



# **2011 CENTER FOR ARMY LEADERSHIP ANNUAL SURVEY OF ARMY LEADERSHIP (CASAL): MAIN FINDINGS**

**TECHNICAL REPORT 2012-1**

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# The Center for Army Leadership

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13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES A separate report from the Center for Army Leadership provides findings from this survey on Army civilian leaders.				
14. ABSTRACT The findings in this report are organized in 3 main sections: the quality of leadership, the effects of climate and situational factors on leadership, and the quality of leader development. The findings are based on responses from over 16,800 uniformed leaders with an overall accuracy within +/- 0.7%. Leadership quality continues to be a strength of the Army, and most of the Leadership Requirements Model competencies and attributes are effectively demonstrated. Leading others and getting results are two strong competencies. Attributes dealing with character, values, empathy, fitness, resilience, knowledge, sound judgment, and mental agility are strong as well. Elements recently added to emphasize discipline, trust, and stewardship are also effectively demonstrated by Army leaders. One consistent exception in strong indicators is the <i>Develops Others</i> competency. Many leaders are perceived as not providing useful counseling, nor encouraging individual development, and not showing genuine concern for subordinate development. Three-fourths of leaders are seen as putting the needs of the unit and mission first before their own needs. Leaders with negative leadership behaviors are more likely to be associated with low unit cohesion, unit discipline problems, low subordinate motivation, poor work quality, and lowered commitment to the Army. Ratings of the LD effectiveness of professional military education (PME) courses improved from the last two years. The report concludes with a look at trends and recommendations to improve leadership and leader development in the Army.				
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## **2011 Center for Army Leadership Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL): Main Findings**

### **PURPOSE**

Since 2005, the Annual Survey of Army Leadership (CASAL) has been an established effort by the Center for Army Leadership (CAL), Combined Arms Center (CAC) to assess and track trends in Army leader attitudes of leader development, the quality of leadership, and the contribution of leadership to mission accomplishment.

CASAL is the authoritative source for how currently serving Army leaders assess the state of Army leadership and leader development. A rigorous scientific approach is used for survey development, data collection, and data analysis. Data are collected from thousands of randomly selected officers, warrant officers, NCOs, and Army civilians. In addition, data are collected from deployed personnel so that comparisons can be made between leadership and leader development in deployed and garrison settings.

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

### **SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

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

Over 16,800 uniformed leaders in the active and reserve components, along with 2,900 DA civilian leaders, participated in the 2011 CASAL.

#### **Quality of Leadership**

- What is the overall quality of Army leaders?
- How does leader effectiveness differ in deployed and non-deployed environments?

- How effective are current Army leaders for each core leader competency and attribute?

#### Leader Development

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

From November-December 2011, over 16,800 uniformed leaders in the active and reserve components, along with 2,932 DA civilian leaders, responded to the survey. This strong participation in the CASAL provides an overall sampling error of approximately +/-0.7%. This sampling error, together with the random sampling method used, means that the respondents are representative of the Army. Thus, a high degree of confidence can be placed in the findings.

#### Main Findings

- *Getting Results, Preparing Oneself, and Leading Others* are the most favorably rated core leader competencies. Army leaders are rated favorably on all leader attributes, especially *Army Values* and *Technical Knowledge*.
- *Develops Others* continues to be the lowest rated core leader competency across all levels; 59% of Army leaders are rated effective at developing their subordinates, while only 45% are rated effective at creating or identifying opportunities for leader development. Institutional courses/schools are not seen as effective in preparing leaders to develop their subordinates.
- Nearly 80% of Army leaders agree their superior puts the needs of the unit and mission ahead of the superior's needs. Ten percent disagree that their superior puts unit and mission first. Negative leader behaviors are associated with low unit cohesion, unit discipline problems, and low subordinate motivation, work quality, and commitment to the Army.
- Methods of informal development that leaders frequently engage in include opportunities to lead others, learning from peers, and on-the-job training. These practices, along with deployment operations and civilian education, are seen as having the largest impact on development.
- There was an increase of 14% in graduates who rated their Professional Military Education course effective or very effective since 2009. Institutional Education continues to be lower than the Operational and Self-development domains for preparing leaders to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility. About one-third

of recent graduates report their most recent course fell short or fell well short of their expectations.

- Fifty-nine percent of leaders at CONUS locations report high morale, which is higher than those in Afghanistan (48%) and Iraq (43%). About one-fourth of deployed leaders report low or very low morale (25% in Afghanistan and 24% in Iraq), compared to 15% CONUS.
- About half of Army leaders believe personnel evaluations and promotion decisions are accurate. Forty-one percent believe duty assignments effectively balance force needs with individual Soldier needs and capabilities. Only 20% believe the system identifies ineffective leaders and places them in positions where leadership skills are not as important as in other positions.
- Perceptions are mixed among Army leaders on problems with discipline in units. Most senior leaders (78%) believe company-level leaders effectively maintain discipline in their units while deployed (compared to 64% while in garrison). A larger percentage of Jr NCOs report unit discipline problems compared to other rank cohorts. Problems occur when standards are relaxed; leaders are inexperienced, immature, or ineffective; or when fraternization occurs. Discipline problems decline when positive leadership principles are followed and standards are enforced.





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## **2011 CENTER FOR ARMY LEADERSHIP ANNUAL SURVEY OF ARMY LEADERSHIP (CASAL): MAIN FINDINGS**

### **ORGANIZATION OF FINDINGS**

The survey was administered online to a representative sample of Regular Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard officers (O-1 to O-6), warrant officers (W-1 to W-5), and noncommissioned officers (E-5 to E-9) who were globally dispersed. In addition to uniformed leaders, Army civilian leaders have participated in the CASAL since 2009 (findings for Army civilians are presented in a separate report). In early November 2011, the survey invitation was sent via e-mail to a random sample of 116,742 Army leaders within the uniformed and civilian cohorts, of whom 20,415 participated, for a response rate of 17.8%. The online survey was accessible to participants through the first week of December 2011.

The level of sampling precision was adequate for each of five rank groups for the active components (AC) and reserve components (RC) (i.e., within sampling error of  $\pm 1.9\%$  to  $\pm 3.6\%$ , and sampling error for entire survey across components and cohorts is  $\pm 0.7\%$ ). Essentially this means that 95 times out of 100 the observed percentage will be within 1% of the true percentage.

It was found that the respondent sample closely approximated the population of the Army in terms of component and gender. The sample was also representative of deployed Army leaders; 65% active and 47% reserve had recent deployment experience (in the past 36 months). Further, approximately 15% of active and reserve component respondents were serving on a deployment at the time of the survey. The population, sample, response rate, and sampling error for each uniformed rank group are presented in Table 1.

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

Population Strata	Population	Planned Sample (Invitations)	Returned		Sampling Error
			N	Response Rate	
Active Component					
Field Grade Officer	30,983	5,992	1,645	27.5%	2.4
Company Grade Officer	47,584	15,420	2,321	15.1%	2.0
Warrant Officer	15,549	4,046	720	17.8%	3.6
Sr NCO	56,357	7,992	1,705	21.3%	2.3
Jr NCO	159,741	19,998	2,623	13.1%	1.9
Total AC	302,141	53,448	9,014	16.9%	1.0
Reserve Component					
Field Grade Officer	28,626	6,004	1,378	23.0%	2.6
Company Grade Officer	38,693	15,432	1,990	12.9%	2.1
Warrant Officer	11,096	4,121	788	19.1%	3.4
Sr NCO	56,238	8,116	1,681	20.7%	2.4
Jr NCO	159,741	20,000	1,962	9.8%	2.2
Total RC	294,394	53,673	7,799	14.5%	1.1
Total Uniformed Personnel	596,535	107,121	16,813	15.7%	0.7

This report is organized into three topic areas:

- Quality of leadership
- Effects of climate and situational factors on leadership
- Quality of leader development.

Within each of these areas, key findings are underlined in-text and summarized in call-out boxes in the right margin. Trends are reported for items that have been asked in previous years of survey administration. Where applicable, CASAL data are supplemented with data from secondary sources. Each major section ends with a short summary that provides a recap of the most important findings. For accuracy and simplicity, percentages are emphasized for active component Army leaders. Findings are usually comparable between the active and reserve component. Exceptions are noted.

## 1. Quality of Leadership

Assessing the quality of leadership within the Army involved six areas of focus:

- Perceptions of leader quality
- The leadership requirements model
- Characteristics of leader effectiveness
- The contribution of leadership to mission accomplishment
- Toxic leadership
- Leader quality while deployed

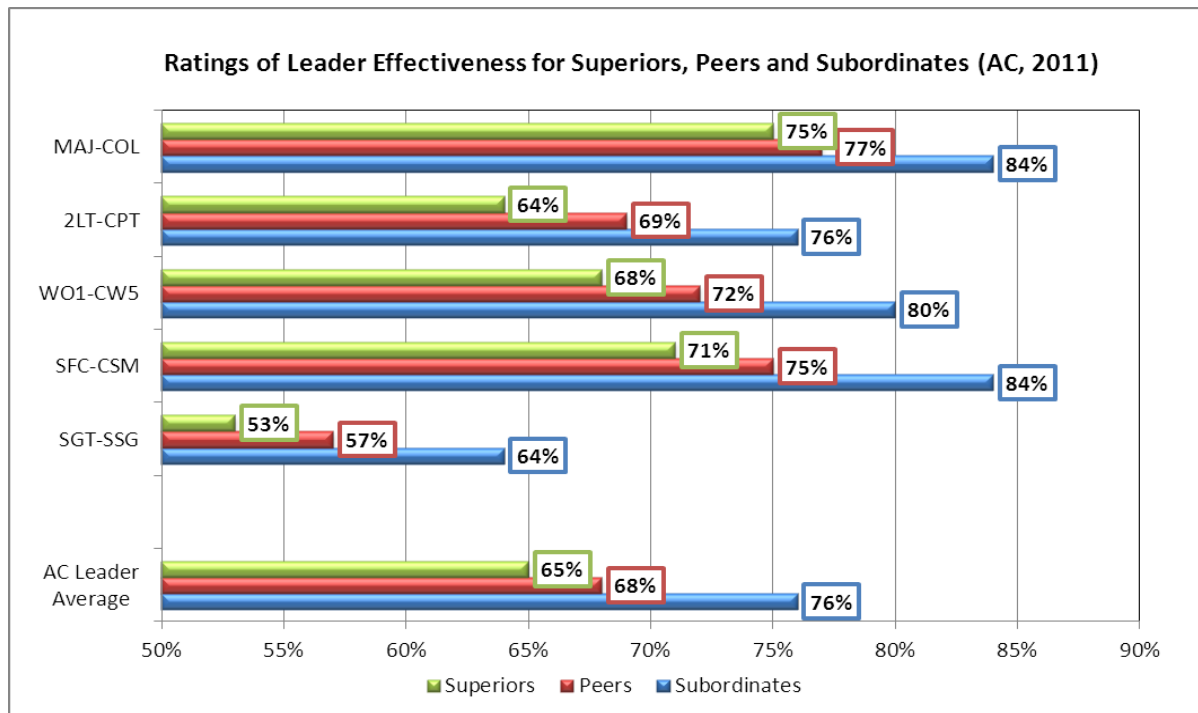
Key findings from the 2011 CASAL regarding the quality of Army leadership included:

- Developing subordinates continues to be a competency that leaders need to devote more time and improvement toward.
- The demonstration of innovative thinking and interpersonal tact remain the lowest rated attributes. Analyses show that effectively demonstrating these two attributes are a key element to distinguishing the “best leaders” from all others.
- 62% of leaders report that their immediate superior fairly well or completely meets their expectations of what an Army leader should *be, know, and do*; however, only half indicate that they strive to be like their superior.
- Higher proportions of officers in command positions are rated effective at leadership competencies and attributes than the broader population of Army leaders.
- A clear relationship exists between a leader’s demonstration of the leadership competencies and attributes and having a positive effect on the unit and subordinates. Those who demonstrate the leadership competencies and attributes engender confidence in subordinates to follow them into life-or-death situations.
- Only a small percentage of leaders rate their immediate superior as demonstrating behaviors associated with toxic leadership, though these negative behaviors are associated with low unit cohesion, low subordinate motivation, work quality, and commitment to the Army.
- Although leaders are effective during deployed operations, findings suggest that improvements could be made in their ability to extend influence to other cultures.

### 1.1 Perceptions of Leader Quality

The quality of leadership in the Army continues to be strong. On average, Army leaders hold favorable views on the effectiveness of their immediate superiors (65%) and peers (68%), as leaders. Additionally, 76% of leaders with direct supervisory duties consider their subordinates to be effective leaders (see Exhibit 1). Less than one-tenth consider their peers (9%) or subordinates (7%) as ineffective; however, 16% of Army leaders perceive their immediate superior to be ineffective as a leader.

**Exhibit 1. Effectiveness Ratings by Cohort for Superiors, Peers, and Subordinates.**



Consistent with prior years, views of subordinate leader effectiveness are more favorable than views of superiors or peer effectiveness. Favorable perceptions of one's subordinates over other leaders can partly be attributed to subordinate performance being a reflection of the leader's own leadership ability and their effectiveness at developing subordinates. Also, rating one's subordinates (direct reports) involves assessing specific individuals, whereas one's peers and superiors are ill-defined, and will consist of ratings representing a more global assessment of all leaders at or above one's level. Understandably, Army leaders will hold greater expectations for leaders at higher levels, which can contribute to less favorable evaluations of effectiveness for peers and superiors as leaders. These lower ratings are not dissimilar from findings of other survey research. When active duty leaders were asked about their satisfaction with their supervisor and co-workers, 57% expressed satisfaction with their supervisor and 51% expressed satisfaction with their co-workers (Human Resources Strategic Assessment Program, Defense Manpower Data Center, 2011).

Without defining effectiveness, Army leaders estimated the percentage of effective leaders in their unit or organization. In 2011, an overall average of 62% (Median =70%) of leaders within units or organizations are considered effective leaders. This assessment is comparable to estimates in previous years. In 2010, respondents estimated 63% of leaders were considered effective; in 2009, 61% were considered effective leaders.

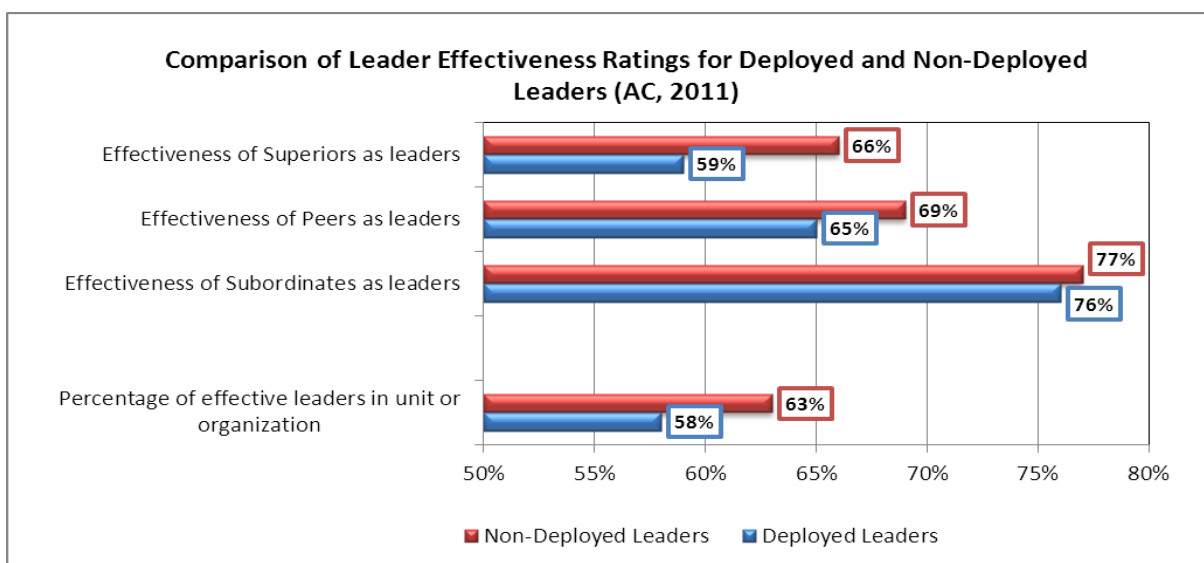
Results show that broader assessments of effectiveness are less favorable than assessments of specific individuals, and this represents a consistent trend across CASAL surveys. This is important to note, as *general assessments* of the percentage of effective leaders within a unit

or organization (61-63%, 2009-2011) could be considered low. However, when Army leaders provide *specific assessments* of their direct superiors, peers, and subordinates (the leaders with whom they interact with regularly), ratings of effectiveness are more favorable, and range from 65% to 81% (2009-2011). More confidence can be placed in the accuracy of these ratings as they represent assessments of specific individuals with whom participants interact and have an opportunity to observe.

### Leader Quality while Deployed

The environment or work setting has a small impact on perceptions of leader effectiveness. This is most noticeable when Army leaders assess their peers and superiors. Sixteen percent of CASAL respondents were serving on a deployment when completing the survey. Deployed leader ratings of their peers and superiors as leaders are less favorable than the assessments made by Army leaders who were not serving on a deployment when completing the survey (see Exhibit 2). In addition, those who were deployed provided a lower estimate of effective leaders within their unit or organization (58% compared to 63%).

***Exhibit 2. Effectiveness Ratings of Superiors, Peers, and Subordinates by Deployed Condition.***



As has been observed in past years, the difference in effectiveness ratings for superiors between each environment is more pronounced than for peers or subordinates. In 2010, there was an 8% difference for the effectiveness of superiors, and in 2011, there is a 7% difference. The difference between ratings for peers and subordinates between 2010 and 2011 never exceeds 4%.

The stressors and demands of deployments pose challenges to any leader. Deployed settings, however, will often allow Army personnel to directly observe the full effectiveness of other leaders with whom they work and interact, within potentially life-threatening conditions. Given the clear need to demonstrate effective leadership, the expectations of Army leaders may be

high and therefore influence the less favorable ratings of their peers and superiors as leaders. Additionally, the tasks or mission requirements that leaders must meet in deployed settings can be expected to be more complex and have a greater impact on Soldiers' welfare than those in a garrison or home station environment. Therefore, leaders (i.e., superiors) may be expected to meet a higher standard depending on the operating environment.

In contrast, the slightly more favorable ratings by Army leaders who were not deployed suggest a positive indication of garrison leadership. As major campaigns draw down, some concern (Department of the Army, 2010) has been expressed regarding the effectiveness of Army leadership within garrison environments. The past decade has developed leaders who are tactically and technically proficient, though many leaders have had less time to develop the skills, attributes and a mindset for leading in a garrison environment. In the context of health promotion, risk reduction, and suicide prevention, it was noted that "the combination of Army transformation coupled with prolonged, recurring combat rotational requirements has resulted in young and mid-level leaders whose only command experience is meeting the demands of the deployment-to-combat-to-redeployment cycle" (Department of the Army, 2010). In addition, the 2011 CASAL captured the opinions of senior leaders (i.e., COL, LTC, CW5, and CSM/SGM) on the most significant leader development issues facing the Army as an institution. These leaders often commented that current Army leaders lack well-rounded leadership capabilities, to include effectively leading in-garrison.

Leadership in garrison is generally effective but can be further improved. Non-deployed leaders view a relatively larger percentage of leaders in their unit or organization as effective, and show more favorability in the perceived effectiveness of their superiors, peers, and subordinates as leaders. As noted earlier, perceptions of the effectiveness of one's superiors show the greatest difference in effectiveness between deployed conditions (i.e., 7% more favorable for non-deployed leaders).

## **1.2 The Leadership Requirements Model**

Army leaders continue to reflect a basic profile of strengths and developmental areas relative to the Leadership Requirements Model as presented in ADP 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Department of the Army, 2012). The relative ordering of leader effectiveness in demonstrating the competencies and attributes is consistent with prior years. Ratings for leader effectiveness at demonstrating the leader attributes continues to be more favorable than demonstrating the core leader competencies. Army leader effectiveness in *developing others* continues to require significant attention; improvement in demonstrating innovative thinking and interpersonal tact should also be addressed.

The 2011 CASAL expanded the assessment of the competencies and attributes to reflect the evolving leadership model and doctrine. New additions to the competencies (as presented in ADP 6-22) were included as additional items. Doctrinal definitions for these additions are as follows:



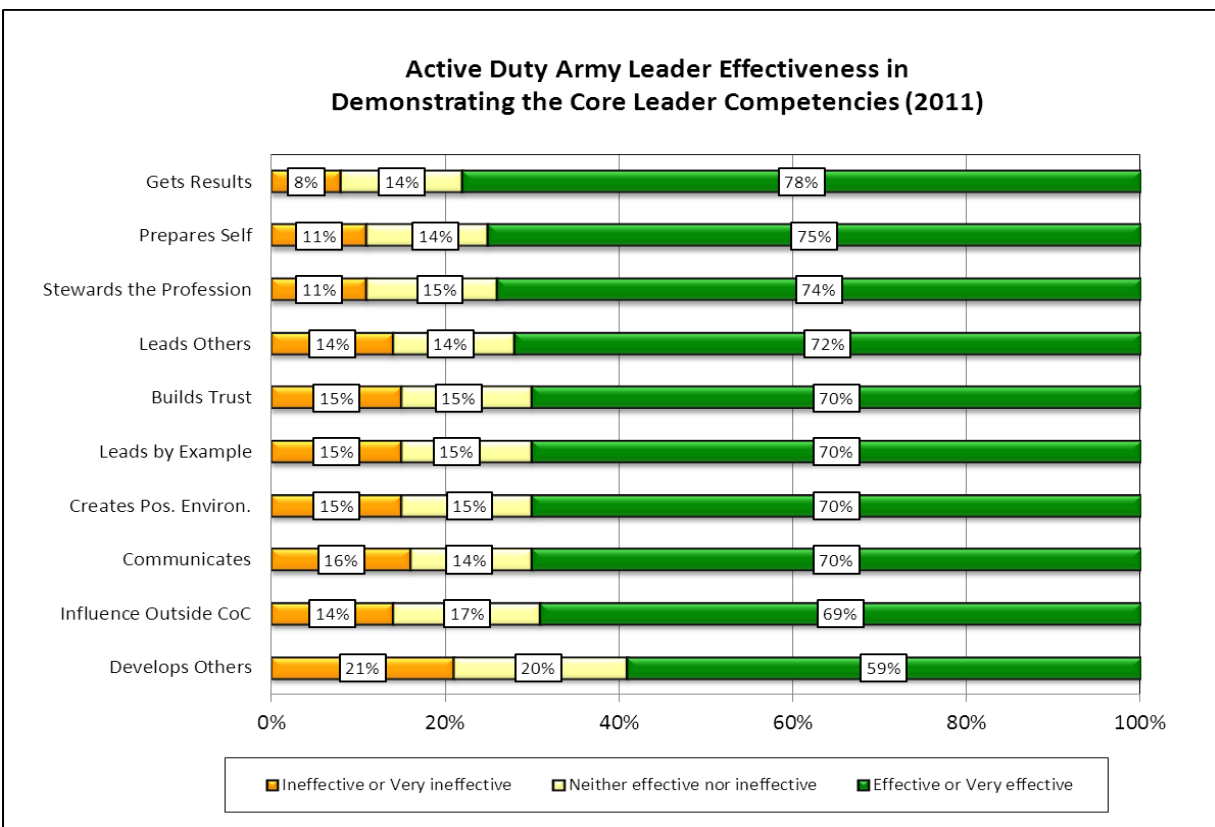
- ***Builds Trust*** – Leaders build trust to mediate relationships and encourage commitment among followers. Trust starts from respect among people and grows from common experiences and shared understanding.
- ***Stewards the Profession*** – Leaders take care of the profession of arms by applying a mindset that embodies cooperative planning and management of all resources, but especially providing for a strong Army team. Leaders actively engage in sustaining full military readiness and preventing the loss of effectiveness as far into the future as possible.

It is important to note that these doctrinal definitions were not provided to participants as a part of the survey.

### Core Leader Competencies

The majority of Army leaders (58-78%) rate their immediate superior as effective or very effective across all of the core leadership competencies (See Exhibit 3). Leaders view their immediate superiors as effective at getting results (78%), preparing themselves as leaders (75%), and stewardship of the profession (74%). However, about one in five Army leaders (21%) is rated ineffective at developing others.

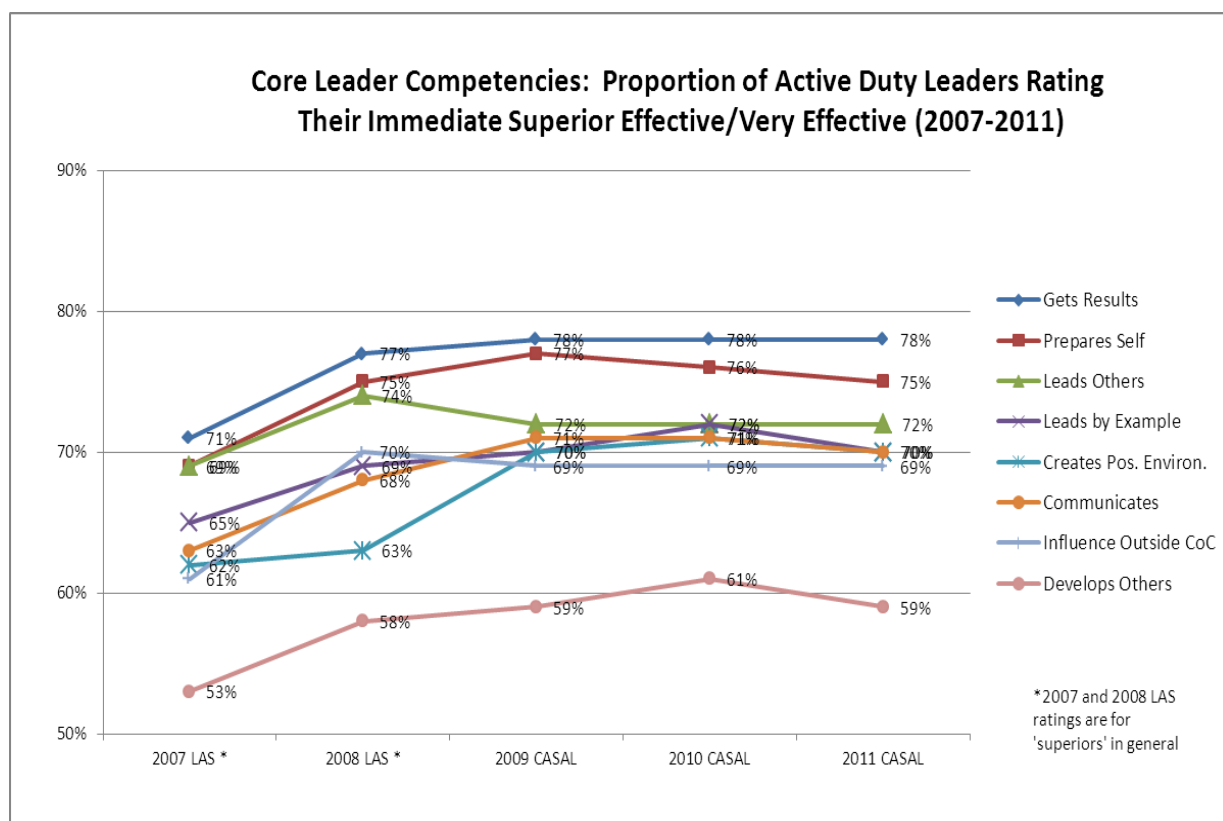
***Exhibit 3. Ratings of Immediate Superior Effectiveness on the Core Leader Competencies by Active Duty Leaders.***



The 2010 CASAL report noted a “3-tier competency trend” whereby the highest and lowest rated competencies remain relatively unchanged, creating a top tier, middle tier, and bottom tier from years 2008 to 2009 (see Exhibit 4); 2011 CASAL findings support this trend.

- Within the top tier, 75% to 78% of leaders provide a favorable rating of their superior’s effectiveness.
- Favorable ratings of immediate superior effectiveness within the middle tier have included 61% to 74% of leaders.
- Within the bottom tier, smaller percentages of leaders (53% to 61%) provide favorable ratings of leader effectiveness (*Develops Others*).

**Exhibit 4. Comparison of Leader Effectiveness in demonstrating the Core Leader Competencies from 2007 to 2011.**



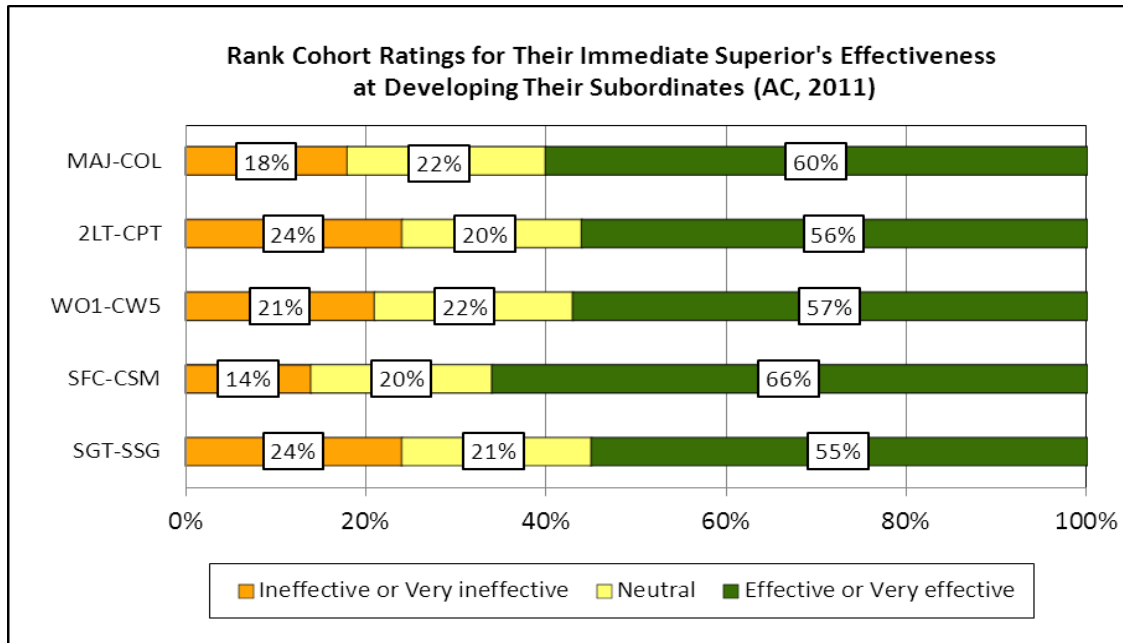
The consistency of this trend suggests that perceptions about these competencies are fairly stable. Getting results and preparing oneself are steady and very positive. However, developing others is an area where a smaller percentage of Army leaders are rated effective by their subordinates.

Appropriately, junior leaders expect and require development from their superiors, and ratings indicate that this is not occurring at an optimal level (see Exhibit 5).

- Just over half of company grade officers (56%), warrant officers (57%) and Jr NCOs (55%) rate their immediate superior effective in developing subordinate leaders.

- Nearly one-fourth of company grade officers (24%) and Jr NCOs (24%) rate their immediate superior ineffective or very ineffective at developing subordinates.
- Notably, only two-thirds of Sr NCOs (66%) and even fewer field grade officers (60%) indicate their superiors are effective at developing others.

**Exhibit 5. Effectiveness of Immediate Superior at Developing their Subordinates.**



These findings are not new, as over the past four years, the *Develops Others* competency has clearly distinguished itself from the other competencies as the lowest rated. Given its separation from the other competencies, *Develops Others* constitutes the greatest Army leader development need within the core leader competency model. *Subordinate development* is further discussed in section 3.2 of this report.

**Key Finding:**

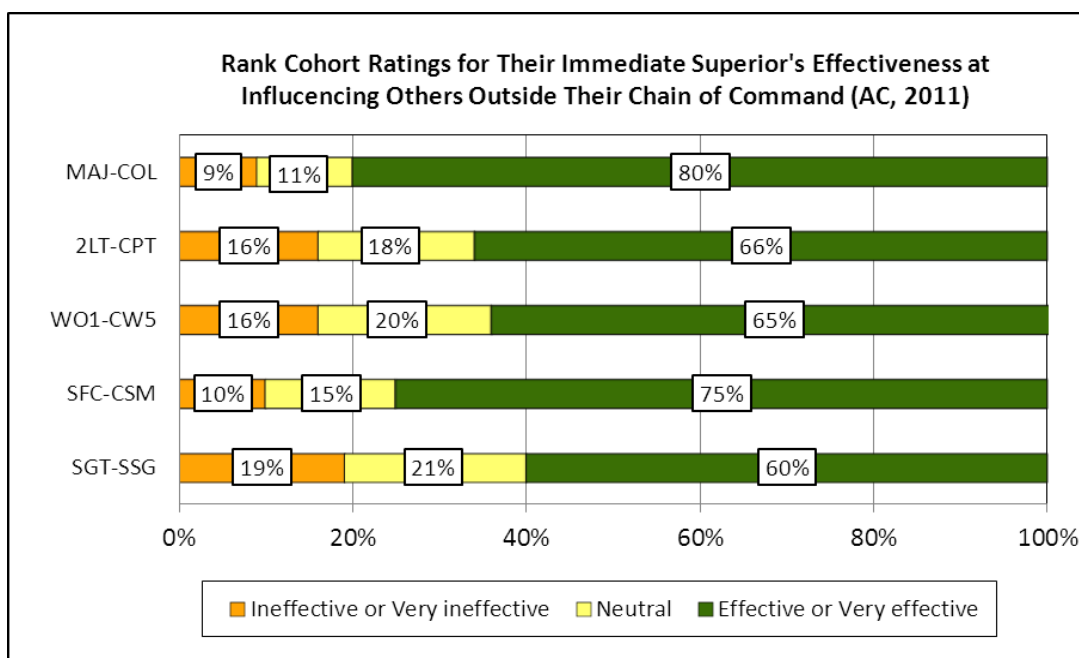
*Develops Others* is the core leader competency that continues to show the most need for improvement, across all levels of leaders.

Although not as distinct as *Develops Others* in the bottom tier, *Extends Influence Beyond the Chain of Command* has consistently been the second lowest rated competency. This lower rating could potentially be negatively influenced by differences in responsibility and experience between the senior and junior cohorts' superiors. The 69% rating of effectiveness is an overall assessment and does not make a distinction between cohorts. The immediate superiors (e.g. command sergeant major, lieutenant colonel, colonel, brigadier general) of the survey's senior cohorts are currently and increasingly working in a Unified Action Partner environment, where mission success can be heavily reliant upon their ability to effectively influence others. Therefore, it is essential that they be effective in doing so. Given the rank of these immediate superiors and the necessity to extend influence at their echelon, it is likely that they have

gained an appropriate level of experience and proficiency. Hence, they are rated more favorably.

