

## Chapter 2

# Our Profession

*[We will] foster continued commitment to the Army Profession, a noble and selfless calling founded on the bedrock of trust.*

Chief of Staff of the Army Marching Orders

The Army has a dual nature—it is both a military department (a part of the Armed Forces) and a military profession. As one of the Nation’s armed services, we carry out the missions assigned to us by the Commander in Chief in accordance with the law and intent of Congress. As a unique military profession, the Army is built upon an ethos of trust, which buttresses four other essential characteristics of our profession: military expertise, honorable service, esprit de corps, and stewardship. *The Army Profession: 2012, After More than a Decade of Conflict* provides an in-depth review of Army professional responsibilities.



**Figure 2-1. “Thumbs up!”—a profession built on trust**

## **A PROFESSION BUILT ON TRUST**

2-1. Trust is “assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.” It is the essence of being an effective Soldier. Trust is the core intangible needed by the Army inside and outside the profession. Our ability to fulfill our strategic roles and discharge our responsibilities to the Nation depends upon trust between Soldiers; between Soldiers and their leaders; among Soldiers, their families, and the Army; and between the Army and the Nation. Ultimately, the Nation trusts the Army to provide landpower when, where, and how combatant commanders need it.

### **TRUST BETWEEN SOLDIERS**

2-2. In battle, Soldiers primarily fight for one another, not just for their country or some ideal. Heroism is not the action of naturally brave men and women; it originates in the bonds between Soldiers and their commitment to each other. This impels them to overcome paralyzing fear because they will not let their comrades down. They entrust their lives to the Soldiers on their left and right, and focus on doing their duty in a way that maintains the trust of their comrades. Without this level of trust, there is no cohesion, no ability to stand fast in the most horrific environments. The level of resilience and cohesion within an Army unit correlates directly to trust between Soldiers in that unit.

2-3. Building trust in an Army as diverse as ours begins with developing common values—the Army values shown in figure 2-2—in each Soldier. Trust begins as Soldiers enter the service and is reinforced throughout the period of their service. The Army Values become the catalyst to developing the trust between Soldiers, and these values instill traits needed not only in war but for the remainder of their lives. (Further discussion on the Army Values is contained in ADRP 6-22.)

### **TRUST BETWEEN SOLDIERS AND LEADERS**

2-4. Trust between Soldiers binds individuals into resilient units, but it cannot accomplish missions nor generate high levels of unit effectiveness. That comes from the trust that Soldiers have with their leaders. Trust between a superior and a subordinate is the second critical aspect of trust; without it, Soldiers will not follow orders except from fear of consequences. Consider the choice our Soldiers make when the likely consequences of following an order (death or wounding) exceed the legal consequences of disobeying it (courts martial). Their collective decision to obey orders is the difference between mission accomplishment and failure. This is based primarily on their trust in their leaders. Accordingly, our doctrine emphasizes building trust up and down the chain of command. Mission command, our fundamental doctrine for command, requires trust throughout the chain of command. Superiors trust subordinates and empower them to accomplish missions within their intent. Subordinates trust superiors to give them the freedom to execute the commander’s intent and support their decisions. The trust between all levels depends upon candor.



**Figure 2-2. The Army Values**

### **TRUST AMONG SOLDIERS, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THE ARMY**

2-5. Beneath the uniform, Soldiers are people with similar priorities to other Americans. Many things inspire a Soldier to join the Army, but families usually keep professional Soldiers in the Army. The Army is committed to Soldiers and their families, providing a strong, supportive environment that enhances their strength and resilience. The trust between the Army and our Soldiers' families is essential to preserving an all-volunteer force. We ask much of our Soldiers and their families. In return, we need to provide a quality of life commensurate with the Soldier's service to the Nation.

