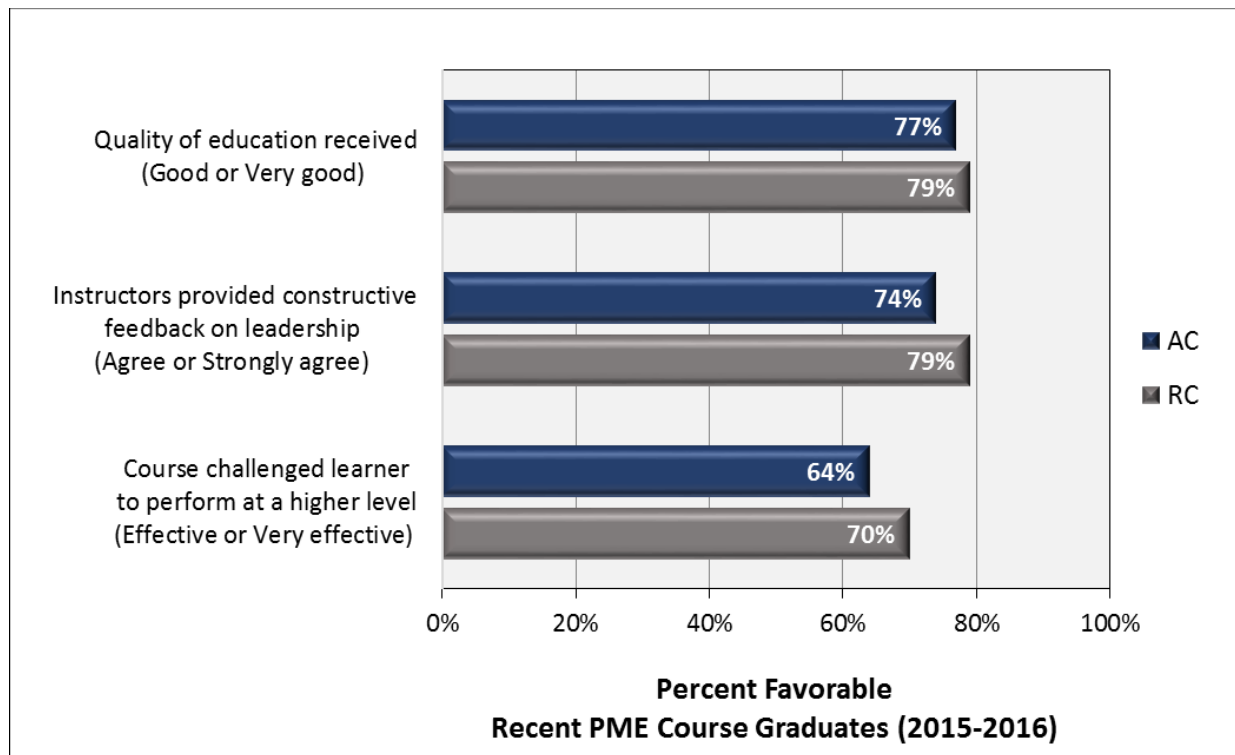

Figure 42. AC and RC Respondent Ratings for the Quality of Army Courses/Schools
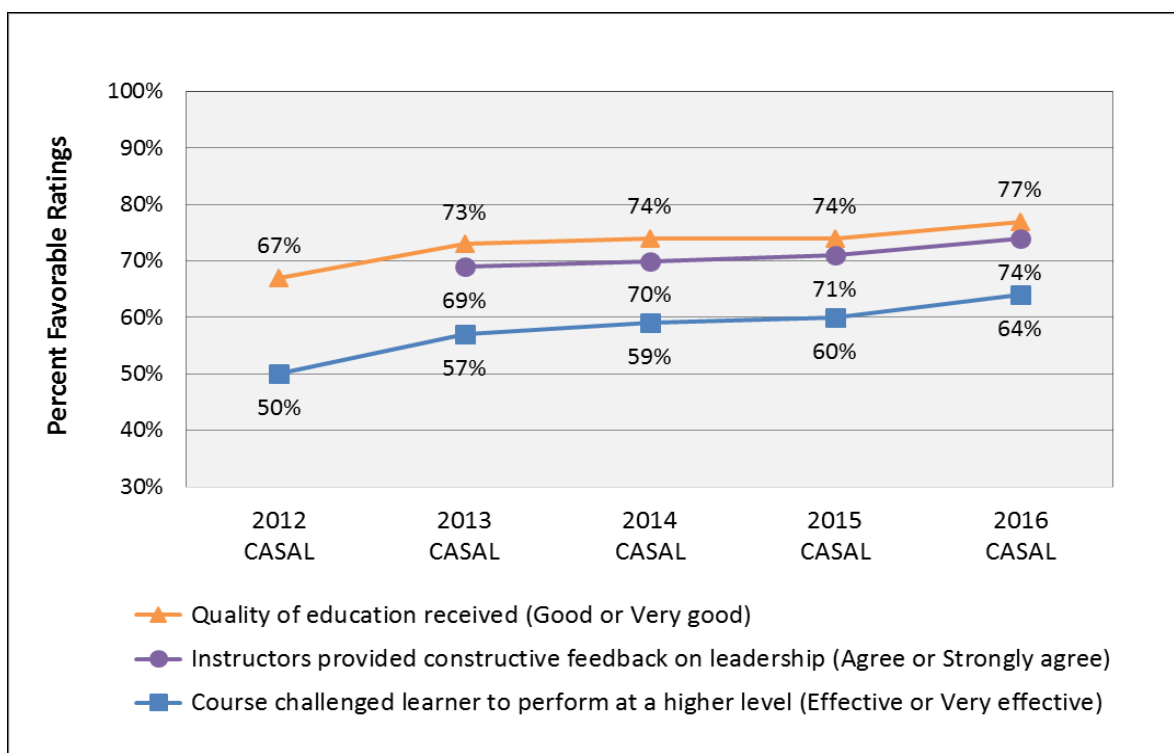
Figure 43. Trends for the Quality of Army Courses/Schools for AC Course Graduates
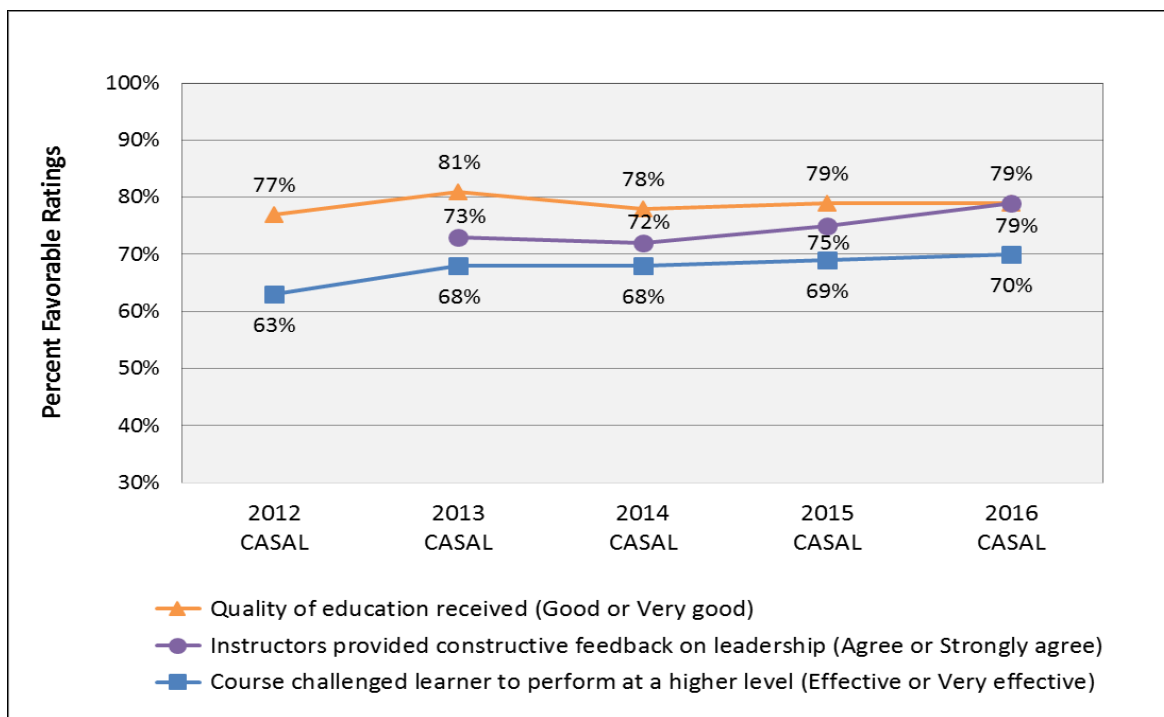

Figure 44. Trends for the Quality of Army Courses/Schools for RC Course Graduates

Utility of Course Learning for Army Duties

CASAL results have consistently shown moderately favorable results regarding the relevance and usefulness of what Army courses offer learners, as well as learners' effectiveness in applying new knowledge and skills to their assigned duties. These attitudes are important to track, as positive reactions mean learners feel courses are a benefit to their development and their ability to perform their duties, and are not simply viewed as a hurdle to promotion or a tax on their time.

About two-thirds of recent graduates agree or strongly agree the content of their most recent course was relevant to their current job (see Figure 45). Between 2012 and 2016, levels of agreement regarding relevancy increased for AC respondents from 51% to 65%, and for RC respondents from 60% to 68%. Warrant officers and senior NCOs in both components report the lowest levels of agreement that the content of their most recent course was relevant to their current job.
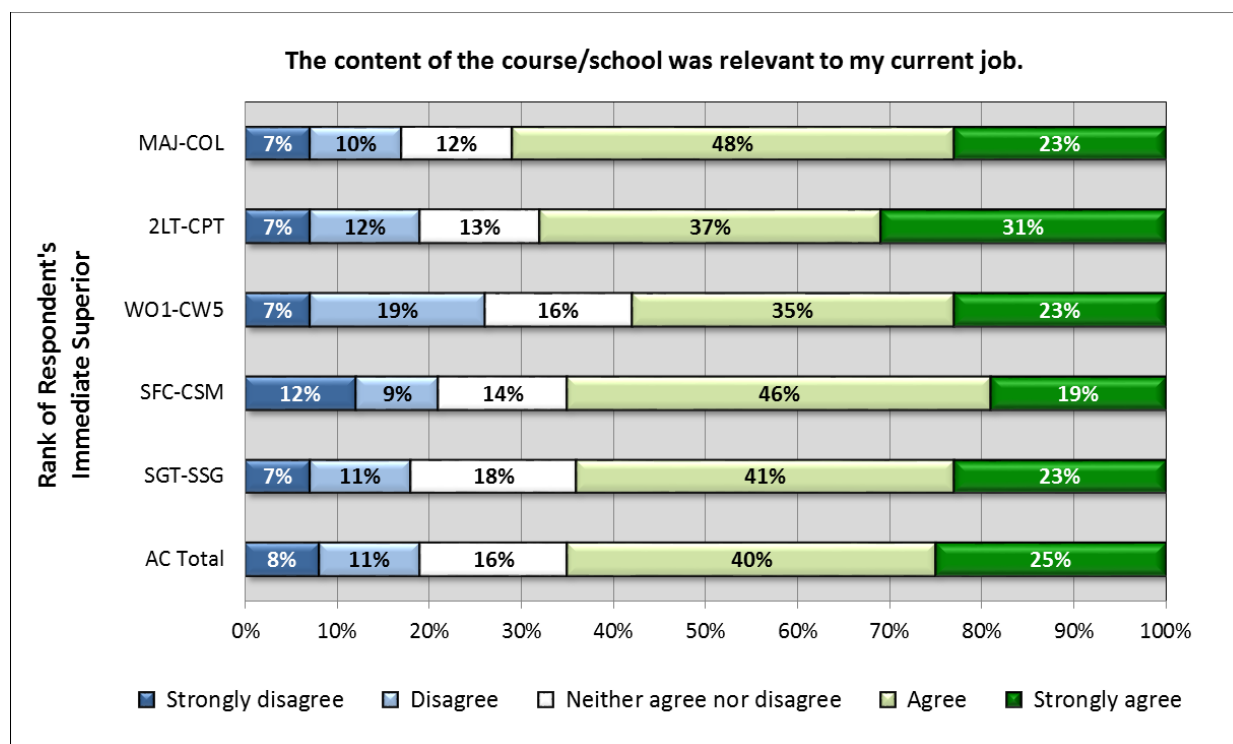
The content of the course/school was relevant to my current job.

Rank of Respondent's Immediate Superior	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
MAJ-COL	7%	10%	12%	48%	23%
2LT-CPT	7%	12%	13%	37%	31%
WO1-CW5	7%	19%	16%	35%	23%
SFC-CSM	12%	9%	14%	46%	19%
SGT-SSG	7%	11%	18%	41%	23%
AC Total	8%	11%	16%	40%	25%

Figure 45. AC Respondent Perceptions Regarding Course Relevance to Current Job

Consistent with previous CASAL results, 2016 results indicate most respondents view school and course learning as useful to them to some degree (see Figure 46). With the exception of senior NCOs, more than half of recent course graduates perceive their learning to be "of

considerable use" or "extremely useful." Additionally, ratings for the perceived relevance of courses to leaders' assigned duties show a slight increase.

How would you rate the usefulness of what you learned?

