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Eudy, Alex J.

Monterey, CA; Naval Postgraduate School

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**NAVAL  
POSTGRADUATE  
SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**SENIOR NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS:  
A DEVELOPMENTAL ANALYSIS**

by

Alex J. Eudy

June 2019

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Douglas A. Borer  
Marco S. DiRenzo

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**SENIOR NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS: A DEVELOPMENTAL  
ANALYSIS**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS  
(IRREGULAR WARFARE)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs) are developed to support combatant commanders. They are systematically trained and given much guidance, but not with regard to higher civilian education and business acumen. The contrast between military and civilian organizations is sharp. The military's hierarchical structure intends to foster and build talent from within. Similar to the military, some businesses hire, train, develop, and advance employees from entry level to senior leadership positions. However, businesses also have the ability to recruit external talent. An analysis of developmental practices within three civilian organizations is performed using both organizational citizenship behavior and the traits of hierarchy contrasted with the internal unit structure of SNCO development. This thesis investigates the application of civilian business practices to those of the United States Military SNCO corps. The final recommendations provide both talent management insight and potential opportunities to enhance SNCO developmental practices.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CSEL	Command Senior Enlisted Leader
COOL	Credentialing Opportunities On-Line
DOPMA	Defense Officer Personnel Management Act
EPME	Enlisted Professional Military Education
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender
MEPS	Military Entrance Processing Station
MCPON	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
OJT	On the Job Training
PCA	Permanent Change of Assignment
PCS	Permanent Change of Station
PME	Professional Military Education
PO	Petty Officer
SEAC	Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman (Joint Chiefs of Staff)
SEL	Senior Enlisted Leader
SNCO	Senior Non-Commissioned Officer
USAF	United States Air Force
USA	United States Army
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USN	United States Navy



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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM**

Command Sergeant Major Patrick McCauley states that Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs) are developed to support combatant commanders.<sup>1</sup> While the Joint Staff J-7 elaborates that they are systematically trained and given much guidance, it is apparent that this is not with regard to higher civilian education and business acumen.<sup>2</sup> The contrast between military and civilian organizations is sharp. The military's hierarchical structure intends to foster and build talent from within. Similar to the military, some businesses hire, train, develop, and grow employees from entry level to senior leadership positions. However, businesses also have the ability to recruit external talent. Can the employee development practices within civilian organizations complement the military's hierarchical internal unit structure and practice, enhancing Senior NCO development?

### **B. RESEARCH QUESTION**

Civilian businesses require committed high-performing employees, whereas the U.S. military relies on a professional SNCO corps to provide enlisted leadership and manage operations. Can the U.S. military apply business employee development practices to SNCO development?

### **C. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The United States Government Publishing Office, United States Code Title 10 Section 502 document language demonstrates that a U.S. Service Member enters the military hierarchy by reciting of the oath of enlistment.<sup>3</sup> The language clearly identifies

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<sup>1</sup> Patrick McCauley, "Value of a Civilian Education for Military Personnel," accessed April 27, 2018, <http://blog.online.norwich.edu/value-of-a-civilian-education-for-military-personnel>.

<sup>2</sup> Joint Staff J-7, "The Joint Command Senior Enlisted Leader Insights and Best Practices Focus Paper," July 2017, [http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/fp/csel\\_fp.pdf](http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/fp/csel_fp.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> United States Government Publishing Office, "United States Code Title 10, Section 502" (USGPO, 2006), <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2011-title10/pdf/USCODE-2011-title10-subtitleA-partII-chap31-sec502.pdf>.

increased echelons of reporting, lawful guidance, and the duties to be executed. Nils Brunsson elaborates on this by exploring how the concepts of order, unified meaning, and a greater purpose are identified and practiced in a hierarchical structure.<sup>4</sup> Dennis Organ, Phillip Podsakoff, and Scott Mackenzie further extrapolate that individual knowledge increases as higher ranks and authorities are achieved, thus subservient groups in specialization, task knowledge, and position become visible.<sup>5</sup> With time and continued training a verbal commitment evolves into ownership of organizational norms as well as increased levels of authority and position.