### **TRUST BETWEEN THE ARMY AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE**

2-6. The Army is among the institutions held in highest confidence by Americans. Trust underwrites our relationship to the Nation and the citizens we protect. Without the confidence of the citizens, we could not maintain the all-volunteer force. Without the confidence of the President and Congress, we could not maintain the readiness required to fight and win.

2-7. Soldiers swear an oath to the Constitution, and do so freely, without compulsion or reservation. Americans place special trust and confidence in Soldiers to serve the Nation before all other considerations. In return, Soldiers ask that their fellow citizens remember their sacrifice, not with tangible rewards, but with respect and appreciation for having done their duty.

## MILITARY EXPERTISE

2-8. Like other professions, we are a repository of a unique body of knowledge—in our case, the employment of landpower in a distinctly American military context. The context is distinct because of American military structure and the way the U.S. military employs joint capabilities. Also like other professions, we apply our knowledge using expertise developed through extensive education and training. Like other professions, we certify individual and organizational competence.

## FIELDS OF PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

2-9. We develop and maintain professional knowledge in four broad fields. First, the *military-technical* field encompasses the doctrine of how the Army applies landpower, including the integration and adaptation of technology, the organization of units, and the planning and execution of military operations. Second, the *moral-ethical* field describes how the Army applies its combat power according to law and the expectation of our citizens. Third, the *political-cultural* field prescribes how personnel and units operate effectively across and outside the Army's institutional boundaries. Land operations require cooperation with other Armed Forces, foreign militaries, other government agencies (our own and those of other countries), and all manner of human societies. Finally, the Army specializes in *leader development* because good leaders are the qualitative multiplier on any battlefield, the most dynamic element of combat power.

2-10. We impart our professional knowledge through training and education at both individual and unit levels. Doctrine expresses a common body of knowledge that Soldiers and Army Civilians use to educate and train. Individual education maintains professional knowledge across generations. Individual and unit training transform knowledge into expertise—a high level of skill in applying knowledge in actual situations.

2-11. Army doctrine stresses mission command, the conduct of military operations that allows subordinate leaders maximum initiative. It acknowledges that operations in the land domain are complex and often chaotic, and micro-management does not work. Mission command emphasizes competent leaders applying their expertise to the situation as it exists on the ground and accomplishing the mission based on their commander's intent. Mission command fosters a culture of trust, mutual understanding, and a willingness to learn from mistakes.

2-12. Training does more than develop technical expertise. It encourages Army leaders to exercise discretionary judgments without close supervision. Given the nature of modern land operations, this ability is critically important because of the lethality of what we do. The failure of individual Army professionals to make the right decision can be devastating, particularly in an omnipresent information environment. The Army Values shape and bind Soldiers' and Army Civilians' discretionary judgments. We strive to ingrain a strong professional ethos, one of trust, honorable service, and high esprit de corps, in parallel with our technical expertise.

2-13. The Army certifies the expertise of individuals and units. Certification of individuals occurs at different stages during their service and varies based upon the

particular skill set. The Army is a profession of professions, some uniquely military and others with close civilian counterparts. In the latter case, Army professionals first earn certification in their broader profession, for example as a doctor or lawyer. Initial certification may occur in a civil school, a military venue, or both. Soldiers and Army Civilians then develop further expertise based on specific military application, such as courts martial procedures for lawyers. However, military expertise is highly specialized and validated wholly within the Army. For example, training and validation of an artillery crewman has no civilian equivalent.

2-14. Three broad criteria apply to certification of Army professionals. Individuals develop certification in detail through Army branches, proponents, and Army Civilian career field programs. Certification measures competence, character, and commitment. For advancement, Army professionals demonstrate competence; their mastery of specific skills. Character ensures Army professionals use their expertise on behalf of the American people and only in accordance with the law. Commitment reflects each individual's willingness to put the requirements of the Army and Nation above their personal goals.

