Navy Leader Development Framework

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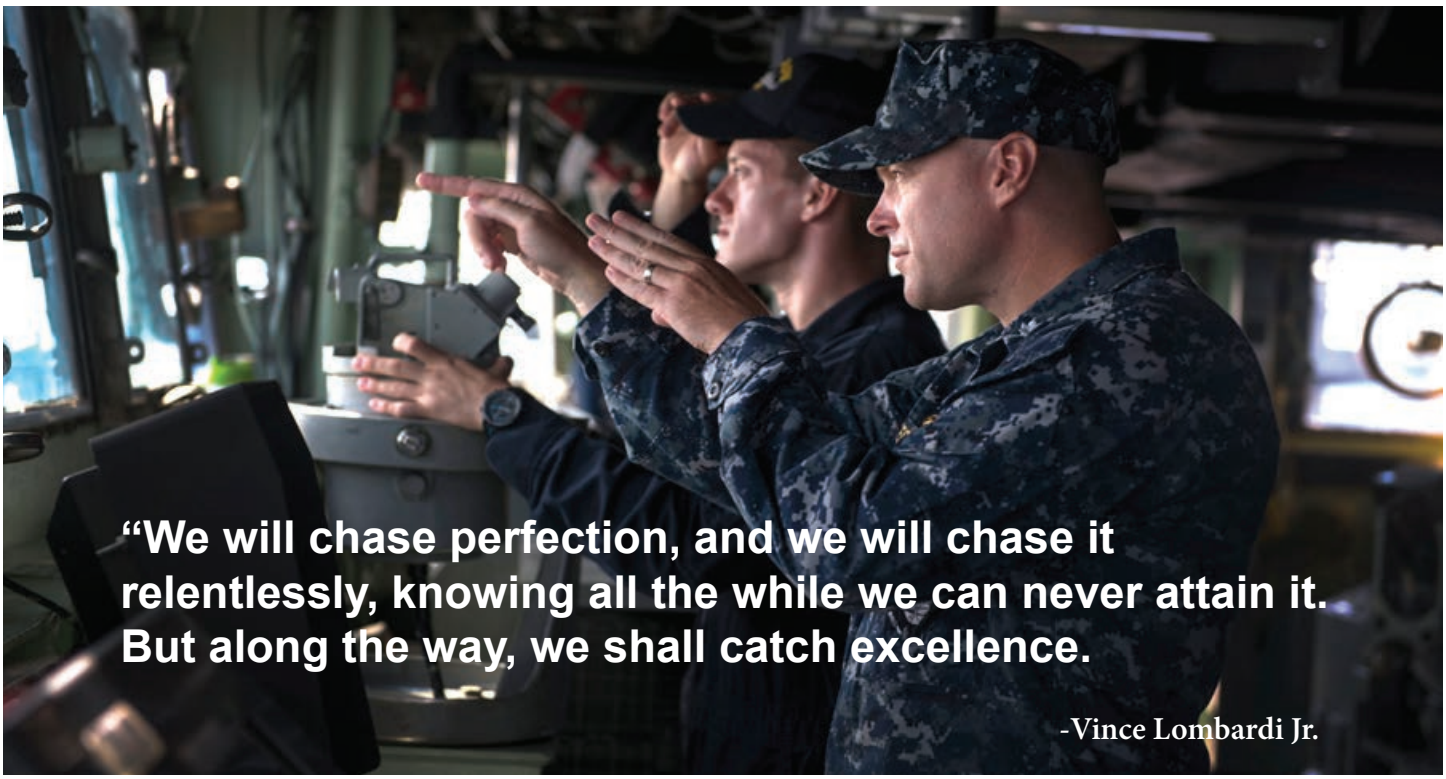
Introduction

A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority makes clear that our Navy's operational and warfighting success requires that we be ready to prevail in an environment that is changing quickly and becoming more complex.

These two factors -- the quickening pace of change and the increasing complexity -- offer the US Navy an opportunity to improve our advantage over our potential adversaries. Creativity and initiative are our strengths. To seize this opportunity, our leaders must think more clearly and learn more rapidly than our adversaries. Leaders have always been essential to the Navy's success - going forward, even more will be required. Developing leaders will remain a principal focus of our Navy.

Effective Navy leaders demonstrate a deliberate commitment to grow throughout their careers. They work from a foundation of humility, embracing our core values of honor, courage, and commitment. They behave with integrity, accountability, initiative and toughness. Navy leaders commit to improving the competence and character of themselves and their teams. They inspire their teams to learn so as to achieve their best possible performance. In our Navy, leaders can take full advantage of a rich combination of formal schools, structured on-the-job training and experience, and self-guided education.