### **1. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)**

In order to advance in both rank and position within a hierarchy, members must develop a vested interest in the organization's structure and mission by demonstrating it through OCB. Foundationally, OCB was identified by Professor Daniel Katz through the lens of workplace motivation in the 1960s.<sup>6</sup> Organ further advanced this analysis two decades later through the Good Soldier Syndrome describing OCB actions as, "Discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization."<sup>7</sup> Military members, while held to specific standards commit to a purpose greater than oneself and in-turn the military hierarchy. This is demonstrated by Jonathan Klein as "respect" through the act of service to the organization, which can easily go beyond the OCB contractual agreement for purposes of advancement.<sup>8</sup> An analysis of military guidance documents and civilian business vignettes is applicable for investigation.

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<sup>4</sup> Nils Brunsson, *The Organization of Hypocrisy: Talk, Decisions, and Actions in Organizations* (Chichester ; New York: Wiley, 1989).

<sup>5</sup> Dennis W. Organ, Philip M. Podsakoff, and Scott Bradley MacKenzie, *Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Its Nature, Antecedents, and Consequences* (Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE, 2006). 147.

<sup>6</sup> Daniel Katz, "The Motivational Basis of Organizational Behavior," *Behavioral Science* Vol.9(2) (1964): pp.131-146.

<sup>7</sup> Dennis W. Organ, "Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Good Soldier Syndrome," *Issues in Organization and Management Series* (Lexington, MA : Lexington Books, 1988), 4-5.

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan I. Klein,., *Corporate Failure by Design: Why Organizations Are Built to Fail* (Westport, CN: Quorum Books, 2000). 48, 126. Note: Klein discusses the advancement of service through the act of belonging and advancing within the organization.

## 2. Empirical Level

Enlisted Leaders provide the U.S. Armed Forces Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) and Petty Officers (PO) with history, purpose, and roles that are clearly defined.<sup>9</sup> The Headquarters Department of the Army,<sup>10</sup> The United States Navy,<sup>11</sup> The United States Air Force,<sup>12</sup> and The United States Marine Corps<sup>13</sup> communicate this through publications to the Joint Staff J-7, their representative A-1, N1, and S-1 directorates, and within the service headquarters at the Pentagon. The Joint Staff J-7 identifies that each publication clarifies development and responsibilities at the given rank tier (junior enlisted, NCO/PO, SNCO/CPO) with specific consideration given to E-8 and E-9 duties and operational-strategic level responsibilities.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, three private sector organizations, Chick-Fil-A, Southwest Airlines, and the Lampo Group provide unique comparisons. Ginger Hardage and Casey Bernadette acknowledge specific company traits,<sup>15</sup> which are featured by Southwest Airlines Headquarters,<sup>16</sup> the Lampo Group,<sup>17</sup> and Chick-fil-A,<sup>18</sup> who as distinctive organizations, each provide targeted employee training, a focus on increased responsibility, and they attempt to capitalize on the long-term tenure of their employees.

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<sup>9</sup> Enlisted Leaders of the U.S. Armed Forces, “The Non-Commissioned Officer and Petty Officer” (National Defense University Press, 2013), <http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/ncobackbone.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army, “TC 7–22.7 (FM 7-22.7). Noncommissioned Officer Guide” (DOA, April 7, 2015), [https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/pdf/tc7\\_22x7.pdf](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/tc7_22x7.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Paul A. Kingsbury, *Chief Petty Officer’s Guide*, 2nd ed. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2018).

<sup>12</sup> United States Air Force, “AFI 36–2618, The Enlisted Force Structure” (Air University, March 23, 2012).

<sup>13</sup> United States Marine Corps, “Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 6–11 Leading Marines” (USMC, November 27, 2002), <https://www.marines.mil/Portals/59/Publications/MCWP%206-11%20Leading%20Marine.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> Joint Staff J-7, “The Joint Command Senior Enlisted Leader Insights and Best Practices Focus Paper.”

<sup>15</sup> Ginger Hardage and Casey Bernadette, “In the Case of Southwest Airlines’ SVP, Culture and Comms, Her Title Perfectly Reflects a Focus on Keeping Customers and Employees Informed and Enthused.,” *PR Week*, December 2011.

<sup>16</sup> Southwest Airlines HQ, “Doing The Right Thing,” Annual, 2010.

<sup>17</sup> “Dave Ramsey Homepage,” accessed September 3, 2018, <https://www.daveramsey.com/>.