In contrast to the senior cohorts, smaller percentages of Jr NCOs and company grade officers rate their immediate superior (e.g. sergeant first class, first sergeant, and captain) as effective at demonstrating this competency (see Exhibit 6). Although it is possible that there may be less of a need for these superiors to extend influence beyond their chain of command, Leed and Sokolow (2010) have noted that the responsibilities of junior officers have expanded and now “encompass not just the application of force but the application of power more broadly, to include diplomatic, economic, and informational elements” (p. 14). Hence, this responsibility is just as applicable to these leaders as it is to more senior leaders.

***Exhibit 6. Effectiveness of Immediate Superior at Influencing Others Outside their Chain of Command.***



If it is the *responsibility* of both junior and senior leaders to demonstrate this competency, then the *difference in experience* in actually doing so is the likely cause for the difference in effectiveness ratings between the cohorts and the lower rating of the competency in general. Junior leaders require greater experience and training in order to become more effective. Increased development in the institutional domain may better prepare them for the operational domain where this competency is needed most.

**New Additions to the Core Leader Competency Model**

2011 CASAL findings indicate that Army leaders are effective at stewardship of the profession and building trust. *Stewards the Profession* ranks third among favorable ratings for

competencies (74% effective/very effective) and can be considered a top-tier competency or strength of Army leaders. Stewardship of the profession focuses on the development and support of members of the Army team. Leaders must consider means for developing subordinates and taking actions to improve the organization beyond their tenure. Notably, the Army's *Profession of Arms Campaign* has examined many facets of the Army as a profession (Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, 2011); the 2011 CASAL assessed leader effectiveness in the competency *Stewards the Profession* using a single item rating of one's immediate superior.

Views of leader effectiveness in *Builds Trust* are comparable to leading others and leading by example, and these competencies are conceptually related. Seventy percent of AC leaders rate their immediate superior effective at establishing trusting relationships with others, while 15% rate them ineffective. Building trust relies on leading by example and demonstrating respect for others and confidence in their abilities. In addition, effectively leading others requires commitment from others, which can be predicated on whether trust has been built.

### Leader Attributes

Large percentages of Army leaders rate their immediate superiors favorably in demonstrating all leader attributes. In addition to being more favorable than the competencies, the range of ratings for the leader attributes is smaller, with more than two-thirds of leaders rating their immediate superior effective at displaying the leader attributes (see Exhibit 7).

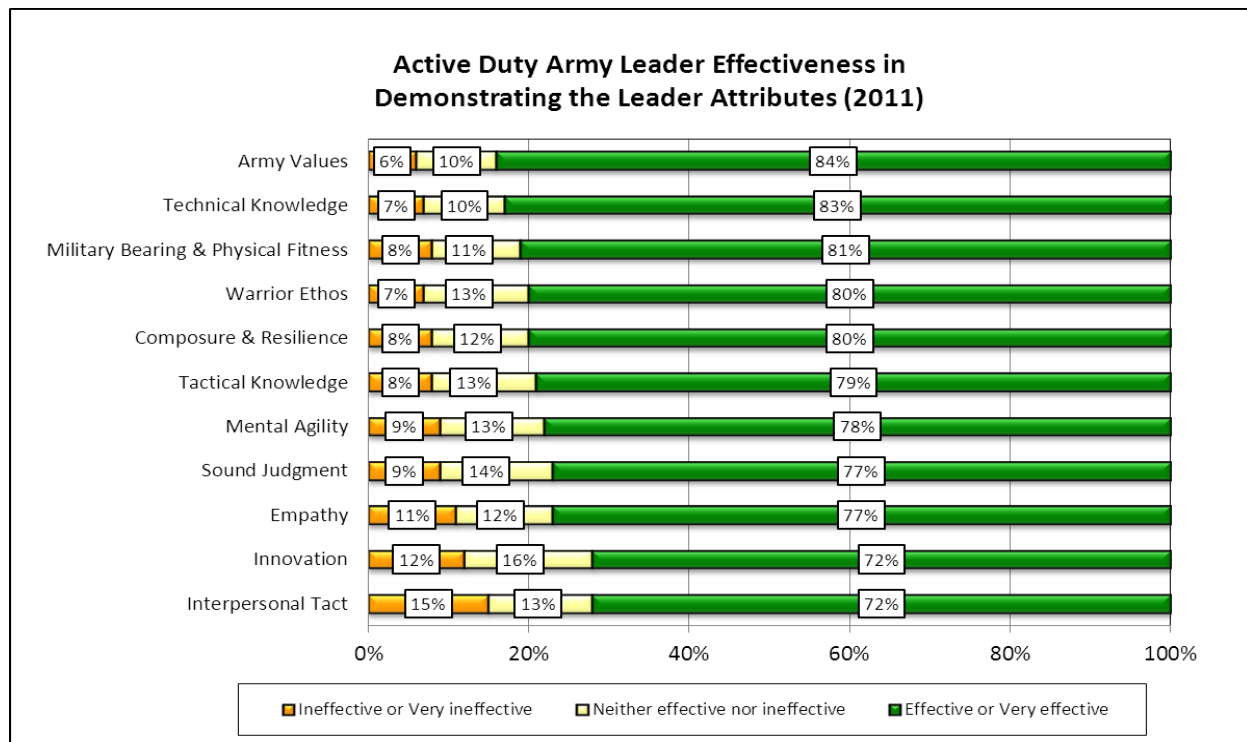
While the relative ranking of most favorable attributes has varied over the past four years, 2011 CASAL findings show strong similarity with results of previous years (see Exhibit 8). The most favorably rated attributes are demonstrating the *Army Values* and *Technical Knowledge*, while the least favorably rated are *Interpersonal Tact* and *Innovation*. However, given the high percentage of favorable ratings across the leader attributes, none of the attributes should be considered as a systemic leader 'weakness' in the Army.

Although positive, the attributes *Innovation* and *Interpersonal Tact* remain areas for development, given their consistently low placement amongst the attributes and their relationship with other key issues (e.g. toxic leadership). A leader's ability to demonstrate interpersonal tact and whether they promote innovation and critical thinking may influence their ability to create a positive environment with open and candid communications. Finding ways to develop and promote the importance of innovation and interpersonal tact could improve the culture and climate in which the leader operates.

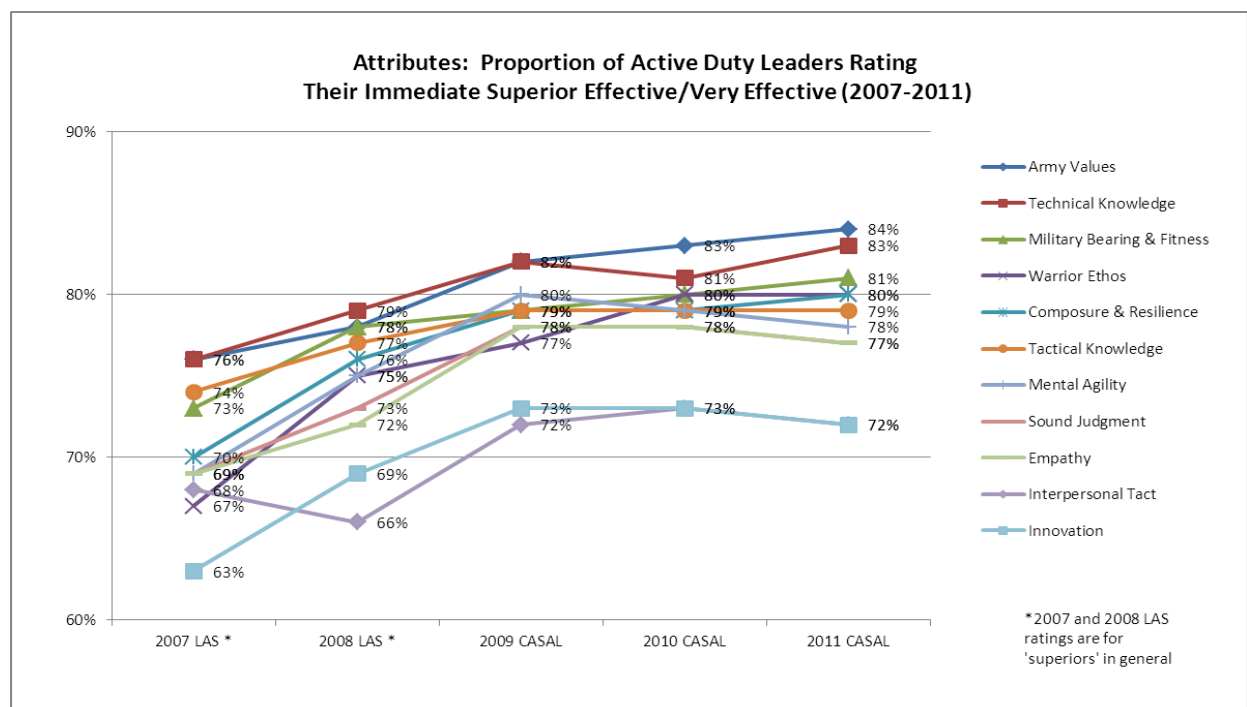
#### **Key Finding:**

*Interpersonal tact* and *Innovation* are the leader attributes that consistently show the most need for improvement across all levels of leaders.

**Exhibit 7. Ratings of Immediate Superior Effectiveness in demonstrating the Leader Attributes by Active Duty Leaders.**



**Exhibit 8. Comparison of Leader Effectiveness in demonstrating the Leader Attributes from 2007 to 2011.**



### Immediate Superior's Greatest Strength

Ratings for the competencies and attributes have demonstrated that the greatest strengths of Army leaders are *Gets Results*, *Prepares Self*, *Stewards the Profession*, and demonstrating the *Army Values* and *Technical Knowledge*. Beyond the effectiveness ratings for the competencies and attributes, CASAL respondents were asked to comment on the greatest strength of their immediate superior. The most frequent comments pertained to some aspect of their immediate superior's intellect, specifically demonstrating expertise. Also frequently cited were superiors' abilities in communicating effectively, exemplifying the Army values, and getting results. However, it is notable that the leader's ability to use interpersonal tact and their ability to think innovatively were the third and fifth most common strengths cited by respondents.

As *Innovation* and *Interpersonal Tact* have consistently been the *lowest* rated leadership attributes, this potentially conflicts with the assessment that they are a perceived "greatest strength" for some leaders. One possible explanation is that these attributes are good discriminators of effective leadership; section 1.3 of this report discusses characteristics that differentiate the "best" and "worst" leaders, and shows that *Innovation* and *Interpersonal Tact* are attributes where best and worst leaders differ the most.

### Commanders: A Profile of Leader Effectiveness

As the field grade officers who are selected to command units within the Army have great responsibility for directing and developing members of their unit, they must clearly reflect the competencies and attributes of the Leadership Requirements Model. 2011 CASAL results demonstrate that leadership is strong at command levels, as evidenced by effectiveness ratings by participants that report directly to the commander of a brigade (n = 271) or battalion (n = 477) (see Exhibit 9).

Current brigade and battalion commanders are viewed as highly effective at demonstrating the core leader competencies. At both echelons, the perceived effectiveness is more favorable than the baseline ratings of all Army leaders assessed in the survey. Brigade commanders exceed the baseline effectiveness for each competency by 4% to 16%. Battalion commanders exceed the baseline effectiveness for each competency by 4% to 10%. Competencies where the commanders show the greatest (favorable) difference from the baseline are *Leads Others*, *Extends influence beyond the Chain of Command*, *Leads by Example* and *Communicates*.

#### **Key Finding:**

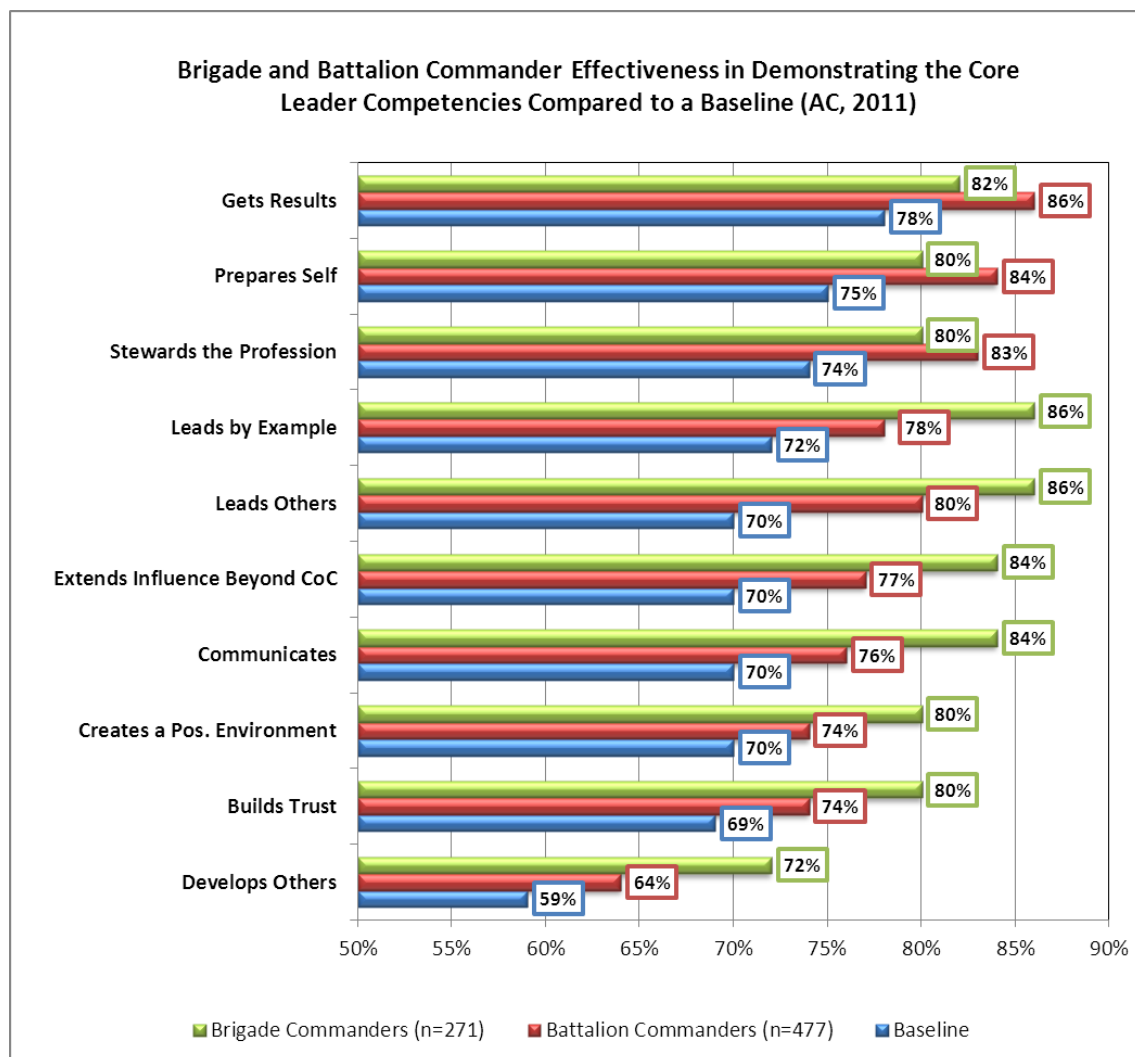
Current brigade and battalion commanders are viewed as effectively demonstrating the competencies and attributes.

With regard to the level of effectiveness for each competency, ratings for commanders generally reflect a similar pattern or relative ranking of effectiveness as the broader baseline. The strengths of commanders are *Gets Results*, *Prepares Self*, and *Stewards the Profession*, consistent with the broader findings of Army leaders. In addition, ratings also reflect a need to

better develop their subordinates. Ratings for brigade and battalion commanders deviate from the baseline on two competencies:

- *Extending Influence beyond the Chain of Command* is ranked more favorably for brigade and battalion commanders (compared to other competencies), and this finding is likely due to the requirement of their duties.
- Brigade and battalion commander effectiveness at establishing trusting relationships with others (*Builds Trust*), while favorable, is ranked lower within the list of competencies.

**Exhibit 9. Brigade and Battalion Commander Effectiveness at Demonstrating the Core Leader Competencies.**

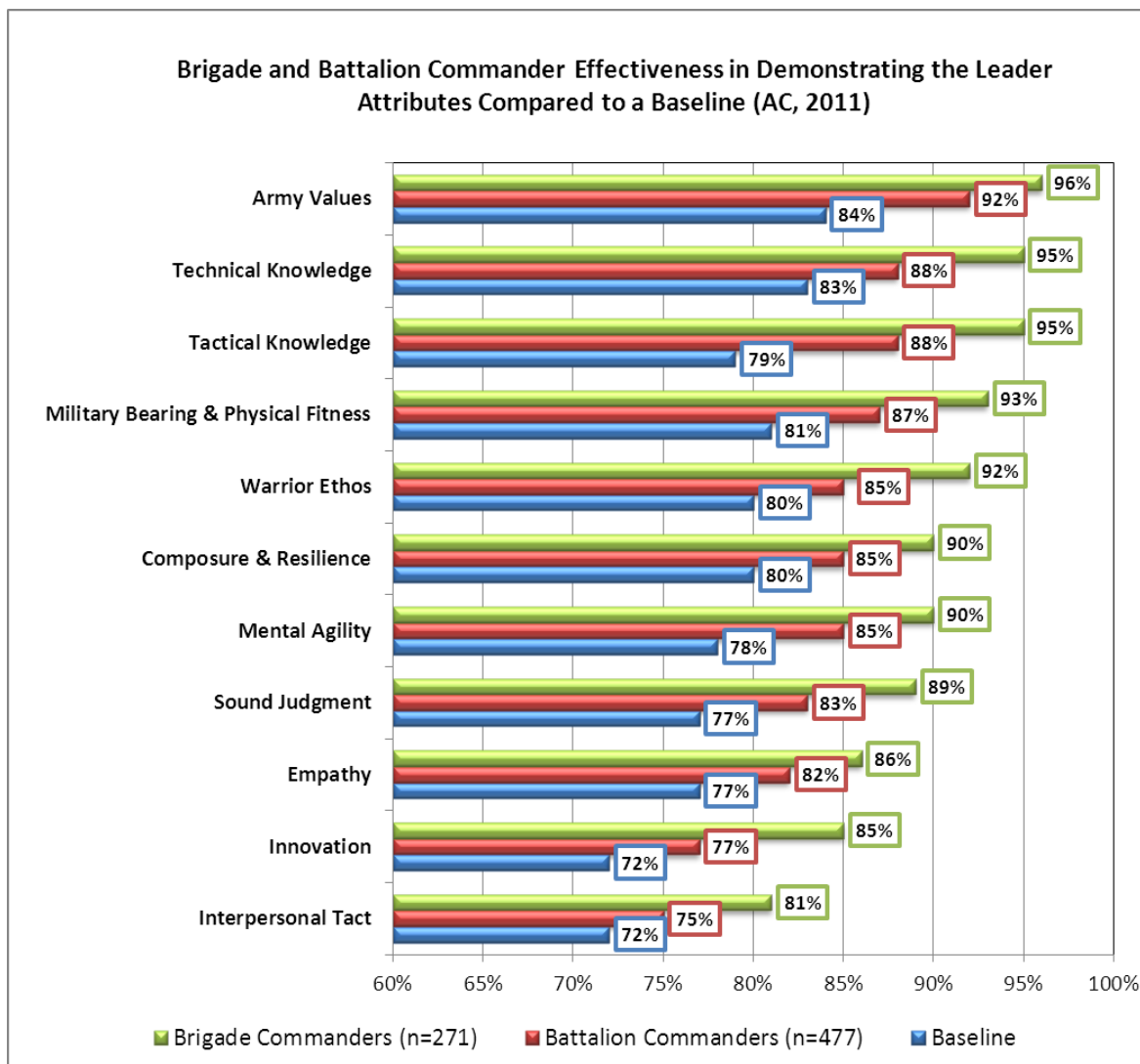




Current brigade and battalion commanders are also viewed as exemplifying the leader attributes. Here too, ratings for commanders at both echelons are above the baseline (for all leaders) in effectively demonstrating the leader attributes (see Exhibit 10).

- Brigade commanders exceed the baseline effectiveness of each attribute by 9% to 16%.
- Battalion commanders exceed the baseline effectiveness of each attribute by 3% to 9%.

**Exhibit 10. Active Duty Brigade and Battalion Commander Effectiveness at Demonstrating the Leader Attributes.**



Overall, Army leaders who report directly to a brigade or battalion commander provide a highly favorable assessment of that commander. Whether at the brigade or battalion level, the commanders are viewed more favorably in demonstrating the leadership competencies and attributes than the broader leadership population. It is possible that this difference is evidence of an effective command selection process whereby those who excel as leaders are appropriately chosen for command.

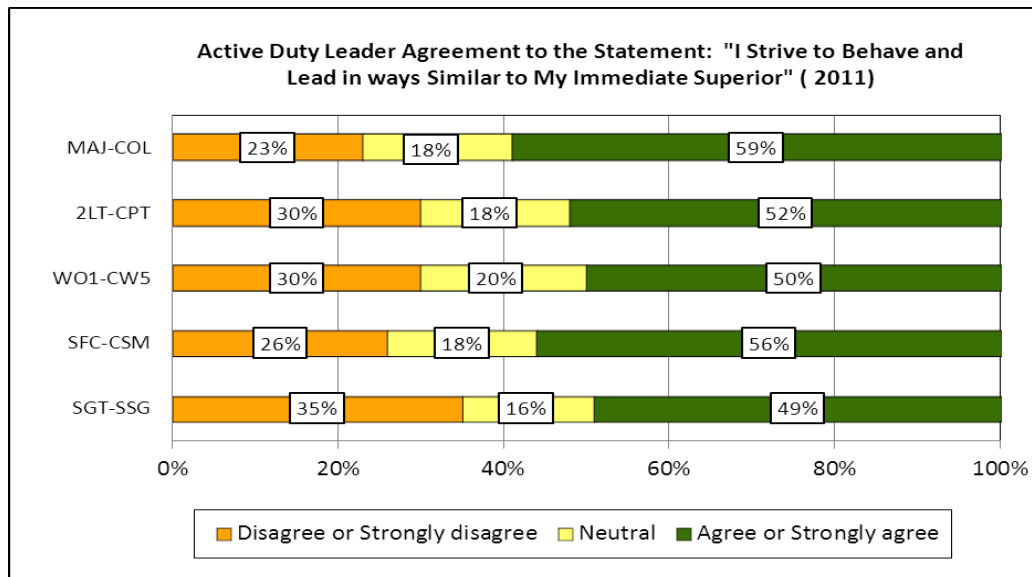
However, the position of those who report directly to a commander is likely to influence the favorability of assessments; in other words, there is range restriction around these ratings. The brigade CSM, brigade staff, and battalion commanders commonly report to the commander, and therefore are likely to assess their effectiveness. Similarly, the battalion CSM, battalion staff, and company commanders are best positioned and most likely to assess the battalion commander. As discussed at the beginning of this section, field-grade officers and senior NCOs hold more favorable views of their superiors than do other rank cohorts. Although positive, battalion commanders show a smaller difference from the broader leadership population with regard to effectively demonstrating the competencies and attributes. The subordinates (respondents) who rated a battalion commander as their immediate superior predominantly consist of company-grade officers, Sr NCOs and Jr NCOs. Company grade officers and Jr NCOs hold less favorable views of their immediate superior's effectiveness as a leader.

### **1.3 Characteristics of Leader Effectiveness**

In addition to assessing the effectiveness of their immediate superior according to the Leadership Requirements Model, CASAL respondents also considered broader assessments of their immediate superior: whether they attempt to emulate the leadership behaviors of their immediate superior, whether their immediate superior meets their expectations regarding effective leadership, and the relative ranking of their immediate superior's leadership ability compared to all leaders in their unit or organization.

- Half of Army leaders (53%) agree or strongly agree that they strive to lead and behave in ways similar to their immediate superior (29% disagree or strongly disagree) (see Exhibit 11).
- Less favorable views from junior leaders are not unexpected, but it is notable that the agreement expressed by field-grade officers is not higher than 59%.
- Similar findings were reported by The Center for the Army Profession and Ethic which broadly asked survey respondents (AC, RC, DA Civilians) whether Army leaders were good role models for what they wanted to be like in the future. In that study, half of respondents (50%) agreed while 22% disagreed (Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, 2011).

**Exhibit 11. Active Duty Leader Agreement to Emulating Immediate Superior's Behavior.**



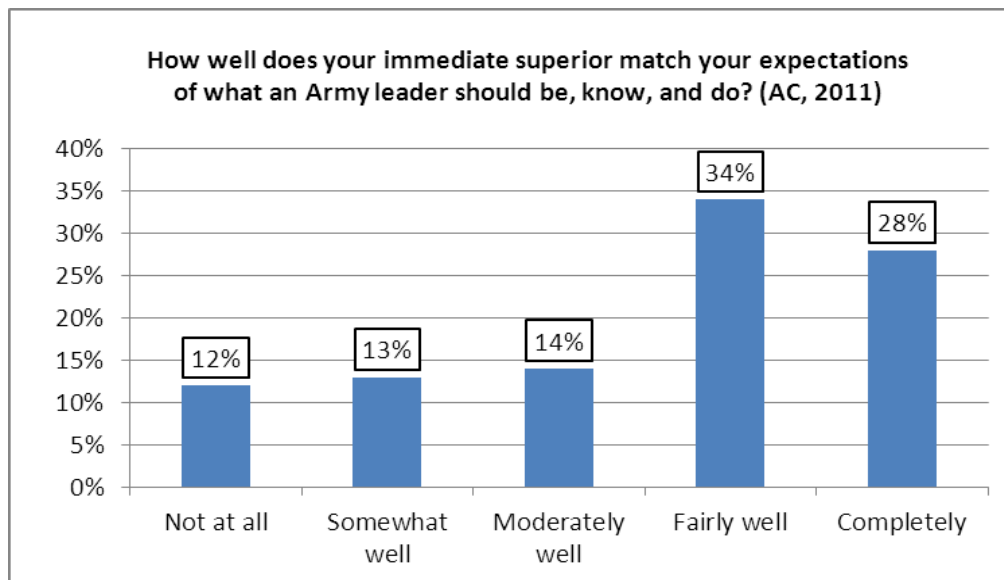
Although nearly one-third (29%) of Army leaders disagree they would like to emulate the behaviors or leadership of their immediate superior, many still hold favorable perceptions of their immediate superior's leadership capabilities (see Exhibit 12).

- 62% of leaders indicate their immediate superior matches their expectations of what an Army leader should *be, know, and do* 'fairly well' or 'completely.'
- Overall only 12% of Army leaders indicate their immediate superior does 'not at all' match their expectations.
- Larger percentages of company grade officers (14%) and Jr NCOs (15%) indicate their immediate superior does 'not at all' meet their expectations in this regard.

A positive finding is that subordinate followers of brigade and battalion commanders rate their superiors favorably in these areas:

- 59% of Army leaders directly reporting to a battalion commander (n = 477) and 66% of Army leaders directly reporting to a brigade commander (n = 271) strive to lead and behave in ways similar to their commander.
- 71% to 76% of Army leaders indicate their commander meets their expectations of an Army leader 'fairly well' or 'completely.'
- With respect to both issues, perceptions of commanders are more favorable than those of the broader leader population.

**Exhibit 12. Active Duty Leader Assessment of Immediate Superior Meeting Leadership Expectations.**



Relationship between the Leadership Requirements Model and Leader Effectiveness

The 2011 CASAL collected a single judgment rating from Army leaders on the relative ranking of their immediate superior compared to all leaders in their unit or organization (in terms of their effectiveness as a leader). The characterizations of one's leader included:

- 'Best or among the best' or 'A high performer' – 66%
- 'Middle of the road' – 22%
- 'Worst or among the worst' or 'A marginal performer' – 13%

Notably, these ratings are highly consistent with the results of the 2010 CASAL (each response option within 1%). These are positive findings, as nearly two-thirds of leaders believe their immediate superior is performing at a high level – with many perceived to be performing as the top leaders in their unit. This rating was used to examine the effectiveness in which the best leaders demonstrate the competencies and attributes as well as the effectiveness of Army leaders deemed 'worst or among the worst' in doing the same.

As expected, the worst leaders are not viewed as effective in demonstrating the competencies and attributes. Only small percentages of leaders that rate their immediate superior as 'the worst or among the worst' also view them as effective in demonstrating the competencies (4-20%) and attributes (14-39%). Ratings for leaders deemed 'the worst' deviate the most from both the baseline and from ratings of 'the best' leaders when

**Key Finding:**

Leaders viewed as **best** in the Army are rated effective in all competencies and attributes. Leaders viewed as **worst** are rated more favorably on the attributes than on the competencies.

it comes to leading others, leading by example, and demonstrating mental agility, and sound judgment.

The best leaders exemplify the core leader competencies and the leader attributes. Views of their effectiveness greatly exceed the baseline perceptions of leadership, and rarely are they seen as ineffective (1-5%). However, the best leaders still show common characteristics of ratings for all leaders, in that there is room for improvement in the competency *Develops Others*, and in the attributes *Innovation* and *Interpersonal Tact*.

#### **1.4 The Contribution of Leadership to Mission Accomplishment**

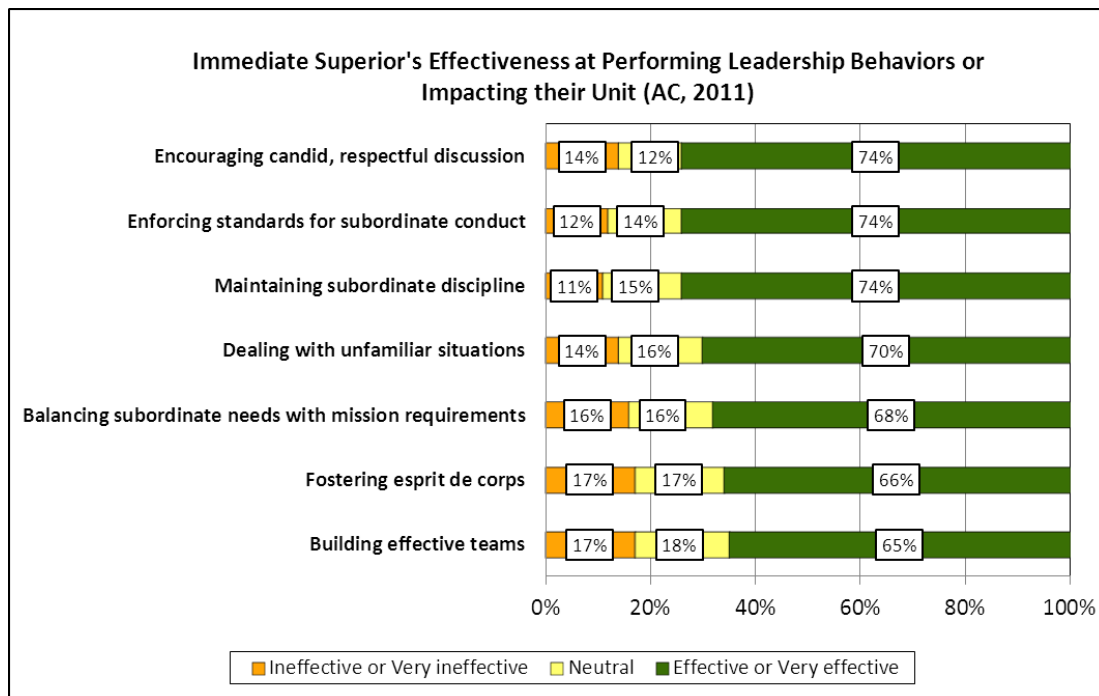
Effective leaders must be able to positively influence various facets within their unit or organization to successfully accomplish the mission. Some of these include discipline, standards, unit environment, and the requirements and issues that potentially impact mission accomplishment. CASAL findings show varied levels of effectiveness associated with these facets.

As discussed earlier, Army leaders have consistently been rated favorably on the competency *Leads Others*. One component of effectively leading others involves maintaining and enforcing high professional standards. Leaders are generally perceived as effective with regard to both enforcing standards (74%) and maintaining discipline (74%) amongst their subordinates. A broader discussion of discipline and standards at the unit level is presented in section 2.3.3.

While the leader's effect on unit conduct is positive, their effect on the broader unit climate is mixed (see Exhibit 13). Creating a positive unit climate involves encouraging open and candid communications, and leaders are generally seen as effective in doing so (74% effective/very effective). However, smaller percentages of leaders are rated effective at fostering esprit de corps (66%) and building teams (65%). This is consistent with earlier analyses that show that *Creates a Positive Environment* remains a "middle-tier" competency for leaders. Both the existing OPTEMPO and ARFORGEN may be contributors to this moderate effectiveness. Although ARFORGEN should help stabilize a unit's structure, respondents have indicated that key leaders often join a unit late or just prior to a deployment. This limits the time and opportunity available to effectively build a cohesive team and/or enhance morale. In addition to leaders being absent during a unit's training phase, respondents indicate that many junior leader promotions and advancements have occurred rapidly. This shortened period of time in key assignments and leader development may impair a leader's knowledge of unit history and Army traditions, reducing their effectiveness at positively impacting climate and culture.

Leaders who effectively create a positive climate also demonstrate care for people and their well-being. CASAL findings show that Army leaders are generally effective at balancing Soldier needs with mission requirements (68%). Balance requires leaders to consider and monitor the impact of mission fulfillment on the mental, physical, and emotional attributes of their subordinates. This also supports the favorable perceptions of leaders demonstrating the core leader competency *Leads Others*.

**Exhibit 13. Ratings on Various Aspects of Leader Behavior or Impact on Units.**



### Impact of Leadership Competencies and Attributes

2011 CASAL findings indicate that the overall effectiveness of Army leaders in demonstrating the leadership competencies and attributes has a direct impact on mission accomplishment. Analyses computed a single rating of the immediate superior's effectiveness at demonstrating the competencies and their effectiveness at demonstrating the leader attributes. This computed rating was then correlated with unit and Soldier outcomes to assess whether a leader's level of effectiveness at demonstrating the competencies and attributes relates to their perceived effectiveness at accomplishing the mission.

There is a clear relationship between the leadership competencies and unit and Soldier outcomes that impact mission success. Leaders who are viewed as being effective at demonstrating the competencies are also viewed as having a positive impact on important facets of their unit and their subordinates (see Tables 2 and 3).

- The relationship between a superior's demonstration of leadership competencies and the *effect on the leader* tends to be stronger than the relationship between a superior's demonstration of leadership competencies and the *effect on the unit*.
- Notably, the strongest relationship exists between the superior's effectiveness at demonstrating the leadership competencies and the leader's *confidence in following their superior into life-or-death situations*.