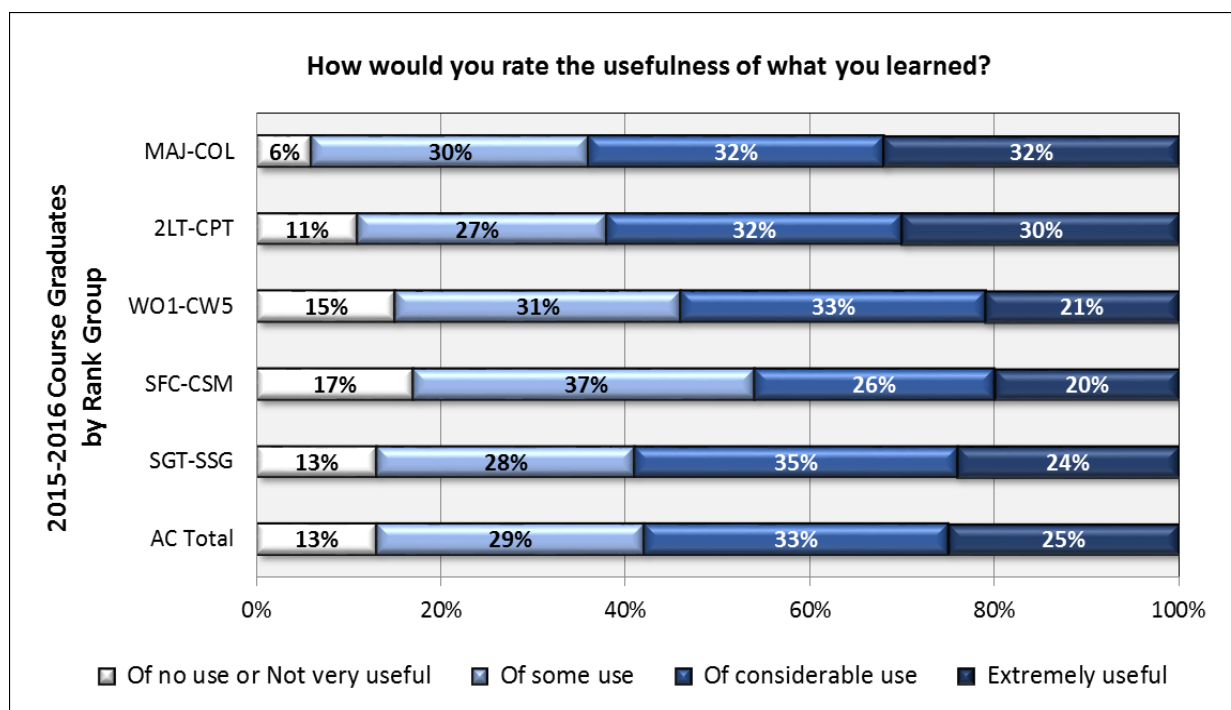| 2015-2016 Course Graduates by Rank Group	Of no use or Not very useful	Of some use	Of considerable use	Extremely useful
MAJ-COL	6%	30%	32%	32%
2LT-CPT	11%	27%	32%	30%
WO1-CW5	15%	31%	33%	21%
SFC-CSM	17%	37%	26%	20%
SGT-SSG	13%	28%	35%	24%
AC Total	13%	29%	33%	25%

Figure 46. AC Respondent Perceptions Regarding the Usefulness of PME Courses/Schools

There are several reasons why up to 17% of respondents may perceive their course learning to be of little or no use to them and why up to one-third of leaders do not perceive their course as relevant to their next job. First, some leaders may hold a misconception that the purpose of PME is to prepare them to perform the specific requirements of their next role. Leaders' expectations for a course may also be misaligned with the course's intent, resulting in attitudes that course content is not useful or related closely enough to duties that would more likely fall under functional area training. Additionally, leaders who attend courses too late in their career may have had to adapt to leadership challenges by learning on the job and at the time of need, and in such cases, the course content may not be viewed as new, useful, or relevant to them.

Preparing Learners for Effective Leadership and Mission Command

To reiterate, an intended outcome of PME is to provide leaders with the attributes and competencies required to operate successfully in any environment (AR 350-1, 2014a). The 2016 CASAL examined course learning outcomes related to leadership capabilities, acting in the absence of orders, and demonstrating warfighting functions. About half of recent AC graduates rate their most recent course effective or very effective at improving their leadership

capabilities, while one in five view the course as ineffective (see Figure 47). In comparison to AC respondents, trend results consistently show that larger percentages of RC respondents perceive course attendance has benefitted their leadership capabilities (See Figure 48).

As institutional education falls under one of the three domains for Army leader development (ADP 7-0, 2012e), it may seem concerning that course ratings for improving leadership capabilities remain at relatively low levels. However, trend data indicate attitudes are fairly stable in this regard (see Figure 48). One explanation for this trend is that developing leadership skills differs from acquiring functional area skills, declarative knowledge, or other learning that occurs in educational settings. Leaders develop skills that support their ability to lead through everything they are exposed to (e.g., opportunities during operational experiences, learning from good and bad leadership examples, and formal training and education), and leadership skill attainment can be difficult to trace back to a specific course module or individual event, for example. In contrast, it is easier for a leader to trace the attainment of procedural skills and declarative knowledge back to a specific setting in which it was introduced.
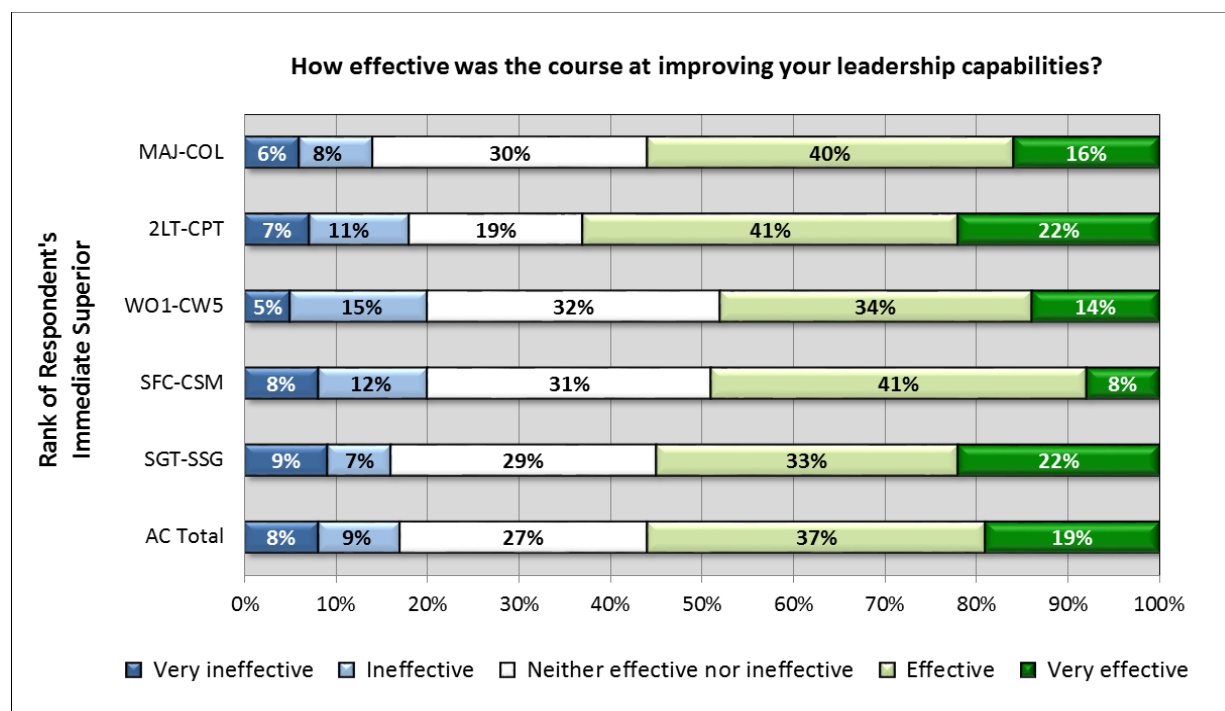

How effective was the course at improving your leadership capabilities?

Rank of Respondent's Immediate Superior	Very ineffective	Ineffective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Effective	Very effective
MAJ-COL	6%	8%	30%	40%	16%
2LT-CPT	7%	11%	19%	41%	22%
WO1-CW5	5%	15%	32%	34%	14%
SFC-CSM	8%	12%	31%	41%	8%
SGT-SSG	9%	7%	29%	33%	22%
AC Total	8%	9%	27%	37%	19%

Figure 47. AC Respondent Perceptions Regarding Course Effectiveness for Improving Leadership Capabilities

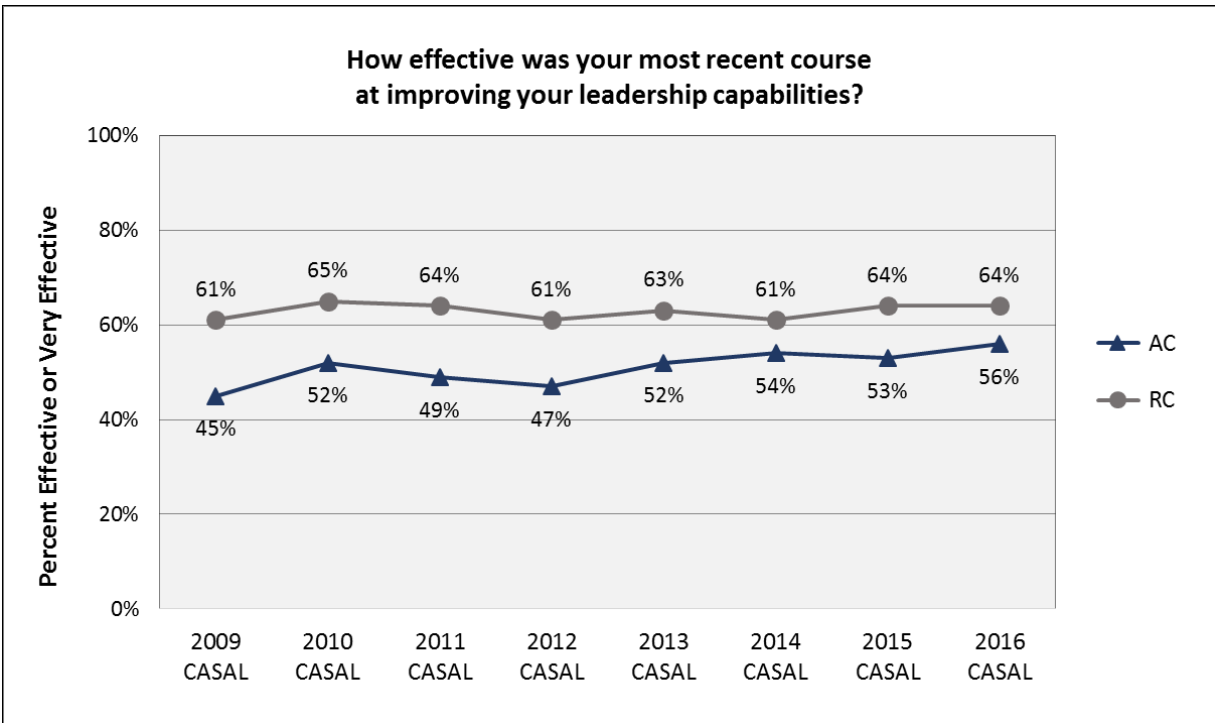**How effective was your most recent course at improving your leadership capabilities?**

Figure 48. Trends for Army Course/School Effectiveness in Improving Leadership Capabilities

The Army's implementation of mission command across the force calls for Army courses and schools to prepare leaders to demonstrate the mission command principles and warfighting functions (Army Mission Command Assessment Plan, 2015c). A majority of recent graduates rate their most recent course effective or very effective at preparing them to take action in the absence of orders and to conduct preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations (see Figures f49 and 50).
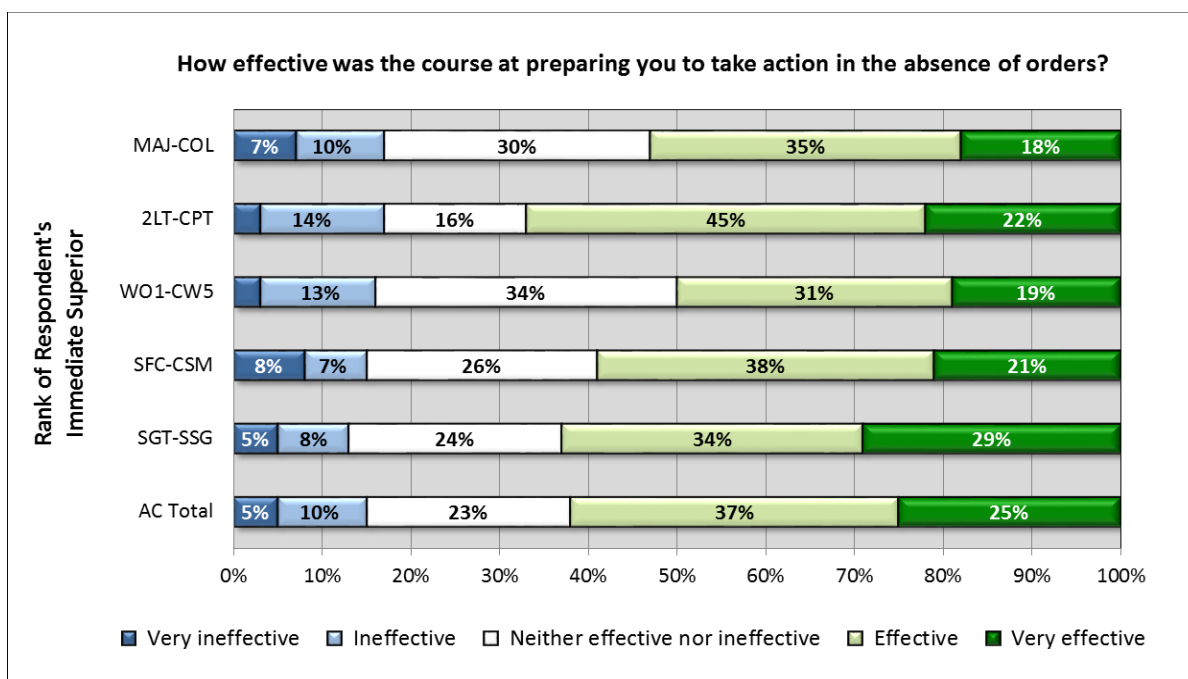
How effective was the course at preparing you to take action in the absence of orders?

Rank of Respondent's Immediate Superior	Very ineffective	Ineffective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Effective	Very effective
MAJ-COL	7%	10%	30%	35%	18%
2LT-CPT		14%	16%	45%	22%
WO1-CW5		13%	34%	31%	19%
SFC-CSM	8%	7%	26%	38%	21%
SGT-SSG	5%	8%	24%	34%	29%
AC Total	5%	10%	23%	37%	25%

Figure 49. AC Respondent Perceptions Regarding Army Course Effectiveness in Preparing Learners to Take Action in the Absence of Orders

How effective was the course at preparing you to conduct preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations?