This framework outlines how the U.S. Navy will develop leaders that demonstrate both operational excellence and strong character at every level of seniority. The concepts discussed in this framework apply to all parts of the Navy Team - everybody should read and understand it. The specifics of leader development will be developed by community leaders and be consistent with this framework.



Why Leader Development?

Our Navy functions on a foundation of trust and confidence. We must maintain the trust and confidence of the American people we are sworn to protect. We must also strengthen trust and confidence within the Navy between all parts of the chain of command. It is trust and confidence that enable delegation, which is central to operations and combat at sea. Leaders who are experts at their jobs and who share our values are essential to establishing bonds of trust and confidence.

Leader development has never been more important or challenging. The security environment in which we operate is extremely complex and quickly changing. This complexity and pace are manifest from the strategic to the tactical level - all of us are participants and accountable to keep pace. Furthermore, as we become more senior, the challenges become harder. We are called to do bigger and more complex things, in tougher and more challenging environments. To prepare ourselves to lead the Navy today requires a dedicated and coherent approach that starts on day one and continues throughout our careers - we all must create opportunities to become better leaders and to make our teams stronger.

One Goal

When we imagine truly world class leaders -- those who are consistently at the top of the pack; victorious in the most challenging contests -- they embody one essential quality:

Top leaders inspire their teams to perform at or near their theoretical limits. By making their teams stronger, they relentlessly chase "best ever" performance. They study every text, try every method, seize every moment, and expend every effort to outfox their competition. They ceaselessly communicate, train, test, and challenge their teams. They are toughest on themselves; they routinely seek out feedback, and are ready to be shown their errors in the interest of learning and getting better. When they win, they are grateful, humble, and spent from their effort. By doing all these things, great leaders bring their teams to a deeply shared commitment to each other in the pursuit of victory.

In the US Navy, at this point in our history, we need leaders with this drive. It's an important question to ask yourself: are you driven to pursue the theoretical limits of performance? If so, you could be a Navy leader. If you can't find the relentless drive to inspire others and be the best in the world, then leadership in the U.S. Navy is not for you. The security of the nation is too important.

Two Lanes on the Path

Keeping this one goal in mind, our Navy will approach leader development as if traveling down a path with two lanes. The farther we travel down the path, the more accomplished we become as leaders.

Lane 1 develops operational and warfighting **competence.** We must become more skilled at our jobs as we grow. An incompetent leader is a recipe for disaster.

Lane 2 develops **character.** We must strengthen our ability to always behave consistently with our core values of honor, courage and commitment.

As *junior* leaders at the beginning of the path, development is biased toward *individual competence* and *personal character*. We learn basic individual and team skills and learn to lead ourselves.

As we become *more experienced*, more senior, and lead bigger teams, the focus of leader development becomes *more about strengthening the performance and character of our teams.* A leader's personal competency remains important, but the performance of the team becomes the primary measure of success. The standard for personal character becomes higher, and, as with competence, the measure of success shifts to how leaders develop the character of their teams.

Senior leaders are almost *exclusively judged by the performance of their teams*. The standard for personal performance is extremely high; senior leaders are judged by their ability to consistently and sustainably produce winning teams.

At the end of the path, a Navy leader comes to be identified with and embody the Navy's competence to execute our mission and character to uphold our values. The leader and the Navy are seen as one.

Three Methods to Move Down the Path

Given the internal drive to bring a team to the limits of performance, and recognizing that there are two lanes—competence and character—on the path of leader development, the Navy has a rich program that provides three methods to make progress:

Education and certification in a well-developed network of **Schools**

On-the-job training and qualification, in our workspaces

Self-guided learning through reading and other forms of research and self-study,

These three methods—formal schools, on-the-job training, and self-guided learning—serve as the methods to move us forward in our development as leaders. Navy leaders progress along the general paths shown in Appendices 1 and 2. Each community has its own specifically tailored plan to develop leaders according to these basic lines.

Developing Competence

We initially become familiar in our chosen fields through formal accession and initial skill-centered schools. This is followed by on-the-job training (typically including a qualification path and milestones, scenario-based and technical training and operations), and self-study activities that focus on developing technical expertise. Up to the level of Major Command or its equivalent, each community provides a specific program aimed at producing operational experts.

Schools: At each step in his or her career path, a Sailor can expect to receive a combination of formal schooling and training. Formal education at the entry levels includes recruit and officer candidate training and more advanced A-schools and officer warfare schools. As one's career progresses, these schools are followed by additional formal education opportunities such as C-schools, chief petty officer, department head, and command schools.

On-the-job: On-the-job training, to include achieving qualifications, is a blend of command training, coaching, encouragement and self-motivation. Each successive qualification is an important step.

