

Developing Trustworthy Commissioned Officers: Transcending the Honor Codes and Concept

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“The discipline which makes the soldiers of a free country reliable in battle is not to be gained by harsh or tyrannical treatment. On the contrary, such treatment is far more likely to destroy than to make an army. It is possible to impart instructions and to give commands in such a manner and such a tone of voice so as to inspire in the Soldier no feeling but an intense desire to obey; while the opposite manner and tone of voice cannot fail to excite strong resentment and a desire to disobey. The one mode or the other of dealing with subordinates springs from a corresponding spirit in the breast of the commander. He who feels the respect which is due to others cannot fail to inspire in them regard for himself; while he who feels, and hence manifests, disrespect toward others, especially his subordinates, cannot fail to inspire hatred against himself.”

MG John M. Schofield, in an address to the
West Point Corps of Cadets, 11 August 1879

“A Cadet will not lie, cheat, steal or tolerate anyone who does.”

- The Cadet Honor Code,
- United States Military Academy

Character: “Those moral qualities that constitute the nature of a leader and shape his or her decisions and actions.”

- USMA Circular 1-101, Cadet Leader Development System, 2005

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Our nation's three primary means of providing the Armed Forces with commissioned officers are: Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), Officer Candidate Schools (OCS), and the Federal Service Academies. Each of these sources are duty bound to commission *leaders of character*, entrusted with leading America's Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen. The importance of commissioning leaders of character is uncontested, even axiomatic; but what is required and expected of a *leader of character* can be a source of debate. Our aim is to clarify what it means to be a leader of character and to recommend a holistic approach to developing such leaders in each of our sources of commission (SOC).

To begin, it is essential to define and understand "character." Next, we must determine a theoretical or empirical method by which character may be developed. Third, tangible activities within the developmental programs at each SOC must be designed and implemented, accordingly. Finally, we must gain consensus on what are expected as observable, measureable outcomes attributable to the developmental process.

Of the many possible descriptions, character has been defined as, "Those moral qualities that constitute the nature of a leader and shape his or her decisions and actions."¹ Dr. Joel J. Kupperman, a highly accomplished professor, author and philosopher, writes a similar, concise definition of character:

"[Cadet X] demonstrates ... character if and only if [Cadet X's] pattern of thought and action, especially in relation to matters affecting the happiness of others, is resistant to pressures, temptations, difficulties, and the insistent expectations of others."²

Here it is shown that one's character is revealed in decisions and actions—across-the-board—not just in the avoidance of lying, cheating, stealing, or tolerating – as most schools' honor codes prohibit. Similarly, Dr. James Rest's four stage model of moral decision making (moral recognition, moral judgment, moral intention, and moral action)³ provides support for this perspective with its focus on recognizing that a moral-ethical issue exists (recognition or

¹ United States Military Academy. USMA Circular 1-101. Cadet Leader Development System. 2005.

² Kupperman, Joel J. Character. Cary, NC, USA: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1995. The term 'Cadet X' was placed in the quote to emphasize the context of the argument.

³ James Rest. Development in Judging Moral Issues. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1979.

sensitivity), culminating in a behavior. In this light, our character includes values, virtues, aesthetics, ethics, morals (conscience), identity, and sense of purpose. These qualities shape our decisions and attendant actions. By Dr. Kupperman's definition, these are the intrinsic qualities, generating observable outcomes, revealing our character.

Fundamentally, we expect a leader to be *trustworthy*. Trust is gained and sustained through the consistent demonstration of competence, character, and commitment. In other words, leaders earn trust when they do their duty well, do it in the right way, do it for the right reasons, and are persevering. Accordingly, a professional member of the Armed Services must:

**Seek to discover the truth, decide what is right*, and demonstrate the
competence, character, and commitment
to act accordingly.**

***A "right" decision must be efficient, effective, and ethical**

Clearly, this view encompasses much more than not lying, cheating, stealing or tolerating such acts. However, these are the fundamental proscriptions constituting the tenets of the Honor Codes or Concept at each Federal Service Academy. They also are essential elements of our Professional Military Ethic, but they are not sufficient. Even when we embrace the prescriptive *Spirit of the Honor Code [Reverence for Truth (honesty); pursuit of Justice (fairness) and Compassion; recognition of the Sanctity of Property; and the commitment to uphold the professional military ethic]*, there is much more.

