TC 6-22.6

Employee Engagement

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Employee Engagement

Contents

Figures

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Tables

Preface

Training Circular (TC) 6-22.6 provides doctrinally based techniques for enhancing employee engagement—how strongly employees connect with their organizations and their jobs, what they can do to take initiative, and how leaders and supervisors can help set conditions for engaged employees. The principal audience for TC 6-22.6 covers all Army Civilians and their supervisors—military and civilian—with an application focus at the direct level of leadership. This training circular does not apply to contractors.

Commanders, staffs, and subordinates ensure their decisions and actions comply with applicable U.S., international, and, in some cases, host-nation laws and regulations. Commanders at all levels ensure their Soldiers operate in accordance with the law of war and the rules of engagement (see the *Department of Defense Law of War Manual*).

TC 6-22.6 uses joint terms where applicable. Selected joint and Army terms and definitions appear in both the glossary and the text. Terms for which TC 6-22.6 is the proponent publication (the authority) are marked with an asterisk (*) in the glossary. Definitions for which TC 6-22.6 is the proponent publication are boldfaced in the text. For other definitions shown in the text, the term is italicized and the number of the proponent publication follows the definition.

TC 6-22.6 applies to the Active Army, Army National Guard/Army National Guard of the United States, and United States Army Reserve unless otherwise stated.

The proponent of TC 6-22.6 is Headquarters, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. The preparing agency is the Center for Army Leadership, U.S. Army Combined Arms Center—Mission Command Center of Excellence. Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to Center for Army Leadership, ATTN: ATZL-MCV-R, 290 Stimson Avenue, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1293 or submit an electronic DA Form 2028 by e-mail to usarmy.leavenworth.tradoc.mbx.6-22@mail.mil.

Introduction

Training Circular (TC) 6-22.6 *Employee Engagement* is a companion publication to Army Doctrinal Publication (ADP) 6-22 and Army Doctrinal Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22 both titled *Army Leadership,* Field Manual (FM) 6-22 titled *Leader Development*, Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 6-22.1 titled *The Counseling Process,* and ATP 6-22.6 titled *Army Team Building*.

Leadership and leader development are activities shaping the culture and climate of an organization; employee engagement is an outcome of those activities and the organizational climate. Employee engagement is an employee's commitment to the organization and its mission.

TC 6-22.6 integrates doctrine, experience, and best practices by drawing upon applicable Army doctrine and regulations, recent Army leadership studies, and research on effective practices from the private and public sectors.

TC 6-22.6 is for the use of employees and supervisors to determine how to address different factors affecting employee engagement. Each chapter provides practical guidance on how to address particular improvement areas and key elements for continued success. Additionally, TC users are encouraged to refer to ADRP 6-22 for specific learning and development activities (see Chapter 7), ATP 6-22.1 for techniques in preparing for interaction, and ATP 6-22.6 for specific techniques for building and maintaining effective teams.

TC 6-22.6 contains six chapters describing the Army's view on employee engagement practices:

Chapter 1 outlines the fundamentals of employee engagement.

Chapter 2 discusses mission factors—aligning vision and inspiring Service Ethos.

Chapter 3 addresses organizational factors affecting open communication and improving processes and systems.

Chapter 4 provides information on work unit factors regarding trust, respect, and teamwork.

Chapter 5 discusses specific employee factors dealing with career development, performance, and work-life balance.

Chapter 6 addresses factors concerning the work itself—the required standards and the exercise of disciplined initiative.

The References section includes pertinent links to recommended readings and Web sites.

Chapter 1

Fundamentals

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT DEFINED

Emphasis on employee engagement is important because it is people who constitute the organization and determine its success. Employee engagement is not a measure of employee happiness, nor employee satisfaction. Even when an employee is happy or satisfied, they may lack initiative to expend greater discretionary effort to do more than is necessary to just survive in the organization. **Employee engagement is the level of commitment an employee has for the organization and the level of initiative applied to their duties**. Measures of engagement indicate how likely individuals will demonstrate initiative and make positive contributions to organizational goals. The level of commitment to the organization, the mission, the work done, and fellow employees differs among people. The organization and supervisor have roles and responsibilities that contribute to employee engagement, but the employee determines the level of engagement they possess.

RELEVANCE AND OUTCOMES

Employee engagement occurs across a spectrum, affecting culture and effectiveness. Simply explained, organizations have a mix of employees across the engagement spectrum: *engaged*—proactive or innovative; *non-engaged*—present without energy or passion in work; or *actively disengaged*—harmful or undermining. Positively engaged employees are more likely to demonstrate initiative and make valuable contributions to organizational goals. Each leader has his or her own level of engagement, and it is subject to change over time. Throughout this publication, all leaders are considered employees as every leader also has a boss.

Elevated employee engagement often leads to increased organizational effectiveness and efficiency. However, it also has other benefits at the individual and team levels:

- Individual level: well-being, fitness, support, personal counseling, EO, EEO, SHARP, family, and work-life balance.
- Team level: organizational values, assisting others, courtesy, conscientiousness, and civic involvement.
- Organizational level: positive climate and culture addressing dignity, inclusion, respect, and trust.

This publication addresses the factors affecting employee engagement. Figure 1-1 depicts how those factors nest.

Figure 1-1. Employee engagement factors model
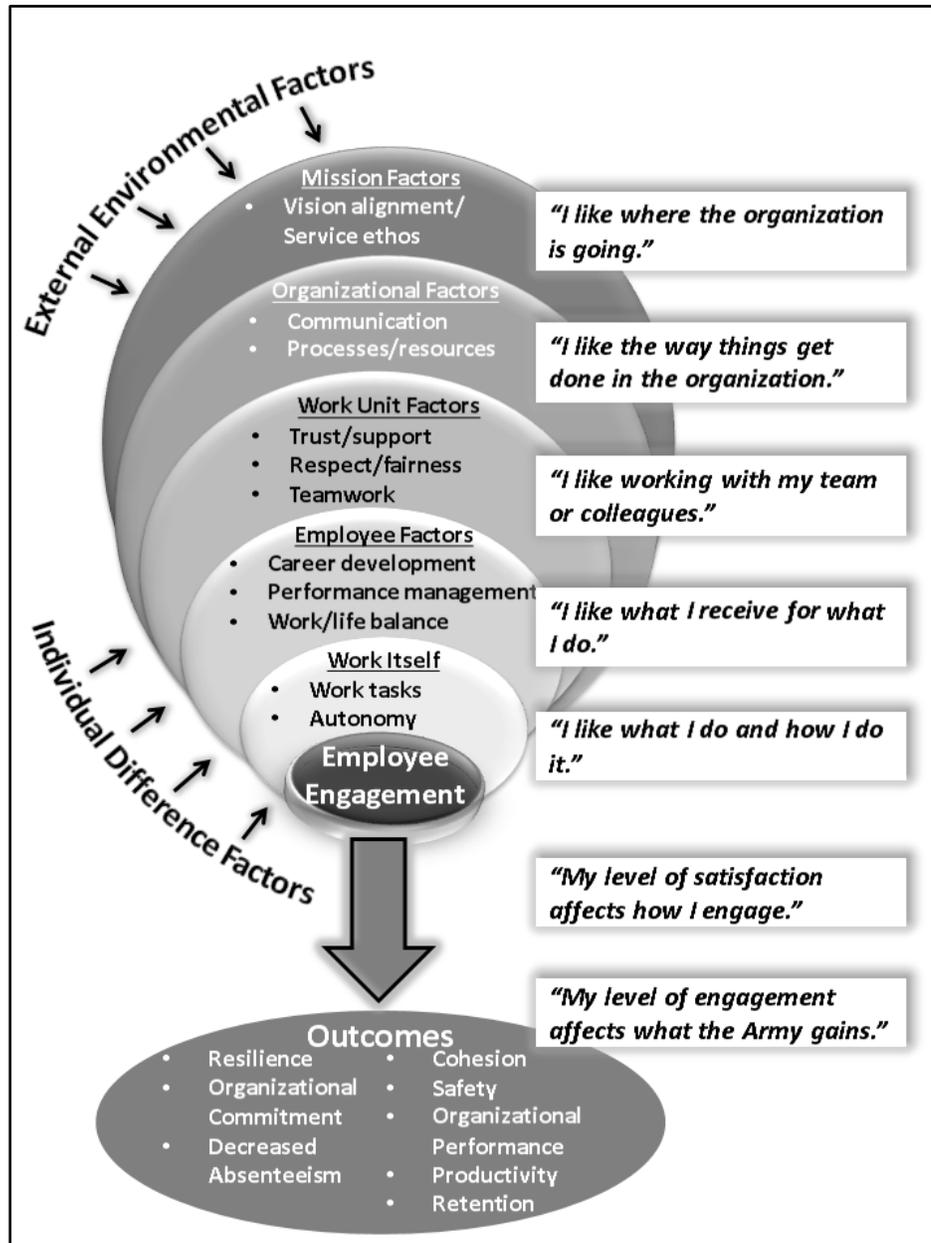
Subsequent chapters address each category of factors:

- Mission factors—aligning vision.
- Organizational factors—open communication and improving processes and systems.
- Work unit factors—trust, respect, and teamwork.
- Employee factors—career development, performance, and work-life balance.
- The work itself— the required standards and the exercise of disciplined initiative.

Chapter 2

Mission Factors

Leaders communicate the organization's vision for the overall mission, and in turn, create shared understanding and model actions supporting the vision. This creates the conditions for employees to become engaged and take the initiative—their actions then support the mission. Figure 2-1 illustrates how important it is to have a shared vision.

Figure 2-1. How vision cascades to the employee level

Having a strong sense of an overarching mission is critical to employee engagement. Employees are generally more involved in their work when they believe in what they do and can see how their work contributes to the organization's overall mission. Daily tasks may seem far removed from ultimate organizational goals, so leaders can fill gaps by aligning employees' roles to the mission and inspiring commitment to service.

> **ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: ALIGNING VISION**
>
> Do employees get a feeling of personal accomplishment from their work?
>
> Do employees feel their work is important for mission achievement?
>
> Do employees extend themselves beyond the minimum of their role requirements?

Indicators of STRENGTH	Indicators of OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
• Employees are inspired by the overall Army mission. • Employees anticipate the leader's thinking and adapt to changing circumstances without additional direction. • Employees go beyond what is required. • Leaders create a culture of employee engagement and two-way feedback. • Leaders approach employees to seek ideas, set goals, and improve processes.	• Employees are not aware of the goals and objectives of their team or the organization. • Employees cannot explain why they do things a certain way except to refer to doctrine, orders, or how it has been done in the past. • Employees do the bare minimum to achieve what is asked of them. • Leaders have not connected employees to the mission.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: ALIGNING VISION

Communicate goals and objectives. Leaders who establish clear and realistic goals create a positive command climate in which collaboration, dialogue, mutual trust, and shared understanding can occur. Articulating team expectations and clarifying connections to Army and organizational goals and objectives enables employees to understand what needs to be done (see ADRP 6-0, *Mission Command* for the discussion on creates shared understanding). Ensure employees understand the answers to questions such as—

- What role does the team play within the organization?
- Why is the role important?
- What are the overarching duties of the team?
- How does (and how should) the team perform its duties?

