

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meetings with USA Recruiting Command, RE: The Army's Framework for Character Development, Fort Knox, KY, 21-22 March 2017

1. PURPOSE: To summarize the discussions during the SUBJECT meetings.
2. REFERENCES: Read Ahead (Discussion Slides, Encl).
3. BACKGROUND:

a. As the Office of Primary Responsibility for the Army Profession as a cross-cutting concept within the Human Dimension (HQDA EXORD 086-16), CAPE is leading the Army Character Development Project (Army Leader Develop Program, APL 3P, I-14-007). The Army Character Development Project Team mission is "to design and articulate a concept for character development that is applicable for all Soldiers and Army Civilians; Army organizations, and the Army as an institution."

b. At this point in the mission, the Army White Paper (Final DRAFT), "The Army's Framework for Character Development" is in Army-wide staffing (s: 19 Apr 2017). The framework is described as the Army Leader Development Strategy implemented IAW the Army Ethic at all levels of leadership (direct, organ izational, and strategic). Successful implementation of the framework depends on an Army culture of trust, ethical organizational climates, and collective acceptance of our shared identity as trusted Army professionals. To date, the Army White Paper has benefitted from the comments received in staffing of the Author's DRAFT (Oct-Nov 2016) and the Initial DRAFT (Jan-Feb 2017).

c. The framework proceeds from the premise that, for the Army, character development begins with the process of attracting and recruiting prospective Soldiers who have the qualifications and motivation to be trusted Army professionals. To discuss the validity of this premise CAPE met with representatives of US Army Recruiting Command to gain their perspective on how to best achieve the goal to inspire and motivate qualified potential Soldiers to answer a calling to honorable service as Soldiers in the Army.

4. MEETINGS:

- a. Round-table discussions with senior members of the US Army Recruiting Command Staff (Chief of Staff, G-2, G-3, Director of Marketing, and SJA).

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b. Office call with the Commandant of the USAREC Recruiting and Retention School (RRS); and informal conversation with the RRS Command Sergeant Major.

c. A focus group session with 15 NCOs serving of the RRS faculty (these NCOs were former Recruiters who now teach prospective Recruiting NCOs to perform their duties).

5. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS:

a. Discussions addressed these questions (slide 7, ENCL) and related topics:

- Does character development for the Army begin with recruiting by attracting and selecting future Soldiers who are motivated to join the Army Profession as a calling to *honorable service*?

- Is it essential that the Army attracts and recruits individuals from society who demonstrate the aptitude and qualifications to honorably fulfill their oaths of service – or should this consideration wait until IMT?

- Do you think that the message the Army conveys to the American people in official publications and all media should include the nature of the Army as a trusted military profession, dedicated to providing honorable service in support and defense of the Constitution?

- Since Army recruiters represent the Army to the youth of America and their families, should their preparation and certification include the responsibility and ability to inspire and motivate individuals to join the Army as a “calling to honorable service”?

b. In the round table session with USAREC senior staff, all agreed that the recruiting process, supported by Army Marketing Research Group (AMRG), should seek to attract and inspire prospective Soldiers to join the Army as a calling to honorable service. Nonetheless, material incentives remain vitally important as a means of persuading those who exhibit propensity for service as an Army Soldier. As such, the message the Army develops and communicates to the American people must be both aspirational and pragmatic. All agreed that the recruiting process should be introduced in PME/CES to ensure leaders in the Army Profession have a basic understanding of and appreciation for the philosophy and practice of recruiting Soldiers for our Army.

c. The RRS Commandant and Sergeant Major affirmed the importance of faculty development and selection to support preparing recruiting NCOs to accept their responsibility to attract people to be trusted Army professionals. Accordingly, the faculty at RRS are former recruiting NCOs whose exemplary performance in that duty serves them well as instructors for students in RRS. Similarly, the leadership of RRS also has extensive experience with the challenges and opportunities in the recruiting mission. For example, they understand how to work with AMRG to tailor a strategic message to the

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local conditions within the recruiting area of responsibility. Cooperation with AMRG in the development and communication of the Army message is essential to achieve and sustain this goal.

d. During the focus group discussions with RRS instructors, the consensus was that character development for the Army begins with recruiting. As such, recruiters must be willing and able to communicate with prospective Soldiers based on both the inspirational and tangible opportunities available through service in the Army.

1) Recruiters must be carefully selected and trained and certified to perform their duties in a manner that reflects favorably on the Army as a trusted military profession. Recruiters operate without direct oversight and must demonstrate their character to do what is right throughout the civilian community.

2) The "Future Soldier Training Program" was highlighted as an important USAREC initiative, available to all recruiters. The program helps prepare and motivate prospective Soldiers for success in basic training. The program of instruction includes introduction to Army Values, physical fitness, in-processing information (e.g., finances, personal affairs, etc.), all intended to smooth the transition from civilian to Army life.

3) In the recruiting process, the instructors do not believe that it is advisable or possible to assess character within individual prospects. Fundamentally, if a future Soldier is fully qualified, he or she is permitted and welcomed to join the Army.

4) Thus, the recruiting process seeks to attract the right people and encourage them to make the decision to take their oath of service. In this regard, RRS instructors have many years of experience. Their knowledge of best practices and how to effectively communicate the Army image to the American people should help inform AMRG in developing both strategic and local messages to America.

6. SUMMARY:

a. A key premise within the Army's Framework for Character Development ("... for the Army, character development starts with our initial efforts to attract and select American citizens and other eligible volunteers who will honorably fulfill their oaths of service) is consistent with the USAREC's perspective and role in manning the force.

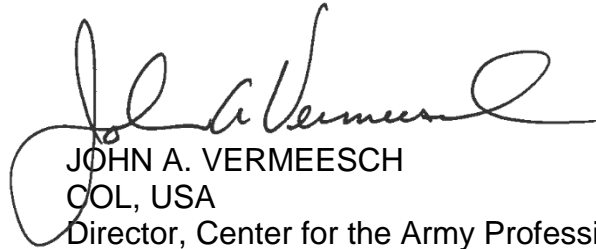
b. The Army as an institution must support recruiting through development and promulgation of an inspirational strategic message that represents who we are as an Army and why and how we honorably serve the American people.

c. Army recruiters have direct contact with the youth of America and their families. They are uniquely positioned to represent the Army as a trusted military profession. While educational, financial, and other incentives are important attractions for many prospective

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Soldiers, these should be presented as supporting the opportunity to honorably serve in defense of the Nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Vermeesch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

JOHN A. VERMEESCH

COL, USA

Director, Center for the Army Profession
and Ethic

Encl (Discussion Slides)