It is our thesis that all the commissioning sources espouse a *Concept of Professional (Leader) Development* that avoids placing a consequences-based emphasis on an Honor Code or Concept. Importantly, the SOC's should adopt a comprehensive paradigm for developing a Cadet's, Midshipman's, and Candidate's holistic true nature in competence, character, and commitment.

Despite the pleas of "old grads" of the Federal Service Academies to maintain tradition and the "way things were," change is both appropriate and imperative. Over the course of their histories, the Academies have continuously and systematically improved their academic,

military, and physical programs; these are widely regarded as first class. In fact, among those who rate universities, the Federal Service Academies are perennially in the top tier across the board. Nonetheless, we argue that the mandate, reflected in the *Vision, Purpose, and Mission* of each Academy, to provide our Armed Forces with commissioned leaders of character deserves a careful philosophical review.

From a historical perspective, by 1891, West Point's Board of Visitors recognized the imperative of character (moral) development—as equally as important as physical and cognitive development. Of note, they emphasized the development of character in Cadets by also addressing the character of the Academy's faculty. The Committee on Discipline and Instruction reported the following to the Board:

“Of the regulations we can say that they deserve our profound respect, for they are the results of nearly a century's experience. They have constituted the rules of conduct that formed the characters of the great men who have graduated here...[The regulations] are now more nearly perfect than ever before, because they provide for their own improvement. Judicious changes have been made all along their history, whenever experience clearly demonstrated the advantages of modifications...The Cadet is required to consider ‘duty the noblest word in the language’...Hence on the matter of discipline we conclude: That the rules of the school, considered in the abstract—their aims and methods; that the professors and officers now on duty here—their character, scholarship, skill and fidelity; that the results of the regulations as administered—shown in physical, moral and mental development of the Cadet—all deserve the commendation of the Board of Visitors.”⁴

Indeed, one key point in this passage is that appropriate modifications have been made “all along their history” to improve the way West Point develops Cadets. However, it was not until 1947 that General Maxwell D. Taylor, Superintendent at the time, explicitly confirmed that the mission of the U.S. Military Academy is to “...develop *character* and the personal attributes essential to an officer...”⁵ Nonetheless, West Point did not officially include character in its mission statement until 1957—ten years later.⁶ Today, West Point's William E. Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic articulates and teaches Cadets the Army Ethic; at the Air

⁴ Report of the Board of Visitors to the United States Military Academy for the year 1891.

⁵ Taylor, Maxwell. *West Point: Its Objectives and Methods*. United States Military Academy. 1947.

⁶ Catalogue of the United States Military Academy, 1957-58.

Force Academy this role is fulfilled by the Center for Character and Leadership Development; and at Annapolis the Vice Admiral James Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership supports this mission.

The Academies each have formal programs designed to develop trustworthy leaders (see for example, USMA Circular 1-101).⁷ These programs are designed to ***educate, train and inspire Cadets and Midshipman to embrace the professional military ethic of their Service and the Armed Forces.***

Thus, leader and character development occur within the academic, military and physical-athletic programs at each Academy (to include extracurricular activities). This developmental concept recognizes that individuals develop simultaneously across and within all domains as they complete the activities inherent within the four-year Service Academy experience. Similarly, this concept applies in ROTC and OCS, notwithstanding the reality that their programs are of a different design and duration.

It is in the successful completion of each commissioning source's programs whereby Cadets, Midshipmen, and Candidates develop in "competence, character, and commitment" – becoming *trustworthy* Commissioned Officers.

In this light, three principles must be reflected in the design of the developmental programs at the Academies, in ROTC, and in OCS: a) character is multi-dimensional (it is our true nature: values, virtues, ethics, morals (conscience), identity, aesthetics, etc); b) competence, character, and commitment can and must be developed simultaneously -- in the same way and at the same time; and c) *Officership*⁸ denotes transformational leadership and values-based decision-making (avoiding over-emphasis on transactional leadership and consequences and rules-based decision-making).

With this foundation, it is arguable that the meaning of 'honor' at each academy, as defined by living according to the precepts of an Honor Code or Concept is inappropriately

⁷ United States Military Academy. USMA Circular 1-101. Cadet Leader Development System. 2005.