Consistently demonstrate Army Values. All Army professionals strive to uphold the Army Ethic by acting ethically and in concert with Army Values. When a leader's behavior is in alignment with the Army values, it facilitates trust between the leader and followers enabling mission success. Leaders who demonstrate loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage are more effective at influencing others.

Selfless service is a key Army value and one of the best ways to inspire a service ethos is to model it to team members. When team members are inspired to commit to the service ethos, each team member will go a little further, endure a little longer, and look a little closer to see how they can add to the effort. Employees are generally more confident in taking the initiative when they understand the shared vision.

Cascade Army vision and goals down to the individual level. Leaders share performance objectives with subordinates and work with team members to develop individual performance targets supporting broad goals and strategies:

- Discuss each employee's core services and deliverables. Explore the connections of these services and deliverables to the broader organization and identify who and what are directly affected by the work.
- Translate Army and team objectives into specific goals and deliverables for the employee. Identify the optimal levels of timeliness, quality, and creativity.
- Reinforce how the employee's performance of duty and contributions accomplish the organization's mission, contribute to cohesive teamwork, and connect to Army goals and values.

Incorporate employee goals and objectives into performance plans. Discuss with subordinates the final goals, objectives, and targets that have been developed. Evaluate their linkage with Army and team objectives, the degree to which they support Army values whether they appropriately support employee growth and development.

Support progress toward goals through focused communication. Speak regularly with employees about goals and objectives—solicit feedback from employees and practice two-way dialogue. Make it a priority to discuss how each employee's work contributes to the Army's mission and the overarching goals of the Army and team.

Narratives (stories) are a powerful way to convey the vision of where the unit is going, how the unit is collectively going to get there, and why employees should care. Stories rely on concrete scenarios, realistic context, and

analogies and metaphors that resonate with people, linger longer in their memories, and give them a sense of purpose and direction. They enable people to see themselves as actors or protagonists in the plot. When people understand themselves as part of the developing narrative of the organization, they are more likely to feel motivated and engaged in their work than if they are simply complying with orders.

Tips for Communicating Narratives

Provide context: Narratives without context can leave the audience confused as to why the story is relevant to them or how to interpret the events. Beginning with a brief backstory ensures the audience follows along.

Make an emotional appeal: Consider telling stories that account for the emotions and desires of the audience to promote the vision. When facts cannot win people over, appealing to people's emotions (such as inclusiveness and competitiveness) can.

Incorporate metaphors grounded in reality: Metaphors and analogies can add emphasis by showing how one situation relates to others the employee may encounter at work. However, talking in abstracts could obscure the point. Use metaphors and analogies grounded in Army context so employees can relate.

Avoid clichés: Do not be the leader who always tells the same story or who makes the outcome of the story predictable from the outset. Avoid clichés and incorporate some suspense or surprise into the narrative to engage the listener.

Incorporate the audience into the conclusion: The Army story never really ends. When using a narrative to articulate vision, convey how the team fits into the story and the role they play in continuing it.

Develop cross-functional and cross-unit expertise. Even with excellent communication about team and overall Army goals and objectives, there is no substitute for actual experience. Gaining experience and knowledge about other functional areas or how other units perform similar functions enables employees to understand how the various sections of the organization fit together. A few key strategies to develop cross-functional or cross-unit expertise among employees are:

- Job rotation: A job rotation program allows an employee to work consecutively through a series of positions to develop varied skills, prepare for the responsibility of a higher-level position, gain a better understanding of how the organization works as a whole, and spread institutional knowledge. The result is a widely skilled workforce, flexible enough to confront a range of workplace challenges, and more motivated and engaged in their work and the success of the organization as a whole.

- Cross-training: Rather than performing specific work for a lengthier period, cross-training enables employees to receive training on a range of positions across units or functional areas. This provides less depth into a particular field than job rotation, but can be useful for those who regularly work with a varied group of stakeholders or who may lead cross-functional teams. In any case, the scope of the program should suit the employee's position classification and career path.

- Job shadowing: Shadowing opportunities are typically the least intensive of these three strategies and allow employees to observe others performing their work in a realistic context. Typically, they are not actually trained to perform the work themselves, but the act of observing the work first hand can still provide an eye-opening experience. The length and number of positions observed can vary, but it is usually beneficial to shadow someone for at least a day to encounter a variety of events and work activities.

Expect team members and leaders to meet high standards. Employees who understand how and why their work is important to the overall vision and mission of the organization are more likely to—

- Be energized by and engaged in their work.
- Perform duty with discipline and to standards.
- Practice disciplined initiative.
- Develop their own leadership qualities.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate *KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS*	*Avoid* *POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS*
• Show how each employee's tasks support the Army mission. Ensure employees understand the value and benefit of their work. • Morale improves when employees enjoy the nature of the work they do—create meaningful work. • Set up the conditions for disciplined initiative by modeling the service ethos and commending employees who demonstrate it.	• When leadership does not share a clear sense of the mission with employees, it is harder for employees to understand the effects of their work. • When there is not a clearly communicated vision of where an organization is going or the future of the work, employees perceive their work will be disappearing or contracted out, which affects morale.

Chapter 3

Organizational Factors

Organizational factors affecting employee engagement consider two significant areas: fostering open communication and improving processes and systems which subsequently improve the organization. Communication is a core competency of Army leadership (see ADRP 6-22); FM 6-22, *Leader Development* provides numerous developmental activities for all leaders to improve their capabilities. These publications provide doctrinal approaches to address leader actions to foster employee engagement.

FOSTERING OPEN COMMUNICATION

Leader communication styles greatly affect employee perceptions of work conditions. Frequency, transparency, tone, and type of communication are all elements affecting engagement and morale. With better communication from leaders, employees report a more positive work experience.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: COMMUNICATION

Do leaders readily seek advice or help from teammates (to include higher, subordinate, or peer groups)?

Do team members feel leaders provide clear and meaningful guidance on work tasks?

Do employees feel comfortable going directly to leaders to ask for assistance?

Do employees feel comfortable communicating upward directly, even if it is bad news?

Do team members believe they can make an honest mistake, admit it, and learn from the experience?

Indicators of *STRENGTH*	Indicators of *OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT*
• Employees are comfortable raising issues with leaders. • Frequent, informal communication between leaders and employees facilitates the flow of information.	• Employees are confused and struggle to find concrete information on task progress, schedules, and milestones. • Employees perceive management does not follow up on raised concerns.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: COMMUNICATION

Build trust with employees and trust within the team. Trust builds from respect among people and grows from common experiences and shared understanding. Leaders who engender trust do not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, unethical behavior, favoritism, or personal biases from others. Leaders who coach, counsel, and mentor employees establish close relationships fostering trust.

Employees who do not trust their leader will not feel comfortable raising issues, asking for assistance, admitting mistakes, or providing upward feedback.

Provide clear and meaningful top-down communication to the team. Practice transparency—share information with team members about Army goals, organization focus areas, and process and policy changes. Ensure employees understand the overarching conditions and factors influencing their work.

Effective and timely communication is particularly important during times of transition. When possible, involve team members throughout the process. Express the reasons for the change, gain relevant insights from the team, and explore potential ways forward. Carefully plan such meetings. Consider questions such as:

- What do you wish to accomplish?
- What information should be presented and what is the best way to present that information?
- What information and insights would you want to receive?
- What are the best ways to encourage the conversation?

Increase the quality and frequency of feedback with individual employees. Use feedback to reinforce desired behaviors through praise and encouragement and to redirect less desirable behaviors by using specific examples and guidance. Feedback is most effective when it is timely, behavior-focused, directive, and two-way.

- Timely: Reinforcement close in time to the observance of desired behaviors will help create a strong linkage. If a team member fails to meet performance expectations, immediately clarify the performance requirements. Otherwise, the team member may continue displaying substandard behavior and perhaps believe it is satisfactory.
- Behavior-focused: Separate the substandard behavior or performance outcome from the individual. Do not speak in generalities or refer to personality traits. Instead, focus on specific observed behaviors or outcomes.
- Directive: Identify specific examples of preferred behavior, focusing on feedback to improve future performance. Provide clear targets and performance expectations.
- Two-way: Give employees a chance to determine their next steps. Ask if they have ideas about how to make improvements.

Improve personal coaching skills. Engage in active listening. Active listening is a structured way to listen and respond to others. There are three main elements of active listening:

- *Comprehending*. Let people complete their thoughts. While they speak, avoid developing a personal response and focus on the important details they are conveying. Paraphrase or restate the message to check understanding.
- *Retaining*. Make an effort to retain the information you hear. Find the important or valuable nuggets of information and remember them.
- *Responding*. Employ appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication. Pay close attention to eye contact and head movements.

Another important element of coaching is encouraging self-reflection. Refrain from providing quick answers. Instead, pose questions requiring employees to think, reflect, and learn. Reinforce individual responsibility for development and ownership of solutions by posing questions such as:

- What is your assessment of the situation?
- What are the potential problems you may encounter?
- What are the potential solutions you see?

Encourage bottom-up communication. Recognize it is difficult to give feedback to the boss. Encourage bottom-up feedback by providing regular opportunities such as organizational governance meetings for team members to share their perspective. Supervisors have to create a safe, inviting environment that makes employees comfortable opening up with their ideas and concerns. Ask for feedback, and ask for it often. Seek trusted associates to tell the truth—do not downplay the feedback received or react defensively.

Use feedback conversations to gain constructive information. For example, when evaluating current, past, and potential goals, leaders can look to team members for important information and meaningful feedback by asking:

- What were (or will be) the immediate results of striving for this goal?
- What were (or will be) the trade-offs in reaching for this goal?
- What additional information should be considered?
- What additional criteria should be used to determine success?

During discussions of past performance, ask team members to explain what influenced their progress. For example, consider asking for input on—

- Issues with resources (such as people, information, materials, budget).
- Training and education needs.
- Other barriers to success.

Act on the information and feedback received. Provide support where needed and update employees on long-term items. Use information from team members to adjust plans and make decisions. Ensure employees feel their feedback and ideas are appreciated, useful, and used. Inform them of actions taken resulting from their feedback.

TRUST IS THE BASIS OF OPEN COMMUNICATION

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS	*Avoid* POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS
• Employees who perceive there is an open-door policy with leaders find it to be beneficial. • Leaders should encourage employees to speak up when they are feeling overwhelmed or need support. This will allow for redistribution of work or making changes benefiting the employee as well as facilitate the completion of work. • When leaders take the time to listen to employee input, the employees feel their input is valued and management is open to suggestions. This is an important element in increasing morale.	• Poor leader communication leads to unclear expectations and the perception of decisions made in isolation and without regard to those affected. Ensure employees understand how decisions are made and receive explanatory communication. • A lack of transparency leads to decisions based on limited information, which results in decisions not always supported or understood by staff members. • When leaders do not communicate about changes, employees do not know how they will be affected or understand the reasons for change; this detracts from morale.