Self-guided study: Beyond schools and on-the-job training, to be world-class leaders, Sailors must strive on their own to expand on the knowledge provided in schools. Once they have achieved the typical qualifications expected for a tour, they look for what other qualifications can be done. They learn about the history of their profession. They learn their shipmate's job. They learn their boss's job. Read, cross-train and build their breadth of experience at every opportunity. This is what will keep us the best navy in the world.

Developing Character

Character development also consists of formal schools, on-the-job training and self-study. The Naval War College will support our Navy's character education and training and helps integrate the competence and character lanes into a coherent path of leader development. The College exercises this responsibility in partnership with other parts of the Navy—including community leaders and operational commands—coordinating and supporting each in their leader development efforts.

Schools: Formal entry-level schools lay the foundation for character by making our institutional values and expectations clear. Within the enlisted community, each successive promotion includes local classes that consist of formal lectures, small group discussions and coaching. These classes are capped off by the Senior Enlisted Academy for our Navy's senior enlisted leaders. Officers participate in similar entry-level character development, which is furthered through formal leadership schooling associated with major career milestones at the Naval Leadership & Ethics Center, to include department head, commanding officer and major command courses.

On-the-job: Every day top leaders take the opportunity to put into practice what they learn. There are a multitude of opportunities to strengthen each other's character. In formal and informal settings, they take the time to discuss the importance of integrity and accountability. Character applies in an operational setting - it's not just for the classroom. The best leaders mention it at briefs, during execution, and during debriefs. They get out in front and avoid bad decisions. The strongest message comes through their personal example.

Self-guided study: Self-study is also important in character development, and the opportunities have never been better. The CNO's suggested reading list provides a jumping-off point to build knowledge about both competence and character. Some will contribute to leader development by writing—it improves oneself and the Navy! There's much more: books, articles, blogs; taking college courses at night or online; attending or listening to lectures; joining professional societies; or participating in innovation opportunities. The intensity of one's self-guided learning effort is perhaps the most direct reflection of the drive to be the best leader possible. Leaders with the passion to make themselves and their teams the best do not wait for schools... they get to it on their own.

Mentors: A discussion about leader development, especially about strengthening character, would be incomplete without a word about mentors. Much of what's been discussed so far has been about teachers in schools, and coaches on the job. *Teachers* focus on transferring knowledge from themselves to their students. *Coaches* develop operational skills through "sets and reps" - drills and routines that perfect an operational skill. *Mentors* do all of the above, and more, in a way that is more personal, involved, and longer term. Mentors probe deeply into their protegé's strengths and weaknesses, challenging them to be a more complete "whole person."

In working with their protegés, mentors also commit themselves to their growth and success. They transfer energy from within themselves to their charge. In a productive mentor-protegé relationship, development comes from the clear sense of mutual commitment - from mentor to protegé and from protegé to mentor - beyond what can happen in a teaching or coaching relationship. This can be extremely important in leader development - the farther one travels down the two-lane path, the more valuable a mentor can be. While it's hard, maybe impossible, to mandate an effectual mentor program, it's important to seek opportunities to be a mentor and to find a mentor. It can be decisive.

A quick but important word about compliance. *It's not uncommon for discussions of competence and character to put the matters of creativity and compliance in tension: operational creativity versus procedural compliance, or a values-based approach versus adherence to policy. The truth is that a fully-developed approach to leadership must recognize the value of all three: compliance, creativity and values. To reduce leadership to one or the other is to limit effectiveness and to cede advantage to the enemy. As Navy leaders, we must create space for values and creativity. But we must also understand the importance of compliance for its unique and irreplaceable contribution when properly applied.*

Way Ahead

The refinement and execution of strategies to implement this framework are an essential next step. Each community lead, as designated by the Chief of Naval Personnel, will develop a strategy to develop leaders up to major command or its equivalent. Each community lead will brief their leader development program to the Chief of Naval Operations or Vice Chief of Naval Operations semi-annually.

The Naval War College will supplement and support each community in their community leader development, and will maintain a strategy for leader development beyond major command. The Naval War College will brief this program and progress to the CNO or VCNO semi-annually.

Conclusion

World-class leadership is our Navy's decisive advantage. First and foremost, Navy leaders must have a burning drive to develop their teams to consistently and sustainably deliver maximum performance. Competence and character are so tightly intertwined that they must be strengthened together. The Navy has a robust program of schools, on-the-job training, and self-guided learning. By executing this framework, our Navy will produce leaders and teams who learn and adapt to achieve maximum possible performance, and who set and maintain high standards, to be ready for decisive operations and combat. Let's get to it.