⁸ This construct provides focus and meaning to graduates from SOC as commissioned officers in the U.S. military (see for example the design and content of the capstone course, MX400, Officership, at USMA).

narrow. Traditionally, violations of “honor” were the only “failure in character,” for which the standard sanction was expulsion (or separation).⁹

This observation does not suggest that the Honor Codes or Concepts are unnecessary. On the contrary, **they are necessary, but insufficient**. In this light, Honor Codes or Concepts are **minimum** standards of acceptable ethical conduct.

It is not surprising then that many Cadets and Midshipmen, staff and faculty, and Service Academy graduates may be comfortable with the view that avoiding an “honor violation” is **prima facie evidence that one has been honorable**. This assumption is unwarranted and unwise. At USMA, Cadets can avoid lying, cheating, stealing, or tolerating and still violate the *Army Values*.¹⁰ For example:

Cadets can live by the *Honor Code*

and:

- 1) Fail to contribute their best efforts to accomplish the mission; an affront to both *Duty & Service*.
- 2) Treat others with contempt or injustice; violating *Respect*.
- 3) Inappropriately offer “allegiance” to friends or teammates; violating professional *Loyalty* to the Constitution.
- 4) Make decisions and take actions that are inconsistent with the Army Ethic and *ethos*; a failure in *Integrity*.
- 5) Be fearful and fail to do what is right; lacking *Courage*.

⁹ Not all Cadets/Midshipmen who are found to have committed an honor violation are separated from an Academy. The Superintendent may suspend the separation or take other action, thereby granting ‘discretion.’ At West Point, this authority was granted in January 1977 by the Honorable Martin R. Hoffman, Secretary of the Army.

¹⁰ The term ‘being honorable’ in this context refers to abiding by the Cadet Honor Code; it does not refer to the holistic concept of being a *Trustworthy Army professional* as demonstrated by living by the Army values. The Values of the U.S. Air Force are – Integrity first, Service before self, and Excellence in all we do. U.S. Navy Core Values – Honor, Courage, Commitment. U.S. Coast Guard – Honor, Respect, Devotion to Duty.

Perhaps General Maxwell D. Taylor said it best when he wrote:

“The responsibility of West Point to the Cadets, however, does not end with their intellectual and physical training. It will be recalled that the mission prescribed by the Department of the Army places the development of character ahead of education in the arts and sciences and in military activities. The conduct of war is a business which calls for more than intellectual and physical attainments. No great Soldier ever rose to eminence in the command of American troops who was not primarily a leader of character. It is for this reason that West Point takes the development of character as a formal objective to be pursued by all available means.”¹¹

Clearly, the Honor Codes or Concept at each Academy **does not** represent the fullness of the military ethic and the Values of each Service. Nonetheless, the honor codes and concept are cardinal elements of the Academies’ *ethos*, providing a timeless foundation. Similarly, our society supports the *Spirit of the Code* (i.e., as stated earlier and in the definition of “Honor” in the *Code of Ethics*, below) and regards it as sacrosanct. **Living truthfully is a standard and an expectation.**

However, the Honor Systems at each Academy are becoming burdened by investigation and “legalisms”; and Cadets and Midshipmen know they can “lawyer up.” **The Honor System’s investigative focus is on evidence for lying, cheating, stealing, or tolerating.** In our Armed Forces and society, *honor* encompasses a broader view. Honor, in the sense of the proscriptive code does not encompass all that is necessary to be “trustworthy” – a characteristic that demands much more.¹² For example, a willful disregard for regulations, such as ‘blowing post,’ is not seen as a breach of honor (unless one lies about the act).¹³ But is such behavior consistent with *Duty*?¹⁴ Or in a similar fashion, a Cadet could also be grossly disrespectful to another without violating the Honor Code. Thus, we propose that each SOC explicitly and formally affirm that decisions and actions *which violate any of their services’ Values* are

¹¹ Taylor, Maxwell. *West Point: Its Objectives and Methods*. United States Military Academy. 1947.

¹² It should be noted that the non-toleration tenet reflects the Military Professional’s *Duty* to uphold the *Ethic* of the Armed Services. However, a Cadet may decide to report a violation only through the “fear of consequences” to him, rather than for the intrinsically “right” reason to “stop unethical practices.”

¹³ The term ‘blowing post’ refers to Cadets who leave the Academy grounds when they are not authorized to do so.