Does trust foster communication or does communication foster trust? The answer is both—communication fosters trust and trust facilitates communication. When employees trust their leader, they are more willing to be open. When leaders communicate openly and effectively, employees feel they can trust their leaders. In addition to self-assessment, leaders are encouraged to solicit subordinates for their perceptions of the leader's communication skills. Table 3-1 provides a framework for self-assessment of communication skills.

Table 3-1. Self-assessment: communication skills

To assess personal communication skills, read the following statements and use the rating scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being extremely low and 10 being extremely high.										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. I walk the talk by encouraging open communication with my team and organization.	Strongly disagree			Agree Somewhat			Strongly agree			
2. How often do I meet with my team to ensure I have regular dialogue with my employees?	Never			Sometimes			As a regular priority			
3. How seriously do I consider acting on the feedback I get from employees?	Not at all			Somewhat seriously			Extremely seriously			
4. Am I truthful about the information I share with employees about our mission, vision, and strategy?	Never			Most of the time			Always			
5. I ensure employees understand the essential information they need to know about the direction of the team or organization?	Not at all			Somewhat certain			Extremely certain			
6. When employees are speaking, I focus on what they are saying instead of thinking about what I want to say next.	Never			Sometimes			Always			
7. How much do employees trust me?	Not at all			Somewhat			Completely			
Add the item scores to determine a total score. Use this rating scale to identify communication ability: 60 to 70: Champion communicator 50 to 59: Good communicator but could be better 35 to 49: Communicator with good intentions who needs to improve 34 or below: Poor communicator who must change behavior										

IMPROVING PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

A wide range of systems and processes operate in the background of every activity. Many are formal and codified in manuals or policies. Others are informal, having emerged out of past practices, personal preference, or simple habit. Discuss with team members how to best accomplish their responsibilities: What approaches best support team and organizational activities? Determine what approaches should be tweaked or changed to ensure optimal performance.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

Do team members openly and honestly discuss ways to improve team performance, within the team and with other organizations?

Are formal processes followed appropriately?

Are effectiveness, efficiency, and safety prioritized in formal and informal processes?

Do team members evaluate formal and informal processes regularly?

Indicators of *STRENGTH*	Indicators of *OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT*
• Team members openly and honestly discuss ways to improve team performance. • Key processes, roles, and expectations are well understood and documented in writing. • Processes align with organizational goals. • Team members support continuous process improvement goals.	• Team members focus solely on getting work done and allocate little time to developing ideas for improvement. • Processes are not well defined or are inefficient, slow down performance, or frustrate employees. • Processes are performed inconsistently or with errors. • Bottlenecks occur, hindering performance.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

Encourage frequent knowledge sharing among team members and with other organizations. In effective organizations, employees look for ways to best achieve their personal performance goals and the goals of the larger organization. Leaders can assist by—

- Increasing the performance of the team by creating supportive conditions for shared knowledge.
- Discussing with the team the importance of knowledge sharing, within and across organizations.
- Setting aside time in meetings for team members to ask for assistance and to provide their own guidance and perspective for others.
- Facilitating peer-to-peer sharing of success stories and lessons learned.

Clarify processes that are not understood. Welcome staff questions about processes and policies and ensure employees understand where to find the policies and procedures applicable to office responsibilities. Take time to explain difficult segments and to provide team members with the big picture.

Routinely assess and benchmark team performance. Regularly evaluate team performance against office, department, and organizational goals and targets. Set aside time to review the effectiveness of the team's financial and human resources. Examine the quality and quantity of business outputs, customer service, and knowledge sharing. Some questions to ask include:

- Are business outputs meeting the required levels of quality and quantity?
- Are team members providing the appropriate level of customer service in their interactions with others?
- Are the team's financial resources being used appropriately to support team outcomes?
- Are evaluations and rewards fostering performance improvement?
- Are training and development activities leading to improved efficiency and effectiveness?

Routine assessment by team leaders is necessary to improve processes, foster a culture that removes redundant procedures, and improve stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Investigate and resolve unethical, inefficient, or ineffective processes. While uncovering suboptimal processes, work to improve efficiencies. Many tools and methodologies are available from the Army Office of Business Transformation. One way to improve efficiency is to apply the define-measure-analyze-improve-control problem solving method:

- *Define*. Define the problem as specifically and completely as possible. Note positive or negative observations explaining the conditions and collect information about the issues from many sources. Carefully examine the full process to fully understand the fundamental operations. Remember, if the process is not limited to the team, outside participation and assistance will be required. Be attentive to:
  - Input-output relationships or handoffs.
  - Resource requirements.
  - Information and training needs.
  - Formal and informal goals of those involved.
  - Formal and informal goals of other offices and departments.

- *Measure*. Quantify the problem. Decide which measurements should be taken to best understand current conditions and indicate when improvements have occurred. Think carefully about potential measurements and ensure they directly tie to the problem as defined. Consider variables at many stages of the process, including input variables, process variables, and outcome variables.
- *Analyze*. Organize and evaluate the gathered information. See AR 5-1, *Management of Army Business Operations* for more information—
  - Identify key points in the process and determine their influence on the process and outcome.
  - Define external and internal constraints, including statutory requirements.
  - Define the as-is process and identify costs.
  - Determine the root cause(s) of the identified issues.
  - Approximation the effect of the identified root cause(s).
- *Improve*. Brainstorm possible solutions and then determine which of the solutions is best. Include stakeholders in the discussion, and take care to keep within the guidelines of DOD rules and regulations. Ask questions such as:
  - What are all the possible solutions to this issue?
  - What do related DOD rules and regulations require?
  - What assumptions am I making?
  - How should possible solutions be evaluated?
  - Which of the possible solutions is best?
  - What does the most efficient and effective process resemble?
  - Is this solution ethical?

  Create a plan to resolve the issue. Develop a process map to include a personal solution. Involve all necessary stakeholders early in the planning process and ensure the new process is well known and understood by all necessary partners. If possible, consider a solution trial run or pilot.

  Communicate the plan and be creative in disseminating the information. Consider using meetings, memos, emails, newsletters, posters, and displays to get the word out.

  Coordinate actions and ensure you assign responsibility, delegate authority, and allocate resources. Inspire and motivate the team seeking to gain an understanding of the desired outcome of the plan. If resources are needed to adequately support the improvement, ensure these resources are made available. Continue to be a champion for the new process and facilitate others to do the same. Share success stories.

- *Control*. Ensure the implementation effort solved the issue(s) by tracking the identified measures. Ensure all stakeholders made the needed changes. Look for unanticipated second- and third-order effects of the new process.

Develop a team process improvement plan. Start by identifying the team's core processes—three to seven processes critical to the team's strategy, vision, and mission. There will probably be a mix of technical, support, and management processes:

- Technical processes: Processes producing a product or service visible to the organization's customers.
- Support processes: Processes supporting the technical process (such as budget, facilities, or acquisition).
- Management processes: Processes providing direction or status for the organization (such as strategic planning and performance management).

Make recommendations to appropriate governing councils. Leaders can nominate cross-domain process improvement opportunities for consideration for business process re-engineering (BPR). BPR projects take into account the Army enterprise within the end-to-end business process framework, and are supported by large-scale tools for process mapping and root cause analysis.

Embrace continuous process improvement. The Lean Six Sigma approach adopted by the Army works to reduce costs and improve productivity and reliability. Lean Six Sigma tools and methodologies form the basis of the Army's continuous process improvement efforts. The U.S. Army Office of Business Transformation coordinates the Lean Six Sigma training program and provides training up to and including the master black belt level of proficiency.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate *KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS*	*Avoid* *POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS*
• Leaders and teams are engaged in continuously improving processes. • Leaders routinely benchmark and assess team performance, and work with team members to solve performance issues.	• Processes are not fully understood by team members. • The old adage—it has always been done that way here.

Continuous process improvement (CPI) improves team performance

At the Watervliet Arsenal in upstate New York, the Army's oldest continuously active arsenal, the commander has an approach to continuous process improvement that can be used in many teams and offices to improve performance. He regularly brings his staff together to discuss performance goals: At Watervliet, the tyranny of time is not part of any leader's vocabulary. This arsenal today has one of the most progressive continuous-improvement programs in the Army, despite being in operation for more than 200 years. It has a long-term commitment to steadily increase the efficiency of its manufacturing, and other processes such as talent management, through Lean Six Sigma efforts. The arsenal begins the cycle with annual strategic planning to determine key performance indicators and performance targets for the coming year. To align continuous improvement with strategic planning, process-improvement events are planned to support pursuit of these targets. Every month, the arsenal commander convenes his key leaders and representatives from the workforce for a stand-up around an operational-style board, like what one may find in a battlefield operations center. At this board, frank and spirited discussions take place concerning the progress being made toward mutually agreed-upon improvement goals, and, at the end of the huddle, all walk away as one team with common direction and priorities.

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Chapter 4

Work Unit Factors

Employee engagement is affected by work unit factors, all dealing with trust, respect, and teamwork. These specific factors are:

- Building trust and support.
- Ensuring respect and fairness.
- Facilitating collaboration and teamwork.

BUILDING TRUST AND SUPPORT

In the most effective organizations, leaders display high levels of integrity, strength of character, and support for employees. When this occurs, employees trust in leadership and are more likely to be engaged in their work. Trust is essential to all effective relationships and building trust is an Army leadership competency. Demonstrating care and support for follower well-being reinforces a positive organizational climate and builds trust. One way to support employees and foster trust is to ensure leaders are aware of employee needs and show this by advocating for their needs and being considerate of their well-being. Further, ensuring employees have needed resources, such as budget, staffing, technology, and tools that enable employees to complete their work, is key to providing support. Additionally, giving employees flexibility provides feelings of autonomy and trust which increase morale—another way to increase support.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: TRUST AND SUPPORT

Do team members believe leaders have the competency and skill to lead the team, walk the talk, and act with integrity?

Does the team feel leaders understand their needs and wants, as well as show appreciation for their work efforts?

Does the team feel they have adequate resources (such as people, materials, information, or budget) to perform their work well?

Does the team feel I will support them if resources or information are needed to complete work tasks?

Does the team feel their suggestions are heard and implemented?

Does the team feel that their leaders make decisions and take actions in accordance with the Army Ethic?