<sup>18</sup> “Who We Are,” Chick-fil-A, accessed September 3, 2018, <https://www.chick-fil-a.com/About/Who-We-Are>.

Julie Weber<sup>19</sup> and Kelly Petrock<sup>20</sup> note that these three factors can be found in practice throughout business review journals that identify key success indicators. This thesis assumes that both military and civilian business platforms create and employ personnel within top leadership positions (actors), in a manner that reflects these indicators.

### **3. Actors within Hierarchy**

Military professionals and business leaders that promote internally to operational-strategic roles have performed at a level valued by their organizations. McCauley<sup>21</sup> and Paul Kingsbury<sup>22</sup> both identify that in the case of military SNCOs, individuals are selected for leadership abilities, professional competency, and projected capability to serve the next higher echelon of responsibility. In comparison, Thom Shanker and Eric Schmitt,<sup>23</sup> along with Thomas Ricks,<sup>24</sup> note that officers chosen for advancement may become established through their ability to influence and project authority beyond perceived organizational limitations. Civilian business leader development concepts within hierarchical structures provide varying examples of OCB throughout an employee's life cycle and compel further investigation.

## **D. METHODOLOGY**

This thesis aims to conduct a series of qualitative case studies, through an inductive analysis, to compare and contrast employee developmental practices for possible military application. This examination includes the viewing of quantitative data from scholarly

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<sup>19</sup> Julie Weber, "How Southwest Airlines Hires Such Dedicated People," *Harvard Business Review*, December 2, 2015, <https://hbr.org/2015/12/how-southwest-airlines-hires-such-dedicated-people>.

<sup>20</sup> Kelly Petrock, "Corporate Culture and Survival (Southwest Airlines)," *ASQ Online*, November 2003, <http://asq.org/teamwork/2003/11/news-for-a-change-v57-i11-feature-article-corporate-culture-and-survival.html?shl=089805>.

<sup>21</sup> Patrick McCauley, "Value of a Civilian Education for Military Personnel."

<sup>22</sup> Paul Kingsbury, "Harnessing the Influence of Senior Enlisted Leaders," National Defense University Press, accessed April 27, 2018, <http://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/702035/harnessing-the-influence-of-senior-enlisted-leaders/>.

<sup>23</sup> Thom Shanker and Eric Schmitt, "Special Operations Veterans Rise in Hierarchy," *The New York Times*, August 8, 2011, sec. U.S., <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/09/us/09commanders.html>.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *The Generals : American Military Command from World War II to Today* (New York: Penguin Press, 2012).

business journal case analysis, but these figures will be used at face value for qualitative interpretation only. Vignettes of employee experiences through public personal biographies,<sup>25</sup> publicized interviews, and publicly available company reports are applied where relevant to demonstrate examples of both success and failure within the given work environment. Additionally, limitations of hierarchical structure or behaviors counterproductive to positive OCB traits are utilized to provide further context. The role of salary is not examined in this analysis of employee development due to the vast differences in military pay scale structure and the numerous private sector compensation methodologies along with withheld proprietary information. The intent of this analysis is not to build or advance any specific theory, but use hierarchy and OCB as heuristic viewfinders to interpret employee development within various organizations.

### **1. Cases and Basis for Selection**

The U.S. Military provides both tangible and intangible outcomes for the American Public. The deployment of troops to eliminate an enemy force is concrete in nature and observable, while freedom and its defense are provided by military forces but are intangible. In a similar manner, civilian businesses provide goods or services that are either consumed in finite periods of time (ex: food, transportation) or drawn upon over a period of time (ex: legal advice, lawn services). Just as military units can be of varying sizes and exist for different purposes, so to can civilian businesses.

The civilian businesses chosen for primary analysis are Chick-Fil-A, Southwest Airlines, and The Lampo Group. The selection of business cases is based upon companies of a large, medium, and small presence that have national level influence within their given product or service. Similar to the military, as civilian companies they are successful within their specific industries and held in high regard with employees and customers alike. Their organizations exhibit outcomes similar to a hierarchical military force of higher employee tenure, internally grown (bottom-up) employees, and low employee turnover rates that

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<sup>25</sup> Public military/civilian biographies, curriculum vitae, and illustrations of civilian COO/military Command Senior Enlisted Leader level firings are used. Ex: 2018 MCPON step down, investigation, and subsequent retirement.



counters industry trends in the modern economic environment. As the need for competitive advantage lends most government and civilian organizations to maintain secrecy in business practices, these three organizations were chosen through the criterion for analysis based on readily accessible and publicly stated employee practices. Each of the selected companies openly provides numerous cases of employee development.