**Table 2. Correlations between Effectively Demonstrating the Leadership Competencies and Organizational Outcomes.**

Relationship Between Demonstrating Leadership Competencies & Effect on Unit/Organizational Outcomes (AC, N = 6,242)	
Effect on Unit Cohesion	.676**
Effect on Unit Discipline	.617**
Effect on Safety	.575**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 3. Correlations between Effectively Demonstrating the Leadership Competencies and Soldier Outcomes.**

Relationship Between Demonstrating Leadership Competencies & Effect on Leader/Soldier Outcomes (AC, N = 6,242)	
Effect on Leader's Motivation	.785**
Effect on Leader's Quality of Work Completed	.700**
Effect on Leader's Commitment to the Army	.671**
"I feel confident following my immediate superior into life-or-death situations"	.804**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is also a clear relationship between the leadership attributes and unit and Soldier outcomes that impact mission success. Leaders who are viewed as effective at demonstrating the attributes are also viewed as having a positive impact on important facets of their unit and subordinates (see Tables 4 and 5).

- The relationship between a superior's demonstration of leadership attributes and the *effect on the leader* also tends to be stronger than the relationship between a superior's demonstration of leadership attributes and the *effect on the unit*.
- Similar to the competencies, the strongest relationship exists between the superior's effectiveness at demonstrating the leadership attributes and the leader's *confidence in following their superior into life-or-death situations*.

**Table 4. Correlations between Effectively Demonstrating the Leader Attributes and Soldier Outcomes.**

Relationship Between Demonstrating Leadership Attributes & Effect on Unit/Organizational Outcomes (AC, N = 5,797)	
Effect on Unit Discipline	.691**
Effect on Unit Cohesion	.644**
Effect on Safety	.620**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 5. Correlations between Effectively Demonstrating the Leader Attributes and Soldier Outcomes.**

Relationship Between Demonstrating Leadership Attributes & Effect on Leader/Soldier Outcomes (AC, N = 5,797)	
Effect on Leader's Quality of Work Completed	.759**
Effect on Leader's Motivation	.699**
Effect on Leader's Commitment to the Army	.675**
"I feel confident following my immediate superior into life-or-death situations"	.803**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## 1.5 Toxic Leadership

Toxic leaders work to promote themselves at the expense of their underlings, and usually do so without considering long-term ramifications to their subordinates, their unit, and the Army profession. Results of the 2010 CASAL indicated that while 75% of Army leaders are viewed as demonstrating constructive (positive) leadership behaviors, as many as one in five are perceived as acting in ways that are positive for the organization, positive for themselves, but negative for subordinates. These findings are based on subordinate ratings of their immediate superior. Perceptions of toxic leadership in the 2011 CASAL suggest that its occurrence remains limited. Key findings include:

- Consistency in views regarding toxic leadership behavior in the Army between the 2010 and 2011 surveys.
- Perceptions of toxic leadership are more frequently found among junior leaders and are less pronounced at senior levels.
- Junior NCOs are more likely to be perceived as demonstrating behaviors frequently associated with toxic leadership.
- In comparison to other officer positions, brigade and battalion commanders are infrequently perceived as toxic.
- The negative impact that toxic leadership has on Army individual and organizational outcomes is strong.

### Presence of Toxic Leadership in the Army

There has been almost no change from the 2010 CASAL with regard to two specific perceptions that may clearly indicate toxic leadership. In 2010, about three-fourths (77%) of Army leaders agreed or strongly agreed that their immediate superior put the needs of the unit or organization ahead of their own needs, and this perception remained unchanged (77%) in 2011. Of all toxic leadership indicators, selfishness or 'careerism' is a pivotal behavior demonstrated by these leaders. The 2010 CASAL also found that almost three-fourths (73%) of Army leaders believed that their immediate superior was on a path to achieving a higher level of leadership responsibility. This view increased slightly to 74% in 2011. This consistency suggests that the issue remains relatively unchanged.



The proportion of Army leaders who express agreement that their immediate superior demonstrates a specific toxic behavior is commonly one-fifth or less (see Table 6). The most commonly displayed negative leadership behaviors are ignoring constructive criticism and setting misplaced priorities. Army leaders infrequently agree that their superior lies about group performance or project progress.

**Table 6. Ratings of Immediate Superior Demonstration of Various Toxic Leadership Behaviors.**

<b>Army Leader Perceptions of their Immediate Superior's Exhibition of Toxic Leadership Behaviors</b>	
<b>My immediate superior...</b>	<b>(% Agreement)</b>
Ignores constructive criticism	22%
Sets misplaced priorities that interfere with accomplishing goals	21%
Interferes with work processes	19%
Behaves in a way that makes me regularly try or think about physically avoiding him/her	19%
Makes poor decisions under pressure or in difficult situations	14%
Lies about group performance or project progress at meetings	10%

2011 CASAL findings also provide evidence for the absence of toxic leadership. Positive indicators of effective leadership related to selfless service and communication are common in the Army:

- 77% of AC leaders agree their immediate superior puts the needs of the unit/organization ahead of self (10% disagree).
- 69% of AC leaders agree their immediate superior promotes good communication among team members (15% disagree).

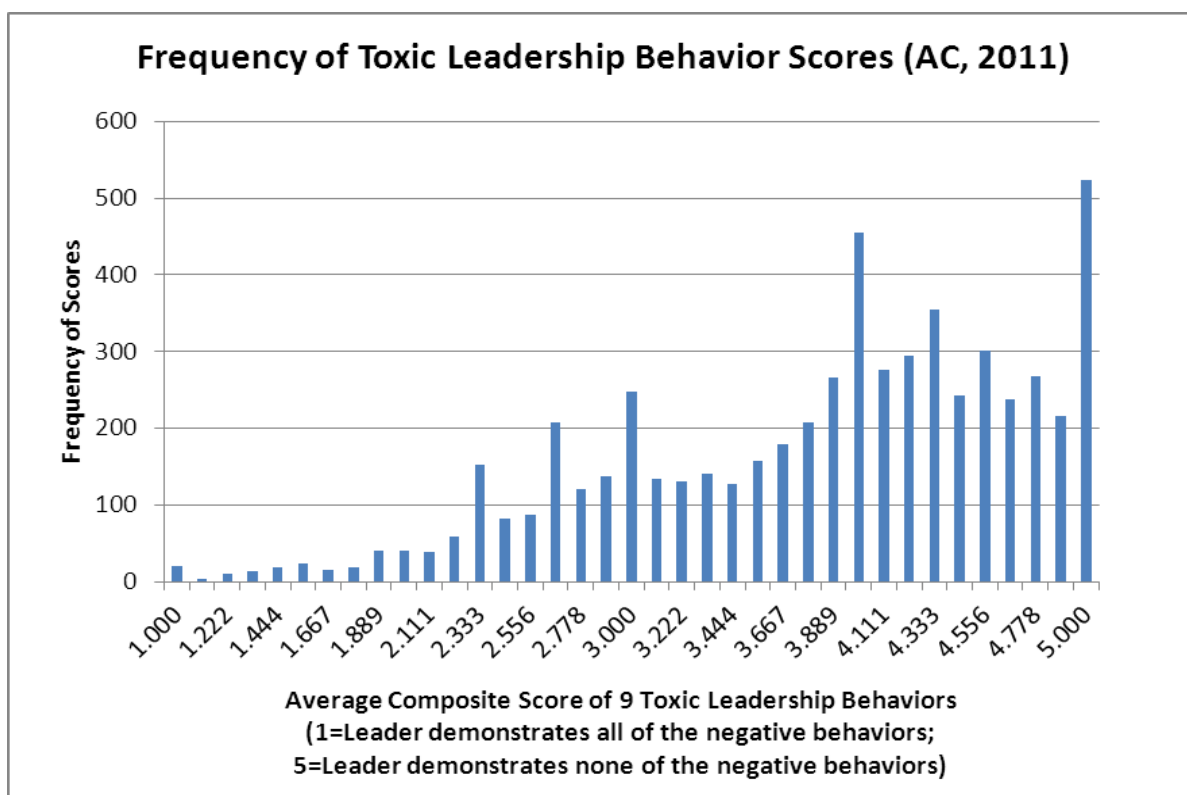
Further, 73% of AC leaders believe their immediate superior is on a path to achieving a higher level of leadership responsibility, while only 12% disagree.

These nine items that reflect behaviors associated with toxic leadership were combined into a single scale composite. This scale of 'Toxic Leadership Behaviors' was created by reverse coding the negatively worded behavior items (i.e., the items presented in Table 6). The purpose of reverse coding these items was to assign negative behaviors (i.e., strong agreement a leader engages in a negative behavior) with a small response value (i.e., '1'). Conversely, positive behaviors (i.e., strong agreement that a leader engages in a positive behavior) are represented by higher response values (i.e., '5'). After recoding responses, values across all nine items were summed and then divided by nine. This procedure created a single scale score with a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 5. Scale scores of '1' indicate a respondent's average rating across all nine items = 1 (Strong agreement one's immediate superior engages in all nine toxic leadership behaviors). Scale scores of '5' indicate a respondent's average rating across all nine items = 5 (strong disagreement one's immediate superior engages in all nine toxic leadership behaviors). A composite scale score was only generated for respondents who rated their immediate superior on all nine behavioral statements.

A reliability analysis was conducted on the nine items comprising the composite variable. These analyses indicate whether the group of items is consistently measuring the same underlying construct or latent variable. Reliability for this set of items demonstrated strong internal consistency ( $\alpha = .92$ ). Reliability indices above .80 are generally considered acceptable and values greater than .90 are considered very strong (Guion, 1998).

A normative approach was used to determine the distribution of toxic leadership behaviors across Army leaders, based on collecting a representative sample of scores from the population. In this case, CASAL is a representative survey across AC and RC components and across multiple cohorts (i.e., field grade officers, company grade officers, Sr NCOs, and Jr NCOs). Through the normative approach, the distribution characteristics of the scaled composite scores are examined. The distribution of scores on the composite scale depicts where most leaders fall across the continuum of values. A percentile rank is then assigned to each score based on the distribution (see Exhibit 14).

**Exhibit 14. Frequency of Composite Score for Nine Toxic Leadership Behaviors.**



The percentile rank for toxic leadership behavior composite scores is presented in Table 7. These values indicate the percentile of a specific score on this scale based on the overall sample of AC leaders. For example, leaders who rate 2.2 on the toxic leadership behavior scale represent a percentile rank of 5.0%, indicating leaders perceived to demonstrate this level of negative toxic leadership behavior are in the bottom 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of all scores observed for this sample.

**Table 7. Percentile Rankings for Active Duty Leaders based on a Toxic Leadership Behavior Composite Score.**

% of Active Duty Leader Population = Score	
0.4% = 1.0	50% = 4.0
1.5% = 1.6	66% = 4.3
3.6% = 2.0	75% = 4.6
5.0% = 2.2	85% = 4.8
20% = 3.0	90% = 4.9
33% = 3.6	95% = 5.0

These findings indicate a small percentage of AC leaders rate their immediate superior as demonstrating most of the toxic leadership behaviors included in this scale (i.e., scale scores of 2.0 or below). This approach is useful as it displays the incidence of toxic leadership behavior as a continuum, and provides informative benchmarks across the sample. However, a limitation to using this approach is that it does not specify the point at which a leader should be deemed a 'toxic' leader (or not) based on demonstration of these negative behaviors.

#### Toxic Leadership by Rank and Position

Further analyses examined the rank and duty position of Army leaders' immediate superiors in order to determine how the demonstration or perception of toxic leadership varies at different levels of leadership (see Exhibits 15 and 16). Key findings with regard to rank include:

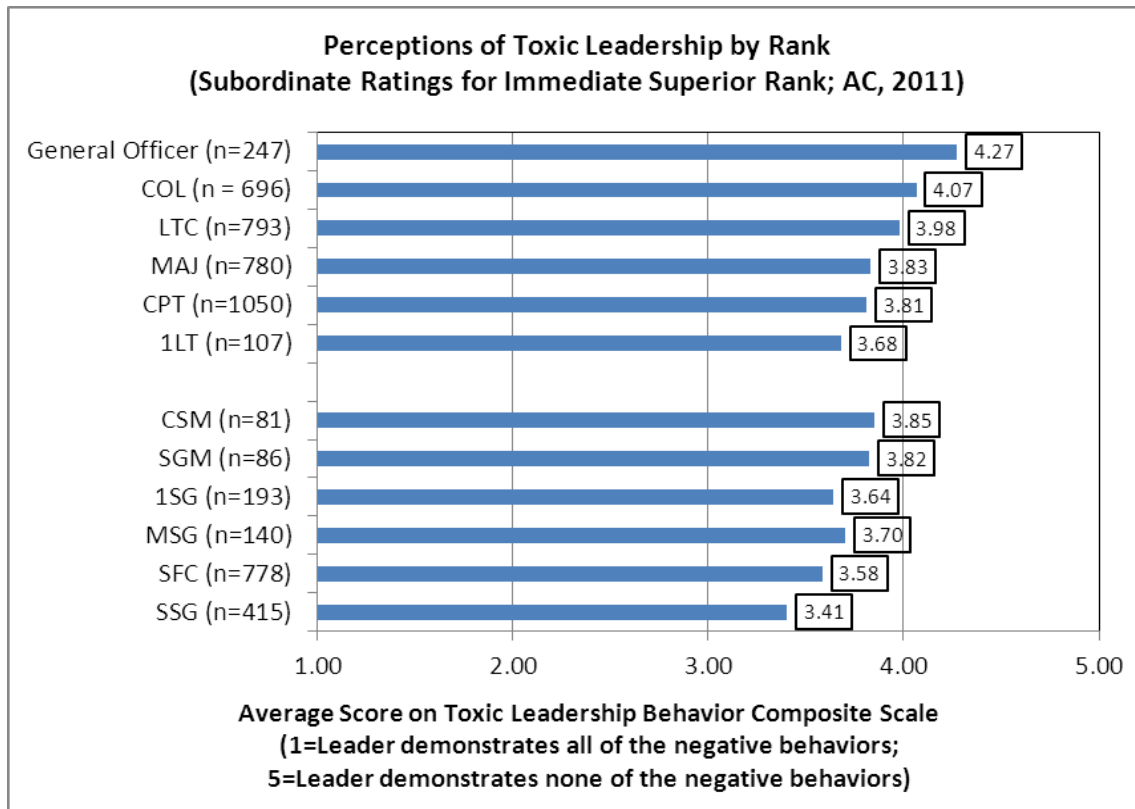
- Overall, lower average composite scores were found among the NCO corps, indicating a greater occurrence of superiors demonstrating negative actions and behaviors. Notably, staff sergeants (E-6) and sergeants first class (E-7) are rated least positively on these items by their subordinates (indicative of demonstrating various toxic leadership behaviors).
- Senior officers (LTC, COL, GO) are less often viewed by their direct report subordinates as exhibiting negative leadership behaviors or actions.

One explanation for this difference in perceived toxicity by rank exists and may challenge whether these are true differences. Focus groups conducted in support of the 2010 CASAL found that rank cohorts interpret toxic leadership and the related behaviors somewhat differently:

- Majors view toxic leadership as the use of abusive communication, bullying, and selfish and career-focused behavior, where there is a lack of care for people.
- Company grade officers view toxic leadership as getting results at the expense of others, selfishness, engagement in immoral, unethical or illegal behaviors, and a lack of integrity and trust.
- Senior NCOs view toxic leadership as selfish abuse of authority, micromanagement, and abusive communications. Notably, many senior NCOs see this as an "officer problem."

- Junior NCOs view toxic leadership as the abuse of power, micromanagement of subordinates, being overly results-focused, being “out to get” subordinates, and the demonstration of loud or violent behavior.

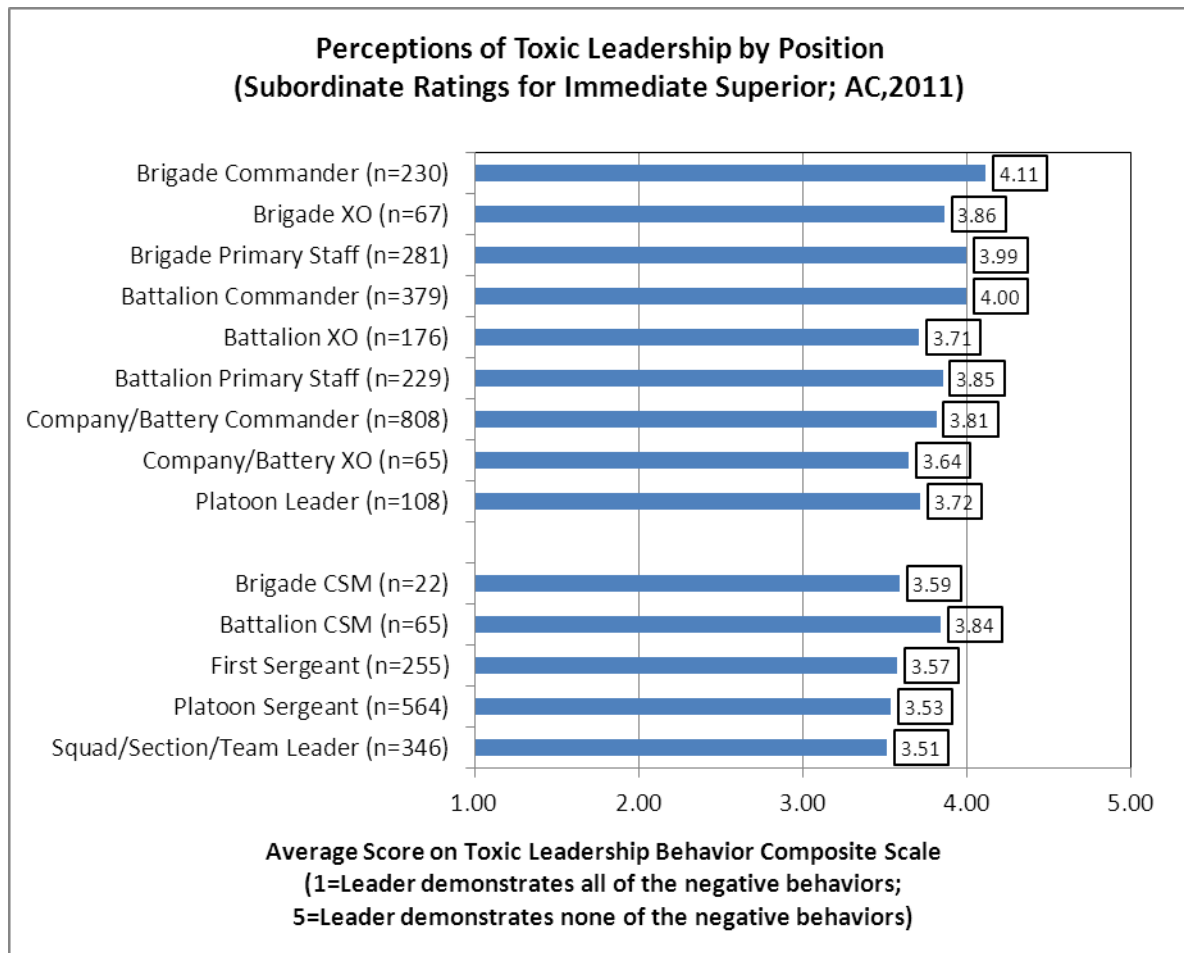
**Exhibit 15. Perceptions of Toxic Leadership by Rank.**



The demonstration of toxic leadership by specific duty positions shows some relation to the previously mentioned findings on rank (see Exhibit 16).

- Brigade and battalion commanders are viewed favorably as leaders. Across officer duty positions, commanders are least often viewed by subordinates as exhibiting negative behaviors (associated with toxic leadership).
- Junior officer positions (platoon leaders and company/battery XO) are rated least positively on the toxic leadership behavior composite scale based on ratings by their subordinates.
- First sergeants, platoon sergeants, and squad/section/team leaders have the lowest average scores on the toxic leadership behavior composite scale based on ratings by their subordinates.

**Exhibit 16. Perception of Toxic Leadership by Position.**



### Impact of Toxic Leadership

Similar to the leadership competencies and attributes, this computed, single assessment of toxic leadership was correlated with unit and Soldier outcomes that impact mission accomplishment in order to determine any relationship. Findings show a strong positive relationship between an Army leader's assessment of their immediate superior exhibiting positive leadership behavior (i.e., the favorable end of the toxic leadership behavior composite scale) and their assessment of their immediate superior's effect on organizational outcomes (see Table 8). Hence, leaders who indicate their immediate superior engages in toxic leadership behaviors (low scores on the composite scale) also indicate their leader has had a negative effect on unit cohesion, unit discipline, and safety.

**Table 8. Correlations of Toxic Leadership Behaviors with Organizational Outcomes.**

Relationship between Demonstrating Toxic Leadership Behaviors and the Effect on Unit/Organizational Outcomes		
	AC (n=5,532)	RC (n=5,247)
Effect on Unit Cohesion	.655**	.661**
Effect on Unit Discipline	.619**	.632**
Effect on Safety	.565**	.599**
Immediate Superior effectiveness in getting results to accomplish the mission successfully	.650**	.671**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Leaders who exhibit these negative behaviors are rated ineffective at getting results to accomplish the mission successfully. This outcome is somewhat unusual, as there has been a perception that these leaders, while toxic, remain capable of accomplishing the mission – but at the expense of those around them.

This same relationship exists between perceived demonstration of toxic leadership behavior and the effect on individual leaders. Leaders who indicate stronger agreement (lower composite scores) that their immediate superior exhibits toxic leadership behaviors also indicate a larger negative effect on their motivation, quality of work, and commitment to the Army (see Table 9). Notably, leaders do not feel confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations if they demonstrate toxic leadership behaviors.

**Table 9. Correlations of Toxic Leadership Behaviors with Soldier Outcomes.**

Relationship between Demonstrating Toxic Leadership Behaviors and the Effect on Leader/Soldier Outcomes		
	AC (n=5,532)	RC (n=5,247)
Effect on Subordinate Motivation	.695**	.691**
Effect on Subordinate Quality of Work Completed	.633**	.645**
Effect on Subordinate Commitment to the Army	.614**	.625**
I feel confident following superior into life-or-death situations	.716**	.715**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Although not common, when a leader is considered to demonstrate behaviors associated with toxic leadership, they are also perceived as directly harmful to their organization and its members, specifically direct-report subordinates. Of importance, these toxic leaders impact the Army organization by reducing the motivation, commitment, and confidence of their subordinates. As a result, lower cohesion and discipline impairs the ability to accomplish the Army mission.

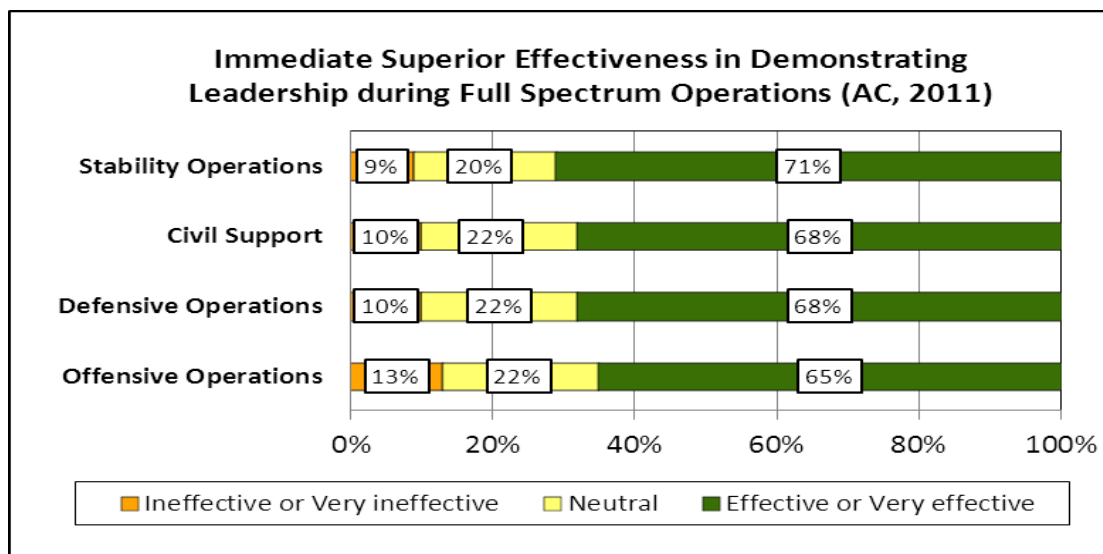
## 1.6 Leader Effectiveness during Deployed Operations

### Leader Performance in Full Spectrum Operations

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

2011 CASAL findings indicate that Army leaders are generally effective across operations (see Exhibit 17). A decade of war which has involved an irregular threat and the need to counter insurgency has made Army leaders most effective at demonstrating leadership during stability operations. As the Army moves to rebalance its training focus, attention could be paid to preparedness for offensive operations in order to increase perceived leader effectiveness to a level that is comparable to the other types of operations.

***Exhibit 17. Active Duty Leader Effectiveness in Demonstrating Leadership during Full Spectrum Operations.***

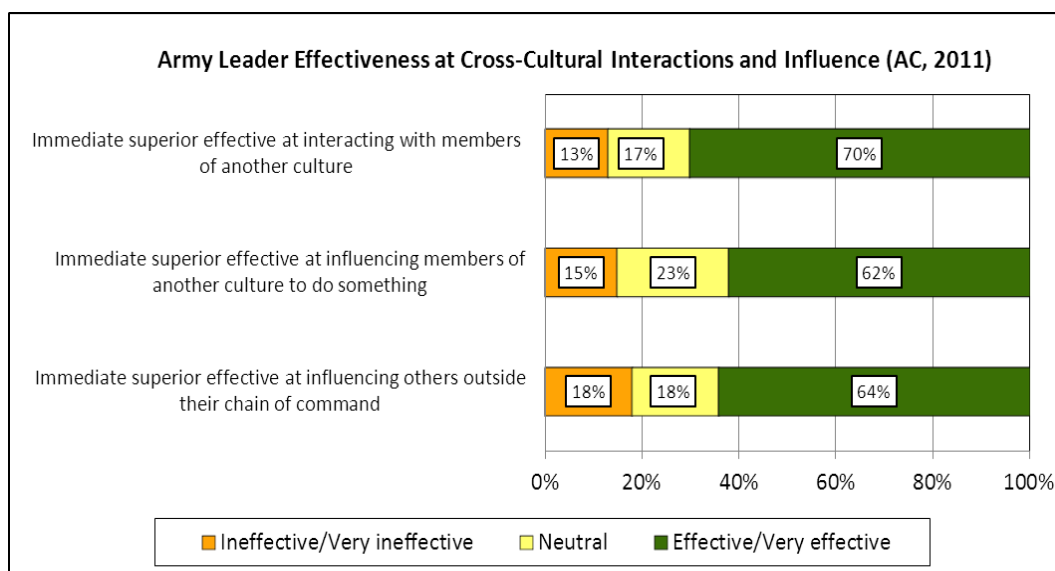


As deployed Army leaders made these assessments of their immediate superior, it is also possible that effectiveness within current operations may have provided a more observable and accurate assessment of their superior's performance in stability operations in contrast to the others.

## Culture and Extending Influence

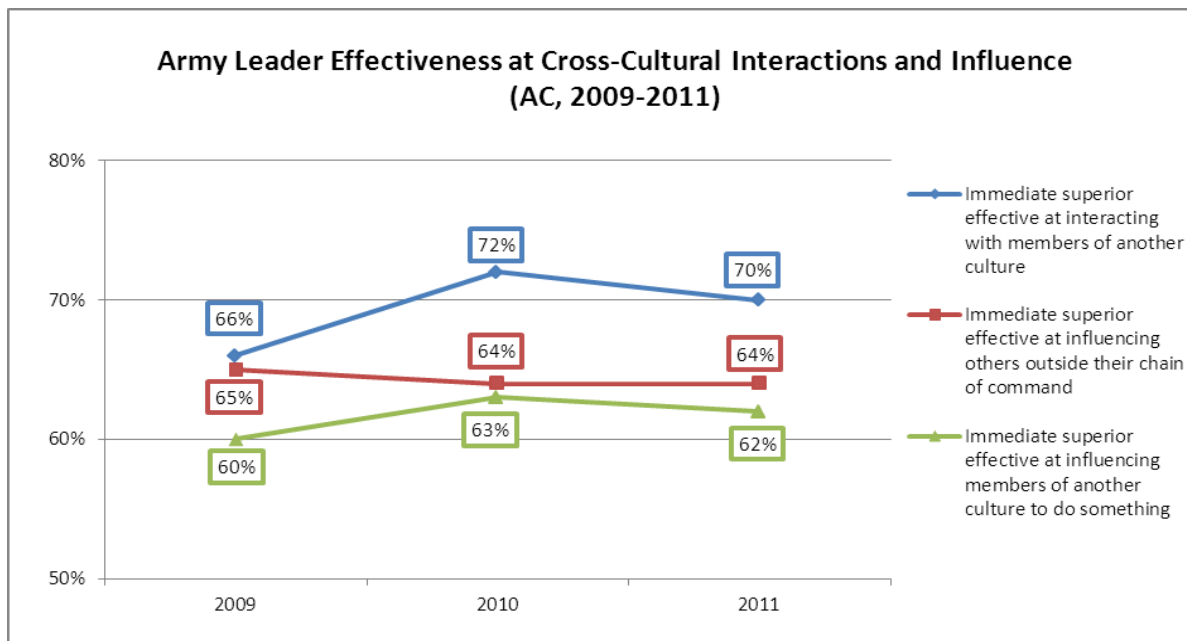
Effectiveness in FSO can rely heavily on the effectiveness of Army leaders in their interactions with locals in deployed environments and how well they demonstrate an understanding of other cultures. 2011 CASAL findings indicate that most Army leaders in deployed environments view their immediate superior as effective or very effective in their interactions with members of another culture (70%) (see Exhibit 18). However, less favorability is found in beliefs about the immediate superior's effectiveness at influencing members of another culture to do something (62%), and in extending influence beyond the chain of command (while deployed) (64%). Findings on leader effectiveness in these areas are fairly consistent over the past three years (see Exhibit 19).

***Exhibit 18. Ratings for Active Duty Leader Effectiveness at Cross-Cultural Interactions and Influence (2011).***





**Exhibit 19. Comparisons between Years for Leader Effectiveness at Cross-Cultural Interactions and Influence (2009-2011).**

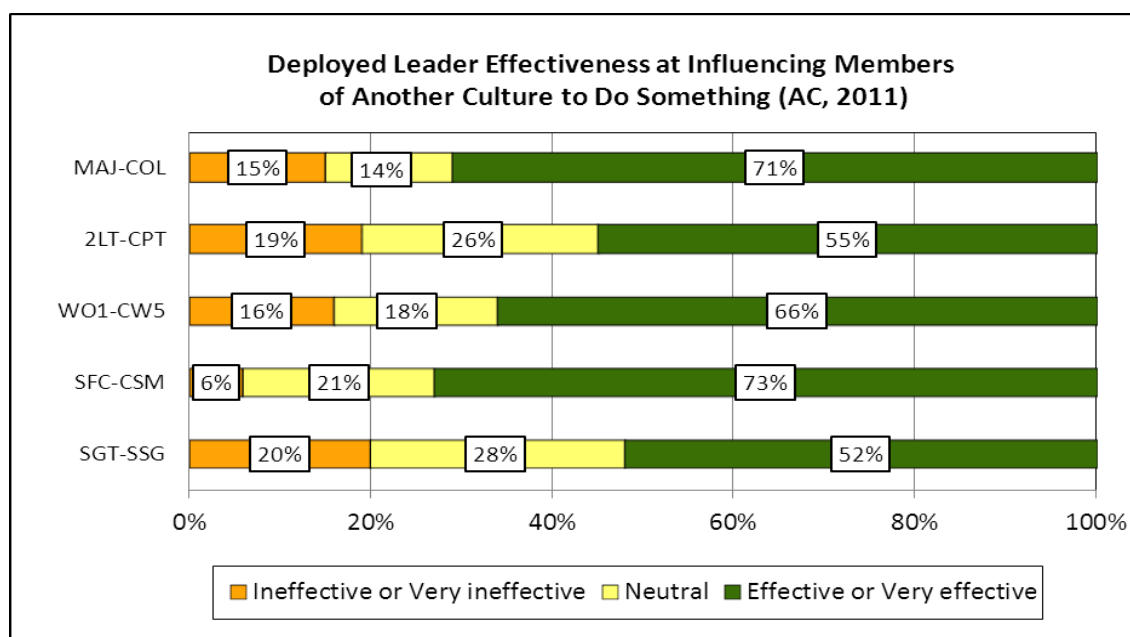


Self-assessments by CASAL respondents indicate that three-fourths of currently deployed Army leaders (74%) believe their current position often requires them to consider cultural factors when making decisions. Those that agree it is relevant to their position also overwhelmingly agree they have confidence in their ability to consider relevant cultural factors when making decisions:

- Deployed field-grade officers (86%), senior NCOs (77%), and company grade officers (73%) most frequently indicate their positions require consideration of cultural factors.
- At least 85% of leaders within *each* cohort agree or strongly agree that they are confident in their ability to appropriately consider cultural factors.

Rank and duty position may shape a leader's view of their superior's performance and their own performance with regard to cross-cultural interactions. While senior leaders may feel strongly about their ability to consider cultural factors and make the right decisions within their position, junior leaders do not share the same view. Nearly one-fourth of deployed company grade officers (22%), warrant officers (22%), and Jr NCOs (24%) rate their immediate superior ineffective at extending influence beyond the chain of command (see Exhibit 20). Similarly, just over a half of company grade officers (55%) and Jr NCOs (53%) indicate their immediate superior is effective at influencing members of another culture to do something.

**Exhibit 20. Ratings of Effectiveness for Immediate Superiors in Cross-Cultural Influence.**



The Army Culture and Foreign Language Strategy (ACFLS) highlights cultural knowledge and learning outcomes to be achieved at different career stages for both officers and NCOs, starting with foundational interpersonal skills. The need for foundational interpersonal skills is supported by CASAL findings which show that interpersonal tact is the lowest rated attribute of leaders. Abbe (2008) noted that good interpersonal skills may sometimes allow a leader to overcome deficits in understanding the local culture's language. Abbe also suggests that cross-cultural training prioritize generalizable concepts about culture and culture skills that teach Soldiers to adapt in unfamiliar environments. Improvements in interpersonal skills and generalizable concepts on culture could help increase a leader's effectiveness at influencing members of another culture to perform a desired action.

### ***Summary of the Quality of Leadership***

Army leaders continue to show favorable ratings of their subordinates and favorable, but somewhat lower ratings of their peers and superiors as effective leaders. In addition, Army leaders express mixed views regarding their immediate superior's effectiveness as a leader. While a majority of leaders indicate their superior meets their expectations of what an Army leader should *be, know, and do*, and, believe their immediate superior is performing at a high level, only half report they strive to be like their superior.