J.M. RICHARDSON
Admiral, U.S. Navy

Appendix 1

Legend
Schools:
On-the-job training:

Selected Abbreviations
NP&P: Navy Pride & Professionalism

Achieve Theoretical Limits of Performance

Self-guided Learning

Senior in-rate and Cross-rate qualifications

Reading – CNO's Recommended Reading List can help!

Professional Media

Blogs

Writing

College Courses

Local and On-line Lectures

Professional societies

Local professional groups

Years of Service	Character	Competence
27 - 30	5th Shore Tour Command Training **Executive Leadership Symposium**	5th Shore Tour Command Training / OJT **Executive Leadership Symposium**
25 - 27	5th Operational Sea Tour Command Training **Executive Leadership Symposium**	5th Operational Sea Tour Senior Qual / DLCPO / CMC Command Training / OJT
21 - 25	4th Shore Tour Command Training **Senior Enlisted Academy** **COB/CMC Course** **Executive Leadership Symposium**	4th Shore Tour OJT **NSLS / KEYSTONE** **Executive Leadership Symposium**
19 - 21	Fleet CPO Training CPO 365 Training 4th Operational Sea Tour Command Training	4th Operational Sea Tour Senior Qual / DLCPO / CMC Command Training / OJT
16 - 19	Fleet CPO Training 3rd Shore Tour Command Training **Senior Enlisted Academy** **COB/CMC Course**	3rd Shore Tour OJT **Senior Enlisted JPME**
14 - 16	Fleet CPO Training 3rd Operational Sea Tour Command Training **CPO 365 Training**	3nd Operational Sea Tour Senior Qual / LPO / LCPO Command Training / OJT
11 - 14	2nd Shore Tour Command Training Fleet CPO Training **CPO 365 Training**	2nd Shore Tour OJT
8 - 11	2nd Operational Sea Tour Command Training **CPO 365 Training** **PO1 Leadership Continuum**	2nd Operational Sea Tour Senior Qual / LPO / LCPO Command Training / OJT **C School / PPME / JPME(DL)**
4 - 8	1nd Shore Tour Command Training **PO2 Leadership Continuum**	1st Shore Tour OJT
1 - 5	1st Operational Sea Tour Command Training Command Indoc / NP&P **PO3 Leadership Continuum**	1st Operational Sea Tour Initial & Warfare Qualifications Work Center Supervisor Command Training / OJT
<1 - 2	Life Skills / GMT	**Initial Specialty Training (A School)**
0	**Recruit Indoctrination (Boot Camp)**	**Recruit Indoctrination (Boot Camp)**

Enlisted Leader Development Path

Appendix 2

Legend
Schools:
On-the-job training:

Achieve Theoretical Limits of Performance

Years of Service	Character	Competence
28+	Flag Operational Tours Executive Coaching	Flag Operational Tours
28+	**ST/LI/TS/PINNACLE** **CAPSTONE/CFMCC/JFMCC** **NFOSES Training** **NFLEX**	**ST/LI/TS/PINNACLE** **CAPSTONE/CFMCC/JFMCC** **NFOSES Training** **NFLEX**
26 – 30	Flag Selection	Flag Selection
25 – 30	Post MC Shore Tour Command Training **Joint/War College**	Post MC Shore Tour **Joint/War College**
22 - 25	Major CMD Operational (Sea) Tour Command Training **Major CMD Leadership Course**	Major CMD Operational (Sea) Tour CMD Training / OJT **Major CMD Operational Training**
18 - 22	Post XO/CO Shore Tour Command Training **Joint/War College**	Post XO/CO Shore Tour OJT **Joint/War College**
15 - 18	XO/CO Operational (Sea) Tour Command Training **PXO/PCO Leadership Course**	XO/CO Operational (Sea) Tour Command Training **PXO/PCO Operational Training**
12 - 15	Post DH Shore Tour Command Training **JPME-I / Master's Program**	Post DH Shore Tour OJT **JPME-I / Master's Program**
7 - 12	DH Operational (Sea) Tour Command Training **JPME – Phase 1** **Dept Head Leadership Course**	DH Operational (Sea) Tour Command Training / OJT **JPME – Phase 1** **Dept Head Operational Training**
5 – 7	JO Shore Tour Command Training **JPME-I / Master's Program**	JO Shore Tour Command Training / OJT **JPME-I / Master's Program**
<1 – 5	JO Operational (Sea) Tour Command Training **Division Officer Leadership Course**	JO Operational (Sea) Tour Command Training/OJT **Initial Designator Training**
0	**Commissioning Education** **USNA/NROTC/OCS**	**Commissioning Education** **USNA/NROTC/OCS**

Self-guided Learning

Senior in-rate and Cross-rate qualifications

Reading – CNO's Recommended Reading List can help!

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College Courses

Local and On-line Lectures

Professional societies

Local professional groups

Officer Leader Development Path