Vivian Giang identified that while “flat” organization characteristics are championed in business media, the traits common to hierarchy and OCB can still be seen in successful business practices.<sup>26</sup> Chick-Fil-A, as a large privately held company provides a broad national brand presence that is selective in its franchisee placement, champions entry level employee development, and is growing rapidly within the food service market. As a medium sized company within the airline industry Southwest Airlines delivers low-cost transportation services throughout select markets. A high-tenure employee environment combined with strong internal development produces many of their mid-level and higher leadership. Continued demonstration of valuing of employees through advancement and profit sharing demonstrates the commitment of Southwest to its employees. Dave Ramey notes that as small company (<1000 employees) The Lampo Group produces the financial talk show The Dave Ramsey Show, a national radio program through self-syndication, which is a top listened to talk radio program in the U.S.<sup>27</sup> In addition, he discusses that Lampo also manages additional sub-businesses and speakers which address market areas covering improvement in personal finance, life goals, and career enhancement.<sup>28</sup> The same page indicates that they have a robust employee development plan and openly provide their business model for others to imitate or apply regardless of industry type or product/service produced.<sup>29</sup> In order to compare these specific businesses with the SNCO development pathway a common framework is required.

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<sup>26</sup> Vivian Giang, “What Kind Of Leadership Is Needed In Flat Hierarchies?,” Fast Company, May 19, 2015, <https://www.fastcompany.com/3046371/what-kind-of-leadership-is-needed-in-flat-hierarchies>.

<sup>27</sup> “Dave Ramsey Homepage.”

<sup>28</sup> “Dave Ramsey Homepage.”

<sup>29</sup> “Dave Ramsey Homepage.”

## **2. Why this Approach?**

The employees' journey is depicted through the lenses of Hire, Train, Develop, and Transition. The concepts of specific leadership training, management instruction, and employee retention initiatives are examined in a reciprocal manner between training and development as these are common factors in employee tenure within an organization, and for continuation into higher organizational roles of increased leadership and responsibility. The analysis of transition will vary greatly between civilian and military cases due to structural differences and legal ramifications in firing, retirement, and potential re-hiring practices. This qualitative approach allows a reader to compare and contrast across the career progression journey of an employee and/or SNCO. Examples counter to the success of the aforementioned industries of food, transportation, and education services will be presented anecdotally to show any contrast to given information. This may include but is not limited to: organizational struggles within hierarchy (Catholic Church), union leader protest (Airline Mechanics), or firings of prominent individuals in leadership roles (Command Senior Enlisted Advisors/Leaders, Civilian Operations Officers.)

## **3. Why this Model?**

This model (Figure 1) was created to systematize the various efforts and methodologies of talent management across diverse industries. As each organization handles the employee development process differently over the course of a career the critical areas (hire, train, develop, transition) are delineated to provide a summary of organizational practices. Exceptions below the mid-level of analysis including specific performance evaluation variances, talent retention methods, employee data outliers, and changes to government regulations will be addressed when they apply to the specific points in the case analysis. These areas are also referenced and reserved for future research purposes only. This model provides the reader with a phased walk-through of high performing civilian talent management examples for comparison to Department of Defense practices at designated career points and milestones. The end goal is to deliver specific prescriptions that advance SNCO development beyond the current doctrinally mandated practices.