Developing subordinates continues to be a competency that leaders need to devote more time and improvement toward. Interpersonal tact remains the lowest rated leader attribute, though most Army leaders demonstrate all leader attributes effectively. Analyses show that effectively demonstrating Innovation and Interpersonal Tact are a key element to distinguishing the "best leaders" from all others. The findings also show that officers in command positions are viewed

as more effectively demonstrating the leadership competencies and attributes than the broader population of Army leaders.

A clear relationship exists between a leader's demonstration of effective leadership (i.e., competencies and attributes) and having a positive effect on their unit and subordinates. Specifically, leaders who effectively demonstrate the competencies and attributes engender confidence in subordinates to follow them into life-or-death situations. Conversely, leaders who demonstrate toxic leadership behaviors have a negative impact on both Soldier and organizational outcomes.

## **2. Effects of Climate and Situational Factors on Leadership**

The influence of climate and situational factors on leadership was addressed in the 2011 CASAL by three areas:

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

Findings in these areas indicate the current level of morale and satisfaction among Army leaders; types of commitment, career intentions and career goals of Army leaders; and special focus on current factors influencing the Army's command climate, including characteristics of the working environment, leader trust, and new insights on discipline and standards in the Army.

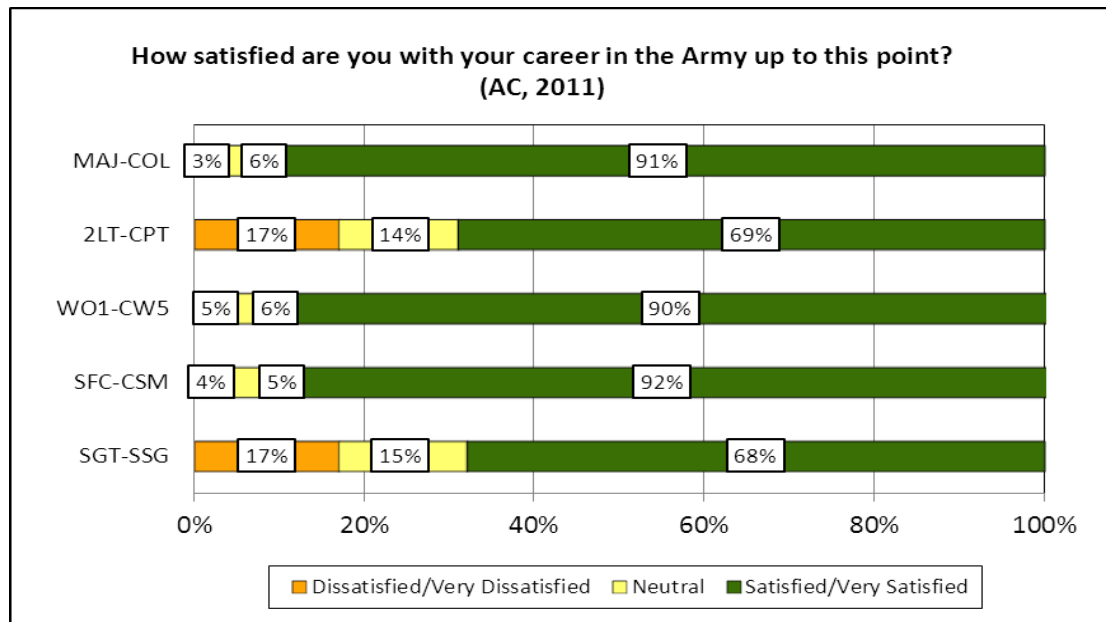
### **2.1 Satisfaction and Morale in the Army**

CASAL findings demonstrate that a strong relationship exists between leaders' level of morale and career satisfaction in the Army ( $r = .53$ ). Further, confidence in the ability of one's unit/organization to perform its mission (an important outcome) positively correlates with both morale ( $r = .46$ ) and career satisfaction ( $r = .33$ ).

#### **Career Satisfaction**

Leaders are generally satisfied with their careers in the Army thus far, though rank and tenure are factors that affect this. In 2011, 79% of AC leaders report they are satisfied or very satisfied with their career in the Army thus far, a finding consistent with the prior two years (79-82%). Smaller percentages of AC leaders at lower levels report satisfaction with their career thus far (69% of company grade officers and 68% of Jr NCOs) (see Exhibit 21), though these findings are not unexpected and are consistent with results from past years.

**Exhibit 21. Current Levels of Career Satisfaction for Active Duty Leaders.**



A slightly larger percentage of leaders in the RC indicate satisfaction or strong satisfaction with their careers in the Army thus far (83%) compared to AC leaders (79%). Notably, a larger percentage of RC company grade officers and Jr NCOs report satisfaction with their Army careers (75% and 73%, respectively) than their AC counterparts. These findings are also not unexpected as reserve status leaders augment their primary roles of full time employment (or education) with military service, and thus their role in the Army may be seen as a source of work variety rather than a primary career path.

Results of a multiple regression analysis found that the factors that explain the most variance in the career satisfaction of AC company grade officers are job characteristics (i.e., satisfaction with freedom or latitude in job, agreement skills match job requirements, amount of feedback received in job) ( $\beta = .22$ ), the perceived value of operational experiences in preparing for higher levels of leadership responsibility ( $\beta = .10$ ), current level of morale ( $\beta = .44$ ), and level of continuance commitment ( $\beta = .18$ ). In short, company grade officers who are dissatisfied with their career in the Army also rate their operational experience as ineffective in preparing them for leadership, are dissatisfied with the level of freedom or latitude they have in their job and with the amount of feedback they receive, and report lower levels of morale and continuance commitment. Table 10 displays the contribution of predictive variables that were included in this model along with their standardized betas.

**Table 10. Predictors of AC Company Grade Officer Career Satisfaction**

Predictor Variable	Beta
Job Characteristics (autonomy, feedback received, informed of decisions affecting work, leader abilities match job requirements)	.22**
Unit Characteristics (confidence in unit, time and energy not wasted on unproductive tasks, lack of discipline problems, standards upheld)	.05
Effectiveness of operational experiences for preparing leader	.10**
Immediate superior shows concern for developing leader's skills	-.04
Effectiveness of superior identifying developmental opportunities	-.02
Effectiveness of self-development for preparing leader	.02
Effectiveness of institutional education for preparing leader	.03
Considering all leaders in unit, overall quality of immediate superior	-.03
Leader's current level of morale	.44**
Leader's level of Continuance commitment	.18**
Leader's level of Affective commitment	.02
Leader is currently a supervisor	.02
Number of deployments in last 36 months	.04
<b>Model Summary</b>	$R^2 = .50^{**}$

\*\*  $p < .001$

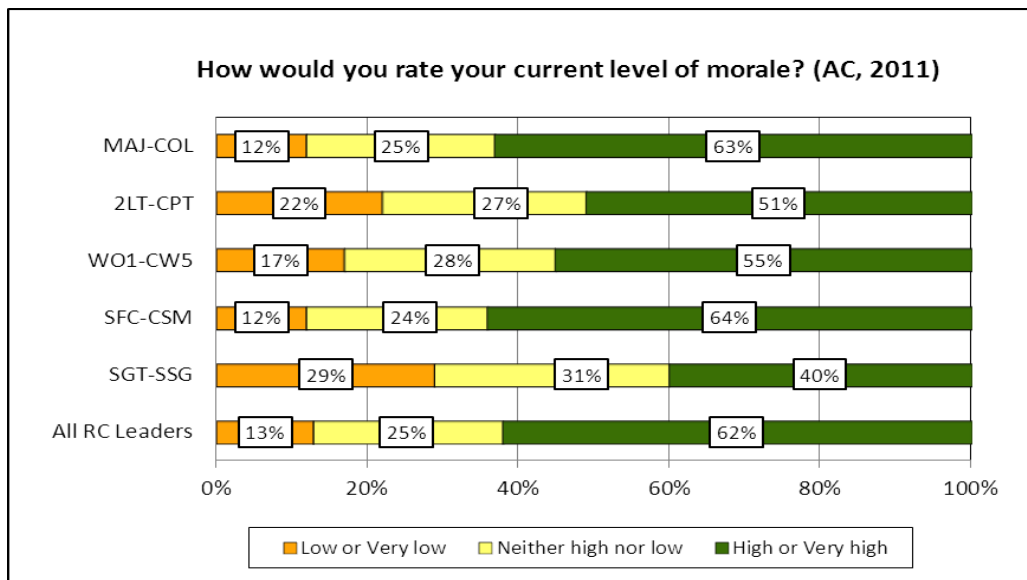
### Morale

Levels of morale in the Army remain largely unchanged since 2010. Overall, 53% of AC leaders and 62% of RC leaders report high or very high morale. However, situational factors such as rank, component, and location affect leaders' level of morale. For example, a consistent trend in CASAL data is that a larger percentage of RC leaders report high or very high morale than AC leaders, regardless of location or deployment status. Current levels of morale by cohort are presented in Exhibit 22.

2011 CASAL findings on levels of morale by location reveal that fewer leaders in deployed environments report high or very high morale compared to leaders at CONUS locations. This finding is also consistent with results from past years.

- At CONUS locations, 55% of AC leaders and 63% of RC leaders report high or very high morale.
- In Afghanistan, 48% of leaders (both components) report high or very high morale while 25% indicate it is low or very low.
- For the two prior years, CASAL found levels of high/very high morale in Afghanistan to range from 43-47% for AC leaders and 51-58% for RC leaders.
- In Iraq, 43% of leaders (both components) report high or very high morale while 24% indicate it is low or very low. It is important to note that 2011 CASAL data were collected during the period of the final drawdown of major forces in Operation New Dawn in Iraq.
- In 2010, a study by the Joint Mental Health Advisory Team 7 (J-MHAT 7) found troop morale in Afghanistan to be on a five-year downward trend; the report indicated almost 20 percent of Soldiers surveyed reported a psychological problem, including acute stress, depression and anxiety (Joint Mental Health Advisory Team 7, 2011).

**Exhibit 22. Current Levels of Morale by Army Leaders.**



The Spring 2011 Sample Survey of Military Personnel (Army Research Institute, 2011) reported comparable levels of morale among Army leaders. In that study, 83% of officers and 67% of enlisted Soldiers reported their own morale as Moderate, High, or Very High. Despite the slight difference in assessment of morale (CASAL mid-point is ‘Neither high nor low’ rather than ‘Moderate’) and cohort groups reported, findings on current levels of low morale are comparable between the surveys (see Table 11).

**Table 11. Comparison of Findings on Morale between CASAL and the SSMP.**

Comparison between Recent Surveys on the Level of Morale by Active Duty Leader Cohorts	
2011 CASAL (Low or Very Low Morale)	2011 Spring SSMP (Low or Very Low Morale)
12% of MAJ-COL 22% of 2LT-CPT	17% of Officers (all ranks)
12% of SFC-CSM 29% of SGT-SSG	33% of Enlisted (all ranks)

### Attitudes about the Future of the Army

The current level of morale in the Army is also reflected in leader attitudes about the future of the Army. In four of the past seven years, the CASAL has assessed leader agreement to the statement “the Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years.”

- Belief the Army is headed in the right direction is positively related to morale ( $r = .39$ ).

- In 2011, AC leader agreement to this statement hit an all-time low (26%, down from 33% in 2010 and 38% in 2006). However, the level of disagreement has remained fairly steady in recent years (35-38%).
- RC leaders show slightly more optimism than AC leaders, with 35% agreement and 30% disagreement (though this includes an unfavorable shift, from 43% agreement and 25% disagreement in 2010).
- Across most rank groups, an increase in *uncertainty* is evidenced by the large percentage of neutral ratings to this statement observed from 2010 to 2011; more than one-third of leaders in both components (35-36%) neither agree nor disagree that the Army is 'on track' to meet future challenges.

**Key Finding:**

26% of AC leaders agree the Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years; 38% disagree the Army is 'on track.'

More pertinent to morale than the level of agreement to this statement are the reasons why leaders perceive the Army is not headed in the right direction. The 74% of active duty leaders that did not agree with the statement (i.e., were neutral or disagreed the Army is headed in the right direction) selected from a list of reasons for their beliefs. Table 12 presents the top seven most frequently selected reasons by AC leaders as well as the top two reasons by rank cohort.

**Table 12. Reasons Selected by 74% of AC Leaders Who Did Not Agree (Neutral or Disagree) the Army is Headed in the Right Direction.**

7 Top Reasons Selected by All AC Ranks	Field Grade Officers	Company Grade Officers	Warrant Officers	Sr NCOs	Jr NCOs
The Army is unable to retain quality leaders (58%)		Most frequent (63%)	Most frequent (58%)		2 <sup>nd</sup> Most frequent (71%)
A lack of discipline, or the "Army is too soft" (57%)		2 <sup>nd</sup> Most frequent (53%)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Most frequent (57%)	Most frequent (65%)	Most frequent (71%)
Ineffective leaders at senior levels (53%)					
Senior leaders focus on the wrong priorities (52%)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Most frequent (44%)				
Junior leader promotions / advancements are happening too soon (46%)				2 <sup>nd</sup> Most frequent (59%)	
Resources/funding or technology are insufficient (39%)	Most Frequent (45%)				

CASAL findings indicate the intentions of Army leaders to remain in the Army continue to be strong, despite the pending reduction in the size of the force. Additionally, CASAL findings indicate the quality of leadership in the Army has remained stable over the past several years.

Leaders hold varying views on discipline in the Army, though challenges in maintaining discipline differ between deployed and non-deployed environments (discipline is discussed in greater detail in section 2.3.3).

Over the past several years, comments have captured a belief by some Army leaders that senior leaders focus on the wrong priorities. Examples include over-emphasis on dashboard unit metrics and completion of mandatory training requirements that do not have a clear linkage to the unit's mission. Leaders have also commented on the rapid promotions and advancement of junior leaders. Sr NCOs particularly tend to indicate many young leaders served as junior enlisted Soldiers for only a short period of time before assuming NCO responsibilities, and that they did not have sufficient opportunity to develop through experience prior to assuming leadership roles. However, as the Army moves to reduce the size of the force, changes to recruitment and retention will impact the rate at which promotions occur for junior leaders going forward ("Force Cuts", 2012).

In addition to the responses selected by participants for this item, 24% of the respondents in this sub-sample (n=2,449) commented on additional reasons why they do not agree the Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years. Two themes stood out in these comments. First, comments on downsizing of the force reflected concerns by leaders that troop reductions would significantly impact the Army's ability to protect national interests abroad, as well as impact the Army's ability to respond to future conflicts. Secondly, several comments indicated that political correctness or the influence of politics in the Army is a reason the Army is not headed in the right direction. These comments generally cited the negative influence of government policy makers (outside the Army) as being detrimental to the future of the Army, and indicated that senior Army leaders themselves felt the need to bow to "politically correct solutions" to appease policy makers, or to "play politics" within their own organizations.

While it is unreasonable to expect all Army leaders to possess thorough knowledge or understanding of current Army practice and how they relate to the unknown challenges of the next 10 years, these findings provide the Army with perspective on important 'here and now' issues that leaders face. Namely, that company grade officers view the retention of quality leaders as a major issue going forward, while NCOs view a lack of discipline or the 'Army is too soft' as the top issue of concern.

## **2.2 Commitment, Career Intentions, and Career Goals**

The stability of the force can be assessed through the type and level of commitment that Army leaders hold, as well as leader intentions to remain in the Army. Strong commitment and intention to remain in the Army are positive signs that the overall stability of the force is favorable. Likewise, if commitment and intention to remain in the Army are low or weak, these indicators serve as warning signs for the stability and sustainability of the force.



The 2012 Army Posture Statement reports that after a decade at war, supporting two large campaigns and other global initiatives, the Army is preparing to reduce its end-strength. The Sergeant Major of the Army recently announced four tools that will be used to reduce the force, which include bringing in fewer Soldiers, retaining fewer Soldiers, adjusting retention control points (RCP) (a cap on the number of years a Soldier may serve without attaining a higher rank), and selective early retirements. Tougher re-enlistment standards and more stringent RCP practices mean enlisted members, especially sergeants and staff-sergeants, may end up leaving the Army earlier than anticipated. Similarly, the Army plans to slow promotion rates for officers to pre-9/11 levels, which will affect officer retention and advancement (“Force Cuts”, 2012).

CASAL provides indications of the current ‘health’ of the force in terms of the types and level of commitment Army leaders currently demonstrate as well as leader intentions to remain or leave the Army.

### Types and Levels of Commitment

For the past three years, the CASAL has tracked two types of leader commitment in the Army: affective commitment (AC) and continuance commitment (CC). Affective commitment is marked by an emotional bond or attachment to the Army. Leaders strong in affective commitment identify with and enjoy working for the Army. Continuance commitment is characterized by going along with the status quo based on the recognition of the perceived costs of leaving the Army (e.g., I am committed to the Army because too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave right now”).

#### **Key Finding:**

Army leaders demonstrate affective commitment – identification with and enjoyment in working for the Army.

CASAL results have consistently found that a majority of Army leaders (both components) rate high on affective commitment, which is a positive finding:

- 65% of Army leaders rate high on **affective commitment**; only 2% rate low.
- 90% of Army leaders agree they are committed to their team or immediate work group because of their sense of personal loyalty.
- 61% of Army leaders agree they feel vested with the problems affecting their squad, team or immediate work group (even if they don’t directly affect them).

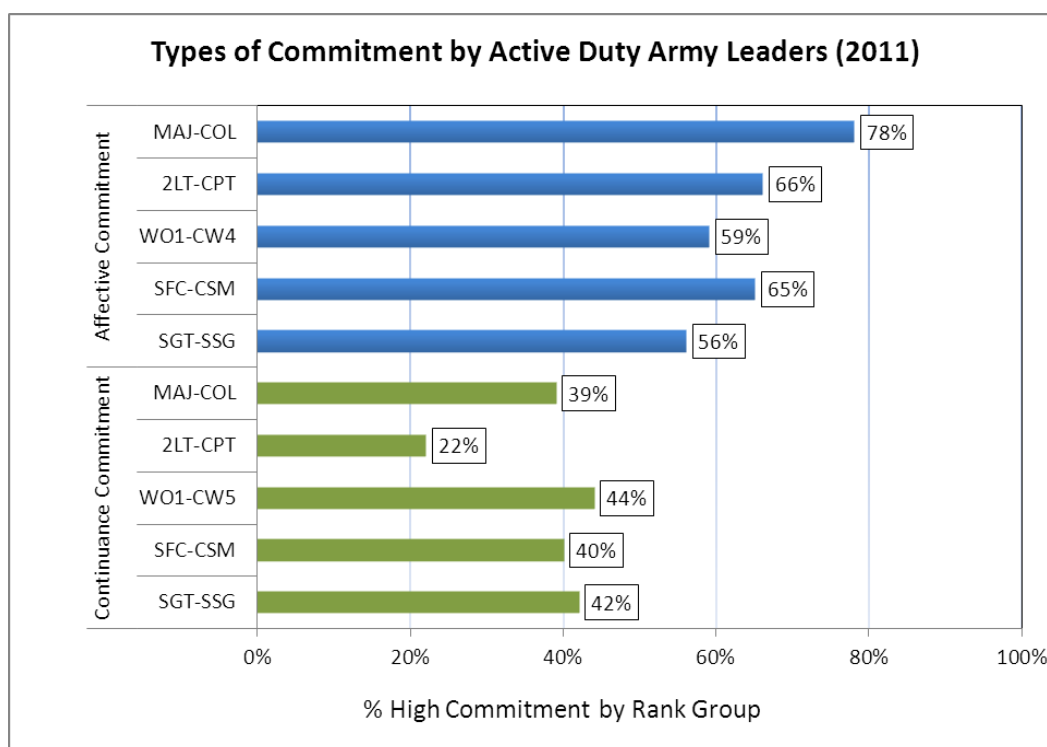
Strong affective commitment among Army leaders has been reported in other recent studies as well. The 2011 Sample Survey of Military Personnel (SSMP) reported that 82% of officers and warrant officers (2LT-COL, WO1-CW5) and 65% of enlisted Soldiers (PV2-CSM) were satisfied or very satisfied with their amount of enjoyment from their job (Army Personnel Survey Office, 2011). A study done in support of the Army Profession of Arms Campaign found that 92% of respondents agreed they were proud to serve in the Army and 89% agreed they had a deep personal commitment to serve the nation as a member of the Army (Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, 2011).

Also consistent are the 2011 CASAL findings on continuance commitment in the Army:

- 36% of Army leaders rate high on **continuance commitment**; 27% rate low.
- 45% of Army leaders agree they are committed to the Army because too much of their life would be disrupted if they were to leave now.
- 46% of AC leaders agree they have invested too many years in the Army to leave now (58% of RC leaders).

Commitment levels are generally consistent across cohorts, with a notable exception that has also been observed in past years: a smaller percentage of company grade officers rate high on continuance commitment (22%) compared to other rank groups (39-44%). This means that while captains and lieutenants hold an emotional attachment to Army service much like the other cohorts do, they less often view departure from the Army as being problematic (e.g., a major disruption to their life, a loss of investment). Exhibit 23 presents the commitment levels for active duty cohorts.

**Exhibit 23. Current Levels of Continuance and Affective Commitment in the Army.**



Both affective and continuance commitment have important implications for the Army, as they relate differently to favorable organizational outcomes. Affective commitment positively relates to immediate, short-term organizational outcomes such as morale and confidence in the ability of one's unit to perform its mission. Continuance commitment more strongly relates to longer-term outcomes such as intention to remain in the Army and belief the Army is headed in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next 10 years. Table 13 displays correlations

between affective and continuance commitment with various individual and organizational outcomes.

**Table 13. Comparisons of Commitment Type and Relationship to Individual and Organizational Outcomes.**

	Affective Commitment	Continuance Commitment
Current level of morale	.12*	.10*
Confidence in the ability of one's unit to perform its mission	.10*	.05*
Satisfaction with career in the Army up to this point	.15*	.16*
Intention to remain in the Army	.15*	.38*
Belief the Army is headed in right direction to prepare for the challenges of next 10 years	.07*	.09*

\*p < .001

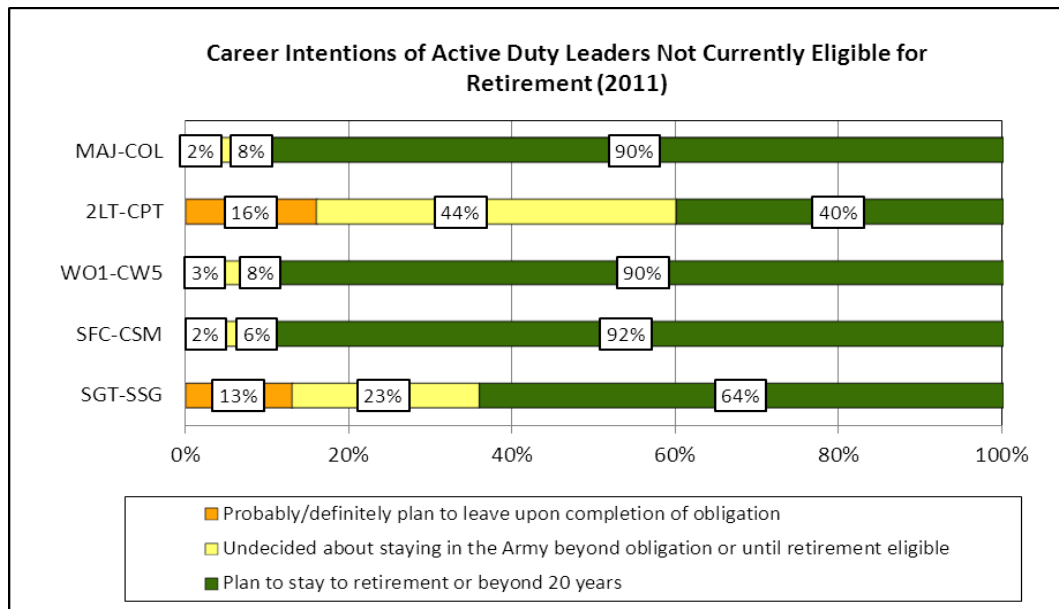
Leader perceptions about reciprocal commitment they receive from the Army are mixed. Overall, only about one-third of leaders (31% AC and 37% RC) indicate disagreement to the statement "the Army no longer demonstrates that is committed to me as much as it expects me to be committed."

- Active duty Jr NCOs (52%) and warrant officers (42%) most predominantly agree the Army is missing on this reciprocal commitment.
- More than one-fourth of Army leaders are neutral to this statement (27% AC and 28% RC).
- Disagreement that the Army no longer demonstrates commitment is positively related to morale ( $r = .43$ ), career satisfaction ( $r = .41$ ), and intention to remain in the Army until retirement or beyond 20 years ( $r = .25$ ).

#### Intention to Remain in the Army

Intentions to remain in the Army continue to be strong. Commitment to service is further evidenced by the fact that 30% of active duty leaders and 40% of reserve component leaders are currently eligible for retirement but choose to remain in the Army. This includes 58% of field grade officers and 61% of Sr NCOs currently on active duty (66% and 67% in the RC, respectively). Further, only one-third of active duty senior leaders (33% of field grade officers and 33% of Sr NCOs) agree they intended to make the military their career when they first entered the Army. Of all Army leaders not currently eligible for retirement, 63% on active duty and 76% in the reserve components plan to stay in the Army until they are eligible for retirement or beyond 20 years. As noted in previous years, there are expected differences in career intentions by rank group (see Exhibit 24).

**Exhibit 24. Career Intentions of Army Leaders Not Currently Eligible for Retirement.**

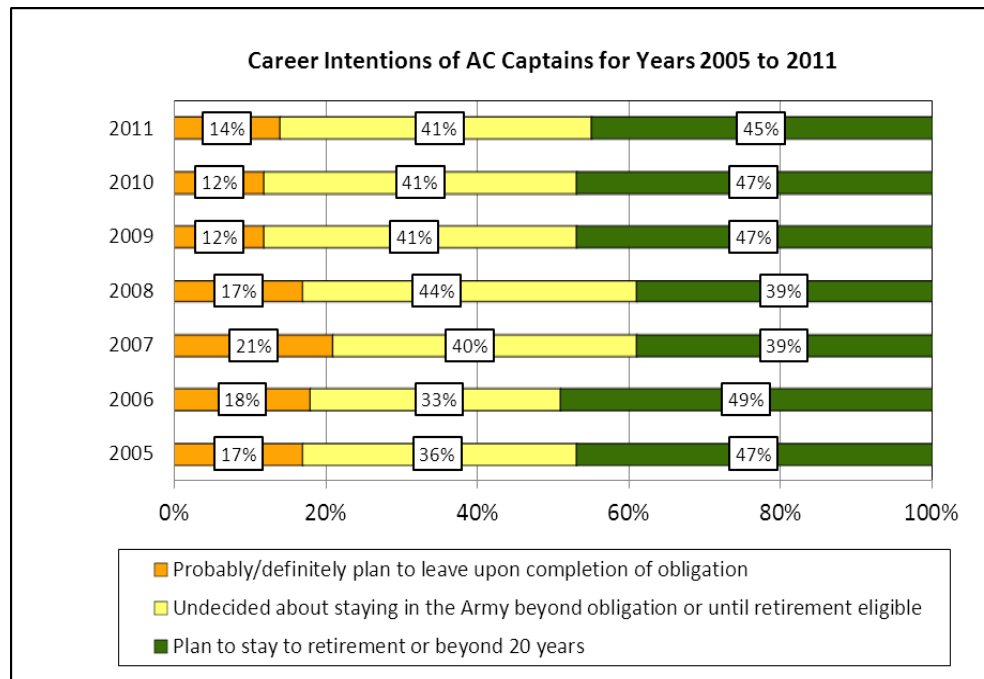


An overall trend observed in CASAL data since 2005 is that the career intentions of Army leaders are generally steady and unchanged. Larger percentages of leaders at senior levels report intention to remain in the Army until retirement than do leaders at lower levels. Additionally, a larger percentage of RC leaders at lower levels (company grade officers, Jr NCOs) intend to remain in the Army until retirement or beyond compared to their AC counterparts.

The retention of active duty captains has long been an Army focus. 2011 CASAL findings indicate 40% of active duty company grade officers (including 45% of captains) plan to remain in the Army until they are retirement eligible or beyond 20 years of service (see Exhibit 25).

Findings for company grade officers continue to show a large degree of uncertainty or indecision. A steady trend since 2009 indicates 41% are undecided about staying beyond their current obligation or staying until retirement. These findings are somewhat consistent with results of the Spring 2011 Sample Survey of Military Personnel (SSMP), which found 48% of company grade officers probably or definitely plan to stay in the active Army until retirement (Army Research Institute, 2011). The 2011 CASAL found that 16% of active duty company grade officers probably or definitely intend to leave the Army upon completion of their current obligation. The Spring 2011 SSMP reported a higher estimate of 23% of company grade officers intending to leave the Army. Notably, a likely reason for the differences in percentages is the variation in response options used by each survey.

**Exhibit 25. Career Intentions of Active Duty Captains from 2005 to 2011.**



### Career Goals

The motivations and career intentions of Army leaders are also evidenced in their career goals. CASAL assesses and tracks the primary career goals of Army leaders which range from obtaining a higher rank or grade, to serving in a command or higher leadership position, to becoming a leading expert in one's specialty. The most prominent career goals by cohort tend to vary, though the following patterns are observed:

- Company grade officers most frequently indicate they aspire to serve in a command or higher leadership position (43% AC; 43% RC).
- More than half of warrant officers (54% AC; 55% RC) most aspire to become leading experts in their specialty.
- Junior NCOs most frequently indicate they aspire to obtain a higher rank or grade (34% AC; 39% RC).

The primary career goals for leaders at senior levels tend to show a greater distribution across the outcomes, and notably, one in five AC field grade officers (20%) and Sr NCOs (19%) are satisfied to stay at their current level and/or have already achieved their goals. Reserve component leaders tend to show greater preference to obtain a higher rank or grade compared to AC leaders (career goals of RC leaders are presented in parentheses in Table 14).

**Table 14. Current Career Goals of Army Leaders.**

	Obtain a higher rank or grade	Serve in a command or higher leadership position	Become a leading expert in specialty	Satisfied to stay at current level; career goals achieved
Field Grade Officer	17% (28%)	37% (38%)	26% (19%)	20% (14%)
Company Grade Officer	15% (23%)	43% (43%)	38% (30%)	3% (4%)
Warrant Officer	24% (26%)	6% (11%)	54% (55%)	16% (8%)
Sr NCO	23% (27%)	33% (33%)	25% (22%)	19% (17%)
Jr NCO	34% (39%)	27% (23%)	35% (34%)	4% (4%)

\*RC response in parentheses ( ).

## **2.3 Command Climate**

The 2011 CASAL examined several aspects of the current climate in which Army leaders operate. For the past three years, CASAL has assessed characteristics of the working environment to include job satisfaction and perceived unit and organizational effectiveness. Additionally, types and levels of leader trust have been assessed and compared to important individual and organizational outcomes. Discipline and standards in the Army are also examined.

### **2.3.1 Characteristics of the Working Environment**

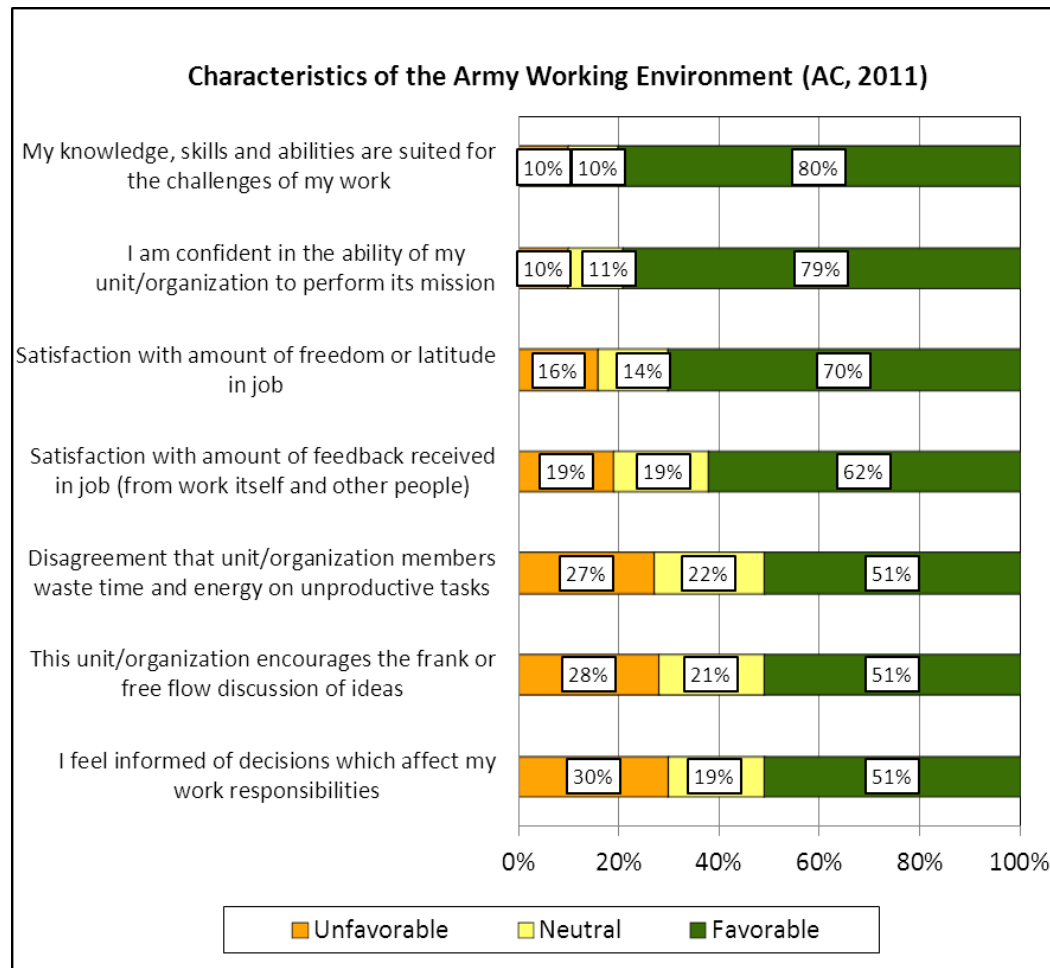
Findings from the 2011 CASAL indicate that Army leaders view several characteristics of their current working environment favorably:

- 80% of Army leaders believe their knowledge, skills and abilities are suited for the challenges of their work (only 10% disagree).
- Army leaders place high confidence (79% agreement) in the ability of their unit/organization to perform its mission.
- However, aspects of organizational communication continue to be areas that show room for improvement.