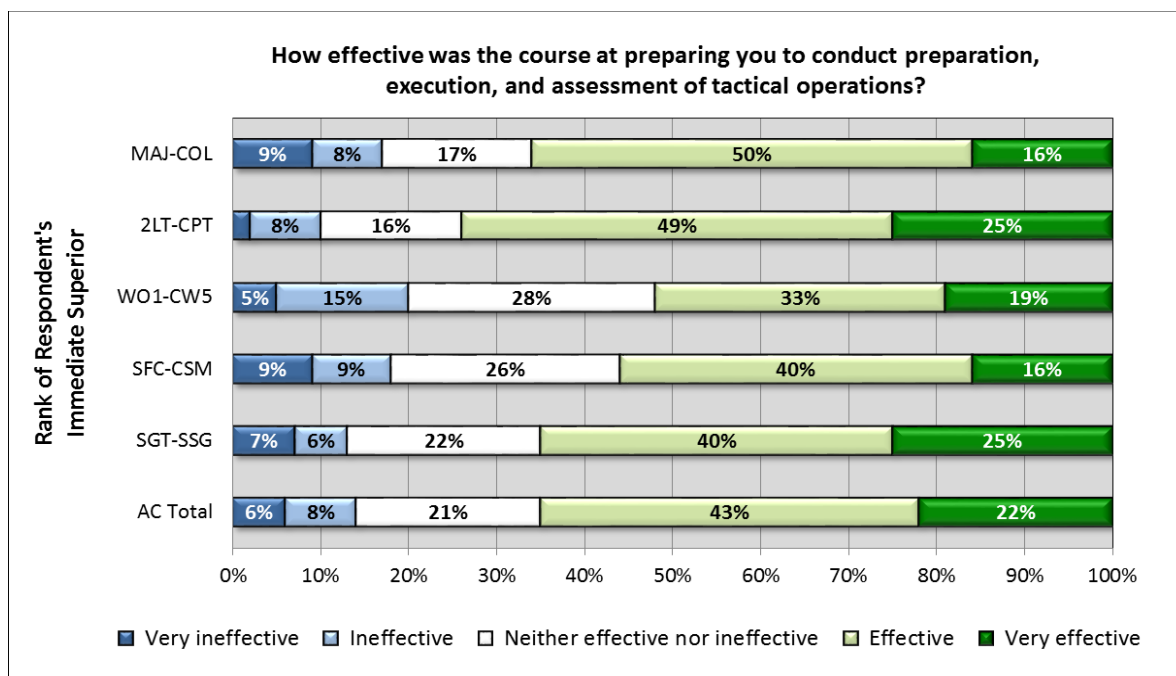| Rank of Respondent's Immediate Superior	Very ineffective	Ineffective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Effective	Very effective
MAJ-COL	9%	8%	17%	50%	16%
2LT-CPT		8%	16%	49%	25%
WO1-CW5	5%	15%	28%	33%	19%
SFC-CSM	9%	9%	26%	40%	16%
SGT-SSG	7%	6%	22%	40%	25%
AC Total	6%	8%	21%	43%	22%

Figure 50. AC Respondent Perceptions Regarding Army Course Effectiveness in Preparing Learners to Conduct Warfighting Functions

Conclusions on Army Education

Army education remains a viable contributor to the development of Army leaders. Army leaders rate their experience with PME as effective for their development at levels similar to the previous three years. Respondent perceptions regarding the quality of education remains favorable and steady, and a majority continue to indicate course cadre provide constructive feedback on student leadership. However, the learning challenge presented by the course and the relevance of course content to graduates' next duties remain relatively low and unchanged.

An intended outcome of PME is to provide leaders with the attributes and competencies required to operate successfully in any environment (AR 350-1, 2014a). About half of recent graduates rate their most recent course effective or very effective at improving their leadership capabilities, and trend results reveal a modest increase in these attitudes since 2009. These ratings remain low, likely because developing leadership skills differs from acquiring functional area skills, declarative knowledge, or other learning that occurs in educational settings. Leaders develop skills that support their ability to lead through everything they are exposed to (e.g., opportunities during operational experiences, learning from good and bad leadership examples, and formal training and education). Leadership skill attainment can be difficult to trace back to a specific course module or individual event, as opposed to a series of experiences over time.

What can be done. To learn more about strengths and weaknesses of PME courses, a more comprehensive assessment of instruction should be directed. CASAL serves as one source of information, with limited reach, on course and school effectiveness in preparing leaders. A coordinated effort to reach PME course graduates, as opposed to a random sample of Army leaders, would provide more robust data tailored to specific learning environments. Quality assurance offices (QAOs) or centers of excellence (CoEs) can be directed to collect reactions from PME course graduates through a survey upon course completion (i.e., end of course questionnaire) and two follow-ups at six-month intervals (i.e., six-month and twelve-month follow-up questionnaire).

The focus of the surveys should be on general learning outcomes with additional emphasis on leadership improvement and impacts in their current role as a leader. Ideally, course contributions to a leader's development will be applied on the job and course graduates can assess this. Aggregate analysis work could be performed by CAL or Army University so trends can be identified and tracked. The data could be used to ensure that the impact of PME on leader development is maximized.

2.3 Leader's Role in Development

The Army requires all of its leaders to assist in the development of subordinates (AR 600-100, 2017a). Developmental relationships are a joint responsibility, requiring the leader to help the subordinate learn, and requiring the subordinate to actively engage in development. Leaders develop subordinates through assessing developmental needs; providing coaching, counseling, and mentoring; creating challenging assignments in their jobs; and providing developmental feedback (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). These methods require the leader to play a prominent role in their subordinate's development.

Develops Others

The practice of subordinate development, or Army leaders' abilities to develop others, continues to be an area of concern that warrants attention and focus. Subordinate leader development requires a concerted effort in both enabling superiors to do it well and holding them accountable for this leadership responsibility. Of the ten core leader competencies, *Develops Others* has consistently received the least favorable assessments across rank levels and positions. In 2016, 61% of AC leaders are rated effective or very effective in developing their subordinates while 19% are rated ineffective or very ineffective (see Figure 51). The favorability level has ranged from 55% to 60% of leaders over the previous eight years, considerably below the three-fourths favorability threshold. Leader effectiveness in assessing the developmental needs of subordinates, a supporting behavior, is assessed at a similarly low level (63% to 65% effective or very effective since 2014).

Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Leader Development*, states that developing leaders involves a holistic, comprehensive, and purposeful group of activities (2015b). Leader development occurs through daily opportunities to learn and teach, and in a range of settings such as at home station, in offices, laboratories, depots, maintenance bays, during exercises, and while deployed. The 2015 CASAL (Riley et al., 2016) confirmed that Army leaders engage in a range of activities to develop their subordinates' leadership skills that align with four fundamentals of development, as described in FM 6-22:

- **Setting conditions** for development involves leaders personally modeling behaviors that encourage development, and creating environments that encourage learning.

- **Providing feedback** starts with opportunities for observation and assessment and leads to immediate, short bursts of feedback on actual leader actions that enhance development, in addition to regular counseling.

- **Enhancing learning** involves the use of leaders as a learning source (i.e., role modeling, mentoring, coaching) and encouraging subordinate self-study, training, and education.

- **Creating opportunities** includes deliberate position assignments and other methods integrated into day-to-day activities that challenge and grow leaders' skills.
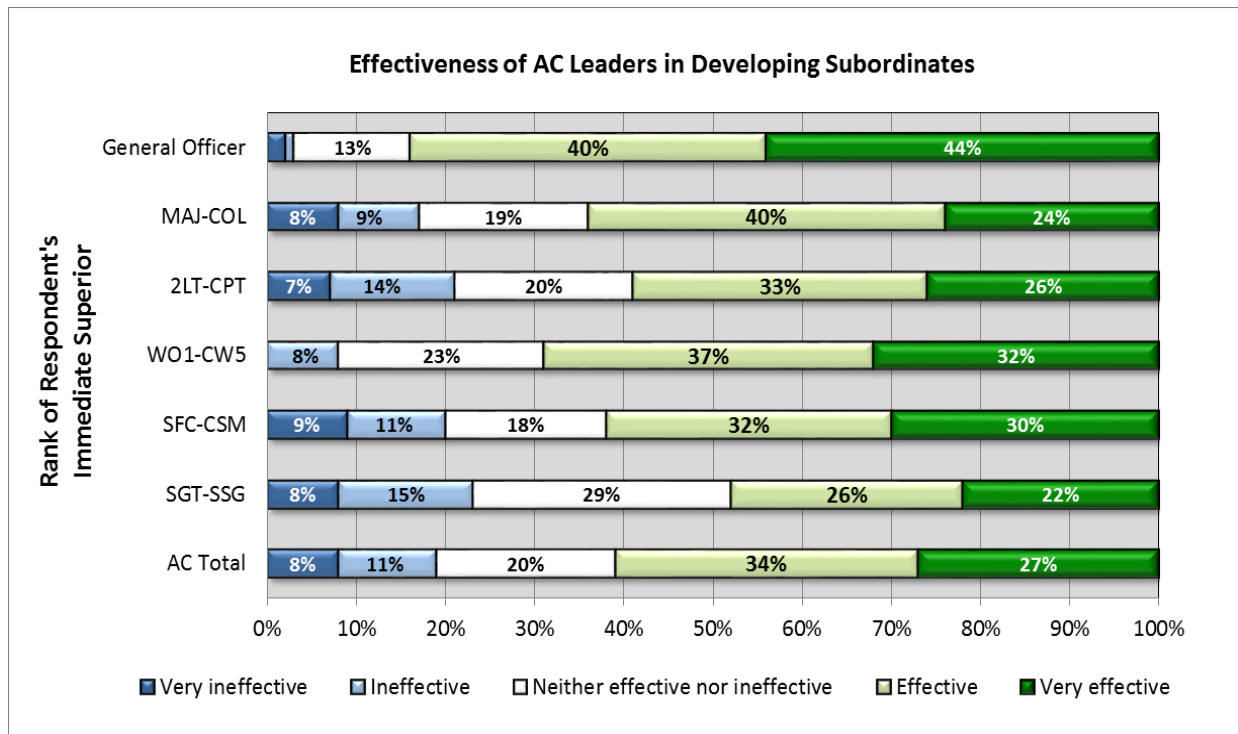

Effectiveness of AC Leaders in Developing Subordinates

Figure 51. AC Leader Effectiveness in Developing Subordinates

Table 21 displays the percentage of AC and RC respondents to the 2015 CASAL who reported that various developmental actions had been taken by their immediate superior in the past 12 months. Subordinate leaders most frequently report that their immediate superior develops them through relatively low-effort methods, such as remaining approachable for the subordinate to ask questions and by offering encouragement or praise. While more deliberate developmental actions that enhance learning and provide new opportunities for subordinates also occur (e.g., training, teaching, coaching, or skill development; mentoring to prepare for future roles; task delegation; new opportunities to lead; or challenging job assignments), these high impact methods are less commonly used. These results provide context for the level of leaders rated effective at *Developing Others.*

Table 21. Leader Development Actions Taken by Respondents' Immediate Superiors

Percentage of AC and RC Respondents Perceiving Actions that Their Immediate Superiors Took in the Past 12 Months to Develop the Respondents' Leadership Skills (2015 CASAL)	AC	RC
Setting Conditions for Development		
1. Remained approachable for me to seek input and ask questions	61%	61%
2. Fostered a climate for development (e.g., allowed learning from honest mistakes)	52%	49%
Providing Feedback		
3. Provided encouragement and/or praise	60%	62%
4. Provided me with feedback on my performance (e.g., formal or informal counseling)	46%	44%
Enhancing Learning		
5. Involved me in a decision-making or planning process	56%	55%
6. Shared experiences, lessons learned, or advice	53%	50%
7. Encouraged or recommended continuing education (e.g., college courses, job certifications)	29%	27%
8. Provided training, teaching, coaching or skill development	28%	27%
9. Provided mentoring to prepare me for future roles or assignments	27%	26%
10. Authorized or allowed me to attend resident training or education	26%	28%
11. Referred me to developmental resources (e.g., online courses, readings, study topics)	19%	19%
Creating Opportunities		
12. Delegated tasks to develop me	49%	44%
13. Provided me with new opportunities to lead	37%	38%
14. Created or called attention to challenging job assignments or opportunities	26%	29%

Performance Counseling

Performance counseling involves the review of a subordinate's duty performance and potential. Counseling enables leaders to help subordinates become more capable, resilient, satisfied, and better prepared for current and future responsibilities. Performance counseling is rated relatively low in terms of its perceived positive impact. In 2016, only one in three respondents (32%) rate the developmental counseling received from their immediate superior as having a large or great impact on their development. For most leaders, the perceived positive impact is moderate at best, and this is a consistent trend observed over the past decade. In comparison to counseling, larger percentages of respondents rate the informal learning through

interactions with peers (70%) and superiors (61%) as having a large or great impact on their development.

