



AGREEL  
ITEMS?

Time & Attendance

*Adam Stoffa, a lawyer with U.S. Army South, explains the legal aspects of the supervisor-civilian employee relationship during a supervisor development course held at the Army South headquarters on Oct. 27 and 28, 2015.*

# Developing Leaders in the Army Civilian Corps

■ By John E. Hall

## FEATURES

The Army has established programs to grow civilians into confident and high-functioning leaders.

I am a member of the Army Civilian Corps. The Army Civilian Corps was established in 2006, formalizing a 230-year record of service as a critical component of the total Army force structure. Army civilians serve in all theaters and are deployed worldwide in support of the Army mission. As the Army's missions have evolved and become more complex, so have the roles of Army civilians.

The Army Operating Concept drives how future Army forces operate to accomplish campaign objectives and protect U.S. interests. The vision for the future must drive change to ensure Army forces are prepared to prevent conflict, shape the security environment, and win wars.

Army civilians serve as a vital part of the Army team to support the defense of our nation. We are trusted to make decisions that produce high-quality results by applying technical knowledge and managing human, financial, and information resources, while operating and accomplishing objectives in unknown, unknowable, and constantly changing environments.

### **Developing Civilians Is Different**

A trained and ready Army will always require leaders who are professionals in every way—leaders who exemplify traditional Army values and professional ethics. The Army of the 21st century relies on top quality civilians in professional, technical, and leadership positions to provide continuity of operations and expertise essential to national defense.

The Army's civilian component and uniformed component operate under different systems of legislation, regulation, and policy. Generally speaking, the uniformed component's intake, promotions, training, and leader development are mandated, centralized, and structured.

In comparison, civilian talent management decisions to hire, compete for promotion, and seek self-development and leader development opportunities

are less structured and more decentralized. They rely on the employee in most cases to take the initiative to seek such opportunities.

The uniformed policy of "up or out" forces Soldiers to get the necessary ticket punches to advance or else they will be passed over for promotion and ultimately released. Civilians, however, can stay in the same position at the same grade level for an indefinite period of time.

So civilians who want to advance and compete for higher level positions of responsibility must take it upon themselves to take advantage of the opportunities provided. To be clear, those opportunities are there, available, and accessible to those who take the initiative to seek them.

Additionally, in today's Army, many civilians are former and retired Soldiers like I am. They bring 20 or more years of leader development to the table when they are hired, having already benefited from formal uniformed service leader development opportunities, including senior service college.

So, in order for a career civilian to compete on a level playing field, they must seek opportunities, establish a mentor network, and obtain all levels of formal training and developmental opportunities. Civilians seeking to advance must view opportunities as invitations and should "refuse no invitation" in order to remain competitive in the Army market.

### **Civilian Leader Development**

The Army's civilian leader development program is aimed at creating a cohort of Army civilians who are knowledgeable leaders, collaborators, and innovators. The Army has invested significantly in developing the leadership skills of its civilians to provide more professional, capable, and agile civilians who can lead during times of change and uncertainty.

Army civilians are equipped with the values, skills, and mindset to serve as competent, resilient members of the Civilian Corps. Leader



*Civilians from the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command participated in a civilian professional development class on July 24, 2015. The class covered individual development plans that align employee training and development efforts with the mission, goals, and objectives of the unit. (Photo by Joel Changhoon Lee)*

development is achieved through a combination of training, education, and experience by way of schooling, assignments, and self-development.

The Army has made great changes in establishing programs to grow civilians into confident, high-functioning leaders capable of decisive action. Training opportunities for civilians can be put into the following categories:

- The Civilian Education System.
- The Senior Enterprise Talent Management (SETM) and Enterprise Talent Management (ETM).
- Career program training.
- Academic degree training.

### **The Civilian Education System**

The Civilian Education System is the Army's leader development program for all civilians. It provides progressive and sequential education for civilians at key points throughout

their careers. Courses are targeted to individuals in specific grades.

The Foundation Course is required for all interns and new Army civilians; the Basic Course is for GS-01s through GS-09s; the Intermediate Course is for GS-10s through GS-12s; the Advanced Course is for GS-13s through GS-15s; and Continuing Education for Senior Leaders is for GS-14s and GS-15s. Additionally, the Action Officer Development Course and the Manager Development Course are open to all Army employees as self-development opportunities.