¹⁴ The Borman Commission Report: “*The Honor Code must not ... be exploited as a means of enforcing regulations.*”

unethical and intolerable. At West Point, the pamphlet governing the Honor Code and System states that:

“The disciplinary and honor systems are [separate and] distinct. Regulatory indiscipline may violate one of the seven Army values. Such infractions will be addressed, but not under the Honor System... However, while a distinction is made between “honor” violations and “regulations” violations, it must be understood that regulation violations may be unethical in their very nature. Deliberate disregard of known and established regulations for personal gain is a clear dereliction of military discipline and a divergence from ethical behavior. For example, the underage consumption of alcohol, while not an honor violation in itself, reflects negatively on the character of the Cadet(s) involved because it violates the laws of the United States.”¹⁵

In other words, Cadets at West Point may deliberately disregard known standards of ethical behavior and, if discovered, will normally be “slugged.”¹⁶ It is this divide between the relative tolerance for certain ethical lapses (e.g., disciplinary violations, lack of respect, etc.) in contrast to the stigma of Honor violations that gives the appearance of a false hierarchy among the Army Values. A *Value* is a principle or concept that is always important all the time. Therefore, all values within the Army Ethic must be embraced – otherwise the *Ethic* itself lacks *Integrity*.

The fundamental, cardinal characteristic in all relationships is *trust*, not simply honesty.¹⁷ A *competent, committed leader of character is trustworthy*. And, in a military context, with its inherent risk of serious injury and death, professional trust is sacrosanct.¹⁸ Developing trust, striving to be trustworthy, requires a life-long commitment to live by Service Values. Coast Guardsman must trust that their leaders will do their Duty. Soldiers must know that leaders will Respect the intrinsic dignity and worth of all. Sailors must know that leaders will display Courage in challenging times. Airmen must know that their leaders are men and

¹⁵ United States Corps of Cadets. USCC Pamphlet 623-1. The Honor Code and System. 1 February 2007.

¹⁶ ‘Slugged’ is a term referring to receiving punishment tours and demerits for violating the regulations of the Corps of Cadets. This action is separate and distinct from an Honor Board, in which Cadets would judge whether or not a Cadet violated the Honor Code, which may result in separation from the Academy.

¹⁷ GEN(R) Colin Powell has been quoted as saying, “The essence of all leadership, of all interpersonal activity, is trust.”

<https://www.willowcreek.com/emailhtml/summit07/july.html> and <http://www.govleaders.org/quotes.htm>

¹⁸ Pat Sweeney. “Do soldiers re-evaluate trust in their leaders prior to combat operations?” *Military Psychology*, 22: (Suppl.1) S70-S88, 2010.

women who place “Integrity First.” Most importantly, the American people expect more than “our Armed Forces will not lie, cheat or steal.” The Oaths we take on entry to our *Profession of Arms* are clear on this matter.

In order to assess or judge the character of Cadets, Midshipmen, or Candidates we must agree on a clearly defined expectation for what each must do in order to demonstrate that he or she is trustworthy - not just “a leader who follows the Honor Code or Concept.” There is a profound difference between the two. It is our contention trustworthy, military professionals (leaders) will:

Seek to discover the truth (to aspire to know that which is actually so -- “never be content with a half-truth when the whole can be won”); to decide what is right;* and to demonstrate the competence, character, and commitment to act accordingly.

*a “right decision” will be efficient, effective, and ethical.

In this regard, we are recommending that each Service Academy, ROTC program, and OCS, adopt a *Code of Ethics* (transcending the limited, proscriptive focus of any Honor Code and Concept). This Code of Ethics should incorporate, at a minimum, each Service’s Values. Consider this illustration (with modification by the authors) from the Army Leadership Policy on the Army G-1 website:

Army Values are the baseline, core, and foundation of every Soldier. Army Values guide the way Soldiers live their lives and perform their duties. They are an inherent part of the Army [Ethic] and [demand] standards of conduct to which all Soldiers must adhere. The moral and ethical tenets of the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Army Values [Duty, Honor, Loyalty, Service, Respect, Integrity, and Courage] characterize the Army Profession and culture, and describe the ethical conduct expected of all Soldiers.¹⁹

¹⁹ Derived from information on the website of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, U.S. Army, for Leadership Policy, 13 August 2008. Modifications, by the authors, reflect their recommended changes to the expression and definitions of the Army Values <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/HR/leadership/default.asp>.