While Army doctrine and guidance endorse performance counseling as a principal method for subordinate development (ADRP 6-22, 2012f; ATP 6-22.1, 2014b; DA PAM 623-3, 2015a), CASAL findings continue to show it is inconsistently applied in practice. Forty-three percent of AC respondents (46% RC) characterize the frequency with which they currently receive performance counseling as "about right" while half feel they receive counseling too infrequently or much too infrequently (i.e., it is not happening enough). Less than half of leaders overall (43% AC; 47% RC) agree the feedback they received during their last performance counseling was useful in helping them set performance goals for improvement. Since 2012, favorable attitudes toward this aspect of counseling have declined for all rank groups (see Figure 52). Results for RC respondents are only slightly more favorable than AC respondents. These results reinforce previous CASAL findings that there is currently unmet need in the Army with regard to performance counseling, both for the frequency of the interaction and the usefulness of the feedback received in setting performance goals for improvement.
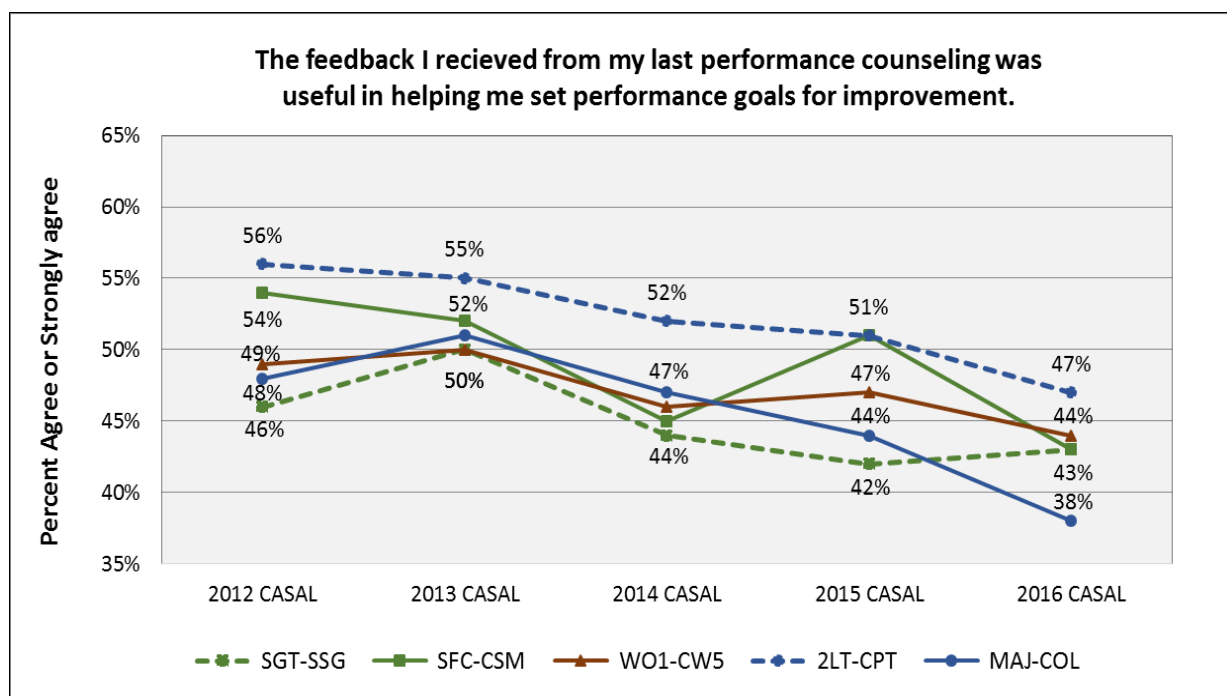

The feedback I recieved from my last performance counseling was useful in helping me set performance goals for improvement.

Figure 52. Ratings for the Usefulness of Performance Counseling Feedback by AC Rank Group (2012 to 2016)

Feedback should be part of the normal performance of work. While set periods for developmental performance counseling are important, leaders should also provide frequent feedback to subordinates as an embedded, natural part of their duties and on a regular basis (ADRP 6-22, 2012f). CASAL findings have demonstrated that less formal developmental interactions are more common than traditional performance counseling. These types of interactions include supervisor-subordinate discussion on job performance, performance improvement, and preparing for future roles. The relative frequency with which these types of interactions occur between superiors and subordinates varies (see Figure 53).
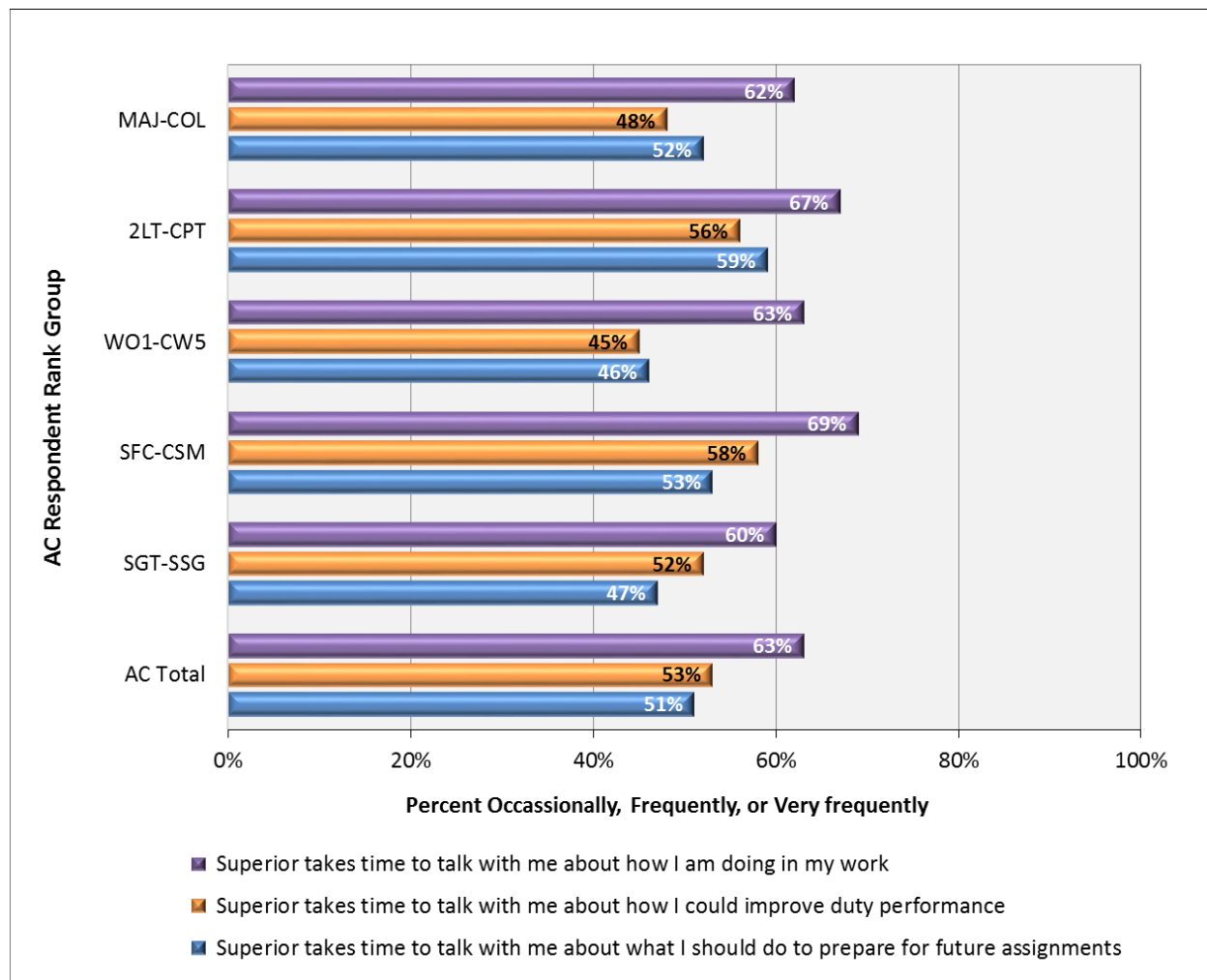
Figure 53. Frequency of Developmental Feedback Received by AC Respondents

As stated in ADP 7-0 (2012e), *Training Units and Developing Leaders*, individuals are responsible for their own professional growth. Given the percentage of leaders rated ineffective or neutral in the competency *Develops Others,* and the inconsistency with which performance counseling

occurs, the role of every Army leader in taking charge of their own development is of elevated importance. In essence, if developmental feedback is not being offered, it is important for an individual leader to seek out or request it from others. However, results of previous CASALs have indicated that leaders seek feedback from others to a limited degree. Leaders in most rank groups tend to seek feedback from their peers most frequently, followed by their immediate superior and subordinates. Small percentages of leaders report frequently seeking feedback from their superior two levels higher.

Mentoring

The term mentoring is often used indiscriminately as any one-on-one development, but the Army makes important distinctions between mentoring, developmental counseling, and other roles such as training, teaching, and coaching. Each of these activities serves a different developmental purpose, but all are complementary. The Army's definition of mentoring describes a voluntary and developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience, characterized by mutual trust and respect (AR 600-100, 2017a). Army leadership doctrine (ADRP 6-22, 2012f) expounds on this definition by identifying general characteristics of a mentoring relationship. Namely, mentorship affects both personal and professional development, both individuals must be active participants, and contrary to common belief, mentoring is not limited to superior-subordinate relationships.

Mentoring remains a valuable method of Army leader development. More than half of Army leaders (57% AC; 53% RC) indicate they currently receive mentoring from one or more mentors. Leaders in both components who receive mentoring report the relationship is beneficial

> *57% of AC respondents currently receive mentoring and 60% serve as a mentor.*

and impactful on their development, a finding across rank groups (see Figures 54 and 55). During ATLDP, nearly two-thirds of respondents rated the mentoring they received as effective (61% to 69%). The study also reported that over 80% of leaders agreed mentoring had a positive effect on their development, and more than three-fourths of officers agreed that mentoring is important for their personal and professional development (Fallesen et al., 2005).

Results of the 2014 CASAL provided strong indications that, for most leaders who receive mentoring, the need is currently being met with regard to the frequency of desired interaction and the impact on development (Riley, Hatfield, Freeman, Fallesen, & Gunther, 2015). A majority of respondents (85% AC; 87% RC) characterized the frequency with which they received mentoring as "about right" while one in seven respondents reported it occurred too infrequently (14% AC; 12% RC).

Army leaders want authentic mentoring that will benefit their development and career progression. Results of the 2015 CASAL indicated that leaders who desire better mentoring would like more frequent interaction, more in-depth discussions on current developmental needs and career path planning, mentors who are highly knowledgeable and engaged, and who hold a genuine interest in the mentee's development (Riley et al., 2016).

Sixty-five percent of AC respondents (60% RC) indicate they provide mentoring to one or more individuals. More than two-thirds of field grade officers (69%), warrant officers (67%), and senior NCOs (72%) indicate they currently serve as a mentor, an important finding given the Army's need to prepare the next generation of junior leaders to assume greater levels of leadership and responsibility. However, of potential concern are the percentages of company grade officers (40%) and junior NCOs (46%) that report they do not currently have a mentor.
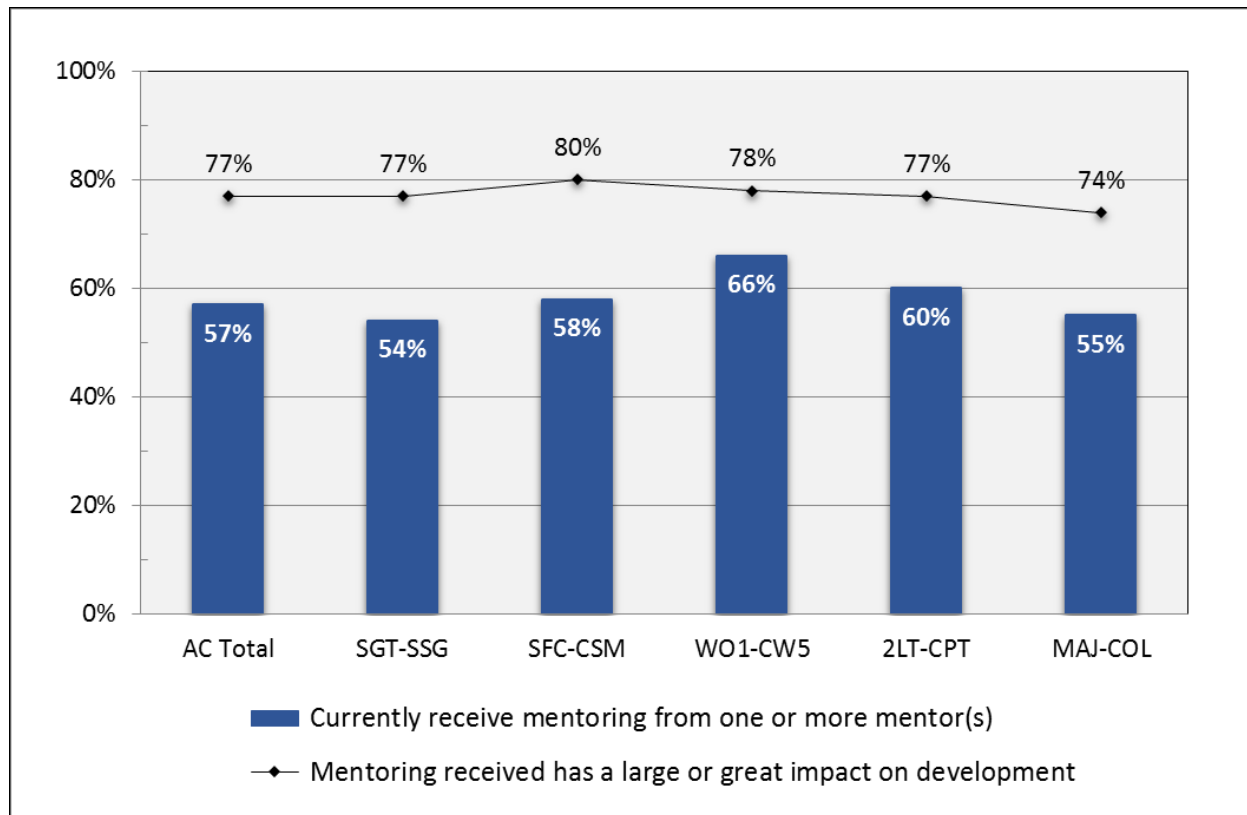

