



“America’s Army—Our Profession”

**Major General Gordon B. “Skip” Davis, Jr., U.S. Army, and
Colonel Jeffrey D. Peterson, U.S. Army**

“Over the past 237 years, the United States Army has proudly served the nation by winning its wars and securing the peace. Our history is marked by decisive action over a wide range of missions—including regular and irregular warfare, humanitarian assistance operations, engagement with allies, and support to civil authorities. Today, our Army is entering not only a period of transition, but also of great opportunity.”

— Foreword to Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 1, *The Army*, 17 September 2012.

As our Army enters this period of transition—underscored by an impending drawdown in Afghanistan, preparing for a new mission post-2014, a forecasted reduction in Army end-strength, and the challenges of developing capabilities for the Army of 2020—we have an exceptional opportunity to learn, grow, and posture our profession for an uncertain future. While we cannot predict the future, we know the nation will call upon our Army to undertake some of its most difficult challenges. The American people we serve trust us to accomplish our assigned missions effectively, efficiently, and ethically. All Army professionals must consciously work to maintain that trust through their demonstrated competence, character, and commitment.

We are not just maintaining the Army Profession; we are strengthening the Army Profession based on findings and recommendations from the 2011 Army Profession Campaign which was designed to study the state of our profession. Directed by the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of the Army, the campaign was the most comprehensive, holistic study of the profession ever conducted by the Army. Over the 15-month study, more than 40,000 Army professionals across all cohorts and components provided feedback on the state of the Army Profession and helped codify a common understanding of the components of our unique profession that had been lacking. The “America’s Army - Our Profession” education and training program for calendar year 2013 was developed to inculcate a shared understanding among the members of our profession—soldiers and Army civilians— and thus begin the process of strengthening the Army Profession from within.

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PHOTO: CSM Frank A. Grippe, command senior enlisted leader for U.S. Central Command, speaks with soldiers in the Panjwaee District of southern Afghanistan, 22 September 2012.

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The results of our 2011 study and our education and training program in 2013 will continue informing our efforts to build and improve resilience and readiness in shaping the Army of 2020. The momentum created will be carried forward into the future as we work together maintaining the honorable standing of the Army Profession. The remainder of this article will explain the newly codified components of the Army Profession and lay out how we will execute the “America’s Army—Our Profession” program in 2013.

Our Army maintains its status as a military profession when all members remain faithful to the five essential characteristics of the Army Profession: trust, military expertise, honorable service, esprit de corps, and stewardship of the profession. Maintaining our status as a profession is why we take time to reflect on and discuss the nature of “America’s Army—Our Profession.” Doing so enables us to learn and understand ourselves better, reaffirm our commitments, and steward the Army for future generations as the Army evolves during this transition.



(U.S. Army)

Chief of Staff of the Army General Raymond T. Odierno

Marching Orders

**America’s Force of Decisive Action, 38th
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, January 2012**

- *Provide trained, equipped, and ready forces to win the current fight while maintaining responsiveness for unforeseen contingencies.*
- *Develop the force of the future, Army 2020 as part of Joint Force 2020 – a versatile mix of capabilities, formations, and equipment.*
- *Sustain our high-quality All-Volunteer Army – Soldiers, Civilians, and Families, in the Active and Reserve Components.*
- *Adapt leader development to meet our future security challenges in an increasingly uncertain and complex strategic environment.*
- *Foster continued commitment to the Army Profession, a noble and selfless calling founded on the bedrock of trust.*

<http://usarmy.vo.llnwd.net/e2/c/downloads/232478.pdf>

Our Profession

The Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) *Marching Orders* concludes with an important emphasis on one of the five essential characteristics of the Army Profession: “Trust—the Bedrock of our Profession.” Reinforcing the importance of trust, General Raymond T. Odierno announced “America’s Army—Our Profession” at the October 2012 AUSA Conference. “America’s Army—Our Profession” is a Calendar Year 2013 (CY13) education and training program designed to build a common, Army-wide understanding of the Army Profession. This program provides information and resources to facilitate dialogue, educate, train, and inspire all members of the Army on the meaning and practice of the Army Profession. Many of these new doctrinal concepts are introduced in Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 1, *The Army*, and further explained in Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 1 (Initial Draft), *The Army Profession*.