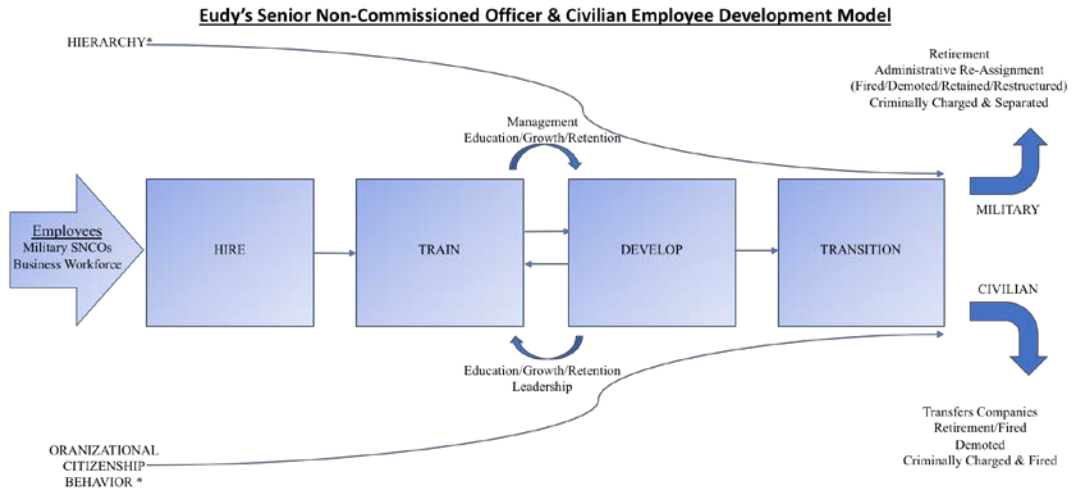


Figure 1. Alex J. Eudy's Employee Development Model<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> This model is currently in usage by the Author, Alex J. Eudy for thesis methodology. For the purposes of brevity this paper uses the term SNCO to reference all services (E7-E-9) members.

## II. HIERARCHY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR: STILL FASHIONING THE WORKPLACE

“The times they are a-changin.”

—Bob Dylan, 1963

This poignant lyric from Bob Dylan illustrated large cultural shifts and evolution in thought during the mid-20th century. Carol Tice explored the evolutions of society, politics, and entertainment that drove researchers in business to look at new ways of modernizing their operations to meet both the customer and societies’ changing expectations.<sup>31</sup> The concepts of making an employee feel valued, engage in company ownership, and a sense of a renewed entrepreneurship within hierarchical organizations emerged. The concept of OCB, fashioned in the 1960s is identified as a guiding factor of employee’s actions furthering commitment to both fellow employees and to overall business goals. The U.S. military construct is able to rely on the service and dedication of members to its formal rigid structure while the strong conformity from recruits helps to meet the demands of military service. Over 60 years later the principles of OCB still remain even through a pronounced revolution in military affairs. Rebecca Greenfield highlighted that as technology drives increased communication and task processing speeds, the age of the hierarchy has been said by some to be over.<sup>32</sup> The military has held strong to its hierarchical structure and the value of organizational citizens (military members) performing as they are directed. Set career benchmarks drive reporting structures, clear standards are established for advancement, and each rank level within the military has well defined duties and responsibilities.

Major Kevin Deibler pointed out that this does not mean that the evolution and modernization of this structure is without error, as increased complexity within the roles of

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<sup>31</sup> Carol Tice, “The American Business Revolution,” Growth Strategies, April 18, 2017, <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/177302>.

<sup>32</sup> Rebecca Greenfield, “The Office Hierarchy Is Officially Dead,” Bloomberg Business, March 5, 2016, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-03-03/the-office-hierarchy-is-officially-dead>.

officers/enlisted, leaders/subordinates, and administrative/tactical positions are undergoing a closing opinion gap regarding duties performed.<sup>33</sup> While William Treseder noted that former tasks driven through clear delineation may now be assumed by additional ranks and grades of lower position.<sup>34</sup> The 115th U.S. Congress, through the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act made modifications to the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) which will inject immense cultural change into the armed forces with specific implementation at the discretion of the Armed Service Secretaries.<sup>35</sup> Blaise Misztal, Mary Farrell, and Jack Rametta noted that the ability to direct hire into different ranks and specialties will increase, periods of break(s) in service may expand, and the route of the careerist in uniform may be on the cusp evolutionary changes.<sup>36</sup> In a matter of years these changes may move from the officer to enlisted ranks if practices prove successful. As such, the common military colloquialism, “The only constant in the military is change” will continue to ring true for military members.

Much like the military, civilian organizations are currently experiencing a large change in the demographics of the work force. Richard Fry identified that as the baby-boomer generation retires, the millennial generation has increased beyond the sub-majority to become the majority in workplace participation.<sup>37</sup> It can be assumed that legacy organizational practices may decrease as these older individuals depart work centers. If the perceived outdated tenants of organizational structure are being applied to modern business environments there are clear environmental needs that hierarchy may be able to satisfy.