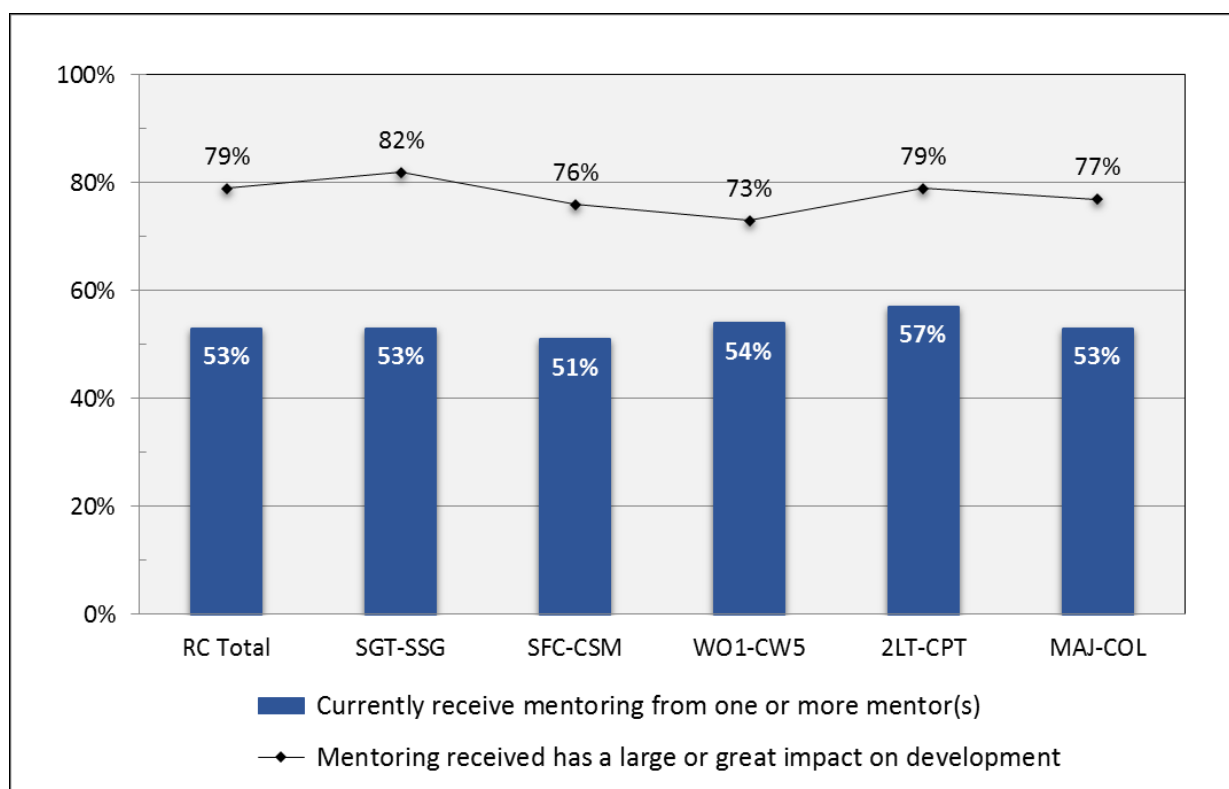**Figure 54.** The Occurrence of Mentoring and Impact on Development for AC Respondents

Figure 55. The Occurrence of Mentoring and Impact on Development for RC Respondents

Conclusions on Leader's Role in Development

The competency *Develops Others* requires the Army's continued focus and attention. Less than two-thirds of leaders are rated effective at developing subordinates or assessing the developmental needs of subordinates, well below a three-fourths favorability threshold. The quality and frequency with which performance counseling occurs between superiors and subordinates continues to show an unmet need and room for improvement. While most leaders report their immediate superior does take the time to talk with them about how they are doing in their work, how they could improve their duty performance, and how to prepare for future assignments at least occasionally, the frequency of these interactions could improve. Mentoring, which can occur outside of superior-subordinate relationships, remains a valuable method of Army leader development. More than half of leaders report they currently provide mentoring, receive mentoring, or both. Most leaders who receive mentoring indicate the need is currently being met with regard to its impact on their development. Leaders with unmet mentoring needs would like more frequent interaction, more in-depth discussions on current developmental needs and career path planning, and mentors who are highly knowledgeable and engaged who hold a genuine interest in the mentee's development.

Direct-level leaders must balance many demands, including the mission, superiors, and developing their direct reports. The skills for developing others start as simply as having questions to ask, knowing how to ask challenging questions that are not perceived as criticism, and helping motivate people to develop. Just over half of respondents indicate their immediate superior has developed them through remaining approachable for the subordinate to seek input and ask questions; providing encouragement or praise; involving the subordinate in a decision-making or planning process; fostering a climate for development (e.g., allow learning from mistakes); and sharing experiences, lessons learned, or advice. All of these are actions any leader can choose to engage in, can be improved through practice, and solidified as habits. None of these actions requires great amounts of time or special training.

What can be done. Senior leaders and senior raters can reinforce the importance of developing subordinates through the leadership example they set, the developmental behaviors they role model, and the questions they ask their key subordinate leaders. Subordinate development can be perceived by some as one more important thing to do that competes with an already high operational tempo and workload. However, preparing subordinates for those future roles with increased responsibility and authority is just as important as meeting today's training requirements.

In the *Develops* section of evaluation reports (OER, NCOER), document what activities a leader has engaged in to develop others (e.g., mentoring, informal counseling, or job shadowing). The rater should provide an assessment of the extent to which the leader has made an effort to develop others. Make performance objectives for *Develops Others* that are mandatory for all leaders. Write those objectives into the evaluation report. These steps contribute to creating a culture of leader development, communicate to leaders the importance of developing others, and hold them accountable for doing so.

There is no simple substitute for leaders approaching counseling with a positive, developmental mindset, and doing it. Counseling should be an effort performed jointly between the subordinate being counseled and the leader. Together they should identify what should and can be improved. Collaboration - as a central focus - can be the key to turning around the quality of counseling. Army resources already exist on how to perform developmental counseling to assist leaders who have not received counseling or do not have a mental picture of how to conduct it effectively. The MSAF VIC includes a library of counseling and coaching videos that provide leaders with a range of realistic examples of different productive counseling sessions. Examples vary in terms of scenario, temperament, and rank, so leaders can draw from a wide array of effective techniques to apply in different situations. An after action review (AAR) is provided at the conclusion of each video showing the leader the actions that

contributed to their effectiveness during the counseling session. MSAF and other tools, like the leadership assessment and review card (LARC, GTA 71-06-007), are available to collect and review ideas for what strengths and developmental needs a subordinate has.

2.4   Unit Training and Leader Development

Developing leaders at all levels is the best means to ensure the Army can adapt to the uncertainties the future holds. Competent and confident leaders are essential to unit readiness and successful deployments. To achieve this, commanders and organizational leaders integrate leader development into their organizational training plans and leader development programs (FM 6-22, 2015b). Collective training, when done correctly, closely approximates and prepares leaders and units for war. Units train in garrison and while deployed to prepare for their mission and to adapt their capabilities to changes in an operational environment (ADP 7-0, 2012e). This chapter describes unit activities for developing leaders, and the effectiveness of unit-based training and combat training center experiences in achieving unit readiness.

Unit Leader Development

CASAL assesses two holistic indicators that provide context for the current quality and level of support for leader development in units. First, while formal unit programs for leader development (e.g., OPD/NCOPD or Sergeant's Time) are important, results continue to show that most leaders do not perceive these programs as having a substantial impact on their development. Less than one-third of AC and RC leaders perceive formal unit programs as having a large or great impact on their development. The relative rank ordering for the impact of formal unit leader development has been consistently low in comparison to other developmental practices. Second, leader perceptions regarding the priority of leader development in their units is also generally low and shows no changes since first assessed in 2009. Only about half of AC and RC respondents (47% AC; 49% RC) report their unit or organization places a high or very high priority on leader development, while one-fourth (24% AC; 22% RC) report the priority as low or very low.

> *About half of AC and RC respondents report a high priority for leader development in their unit or organization, a level consistent with past results.*

These perceptions are important, as unit leaders' priorities should reflect the commander's priorities. However, there is evidence that top-level priorities for leader development do not always translate down to the lowest levels. Results of a recent inspection of Army leader development programs indicated that while commanding generals list leader development as a top priority, subordinate officers, warrant officers, and NCOs tend to perceive a low priority for leader development at the unit level (Inspector General, 2015).

Formal Plans and Guidance for Leader Development

One way that unit commanders and organizational leaders convey the importance and priority for leader development is through formal plans and guidance. Organizational leader development plans must nest in the purpose and guidance of the higher organization's plan. Leader development plans should provide guidance to subordinate units, yet allow unit leaders the freedom to determine practices and schedules most conducive to their missions.

Field Manual 6-22, *Leader Development*, is the Army's first doctrine dedicated solely to leader development (first published in June 2015). It describes leader development as a mindset and a process (not merely an event) that is reflected by everything leaders do. FM 6-22 (2015b) provides guidance on leader development program development following the same steps used in the operations process described in ADP 5-0 (2012b). Considerations for plan development include visualizing goals and end states for leader development, identifying learning enablers and developmental opportunities, and designing evaluation measures. Optimally, FM 6-22 will serve as an enabler to increase the proportion of units and higher headquarters that develop and execute formal leader development plans, and in turn, increase the awareness of subordinate leaders at all levels regarding the components and details of the plans.

Results of the 2016 CASAL show that only about one-third of AC and RC respondents (34% and 31%, respectively) are aware of their unit's or higher headquarters' formal plan or published guidance for leader development. One-fifth of AC and RC respondents report their unit does not have a formal plan or guidance for leader development; nearly half report they do not know. These results provide context for findings of a recent inspection of Army leader development programs, which estimated that 64% of brigade and battalion teams had established programs (Inspector General, 2015).

> *One-third of AC respondents indicate awareness of their unit's formal plan or published guidance for leader development.*

Findings of the 2015 CASAL offer additional perspective on formal leader development plans and guidance currently used across the force. Respondents most frequently indicated their unit's plans or guidance included a clear purpose for leader development (70% of the time), but less often indicated *what* will be developed, identified *how* leaders will be developed, directed unit leaders to produce or sustain a climate of learning, or identified developmental goals for leaders at various levels (54% to 59% of the time). When interpreting these results, it is important to consider that these are respondent perceptions. In reality, a larger percentage of Army units and organizations may have formal plans or guidance for leader development.

These results are valuable as they provide an indication of the percentage of AC leaders who are aware that formal plans or guidance exist in their unit or higher headquarters, and who are cognizant of the various components of a well-established plan for leader development.

<u>Unit Leader Development Activities</u>

More important than awareness of the existence of formal plans and guidance is the actual occurrence of leader development activities in units and organizations. The 2016 CASAL asked respondents to rate the frequency with which their unit or organization develops leaders through methods described in FM 6-22 (2015b). There is general consistency across rank groups with regard to ratings for the frequency with which units or organizations utilize these development methods (see Figure 56 for AC results). The notable exception is that junior NCOs indicate in higher percentages that each of these methods is used rarely or occasionally as opposed to frequently or very frequently. Ratings by RC respondents closely approximate ratings by AC respondents.
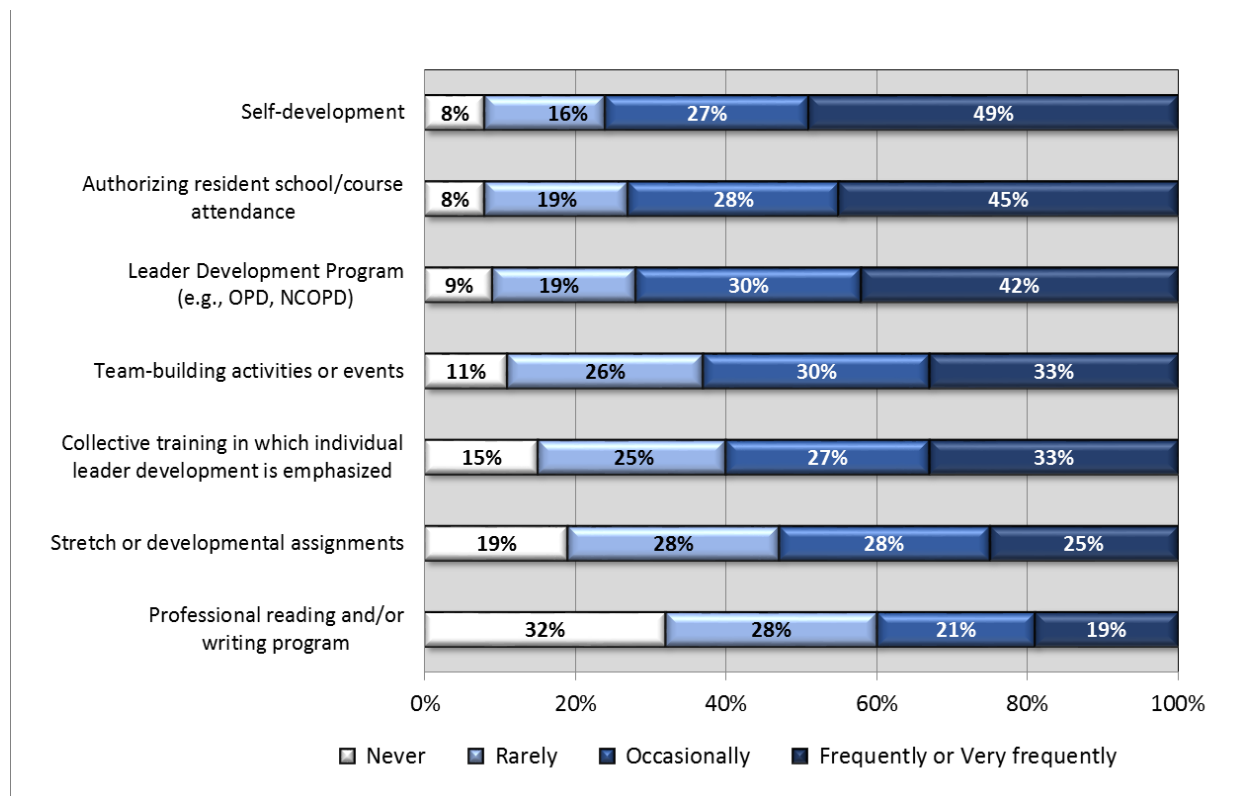

Figure 56. Frequency with which AC Units and Organizations Use Leader Development Activities

It is not surprising that the largest percentage of respondents report their unit uses self-development frequently or very frequently to develop leaders. This method of development is arguably the least resource intensive for a unit, as it places primary responsibility on the individual Soldier to plan and execute. Self-development is also the most accommodating of individual needs, preferences, and schedules. Similarly, authorizations for school or course attendance often only require a unit to release a leader for a period of time, or the leader transitions to a school assignment en route to the next duty assignment. Ranking third in this list in terms of frequency are formal leader development programs within units (e.g., OPD or NCOPD), which often appear as scheduled professional development on a training calendar. Recall however that effective unit leader development should be viewed as a process (not merely an event), reflected by everything that leaders do (FM 6-22, 2015b). These results provide context for the finding that only half of AC and RC leaders perceive their unit places a high or very high priority on leader development. A formal leader development program (i.e., one that is planned and organized) requires unit attention and effort. However, most units only rarely or occasionally conduct programmed team-building activities or events, emphasize leader development in collective training, provide stretch or developmental assignments, and promote professional reading programs.