At USMA, ROTC, and in OCS, an inclusive Code of Ethics should be based on the following:

**“Cadets and Candidates will embrace and uphold the Army Values --
as consistently demonstrated in their decisions and actions.”**

This principle denotes and mandates adopting the Army Values as one’s own. Accordingly, one’s decisions and actions will be in accord with one’s Values. In this light, an Army Code of Ethics must include all Army Values.

Code of Ethics.²⁰

Purpose: In order to foster trust in all our endeavors, personal and professional, we adopt this *Code of Ethics* to guide our decisions and actions, in pursuit of excellence.

Premise: Trust is belief in and reliance on the **competence, character, and commitment** of a person, organization, or institution. Trust is the foundation for successful accomplishment of the Army's Mission.

Goal: In order to be trustworthy, we aspire to be leaders of **competence, character, and commitment**. As such, we seek to discover the *truth*, decide what is *right**, and demonstrate the *competence, character, and commitment* to act accordingly.

[A “right” decision is *efficient, effective, and ethical*]

*We pledge to live by our **Values**:*

Integrity: Decision-making and action based on principles.

Duty: Contributing one’s best effort to accomplish the mission, striving for excellence in all endeavors.

Honor: Reverence for the truth (honesty), justice (fairness), regard for the property of others, and commitment to upholding the Army Professional Ethic.

Loyalty: Allegiance to the Constitution of the United States of America.

Service: Contribution to the well-being and benefit of others (teamwork).

Respect: Recognition of the intrinsic (infinite) dignity and worth of all people.

Courage: Commitment to do what is right despite risk, uncertainty, and fear.

Pledge: In the conduct of our duty we strive to continuously develop our **competence, character, and competence**, seeking to develop these attributes in order to be worthy of trust and to effectively and ethically serve the common defense.

- That which is **good** is consistent with our sense of virtue, ethics, and morality.
- That which is **moral** is known to our conscience—to which we pledge to be true.

²⁰ This Code revises the current definitions of the Army Values.

This Code (adapted to the values of each Service) encompasses what it means to be *a trustworthy professional in the Armed Forces of the United States*.

Consequently, the standard sanction for violating such a Code of Ethics within our SOC's should be *development, not separation*. ***Separation should be a consequence of failure to demonstrate satisfactory progress within a developmental program.*** Over the last decade (1990's and continuing) West Point has employed highly successful developmental mentorship activities to provide remediation for Cadets who committed serious errors in judgment. The mentorship strategies are tailored to the nature of the offense (e.g. Honor, Respect, Regulations, Alcohol-Drugs, Leadership, etc.). Each of these remedial programs requires a Cadet to be mentored and to complete several demanding requirements, including: study, reflection, service, and assessment. While these programs are specifically designed for those who have serious failings, *ideally every future officer should have an opportunity to participate in a developmental practicum.*

This concept is fully supported by the Army's governing regulation for West Point, Army Regulation (AR) 210-26 and the United States Code (USC) as shown below:

Supporting Document	Excerpt(s) from Document
AR 210-26, United States Military Academy	"The Superintendent will establish procedures and programs for the intellectual, military, and physical development of cadets as future commissioned officers consistent with the moral and ethical standards of uniformed service in the U.S. Army."²¹ "Cadets are required to act as leaders of character. They are not only to abstain from all vicious, immoral, and irregular conduct, but they are also enjoined to conduct themselves upon every occasion with the propriety and decorum characterizing a society of ladies and gentlemen. Cadets who conduct themselves in a manner unbecoming an officer and a lady or gentleman may be separated from the Military Academy and awarded punishments under paragraph 6-4 of this regulation."²²

²¹ Army Regulation 210-26. United States Military Academy. 26 July 2002.

²² Ibid.

Section 3583, Title 10, United States Code	“[Officers] show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism and subordination.” ²³
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Under this guidance and direction, West Point and all SOC's should adopt a Code of Ethics and implement a system for adjudication of alleged violations that is administratively and legally sufficient.