The Army's capstone doctrinal publication (ADP 1) and its companion on the profession (ADRP 1) define and describe the five essential characteristics of the Army Profession, membership and certification criteria for Army professionals, and the Army Ethic. The "America's Army—Our Profession" education and training program is specifically designed to teach and inspire understanding of the Army Profession and to enhance commitment to our professional obligations—to ourselves, others, the Army, and the American people.

The CSA's intent is to generate dialogue for soldiers and Army civilians, to increase their understanding of the Army Profession, to reaffirm their understanding of what it means to be a professional, to recommit to a culture of selfless service, and to internalize the Army Ethic. The primary goals of the "America's Army—Our Profession" program are to create an enduring emphasis on the Army Profession, to strengthen our professional identity, and to inspire future generations of Army professionals. Ultimately, Army professionals must—

- Know and understand the Army Profession doctrine and concepts.
- Conduct themselves in a manner worthy of their professional status and calling.
- Ensure stewardship through accountability of conduct and performance and constant improvement of the Army Profession.
- Generate and sustain their own dialogue about the profession.

The "America's Army—Our Profession" program will be executed through the following quarterly themes over the course of the calendar year:

- 1st Quarter (January-March 2013): Standards and Discipline.
- 2nd Quarter (April-June 2013): Army Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions.
- 3rd Quarter (July-September 2013): Military Expertise—Certified Army Professionals.
- 4th Quarter (October-December 2013): Trust—The Bedrock of Our Profession.

The 1st Quarter theme, "Standards and Discipline," focuses on an Army professional's decision to