CASAL results have consistently demonstrated that large percentages of leaders view on-the-job training and opportunities to lead as having a large or great impact on their development, rated more impactful than self-development and institutional education for most respondents. Thus, unit leaders should strive to capitalize on the learning that occurs in the operational domain by utilizing methods such as setting developmental goals within expected duties, stretch or developmental assignments, collective training, team-building activities or events, and honest feedback and self-reflection.

Unit-based Training

The operational training domain of leader development includes activities that organizations undertake while at home station, at maneuver combat training centers, during joint exercises, at mobilization centers, and while operationally deployed (ADRP 7-0, 2012g). Unit training is dual purposed, to both prepare units for operations and to exercise and improve individual skills of leading and developing units.

CASAL results indicate about half of AC and RC respondents view unit training activities or events as having a large or great positive impact on their development. In comparison, other development methods such as on-the-job training, opportunities to lead, and receiving feedback from peers are viewed as having a large impact by larger percentages of leaders.

However, with deliberate planning and execution, unit leaders can capitalize on unit training activities by integrating these other methods to enhance the developmental nature of the experience (e.g., junior leaders provided with opportunities to lead during unit training or other leaders observe, assess, and provide leadership feedback).

The 2016 CASAL assessed two indicators of effectiveness for AC unit-based training. At a broad level, about half of AC respondents (52%) report agreement that unit training is sufficiently challenging in preparing their unit for future mission success. More specifically, a slightly larger percentage of AC respondents (56%) report their unit training conducted during the past quarter was effective or very effective in preparing for future mission success. These findings are indications of moderately strong confidence in the current effectiveness of unit-based training. At the rank group level, larger percentages of officers hold favorable perceptions regarding unit training effectiveness in comparison to warrant officers and NCOs (see Figures 57 and 58).
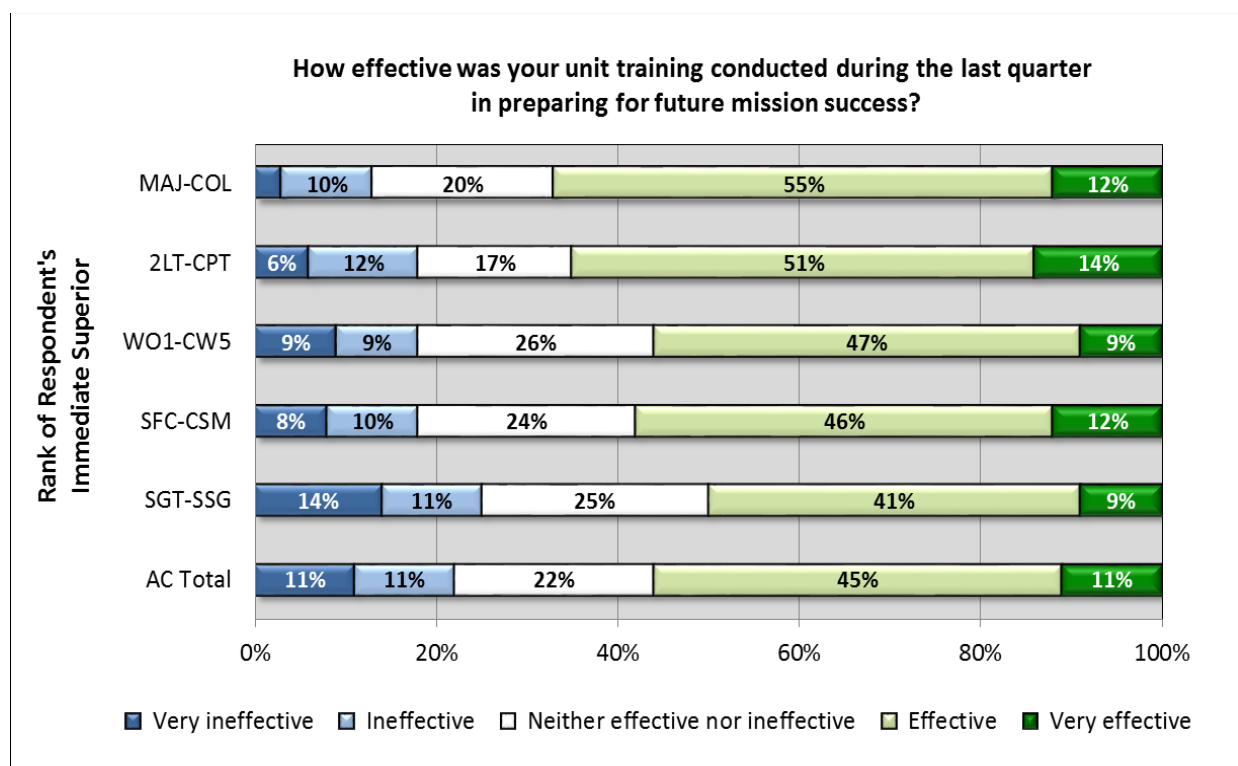

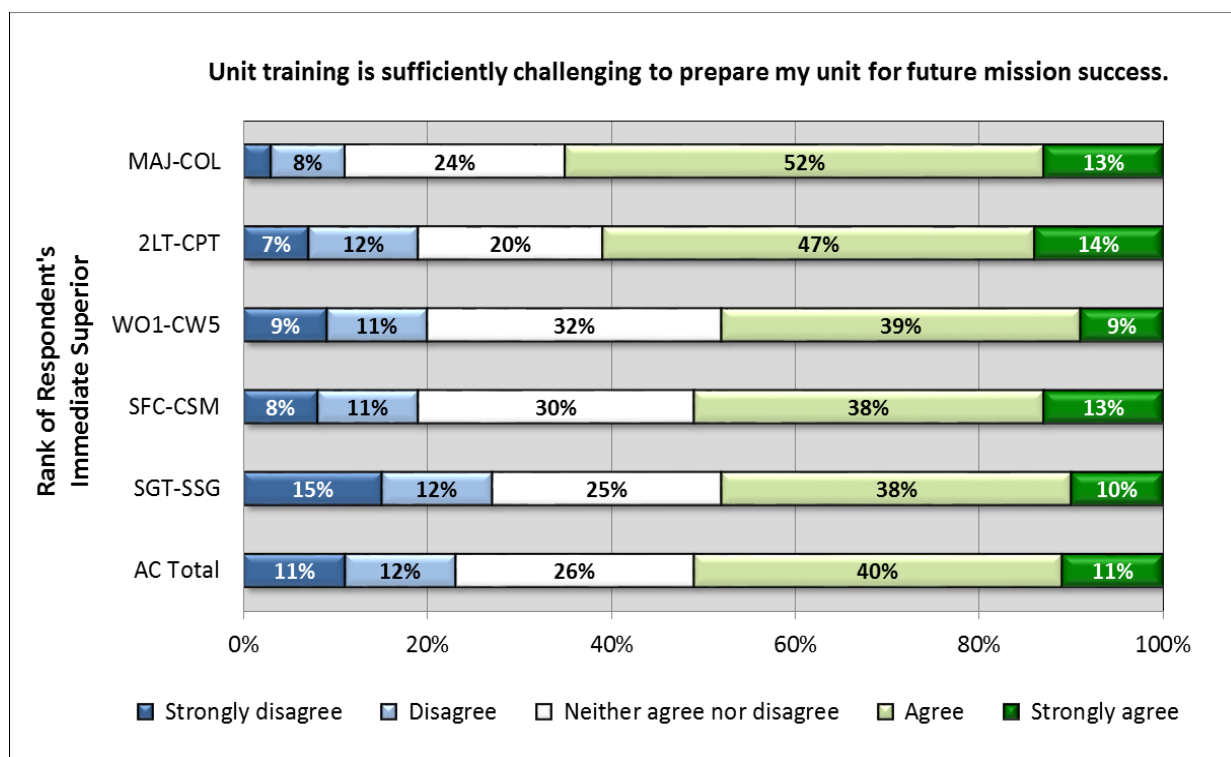**Figure 57.** AC Respondent Ratings for Unit Training Effectiveness

Figure 58. AC Respondent Ratings for Unit Training Challenge

A potential reason why CASAL ratings for unit-based training are not more favorable is that these items reflect respondent attitudes regarding training effectiveness at the unit level. This may be difficult for individual leaders to independently assess or gauge. Findings from the 2016 Status of Forces Survey (SOFS) provide additional context for results on unit-based training (Office of People Analytics, 2016). Specifically, that respondents' summative evaluations for personal readiness and unit readiness differ (see Table 22). Respondents in all rank categories tended to report that they were personally well prepared to perform their wartime job (79% overall), while smaller percentages reported their unit was well prepared for its wartime mission (55% overall). A larger percentage of respondents more favorably assessed their personal preparation to perform their wartime job (79% overall) than credited the training that went into attaining their level of preparation (68% overall).

Table 22. 2016 Status of Forces Survey Army Results on Readiness to Perform Wartime Job or Mission

2016 Status of Forces Survey of Active Duty Members (Army Results)			
Active Component Rank Group	**How well prepared are you to perform your wartime job? (% Well or Very Well Prepared)**	**How well has your training prepared you to perform your wartime job? (% Well or Very Well Prepared)**	**How well prepared is your unit to perform its wartime mission? (% Well or Very Well Prepared)**
MAJ-COL (O4-O6)	89%	81%	70%
2LT-CPT (O1-O3)	78%	67%	58%
SGT-CSM (E5-E9)	88%	74%	54%
PV1-CPL (E1-E4)	68%	60%	53%
AC Total	79%	68%	55%

Integration of AC and RC unit training

As previously described in the discussion on the institutional domain of leader development (see chapter 2.1), the Army Total Force Policy establishes policy for the integration of the Army's active and reserve components as a "Total Force" (ATFP; Army Directive 2012-08, 2012a). One-third of AC leaders (34%) report they participated in a training exercise (e.g., CTC, MCTP, or home station training) with a mix of AC and RC units and/or Soldiers in the past 12 months. A slightly larger percentage of RC leaders (40%) report the same. This integration of forces during training is well received, as a majority of leaders in both components believe the mix of AC and RC Soldiers and units had a positive or very positive effect on the training experience. As with integrated education, larger percentages of RC leaders than AC leaders perceive positive benefits of this integration during training (see Figure 59). Notably small percentages of leaders in any rank group (10% or less) perceived a negative or very negative effect from the integration during their most recent training experience.
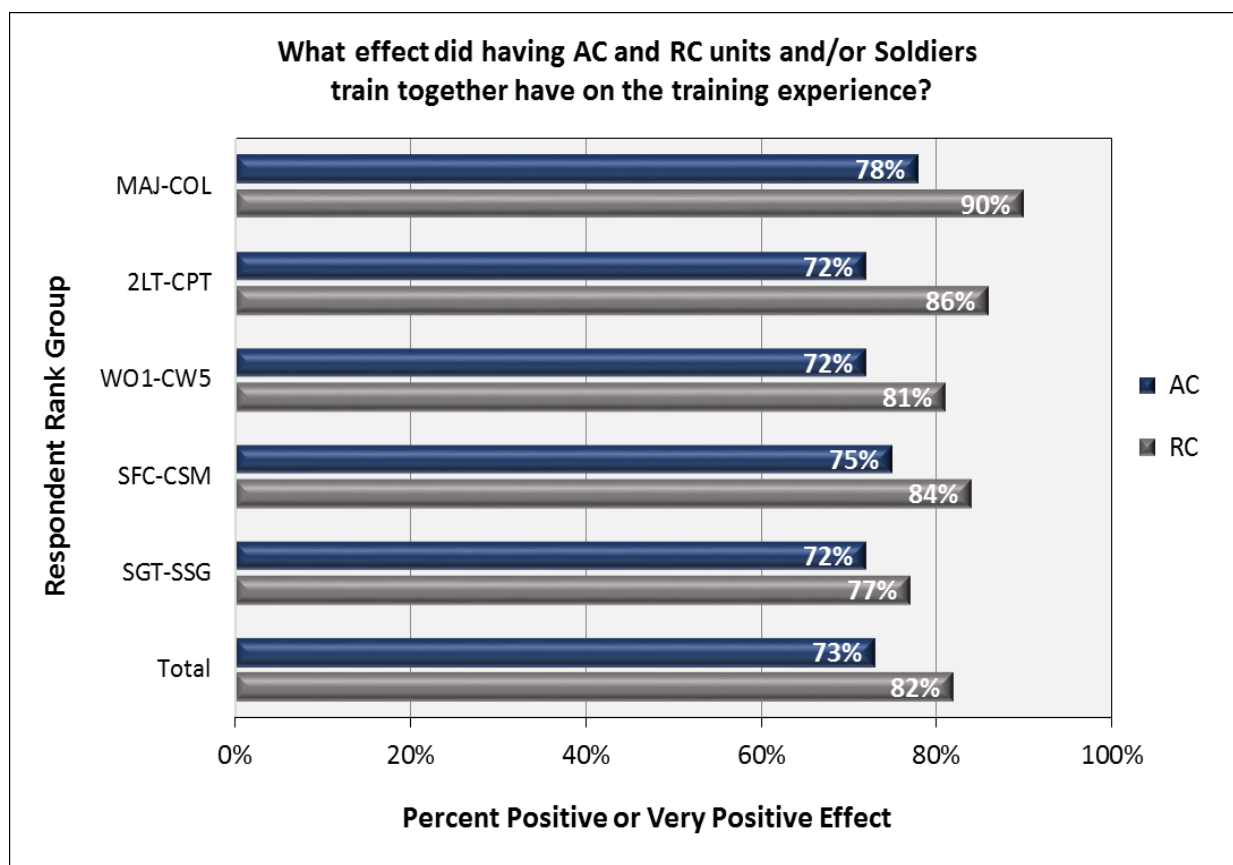
What effect did having AC and RC units and/or Soldiers train together have on the training experience?

Respondent Rank Group	AC	RC
MAJ-COL	78%	90%
2LT-CPT	72%	86%
WO1-CW5	72%	81%
SFC-CSM	75%	84%
SGT-SSG	72%	77%
Total	73%	82%

Percent Positive or Very Positive Effect

▌ *Figure 59.* AC and RC Respondent Perceptions Regarding Integrated Training

Combat Training Centers

The purpose of the combat training center (CTC) program is to generate ready units and agile leaders who are confident in their abilities to operate in complex environments (AR 350-50, 2013b). Results of the 2016 CASAL show that about half of AC leaders (56%) have trained at a CTC at some point in their career, compared to more than one-third (38%) of RC leaders.