Exhibit 26 displays the level of agreement or satisfaction Army leaders have with various characteristics of their working environment. Overall, Army leaders are generally satisfied with the amount of freedom or latitude they have in their job (70%). However, a smaller percentage of leaders (62%) are satisfied with the amount of feedback they receive in their job, from the work itself and from others.

Other characteristics of the working environment are rated less favorably by Army leaders. About half of active duty leaders (51%) agree that members of their unit or organization waste time and energy on unproductive tasks, while only 27% disagree this is the case. A majority of AC company grade officers (53%) and Jr NCOs (57%) agree that time and energy are wasted in this way. A smaller percentage of leaders in the RC (41%) agree time and energy are wasted on unproductive tasks.

**Exhibit 26. Characteristics of the Current Working Environment in the Army.**



The 2010 CASAL identified organizational communication as an aspect of the working environment that showed room for improvement, a finding based on low ratings for several items. Results of the 2011 CASAL show little to no change in favorability in a number of these areas for active duty leaders:

- 51% feel they are informed of decisions which affect their work responsibilities (54% in 2010).
- 51% agree their unit or organization encourages the frank or free flow discussion of ideas (54% in 2010).
- More than one-fourth of AC leaders (28-30%) continue to indicate disagreement with these statements.

Further, 44% of AC leaders indicate senior leaders in their unit/organization encourage creative or innovative thought to a 'great' or 'very great' extent, while 46% indicate it is done to a 'slight' or 'moderate' extent, findings which are consistent with 2010.

Other job attitudes of Army leaders also show favorability. A majority of active duty leaders (84%) agree that their contributions directly impact the success of their unit or organization's

mission, while only 3% disagree. As expected, larger percentages of senior leaders (90% of field grade officers and 92% of Sr NCOs) indicate agreement to this statement than do leaders at junior levels. In comparison, more than two-thirds of active duty leaders (69%) agree their contributions directly impact the success of the Army's larger mission, while 9% disagree. For both of these statements, the active and reserve components do not differ in levels of agreement by cohort (e.g., percent agreement by AC Sr NCOs does not differ from RC Sr NCOs).

## Stress

Stress is an important consideration in the workplace, especially in the Army where a high OPTEMPO can be common and rigorous demands are placed on leaders. More than one-fifth of active duty leaders (21%) report stress from a high workload is a serious problem, while 59% view it as a moderate problem. In the reserve component, 16% of leaders view it as a serious problem and 57% view it as a moderate problem.

- The percentage of active duty leaders reporting stress is 'a serious problem' has remained fairly stable over the past three years (19% in 2009; 18% in 2010; 21% in 2011).
- However, the percentage of leaders reporting stress is 'not a problem at all' has declined steadily in recent years (29% in 2009; 25% in 2010; 20% in 2011).
- Stress from high workload is rated as 'not a problem' by a smaller percentage of leaders who are serving on a deployment (20%) compared to those who are not currently deployed (24%); however, the overall incidence of stress from high workload being reported as 'a serious problem' does not tend to differ between deployed and non-deployed environments (19-20%).
- Important outcomes that positively relate to the severity of stress from high workload include low morale ( $r = .31$ ), a lack of confidence in the ability of one's unit/organization to perform its mission ( $r = .19$ ), and a lack of confidence in following one's immediate superior into life-or-death situations ( $r = .15$ ).
- Similar findings were reported by the Spring 2010 Sample Survey of Military Personnel (SSMP); notably that the incidence of high stress has remained relatively stable since 2007, and that when surveyed in 2010, 16% of officers and 24% of enlisted Soldiers report high, very high, or extremely high levels of stress in their military job (Army Research Institute, 2010).

Stress and work demands can have an effect on Army leaders and their family responsibilities. As expected, a linear negative relationship exists between the severity of workplace stress and effective work/family balance ( $r = -.39$ ). In other words, as the perceived severity of workplace stress increases, leader effectiveness in maintaining work/family balance decreases. Overall, only about half of Army leaders (56%) agree that in their current assignment, they are able to maintain balance between their work and family responsibilities. More importantly, one in four Army leaders (26%) disagree they are able to maintain this balance. This ability to effectively maintain

### **Key Finding:**

21% of AC leaders perceive stress from a high workload to be a serious problem; only one-fourth of these leaders feel they can balance work and family responsibilities.



work/family balance is intensified by the perceived level of stress from high workload. For leaders that view stress from high workload as:

- 'A serious problem' – only 26% agree they are able to maintain balance between work and family responsibilities (56% disagree).
- 'A moderate problem' – 59% agree they are able to maintain balance between work and family responsibilities (22% disagree).
- 'Not a problem' – 78% agree they are able to maintain balance between work and family responsibilities (9% disagree).

Units and organizations can respond to an increase in leader work stress by fostering a climate in which seeking help for stress-related problems is accepted and encouraged. 2011 CASAL findings indicate that 55% of active duty leaders agree that seeking help for stress-related problems (not limited to seeking help at work) is accepted and encouraged in their unit or organization (16% disagree).

- Sr NCOs show the highest level of agreement (67%) while Jr NCOs show the highest level of disagreement (22%).
- Active duty leader agreement to this statement has fluctuated over the past three years (55% in 2009; 59% in 2010); the level of disagreement remains unchanged since 2009 (15-17%).
- Leaders in the reserve component indicate similar levels of agreement (55-59%) and disagreement (15-16%) as active duty leaders over this time period.

About half of AC leaders (55%) with recent deployment experience (within the past 36 months) agree that leaders in their unit or organization help Soldiers handle combat stress (17% disagree). Reserve component findings are comparable (57% and 15%, respectively).

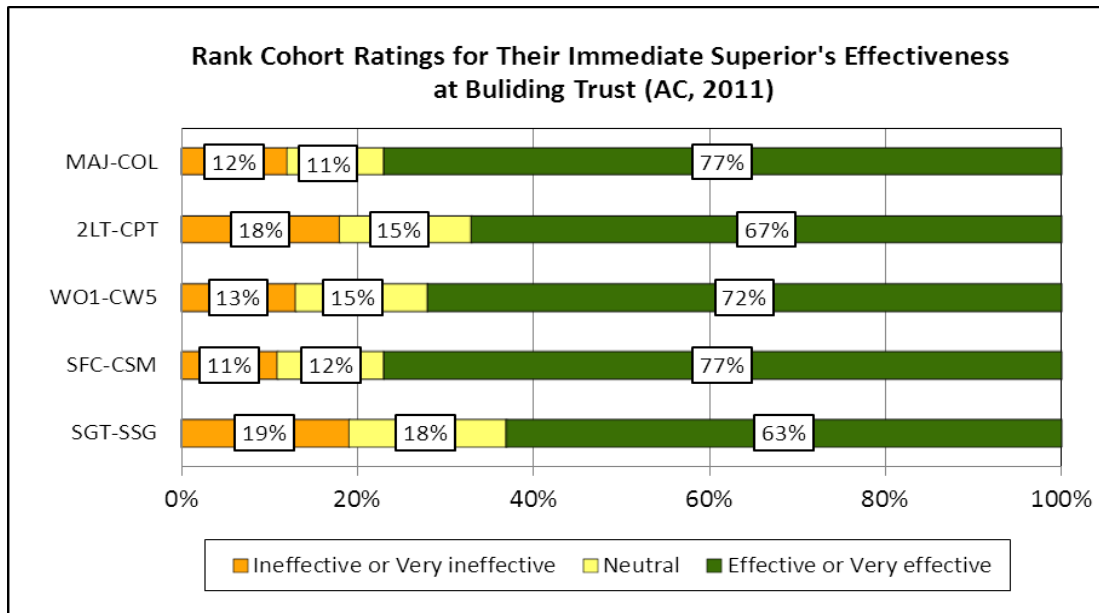
- The level of agreement by recently deployed AC leaders has fluctuated slightly over the past four years (57% in 2008; 61% in 2009; 61% in 2010; 55% 2011).
- Jr NCOs continue to show the highest levels of disagreement that leaders help Soldiers handle combat stress (29% in 2008; 23% in 2009; 22% in 2010; 26% in 2011).
- While both the active and reserve components continue to show room for improvement in this area, it should be noted that previous CASAL administrations (2009-10) found that Army leaders largely agree that Soldiers know who or where to turn when they experience job or work problems (80%), when they experience problems in their personal life (78%), and when they are dealing with stress (74%).

### **2.3.2 Leader Trust**

Trust is an important component of leadership. The latest revision to the Army's Leadership Requirements Model includes the addition of *Builds Trust* as a core leader competency. Army Leadership, ADP 6-22, outlines the requirement for leaders to build trust to mediate relationships and encourage commitment among followers, and further states that trust starts with respect among people and grows from both common experiences and a shared understanding (Department of the Army, 2012).

2011 CASAL findings indicate that 70% of AC leaders (72% RC) rate their immediate superior effective or very effective at establishing trusting relationships, while 15% rate them ineffective or very ineffective (14% RC). A larger percentage of leaders at senior levels rate their superior effective at *Building Trust* than at junior levels (See Exhibit 27). As this element is a new addition to the core leader competency model, CASAL trend data are not available.

**Exhibit 27. Ratings for Immediate Superior Effectiveness in Building Trust.**



Further, Gillespie (2003) demonstrated that trust can be conceptualized in two ways:

- Disclosure trust (e.g., I confide in my immediate superior, or discuss with my peers or subordinates work-related problems).
- Reliance trust (e.g., I am confident following my immediate superior into life-or-death situations).

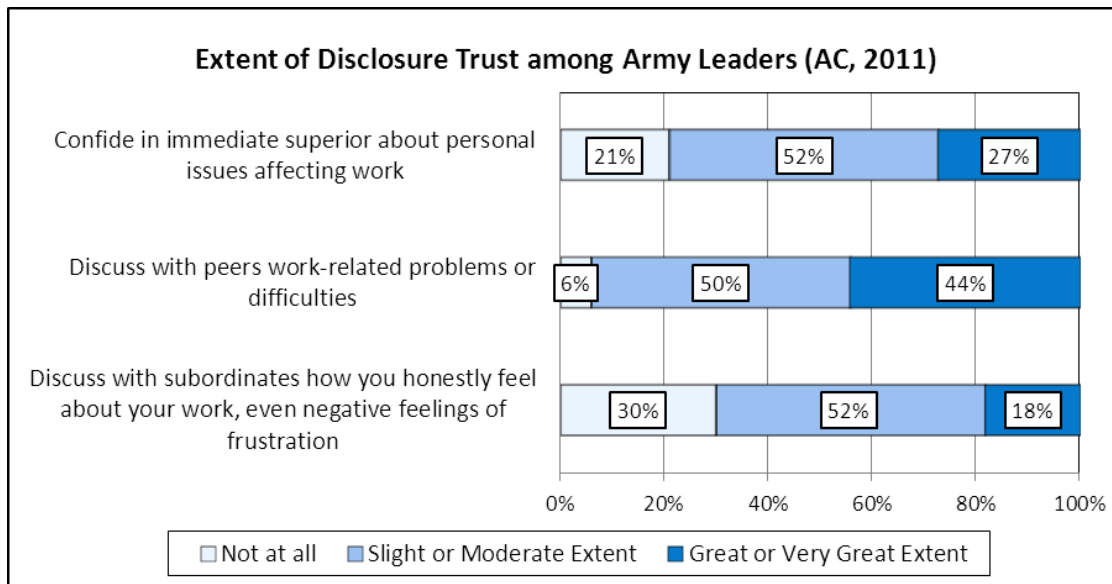
### Disclosure Trust

Results of the 2011 CASAL support previous findings that Army leaders hold relatively higher trust in their superiors and peers than in their subordinates when it comes to disclosure. For the past three years, CASAL has assessed and tracked disclosure trust among Army leaders' superiors, peers and subordinates using three items from the Behavioral Trust inventory (BTI: Gillespie, 2003):

- "To what extent do you confide in your *immediate superior* about personal issues that are affecting your work?"
- "To what extent do you discuss with your *peers* work-related problems or difficulties?"
- "To what extent do you discuss with your *subordinates* how you honestly feel about your work, even negative feelings and frustration?"

As depicted in Exhibit 28, one in five Army leaders refrain from discussing with their immediate superior personal issues affecting their work, and almost one in three leaders do not disclose to subordinates how they honestly feel about work.

**Exhibit 28. Extent of Disclosure Trust among Active Duty Leaders.**



### Reliance Trust

Overall, two-thirds of Army leaders (66%) agree or strongly agree with the statement “I feel confident following my immediate superior into life-or-death situations” while 19% disagrees. CASAL findings indicate that confidence in following one’s immediate superior into life-or-death situations positively relates to the following:

- Current level of morale ( $r = .37$ )
- Confidence in the ability of one’s unit/organization to perform its mission ( $r = .33$ )
- Satisfaction with career in the Army thus far ( $r = .19$ )
- Personal loyalty (commitment) to one’s team or immediate work group ( $r = .09$ )

Slight improvement for this item has been observed in recent years. In 2010, 68% of AC leaders agreed they were confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations, compared to 62-63% agreement in 2007-08. Overall disagreement to this statement has remained fairly steady, with about one-in-five Army leaders indicating they are not confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations (17-21%). In 2011, specific reasons for a lack of trust in one’s immediate superior (in life-or-death situations) were not collected, though data from prior years have indicated that some participants do not work in fields where life-or-death situations are common or expected. Therefore, closer observation of this type of trust in specific settings is warranted. 2011 CASAL results indicate:

- 71% of leaders currently serving in a Maneuver, Fires & Effects (MFE) (MTOE) assignments agree they are confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations; 16% disagree.
- 61% of leaders currently serving on a deployment agree, compared to 68% not currently deployed.
- 65% of leaders currently deployed to Afghanistan and serving in MFE assignments agree; 20% disagree.

Several factors relate to subordinate confidence in following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations. Overall, of leaders who indicate disagreement they are confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations, more than half view their immediate superior as ineffective/very ineffective in the following:

- Fostering esprit de corps (63%)
- Building effective teams (62%)
- Establishing trusting relationships with others (58%)
- Balancing subordinate needs with mission requirements (58%)
- Dealing with unfamiliar situations (55%)
- Interpersonal tact (54%)
- Encouraging candid, respectful discussion (51%)

Notably, most of these behaviors that relate to a lack of trust align with leading others, interacting with others, and fostering a positive climate, as opposed to achieving results, preparing oneself, or demonstrating one's own (technical or tactical) knowledge.

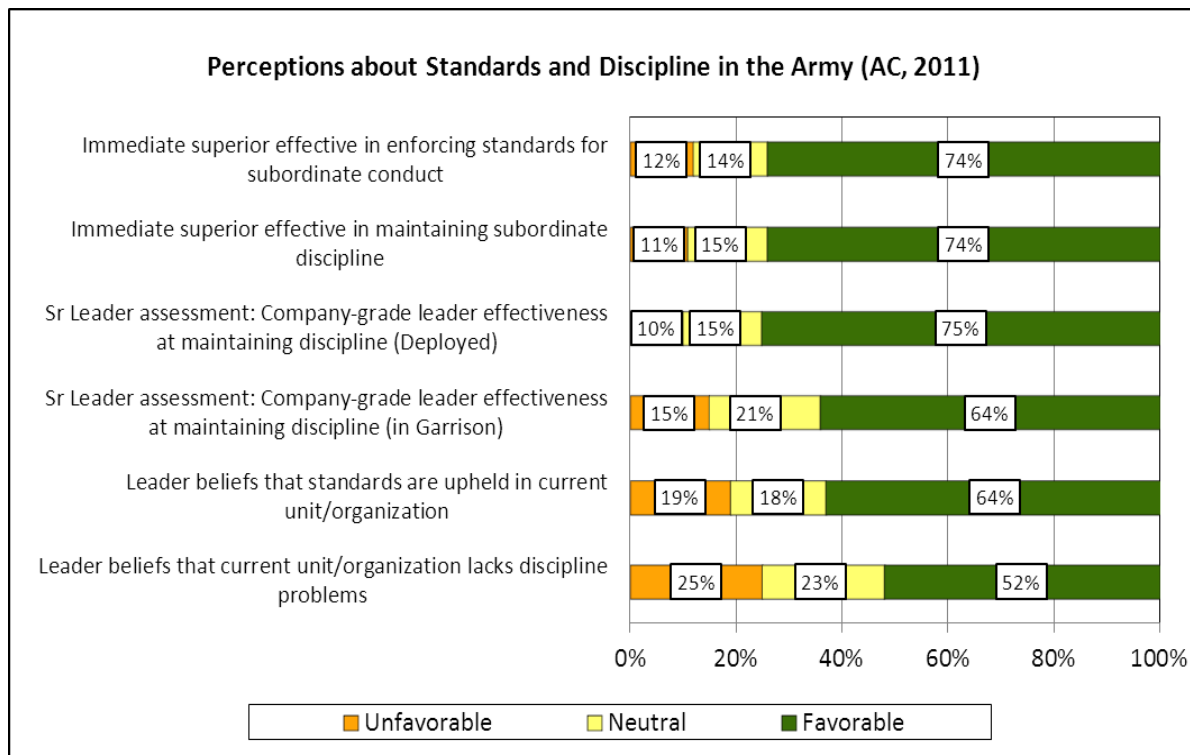
### **2.3.3 Discipline and Standards**

Findings from the 2010 CASAL provided indications that unit discipline is perceived to be a problem by some leaders. A lack of discipline is also one reason many leaders do not agree the Army is heading in the right direction to prepare for the challenges of the next ten years. Discipline was further explored in the 2011 CASAL to assess the prevalence of these perceptions and to determine related factors within the working environment.

2011 CASAL results present a mixed story with regard to the current status of discipline and standards in the Army and the overall extent of the problem (see Exhibit 29). Notably, closer examination of these variables indicates:

- Specific ratings of one's immediate superior in effectively maintaining discipline and enforcing standards are generally favorable (74% effective or very effective).
- Based on broad assessments at the unit level, junior-level leaders (i.e. Jr NCOs and company grade officers) more frequently indicate discipline *is* a problem and standards *are not* upheld compared to senior leaders.
- Senior leaders view company-grade leaders (officers and NCOs) as more effective in maintaining subordinate discipline in *deployed settings* and less effective in *garrison settings*.

**Exhibit 29. Scorecard for Current Status of Discipline and Standards in the Army.**



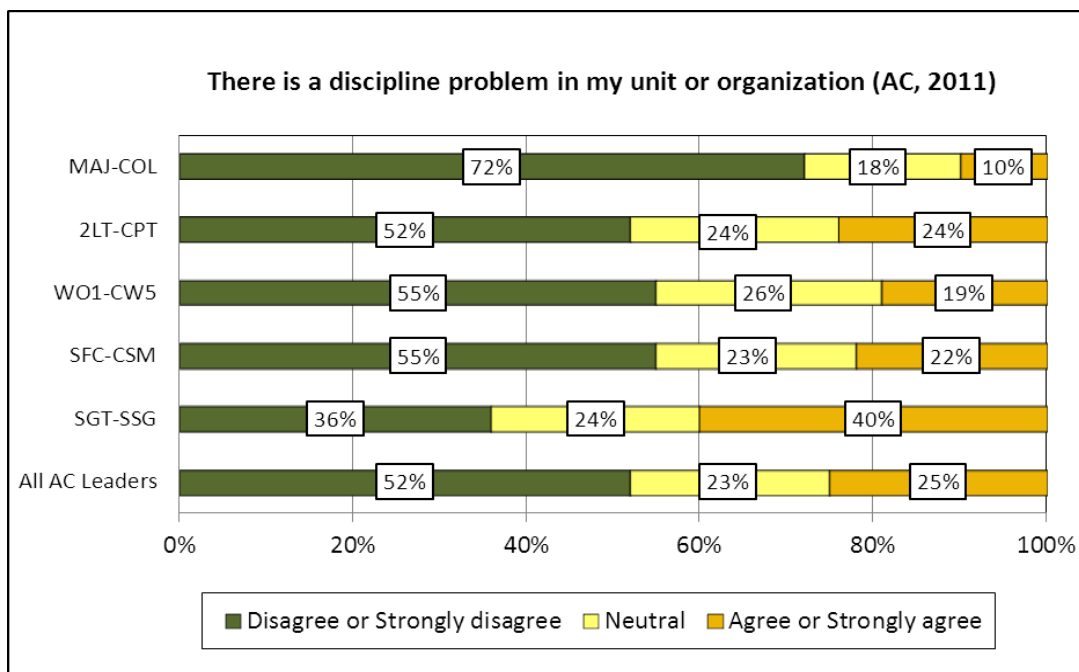
### Discipline Perceptions within Units and Organizations

At the unit or organization level, perceptions about discipline are only moderately favorable (see Exhibit 30). Overall, about half of AC leaders (52%) disagree that their unit or organization has a discipline problem, while 25% agree that a problem exists. In comparison, a slightly larger percentage of RC leaders (58%) disagree there is a discipline problem in their unit or organization, while 19% agree that a problem exists. Notably, stark differences are found in the level of agreement by rank cohorts.

While 40% of AC Jr NCOs agree there is a discipline problem in their unit or organization (36% disagree), these findings represent a unique perspective that should be interpreted with caution. Junior enlisted Soldiers (E-1 to E-4) represent the youngest members of units with the least amount of experience and leadership responsibility. These Soldiers are trained and led by Jr NCOs, meaning Jr NCOs are often working at the crux between first-line leadership and followership as a part of their regular duties. Sergeants are the first line of action in maintaining discipline within the junior enlisted ranks. Therefore, as issues arise, Jr NCOs are charged with responding and demonstrating sound leadership to restore discipline amongst their subordinates. In short, Jr NCOs may be exposed to a greater frequency of discipline problems compared to leaders at higher levels; in addition, they are also the ones that are expected to deal with and resolve discipline issues. It is worth noting that in comparison to AC Jr NCOs,

findings for RC Jr NCOs are slightly more favorable, as 46% disagree that their unit or organization has a discipline problem while 28% agree.

**Exhibit 30. Perceptions of Unit Discipline Problems by Army Leaders.**



About one in four AC company grade officers (24%) agree their unit or organization has a discipline problem (52% disagree). Company grade officers can also be expected to have regular interaction with junior enlisted Soldiers, though they less often hold the same direct-supervisory responsibilities over them that Jr NCOs have. However, the company grade officer level is expected to take action to correct unit discipline problems when necessary, including counseling and formal administrative action. Thus, the proximity of company grade officers to junior enlisted discipline problems likely gives them an adequate vantage point to assess the extent of the issue. Though as stated before, Jr NCOs remain the first line of response in dealing with and resolving discipline problems.

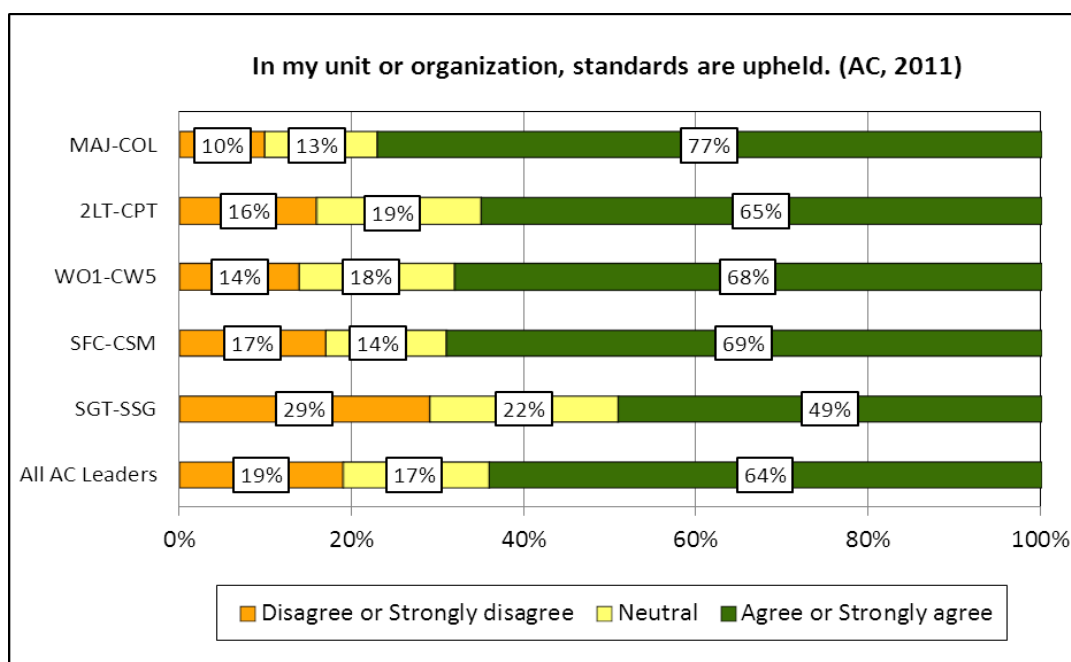
Smaller percentages of senior leaders report their unit or organization has a discipline problem. About one-fifth of Sr NCOs (22%) and warrant officers (19%) agree there is a problem in their unit or organization, while only one-tenth of field grade officers (10%) believe there is a problem. There are two potential reasons why senior leaders indicate less agreement that discipline problems exist in their units. First, senior leaders operate at echelons where there are fewer junior enlisted Soldiers, and thus fewer problems. Second, Army leaders are handling discipline problems at the appropriate (lower) level, and only extreme offenses are brought to the attention or require the involvement of leaders at higher levels.

Army leaders provided open-ended comments on reasons for the high or low occurrence of discipline problems in their units. Commonly cited was that adherence to and enforcement of

standards by unit leaders limits problems with discipline. Unsurprisingly, the perceived enforcement of standards in units and organizations is negatively related to perceived discipline problems ( $r = -.42$ ), such that leaders who perceive a high level of enforcement of standards perceive fewer discipline problems.

- Overall, the 2011 CASAL found just under two-thirds of AC leaders (64%) agree that standards are upheld in their unit or organization, while one-fifth disagree (19%).
- Comparable levels of agreement are found in the reserve component (67% agreement; 17% disagreement).
- As with unit discipline, leader perceptions about the adherence to standards vary by rank cohort (see exhibit 31).
- A larger percentage of RC Jr NCOs (58%) agree standards are upheld in their unit or organization compared to AC Jr NCOs (49%).

**Exhibit 31. Perceptions about the Adherence to Standards in Units by Army Leaders.**



It is important to reiterate that ratings for these two items represent broad assessment of one's unit or organization. At a more local level, Army leaders generally view their immediate superior as effective in enforcing standards (74%) and maintaining subordinate discipline (74%). Overall, only 11-12% of Army leaders believe their immediate superior is ineffective in either behavior, though effectiveness in these areas varies by unit position (as rated by the direct subordinates of key leaders) (see Exhibit 32).

**Key Finding:**

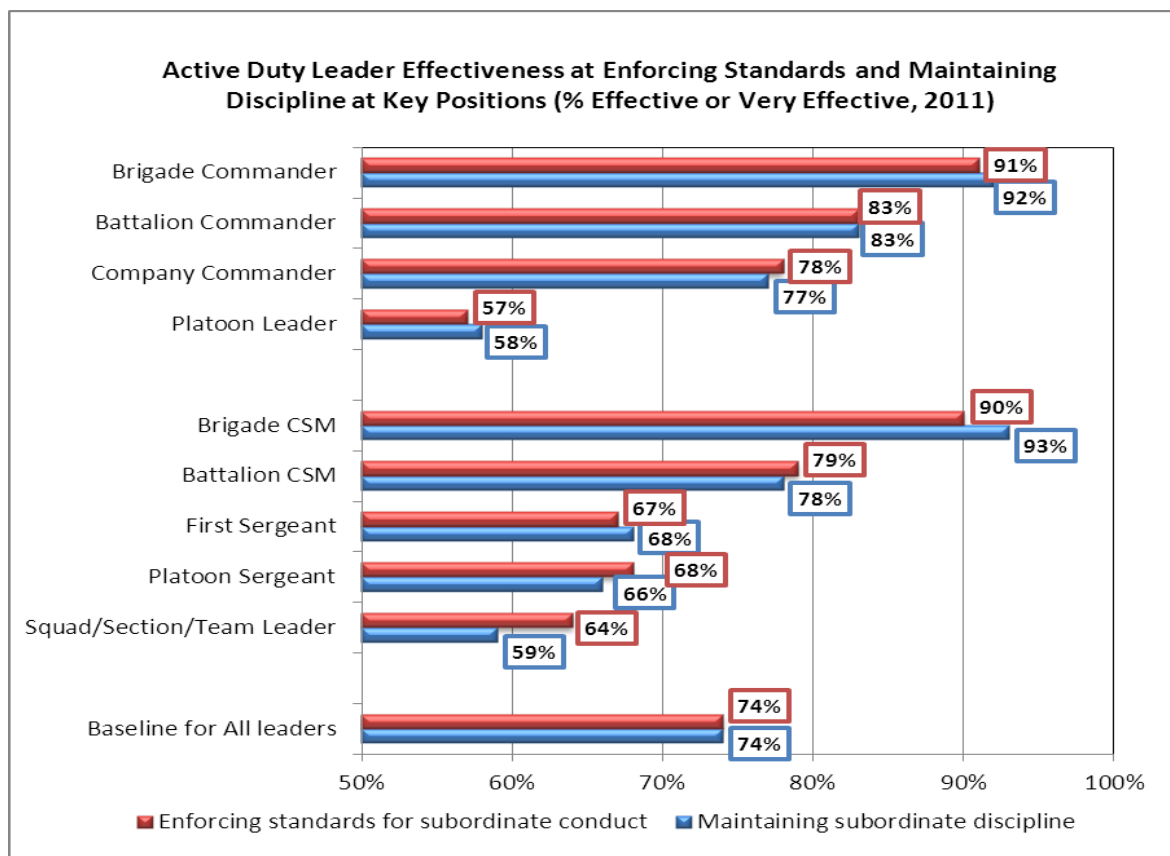
Three-fourths of Army leaders are viewed as effective in enforcing standards and maintaining subordinate discipline.

Leader comments on factors that limit discipline problems in units and organizations were categorized into themes. Most notably, the following themes are

leader actions that demonstrate what Army units are doing well to limit discipline problems, or represent factors that relate to low incidence of discipline problems:

- Demonstration of sound or positive leadership behaviors
- Enforcement and adherence to existing standards
- Leader engagement and involvement with subordinates
- Lack of junior-level Soldiers, or high frequency of NCOs
- Maturity and professionalism of unit members
- Counseling, corrective action, and on-the-spot corrections
- A positive command climate, esprit de corps, and high morale
- Accountability for all unit members

**Exhibit 32. Leader Effectiveness at Enforcing Standards and Maintaining Discipline at Various Levels.**



Conversely, the following factors were reported in leader comments as common in units and organizations that have a discipline problem:

- Poor application or enforcement of existing standards
- Poor senior leadership (e.g., fail to set the example, lack of accountability, overly self-concerned)
- The quality, attitude, or lack of values by younger Soldiers



- Leader inability to appropriately address discipline problems (e.g., can't "smoke" Soldiers anymore; existing Army policies are weak)
- Lack of attention paid to subordinates (e.g., no personal concern, no mentorship)
- Chain of command issues (e.g., leaders wanting to be friends with subordinates; inappropriate relationships; officer involvement in NCO business)

Overall, when it comes to discipline problems, the most prominent (common) theme between these findings is that *leadership matters*. Units with leaders that demonstrate positive leadership behaviors, enforce existing standards, stay involved with their subordinates, hold them accountable, demonstrate care and concern for their people, and provide subordinate development are able to head off discipline problems.

### Discipline and Situational Factors

The 2011 CASAL captured the opinions of senior leaders (COL, LTC, CW5, and CSM/SGM) on company-level leader effectiveness in handling discipline issues in two settings: garrison and while deployed. Most senior leaders (75%) view company-grade leaders (officers and NCOs) as effective in maintaining discipline in their units while deployed (only 10% rate them ineffective). However, these perceptions do not extend to garrison environments, where only 64% of senior leaders view company-grade leaders as effective in maintaining discipline (15% ineffective). Senior leaders that believe company-grade leaders are ineffective at maintaining discipline in either of these environments commented on factors they believe contribute to the problem. The most prominent themes from these comments are presented in Table 15.

#### **Key Finding:**

Senior leaders view company grade leaders as more effective in maintaining unit discipline while deployed than while in garrison settings.

The most prominent theme for discipline problems while deployed related to leader inexperience, immaturity or ineffectiveness. Senior leaders also perceive discipline problems arise while deployed because company-grade leaders want to be 'liked' by their subordinates, or otherwise engage in fraternization or friendships with subordinates. Comments also noted the linkage between discipline problems and adherence to standards, particularly in working environments that become too relaxed and where standards are not enforced. Some senior leaders believe company-grade leaders hold and permit a unit perception that certain standards 'do not apply' while deployed, a finding also reported by a study supporting the Army Profession of Arms Campaign (Center for Army Profession and Ethic, 2012). Senior leaders also indicate that as deployed settings involve operational demands that require a strong mission focus, this too detracts from company-grade leader effectiveness in maintaining unit discipline.

The most frequently mentioned theme for factors related to garrison discipline problems addressed differences between garrison environments and deployed environments. Specifically, that after a decade at war, company-grade leaders have grown so accustomed to rapid deployment cycles that the art of garrison leadership has been lost. Presumably, many company-grade leaders have spent their entire career in a post-9/11 Army and are not familiar

with normal garrison operations, and this contributes to how they do (or do not) maintain discipline while in garrison.

**Table 15. Senior Leader Assessment of Factors that Make Company-Grade Leaders Ineffective at Maintaining Unit Discipline.**

<b>Factors that Make Company-Grade Leaders (Officers and NCOs) Ineffective at Maintaining Discipline in Their Units</b>	
<b>While Deployed (Senior leader comments; n=170)</b>	<b>While in Garrison (Senior leader comments; n=295)</b>
1. Inexperienced, immature, or ineffective leaders	1. Not deployment focused, or unfamiliar with garrison procedures
2. Fraternization – Leaders want to be liked/friends	2. Standards are relaxed/not enforced
3. Standards are relaxed/not enforced	3. Inexperienced, immature, or ineffective leaders
4. Leaders are focused on task at hand; Environmental distractors	4. Leaders not engaged with Soldiers; Don't know their troops
5. Selfishness or careerism – Less concern for mission or others	5. Cutting Soldiers slack between deployments; Letting troops unwind
6. Lack of senior leader support; Leaders hands are tied	6. Leaders are focused on task at hand; Environmental distractors
7. Belief standards or rules are different when deployed	7. Less control and accountability in garrison
	8. Lack of senior leader support; Leaders hands are tied
	9. Fraternization – Leaders want to be liked/friends
	10. Lack of priorities in garrison; Complacent in low threat environment

As with deployed environments, relaxed standards also impact unit discipline in garrison. Other factors affecting discipline problems in garrison include a lack of engagement between company-grade leaders and their Soldiers, that they do not know their troops well enough on a personal level, or are otherwise distant from their Soldiers (e.g., “leaders don’t leave their offices”). Some believe company-level leaders feel the need to cut Soldiers some slack between deployments (during the *Reset* phase of the ARFORGEN cycle) and allow Soldiers that time to ‘unwind’, which leads to discipline problems. This is further exacerbated by leader transitions during this dwell time in garrison, where company-level leaders rotate out from the unit and a disconnect between leader and Soldier accountability can occur. Other factors affecting company-level leaders maintaining discipline include distractors that occur in garrison environments; a loss of control and accountability for Soldiers “after hours” while in garrison (to include a lack of barracks inspections or checks such as drug screenings); and a lack of senior leader support for company-level leaders enforcing standards and discipline, in that leaders “hands are tied” when it comes to handling issues.