Indicators of **STRENGTH**	*Indicators of* **OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**
• Leaders display high levels of integrity, character, and ethical decision making. • Leaders admit mistakes and present the truth, even if unpopular or difficult. • Leaders keep promises and take a genuine interest in employee well-being. • Leaders are advocates for employees, ensuring they receive individualized care and consideration. • Leaders are approachable and receptive to feedback. • Employees believe their leaders have the capabilities needed to effectively lead the team.	• Employees do not trust their leader to follow through on commitments and promises. • Employees believe their leader focuses on self-promotion, taking credit for the work and contribution of others. • Leaders do not keep employees informed. • Employees lack the necessary tools, equipment, or resources required to effectively complete work. • Detached leaders, who are not in touch with their employees nor interested in what the employees are doing, fail to have awareness of employee needs.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: BUILDING TRUST AND SUPPORT

Work to build trust in leadership. Building trust forms the bedrock of mutual respect and shared understanding and enables teams to function at the highest level. A leader can build employee trust by modeling each of the Army's components of the Builds Trust leader competency:

- Set a personal example for trust. Setting a personal example inspires others to act in the same manner. Act with integrity and character by being firm, fair, and respectful and assess your own trustworthiness. Admit mistakes, keep confidences, and follow through on commitments and promises.
- Take direct actions to build trust. Develop others through mentoring, coaching, and counseling. Develop positive relationships with peers, superiors, and subordinates. Do not tolerate misconduct or unfair treatment and take appropriate action to correct dysfunction.
- Sustain a climate of trust. Create a positive, mutually beneficial environment characterized by openness and risk-tolerance. Demonstrate these qualities through decisions and actions.

Work to understand employee needs. Leaders support employees by understanding their situation and their personal needs. This can be done in multiple ways:

- Conduct focus groups to determine ways to support employees and provide interventions to meet their needs.
- Use a brief pulse survey to learn about needs from employees across the team or office.
- Hold small group or individual meetings between leaders and employees.

When working to understand employee needs, it is important for a structured conversation to occur so employees do not gain a false sense of what will happen in the work place or become frustrated because of what they do not have. As such, these conversations need to include elements such as:

- Conduct a structured discussion about what employees need and how to make the organization a better place for them to work.
- Focus on actionable factors under the leadership's control.
- Be intentional in the forming of focus groups or discussion meetings as to not inhibit the candor of employees because of a fear of retribution. For example, it is best to not include employees and their supervisor in the same group as employees may be hesitant to share their true feelings.
- Be clear with employees on how their input will be used and make sure to circle back to employees to show what is occurring as a result of the focus groups.
- Gathering this information from employees will make them understand that leaders have their best interests at heart, they are cared for, and they have a voice in what happens in the workplace.

Support employees through understanding them personally. Leaders best support employees when they are aware of their needs. This awareness builds trust and engagement from employees. Ways to support individual employees through understanding them include:

- Awareness. Leadership awareness and knowledge of employee needs, wants, and the overall work situation shows they care about employees.
- Consideration of employee well-being. Leadership consideration and respect for employee well-being and comfort is an indicator of support to employees.

Respond to employee concerns and complaints. Leaders need to take an active role in hearing and addressing employee concerns and complaints. This can improve employee engagement; employees will feel there is someone to listen to their concerns and their individual role in the organization matters.

Offer employees the resources they need to effectively complete work. These resources could be needed tools or equipment or could be benefits such as flexibility. Allowing flexibility in work location (such as telework) or time (such as flexible start and end times to the day, compressed workweek or part-time schedule) allow employees to influence where and when they work to best balance the needs of the team and the employee, which demonstrates support for employee well-being and stewardship of the profession.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS	Avoid POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS
• Foster an environment of honesty, transparency, and kindness. • When mistakes are made, admit it, fix, it and move forward. • Create an environment without favoritism and where employees feel there is fair treatment.	• Do not justify wrongful behavior or cover up misdeeds—this leads to mistrust. • Listen to people—do not pretend to listen. • Do not just pretend to care but actively seek what is good for others.

ENSURING RESPECT AND FAIRNESS

Demonstrating respect and fairness demonstrates sensitivity to diversity and treating others equitably—as you would want to be treated. Respect and fairness in the workplace are fundamental keys to motivating employees. Employees who experience respect and fairness are more likely to internalize the organization's goals and values and work collaboratively for the long-term benefit of the organization and its members.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: RESPECT AND FAIRNESS

Are team members treated with respect by others within the team and organization?

Are diversity, cultural factors, and ethical considerations taken into account when making decisions?

Are prohibited practices prevented and stopped?

Indicators of STRENGTH	Indicators of OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
• Guidelines, requirements, and policies are applied equally to all team members. • Diversity and inclusiveness are supported and celebrated.	• Employees feel policies and procedures are applied unfairly and favoritism plays a role. • Employees experience harassment or persecution at work.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: RESPECT AND FAIRNESS

Set the example. Personally model the Army Values in all decisions and actions. An integral measure of respect and fairness within teams can be found within the leader's character. Leaders support an ethical team climate of respect and fairness by upholding the Army Values as a core part of their own moral code. These values include:

- *Loyalty*: Earn subordinates' loyalty by training them well, treating them fairly, and living the Army Values.
- *Duty*: Take responsibility for your actions and those of subordinates. Demonstrate dedicated effort, organization, thoroughness, reliability, and practicality.
- *Respect*: Consistently foster a climate to treat everyone with dignity and respect, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, or religious belief. Fostering a positive climate begins with a leaders' personal example.
- *Selfless Service*: Doing what is right for the nation, the Army, the organization, and subordinate.
- *Honor*: Demonstrate an understanding of what is right. Put the Army Values above self-interest and above career and personal comfort.
- *Integrity*: Consistently follow clear principles, high moral standards, and honesty to others.
- *Personal Courage*: Put fear aside and do what is necessary.

Maintain an ethical climate to support character development in team members. Ensure team members feel comfortable doing the right thing for the right reason and with the right goal. Through words and actions, leaders support character development among their subordinates. Inform, guide, and inspire the team as Army professionals toward trustworthy moral behavior. Live the Army Ethic and hold team members to a similarly high standard of character, competence, and commitment.

- Universal norms:
    - Basic rights.
    - Golden rule (law of reciprocity)—treat others the way you wish to be treated.
- Values, creeds, and mottos:
    - NCO Creed.
    - Army Civilian Corps Creed.
    - Army Values.
    - The Soldier's Creed (Warrior Ethos).

Reflect on the moral principles embodied in the Preamble to the Constitution:

> *We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and to our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*

Encourage self-awareness. Self-awareness is an important characteristic to have for social interaction but it is especially critical for leaders. Self-awareness:

- Can reveal biases leading to unfair or disrespectful treatment toward others.
- Allows leaders to identify their strengths and developmental needs, permitting them to optimize their strengths while addressing their developmental needs.
- Enhances a leader's ability to get the most of their subordinates because they understand what they can do better to lead them.
- Affects the quality of a leader's interactions with others, resulting in more engaged employees.

There has been a big push for feedback programs in the Army such as the Multisource Assessment and Feedback (MSAF) program, which enables leaders to develop improved self-awareness of their leadership qualities. Formal feedback from these programs, along with informal feedback based on observation and assessment, provides vital information to confirm or increase self-awareness about ethical leadership.

Assess feelings of fairness and justice among subordinates. Employees should feel their work is conducted in a fair manner and there is equal treatment for all members of the team. When assessing feelings of fairness and justice, consider the three types of justice affecting employee perceptions:

- Procedural Justice: Employees should feel the decision processes are fair. Work to communicate policies and procedures so they are well known and be as transparent as possible when following them.
- Distributive Justice: Employees should feel outcomes are consistent with input and rewards are distributed fairly throughout the team. If employees feel they are not receiving desired outcomes relative to others on the team, use coaching, counseling, and sensing sessions to determine what needs to occur to improve results.
- Interactional Justice: Employees should feel the interpersonal treatment they receive is fair and explanations of organizational processes and decisions are specific, timely, and provide enough information to employees.

Employees need to feel valued as more than just a warm body. If respect and climate issues exist within the team, work to identify and resolve these negative climate issues by—

- Gathering information about the office or organizational climate from peers and subordinates.
- Recognizing legitimate concerns from subordinates.
- Using effective feedback techniques.
- Correcting negative behaviors using both evaluative and developmental approaches.
- Using team climate assessment reports to identify problems early.

Immediately address issues of harassment and other prohibited practices. Ensure familiarity with the organization's policies and procedures on harassment and other prohibited practices. Ensure all employees, including leaders, are held accountable and receive the proper consequences if harassment or other prohibited practices occur.

If a leader tolerates harassment or discrimination, it erodes team cohesiveness and breaks the trust employees have for their leaders. Repairing broken trust is a difficult and effortful process.

Support diversity and be mindful of cultural factors. Employees come to the team with differences in upbringing, culture, religious backgrounds, and traditions. These diverse backgrounds and traditions influence an employee's moral beliefs and perceptions of the world around them. Leaders must—

- Be sensitive to the different backgrounds of team members to best use their talents.
- Be aware of the culture of the country in which the team is operating.
- Consider implications of customs, traditions, doctrinal principles, and operational methods.
- Do not require people to violate their beliefs by ordering or encouraging unlawful or unethical actions.
- Question and refuse to obey any unlawful orders. Seek legal counsel for complex questions.

Recognize and empathize with the needs of team members. Leaders should develop an understanding of subordinate needs that allow thinking through their perspective, anticipating what they experience, and envisioning how decisions or actions affect them. These actions enable leaders to develop understanding:

- Give the training, equipment, and support needed to accomplish necessary tasks.
- Assess risks and take risk management actions to set employees up for success.
- When difficulties arise, get involved. Share their hardships.
- Protect leave periods to support work-life balance and family relationships.
- Show employees their value by recognizing their accomplishments.
- Hire team members who will act in ways conducive to future team success.

Enforce standards for all team members. A leader's ultimate goal is to train to the standards that ensure mission success. Instilling effective discipline is achieved when a leader—

- Communicates and enforces high but realistic standards.
- Sets intermediate goals and support them through plans, resources, and evaluation.
- Prioritizes tasks. Recognize not everything can be a number one priority.
- Instills discipline by training to standard, using rewards and punishment judiciously, and ensuring the staff has the expertise required.
- Promotes a culture of trust by being firm, fair, and respectful and not tolerating harassment or discriminatory behaviors.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate *KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS*	*Avoid* *POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS*
• Policies and procedures are clearly understood and evenly applied throughout the team. • Leaders are skilled at leading a diverse team. • Employees understand prohibited practices and avoid them. • If prohibited practices occur, leaders immediately address the issue appropriately.	• Unclear expectations lead some employees to feel accolades and rewards are distributed unfairly. • Diversity and cultural differences are misunderstood or feared. • Employees and leaders do not fully understand or avoid prohibited practices.

Table 4-1 indicates specific leader actions for the leader competencies of builds trust, leads others, communicates, creates a positive environment, and prepares self. All of these actions promote respect and fairness.