The key components of the CTC program's mission are to provide commanders, staffs, and units an operational experience focused on unit readiness balanced with leader development requirements (AR 350-50, 2013b). CASAL results on the effectiveness of CTCs in developing leaders remain moderate to strong, and have trended more favorably in recent years. Ratings reflect the attitudes of leaders who trained at a CTC within the past 12 months (from the time of the survey). Findings confirm that CTC experiences

> *CTC experiences are perceived as moderately to strongly effective in developing leadership skills, and favorable attitudes are trending upward.*

benefit leaders by improving leadership skills (both for the respondent and subordinate leaders); improving leaders' abilities to perform warfighting functions (i.e., lead the preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations); and improving units' mission readiness. Two-thirds of leaders rate the leadership feedback they received at the CTC as effective or very effective.

In comparison to AC leaders, larger percentages of RC leaders perceive their CTC experiences as effective for leadership improvement and improving unit mission readiness (see Figure 60). Results also show that AC and RC leader perceptions have either remained steady or trended more favorably since 2012 (see Figure 61).
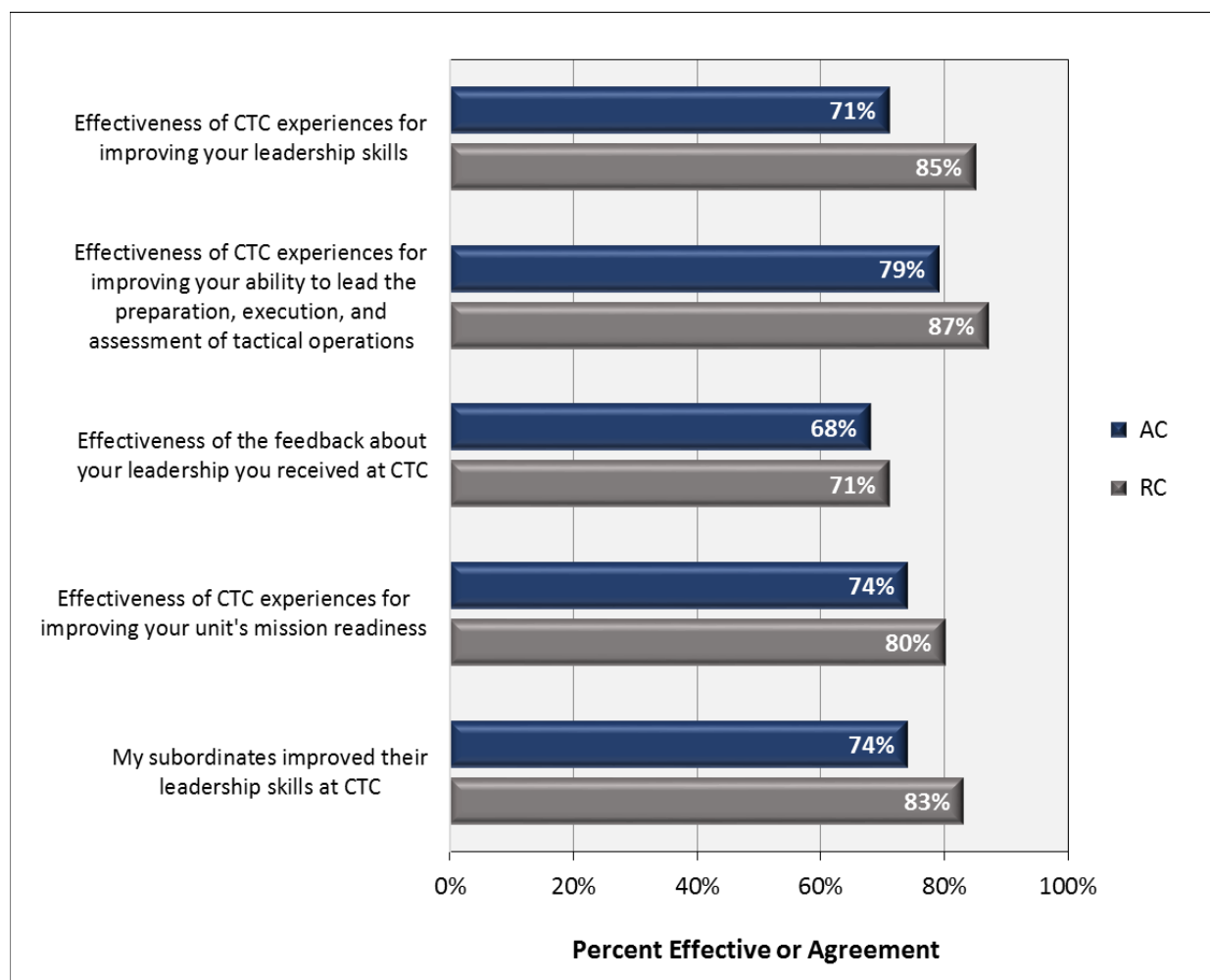

Figure 60. Ratings by AC and RC Respondents Who Trained at a CTC within the Past 12 Months
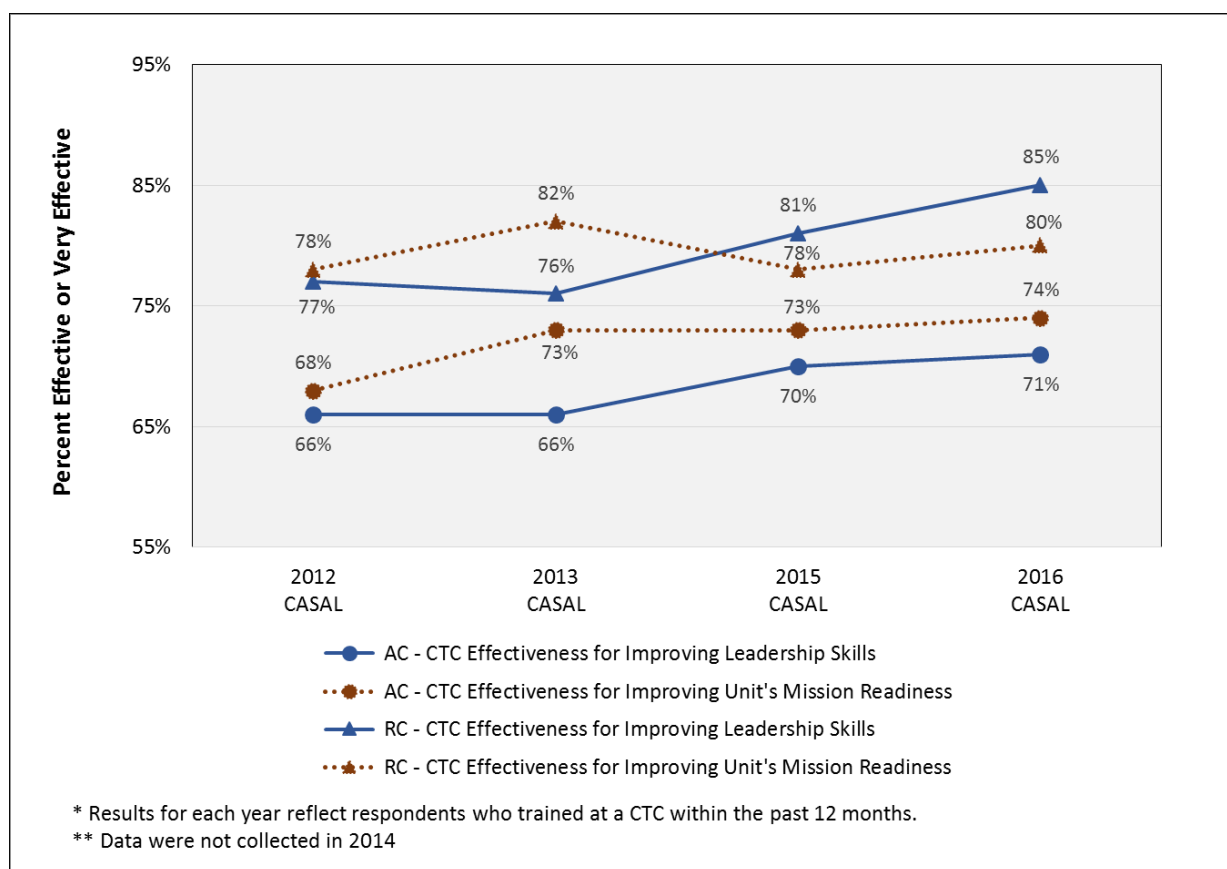
Figure 61. Effectiveness of CTC Experiences for Improving AC and RC Leadership Skills and Unit Mission Readiness (2012 to 2016)

Conclusions on Unit Training and Leader Development

CASAL results have consistently shown that only about half of leaders perceive their unit or organization places a high or very high priority on leader development. Respondent ratings indicate that Army units and organizations tend to rely on self-development, authorizations for resident school/course attendance, and leader development programs such as OPD/NCOPD to develop leaders. Most units only rarely or occasionally conduct programmed team-building activities or events, emphasize leader development in collective training, provide stretch or developmental assignments, and promote professional reading programs. Despite the use of these activities, only about one-third of AC respondents indicate awareness of a formal plan or published guidance for leader development held by their unit or higher headquarters.

The purpose of unit training is to prepare units for operations and to exercise and improve individual skills of *leading* and *developing* in units. Over half of AC leaders assess favorably their unit's training effectiveness and the degree of challenge to prepare for unit mission readiness. As demonstrated by results of the SOFS, AC respondents tend to hold more confidence in their

personal preparation to perform their wartime job and less certainty in the readiness of their unit as a whole. AC and RC leaders who participated in integrated training during the past 12 months report favorable attitudes regarding the positive effect of the integration on the training experience.

Combat training centers (CTCs) are intended to provide a rich environment in which units train and individuals develop. Fifty-six percent of AC respondents and 38% in the RC have participated as part of the training audience at a CTC at least once in their career. Respondent assessments of their CTC experience remain favorable regarding its effectiveness in improving leadership skills and in improving leaders' ability to lead the preparation, execution, and assessment of tactical operations. Three-fourths of respondents rate their CTC experience effective for improving their unit's mission readiness, a favorable trend compared to the same assessment by two-thirds of respondents in 2012.

What can be done. Emphasize a culture of leader development. Enhancements to leader development practices at the unit or organizational level will convey the importance of these activities. Unit commanders and senior leaders who model effective development behaviors will set an example for subordinates to follow. Fostering formal and informal counseling, mentorship, climates for learning, and a mindset for seeking feedback and development from others will ingrain these activities as a regular part of a leader's routine and will yield positive outcomes. Leader development should be integrated into already occurring training and operational functions. Tables 2-2 and 2-3 of FM 6-22, *Leader Development* (2015b), list many elements that commanders and senior leaders can integrate into unit plans or guidance, and Chapter 3, *Fundamentals of Development*, describes how to implement leader development into unit operations.

Available resources can be utilized to enhance the leadership development aspects of collective training experiences. CAL's handbook titled *Developing Leadership during Unit Training Exercises* describes how to optimize the developmental value of unit-based training events for improving leadership. Many concepts within this handbook have been incorporated into Chapters 3 and 6 of FM 6-22, *Leader Development* (2015b).

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Appendix A: Summary of Military Leader Recommendations

This appendix provides a summary of the recommendations from the 2016 CASAL Military Leader Findings, organized by report chapter.

1.1 Leader Effectiveness

Self-assessment programs could be developed for leadership proficiency levels to encourage focused attention on leadership skill improvement. A leader could attain a level of proficiency after completing a prescribed set of criteria. Examples of criteria include being assessed through MSAF (and/or through an assessment center), receiving coaching through the MSAF program, completing certain leadership training materials (e.g., interactive media instruction (IMI) training materials), and providing evidence of actions taken to develop others. The idea of using levels of attained and verified skills would be to motivate individuals to improve their mastery of leadership. The levels would not be used in administrative decisions. Aspects of the program could be similar to a virtual assessment center, in which leaders participate in activities online and their performance is assessed over a short and defined period of time (e.g., 4 hours). Other aspects, such as participating in an MSAF assessment and actions taken to develop others, would be long-term activities that take place over a few months. In addition to promoting the continuous development of leadership skills, the existence of such a program communicates to the force that leadership skill improvement and developing others is valued and rewarded by the Army. Existing developmental resources such as the MSAF assessment and the MSAF Virtual Improvement Center (VIC; Center for Army Leadership, 2012) offer a head start for a progressive skill attainment program.

1.2 The Effects of Climate and Situational Factors on Leadership

Continue through CASAL and other Army surveys to assess and track levels of morale, career satisfaction, and intentions to remain in the Army, to monitor changes and potential effects on conditions in units and organizations and to examine the relationship between leadership and these other constructs.

Promote the use of the new Army training circular on how to improve engagement in Army units and organizations (TC 6-22.6, *Employee Engagement,* 2017b). This resource was developed to provide doctrinally-based techniques for enhancing employee engagement, for use by all personnel and their supervisors (military and civilian) with an application focus at the direct level of leadership. The circular integrates experiences and best practices by drawing upon Army doctrine and regulation, recent Army leadership studies, and research on effective

practices from the private and public sectors. The resource describes each factor affecting employee engagement and provides assessments to determine team strengths and needs in each area, as well as actionable methods to set conditions for enhancing employee engagement. The resource is available through the Army Publishing Directorate website. It is up to leaders and managers to implement the guidelines to realize improvement.

1.3 Counterproductive Leadership

Continue research on the antecedents, causes, and occurrence of counterproductive leadership and toxic leadership in the Army. The Army and the Center for Army Leadership have developed an understanding of the types of behaviors that can be classified as counterproductive. More needs to be learned about what causes leaders to engage in or demonstrate these negative behaviors or outcomes. CAL is currently developing interactive media instruction (IMI) to address counterproductive leadership. The instruction includes how to define and identify counterproductive behaviors, how to assess the causes and effects of the behaviors, and how to apply strategies and techniques to address counterproductive behaviors. The instruction will allow a leader to identify any of his or her own behaviors that are counterproductive. It will also provide strategies for individuals who are experiencing or witnessing the effects of counterproductive leadership and guide them in identifying, assessing, and addressing the behaviors.