2-15. Units are also certified, but in terms of readiness to accomplish their missions. Unit compliance with safety and personnel regulations is measured through inspections. Unit combat readiness is determined by demonstrated performance in training events and through candid assessment by the chain of command. Units deploying to combat typically go through an additional phase of training called a mission rehearsal exercise that mimics likely missions as closely as safety, resources, and terrain allow.

## **MEMBERSHIP IN THE ARMY PROFESSION**

2-16. The Army profession recognizes two communities of practice: the *Profession of Arms* and *Army Civilian Corps*. After taking an initial oath, each individual (military or civilian) becomes a member of the Army profession, but an individual is not a professional until certified. The transition from an aspiring professional to a professional in either community is not automatic. Initial certification occurs upon graduation or completion of the first qualifying event such as Advanced Individual Training for the Soldier. Membership is a status that is earned through certification and periodic recertification in competence, character, and commitment. Membership in the Army profession carries with it significant responsibility—the effective and ethical application of combat power. Additional certifications follow as the professional advances in skill, experience, and responsibility. The responsibility for each individual's development and certification is a mutual one, shared by the individual with the Army.



**Figure 2-3. Initial certification—crewmembers learn to operate the M1A1 tank**

## **HONORABLE SERVICE**

2-17. Official recognition of honorable service is the external manifestation of the Army professional's oath and ethical conduct. Selfless service is an internalized value that determines the character of their time in the Army. Our Soldiers and Army Civilians join to serve the Nation—to support and defend the Constitution and to do so in a way that upholds U.S. law and American values. Army professionals are duty-bound to uphold their oath, embody the Soldier's Creed and Army Civilian Creed, and instill the Army Values in themselves and others. This is our collective ethos—the moral principles that define our profession.

## **OUR CONSTITUTIONAL OATHS**

2-18. Article VI of the Constitution requires that every member of the Army profession—military or civilian, officer or enlisted—"shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution." An oath is an individual moral commitment made publicly. The gravity of this commitment is that it binds Soldiers to an unlimited liability, acceptance of the risk of serious personal harm or death. This fact distinguishes the uniformed members of the Army from its Civilian Corps and all other employees of the Federal Government. This Constitutional oath is legally binding and makes Soldiers subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice, federal laws applicable to the Armed Forces, and the Law of Land Warfare.

## **OUR ETHICS**

2-19. All warfare challenges the morals and ethics of Soldiers. An enemy may not respect international conventions and may commit atrocities with the aim of provoking retaliation in kind. Any loss of discipline on the part of our Soldiers is then exploited in propaganda and magnified through the media. The ethical challenge rests heavily on small-unit leaders who maintain discipline and ensure that the conduct of Soldiers remains within ethical and moral boundaries. There are five compelling reasons for this. First, humane treatment of detainees encourages enemy surrender and thereby reduces friendly losses. Conversely, nothing emboldens enemy resistance like the belief that U.S. forces will kill or torture prisoners. Second, humane treatment of noncombatants reduces their antagonism toward U.S. forces and may lead to valuable intelligence. Third, leaders make decisions in action fraught with consequences. If leaders lack an ethical foundation, those consequences can adversely affect mission accomplishment. Fourth, leaders who tacitly accept misconduct, or far worse, encourage it, erode discipline within the unit. This destroys unit cohesion and esprit de corps. Finally, Soldiers must live with the consequences of their conduct. All leaders shoulder the responsibility that their subordinates return from a campaign not only as good Soldiers, but also as good citizens with pride in their service to the Nation. General Creighton Abrams, reflecting on his service spanning World War II, Korea, the Cold War, and Vietnam, stated it well: “While we are guarding the country, we must accept being the guardian of the finest ethics; the country needs it and we must do it.”

## **ESPRIT DE CORPS**

2-20. Fighting and winning requires professionals imbued with respect for our history and tradition and committed to the highest standards of individual and collective excellence. This respect and commitment is what we mean by esprit de corps. Professionals foster and sustain esprit de corps throughout the Army profession. Professionals exude purpose, demonstrate strong bonds of loyalty and pride, and place the mission above their own welfare. This makes us an Army family, one that takes care of its own and never leaves a fellow comrade or their family behind.