Table 4-1. Leader actions to promote respect and fairness

Leadership Competencies	Leader Actions
Builds trust Leaders build trust to mediate relationships and encourage commitment among followers. Trust develops from respect among people and grows from common experiences and shared understanding.	• Is firm, fair, and respectful to gain trust. • Assesses degree of own trustworthiness. • Assesses factors or conditions promoting or hindering trust. • Corrects team members who undermine trust with their attitudes or actions.
Leads others Leaders motivate, inspire, and influence others to take initiative, work toward a common purpose, accomplish critical tasks, and achieve organizational objectives.	• Reinforces the importance and role of standards. • Performs individual and collective tasks to standard. • Recognizes and takes responsibility for poor performance and addresses it appropriately.
Communicates Leaders communicate effectively by clearly expressing ideas and actively listening to others. By understanding the nature and importance of communication and practicing effective communication techniques, leaders will relate better to others and be able to translate goals into actions.	• Maintains awareness of communication customs, expressions, actions, or behaviors. • Demonstrates respect for others.
Creates a positive environment Leaders establish and maintain positive expectations and attitudes to support effective work behaviors and healthy relationships. Leaders improve the organization while accomplishing missions. They should leave the organization better than it was when they arrived.	• Provides accurate evaluations and assessments. • Supports equal opportunity. • Prevents all forms of harassment. • Encourages learning about and leveraging diversity. • Clearly articulates expectations. • Creates a climate that expects good performance, recognizes superior performance, and does not accept poor performance. • Challenges others to match the leader's example.

Table 4-1. Leader actions to promote respect and fairness (continued)

Prepares self	
Leaders prepare to execute their leadership responsibilities fully. They are aware of their limitations and strengths and seek self-development.	• Evaluates one's strengths and weaknesses. • Learns from mistakes to make corrections; learns from experience. • Seeks feedback; determines areas in need of development. • Determines personal goals and makes progress toward them. • Develops capabilities where possible but accepts personal limitations. • Seeks opportunities to use capabilities appropriately. • Understands self-motivation under various task conditions.

FACILITATING COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK

Performance improves when team members willingly share information and work together to accomplish shared goals. Employees should feel comfortable approaching colleagues for ideas, initiating discussions around problem solving, and pulling together to face difficulties head-on. Leaders should encourage open communication and promote esprit de corps.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: TEAMWORK

Do team members willingly work together on joint projects?

Are best practices, lessons learned, guidance, and useful information shared freely within the team?

Are employees effective at gaining support and cooperation from stakeholders outside of the immediate team?

Are knowledge management tools being used to improve team, organization, and Army performance?

Indicators of *STRENGTH*	*Indicators of* *OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT*
• Colleagues exhibit a willingness to work toward shared goals, and pull together during tight deadlines and difficult projects. • Team members regularly share best practices, lessons learned, and other information and guidance with one another. • Employees are skilled at building collaborative teams with stakeholders outside of the immediate team. • Team members use knowledge management tools effectively.	• Team members do not trust their colleagues to complete tasks thoroughly or on time. • Coworkers rarely interact and are reluctant to approach colleagues when needing assistance. • Employees are not members of task forces or collaborative efforts involving other offices or organizations. • Employees are unwilling to take responsibility for projects requiring outside support or cooperation. • Team members feel they do not have enough time to use knowledge management tools.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: TEAMWORK

Provide a foundation for good relationships among colleagues. Good relationships with colleagues are key drivers of morale within organizations, and often underpin work-related efforts requiring shared knowledge and collaboration. Social activities can set the stage for colleagues to meet one another and deepen ties. Potential activities can include:

- Staff parties.
- Combined staff meetings.
- Specially designed planning meetings.
- Shared lunches.
- Celebrations.

Encourage staff members to spend time getting to know teammates, internal and external customers, and the people they rely on for information and support. Work with employees to identify the stakeholders who are important to the success of their work, and together develop a plan to enhance these relationships.

Nurture the development of trust among team members. Encourage openness and risk tolerance and support norms and values that create positive, mutually beneficial conditions for the team. Personally demonstrate these values by taking prudent risks and creating transparency in decisions and actions. Some key actions to remember:

- Keep people informed of goals, actions, and results.
- Follow through on actions.
- Do not overpromise and under deliver.

Address performance management issues. Most employees work hard and conscientiously fulfill work duties. Unfortunately, some shirk duties, lack customer service skills, perform low quality work, or take credit for work done by others. Coworkers notice employee misconduct, which can severely lower team morale and collaboration. Communicate that misconduct will not be tolerated. Use effective feedback methods and the performance management process to maintain a consistent and dependable level of quality and timeliness among all members of the team.

Build the team during all three stages of team development. It is difficult but important to build teams of members who trust one another, execute tasks thoroughly and quickly, meet and exceed standards, adapt to demanding challenges, and learn from experience. With knowledge and patience, leaders can guide their teams through the three stages of team development:

- *Formation Stage*: Welcome new members by introducing them to the team, orienting them to the team's schedule and norms, and letting them learn the environment. Provide direction, reinforce the norms for team performance standards, and learn how team members relate to one another. Assess the relational and technical skills of new members and determine how to best integrate and guide them.
- *Enrichment Stage*: During the enrichment stage, focus on training the team on how to work together and meet high performance standards. Listen to team members and follow through. Get to know the team, establish clear lines of authority, and consistently enforce standards.

  Be aware of signs of distrust. Indicators of distrust include persistent defense of one's opinion, avoidance of conflict, ignoring the importance of team membership and goals, and suspicion about the motivation of others.

  To improve trust and build morale, get to know team members, communicate truthfully with them, treat them fairly, and recognize good work and teamwork.
- *Sustainment stage*: At this stage, the team functions cohesively without direction and members identify with their team. If unexpected changes occur, address difficulties head-on by providing regular training and sharing positive experiences. Remember, all teams have their strengths and needs—watch for signs of complacency. Continue to hold the team to high standards and reinforce interaction practices.

Create a culture of shared knowledge. Harness the power of hard-won knowledge within the team. Provide time at staff meetings for employees to share project successes and discuss current challenges and lessons learned. During these discussions:

- Encourage information sharing and collaborative problem solving among team members.

- Enable, foster, and encourage innovation.
- Maintain an atmosphere of respect and courteous behavior among staff.
- Celebrate diverse ideas and points of view.
- Do not do all the talking: allow team members to fully participate.
- Reward employee candor and do not punish employees for honestly reporting difficulties.
- Reinforce constructive knowledge sharing through accolades and incentives.

Effectively harness conflict. Conflict can be constructive when it leads to a broader understanding of how team members experience their work, reveals a deficiency in resources, or sheds light on potential problems or hazards. Successful, creative solutions can be developed through effective and heartfelt discussions of key issues.

When conflicts arise, encourage team members to see the process as a deeper dive into opposing viewpoints. Encourage team members to identify and discuss potential problems, and to develop solutions to address the issues. Recognize that many employees will need careful attention and coaching through this problem-solving process. Maintain an atmosphere of respect and courteous behavior among the team.

If conflict exists between colleagues—and if the conflict does not stem from illegal, hostile, or discriminatory behavior—allow employees the opportunity to manage the conflict themselves but stay involved and give attentive support. Provide one-on-one guidance for managing the necessary conversation, and consider giving employees the opportunity to practice the conversation with you as a surrogate ahead of time. If repeated attempts by employees to solve interpersonal issues do not succeed, assist as necessary.

Promote diverse knowledge management opportunities. A vast number of knowledge management tools can be used to share and preserve knowledge, track progress toward shared goals, and enhance collaboration on a large scale. Many digital knowledge-sharing tools are now widely available. Digital knowledge sharing tools include (but are not limited to):

- Official websites and portal web pages, such as milSuite and SharePoint.
- Army Knowledge Online.
- Digital professional and social forums.
- Chat programs.
- Blogs.
- Social networking sites.
- Tele-video conferencing systems.

Many low tech and low cost non-digital tools and activities are easily accessible, and can greatly improve knowledge sharing among team members, including:

- After action reviews.
- Storytelling (means of transferring tacit knowledge).
- Email distribution lists, such as those used by Army Career Programs.
- Map boards, status boards, and unit message bulletin boards.
- White (dry erase) boards.
- Sticky notes.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS	Avoid POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS
• Staff meetings regularly include open discussions about performance, outcomes, best practices, mistakes, and resources. • Multiple communication channels are used for team collaboration, including newsletters, bulletin and white boards, and widely distributed newsletters and reports.	• Team members who are reluctant to approach colleagues when assistance is needed. • Team members who consistently shirk duties or perform low quality work. • Lack of awareness among team members about the work of their colleagues.

• Team members understand and use knowledge management tools.	• Lack of awareness and skill in using knowledge management tools effectively.

Leaders pay a key role in developing cohesive and effective teams. See ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership* for more on the leader competencies and ATP 6-22.6, *Army Team Building* for techniques on team building. Table 4-2 outlines specific leader actions to develop teamwork.

Table 4-2. Leader actions to develop teamwork

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES Team Building	*LEADER ACTIONS*
Assesses developmental needs of others	• Determines subordinate strengths and weaknesses under various conditions. • Evaluates subordinates in a fair and consistent manner. • Uses 360-degree assessments. • Assesses task proficiency and subordinate motivation to consider methods of improving work assignments. • Determines when job enrichment would be useful • Considers methods of cross training on tasks and assignments. • Challenges subordinates to improve weaknesses and sustain strengths. • Encourages subordinates to improve processes.
Counsels, coaches, and mentors	• Improves subordinate understanding and proficiency. • Uses experience and knowledge to improve future performance. • Counsels, coaches, and mentors subordinates and others.
Facilitates ongoing development	• Maintains awareness of existing individual and organizational development programs and removes barriers to development. • Supports opportunities for self-development. • Arranges training opportunities for subordinates to improve self-awareness, confidence, and competence. • Encourages subordinates to pursue institutional learning opportunities. • Provides information about institutional training and career progression. • Maintains resources related to development.
Builds team or group skills and processes	• Presents challenging assignments for team or group interaction. • Provides resources and support for realistic, mission-oriented training. • Sustains and improves the relationships among team or group members. • Provides feedback on team processes. • Integrates diversity training.

Better ways to address conflict among collaborators

When conflicts arise among collaborators, it is important to address the issues head-on. Learn effective techniques for the team to express and discuss issues. Encourage team members to state their opinions and viewpoints in a nonthreatening manner and then discuss solutions as a team.

List the problems. Assemble the team and list issues the team members are experiencing or foresee.

Encourage all to participate. Ensure one or a few participants do not dominate the discussion.

Do not downplay emotional factors—list them along with everything else.

Do not let personal perspectives and feelings run the discussion. Maintain neutrality or bring in a neutral facilitator if you want the list to include your perspective.

Brainstorm potential solutions. For each issue, list all potential solutions. Encourage the team to list wacky and pie-in-the-sky solutions as well as more realistic solutions. Set ground-rules that differentiate between divergent and convergent thinking.

Make a list of needed information. As the discussion progresses, the team may find additional information is needed before solutions can be decided. For each item, assign a team member who will be responsible to get the information to the team.

Decide on solutions. As a team, after identifying all potential solutions and supporting information is available, decide on the best solution(s). Before finalizing decisions, discuss the pros and cons of each solution and determine whether multiple solutions are necessary.