Comments by senior leaders reinforce the notion that leadership matters when it comes to unit discipline. Company-grade leaders need to demonstrate maturity and positive leadership behaviors, to lead by example, to hold themselves and others accountable, and not allow the environment to become too relaxed. Leaders must be engaged with and know their

subordinate Soldiers. Senior leaders must support company-grade leaders by enabling them with sufficient authority to lead Soldiers and maintain discipline within their ranks.

### ***Summary of the Effects of Climate and Situational Factors on Leadership***

Career satisfaction is high among Army leaders, and this represents a steady trend. Morale levels in the Army continue to be generally favorable, though leaders at lower ranks and those that are deployed report lower levels of morale. Large percentages of Army leaders demonstrate affective commitment, meaning they identify with and enjoy serving in the Army. A high percentage of leaders are committed and feel personal loyalty to their team or immediate work group. About one-third of Army leaders are eligible for retirement but choose to remain in the Army. Of those not currently eligible to retire, about two-thirds intend to remain in the Army until retirement or beyond.

The current working environment in the Army shows several strengths, including high agreement that leaders' knowledge, skills and abilities are suited for the challenges of their work, and leader confidence in the ability of their unit or organization to perform its mission. However, stress from a high workload continues to be seen as a serious problem by one in five Army leaders, a consistent trend observed over the past three years. Leaders are viewed as moderately effective at establishing trusting relationships, and about two-thirds of leaders are confident following their immediate superior into life-or-death situations. Leaders are most comfortable disclosing work-related problems with their peers and least likely to do so with their subordinates.

At a local level, most leaders believe their immediate superiors effectively enforce standards and maintain discipline in units. On a broader level, senior leaders less often view issues with discipline and standards as problematic compared to leaders at lower levels, which is not unexpected. Junior-level leaders are charged with maintaining discipline in their subordinate junior enlisted Soldiers, and see these issues as more problematic. Senior leaders view company-grade leaders as less effective at maintaining unit discipline while in garrison than while deployed. Army units and organizations that effectively limit discipline problems have leaders that demonstrate sound leadership behaviors, lead by example, adhere to and enforce existing standards, and know and stay engaged with their subordinates.

### **3. Quality of Leader Development**

The quality of Army leader development was addressed by the following areas:

- The Army leader development model
- Subordinate development
- Leader development practices
- Senior leader perspectives on leader development
- Pre-deployment leader preparation and training
- Institutional education
- The personnel management system

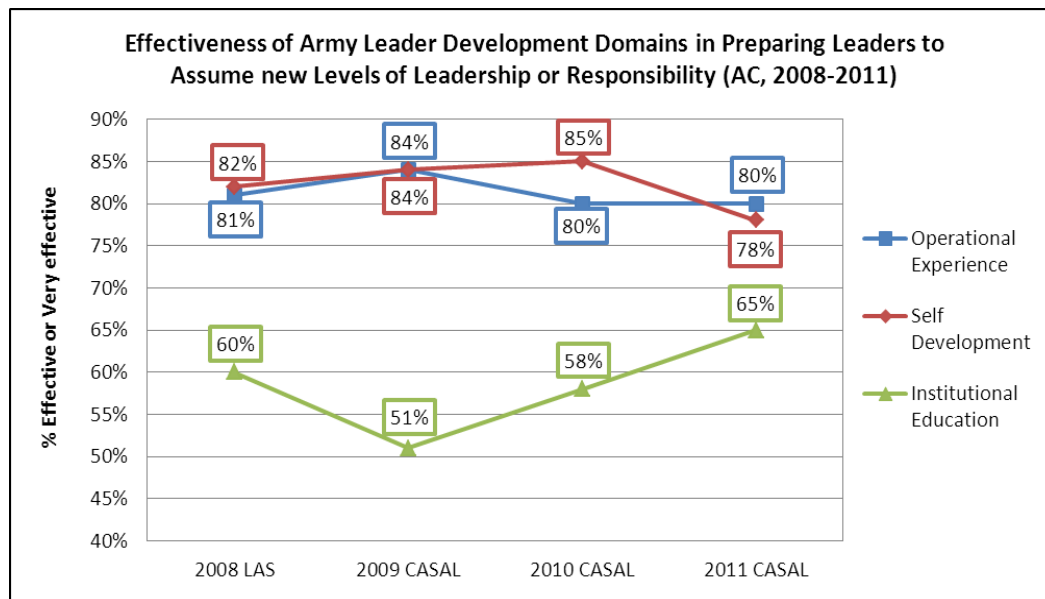
The key findings that relate to each of these areas provide an overall picture of the current quality, role, and areas for improvement for leader development in the Army.

#### **3.1 The Army Leader Development Model**

Army leaders are developed in a deliberate, continuous, and progressive manner that spans their entire career. The Army's model for leader development consists of three mutually supporting training domains: operational, self-development, and institutional. Each of these domains encompasses training, education, and experiences (Field Manual 7-0). The institutional domain includes schools that provide knowledge, skills, and practice to leaders to ensure they can perform critical tasks to a predefined proficiency. Additionally, the institutional domain instills key competencies, values, and skills needed by leaders to succeed in any circumstance. Self-development is the continuous, life-long process that is used to supplement and enhance knowledge and skills gained through operational experiences and institutional education and training (Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009). The operational domain includes training activities conducted at home station, during training events (e.g., CTCs) and while operationally deployed. Commanders and leaders conduct training in the operational domain to build upon the knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviors that their subordinates gain in the institutional and self-development domains.

The effectiveness of each of the three leader development domains has been tracked annually since 2008 (see Exhibit 33). Operational experience and self development are consistently viewed as being effective by large percentages of Army leaders in preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility. A smaller percentage of leaders view institutional education as effective (though steady progress is observed over the past 3 years).

**Exhibit 33. Comparison of the Effectiveness of the Army Leader Development Domains (2008-2011).**



### Operational Experience

Army leaders value operational (work) experience as a method for preparing them to assume new levels of leadership and responsibility. Larger percentages of field grade officers (90%) and Sr NCOs (88%) view their operational experience as effective in developing their leadership skills compared to junior-level leaders, though no more than 12% of any rank cohort rate this method of development as ineffective. CASAL findings from past years have also shown that leaders are generally satisfied with the variety of experiences provided by the Army, and that operational experiences such as duty assignments and on-the-job training are seen as having a large impact on development (Riley, Hatfield, Nicely, Keller-Glaze, & Steele, 2011; Keller-Glaze et al., 2010).

### Self Development

Army leaders also view self development as an effective method for preparing for new levels of leadership and responsibility (78%), though the level of effective ratings shows a slight decline in 2011 (compared to 82-85% in 2008-2010). Furthermore, about two-thirds of Army leaders (67%) agree they know specifically what they need to do to develop as a leader. Consistent with past years, a smaller percentage of company grade officers agree they know what they need to do to develop themselves (56%) compared to other rank groups.

Perceptions about unit and organizational support for self development show greater variation. Overall, a strong organizational emphasis for self development does not appear to be

widespread, and only about one-third of leaders agree their unit or organization makes time available for leader self development.

- 59% of leaders agree their organization expects them to participate in self development (other than mandatory training), down from 64% in 2010.
- 35% of leaders agree their organization makes time available for self development, down from 41% in 2010.

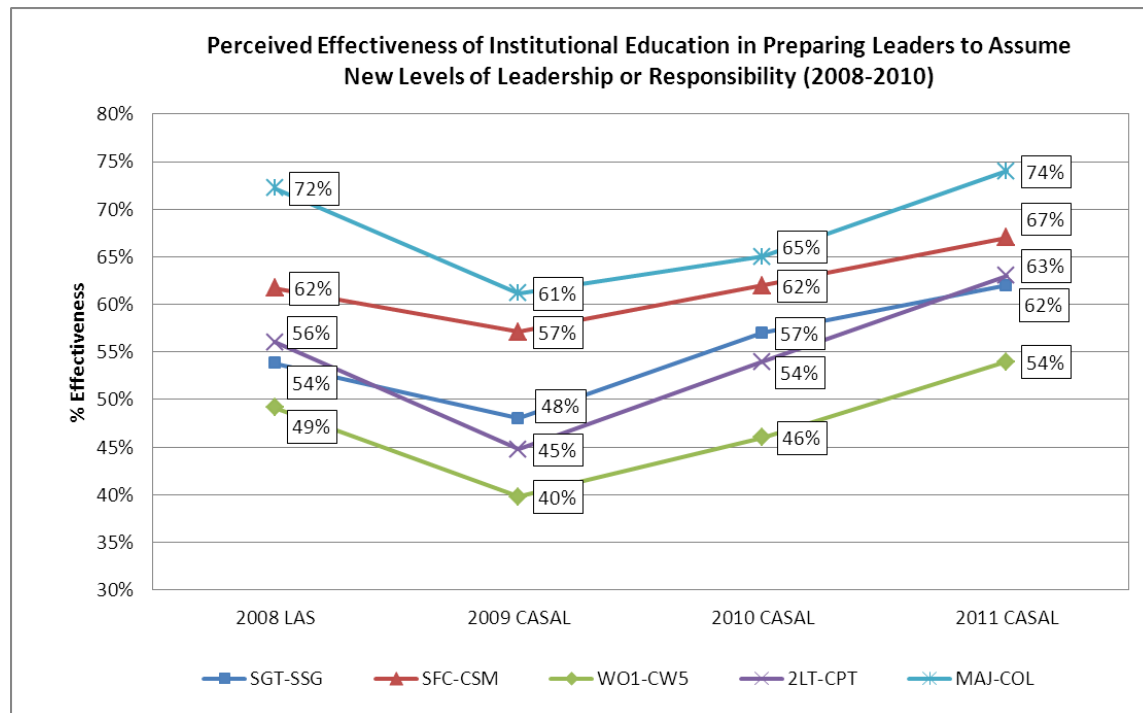
### Institutional Education

Army regulation states that the purpose of the institutional domain is to provide “Soldiers, leaders, and Army Civilians the key knowledge, skills, and attributes required to operate successfully in any environment” (AR 350-1, p. 47). 2011 CASAL findings continue to reflect the same trend evident in previous years, where institutional education is viewed as effective by a smaller percentage of leaders than the operational and self-development domains. However, attitudes toward institutional education have continued to improve for a second year and have nearly achieved a two-thirds benchmark for effectiveness.

- In 2011, 65% of Army leaders rate institutional education courses or schools as effective for preparing them to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility.
- Larger percentages of field grade officers and Sr NCOs report that courses or schools have been effective means for preparing them (74% and 67%, respectively) compared to other rank cohorts.
- Warrant officers report the least favorable views for institutional education effectiveness for preparing them for new levels of leadership or responsibility (54% effective or very effective).
- Overall, perceptions about the effectiveness of institutional education for preparing leaders are at the highest level observed in the past four years, and this increase in favorable perceptions is observed across rank cohorts.

Exhibit 34 displays the level of favorable ratings (2008 to 2011) toward institutional education for preparing leaders for greater responsibility and leadership. In addition, 61% of AC leaders agree that instruction from institutional training has provided a foundation that helps them get more learning out of everyday experiences, while nearly one-fourth (23%) neither agree nor disagree. In comparison, 70% of RC leaders agree institutional education has benefitted them in this way (20% neither agree nor disagree). Given the high percentage of neutral ratings for this item, some leaders may find it difficult to assess the linkage between these contexts.

**Exhibit 34. Ratings of Effectiveness for Institutional Education from 2008-2011.**

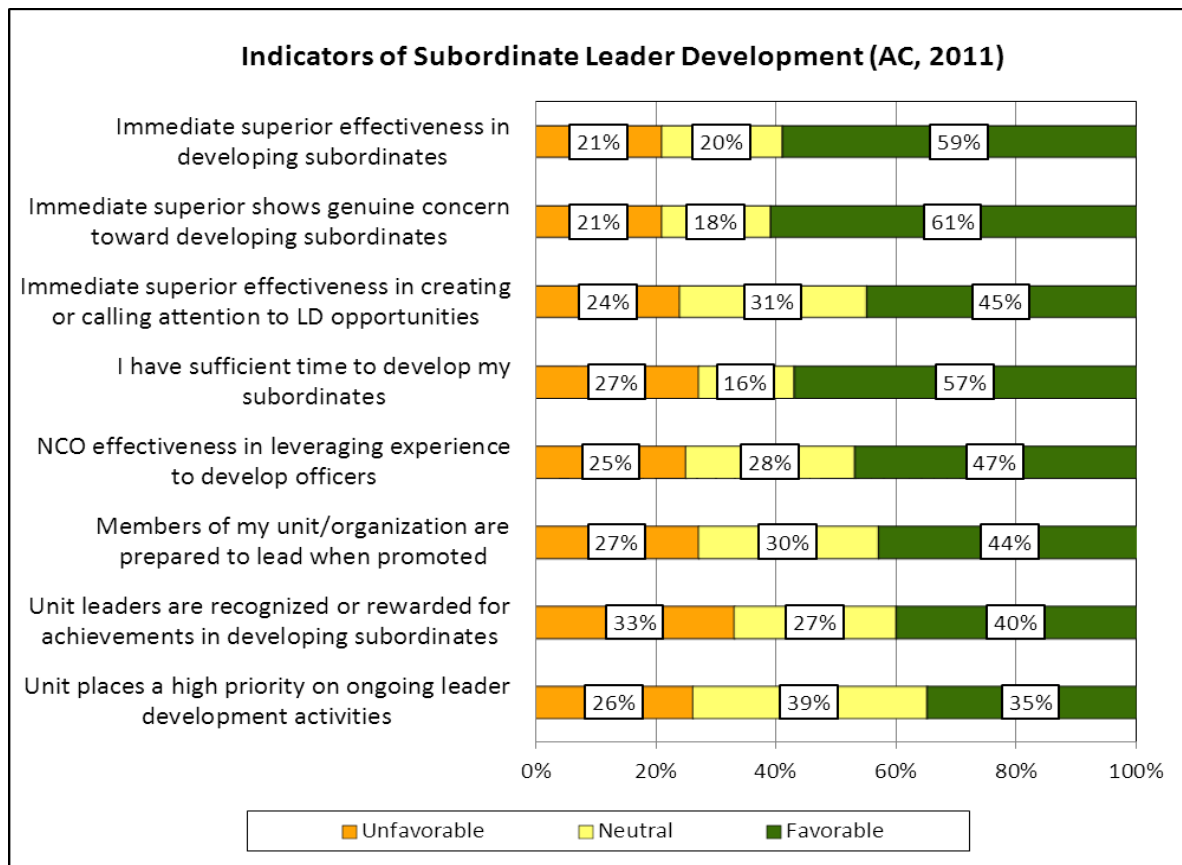


Perceived organizational support for course and school attendance is mixed. About half of AC leaders (51%) believe their superiors would support their attendance at an institutional course/school if the opportunity required that they miss a key unit or organizational event (e.g., CTC rotation, MRE); about one-third (31%) disagree. About two-thirds of RC leaders (68%) agree their superiors would allow such an absence while 17% disagree. These findings are consistent with results from 2010 and provide an indication of how, to senior leaders, Army course attendance ranks in importance compared to organizational requirements. Specific ratings on courses and schools within the Army institutional domain are discussed in further detail in section 3.6 of this report.

### 3.2 Subordinate Development

While all Army leaders are responsible for developing those junior to them to the fullest extent possible (AR 600-100), this area consistently shows the greatest room for improvement for leaders at all levels. The results of various aspects of leader effectiveness in developing subordinates are displayed in Exhibit 35. These eight items from the 2011 CASAL, along with trends from previous years, indicate Army leaders continue to show room for improvement in this area. *Develops Others* has consistently been rated least favorable of all core leader competencies, and, several of these indicators of unit leader development fail to show improvement in recent years (see Exhibit 36). Given the importance of preparing the next generation of Army leaders for effective leadership, subordinate development requires the Army's focus and effort in both enabling leaders to do it well and holding them accountable for this leadership responsibility.

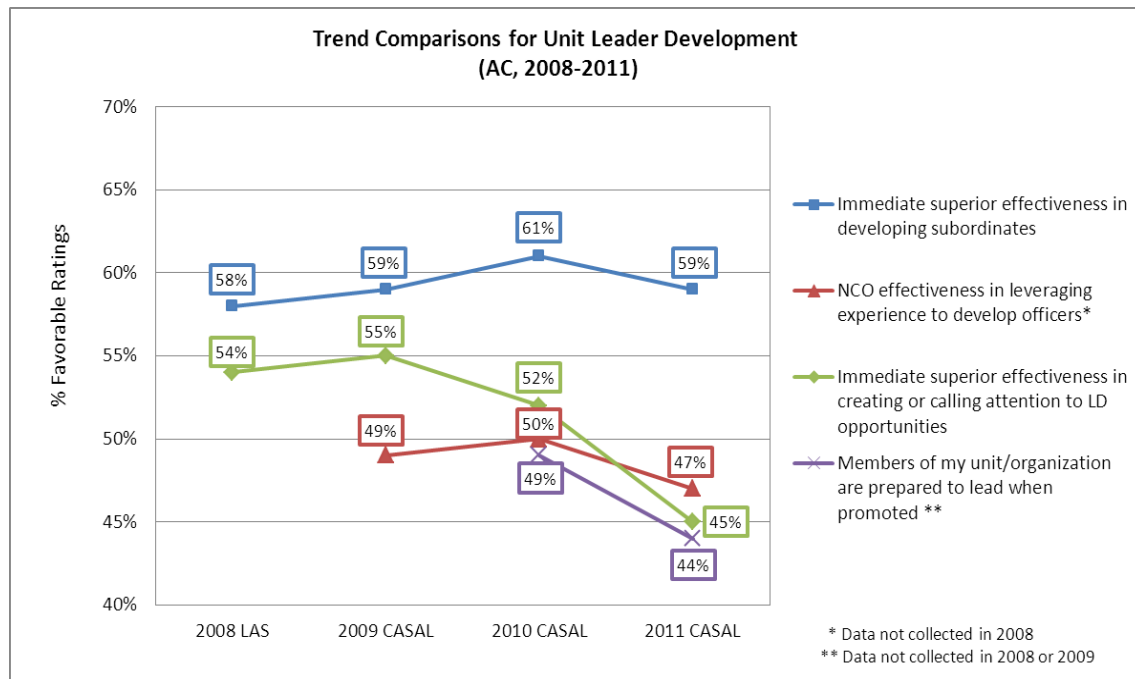
**Exhibit 35. A 2011 Scorecard for Subordinate Leader Development in Units and Organizations.**



As a broad assessment, two-thirds of Army leaders (66%) indicate leaders in their unit or organization develop the leadership skills of their subordinates to a 'slight' or 'moderate' extent, while only one-fourth (25%) report this occurs to a 'great' or 'very great' extent. These findings show a slight decline since 2009, though no more than 9% of leaders indicate leader development is done 'not at all' in their units during these years. These results are similar to what was reported by a study supporting the Army's Profession of Arms (Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, 2011), which found that 44% of respondents agreed that leaders in their unit/organization invest their time and efforts to develop them. Thus, indications suggest unit leader development is occurring but not at an optimal level.



**Exhibit 36. Comparisons of Unit Leader Development from 2008-2011.**



Another important indicator of unit-based leader development is the effectiveness in which NCOs leverage their experience to develop officers. This developmental relationship is especially important at the platoon leadership level between new lieutenants and seasoned NCOs. Sr NCOs and company grade officers generally view NCOs as effective or very effective in leveraging experience to provide this development (54% & 53%, respectively).

- In comparison, smaller percentages of field grade officers and Jr NCOs rate this developmental relationship as effective (44% and 41%, respectively).
- Few warrant officers view NCOs as effective in developing officers (32%), though as technical experts and officers themselves, they may not recognize or value the contribution of NCO expertise in developing officers.
- Findings on NCO effectiveness in developing officers are consistent with those observed in 2009 and 2010 (49-50% effective).

As reported in past CASAL findings, an important outcome of leader development is the preparedness of unit members to lead in their new responsibilities once they are promoted. Senior leaders tend to assess this more favorably than leaders at lower levels. In 2011, 60% of AC field grade officers agree that members of their unit or organization who are promoted are prepared to lead in their new assignment. Less than half of leaders in the other cohorts agree or strongly agree, including 49% of Sr NCOs, 47% of company grade officers, 41% of warrant officers, and only 28% of Jr NCOs. When compared to previous years, findings are less favorable in 2011, and show an overall decline in agreement (-5%) for leaders in both components.

### Ratings for immediate superiors

A continuing trend in CASAL findings is that the development Army leaders receive from their immediate superior needs improvement, especially the development received by leaders at junior levels (i.e., company grade officers and Jr NCOs). Less than two-thirds of all Army leaders (59%) rate their current immediate superior as effective or very effective at developing their subordinates, and favorable ratings reported by CASAL have been near this level (58-61%) since 2008. Another consistent trend is that ratings by company grade officers and Jr NCOs show the least favorability among AC leaders (56% and 55%, respectively, in 2011).

Further exploration into the involvement of leaders in the development of their subordinates indicates mixed results:

- 45% of AC leaders rate their immediate superior effective or very effective at creating or calling attention to leader development opportunities in their current assignment; while 24% rate them ineffective. These findings show a sharp decline compared to the past several years (52% in 2010; 55% in 2009; 54% in 2008; 59% in 2007).
- 2010 CASAL focus groups revealed that many leaders believe the effectiveness in which subordinate development occurs relies heavily on how much time and effort one's immediate superior is willing to put into the development. Thus, genuine concern for subordinate development is an important factor in how well the development plays out.
- The 2011 CASAL found that 61% of AC leaders agree with the statement "my immediate superior shows genuine concern when it comes to developing my leadership skills," while 21% indicate disagreement. Army leaders show room for improvement in this regard.
- Notably, only 55% of Jr NCOs report their immediate superior shows genuine concern toward developing their leadership skills, while 26% disagree/strongly disagree.

### Organizational Support for Leader Development

Aside from personal and genuine concern for subordinate development, Army leaders need support from their unit or organization and its senior leaders for the development to be effective. A 2010 CASAL recommendation called for increased senior leader communication of the priority for leader development. Research has found that an organizational vision that explicitly involves subordinates promotes followers to align with that vision (Stam, Knippenberg, & Wisse, 2010). Specifically, senior leaders should integrate leader development into their vision for organizational success, and one method to do this is to recognize or reward unit member achievements in developing others. However, 2011 CASAL findings indicate that less than half of AC leaders (40%) agree this is done in their unit or organization, while 33% disagree. RC leaders show similar levels of agreement (43%) and disagreement (29%) as AC leaders.

- Notably, 51% of AC Sr NCOs agree that achievements in developing others are recognized or rewarded. However, less than one-third of Jr NCOs (30%) believe this occurs in their unit or organization (42% disagree).

- This disparity in perceptions is important; Jr NCOs are likely the leaders on the receiving end of any praise or recognition (for developing their subordinates) from Sr NCOs, and most do not perceive this to be occurring.

CASAL findings from past years have shown that the priority for leader development in units and organizations is generally low, and notably, has gotten worse. In 2010, only 46% of AC leaders rated the priority their unit or organization placed on leader development to be high or very high (down from 53% in 2009, and 55% in 2008). Ratings by RC leaders were only slightly more favorable during these years, but also experienced a slight decline in 2010.

CASAL focus groups conducted in 2010 revealed that many leaders interpret the term *unit leader development* to mean formal or scheduled activities such as classroom-based briefings or meetings (e.g., OPD/NCOPD, Sergeant's Time). To a lesser extent, leaders in more senior ranks (SFC, MSG, CPT, and MAJ) also identified developmental interactions such as counseling, mentorship, and providing opportunities to lead as key methods of leader development. Research has shown that the most impactful methods of leader development are learning from experience as well as ongoing, in-the-moment interactions with others (McCall, Lombardo, & Morrison, 1988). Thus, in the 2011 CASAL, leaders were asked to rate the priority their unit or organization places on ongoing, day-to-day leader development activities such as opportunities to lead others, receiving feedback from superiors and peers, mentoring, and on-the-job training. Ratings for the priority given to these less formal, day-to-day activities were even less favorable; 35% of AC leaders and 40% of RC leaders rate the priority their unit/organization places on these activities as high or very high (22-26% low or very low).

Another indication of support for leader development is whether Army leaders feel they have sufficient time available to develop their subordinates. The 2011 CASAL found that 57% of AC leaders agree they have sufficient time to carry out the duties and responsibilities for developing their subordinates, while 27% disagree. These findings are consistent with those observed in 2010 (57% agreement), but show a decline from 2009 (63% agreement).

**Key Finding:**

26% of Army leaders think their unit places a low priority on ongoing methods of leader development; 32% of junior level leaders do not believe they have time to develop subordinates.

- Larger percentages of AC field grade officers (61%), Sr NCOs (65%), and warrant officers (67%) agree they have sufficient time to develop subordinates compared to other rank cohorts.
- Only about half of AC company grade officers (53%) and Jr NCOs (50%) agree; nearly one-third (31% and 32%, respectively) disagree.
- Leaders in the RC, whom traditionally serve on a part-time basis, show less agreement (53%) than AC leaders that they have sufficient time to develop subordinates; nearly one-third (30%) indicate disagreement, a finding not unexpected.

The time and priority that units devote to leader development is also evidenced in the level of support they grant to development outside of the unit. However, CASAL findings on the support for temporary absences for the purpose of individual leader development are mixed:

- 51% of AC leaders agree their unit would support their attendance at an institutional course/school if it meant missing a key unit or organizational event (e.g., CTC rotation, MRE); about one-third (31%) indicate disagreement. These findings are consistent with results from 2010 and provide an indication of how, to senior leaders, Army course attendance ranks in importance compared to organizational events.
- 47% of AC leaders agree their unit would support their temporary absence from the unit for the purpose of individual leader development (34% disagree).
- Support for individual leader absences appears to be greater in the reserve components: 64% of RC leaders believe their superiors would support their absence for the purpose of individual development, and 68% for an absence to attend a course or school.

### **3.3 Leader Development Practices**

Since 2005, the CASAL has assessed the positive impact various leader practices have had on leader development. The 2011 CASAL was the first year in which leaders also assessed the frequency in which they engage in or receive development through various practices. As shown in Table 16, about two-thirds of AC leaders frequently or very frequently develop through opportunities to lead others (66%), and through learning from their peers (66%); further, only 4% or less of AC leaders report they never engage in these practices. Army leaders less frequently engage in on-the-job training, self development activities, and learning from their superiors, though notably, 90% or more of AC leaders indicate they engage in these practices to some degree. Practices that leaders engage in least frequently include developmental counseling from their immediate superior, mentoring from someone outside the chain of command, and formal leader development within their unit.

**Table 16. The Frequencies of Engagement in Leader Development Practices for Active Duty Leaders.**

<b>Active Duty Leader Engagement in Various Leader Development Practices</b>			
How frequently do you engage in or receive the following...	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely / Occasionally</b>	<b>Frequently / Very Frequently</b>
Opportunities to lead others	4%	31%	66%
Learning from peers (observing, collaborating, receiving feedback)	3%	31%	66%
On-the-job Training	6%	36%	58%
Self development activities	6%	45%	49%
Learning from superiors (observing, job shadowing, receiving feedback)	10%	46%	44%
Formal leader development programs within the unit (OPD/NCOPD, Sergeant's Time)	14%	52%	35%
Mentoring from someone outside the chain of command	17%	49%	33%
Developmental counseling from immediate superior	19%	55%	26%

More important than the frequency in which leaders engage in these practices is the positive impact they have on their development. A larger percentage of leaders rate practices related to operational experience as having a 'large' or 'great' impact on development compared to practices related to developmental interactions with their superiors or mentors, or formal leader development programs within the unit (see Exhibit 37). These findings are consistent with results from past years, though direct comparisons are not made due to changes in survey methodology.

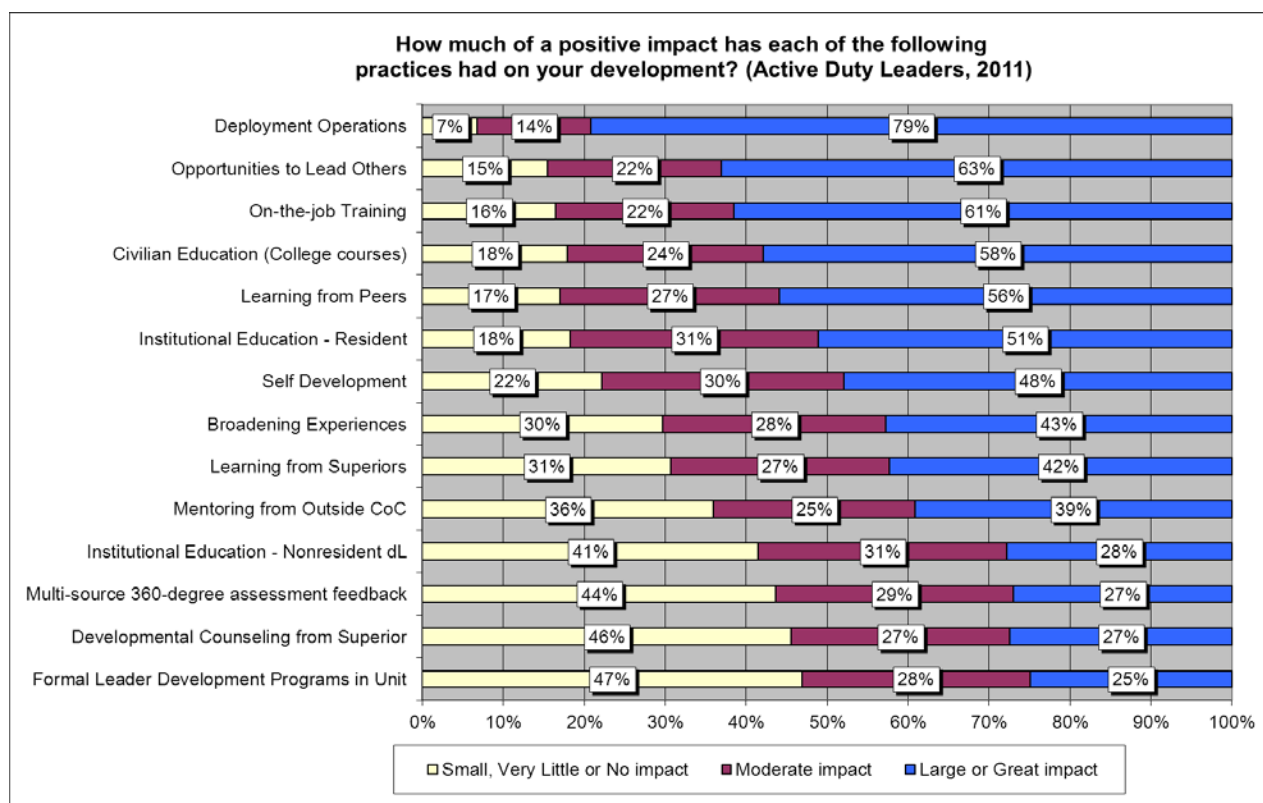
- Nearly two-thirds of AC leaders view opportunities to lead others and on-the-job training as having large or great impact on their development. A majority of leaders (58-66%) report engaging in these practices frequently or very frequently.
- About half of Army leaders (48%) view self development as having had a large or great impact on their development; notably, only 6% of Army leaders report they 'never' engage in self development activities.
- Mentorship (specifically from someone outside the chain of command) has had a large or great impact on development for 39% of AC leaders and a moderate impact on development for 25% of AC leaders. Just over one-third of AC leaders (36%) report mentoring from outside the CoC has only had a small, very little or no impact on their development. Overall, 17% of AC leaders indicate they never engage in this form of development. These findings show little change since the Army Training and Leader Development Panel officer study, which reported that while officers believe mentoring is important for both personal and professional development, a majority of officers report not having mentors (Combined Arms Center, 2003).

Findings on these developmental practices also relate to the need for improved subordinate development in the Army (discussed previously in section 3.2 of this report). A larger percentage of leaders rate learning from their peers (56%) as having a large or great impact on their development compared to learning from superiors (42%). Peer learning (66%) is also reported to occur frequently/very frequently for a larger percentage of leaders than learning from superiors (44%). Overall, these findings are consistent with previous CASAL results which found that learning from peers and superiors are desired methods of development and that when they occur, they are generally seen as being ‘impactful’ on development. However, of concern in 2011 is that 46% of leaders report they engage in learning from their superiors rarely or occasionally, and that when this occurs, nearly one-third of leaders (31%) report it has a small, very little or no impact on their development.

**Key Finding:**

19% of Army leaders report they ‘never’ receive counseling from their immediate superior; 49% report counseling has had a small, very little, or no positive impact on their development.

**Exhibit 37. The Impact of Various Practices on the Development of Active Duty Leaders.**



One in five Army leaders (19%) report they never receive developmental counseling from their immediate superior, while just over half (55%) indicate it occurs rarely or occasionally. Presumably, formal counseling by one’s immediate superior should occur at least annually.

Nearly half of AC leaders (46%) indicate developmental counseling from their immediate superior has a small, very little or no impact on their development. Twenty-seven percent report it has had a large or great impact while another 27% rate the impact as moderate. While not favorable, these findings are consistent with results of prior years of CASAL (2005-2008) and the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP), both of which found that counseling is unevenly applied in the Army.

Only about one-third of AC leaders (35%) report that they participate in formal leader development activities (such as OPD, NCOPD, and Sergeant's time) within their unit. Half of leaders report they engage in these activities rarely or occasionally, while 14% never do so. Further, these activities are viewed as having a small, very little, or no impact on development by 47% of leaders, while 29% rate the positive impact on their development as moderate.

As discussed previously, many Army leaders tend to associate unit leader development with formal activities that appear on a training calendar, involve slide deck briefings or presentations, and become the first activities canceled when operational demands are high. However, findings from the 2011 CASAL demonstrate that the most impactful and frequently occurring methods for leader development include informal opportunities such as leading others, on-the-job training, and learning from peers. Thus the Army should continue to capitalize on these types of opportunities as much as possible. However, as noted previously, the priority units place on these types of ongoing leader development practices is not currently optimal (i.e., 35% high or very high priority; 26% low or very low), and requires attention and effort to improve.