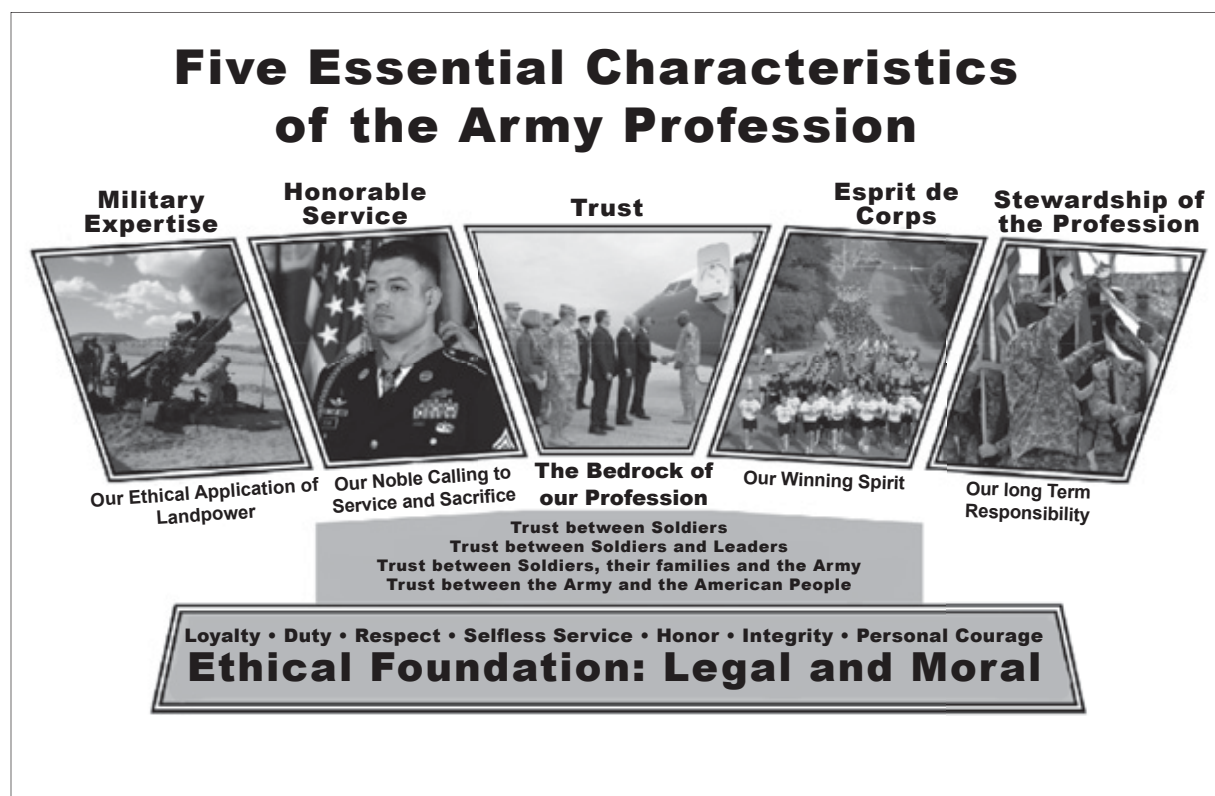


Figure 1

do what is right in the face of temptations, obstacles, adversity, frustrations, fatigue, and fear. All Army professionals are expected to uphold standards and develop discipline in themselves, others, and their organizations. Discipline requires attending to the organizational and administrative details that are essential for effectiveness and efficiency. Discipline enables Army professionals to practice good stewardship of the Army Profession by performing proper maintenance, practicing supply management, training to standards, and accounting for property. Discipline enables Army professionals to practice high moral standards of conduct and behavior under challenging conditions. Disciplined leaders provide coaching, counseling, and mentoring, which are essential to being stewards of our people, the Army's most important resource.

Some may associate discipline only with negative outcomes such as the many requirements of regulations, punishment for breaking regulations, or the consequences of errors in judgment. However, it is important to understand that our professional discipline is fundamentally positive. Standards and discipline are what set us apart from common living. They provide the basis of trust at all levels between Army professionals, civilian leaders, the American public, and Army families. They give us pride and esprit de corps, while providing us the "why and how" we practice our profession.

The 2nd Quarter theme, "Army Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions," sustains our connections with preceding generations of citizen-soldiers. These observances enhance our esprit de corps (winning spirit) and reinforce our commitment to steward the Army Profession. The Army Profession has a proud history of completing its challenging missions on behalf of the American people with courage and honor. Today, Army professionals are respected and appreciated for their service to the nation. Army customs, courtesies, and traditions sustain and foster this legacy of service within the Army culture.

Focusing on our customs, courtesies, and traditions motivates an enduring commitment to the Army Profession, our mission, our people, and ultimately our culture. Traditions bind us across more than two centuries of honorable service. They provide a living connection with all the generations of citizen-soldiers of the past, extending the lineage

of all patriots who have honorably defended our nation and our freedoms. As good stewards of the Army Profession, we must ensure that our customs, courtesies, and traditions are embraced and practiced by future generations.

The 3rd Quarter theme, "Military Expertise—Certified Army Professionals," highlights our expert knowledge and how we certify Army professionals in their competence, character, and commitment. Our professional military expertise is the design, generation, support, and ethical application of landpower. This is our unique contribution to the defense of our nation. Our professional responsibility is to continually create and advance our expert knowledge and skills in landpower. We accomplish this by ensuring every Army professional is continually certified through a lifelong commitment to learning and developing expertise in our Army's four fields of expert knowledge:

- *Military-Technical*—How the Army applies landpower to accomplish its missions.

- *Moral-Ethical*—How the Army accomplishes its missions in ways congruent with our moral and ethical framework.

- *Political-Cultural*—How the Army, mindful of its subordination to civil authorities, understands and operates in a multi-cultural, complex world.

- *Human Development*—How the Army recruits, develops, and inspires Army professionals.