Continue to evaluate. Continue to assess the effectiveness of solution(s) as work progresses and revisit the discussion as needed.

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Chapter 5

Employee Factors

Much of employee engagement depends on the particular employee. Several substantial factors are promoting career development; recognizing, rewarding, and managing performance; and creating work-life balance.

PROMOTING CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Employees thrive in conditions where they can gain more knowledge in their career field and progress in their chosen career path. Work with employees to map out their desired career path and when and where to acquire needed skills and knowledge. Support employees' long-term career success by assisting their efforts to identify and engage in a variety of development activities, such as mentoring relationships, stretch assignments, and learning communities.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Do team members have clarity on their career paths?

Do team members take the time to prepare detailed development plans with specific goals?

Do team members have adequate access to on-the-job training, coaching and mentoring, stretch assignments, training details, and other development opportunities?

Are there barriers preventing team members from accessing or obtaining the skills and knowledge they need?

Do team members feel there are adequate opportunities to advance in their careers?

Indicators of *STRENGTH*	*Indicators of* *OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT*
• Employees take ownership of their own development, actively planning and taking actions on career advancement. • Employees regularly participate in formal and informal development activities. • Employees know how to mature in work responsibility, acquire more challenging work assignments, and advance in their careers. • Leaders recognize growth opportunities and have employees identify and gain approval to participate in career development activities.	• Employees are unclear about their career paths and do not plan for or seek out career development opportunities. • Employees do not feel they receive adequate opportunities to learn desired skills. • Formal training viewed as the only way to increase skills and knowledge. Leaders and team members are unfamiliar with other learning options. • Team members feel they do not have time to learn new skills. Challenging new assignments are given with little advance training or supportive oversight.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Develop and distribute guidance on formal training attendance. Policies and guidance related to training should be developed and distributed to team members. Find a physical or virtual home for these documents (such

as a policies and procedures binder, a shared drive accessible by all team members, or a folder in SharePoint) so employees know where to go to learn about or better understand these procedures.

Advise employees to learn about career programs to support their development. Career programs assist the Army Civilian workforce to set and reach their career goals. Thirty-one career programs exist, organized to provide career management, education, and training to personnel within common occupational series.

Take time to introduce each employee to the career program (see Army Career Tracker) supporting his or her occupational series. Explain how career programs can support development and familiarize staff with their career program managers.

Discuss career development goals with each employee regularly. Listen to employees' career goals and aspirations—sit down with them to develop personalized and structured development plans. These plans can guide their efforts to attain the work skills and knowledge they need. Structured development plans should include:

- A self-assessment to identify areas for improvement.
- Individual goals with specific steps and timeframes.
- Lists of opportunities and resources enabling the employee to achieve each goal.

Provide support for formal and informal learning opportunities. One of the biggest challenges of career-related learning is simply recognizing the many available learning opportunities. A wide variety of methods and resources can support continuous learning and career development. Enable team members to recognize these different opportunities, including:

- Formal learning (such as classroom learning, distance learning, and job aids).
- On-the-job learning (such as special projects or delegated assignments).
- Peer learning (such as learning groups and teams, discussion forums).
- Learning from leaders and experts (such as coaching, mentoring, job shadowing, and informational interviews).

Remember, developing others is a deliberate and continuous process grounded in Army Values. Show team members learning and development are valued by being visibly engaged in development activities, such as:

- Supporting formal and on-the-job learning to encourage subordinate growth in current roles and positions.
- Self-developing through formal and informal means.
- Promoting a culture where mistakes are learning opportunities.
- Openly discussing what went right and wrong in personal past projects.
- Observing subordinates' performance and providing constructive feedback.

Empower subordinates through effective delegation. As a leader, regularly devote time to developing subordinates. Proper delegation allows team members to learn and grow. Leaders must ensure employees share a common vision and are encouraged to exercise discipline initiative. To properly delegate authority, provide clear intent, set realistic project goals and objectives for employees, and allow them to take prudent risk. Afford employees the opportunity to provide feedback and support to enhance the learning process and reduce unnecessary stress. When delegating, keep the following guidance in mind:

- Recognize the best way to create a solid organization is to empower subordinates.
- Be present to observe key activities but, after initially observing the situation, give time and space for the employee to exercise initiative.
- Establish yourself as a supportive resource, rather than an evaluative note taker.
- Remember to include regular checks and status updates.
- Assist subordinates in identifying successes.
- When mistakes happen, ensure subordinates sort out what happened and why.
- Enable subordinates to learn from their successes and mistakes in a positive manner through a quality after action review.
- Assist subordinates to first master individual competencies and provide opportunities for them to apply and tailor their competencies to situational needs. Competence develops from a balanced combination of institutional schooling, self-development, realistic training, and professional experience. Adopt a

systematic and gradual approach. Leading people by supporting them through a complex task allows them to develop the confidence to take on progressively more difficult challenges.

Develop subordinates using effective coaching, mentoring, and guided discovery learning. Use effective coaching and mentoring to develop subordinates. Learn about guided discovery learning and how to implement it properly. Refer to FM 6-22 for an expansive discussion of these approaches along with application guidance.

- *Coaching*: Coaching enables individuals to understand their current level of performance and guides their performance to the next level. Become a leader who excels at coaching subordinates.
- *Mentoring*: Mentoring connections are best when characterized by mutual trust and respect. They are most effective when they occur outside the chain of command, between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience.
- *Guided discovery learning*: The techniques supporting guided discovery learning enable you to deliver leadership observations to subordinates and support their development through positive reinforcement, prompted self-reflection, and analysis.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate **KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS**	*Avoid* **POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS**
• Leaders provide support for formal and informal learning opportunities.	• Perceptions that employee development is contingent on available GS positions.
• Employees clearly understand the path to advance their career and know how to achieve the next step.	• Organizational silos contributing to a lack of knowledge-sharing opportunities.

Table 5-1 outlines developmental opportunities and activities (See FM 6-22 for more information). Organizations can promote development by publicizing and marketing formal developmental opportunities. Table 5-2 provides a quick reference illustrating a variety of conditions for learning.

Table 5-1. Developmental opportunities and activities

Developmental Opportunities	FORMAL Directed by policy or regulations	SEMIFORMAL Commonly practiced and may be required	INFORMAL Consists of additional learning opportunities
Challenging experiences	Broadening assignments	Talent management Stretch assignments Rotational assignments Developmental assignments	Opportunities to operate in unfamiliar situations Broadening tasks, casualty assistance, staff duty, food service duty
Group development	After action reviews	Professional development Team building events	Professional reading and writing program Sharing experiences Excellence competitions
Education	Civilian Education System Professional education courses Functional, branch, career program, or special training	Scheduling or supporting subordinates to attend institutional education	Encourage utilization of new skills and knowledge of recent grads
Self-development	Structured self-development	Guided self-development	Self-assessment Reflective journaling Personalized self-development Study and practice
Collective training	Incorporate development goals and processes into training objectives	Team building exercises	Shared stories of development

Table 5-2. Learning opportunities checklist

FORMAL LEARNING	
☐	CLASSROOM LEARNING: Work-related training facilitated by an instructor in a traditional classroom setting.
☐	DISTANCE LEARNING: Like classroom learning, but instruction takes place via video or Web-based connections; typically offered by universities and professional vendors.
☐	ONLINE LEARNING: Learning available via the Internet, including self-paced courses, real-time presentations, and online reading materials.
☐	SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING: Development activities employees can pursue on their own. Includes any training source where the learner has control over topics or pace.
☐	JOB AIDS: Tools giving incremental guidance toward task completion.
ON-THE-JOB LEARNING	
☐	SPECIAL PROJECTS AND ASSIGNMENTS: Temporary duties performed on a part– or full-time basis.
☐	DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES: Transfer of responsibility for how a task is accomplished. Leaders set goals and objectives that must be met. The subordinate determines actions and schedules for meeting the objectives.
PEER LEARNING	
☐	LEARNING GROUPS (TEAMS): Ongoing meetings where employees focus on learning and development needs and interests.
☐	DISCUSSION FORUMS: Groups regularly meet to share ideas, information, and solutions to work-related issues. Forums can be face-to-face or online.
LEARNING FROM LEADERS AND EXPERTS	
☐	COACHING: Observation, feedback, and facilitative problem solving to enhance performance.
☐	MENTORING: Formal or informal relationship where the mentor provides ongoing support, advice, and career direction.
☐	MANAGER AS TEACHER: Leader-facilitated learning where each interaction with subordinates is treated as a learning opportunity.
☐	JOB SHADOWING: Temporary observation of another person's daily routine.
☐	INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS: Meetings held with key people to gain information, perspectives, and advice.

RECOGNIZING, REWARDING, AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE

To create an engaged workforce, it is important to keep employees motivated and realize the value of performance excellence. As a leader, boost employee motivation by recognizing and rewarding their performance. While leaders may have limited control over formal, institutionalized reward practices and processes (such as allocation of monetary rewards or promotions), there are many ways, both formal and informal, to give credit to employees for their individual and team achievements to sustain and improve performance.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: RECOGNIZING, REWARDING, AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE

Are team members recognized and rewarded for improving their performance? How so?

Do team members know how their performance contributes to organization mission success? If no, what are some potential reasons?

Do team members take ownership for continuous performance improvement?

Indicators of ***STRENGTH***	*Indicators of* ***OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT***
• Employees can distinguish among different levels of performance. • Employees feel motivated to improve their performance. • Employees know how their performance affects organization mission success.	• Employees are unaware of performance standards required of their positions. • Employees do not believe their performance makes a difference. • Employees are unclear how their work affects the overall organization mission.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: RECOGNIZING, REWARDING, AND MANAGING PERFORMANCE

Ensure conditions for effective rewards and recognition. Rewards and recognition can be powerful motivators to positively reinforce desired behaviors and performance. To take advantage of them, certain conditions need to be met for rewards and recognition to be effective in driving employee performance. Specifically, the following conditions ensure the effectiveness of rewards and recognition:

- *Timeliness*: Important rewards and recognition must be delivered in a timely fashion to create a strong linkage to the desired behavior or performance. The longer the time lag, the less likely the reward and recognition will motivate future behaviors and performance.

- *Attractiveness*: Like the timeliness condition, rewards and recognition perceived as attractive are stronger motivators of future behaviors and performance. The same reward or recognition may be more effective for some than others— use benchmarked research to find the most appropriate rewards.

- *Certainty and consistency*: Rewards and recognition influence behaviors through outcome expectancies. People believe when they do certain things, that they will get certain outputs. The more confident people are that a behavior will lead to the desired outcome (such as reward and recognition); the more likely they will repeat the behavior to attain the outcome.

- *Appropriateness*: Rewards and recognition could backfire if used too frequently and not selectively. Rewards and recognition work to motivate behaviors and performance by creating expectancies. However, if you create a culture where individuals expect to be praised for everything they do, it becomes more difficult to motivate them for specific, wanted behaviors.