Deployment operations, formal education (e.g., course or school attendance), working with outside organizations, and formal assessment and feedback systems also impact the development of Army leaders.

- A large majority of AC leaders rate deployment operations as having had a large or great positive impact on their development. A consistent trend in CASAL surveys is that deployments are seen as very developmental by Army leaders due to the nature of the experience (e.g., opportunity to lead in real world situations, opportunity to apply skills, doing one's job where it matters most).
- Formal education is generally seen as impactful on leader development. More than half of AC leaders rate both civilian education (e.g., college courses) (58%) and resident Army-provided courses (51%) as having a large or great positive impact on their development. Notably only 28% of AC leaders rate institutional education via distributed learning as having a large or great impact, while 41% indicate it has had a small, very little or no impact. This is consistent with past findings on nonresident course attendance, which found that smaller percentages of AC leaders rated learning through distributed learning (dL) as effective compared to resident course attendance through PCS or TDY (Riley, Hatfield, Keller-Glaze, Fallesen, & Karrasch, 2008).
- 43% of AC leaders view broadening experiences with outside organizations (e.g. Unified Action Partner, civic involvement) as having a large or great impact on their development; 28% rate these experiences as having a moderate impact.

- 27% of AC leaders rate Multi-source 360-degree assessment feedback (superior, peer and subordinate ratings) as having a large or great impact on their development; 29% rate this as having a moderate impact.

Notably, many of these experiences inherently include other elements of development. For example, peer learning likely occurs to a great extent during attendance at PME or college courses. Deployments often provide great opportunities for leading others. Once leaders receive and interpret the feedback from a multi-source assessment, they engage in goal setting (e.g., creation of a developmental action plan) to guide their self development.

### 3.4 Senior Leader Perspectives on Leader Development

Army senior leaders (in the ranks of COL, LTC, CW5, CSM and SGM) report that broad indicators of support for leader development in the Army are not optimal. Two-thirds of senior leaders agree that leaders in their unit or organization understand the importance of developing the leadership skills of their subordinates (68%), while 15% disagree. Further, less than half of senior leaders (44%) believe the Army successfully provides leaders with an individualized approach to their development as leaders, while one-third (33%) disagree that this is done. Senior leader perceptions on the lack of flexibility of existing Army systems (e.g., personnel management) and the impact on leader development is further discussed in section 3.7 of this report.

Senior leaders commented on ways in which company-grade leaders (officers and NCOs) can better implement leader development into their units. The three most predominant themes in these comments for improving unit leader development included:

- An increased focus on mentoring, coaching and teaching (from senior leaders)
- Greater senior leader support for leader development (more emphasis, priority, direction)
- Provide junior leaders with opportunities to lead (enable them without micromanaging)

Many senior leaders believe mentoring of company-grade leaders (by their senior leaders) is needed to improve the implementation of company-level leader development. Some senior leaders believe voluntary mentoring relationships should be encouraged in units, while others think a mandatory approach should be implemented.

#### **Key Finding:**

Senior leaders recognize that increased support for leader development is needed to improve leader effectiveness in developing subordinate leaders.

Another common view among senior leaders is that support for leader development (at the company level) is lacking and needs senior-level emphasis. Comments reflect a need for commanders and leaders at higher echelons to emphasize, direct, or elevate the priority for leader development at the company level. As one respondent commented, “When leaders above the company grade officers participate and make it a part of the business, it will become part of the mission set that is a priority at the company level.” As stated by another respondent, “subordinates do what the boss checks on; everybody’s plate is full, but senior leaders have to



at least informally check.” Part of support for leader development involves senior leaders setting the example by developing their own subordinates and holding their subordinates accountable for doing the same. They further support their subordinates by creating a climate for development by allowing for honest mistakes and not fostering a zero-defect environment.

Finally, an actionable way to show support for leader development is to enable junior leaders by providing opportunities to lead. Specifically, it is beneficial for senior leaders to empower subordinate leaders (including the company commander and other unit leaders) to plan and conduct their unit’s training (including leader development training) without overly prescriptive guidance. Senior leader comments stated there needs to be less micromanagement and more autonomy at the company level. Senior leaders can do this by demonstrating trust for company-grade leaders and providing them more freedom of action and latitude to lead.

### **3.5 Pre-Deployment Preparation and Training**

#### Pre-Deployment Leader Training and Combat Training Centers

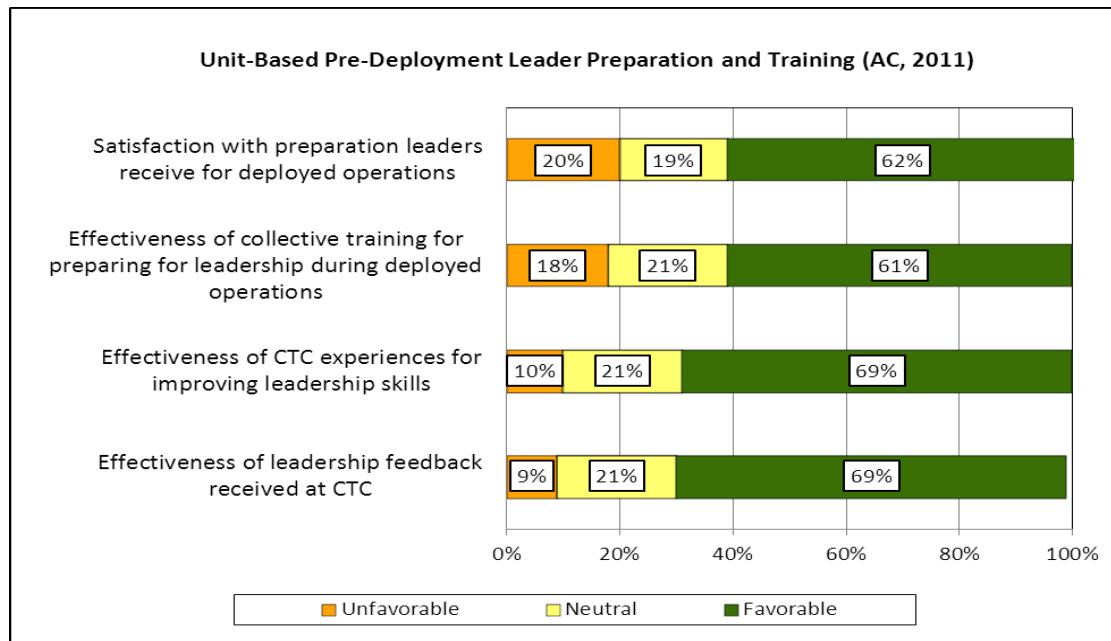
The preparation and training that leaders receive prior to deployed operations continue to be areas that show room for improvement (see Exhibit 38). Ratings by Army leaders that deployed within the past 36 months show that:

- 62% are satisfied/very satisfied with the preparation leaders receive for deployed operations.
- 61% rate collective training (e.g., company and higher training events) effective/very effective in preparing them for leadership during deployed operations.
- Company grade officers and Jr NCOs indicate greater percentages of dissatisfaction and rate collective training less effective than other rank groups.

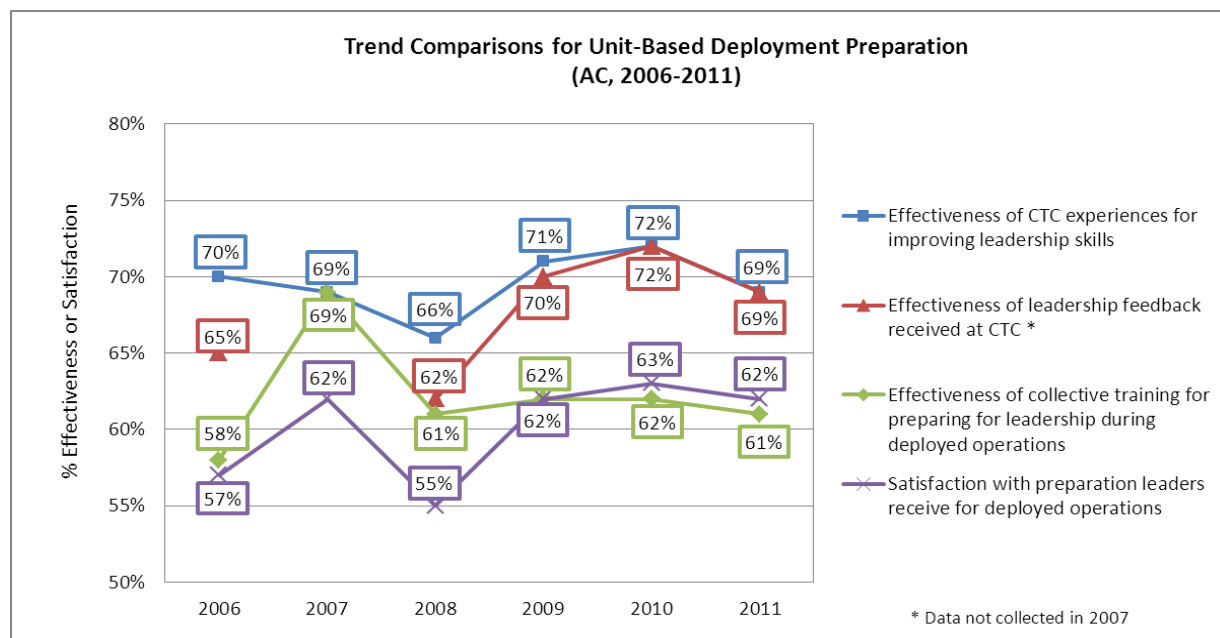
In comparison to AC leaders, smaller percentages of RC leaders indicate satisfaction with pre-deployment preparation (59%) and rate collective training effective/very effective (57%).

Findings also suggest that perceptions about pre-deployment training have not improved in recent years. Favorable ratings for several items show slight fluctuation since 2006 (see Exhibit 39 for comparisons and trends).

**Exhibit 38. Indicators of Pre-deployment Leader Preparation and Training.**



**Exhibit 39. Comparisons of Unit-Based Pre-Deployment Leader Preparation and Training (2006-2011).**



Combat training center (CTC) attendance has remained fairly stable over that past several years. Fifty-nine percent of AC leaders report having attended a CTC in their career (compared to 61% in 2010, and 58% in 2009). Smaller percentages of RC leaders report having ever attended a CTC during their career (44%). Of leaders who have attended a CTC, 69% rate their

CTC experiences as effective or very effective for improving their leadership skills, while another 69% rate the leadership feedback received at the CTC as effective or very effective. These findings are largely unchanged since 2009.

Of leaders who recently attended a CTC (within the past year), two-thirds rate the experience as effective for improving their leadership skills (67%) and another two-thirds rate the leadership feedback they received as effective (67%). These findings are consistent with results from 2009 and 2010.

These data provide a general indication of the effectiveness of unit-based pre-deployment training and CTC experiences for developing leaders. However, direct inferences on the effectiveness of CTC cadre in providing leader development and effective leadership feedback should not be made based on these findings. During CTC rotations, leaders may also receive feedback and development from their unit superiors and/or other members of their chain of command. The collective experience has an impact on leader development and influences perceptions of the experience.

### 3.6 Institutional Education

The following bullets summarize the overall ratings for the quality of Army education, expectations of course graduates before they attend, and perceptions about Army education systems.

#### ***Quality of Army Education***

- Army leader perceptions of the institutional domain are more favorable in 2011 than in the past four years.
- About two-thirds of leaders (65%) report institutional education has effectively prepared them to assume new levels of leadership and responsibility.
- At least 75% of senior leaders (COL, LTC, CW5, and CSM/SGM) report that recent OES and NCOES course graduates meet or exceed their expectations with respect to various leadership capabilities; 59% of senior leaders agree that subordinate officers and NCOs are gaining the appropriate KSAs from Army courses and schools that they need to be prepared for their next jobs.
- Perceptions of recent course graduates regarding the quality of the leader development received at the course remain relatively unchanged when compared to previous years; perceptions regarding the content of courses/schools have improved.

Qualities of Army Courses or Schools	Metric – Ratings by Recent Graduates (2007-2011)	Change from 2010 CASAL
Quality of the leader development received	62% Good or Very good	-1%
Course improved leadership capabilities	49% Effective or Very effective	-2%
Course content was current with COE	67% Agree or Strongly agree	+6%
Content relevant to leadership responsibilities in job	54% Agree or Strongly agree	+3%
Timing of Attendance	64% About the right time	-6%

### ***Course Expectations***

- Prior to attendance, Army leaders have modest (45%-49%) expectations that their course will impact their leadership abilities to a 'great extent.' After attendance to courses/schools, 66% of Army leaders indicate their course expectations were met or exceeded.
- Ill-timed course content, poor course instruction, or the absence of developing key leadership skills are reasons course expectations are not met.
- Comments by recent course graduates and senior leaders indicate institutional education does not meet expectations with regard to increasing knowledge and skill *to develop subordinates*.

### ***Education Systems***

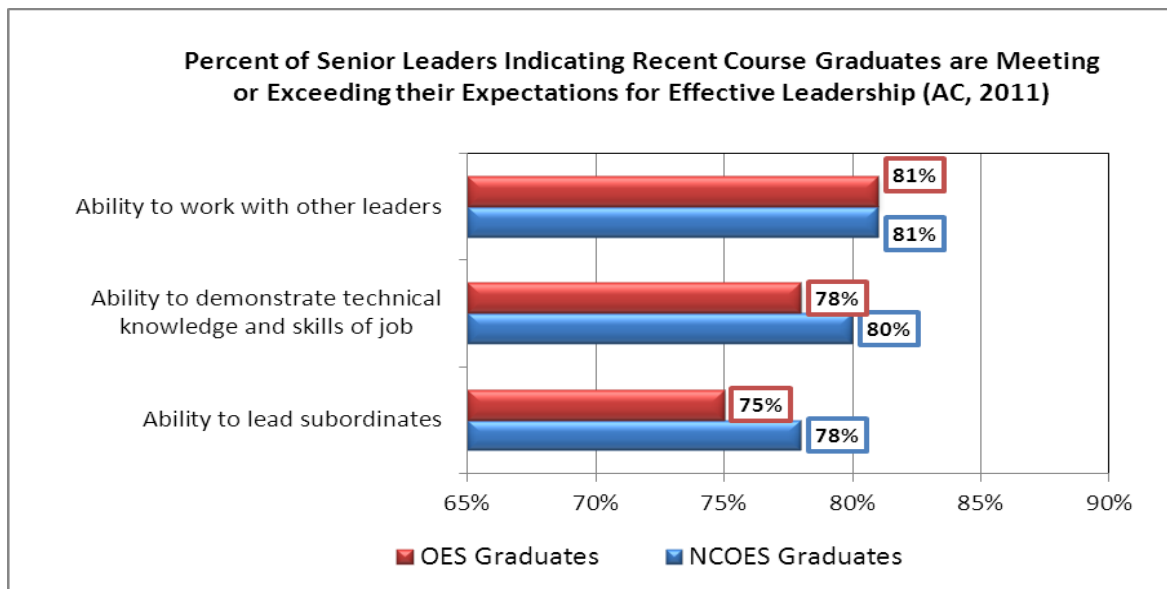
- Consistent with 2010, both the Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) B and the Captains Career Course (CCC) show room for improvement for perceived utility and meeting leader expectations.
- Compared to other NCOES courses, the Senior Leader Course (SLC) meets expectations the least, shows the lowest favorability for the quality of leader development received, and is viewed as having the least utility by graduates. As a mid-grade course, the SLC may be challenged to educate NCOs who already hold a broad range of knowledge and experience when they attend the course.
- Recent graduates of Warrant Officer Education System courses hold less favorable views toward course attendance and quality than do officers and NCOs.

Qualities of Army Courses or Schools	Metric – Ratings by Recent Graduates (2007-2011)	OES	WOES	NCOES
Expectations for course prior to attendance	Met, Exceeded, or Greatly exceeded expectations	70%	63%	65%
Quality of the leader development received	Good or Very good	61%	56%	64%
Utility of knowledge or skills gained	Of considerable use or Extremely useful	55%	44%	51%

### **Perceptions of Senior Leaders**

Senior leaders (in the ranks of COL, LTC, CW5, CSM and SGM) generally view the quality of the product they are receiving from Army courses and schools favorably. Recent graduates of OES and NCOES courses are meeting, exceeding, or greatly exceeding senior leader expectations when it comes to their abilities to lead subordinates, to work with other leaders (officers, warrant officers, NCOs, DA Civilians), and to demonstrate the technical knowledge and skills required in their assigned duties (see Exhibit 40).

***Exhibit 40. Degree in Which OES and NCOES Course Graduates are Meeting or Exceeding Senior Leader Expectations.***



Although recent OES and NCOES graduates are generally meeting or exceeding senior leader expectations in these areas of leadership, their overall preparedness (to be successful in their next jobs) is viewed less favorably:

- 58% of AC senior leaders agree that OES graduates are gaining the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities in their courses that they need to be successful in their next jobs; 14% disagree.
- In comparison, 60% of AC senior leaders agree that NCOES graduates are gaining the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities to be successful, though 14% of LTC/COL and 27% of SGM/CSM disagree.
- In the reserve component, 59% of senior leaders agree OES graduates are gaining the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities in their courses; 67% agree for NCOES graduates (14% and 13% disagree, respectively).

Of senior leaders who disagree about the quality of OES or NCOES in preparing graduates, open-ended comments indicate both officer and NCO graduates lack an adequate ability to develop and mentor subordinates, an adequate ability to communicate effectively, and adequate skill in planning and time or resource management. This small group of senior leaders also notes that recent OES graduates tend to lack an adequate ability to lead and influence others, and that NCOES graduates lack critical or creative thinking skills. Table 17 displays the most predominant themes represented in the comments.

**Table 17. Senior Leader Perceptions about KSAs that Course Graduates Lack.**

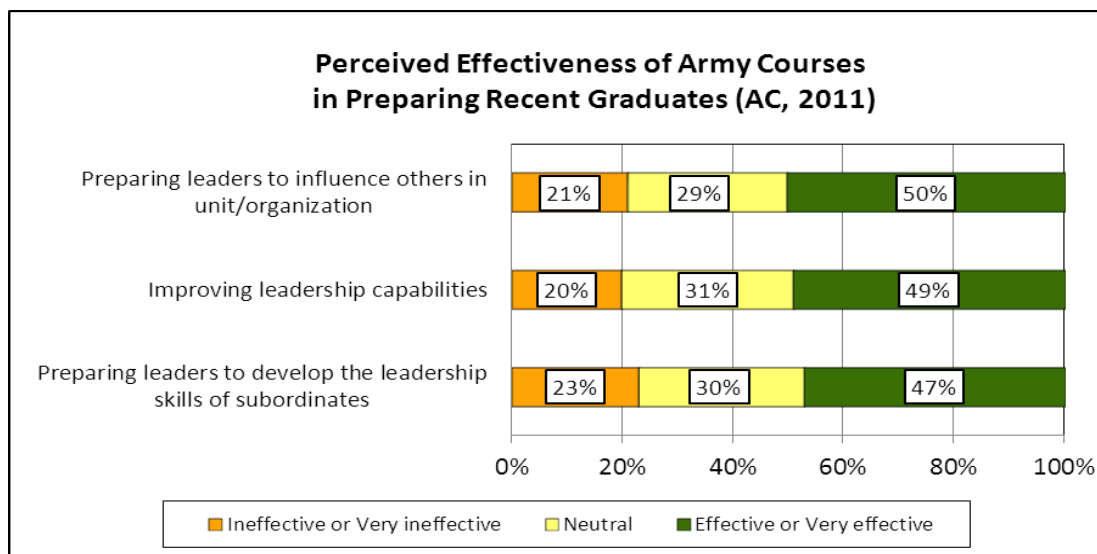
Senior Leader Perceptions of the Knowledge, Skills or Abilities Lacking in Recent Course Graduates		
	OES Graduates (n=47)	NCOES Graduates (n=40)
Ability to develop & mentor subordinates	♦	♦
Skill in planning and time/resource management	♦	♦
Skill in communicating	♦	♦
Ability to lead & influence others	♦	
Critical or creative thinking skills		♦

### Perceptions of Recent Graduates

The 2011 CASAL asked uniformed leaders who graduated from an Army course or school between 2007 and 2011 to assess their course experience (a group hereby referred to as *recent graduates*). Exhibit 41 displays the effectiveness of Army courses in preparing leaders for future leadership requirements. In general, approximately half of recent graduates believe the course or school was effective at preparing them to influence others within their unit or organization and for preparing them to develop the leadership skills of their subordinates. Similarly, only half perceived the course or school to have improved their leadership capabilities, a perception consistent with findings of the 2010 CASAL. Additionally:

- 64% of Army leaders believe they attended their most recent course or school at about the right time in their career to prepare them for the responsibilities that they have held; 34% believe they attended the course too late or way too late in their career.
- 62% of Army leaders view the leader development they received at the course as ‘good’ or ‘very good.’

**Exhibit 41. Perceived Effectiveness of Army Courses in Preparing Recent Graduates.**



There are contrasting perceptions of effectiveness within the officer and NCO corps (see Table 18). Jr NCOs more frequently than Sr NCOs rate their most recent course or school as effective for preparing them for leadership. Amongst officers, however, field grade officers more frequently than company grade officers view their recent Army course or school as effective in preparing them for future leadership requirements. Across all cohorts, company grade officers show the lowest favorable ratings that their most recent course was effective (favorable ratings never achieve 50%).

**Table 18. Perceptions by Recent Graduates about Institutional Education Quality by Rank Cohort.**

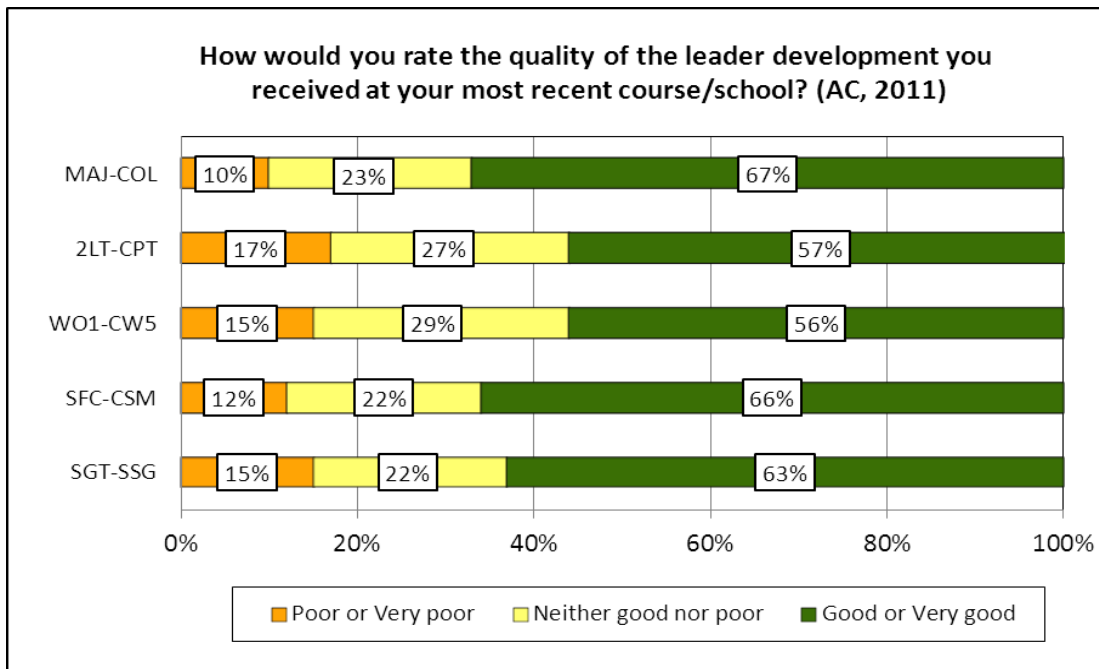
<b>Effectiveness of Institutional Education in Preparing Recent Graduates (AC, % Effective/Very Effective)</b>				
	<b>SGT - SSG</b>	<b>SFC - CSM</b>	<b>2LT-CPT</b>	<b>MAJ-COL</b>
Improving leadership capabilities	51%	47%	47%	57%
Preparing to influence others in unit/organization	50%	47%	45%	64%
Preparing to develop the leadership skills of subordinates	52%	48%	40%	50%

Nearly two-thirds of recent graduates (64%) believe they attended their most recent course or school at about the right time in their career to prepare them for the responsibilities that they have held. While this finding is favorable, almost all of the remaining graduates (34%) believe they attended the course too late or way too late.

- 42% of AC warrant officers and Jr NCOs and 38% of Sr NCOs believe their most recent course came too late or way too late in their career (compared to 15% of company grade officers and 30% of field grade officers).
- Perceptions by cohort are consistent with findings from 2010, with the exception of warrant officers. In 2010, 67% of warrant officers said their most recent course came at 'about the right time' in their career, while 31% said they attended too late in their career.

2011 CASAL findings indicate that 62% of Army leaders view the leader development they received at their most recent course or school as 'good' or 'very good.' This general perception has fluctuated over the past seven years, though perceptions observed in 2011 are consistent with 2010 CASAL findings (63%). There are minimal differences in perceived course quality between Jr NCOs and Sr NCOs, though a large gap exists between officer cohorts. A larger percentage of company grade officers rate the quality of their most recent course as 'poor' or 'very poor' compared to other rank cohorts, and the views of warrant officers are similar to junior commissioned officers (see Exhibit 42).

**Exhibit 42. Perceptions by Recent Graduates about Course Quality.**



### Course Content and Instruction

2011 CASAL findings indicate views by recent graduates on the content of courses and schools are improving compared to past years.

- 54% of recent graduates agree the content of their most recent course was relevant to the leadership responsibilities they face in their jobs (while alone not very favorable, this is a 3% increase since 2010).
- 58% of the recent course graduates agree the course content increased their awareness of their leadership strengths or weaknesses (consistent with 2010 findings).
- 67% of recent graduates express agreement that the content of their most recent course was up to date with the current operating environment at the time they attended.

In 2010, less than two-thirds of recent graduates (61%) believed the course content was current, and there was concern regarding how a lack of currency can impact a leader's transfer of education to their leadership responsibilities and unit (Hatfield, Steele, Riley, Keller-Glaze, & Fallesen, 2011).

In 2011, warrant officers show the lowest levels of agreement that their most recent course was relevant to the leadership responsibilities in their job (52%) or increased their awareness of leadership strengths and weaknesses (53%). However, both Sr NCOs and Jr NCOs show the lowest levels of agreement that the content of their most recent course was up to date with the current operating environment (66% and 67%, respectively).



The quality of course instructors continues to be viewed favorably by recent graduates, as 78% rate the quality of their instructor as good or very good, comparable with findings from the 2010 CASAL. Notably, the most favorable ratings for the quality of course instructors were from warrant officers, as 82% indicate their instructor was good or very good. In 2011, 55% of the recent graduates agreed their course instructor provided autonomy by allowing choices and options for course work and activities, (compared to 53% in 2010).

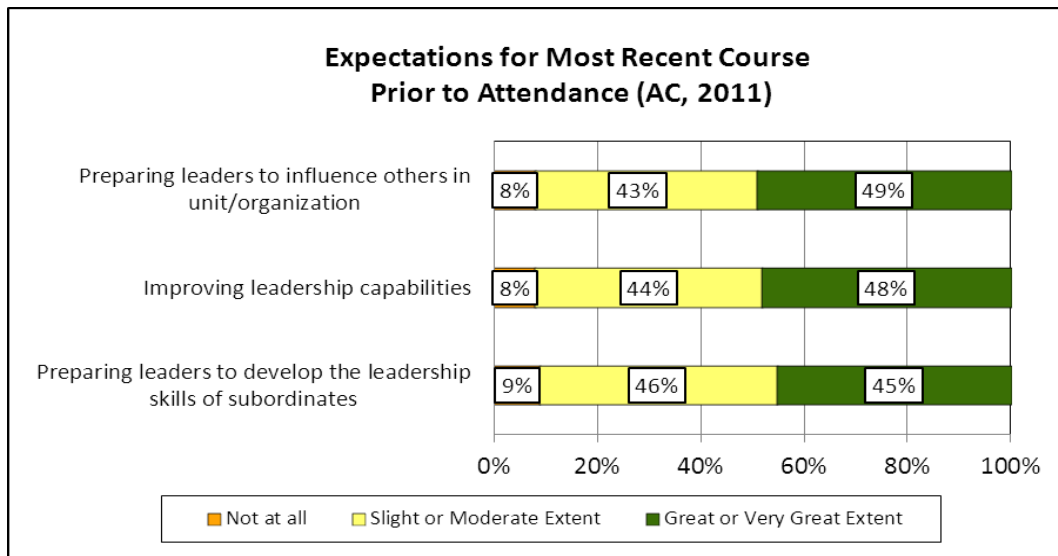
- Company grade officers show the lowest level of agreement (46%) that their course instructor provided autonomy by allowing choices and options for coursework and activities. One contributor to this low assessment by company grade officer instruction could be a continued pedagogical, rather than andragogical, approach to learning.
- It should be noted, however, that views of available autonomy are more favorable for advanced courses within NCOES and OES.

### Leader Expectations for Courses

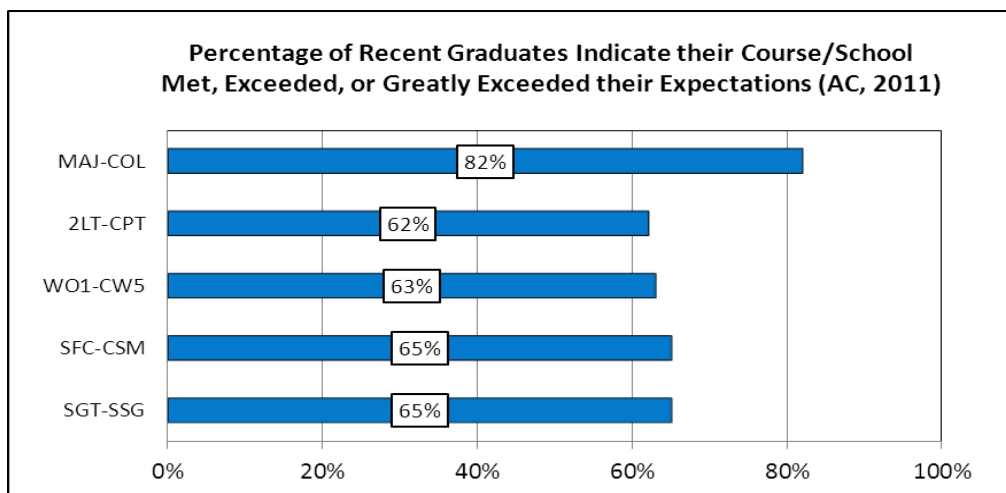
While course ratings continue to be mixed, so too are the expectations that Army leaders have for the courses and schools they attend. 2011 was the first year that CASAL examined the course expectations of Army leaders. As a broad indicator of the expectations Army leaders have for the institutional domain, less than half (46%) of AC leaders believe the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in their *next* job will be provided to them at their *next* institutional school or course. Nearly one-third of leaders (30%) neither agree nor disagree their next course will provide the necessary knowledge and skills they will need, while one-fourth (24%) disagree.

Army leaders who recently completed a school or course (2007-2011) further assessed the expectations they had regarding leadership improvement *prior to attending* their respective course. About half of AC leaders expected the course to increase or improve their abilities in various areas – in leading others, in developing the leadership skills of subordinates, and in influencing others – to a ‘Great’ or ‘Very great’ extent (45-49%). Large percentages (43-46%) of the remaining leaders report they expected the course to impact leadership ability or understanding to a ‘Slight’ or ‘Moderate’ extent (see Exhibit 43). Overall, Army courses appear to be meeting or exceeding the expectations of about 82% of AC field grade officers but only 62-65% of all other AC uniformed leaders (see Exhibit 44).

**Exhibit 43. Perceptions of Recent Graduates about the Impact of Course Attendance.**



**Exhibit 44. Course Effectiveness in Meeting the Expectations of Leaders Who Attend.**



Recent graduates who indicated their course expectations were not met commented on reasons why this was the case. Some respondents also noted knowledge or skill areas they expected the course to cover but were not addressed. Comments generally cited broad issues regarding the content or nature of the course (e.g., information was covered in a previous course, course was “check the block”), rather than specific knowledge, skills areas, or topics that they expected to be covered but were missing (e.g., leadership skills, mentoring Soldiers). The most predominant themes to these comments are presented in Table 19.

**Table 19. Themes for the Reasons Army Courses are Not Meeting Leader Expectations.**

<b>Course-Specific Issues</b>	<b>Knowledge or Skills Areas that Were Expected but Not Addressed</b>
Content not applicable to current or future responsibilities	Development of basic leadership skills
Content covered in a previous course	Knowledge regarding upcoming level of responsibility
Content not reflective of contemporary operating environment (COE)	Knowledge or skill to develop, counsel, or mentor subordinates
“Check the block” nature of the course	

### Utilization of Education

Army leaders must effectively apply the knowledge, skills and abilities they gain through courses and school to their jobs in order to continue to develop as a leader and to improve their organization. Attitudes regarding the utility of Army courses and schools, and the perceived level of utilization or support from units, have an impact on how well leaders transfer what they gain from courses to their jobs.

- A positive finding is that only a small percentage (12%) of recent graduates believe their course was ‘not very useful’ or ‘of no use.’
- 32% of recent graduates found the course to be ‘of considerable use’ while 20% rated the course as ‘extremely useful.’

A known low area concerning the transfer of institutional learning to the job is in the level of support leaders perceive from their units and organizations. Since 2007, less than half of AC leaders have rated their unit/organization effective in utilizing or supporting leadership skills learned in their most recent course. In 2011, 44% of AC leaders rate their unit or organization effective in doing so; however, favorable ratings have ranged from a low of 40% (2009) to a high of 49% (2010) over the past five years. About one-fifth of leaders in the AC (21%) and RC (18%) rate their unit/organization ineffective or very ineffective.