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<sup>33</sup> Kevin A. Deibler, “Commentary: The Rank Structure Is Holding Us Back. It’s Time for Drastic Change,” Air Force Times: Commentary Section, August 20, 2017, <https://www.airforcetimes.com/opinion/commentary/2017/08/20/commentary-the-rank-structure-is-holding-us-back-its-time-for-dramatic-change/>.

<sup>34</sup> William Treseder, “It’s Time To Abolish The Enlisted-Officer Divide,” Task and Purpose, June 4, 2018, <https://taskandpurpose.com/its-time-to-abolish-the-enlisted-officer-divide/>.

<sup>35</sup> 115th U.S. Congress, “John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019” (115th U.S. Congress, June 5, 2018), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/2810/text>.

<sup>36</sup> Blaise Misztal, Mary Farrell, and Jack Rametta, “Personnel Reform Lives, But Don’t Call It ‘Force of the Future,’” Commentary, War on the Rocks, August 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/personnel-reform-lives-but-dont-call-it-force-of-the-future/>.

<sup>37</sup> Richard Fry, “Millennials Are the Largest Generation in the U.S. Labor Force,” April 11, 2018, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/11/millennials-largest-generation-us-labor-force/>.

The question can be asked; does hierarchy still matter and how does it impact the individual employee?

#### **A. HIERARCHY-THE PYRAMID**

Within a Mintzbergian-style Machine Bureaucracy a governmental or military usage of hierarchy applies levels of progression and set career milestones. When the word hierarchy is used to describe an organization's structure the immediate thought may be a pyramid, ladder, or formalized configuration with personnel decreasing in number and increasing in positional role or responsibility as upward progression occurs. The duties performed both laterally and vertically will differ greatly and may limit an individual's advancement depending on environmental constraints.

A prominent hierarchy familiar to the general public around the world is the Catholic Church. Thomas Hurley noted that its usage of hierarchy is very important to not only structure and operational functions, but it is critical to upholding the core beliefs of the religious establishment.<sup>38</sup> Clear, deliberate lines of action, communication, and responsibility have played out in front of the world highlighting the advantages and drawbacks of hierarchical structure during the church's ongoing child abuse struggles. Slowed communication, toxic sub-cultures, and organizational drawbacks are forced to balance against set authority (roles) and positional or personal power application. This does not mean that hierarchy is a necessary evil, but similar to any other format of organizational design it can be viewed in both positive and negative connotations, which may or may not pertain to specific industries or formations. By recognizing the modern usage of hierarchy an employee may optimize their performance to required levels and possibly avoid hierarchical drawbacks as they are identified. In order to look beyond a formalized government, religious, or military structure of hierarchy the relaxed usage of its framework can be viewed through a civilian business example.

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<sup>38</sup> Thomas Hurley, "The Importance of the Hierarchy in the Church," *Homiletic & Pastoral Review*, June 2005, 56-58, 60.

## B. HIERARCHY AND BUSINESS

The ability for a business to innovate over time is crucial to remain competitive against marketplace competition. Hierarchy, not well known for its' ability to adapt to innovation may be viewed as a dated construct that has little place in the modern workforce. Conversely, as organizations increase in size, they may find the principles of hierarchy quite functional. As profiled by David Garvin, the company Google found themselves at this crossroads in the early 2000s.<sup>39</sup> In summary, Garvin noticed Google attempted to be more modern and conduct business practices as a flat organization.<sup>40</sup> He acknowledged that upon rapid employee growth, increased employee taskings, and amplified project complexity, managers found themselves orchestrating too much beyond their given span of control.<sup>41</sup> He then identified that Google took the flat structure and elongated it vertically into a shorter pyramid with increased management roles. Finally, he noticed that this helped to sub-divide operational level projects, increased management of distributed workforces, and provided greater managerial control over individual responsibilities within the company.<sup>42</sup> The result was an astounding success and provided the opportunity to increase employee outcomes for overall productivity while empowering employee task execution. In Google's case the individual employee was impacted by a bureaucracy that did not work for their specific needs, while the organization required a hierarchical framework to optimize operations and to prosper.