### **SETM and ETM**

The SETM and ETM programs were developed to allow GS-12s through GS-15s and their equivalents to gain professional, senior-level developmental and experiential learning opportunities. SETM and ETM produce civilian leaders who

can serve in increasing levels of responsibilities with an enterprise perspective.

SETM (for GS-14s and GS-15s) includes the following programs:

- The Enterprise Placement Program.
- SETM-Temporary Duty.
- Senior service college programs.
- The Defense Senior Leader Development Program.

The Enterprise Placement Program provides permanent placements and details into specially designated, key GS-15 positions. SETM-Temporary Duty is a short-term developmental assignment into a command-nominated project. Senior service college is open to applicants who compete for allocated seats at the Army War College or the Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy.



*U.S. Army South conducts its first supervisor development course on Oct. 27 and 28, 2015, to provide military and civilian managers with the training and information needed to execute their duties and responsibilities as supervisors of civilian employees.*

The Defense Senior Leader Development Program is a two-year program that includes a senior service college, leadership seminars, and a developmental assignment. The Army Senior Civilian Fellowship involves postgraduate study. Mobility and continuation of service agreements are required for most of the SETM programs.

ETM (for GS-12s and GS-13s) includes ETM shadowing assignments, ETM-Temporary Duty, the Command and General Staff Officers' Course, and the Executive Leadership Development Program, which is a 10-month series of learning and training experiences.

### **Career Program Training**

Career program training is where Army civilians receive their functional or specialty training. The Army has 31 career programs, and every civilian position is coded into one of the programs based on the requirements

of the position.

Career programs have functional chiefs at the departmental level and a hierarchy of program managers down to the activity level. They offer the technical training required for job proficiency.

### **Academic Degree Training**

Academic degree training opportunities are generally offered through career program channels. All Army employees are eligible except those occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to an excepted service or senior executive service position.

At the time of application, the candidate must have three years of permanent, full-time employment as an Army civilian.

### **Leader Development Strategy**

The Army Leader Development Strategy, which applies to the four leader cohorts (officers, warrant officers, noncommissioned officers, and

civilians), provides guidance and direction for the Army in developing its leaders by laying out the ends, ways, and means to develop competent and committed leaders. As part of the broad strategy, each functional community has the responsibility to develop the tactical and technical competencies of its leaders.

For those working in one of the logistics fields, the Logistics Leader Development Strategy (LLDS), currently under development, will lay the foundation for how to develop agile, innovative logistics leaders who have the requisite leader attributes, tactical and operational skills, and strategic- and enterprise-level proficiency to thrive in the global environment in which the Army serves.

Although functional development and leader development are different for each of the four cohorts, the goal is to provide an overarching strategy that will continually update the LLDS across all cohorts. This



will ensure the right developmental opportunities are available and all cohorts are able to adapt to changes in the operational and strategic environments while supporting the Army's contribution to winning in a complex world.

The value of the strategy for civilians is twofold: to provide an overarching framework for civilian logisticians to view their role, development, and mission, and to provide expanded developmental opportunities for civilian and military members to participate in common training when appropriate. The strategy ensures that learning outcomes and opportunities for civilians are in sync with those of the military cohorts.

### **Overcoming Barriers**

Like their uniformed counterparts, civilians must be functionally proficient and technically competent leaders. The Army has established civilian training programs; however,

barriers exist that inhibit civilians from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

Unlike much of the required professional military education, civilian leader development is voluntary, is not tied to promotions, and is based on funding. Some leaders are reluctant to approve training outside of the organization because of minimal staffing to meet current mission requirements. Many training opportunities require employees to relocate temporarily or permanently, and some employees are not willing to move for personal or professional reasons.

As leaders, we have to innovate to find ways to overcome barriers even in times of limited budgets and resources. Supervisors should encourage training attendance to foster an environment where employees are deemed more competitive. They should look for ways to establish follow-on assignments that do not require

relocation yet can still meet the ever-changing needs of the Army.

Through succession planning, organizations should recruit superior personnel, develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities and prepare them for more challenging positions to ensure personnel are constantly developed to fill needed roles.

Training and developing employees for leadership positions ensures they are agile and adaptive to adjust to ever-changing requirements. The Army is committed to the development of its leaders. The training and development of the Army Civilian Corps is required to sustain a mission-ready Army.

---

John E. Hall is a member of the Senior Executive Service and is currently the deputy to the commander of the Army's Combined Arms Support Command and Fort Lee.