### Officer Education System

Ratings by officers generally indicate that course expectations are being met or exceeded. However, evaluations by field grade officers positively sway the results. Key findings regarding the OES include:

- The Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC B) and the Captains Career Course (CCC) have much fewer recent graduates who indicate that their expectations were met (60% and 64%, respectively). Perceived quality of leader development and utility of the course are also substantially lower.
- Recent BOLC B and CCC graduates clearly indicate that the course content was not relevant to the leadership responsibilities in their job (48% and 51%, respectively), nor did it effectively prepare them to develop the leadership skills of subordinates (38% and 40%, respectively). Open-ended comments reflect leader attitudes that their most

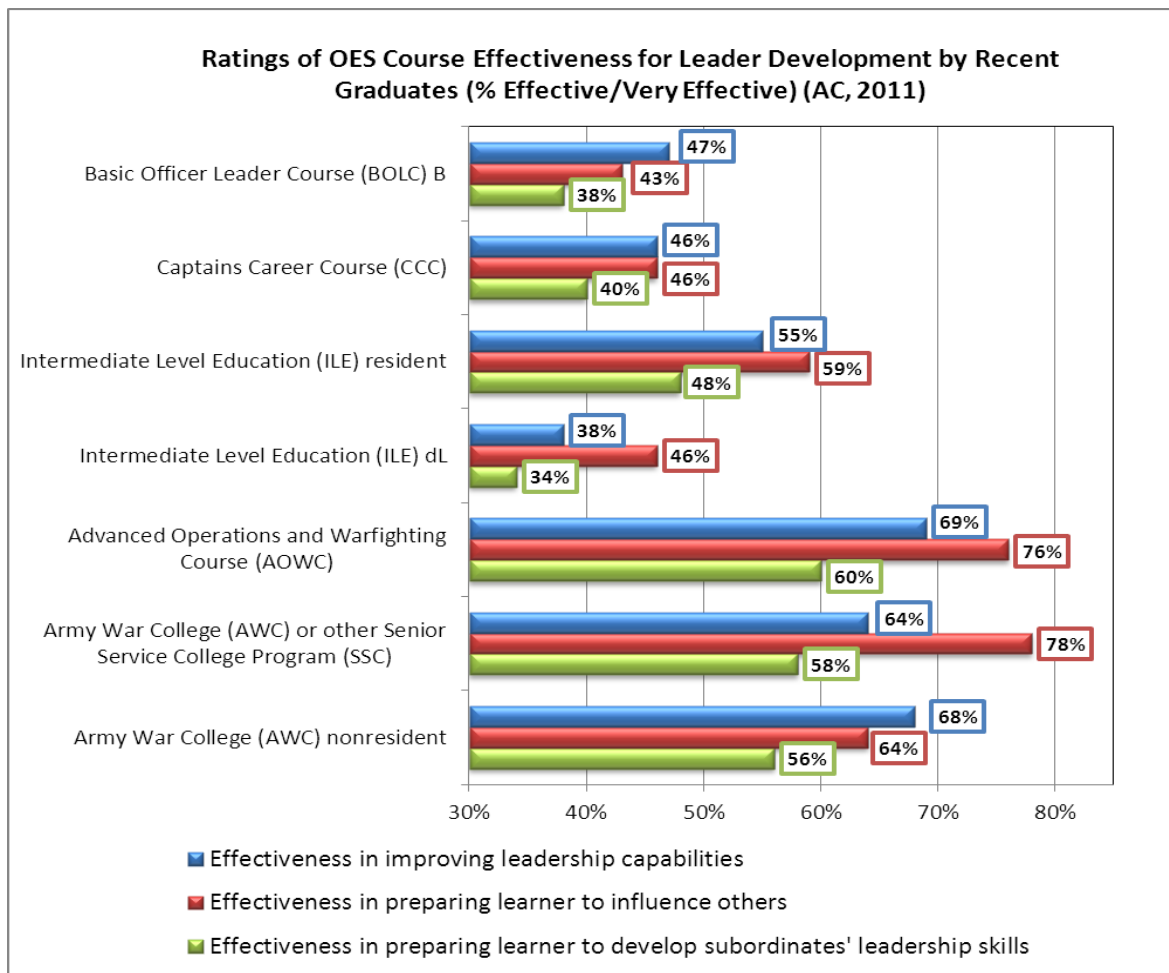
recent course did not have a clear emphasis on leadership and leadership duties, or a focus on their role in their next job.

- The lack of preparedness to develop subordinates is consistent with 2010 findings (38% and 42%, respectively), but there has been improvement with regard to the content matching their leadership responsibilities. In 2010, only 45% of BOLC B and 46% of CCC graduates indicated that the course content related well to their job.
- Course timing is related to course perceptions in a small but significant way; leaders who feel they attended BOLC B or CCC “too late” in their career are less likely to view the course as relevant ( $r = -.10$ ).
- In comparison to BOLC B and CCC, the educational goal of the AOWC is more focused (i.e., warfighting), and the timing of attendance is more predictable (i.e., after ILE).
- See Table 20 and Exhibit 45 for course-level results of the OES.

**Table 20. Ratings for Officer Education System Courses and Schools by Recent AC Graduates (2007-2011).**

	Course Met or Exceeded Expectations	Quality of Leader Development (% Good or Very Good)	Course ‘Of considerable use’ or ‘Extremely useful’	Agreement course content was up to date	Agreement course content is relevant	Agreement course increased awareness of strengths and weaknesses
Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) B	60%	56%	49%	71%	48%	58%
Captains Career Course (CCC)	64%	56%	50%	66%	51%	56%
Intermediate Level Education (ILE) resident	80%	67%	57%	79%	59%	66%
Intermediate Level Education (ILE) dL	64%	46%	44%	77%	48%	51%
Advanced Operations and Warfighting Course (AOWC)	89%	73%	68%	91%	85%	74%
Army War College (AWC) or other SSC	94%	74%	82%	91%	82%	71%
Army War College (AWC) nonresident	89%	89%	86%	96%	75%	68%

**Exhibit 45. Ratings for Officer Education System Course Effectiveness in Preparing Leaders by Recent AC Graduates (2007-2011).**



### Warrant Officer Education System

Ratings by recent graduates of WOES courses show less favorability compared to OES and NCOES courses.

- Warrant officer courses show less favorability in terms of meeting or exceeding leader expectations, ratings for the quality of leader development received, and the usefulness of the course.
- Across all of the resident courses offered by the Army, recent graduates of the Warrant Officer Advanced Course (WOAC) have the least favorable ratings.
- See Table 21 and Exhibit 46 for course-level results of the WOES.

Nearly half of recent graduates of the Warrant Officer Advanced Course (45%) report the course fell short or fell well short of their expectations. Ratings for the quality of leader development received at WOAC is rated lower than other WOES courses, and nearly one-fifth of graduates see limited utility of what is learned. Ratings for the Warrant Officer Staff Course

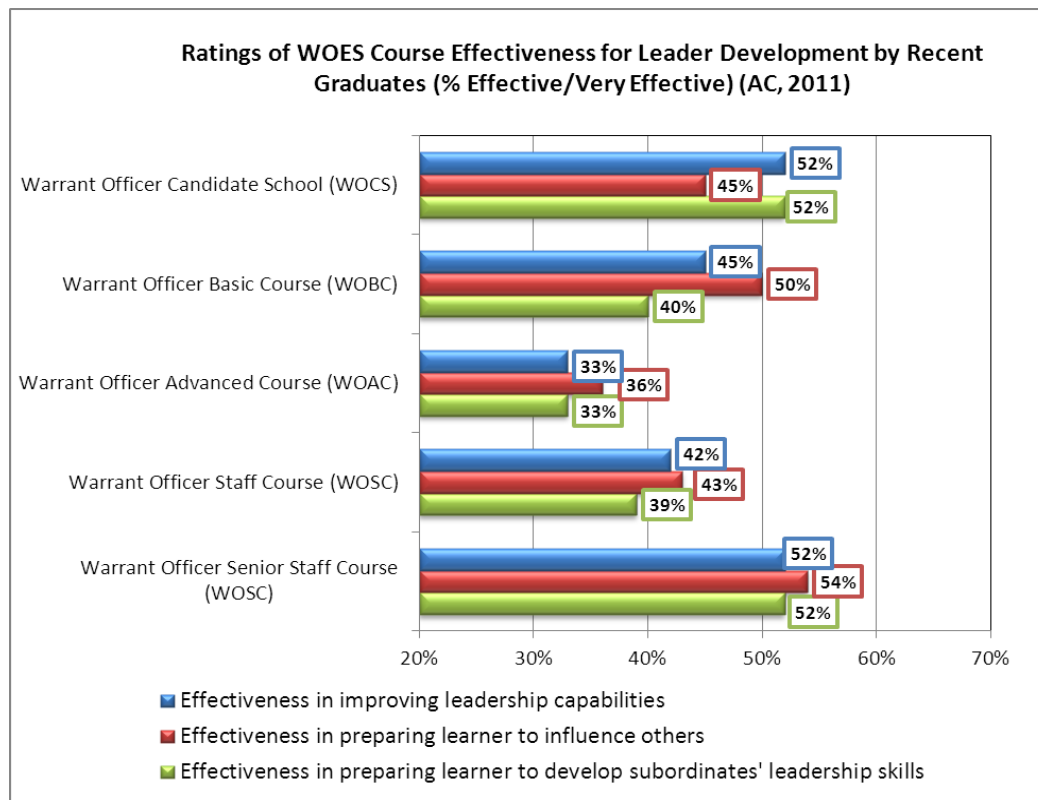
(WOSC) also show less favorability by recent graduates; however, the lower assessment primarily pertains to late attendance and less perceived utility of the course. The content and effectiveness of leader development in the WOSC is viewed (considerably) more favorably than the WOAC.

The WOAC focuses on developing the officer's respective branch technical knowledge and skills. Having a heavy focus on technical training could be one cause for the less favorable views regarding leadership. In addition, these views may also be attributable to being a mid-level course within the WOES. The backgrounds and experience of the warrant officers attending could vary broadly at this point in their career and the course curriculum may be more appropriate for some leaders than others. As noted, over two-thirds of the graduates believe they attended too late or way too late in their careers. Hence, for some, the knowledge and skills the course offered may have already been acquired through operational experience or self-study.

**Table 21. Ratings for Warrant Officer Education System Courses by Recent AC Graduates (2007-2011).**

	Course Met or Exceeded Expectations	Quality of Leader Development (% Good or Very Good)	Course 'Of considerable use' or 'Extremely useful'	Agreement course content was up to date	Agreement course content is relevant	Agreement course increased awareness of strengths and weaknesses
Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS)	64%	62%	50%	86%	58%	67%
Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC)	65%	58%	56%	64%	56%	53%
Warrant Officer Advanced Course (WOAC)	55%	53%	38%	52%	40%	41%
Warrant Officer Staff Course (WOSC)	70%	54%	30%	73%	41%	49%
Warrant Officer Senior Staff Course (WOSSC)	72%	60%	52%	83%	57%	53%

**Exhibit 46. Ratings for Warrant Officer Education System Course Effectiveness in Preparing Leaders by Recent AC Course Graduates (2007-2011).**



### Noncommissioned Officer Education System

Recent graduates of NCOES courses generally rate their most recent course favorably across various dimensions.

- 75% of recent NCOES graduates report their course met or exceed their expectations.
- A majority rate the quality of the leader development received as 'good' or 'very good.'
- NCOs generally view the education they received as useful. However, a recognizable percentage (13%) of graduates views it as not very useful or of no use.
- See Table 22 and Exhibit 47 for course-level results of the NCOES.

The Senior Leader Course (SLC) stands out within Army institutional education and the NCOES. Across all officer, warrant, and NCO courses assessed, the SLC received the second lowest overall assessment. Within the NCOES, the SLC met expectations the least, the quality of leader development was viewed least favorably, and graduates saw the least utility in the course.

- In contrast to the other courses, SLC's level of effectiveness at improving leadership capabilities, preparing to influence others, or preparing to develop subordinates never achieves 50%. While 57% of recent graduates report the course content was relevant to the current operating environment, only 49% believe the course increased their

awareness of their leadership strengths and weaknesses, and 44% found the course to of considerable use or extremely useful.

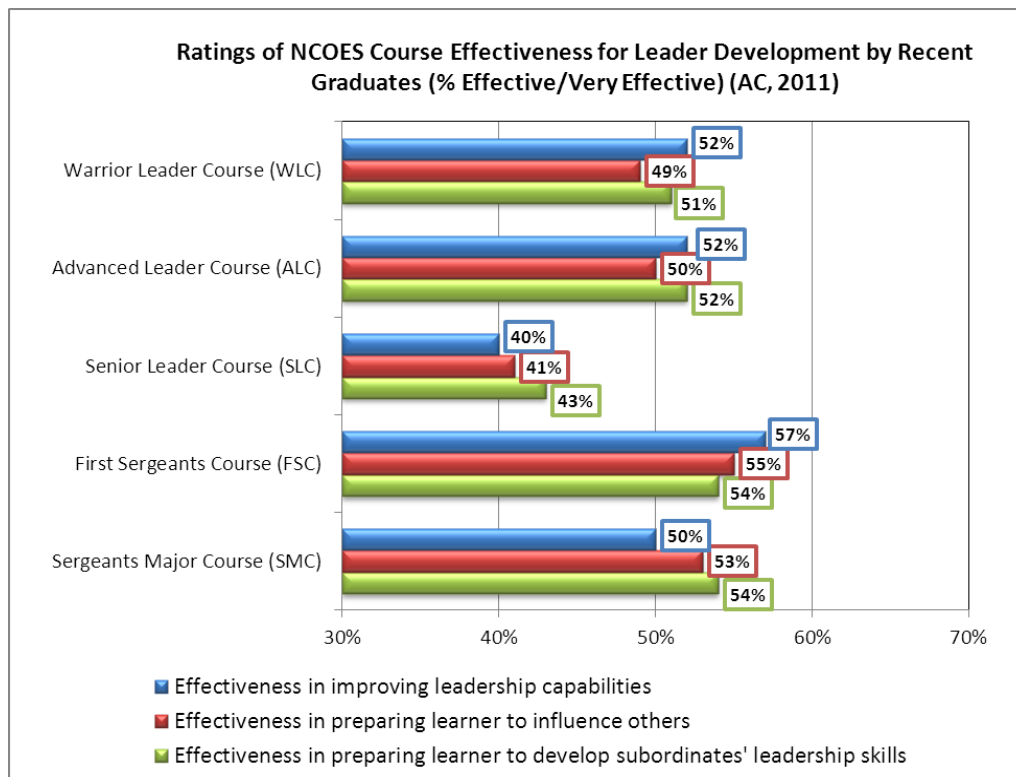
Many NCOES graduates commented that a reason their most recent course did not meet their expectations was that the course included information that was already covered in prior courses, or that the course did not provide information that emphasized requirements of their current or future job. Comments and ratings for SLC reflect these issues. Further, as SLC is a mid-level course, NCOs who attend hold broad and varied levels of experience. Unlike the Warrior Leader Course (an introductory course for new leaders) or the Sergeants Major Course (a capstone course for very senior NCOs), ratings for the SLC may be hampered by the broad array of NCOs who attend. Thus, the course content and experience provides a learning environment well suited for some NCOs and less so for others. Notably, 41% of recent graduates of SLC believe they attended the course too late in their career, which contributes to attitudes about the content having less relevance. Course timing is related to perceptions about course relevance in a significant way, as leaders who feel they attended SLC “too late” in their career are less likely to view the course as relevant ( $r = -.28$ ).

**Table 22. Ratings for Noncommissioned Officer Education System Courses by Recent AC Graduates (2007-2011).**

	Course Met or Exceeded Expectations	Quality of Leader Development (% Good or Very Good)	Course ‘Of considerable use’ or ‘Extremely useful’	Agreement course content was up to date	Agreement course content is relevant	Agreement course increased awareness of strengths and weaknesses
Warrior Leader Course (WLC)	63%	62%	46%	69%	50%	62%
Advanced Leader Course (ALC)	65%	62%	53%	63%	53%	58%
Senior Leader Course (SLC)	60%	59%	44%	57%	47%	49%
First Sergeants Course (FSC)	71%	70%	59%	70%	67%	61%
Sergeants Major Course (SMC)	70%	77%	60%	61%	57%	62%



**Exhibit 47. Ratings for Noncommissioned Officer Education System Course Effectiveness in Preparing Leaders (2007-2011).**



**Summary of Army Institutional Education**

Perceptions of the effectiveness of Army institutional education for preparing leaders to assume new levels of leadership or responsibility have increased to their highest level in four years. Despite this increase, one-third of Army leaders do not rate institutional education as effective, and views of this training domain remain less favorable than self-development and operational experience.

Senior leaders are generally satisfied with the quality of the graduates that OES and NCOES courses are providing to their units and organizations. An area where senior leader expectations for these leaders are least often met pertains to developing subordinate leaders.

Ratings for the relevancy and currency of course content by recent graduates are more favorable in 2011 than in past years. Two-thirds of recent graduates indicate the course content is reflective of the current operating environment. The expectations Army leaders have for their respective courses are modest, and most leaders do not expect their next course alone to sufficiently prepare them with the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in their next job. Less than half of leaders indicate they expected their most recent course to improve their leadership capabilities. However, after attending a course, three-fourths indicate the course met or exceeded their expectations. A gap remains between the Army leaders'

perceived high utility of their course and the actual opportunity or support to apply their education at their unit.

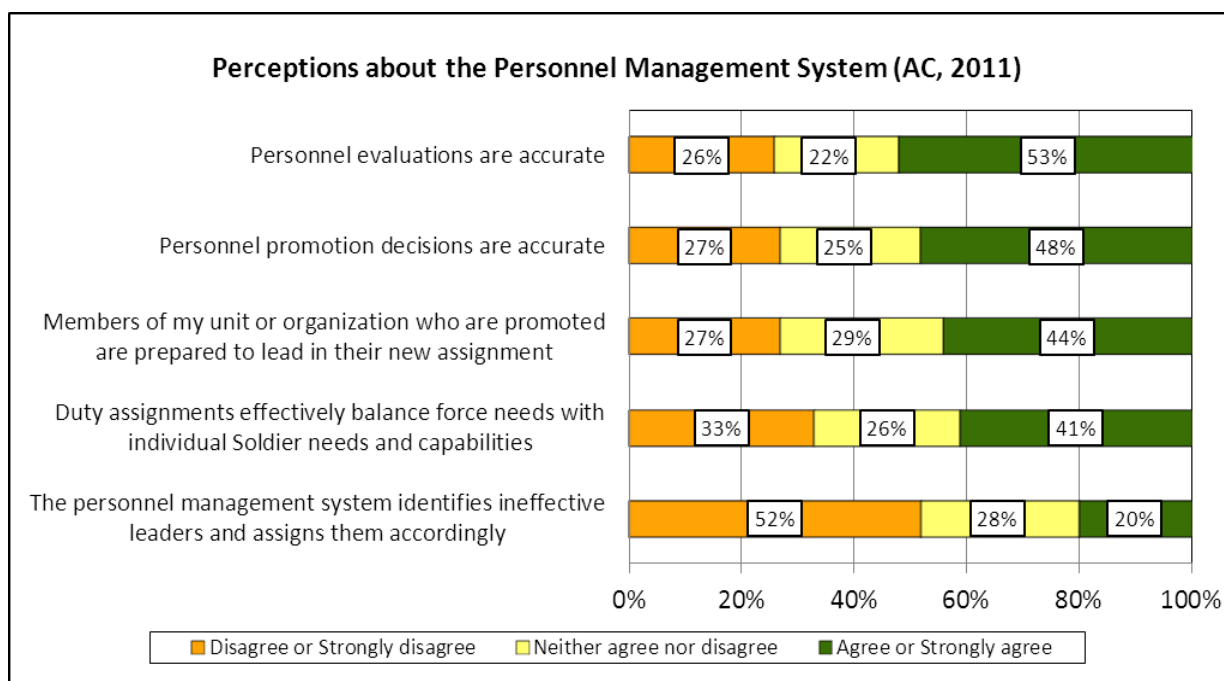
### 3.7 The Personnel Management System

2011 was the first year that CASAL assessed leader opinions about various facets of the Army's personnel management system. Aspects of this system that were examined include the perceived accuracy of personnel evaluations, the perceived accuracy of promotion decisions, whether duty assignments effectively balance force needs with individual Soldier needs and capabilities, and perceptions as to whether ineffective leaders are identified and assigned to positions that do not emphasize leadership skills.

CASAL results show that Army leaders do not overwhelmingly favor the current personnel management system (see Exhibit 48):

- About half of AC leaders agree that personnel evaluations and personnel promotion decisions are accurate, while more than one-fourth disagree.
- 57% of RC leaders agree that personnel evaluations are accurate and 49% agree personnel promotion decisions are accurate (23% and 27% disagree, respectively).
- A larger percentage of Jr NCOs in both components (40% AC, 36% RC) disagree that promotion decisions are accurate, compared to other rank cohorts.
- Additionally, less than half of AC and RC leaders (44% and 46%, respectively) agree that members of their unit or organization who are promoted are prepared to lead in their new assignment, while more than one-fourth disagree.

**Exhibit 48. Active Duty Leader Perceptions about the Personnel Management System.**



2011 CASAL findings also show there is less agreement for the notion that duty assignments effectively balance force needs with individual Soldier needs and capabilities. Forty-one percent of AC leaders agree that duty assignments effectively balance force and Soldier needs, though one-third of leaders (33%) disagree. One-half of RC leaders (50%) agree duty assignments effectively balance force and Soldier needs while 25% disagree.

2011 CASAL results also found that about half of active duty leaders (52%) disagree that the personnel management system identifies ineffective leaders and assigns them to positions that do not emphasize leadership skills.

- Only 20% of active duty leaders agree the system effectively 'catches' ineffective leaders and assigns them accordingly; nearly one-third of leaders (29%) neither agree nor disagree.
- Notably, 57% of field grade officers disagree the system is managing ineffective leaders in this way.
- Perceptions of RC leaders are only slightly more favorable (46% disagree; 24% agree).

A study by the Army Profession of Arms Campaign reported similar findings. Results show that 53% of respondents believe the Army is effective at promoting high performing members, while only 22% believe the Army is effective at identifying ineffective or negative leaders. Further, 18% believe the Army is effective at rehabilitating or removing ineffective or negative leaders (Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, 2011).

Taken together, these findings are important, as results of the 2010 CASAL estimated that as many as one in five Army leaders perceive their immediate superior to demonstrate self-serving toxic leadership behaviors, and 2011 results indicate about 8% of Army leaders are seen as demonstrating negative leadership behaviors (based on a composite score). However, about half of leaders do not have faith in the personnel management system to identify ineffective leaders and assign them accordingly.

The unfavorable views of the personnel management system found by CASAL are substantiated elsewhere. A recent study reported that nearly two-thirds of active duty general officers (65%) rated personnel management as one of the worst performing functions in the Army. The system is seen as failing both people and organizations due to inflexible legacy institutions and systems based on an antiquated management theory. The key shortcomings of the system were identified as failure to adapt and respond quickly to changing Army requirements, a lack of clarity in its personnel inventory and capabilities, limited ability to flexibly manage its officers resulting in short and rigid career timelines, and lost trust of many due to the friction and imbalance between unit manning and individual development (Halter, 2012).

From a leader development perspective, other findings indicate imbalance in leader evaluation and promotion practices. AC officers participated in focus groups as part of the 2010 CASAL; it was found that a leader development concern for many majors is that the Army's personnel system does not demonstrate the needed flexibility for non-traditional career paths (e.g., other

than command track). Further, officers noted that these paths are not being emphasized or encouraged by senior leaders. Leaders indicated that officers on non-traditional paths are disadvantaged when it comes to both formal (evaluations, assignments) and informal (mentorship, career advice and guidance) personnel practices, and that 'what right looks like' is too often dictated from higher but is not always applicable to their situation. A gap identified in the focus groups is that senior leaders, particularly commanders, often lack knowledge in providing career path guidance to subordinates who desire to progress along a non-command track.

More broadly, perceptions about deficiencies within the personnel management system were also captured in open-ended comments in the 2011 CASAL. Senior leaders commented on what they viewed as the most significant leader development weaknesses the Army is current facing, and comments predominantly referenced matters related to personnel management. The three most prominent themes from these comments indicate:

- The Army lacks a true measure for discriminating between levels of performance, which negatively impacts leader development.
- Rapid promotion and rigid methods for development and advancement also have a negative influence on leader development.
- A better means for talent management is needed in the Army.

Many senior leaders indicated leader development is not supported well by the existing evaluation system. The OER and NCOER can be heavily influenced by subjective factors, or, are not completed properly, which has a large impact on their ability to discriminate between the quality of leaders. Because of the subjectivity or misuse of the evaluation report, leaders who need further development are not identified and the necessary leader development within the Army institution does not occur.

**Key Finding:**

Senior leaders are concerned the current personnel management system does not effectively discriminate between levels of performance.

Coinciding with this issue, the OPTEMPO and manpower requirements of the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns have relied on leaders being promoted in order to fulfill necessary leadership requirements, and as a result, many junior and mid-grade leaders were advanced in rank regardless of their performance or input from evaluation reports. Senior leaders also indicated that typical requirements for promotion, such as completion of education, have been overlooked in order to address leadership needs, and that this has had a negative impact on the quality of the leaders currently in the Army. Addressing this problem through accurate evaluations and leader development will remain a challenge.

In addition to inaccurate evaluations and high promotion rates, senior leaders note the pace of promotion and the general timeline for advancement has been too rapid. Managing personnel by year group and fixed timelines have prevented leaders from remaining in necessary positions for a period of time that would permit development and gained experience that is essential for future leadership responsibilities. Senior leaders indicate that current leaders who held limited duty positions (and advanced rapidly) lack the knowledge and skills necessary for command or

staff assignments. This also impairs the quality of leadership within the Army and will require concerted leader development to improve.

While more accurate evaluations, selective promotions, and time for junior leader development will improve the Army as an institution, senior leaders also indicated that a better means for personnel/talent management is needed. A method that can flexibly meet both the needs of the Army and the leader would foster better leader development within the Army. Several comments indicated that personnel decisions could better recognize that leaders develop at different paces, personal capabilities and characteristics could be better aligned to assignments, and more flexibility in tenure (e.g. eliminate the “up or out” approach) could enhance leadership within the institution.

Notably, the Army is working on some of these personnel management issues through several forthcoming initiatives.

- Due to the drawdown of forces in Afghanistan and a reduction in Army end-strength, officer promotion selection rates are expected to return to pre-9/11 levels (“Promotion Rates”, 2012).
- The Army will use four tools to implement force cuts over the next several years: to bring in fewer Soldiers, to retain fewer Soldiers, to adjust retention control points (RCP) for sergeants and staff sergeants, and selective early retirement boards for sergeants first class, master sergeants and sergeants major (“Force Cuts”, 2012).
- Army Directive 2011-16 outlines changes to the Army evaluation reporting system that will be implemented during the summer of 2012, which will include new evaluation forms that will incorporate current doctrine, increase rater accountability, further stratify the senior rater profile technique for OERs and include an interactive leader development tool.

### ***Summary of the Quality of Leader Development***

The Army Leader Development Model is well supported, though leaders view operational work experience and their own self development as stronger methods of development than institutional education. Leader expectations for the courses and schools they attend are generally being met, though the overall perceived impact of education on leader development continues to be low. The Army’s priority for institutional education should be on improving leader abilities to utilize and transfer what is learned in courses to the operational setting.

Subordinate development continues to show room for improvement. Favored and impactful ways to effectively develop subordinates include providing them with opportunities to lead, experiential learning on-the-job, and learning from peers. Leaders perceive the priority that their units and organizations place on ongoing methods of development (such as these) is low. Ways senior leaders can support junior leader development are through emphasizing leader development as a priority, empowering leaders to plan and conduct training, fostering a climate for learning and development, and holding leaders accountable.

Unit-based pre-deployment training is generally viewed as effective; CTC experiences prepare leaders for challenges they will face while deployed, though other unit-based collective training and preparation show room for improvement. As the Army experiences a draw down from overseas deployments and prepares for a reduction in the size of the force, the Army needs to devote more attention to personnel management systems and processes. Within the current system, personnel evaluations and promotion decisions are not viewed favorably, and leaders are calling for improved methods to measure and discriminate levels of leader performance and to manage talent within the Army.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Findings from the 2011 CASAL provide the Army with several new insights on leadership, leader development, and the climate and situational factors affecting leadership and the working environment. The following points highlight new insights, important trends observed across years, and key areas that warrant further consideration.

### ***New Findings and Insights***

- Most leaders view their immediate superior as effective in enforcing standards and maintaining discipline. Senior leaders view company-grade leaders as more effective in maintaining subordinate discipline while deployed than while in garrison. Sound leadership, enforcement of standards, and leader accountability are factors that help limit discipline problems in units.
- Army leaders are generally rated favorably on the new additions to the core leader competency model, *Stewards the Profession* and *Builds Trust*.
- Opportunities to lead others, learning from peers, and on-the-job training are methods of development that leaders experience most frequently, and, consistent with past years, are also viewed as having a large impact on development. Formal leader development programs in units and counseling from one's immediate superior occur less frequently and nearly half of Army leaders view these as having a small, very little or no impact on development.
- The current Army personnel management system is not perceived favorably. Leaders view the current system as inflexible and that it lacks a true measure for discriminating between levels of leader performance and ability. Revisions underway in the performance ratings systems have the opportunity to address these perceptions.

### ***Key Findings across Years (Trends)***

- Subordinate development continues to be the greatest leader development need that shows room for improvement.
- There was a notable increase in favorable perceptions of institutional education since 2009. This domain continues to be rated less favorably than operational work experience and self development. Improvement in Army education should focus on increasing the transferability of knowledge and skills leaders gain in their courses to their jobs.
- Army leaders are generally rated favorably on all leader attributes; for the core leader competencies, *Gets Results* and *Prepares Self* continue to be key leader strengths, while *Develops Others* is most in need of improvement.
- Perceptions of organizational communication continue to show room for improvement. Only half of leaders feel informed of decisions which affect their work responsibilities and half believe their organization encourages the frank or free flow discussion of ideas.

## ***Considerations for Improvement***

The 2011 CASAL identified numerous areas where the Army is strong, and, where improvement could be made. However, in considering where and how the Army should focus future efforts, CASAL recommendations narrow in on actionable steps that can be taken to realistically impact areas where improvement is needed.

Notably, a continuing trend observed in CASAL findings is that improvement is needed in the implementation of leader development within units and organizations. Commanders need help in effectively prioritizing, fostering, and supporting leader development initiatives in their units. Unit leaders need this support to effectively develop their subordinates and prepare the next generation to lead. Leaders at all levels will benefit from knowing ‘what right looks like’ in terms of implementing leader development. Therefore, the following five recommendations and supporting action items address ongoing needs identified in the data.

### **1. Expand resources that help commanders understand ‘what right looks like’ when it comes to unit leader development, and to implement best practices.**

- a. Establish a small cadre of leader development experts to advise brigade and battalion commanders. The team, when requested, would provide commanders with techniques and programs tailored to a unit’s leader development needs. Commanders can identify unit deficiencies or weaknesses through various existing metrics such as unit MSAF roll-up reports, command climate surveys, and inspections. They can then request assistance or guidance in areas where improvement is needed (e.g., team building, subordinate development). The cadre of advisors will be prepared to advise commanders in areas such as emerging methods of informal leader development, providing career path advice, and tracking mechanisms for leader development.
- b. Within brigade-level units, designate an enlisted member of the command team, such as the CSM or Ops SGM, as a unit leader development advisor to the commander. This individual shall assist the commander in planning and implementing his/her intent for leader development throughout the brigade. Train and certify this individual to serve in this role and award an additional skill identifier (ASI) as a unit leader development specialist.
- c. Increase visibility and awareness of how units are effectively implementing leader development programs at the unit level. This should include wider dissemination of best practices, innovative approaches and exemplar models of unit leader development that can be adapted and tailored to specific organizations. Several tools currently exist (including the MSAF Program’s Virtual Improvement Center, the Army Training Network, and MilSuite), though findings continue to indicate many leaders (including commanders) are not aware of what resources are available. Develop a mechanism in which schoolhouses (NCO Education System, Officer Education System, School for Command Preparation, Army War College, etc.) can promote the existence of these resources in some form of student take-away.



- 2. Expand leader development resources to help small-unit leaders develop their subordinate leaders.**
  - a. CAL will develop and pilot the use of a graded list of leadership skills (based on ADP 6-22) that can be used to rapidly evaluate subordinate leadership strengths and weaknesses. The existing list of behavioral indicators for the Leadership Requirements Model (as featured in the appendix of *Developing Leadership during Unit Training Exercises* handbook) can be leveraged to develop this tool. Use of such a checklist provides leaders with a measurement check and feedback on how they will be rated on their OER or NCOER.
  - b. CAL will develop a hip-pocket guide or smart book for small-unit leaders on leadership responsibility. This resource should also provide tactics, techniques and procedures for developing subordinate leaders, nested within other useful content. Topics identified as developmental needs of small unit leaders include planning, time management, and building teams.
- 3. Expand the leadership coaching program to serve leaders at all levels.**
  - a. Broaden the current MSAF coaching program by making it more widely available to Army leaders. Publicize its existence as a unique and valuable resource for individual leader development.
  - b. Train coaches to give feedback on interpersonal skills. Unlike some of the other competencies and attributes, interpersonal skills can be observed directly by the coach, which could make coaching on these skills more effective.
- 4. Enhance the nonresident/dL course experience in the institutional domain.**
  - a. Establish leader development instructor positions within formations to improve the student experience of non-resident (dL) PME attendance. This cadre of instructors would serve as an *embedded MTT* which would improve face-to-face interaction for learners, something currently not available via dL. This would also reduce the pressure of Soldiers attempting to attend the resident portions of their OES, WOES, or NCOES courses within the confines of the current OPTEMPO.
- 5. Enforce the practice of leader development.**
  - a. As part of the formal evaluation process, have each leader provide examples of their efforts to develop subordinates that occurred during the rating period. Require the rater to include bulleted comments regarding the specific actions and activities that the rated leader engaged in to develop others. For officers, comments would pertain to “Developing” and “Building” in Part IVb of DA Form 67-9. For NCOs, comments would pertain to “Leadership,” “Training,” and “Responsibility & Accountability” in Part IV of DA Form 2166-8. An example comment would be “conducted weekly PT sessions with platoon leaders and discussed future leadership roles.” Increased emphasis on leader development within the evaluation process would serve as a forcing mechanism to drive the execution of leader development and the application of available resources.

- b. Seek approval of a half day working session in which BCT level leaders are provided with results of CASAL and other indicators of leader development (e.g., MSAF aggregate results). This can be conducted in a manner similar to the Army Family Action Plan process. Given a process facilitator, BCT level commanders would engage their unit leaders in developing a plan to improve leader development in their unit. Written action plans would be the outcome of such an event and their status integrated into Quarterly Training Briefs or other ongoing unit status indicators.
- c. Require brigade-level commanders to execute a unit-level MSAF event. The Officer Evaluation Report (OER) was recently modified to acknowledge whether or not an officer has completed a multi-source assessment (Army Directive 2011-16) through the Army's Multi-Source Assessment and Feedback program (MSAF, Army360) within the past three years. This recommendation extends that requirement to specify that brigade-level commanders execute an MSAF event with their units every three years. The MSAF unit event provides the commander with a snapshot of unit leader aggregate strengths and development needs that can be used to focus leader development activities.

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