- *Clarity and transparency*: The last thing wanted is for rewards and recognition to turn into perceptions of favoritism and sap the morale of those who do not understand why they are left out. If a few employees are always selected for rewards and recognition without clear explanations, it could be demotivating to others who might feel their work is not seen as important.

Create and implement effective reward and recognition strategies. Often, rewards and recognition are immediately associated with medals, commendations, or time off. However, there are many ways to use rewards and recognition to motivate employees. Here are a few useful strategies to get started:

- *Leverage resources within your control*. Find out what employees need and value and what would get them excited about performance improvement. Consider creative options. For example, face time with leaders or opportunities to attend training events to network with employees from other organizations

can be effective rewards and recognition. Resources not thought as tangible rewards can also be powerful tools of recognition. For example, give employees an interesting task to work or involve them in decisions related to the organizational mission.

- *Use informal rewards and recognition*. Rewards and recognition do not always have to be formally structured. Spontaneous and authentic informal rewards and recognition indicate employee performance is taken seriously and leaders constantly look for signs of improvement. Simple acknowledgement of a job well done shows appreciation. Informal recognition allows a more personal and genuine approach.
- *Focus on actions and behavior*. While it is common to reward and recognize performance, sometimes only focusing on performance can be demotivating if the effort-performance link is weak. It is important that employees do not feel their hard work goes unnoticed and only outcomes are rewarded and recognized. Focusing on actions and behaviors allows leaders to reward and recognize individuals' effort and reinforce the value in doing good work.

Build trust and achieve mutual respect through rewards and recognition. Rewards and recognition, when applied effectively, can serve to not only motivate employees but also build rapport and trust. When employees see their work is valued, they feel valued by their leaders as well. This feeling of being seen and mutual respect with one's leader can be a relationship builder and reward in and of itself. To build trust and achieve mutual respect with employees through rewards and recognition, the key is to be genuine and authentic in the execution. Here are some tips to keep in mind to deliver rewards and recognition with authenticity:

- Present rewards and recognition with a genuine expression of appreciation for the recipient's achievements and contributions. Whether or not the rewards and recognition are tangible, meaningful words of acknowledgement are always well received.
- Include specific details in the description of the recipient's achievements and contributions. Explain how they have made a difference to others and the organization as a whole.
- Respect employees' personal wishes and individual preferences. Not everyone loves to be in the spotlight—some may feel embarrassed. Find out what the recipient feels comfortable with and accommodate when possible.

Enable employees to develop internal motivation. As discussed so far, external rewards and recognition can be powerful motivators to promote performance improvement. However, it is important to understand the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The external tangible rewards are mostly what have been discussed thus far. Intrinsic rewards are the internal feelings or values an individual places on achievement; these intrinsic rewards can actually be more meaningful than the extrinsic rewards. Thus, enable employees to internalize rewards by pursuing and achieving performance excellence and continuous improvement. Rewards and leader recognition should not be the only source of motivation to drive performance. Work with employees to find ways to align performance goals to their personal values so the activities become internally rewarding. What internally motivates one employee can vary greatly from what internally motivates another, but can create conditions where this mindset becomes the norm. Some ideas to consider include—

- Encouraging self-reflection.
- Sharing personal stories and insights.
- Facilitating team sharing.
- Aligning individual development to the organizational mission.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate **KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS**	*Avoid* **POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS**
• Rewards are delivered based on pre-determined performance goals. Similar or equivalent efforts are acknowledged with similar types of rewards. • Clear criteria for actions and performance are eligible for reward and recognition are established and communicated. Rewards and recognition match the level of effort or performance. • Explanations for the reward and recognition decisions are always provided. Leaders can use this as an opportunity to provide feedback to employees.	• Communication around performance goals is sporadic. Only visible efforts are recognized or rewarded. • Rewards and recognition are viewed with speculations of favoritism. There is no documentation of eligibility criteria. • Explanations for reward and recognition are limited. Employees are provided with little performance feedback or guidance.

Motivating employees to achieve and sustain good performance and continuously improve is central to leaders' ability to pursue excellence and get results. See ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership* for more on the leader competency gets results and table 5-3 for specific leader actions associated with performance recognition and rewards and continuous performance improvement:

Table 5-3. Leader actions to get results

Leadership Competencies *Gets results*	*Leader Actions*
Recognizes and rewards good performance	• Recognizes individual and team accomplishments; rewards appropriately. • Credits subordinates for good performance; builds on successes. • Explores reward systems and individual reward motivations.
Seeks, recognizes and takes advantage of opportunities to improve performance	• Asks incisive questions. • Anticipates needs for actions; envisions ways to improve. • Acts to improve the organization's collective performance. • Recommends best methods to accomplish tasks; uses information and technology to improve individual and group effectiveness. • Encourages staff to use creativity to solve problems.

CREATING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work-life balance exists when employees feel satisfied with the way they divide their time and energy between paid work and all the other things they need and want to do. The ability for employees to maintain work-life balance is a key driver of employee engagement and stress from overwork and work-life imbalance is a leading factor for why employees leave an organization. Employees cannot give 100% to the organization all the time. It is important to acknowledge and encourage work-life balance to foster employee engagement.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: CREATING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Do team members feel management is considerate and permits them to take time off for illness or urgent personal and family needs?

When personal and family needs arise, do employees have the flexibility in their work schedule to accommodate them?

Do employees feel supported of their needs to balance work and their personal and family life?

Do team members feel they have adequate time to perform their work well?

Do employees consistently feel overstressed from high workloads?

Indicators of STRENGTH	Indicators of OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
• Work schedules allow employees to attend to demands or needs in their personal lives. • Leaders provide work-life balance by encouraging employees to take time off or change work schedules when they are sick or family needs arise. • Leaders provide for subordinates' professional health, welfare, and development. • Leaders set a personal example of work-life balance in their own life.	• Employee workload is overwhelming or unable to be completed in the time available during a typical workweek. • Leader fails to provide for individual support needs. • Leader expects more of subordinates than of oneself. • A lack of flexibility causes employees to struggle to attend to demands or needs in their personal lives.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Speak with employees to determine how to better serve them. Conduct formal assessments and set aside social time with subordinates and peers. These activities can develop compassion and provide insight for ways to meet their needs. Leaders who care for employee well-being inspire confidence and increase engagement.

- Conduct focus groups to determine ways for employees to relieve work stressors and improve work-life balance.
- Use a brief pulse survey to learn about the work-life needs and desires from employees across the team or organization.
- Hold small group or individual meetings with employees to show care for their well-being.

Display empathy when an employee is having a hard time. Being able to empathize—see something from another person's point of view, feelings, or emotions—with your employees allows better interaction with others. Army leaders should recognize that empathy includes nurturing a close relationship between the Army and Army families, which includes recovery time from difficult work situations, protecting leave periods, and support events to allow information exchange and family team building. Display empathy through the following steps:

- Read other's emotional cues.
- Consider other points of view in decision-making.
- React appropriately to other's emotional states.
- Show compassion when others are distressed.
- Predict how others will react to certain events.
- Demonstrate ability to establish good rapport.

Directly address work-life needs:

- *Reduce expectations of exceptionally long work hours*. Praise high quality work outputs rather than long work hours. Allow employees appropriate amounts of recovery time (such as time off, a more reasonable workload), especially after any surge periods where employees worked long hours.
- *Be a role model of positive work-life balance*. Take personal leave and disengage with work while on leave. Reference personal family life in regular business communications to encourage open conversations about these issues in the workplace.
- *Provide flexible work arrangements*. Allow key talent flexibility in work location and schedule. Teleworking permits employees to take less leave when personal needs arise (such as needing to be home for repair service), shortens commute times, and limits office distractions when performing work tasks. Allowing flexible schedules, such as flexible start and end times, compressed workweeks, or part-time scheduling allows employees to tailor working hours in a way to efficiently balance work and personal needs.
- *Support involvement in activities outside of work*. Show interest in employees' personal lives and hobbies while respecting individual preferences for privacy. Allow time off or schedule flexibility for employees to attend personal activities. Plan or attend social events with employees and their families to show care for employee well-being outside of the workplace.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate **KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS**	*Avoid* **POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS**
• Leaders maintain and are open about their own work-life balance. • Leaders suggest and encourage flexible work arrangements. • Leaders openly talk about their own and others' personal lives and families. • Leaders support the needs and well-being of employees.	• Leaders expect others to work consistently long hours, and potentially longer hours than the leaders are working. • Norms inhibit family-friendly or flexible work arrangements due to fear of being perceived as less committed. • Policies or leaders preach work-life balance, but do not have balance in their own lives.

TELEWORK ARRANGEMENTS

When considering a recurring telework arrangement (not sporadic based on specific needs), it is important to determine not only if the work tasks are suitable to be performed offsite, but also to assess if an employee possesses the interest, comfort, personal characteristics, and skills to appropriately handle a telework arrangement. Telework requires individuals to be self-motivated, organized, and good communicators. Employees who, for example, rely on day-to-day contact with peers and supervisors for motivation may not be well suited for telework. A person's eligibility to telework should be determined by both the employee and the employee's supervisor following the telework policies of the Department of Defense (see DODI 1035.01) and the individual agency. The employee and supervisor can use table 5-4 to assess an individual's readiness and preparedness to telework based on current profile of skills, personal characteristics, and personal situation. Table 5-4 aids identification of possible limitations an employee may have with telework.

Table 5-4. Telework determination matrix

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
The decision to telework following agency policy should be based on the adaptability of an employee to work autonomously in a suitable telework setting without immediate supervision. This tool should be used by an employee and supervisor as a basis for discussing the option of telework and the appropriateness of this arrangement for the particular employee. The employee and supervisor should answer each item using the 5-point scale. Lower scores indicate teleworking may not be an appropriate choice for the employee at this time.					
	5	4	3	2	1
Employee works without regular monitoring or supervision.					
Employee independently identifies required work outcomes.					
Employee plans work production schedule.					
Employee communicates roadblocks to successful completion of a task or project in sufficient time to allow for alterations to improve the opportunity for success.					
Employee meets deadlines.					
Employee demonstrates satisfactory computer proficiency.					
Employee has work tasks that can be performed away from the main office.					
Employee is willing and able to communicate in new ways (such as increased reliance on email and phone).					
Employee has a suitable place to work outside the office.					
Employee is willing to learn how to manage co-workers, family, friends, and neighbors under telework conditions.					
Employee is disciplined enough to ignore distractions.					
Employee's work can be done from anywhere other than the office.					
Employee's manager could measure employee productivity without face time.					
Employee is self-motivated.					
Employee can work without face-to-face co-worker interaction.					
Employee can work without face-to-face interaction with supervisor or subordinates.					

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Chapter 6

The Work Itself

Employee engagement is affected by the work itself. Significant factors within the work itself include enhancing proficiency and fit of work tasks and empowering employee autonomy and ownership.