A key goal in developing future officers should be to develop their appreciation for and adoption of the Code of Ethics as their *own*. Cadets, Midshipmen, and Candidates must know it, adhere to it, believe in it, and lead others, accordingly. Kurt Lewin, Albert Bandura, Edgar Schein and other notables in the field of human development and social psychology write that one is influenced by his and her environment. The elements which create that environment must also be considered valid and worthy of continued use in order to endure. Thus, the Code of Ethics will become an inherent, cardinal characteristic of the ethic, ethos, and culture of the SOC if the transformation is logical, inclusive, inspirational, and beneficial to all. The transformation will require SOC leadership and the staff and faculty to be champions. If done according to the model (concept) below, Cadets, Midshipmen, and Candidates will know, adhere to, believe in, and lead in the process of developing themselves and others to truly be trustworthy future leaders of the Armed Forces.

²³ Section 3583, Title 10, United States Code. Requirement of Exemplary Conduct.

Developmental Concept

Activity

Outcome

Instruction-Study-Reflection.....>>	Knowledge & Understanding
Practicum..... >>	Adherence & Discipline
Assessment.....>>	Confidence & Belief
Experience..... >>	Leadership & Wisdom

1. Instruction, study, and reflection include classroom work, lectures, discussions, reading, role playing, case studies, journaling, and contemplation.
2. Practicum includes activity focused on applying the Code of Ethics (e.g., service-learning, volunteering, leading project teams, etc.), remedial or mentor programs that result from violating the Code of Ethics, social activities with staff and faculty, and extra-curricular activities.
3. Assessment includes formal evaluations in academics, military education and training, and physical and athletic endeavors. An important contributor is the guidance received in the form of coaching, counseling, and mentoring.
4. Experience includes activities such as summer details, internships, intercollegiate competitions, and all duties away from the Academies or campuses.

In expanding our concept for professional (leader) development to embrace Trust, everyone (military and civilian) interacting with those in pre-commissioning programs becomes responsible for living, teaching, and abiding by the Code of Ethics. As many have observed about the culture at West Point, “When asked what we do here at West Point, the concept is: ‘We develop character as we develop competence.’”²⁴ Indeed, the staff and faculty at each commissioning source have an obligation to show Cadets, Midshipmen, and Candidates what “right” looks like (decisions and actions which are efficient, effective, and ethical—consistent with their Service’s Values). It is important to recall that the West Point Board of Visitors in 1891, referenced earlier in this essay, recognized that the mission of West Point, as with the other Academies, is achieved through the scholarship, skill, and fidelity of the staff and faculty

²⁴ Adapted from LTG F.L Hagenbeck, Superintendent’s Letter, Assembly - West Point Association of Graduates, July/Aug, 2008.

who must demonstrate competence, character, and commitment in the process of developing trustworthy Cadets, fulfilling the expectations of the American people.

Perhaps the Posvar Commission in 1989 was prescient in its final report: “As an ethical rule, [the Honor Code] happens to be stated in proscriptive terms, specifically against lying, cheating, stealing or tolerating those who do. This list has changed, and can change again.”²⁵

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²⁵ Sorley, Lewis. Honor Bright: History and Origins of the West Point Honor Code and System. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill Learning Solutions, 2008.

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Army Professional Values-Based Decision-Making

Making values-based decisions is the Army professional's most important responsibility and challenge. Decisions precede actions, and our decisions and actions reveal our competence, character, and commitment. Our consistent demonstration of these Army professional certification criteria sustain and develop trust with our leaders, peers, and subordinates. Trust is the "bedrock of our profession" and is essential to the successful performance of our duty and the accomplishment of every mission.

Trust is not sufficient to guarantee success (nothing is), but without it all organizational efforts are less efficient and less effective. Trust is defined as confidence and belief in the competency, character, and commitment of an institution, organization, group, or individual to fulfill obligations and commitments.

Accordingly, an Army professional will seek to discover the truth (that which actually so), decide what is right,* and demonstrate the competence, character, and commitment to act accordingly. This requires making right decisions, planning, leading, managing, assessing, adjusting, and achieving results (desired outcomes).

Yet, in our developmental process, we are rarely exposed to the factors and methods that should be considered and employed when we are faced with important choices. In our professional education and training, we are most often asked to demonstrate our competence to *solve* problems (e.g., tactics, logistics, personnel, planning, budgeting, etc). We are given assignments, tests, or projects where the requirement is defined and we are challenged to complete the task.