While structures like a holacracy may be used to bring order to open or flat work environments with younger employees, the formal and informal hierarchy holds an important place in workplace performance. Hierarchy's prominent structure may help or hinder organizational functions, but in either case, it is unable to be successful without the workers within the structure. Google recognized the value of employee outcomes and

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<sup>39</sup> David A. Garvin, "How Google Sold Its Engineers on Management," *Harvard Business Review-Leadership Development*, December 2013, <https://hbr.org/2013/12/how-google-sold-its-engineers-on-management>.

<sup>40</sup> David A. Garvin.

<sup>41</sup> David A. Garvin.

<sup>42</sup> David A. Garvin.

received increased productivity through hierarchical norms. This example of improved employee and organizational performance is supported by organizational citizens who were also in continuous support of the firm's existence. A worker that performs functions as a dedicated organizational citizen provides a level of increased commitment and positive outcomes that benefit both themselves and the organization long term.

**C. BEING A “GOOD SOLDIER,” ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR**

The concept of good citizenry may bring up thoughts of duty and loyalty to the state. Whether in actions like military service, voting, or carrying out daily life as a law-abiding citizen the objective of citizenry is compliance. It is this obedience and maintenance of order that allows employees to receive the benefits that are both tangible and intangible. The OCB concepts defined and refined by Mr. Daniel Katz and Mr. Dennis Ogdan are readily identifiable today. Refer to (Figure 2) for common examples of workplace interactions that demonstrate both individual loyalty and care for the firm. Some actions may be enforceable through policy, while others may be internal perceptions or viewpoints that materialize through outward physical actions or verbal comments.

Form of OCB	Examples
Altruism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Helping a coworker with a project</li> <li>■ Switching vacation dates with another person</li> <li>■ Volunteering</li> </ul>
Conscientiousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Never missing a day of work</li> <li>■ Coming to work early if needed</li> <li>■ Not spending time on personal calls</li> </ul>
Civic virtue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Attending voluntary meetings and functions</li> <li>■ Reading memos; keeping up with new information</li> </ul>
Sportsmanship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Making do without complaint (“Grin and bear it!”)</li> <li>■ Not finding fault with the organization</li> </ul>
Courtesy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ “Turning the other cheek” to avoid problems</li> <li>■ Not “blowing up” when provoked</li> </ul>

Figure 2. Pearson Education Inc. & Prentice Hall OCB Example Identifiers.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Source: Pearson Education Publishing Inc, “Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (Conflict, Cooperation, Trust, and Deviance)” (Powerpoint Slide, 2011), <https://slideplayer.com/slide/4600192/>.



The displayed OCB examples of (Figure 2) must be carefully balanced as both positive and negative outcomes are possible. The dangers of over commitment can form a tainted relationship with the firm (perception of undervalued) just as underperformance may cause harm to the employees’ role in the organization. When combined with Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs through the *Loyalty Works Model of Employee Engagement* (Figure 3) demonstrated engagement occurs at all levels, from survival (organizational entry) to self-actualization (true ownership).<sup>44</sup>



Figure 3. LoyaltyWorks-Employee Engagement Psychology Model<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Source: “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs | Employee Engagement Psychology,” *Loyaltyworks, Inc.* (blog), August 29, 2014, <https://www.loyaltyworks.com/news-and-views/uncategorized/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-and-employee-engagement/>.

<sup>45</sup> Source: “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs | Employee Engagement Psychology.”

When applied to a business or military context the levels of engagement described in (Figure 3) may include the tangible benefits of promotion and increased responsibility. The intangible benefits of belonging and positive emotional return help capitalize on the re-investment toward the firm's mission success. The higher the individual climbs (promotes), the greater these internal motivators need to be as the original baseline benefits (value) may have diminished with employee progression. The increasing intrinsic value of the organization to the individual and the employees' personal value are intertwined in both identity and capability. This is compounded over time through amplified ownership of processes and people within the hierarchical structure along with upward movement within the machine bureaucracy. OCB when applied heavily to military culture may help offset civilian employment advantages such as increased financial benefits, increased authority or positional level attainment, and a lack of potential hazardous duty or risk to physical life, family, and relationships.