2.2 Army Education

To learn more about strengths and weaknesses of PME courses, a more comprehensive assessment of instruction should be directed. CASAL serves as one source of information, with limited reach, on course and school effectiveness in preparing leaders. A coordinated effort to reach PME course graduates, as opposed to a random sample of Army leaders, would provide more robust data tailored to specific learning environments. QAOs or CoEs can be directed to collect reactions from PME course graduates through a survey upon course completion (i.e., end of course questionnaire) and two follow-ups at six-month intervals (i.e., six-month and twelve-month follow-up questionnaire).

The focus of the surveys should be on general learning outcomes with additional emphasis on leadership improvement and impacts in their current role as a leader. Ideally, course contributions to a leader's development will be applied on the job and course graduates can assess this. Aggregate analysis work could be performed by CAL or Army University so trends can be identified and tracked. The data could be used to ensure that the impact of PME on leader development is maximized.

2.3 Leader's Role in Development

Senior leaders and senior raters can reinforce the importance of developing subordinates through the leadership example they set, the developmental behaviors they role model, and the questions they ask their key subordinate leaders. Subordinate development can be perceived by some as one more important thing to do that competes with an already high operational tempo and workload. However, preparing subordinates for those future roles with increased responsibility and authority is just as important as meeting today's training requirements.

In the *Develops* section of evaluation reports (OER, NCOER), document what activities a leader has engaged in to develop others (e.g., mentoring, informal counseling, or job shadowing). The rater should provide an assessment of the extent to which the leader has made an effort to develop others. Make performance objectives for *Develops Others* that are mandatory for all leaders. Write those objectives into the evaluation report. These steps contribute to creating a culture of leader development, communicate to leaders the importance of developing others, and hold them accountable for doing so.

There is no simple substitute for leaders approaching counseling with a positive, developmental mindset, and doing it. Counseling should be an effort performed jointly between the subordinate being counseled and the leader. Together they should identify what should and can be improved. Collaboration - as a central focus - can be the key to turning around the quality of counseling. Army resources already exist on how to perform developmental counseling to assist leaders who have not received counseling or do not have a mental picture of how to conduct it effectively. The MSAF VIC includes a library of counseling and coaching videos that provide leaders with a range of realistic examples of different productive counseling sessions. Examples vary in terms of scenario, temperament, and rank, so leaders can draw from a wide array of effective techniques to apply in different situations. An after action review (AAR) is provided at the conclusion of each video showing the leader the actions that contributed to their effectiveness during the counseling session. MSAF and other tools, like the leadership assessment and review card (LARC, GTA 6-22.6), are available to collect and review ideas for what strengths and developmental needs a subordinate has.

2.4 Unit Training and Leader Development

Emphasize a culture of leader development. Enhancements to leader development practices at the unit or organizational level will convey the importance of these activities. Unit commanders and senior leaders who model effective development behaviors will set an example for

subordinates to follow. Fostering formal and informal counseling, mentorship, climates for learning, and a mindset for seeking feedback and development from others will ingrain these activities as a regular part of a leader's routine and will yield positive outcomes. Leader development should be integrated into already occurring training and operational functions. Tables 2-2 and 2-3 of FM 6-22, *Leader Development* (2015b), list many elements that commanders and senior leaders can integrate into unit plans or guidance, and Chapter 3, *Fundamentals of Development*, describes how to implement leader development into unit operations.

Available resources can be utilized to enhance the leadership development aspects of collective training experiences. CAL's handbook titled *Developing Leadership during Unit Training Exercises* describes how to optimize the developmental value of unit-based training events for improving leadership. Many concepts within this handbook have been incorporated into Chapters 3 and 6 of FM 6-22, *Leader Development* (2015b).

Appendix B: Summary of Statistical Analysis Methods

This appendix describes the range of statistical analyses conducted for CASAL to aid interpretation of results.

Descriptive Statistics

Scales Used

CASAL items use a variety of scales with response options that best fit the construct being measured. Percentages are reported throughout CASAL to indicate the proportion of respondents within a rank group that endorse each response option. Higher percentages (closer to 100%) indicate that more respondents within that rank chose that response to capture their opinions and perceptions. Lower percentages (closer to 0%) indicate that a response was chosen by fewer respondents and is less representative of the group's opinions and perceptions.

Most of the items in CASAL are assessed using a 5-point Likert scale consisting of two unfavorable responses, one neutral response, two favorable responses, and an option to select *No basis to assess*. For simplicity and ease of interpretation, the 5 response options are typically reported in three categories: unfavorable, neutral, and favorable (see Table B1).

Table B1. Five Point Likert Scale Response Options Used by CASAL

Type of Response	Unfavorable		Neutral	Favorable	
	1	2	3	4	5
Agreement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Effectiveness	Very ineffective	Ineffective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Effective	Very effective
Satisfaction	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Effect	Very negative effect	Negative effect	No effect	Positive effect	Very positive effect
Quality	Very poor	Poor	Neither good nor poor	Good	Very good

A selection of items in CASAL are assessed using response option scales that do not include a neutral midpoint, and must be interpreted differently than the scales listed above (see Table

B2). For example, perceptions of "moderate trust" in units, the "moderate" impact of an activity on an individual's development as a leader, the "occasional" occurrence of a leader development method, and leadership that "meets expectations" can be interpreted as favorable rather than neutral results, depending on the context of the item.

Table B2. Additional Five Point Scale Response Options Used by CASAL

Type of Response	Smallest or Lowest		Non-neutral Midpoint	Largest or Highest	
	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Trust	Very low trust	Low trust	Moderate trust	High trust	Very high trust
Impact	Very little or no impact	Small impact	Moderate impact	Large impact	Great impact
Frequency	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
Meeting Expectations	Falls well short of my expectations	Falls short of my expectations	Meets my expectations	Exceeds my expectations	Greatly exceeds my expectations
Frequency of Occurrence	Much too infrequent	Too infrequent	About right	Too frequent	Much too frequent
Usefulness	Of no use	Not very useful	Of some use	Of considerable use	Extremely useful

Index Scores

Index scores are a measure of the proportion of favorable responses across a set of items. The scores are calculated as the average of the unrounded percent positive of each item in a set of items, and range from 0 to 100. Index scores closer to 100 indicate that a greater proportion of respondents rated the item set favorably, whereas index scores closer to 0 indicate fewer favorable ratings. Index scores are easy to interpret and facilitate tracking trends over time. CASAL calculates and reports index scores for leadership effectiveness (i.e., respondent ratings of their immediate superior's effectiveness in demonstrating the competencies and attributes) and respondent engagement. Scores are reported for each rank group and at the overall component level.

Composite Scores

Composite scores refer to a single score based on an individual's responses to multiple survey items (Furr & Bacharach, 2008). On the CASAL survey, multiple survey items are created to measure one construct or characteristic. For example, engagement is measured by 10 survey items. Each individual survey item reflects a different aspect of the many components of engagement (e.g., involvement, satisfaction, or enthusiasm for work).

To create a composite score, an individual's responses are summed and divided by the total number of items in order to calculate the mean (mathematical average). CASAL composite scores range from a minimum value of 1.0 to a maximum value of 5.0. For example, CASAL assesses engagement through 10 items assessed on a 5-point Likert scale. To create the engagement composite score for each respondent, the responses (1 to 5) for the 10 items are summed and divided by 10 to calculate the average. A score of 5.0 represents the highest possible composite score for engagement, while a score of 1.0 is the lowest possible composite score.

The use of a composite score tends to allow more valid and reliable measurement of a construct than a single item can offer. Multiple items contain more comprehensive information about a characteristic than does a single item (Furr & Bacharach, 2008). CASAL reports composite scores to represent respondents' ratings for their immediate superior's effectiveness in demonstrating leader competencies, leader attributes, trust-building behavior, the mission command philosophy, and counterproductive leadership, as well as respondents' personal level of engagement and perceptions of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) among members of their teams and immediate work groups.

Composite scores are used to describe levels of a given construct across groups of respondents as described above. They are also used to examine the relationship between the composite (e.g., engagement) and other items (e.g., 'My immediate supervisor is an effective leader.') or other composites (e.g., demonstration of organizational citizenship behaviors in teams) using statistical tests such as correlation or regression.

Reliability

Generally, reliability refers to consistency, accuracy, and/or reproducibility. The central type of reliability reported in survey research is internal consistency, which is a measure of the relationships or association between items within a composite. Items within a composite should be highly related or associated, as they should each be measuring one overarching characteristic or construct (Furr & Bacharach, 2008). Cronbach's alpha is an index of internal

consistency; a positive value that indicates the internal consistency of the composite items ranging from 0.00 to 1.00, with increasing values representing greater internal consistency. Guion (1998) specifies the generally accepted rules of thumb for interpreting values for internal consistency (i.e., alpha values; see Table B3).

Table B3. Practical Rules of Thumb for Interpreting Internal Consistency (Guion 1998)

Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation of Internal Consistency
α ≥ 0.90	Very Strong
0.80 to 0.89	Strong
0.70 to 0.79	Acceptable
0.60 to 0.69	Questionable
α < 0.60	Poor

CASAL reports Cronbach's alpha for all composite scores as an estimate of the internal consistency among the items within that composite.

Tests of Statistical Significance

Correlation

A correlation is a statistical technique that is used to indicate the strength and the direction of the relationship or association between two variables (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007). Correlation coefficients are numbers that range from -1.00 to +1.00. Correlations closer to -1.00 or 1.00 indicate a stronger relationship; correlations closer to 0.00 are considered weak or negligible relationships. Positive values indicate a positive relationship (i.e., as values for one variable increase, the other variable also increases), and negative values indicate an inverse relationship (i.e., as values for one variable increase, the other decreases). Correlations do not indicate causality; it is not inferred and cannot be assumed that one variable causes the other.

CASAL reports correlations between survey items and composites that should be related, based on psychological theory, previous research, or Army doctrine, in order to determine the strength and direction of the actual relationship. For example, CASAL reports correlations between respondents' assessment of engagement and assessments of their immediate superior's demonstration of the core leader competencies and attributes. This correlation is positive; when a respondent perceives their immediate superior effectively demonstrates core leader competencies, the respondent tends to report a favorable level of engagement. CASAL also reports the correlation between respondent agreement that unit standards are upheld and

respondent agreement that a discipline problem exists within the unit. The correlation between these items is negative, indicating an inverse relationship; respondents who agree unit standards are upheld tend to also disagree a discipline problem exists. Cohen (1992) specifies generally accepted rules of thumb for interpreting small, medium, and large correlation values (see Table B4).

Table B4. Practical Rules of Thumb for Interpreting Correlations (Cohen, 1992)

Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation of Correlation Value
0.70 to 1.0 (-0.70 to -1.0)	Very large positive (or negative) correlation
0.50 to 0.69 (-0.50 to 0.69)	Large positive (or negative) correlation
0.30 to 0.49 (-0.30 to 0.49)	Medium positive (or negative) correlation
0.10 to 0.29 (-0.30 to 0.50)	Small positive (or negative) correlation
0.00 to 0.09 (0.00 to -0.30)	Negligible or no correlation

Multiple Regression

Multiple regression is a statistical procedure used to estimate the relationship among multiple independent variables (predictors) and a dependent variable (outcome). Regression is similar to correlation in that it estimates the relationships between variables, but regression allows the exploration of several relationships at once (i.e., multiple independent variables), and is used to evaluate the magnitude of predictive relationships (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). CASAL analyses focus on two statistics that report results of multiple regressions:

- A statistic called a standardized ***beta*** weight represents the specific impact each predictor has on the outcome measure, accounting for the contribution of other predictors. Standardized beta weights are similar to correlation coefficients in that they range from -1.00 to +1.00, with the size of the weight indicating the extent of impact and the direction (+ or -) of the relationship. The larger the standardized beta weight, the larger the impact that scores for that predictor have on the outcome.

- A statistical measure called the coefficient of determination or ***R^2*** indicates the goodness of fit of the regression line to the data observed. It is a positive number that ranges from 0.00

to 1.00 and can be interpreted as the percentage of variance of the outcome explained by all the predictors.

CASAL uses multiple regression to better understand relationships between variables, including how factors combine and how much they have in common with other variables. For example, a multiple regression can test the contribution of respondents' ratings of their immediate superior's demonstration of the competencies and attributes to explain perceptions of that superior's overall effectiveness as a leader. The results indicate that both competencies and attributes contribute to perceptions of leader effectiveness (i.e., competencies and attributes predict effectiveness) and that competencies have a stronger impact on those perceptions than do attributes.

Stepwise Regression

A stepwise multiple regression is an exploratory statistical approach to identify the strongest unique predictors within a set of predictors that explains significant variance in ratings for a particular outcome variable. First, the predictor which provides the largest, singular contribution to the explanation of the outcome is identified. Then, the next strongest contributing predictor from the remaining pool of predictors is identified, and the process is repeated until no remaining predictors explain a statistically significant portion of the variance (i.e., at least 1% additional variance explained) of the outcome. Stepwise regression results with CASAL data should be interpreted with caution, as sample data, not scientific theory, guide the selection order of the predictors. Related to this, the order produced from the set of predictors may not be the same in other samples because trivial differences can lead to the selection of a predictor (Cohen et al., 2003).

Stepwise multiple regressions are conducted in CASAL to determine which combination of predictors explain the most variance of an outcome. Results from stepwise regression indicate the predictors that provide a significant contribution to explain variance in the outcome. In CASAL findings, significant contributing predictors are reported in the order of magnitude according to the amount of variance explained for the outcome. Nonsignificant variables are not included in the final model.

CASAL uses stepwise regression to identify which predictors together explain the most variance in an outcome. For example, stepwise regression is used to identify which leadership behaviors together explain perceptions of effective leadership.

Effect Sizes

CASAL reports effect sizes as a numerical value that quantifies the size of the difference between two groups. Cohen's *d* is an effect size used to indicate the standardized difference between two means (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007). Mathematically, Cohen's *d* is the difference between two means divided by the standard deviation of the data. A Cohen's *d* of 0.00 indicates no difference between the two groups (they have the same mean). The greater the Cohen's *d* value, the larger the standardized difference between the groups. Cohen (1988) specifies the generally accepted rules of thumb for interpreting Cohen's *d* values (see Table B5).

Table B5. Practical Rules of Thumb for Interpreting Cohen's *d* Values

Cohen's *d*	Interpretation of Effect Size
$d \geq 0.80$	Large effect
0.50 to 0.79	Medium effect
0.20 to 0.49	Small effect
0.01 to 0.19	Very small effect
$d = 0.00$	No difference