However, in the conduct of our operational, experiential duty, we are rarely given the properly defined problem. It is in recognizing and addressing this condition where the greatest gains can be made in preparing Army professionals to efficiently, effectively, and ethically perform their duties with discipline and to standards, making their best contribution to the accomplishment of the organizational mission.

The values-based decision process is summarized below:

Develop the Vision (Commander's Concept): Goal or Desired State (outcome)

Gain Situational Understanding: Seek to Discover the Truth (that which is actually so)

Define the Mission (Problem): Vision-Situation=Mission

Reaffirm, Commit to the Army Ethic, Values: Principles and Concepts -- *Always* Important

Identify Courses of Action: Reject if action would Violate any Army Value (creative thinking and moral-ethical reasoning)

Analyze Options/Alternatives: Compare Courses of Action (critical and analytical thinking)

Recommend or Decide: Select the best "right" Course of Action (efficient, effective, ethical)

Plan for Implementation: Coordinate, Resource, Assign Responsibility, Delegate Authority

Implement: Lead, Manage (efficiently, effectively, ethically)

Assess: Monitor, Measure, Evaluate -- Seek to Discover the Truth (gain and sustain situational understanding)

Adjust: Re-enter Decision Process

*A "right decision" is efficient, effective, and ethical

Army Profession Code of Ethics

Purpose:

In order to sustain and develop *Trust*,
we commit to the
Army Profession Code of Ethics,
guiding our decisions and actions, in the conduct of our duty, with discipline and to standards.

Premise: Trust is belief in and reliance on the **competence, character, and commitment** of a person, organization, or institution. Trust is the foundation for successful accomplishment of the Army's Mission.

Goal: We seek to discover the *truth*, decide what is *right**, and demonstrate and demonstrate the *competence, character, and commitment* to act accordingly.

[A "right" decision is *efficient, effective, and ethical*]

-- *We live by* --

Army Values:

Integrity: Decision-making and actions based on principles.

Duty: Contributing our best effort to accomplish the mission, doing what is right to the best of one's ability, striving for excellence in all endeavors.

Honor: Reverence for the truth (honesty), justice (fairness), regard for the property of others, and commitment to upholding the Army Ethic.

Loyalty: Allegiance to the Constitution of the United States of America.

Service: Contribution to the well-being and benefit of others (teamwork).

Respect: Recognition of the intrinsic dignity and worth of all people.

Courage: Commitment to do what is *right* despite risk, uncertainty, and fear.

Pledge: In the conduct of our duty, with discipline and to standards, we strive to continuously develop our **competence, character, and competence**, seeking to develop these attributes in order to be worthy of trust and to efficiently, effectively, and ethically serve the common defense.

- That which is **good** is consistent with our sense of virtue, ethics, and morality.

- That which is **moral** is known to our conscience—to which we pledge to be true.

Commissioned Officers of the United States Army

Commissioned Officers are the uniformed leaders of the U.S. Army; they are Army professional Soldiers in *service* to the nation. In war and peace, they are trusted *leaders of competence, character, commitment*. They are collectively responsible for successful accomplishment of the Army's Mission. In the conduct of their duties they demonstrate commitment to the Army Ethic and Values as embodied in the enduring creed: *Duty, Honor, Country*; always adhering to Army Values in their decisions and actions.

Commissioned Officers continuously develop as *Stewards* of the Army Profession. They diligently prepare for the responsibilities of their present and future career challenges and obligations. In all cases, they *serve* to accomplish the mission to the best of their abilities, with discipline, striving for standards of excellence. They seek to discover the *truth*, decide what is *right*, and demonstrate that they are *trustworthy*.

Upon taking the *Oath of Office*, Commissioned Officers accept the obligation and privilege of providing *loyal* support for and defense of the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. In fulfilling this obligation, Commissioned Officers accept the *responsibility* to obey the legal and moral orders of those appointed over them and to manifest unqualified *integrity*, fostering trust between the Army and the society it defends. Commissioned Officers accept that all people have unalienable rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. These fundamental rights demand a *respect* for humanity and property that is unqualified, even in the presence of the violence of war and the uncertain nature of hostile environments.

As a Commissioned Officer in the US Army, I am a leader of American Soldiers, a member of the Army Profession, committed to the Army Professional Ethic; I am dedicated to the cause of liberty, under the Constitution of the United States of America.