Through certification, the Army validates the expertise of its individual professionals and of its organizations. The role of certification within the Army is two-fold. First, it demonstrates to the American people that the Army is qualified to practice its profession effectively, efficiently, and ethically. Second, certification milestones motivate Army professionals to achieve higher performance standards in the pursuit of excellence. Some examples of certification include selection for promotion in grade, successful completion of professional education and training, selection for key positions or assignments, or the award of specific skill identifiers or badges. The Army certifies its members relative to rank, grade or position to ensure they meet the nation's needs and the expectations for military expertise. Certification ensures each Army professional demonstrates three critical traits:

- *Competence*—An Army professional's demonstrated ability to successfully perform his/her duties

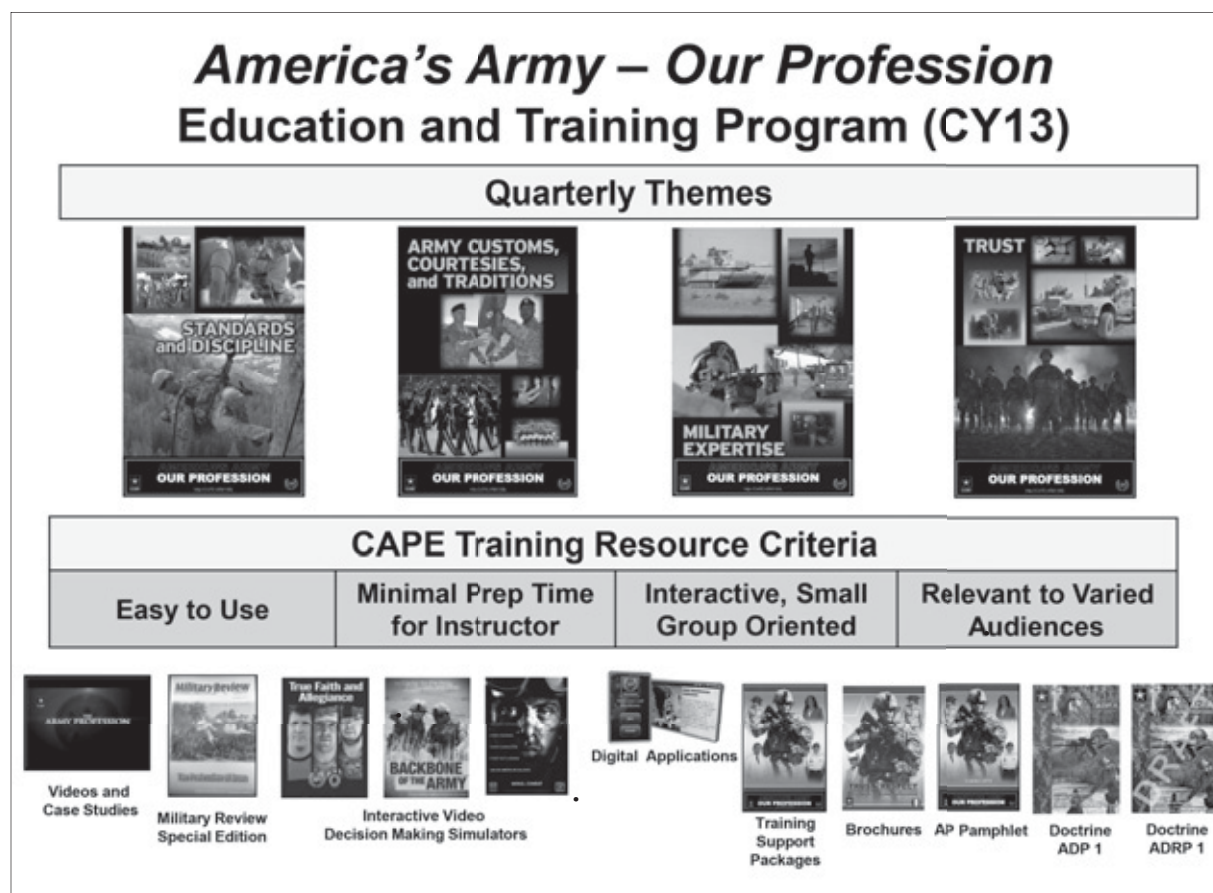


Figure 2

and to accomplish the mission with discipline and to standards.

- *Character*—An Army professional's dedication and adherence to Army Values and the Profession's Ethic as consistently and faithfully demonstrated in decisions and actions.

- *Commitment*—The resolve of an Army professional to contribute honorable service to the nation, to perform his/her duties with discipline and to standards, and to strive to successfully and ethically accomplish the mission despite adversity, obstacles, and challenge.