## **TRADITIONS AND HISTORY**

2-21. Our esprit de corps is rooted in tradition and history. Very few American institutions have a history as rich or long as ours. We emphasize this through the practice of customs, traditions, and ceremonies. Units and organizations preserve their unit histories and display them in unit distinctive insignia (such as unit crests, patches, and mottos). These practices and symbols give us a sense of commitment, identify the cause we serve, and unite us to those who have gone before and sacrificed so much.

## **DISCIPLINE AND PRIDE**

2-22. Discipline and pride are the hallmark of units with high esprit de corps. Discipline is behavior tempered by high standards of conduct and performance. Discipline reflects the self-control necessary in the face of temptation, obstacles, and adversity, and the fear

to do the harder right instead of the easier wrong. Pride stems from an internalized recognition that obstacles, adversity, and fear can be mastered through discipline and teamwork. Discipline and pride go together with judgment, expertise, and experience to create military and civilian professionals.



**Figure 2-4. Esprit de corps reflected in our customs and ceremonies**

### **ESPRIT AT ALL LEVELS**

2-23. Esprit de corps applies at all levels from the individual to the Army overall. Individual esprit shows in high motivation, discipline, and morale. Soldiers with esprit de corps have pride, a sense of accomplishment in doing a good job or seeing a subordinate develop, and shared values. A small-unit or team's esprit de corps is reflected through mission focus, technical and tactical proficiency, teamwork, and ultimately cohesion on the battlefield. At the large-unit or organizational level, esprit de corps reflects the shared commitment Army professionals have for the organization—its mission and goals, its traditions and customs, and its heritage of honorable service. It reflects the pride of being a “Marne Soldier” or a “Screaming Eagle.” Unit and organizational esprit de corps is built on an open command climate of candor, trust, and respect, with leaders who exhibit concern for the welfare of subordinates and set the example for expertise and honorable service.

### **STEWARDSHIP**

2-24. Stewardship reflects the Army professional's responsibilities to the Army and Nation. As professionals, we remain responsible for today's missions, even as we build a



better Army for tomorrow. We ensure that our profession is capable of succeeding in whatever missions our Nation gives us in the future. Through stewardship, Army professionals commit to the long-term effectiveness of the profession.

2-25. To be an Army professional and a steward of the profession is not just a job, it is an office. The office Army professionals enter upon swearing the oath is not our physical workspace; it is our ethical workspace. The oaths taken by Army officers and Army Civilians conclude with "...and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the *office* [emphasis added] upon which I am about to enter". Title 10, United States Code, contains our explicit responsibilities as cited in paragraph 1-18. We provide highly effective landpower for whatever purpose the Nation requires. In practical terms, our public accounting as a profession occurs when the Nation calls us to accomplish the Army mission: to fight and win our Nation's wars. Stewardship therefore involves a subordination of all Army leaders, civilian and military, to the larger responsibilities of the profession: being the stewards of the trust between the Army and American people.

### **CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS**

+ 2-26. Military professionals also have a stewardship responsibility for the relationship between the military and civilian leadership of the Army. Civilian control of the military is embedded in our Constitution and serves as the cornerstone of our military. Military professionals understand this and appreciate the critical role this concept has played throughout our history. Equally important, this concept requires that military professionals understand the role of our civilian leaders and their responsibilities to the civilian leadership. Military professionals have unique expertise, and their input is vital to formulating and executing effective defense policy.

### **ARMY PROFESSIONALS AND THE NATION**

+ 2-27. Army professionals have a dual charge. On the one hand, we Army professionals defend the Nation from danger by applying landpower when and where directed by civilian authority. On the other hand, we are also citizens whose strength of character exemplifies the ideals espoused by our ethos. By living our values, we extend the character of our profession far beyond active service.

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