ENHANCING PROFICIENCY AND FIT OF WORK TASKS

In supporting competency development, leaders guide employees to relevant learning and nurture greater proficiency required to perform effectively. Employees are most engaged when they perform well at their work and have challenging but not impossible tasks.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: ENHANCING PROFICIENCY AND FIT OF JOB TASKS

Does the team demonstrate a high degree of competence and skill?

Are team members working toward the goals that will develop them in their careers?

Are employees thriving in their work and assigned roles?

Indicators of STRENGTH	*Indicators of* OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
• Employees perform tasks at or above expectations. • Employees have individual development plans (IDPs) and their IDP goals align to mission achievement. • Employees are able to meet the challenges associated with their assignments.	• Employees require assistance or perform sub-optimally on tasks. • Employee task performance is falling short of the requirements of their position. • Employees do not have clear developmental goals or awareness of the competencies they need to develop.

ADDRESS IMPROVEMENT AREAS: WORK TASK PROFICIENCY AND FIT

Gather information to develop unit-wide competency metrics. Part of the challenge in promoting proficiency among employees is obtaining an accurate picture of where they stand and identifying needed improvement. To do this, leaders may need to gather information on how employees are doing with respect to demonstrating competencies. There are various ways to collect information:

- Have one-on-one meetings with subordinate leaders to discuss their perceptions of performance gaps at the team level. Avoid discussing specific people, as this can be counter-productive to building a positive culture.

- Ask employees to complete a self-assessment. Have a neutral third party aggregate the data and provide metrics to indicate relative strengths and weaknesses on the Army leader requirements model (see ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership*) across the team.

- View aggregate-level data from the MSAF Program using the Unit 360 assessment approach to determine points of need for the team's overall proficiency.

Interpret assessment results. When reviewing the metrics, note the relative strengths and developmental needs across the team. Attending to the largest and most important developmental needs first will allow prioritization and implementation of the developmental initiatives.

This is not to say leaders should rely solely on collected metrics—they must take into account personal perceptions and intuition and select priorities using discretion and vision for the team.

Ensure the right person is assigned to the right position. While assessing competency metrics, leaders may identify individuals who have the right attitude but are not a good fit for their particular position. These individuals will not be engaged in their work and will affect the team's effectiveness. Signs of a poor fit include—

- Employee demonstrates a pattern of weakness in a particular area.
- Employee expresses frustration about one responsibility or role in particular.
- Employee has a certain set of tasks or duties on which they always seem to procrastinate.
- Other employees or managers say the position does not seem to be a good fit.

These employees would benefit from a reassignment, adjustments to responsibilities, or additional training and coaching. Confirm that the individual desires the change to make the transition as smooth as possible. Supervisors will follow position management practices such as position description updates and succession planning to implement the changes.

Create and support challenging work assignments. Creating and supporting challenging work assignments for employees is an effective way to advance their development. Work assignments promoting development are challenging and require an increase in responsibilities or duties. It is important to provide the right level of support—too much support takes away their autonomy but not enough support may cause them to flounder.

One of the main difficulties with providing challenging work assignments to employees is being able to accurately judge if they are ready. An employee might be ready if they—

- Drive for betterment—always looking for ways to improve personal work.
- Assist others—an employee who actively teaches and improves coworkers is proving personal capabilities to handle more responsibility and manage others.
- Find solutions—shows ingenuity and critical thinking skills.
- Accountable—takes accountability for personal actions and knows how to receive criticism.

Account for differences in capabilities. Being able to select the right employee is a fundamental part of leadership and a leader's ability to do so affects the mission. Good leaders recognize their employees differ from each other and account for the differences in capabilities and commitment of individuals and groups.

Develop an action plan and monitor progress toward goals. After identifying the team's most pressing proficiency gaps, formulate an action plan to close the gaps. Think about whether or not individuals are a good fit for their role and whether they could use more responsibility. After implementing the action plan, monitor progress toward achieving the stated goals. Monitor progress through personal observations, reports from subordinate employee leaders, or iterative assessments. Plan sufficient time between assessments (at least 6 months) to allow improvements to take hold and manifest desired results.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate ***KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS***	*Avoid* ***POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS***
• Leaders are aware of performance gaps and a plan is in place to address them. • Employees are appropriately challenged by their work.	• Employees needing more responsibility are a bad fit for their role and the team experiences reduced productivity. • A plan of action is not in place to address proficiency gaps in the team. • Leader uses a one-size-fits-all approach to challenging team members and increasing proficiency.

Proficiency gaps are often identified after completing the team assessment. Addressing the proficiency gaps will lead to higher productivity. Use the template in table 6-1 to form a plan of action to address proficiency gaps.

Table 6-1. Developing a team plan of action template

1. Select an Improvement Area	
Improvement Area	
Root Causes	
2. Choose a Strategy	
Strategy	
Purpose	
3. Define Objectives of the Strategy	
Objective 1: Objective 2: Objective 3:	
4. Refine the Path	
Target Audience (to whom the strategy is being aimed)	
Action Leads (who will be responsible)	
Communication Avenue(s) (how the objectives will be communicated)	
Timeframe	
5. Identify Resources	
Implementation Resources	
Sustainment Resources	

EMPOWERING EMPLOYEE AUTONOMY AND OWNERSHIP

For employees to take ownership of their work the way they would work for themselves, leaders enable them to be more than just an order-taking drone by cultivating a culture of autonomy. Work to reduce micromanagement and break away from a culture where employees fear action.

ASSESS TEAM STRENGTHS AND NEEDS: EMPOWERING EMPLOYEE AUTONOMY AND OWNERSHIP

Do team members know what is expected of them?

Do employees feel they have the authority needed to perform their work thoroughly and on time?

Do employees have access to the information they need to perform their work?

Are employees required to wait while someone further up the chain ratifies their decisions?

Indicators of STRENGTH	Indicators of OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
• Employees know what is expected of them and have the authority to carry out their work. • Employee mistakes are addressed with sensitivity and guidance.	• Employees feel they are micromanaged. • Work requirements are often ambiguous. • Decisions are second-guessed and sometimes reversed.

ADDRESS TEAM IMPROVEMENT AREAS: EMPLOYEE AUTONOMY AND OWNERSHIP

Share your vision and explain the reasoning behind it. Sharing vision enables employees to feel they are part of something bigger than their interests are. Explain employee's work in the context of the bigger picture to ensure they not just understand 'what' but also 'why'. Communicate the mission and vision early and often, asking for continual input from employees so they see what you see and commit to working toward that outcome:

- Hold upfront one-on-one meetings with employees to ensure they understand the necessary outcomes, milestones, and checkpoints.
- Consider using a project management matrix as a guide (see figure 6-2 on page 6-5).
- Discuss specific objectives, and provide time for employees to ask clarification questions.

Involve employees in goal setting and planning activities. Seek out ideas, knowledge, and insights from employees, and whenever possible, invite them to advise important decisions. At the least, let them see your process for making difficult decisions.

To increase autonomy, seek out opportunities to let employees decide how to achieve assigned tasks. Agree upon what constitutes a successful outcome, and then let them chart their own course. This builds ownership in the process and they might discover a method for getting the work done that is better than the one assigned. If that happens, call attention to it. If they choose a poor methodology, do not jump in and scold them, but rather ask questions that enable them to see better options and give them another chance.

Trust your employees. Sometimes it is worth the risk to trust employees to make a decision or step into a role that pushes them before they have had a chance to prove themselves. Your trust will give them confidence, and confidence is crucial to their personal development and sense of autonomy. It will also encourage them to take ownership of their work.

Delegate authority and encourage employees to solve their own problems. Allow employees to practice leadership by delegating authority to them to assign tasks to others and run meetings or other activities. Army leadership doctrine indicates delegation is a critical factor for success at the organizational level of leadership, and as such, it is important for leaders to know the character of their employees.

When employees have problems, it presents another chance for them to practice another important leadership skill: decision-making. To encourage decision-making:

- Listen to employee problems but do not instantly provide the answer.
- Ask probing questions leading them to determine the right answer.

When they arrive at a solution, compliment them, and tell them you have faith in them to figure it out. Do not abandon them, but show trust in their judgment.

Hold employees accountable. Remember, employer trust and employee autonomy are two-way transactions. Holding employees accountable for their work and for meeting established goals and deadlines motivates them to achieve better results. Demand their best effort.

Provide constructive feedback. Regardless of the outcome, let employees know how they are doing and provide them with coaching if they need to improve. Employees want and need feedback to further develop their knowledge and skills:

- Acknowledge employees for stepping up. A few seconds of genuine one-on-one acknowledgement and recognition can go a long way toward reinforcing an employee's willingness to contribute. Show appreciation for their above-and-beyond commitment with a reward to match the result. Often, the best reward is additional trust and added responsibility.

● Encourage employees to identify lessons learned. Talk through mistakes and encourage employees to think about how they can avoid making the same mistakes in the future. Do not punish employees for their candor.

SUPPORT CONTINUED SUCCESS

Incorporate
KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

- Provide conditions in which employees can do their work without being micromanaged.
- After identifying time and quality constraints, allow employees to determine how to accomplish tasks on their own and learn.
- Check in with employees at regular and planned intervals. Be available to answer questions and provide assistance when needed.

Avoid
POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS

- Expect delays when employees feel they constantly have to prove themselves to leaders.
- Expect delays and other problems if time is not taken up front to clarify desired outcomes, milestones, and checkpoints, along with resource and decision-making constraints.
- Recognize the difficulties imposed when employees are given a great deal of responsibility for their work, but inadequate authority.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT MATRIX USAGE

Consider using a project management matrix to guide discussions with employees about their work. As the leader, determine objectives in advance and allow employees to determine specific tasks. Together, discuss timeframes and resources, and decide on a schedule for future meetings. An example of the type of information included in a project management matrix is shown in table 6-2.

Table 6-2. Sample project management matrix

Objectives Outputs and outcomes required for success	Tasks Tasks to accomplish the objectives	Success Criteria How to identify success for each task	Time Frame Time frame or deadline for each task	Resources Required budget, information, or skills
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
Status meetings will be held:				

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Glossary

SECTION I – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADP	Army doctrinal publication
ADRP	Army doctrinal reference publication
ATP	Army techniques publication
AR	Army regulation
FM	field manual
MSAF	Multisource Assessment and Feedback Program
TC	training circular

SECTION II – TERMS

*employee engagement

The level of commitment an employee has for the organization and the level of initiative applied to their duties.

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PRESCRIBED FORMS

None.

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RECOMMENDED WEB SITES

Some sites may require CAC authentication.

Army Career Tracker: https://actnow.army.mil

Civilian Workforce Transformation Employee Engagement:
https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/employee-engagement

milSuite: https://www.milsuite.mil/learn/milsuite/

Office of Personnel Management: http://www.opm.gov

Squad Leaders' Assessment Resource: http://cape.army.mil/not-in-my-squad/#

U.S. Army Civilian Personnel homepage: http://cpol.army.mil/index.html

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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

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