Trust

The 4th Quarter theme is "Trust—The Bedrock of our Army Profession." Trust is assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, and truth of someone or something. Trust is the core intangible, which is essential inside and outside the Army Profession. The ability to accomplish our mission

depends upon trust. Our Army Values, consistently reflected in our decisions and actions, reveal our character and result in trust. By living our values in all our endeavors, personal and professional, we sustain and develop trust inside the Army among fellow professionals and outside the Army with the American people.

Trust with the American people is earned and maintained when the Army Profession consistently demonstrates military expertise, honorable service, esprit de corps, and effective stewardship. The nation trusts the Army to provide landpower when, where, and how it is required to protect and defend the security and interests of the American people. Army professionals have a duty to serve society in an effective, efficient, and ethical manner, thus preserving the trust we earned throughout our history and to sustain that trust during a period of transition.

Trust among Army professionals is the foundation of our success. We earn and develop trust with

our fellow soldiers and civilians by consistently demonstrating our competence, character, and commitment. In every situation, we perform our duty with discipline and to standards.

Mission command requires trust and stresses reliance on competent leaders of character and commitment. Every Army professional demonstrates military expertise and professional judgment to accomplish the mission with disciplined initiative, consistent with their commander's intent. Simply put, successful mission command depends on trust.

Finally, we must strive to maintain trust between civilians, soldiers, families, and the Army. People are the Army and when a soldier or civilian joins the Army Profession, their family joins the Army family. Therefore, the Army is committed to a supportive and caring culture that strengthens Army family bonds and provides a secure, nurturing quality of life for our families.

Continuing to honor this commitment is essential to preserving trust among civilians, soldiers, their families, and the Army.

The Way Forward

The active support of Army leaders, military and civilian, is the key factor in the success of the "America's Army—Our Profession" program. Army leaders are called upon to integrate Army Profession concepts, to motivate all members of the profession to reflect on and discuss these concepts, and inspire professional behavior while role-modeling that behavior themselves. Leaders can integrate Army Profession concepts by emphasizing them in training and leader development guidance, public remarks, professional development sessions, ceremonial events, soldier and NCO boards, and organizational functions.

Leaders do not have to build these programs on their own because the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE) provides multiple resources to support all organizations. Leaders can conduct their own "America's Army—Our Profession" training, made possible with ready to use,

"Soldiering is a matter of the mind and heart . . . That takes character, competence, and leadership and continuous development in a profession that demands and encourages that continuing growth."

General Frederick Franks, U.S. Army, Retired

interactive, and engaging training resources available on line at <<http://CAPE.army.mil>>. They can send appropriate personnel to a Master Army Profession and Ethic Training (MAPET) course which provides each graduate with a deep understanding of Army Profession doctrine, prepares them to facilitate professional development discussions, and enables them to advise the commander on integrating the Army Profession into all organizational events. Additionally, there are limited opportunities for leaders to host a MAPET course at their installation at minimal cost to the unit in return for 50 trained personnel at the end of the five-day course. Organizations can also host a CAPE-supported Army Profession seminar, a two- to three-hour leader development session that will inform participants of Army Profession doctrine, demonstrate the web-based training and education resources, and demonstrate a technique for facilitating an Army Profession leader development session.

These are but a few of the many other creative ways leaders can engage and inspire the profession in their subordinates and organizations. But regardless of how you choose to support "America's Army—Our Profession," the importance of the training is clearly articulated by General (Retired) Fred Franks in a 2011 Special Edition of *Military Review*. Franks emphasizes the importance of our identity as Army professionals who have a legacy of honorable service. We do not know the conditions of future warfare, but we must be ready for any challenge and any mission. That readiness begins with a clear understanding of who we are, what ethic we follow, who we represent, and what we do as Army professionals. Uniformed and civilian leaders at all levels are charged to support "America's Army—Our Profession," to understand our doctrine, and to inspire a culture where all Army professionals conduct themselves in a manner worthy of their professional status. The future of the Army Profession depends on each and every leader ensuring these fundamental principles are practiced and passed on to the next generation of Army professionals. **MR**