#### **D. POTENTIAL DRAWBACKS AND A FORCE FOR GOOD**

The aspect of self-harm from being over committed to the organization can be described as employee "burnout," a phenomenon analyzed by Lisa Baranik and Lillian Eby for counterproductivity, reduced employee interpersonal outcomes, and levels of reduced job performance.<sup>46</sup> In a negative context, counterproductive OCB examples may include but are not limited to; spending too much time in the office and overlooking personal or family needs, a lack of personal identity outside the work environment, or observed decreased performance for the organization by being too involved and not well rounded for sustained performance. As an employee chooses to commit themselves to their job and exhibit high levels of OCB, it may bring out both the best and worst of the individual. Their impact on the work environment, task completion, and greater organizational outcomes will be attributed to the characteristics of OCB that they choose to demonstrate.

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<sup>46</sup> Lisa E. Baranik and Lillian Eby, "Organizational Citizenship Behaviors and Employee Depressed Mood, Burnout, and Satisfaction with Health and Life.," *Personnel Review* 45, no. 4 (June 6, 2016): 626–42.

While having employees that value organizational goals will generally help produce beneficial results for the bottom line (monetary or mission accomplishment), solely pursuing goals may inhibit other workplace actions. The ownership of the organization's mission and goals are critical to the long-term success and the ability to recognize and correct lacking performance is equally as important. This applies not only to fiscal outcomes but in the proper functioning and performance of workplace operations. If the individual values both themselves and their assimilation toward organizational norms they may demonstrate levels of self-actualization that are altruistic in nature. Current analysis by Peter Northouse explores the idea that employees in leadership and management positions conducting unselfish actions benefiting to others and/or the whole (altruism), may be perceived as servanthood leaders due to their exhibited qualities.<sup>47</sup> As fellow employee and company needs are placed before that of the individual, the company succeeds, and in-turn the individual also may be successful. This balance of individual effort for maximum corporate gain may offset negative occurrences or poor workplace performance. These factors when combined with structured hierarchical environments may lead to improved individual performance.

## **E. SUMMARY**

If individuals within an organization (civilian or government) are to perform well in the modern work environment, they must recognize that hierarchy and OCB can be critical to improved performance if applied correctly. This application goes beyond a management framework or instilling basic mandated practices like mandated office hours or requiring menial tasks. Both theories intertwine heavily with an organization's culture and fashion employee expectations for current and future performance. Recognizing that both theories have costs and benefits to implementation, modifications can be made to the specific organization for optimum usage. In the model of a strict hierarchy, a leader recognizes that defined roles and responsibilities may conflict with employee functionality and communication. In complex environments or situations, a machine bureaucracy will

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<sup>47</sup> Peter G. Northouse, "Chapter 10: Servant Leadership," in *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 8th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2018), 230–43.

continue to perform in the face of adversity and times of great trial. While employees will have a clearly defined path to advance, they may not have the freedom given by more malleable formats of organizational structure.

In a regulation-bound environment like the military the commitment of the SNCO through OCB and to the organization's norms is required for longevity. Just as hierarchy values employee tenure, citizenship behavior values the long-term commitment of heart, mind, and actions, to the workplace. If the military chooses to foster an environment that develops OCB, leaders must be mindful of how individuals function while conducting operations. This does not mean that members operate blindly in service to the organization solely based on their level of internal commitment. While the demonstrated external commitment can produce exceedingly high levels of graduated performance, it can also inhibit capabilities of the workforce if overworked, improperly employed, or managed in a sub-par manner. By understanding the impacts that both hierarchy and OCB have on workplace functions, an analysis can be performed on both the military's enlisted structure and specific businesses to interpret their practices of employee development.

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### III. ENLISTED DEVELOPMENT VIA JOINT STAFF GUIDANCE

“(NCO/PO) The Backbone of the Armed Forces”

—Senior Enlisted Leaders of the Armed Forces, 2013

#### A. OVERVIEW

This section provides the standard development pathway of enlisted members from junior ranks into SNCOs across the joint environment. The analysis is based on accomplishing the capabilities required of the aforementioned Joint Staff (J-7) Command Senior Enlisted Leader (CSEL) Best Practices Paper, and the qualities described for optimum competency in conducting military operations.<sup>48</sup> The DoD concepts presented demonstrate a rigid structure that does not easily adjust to rapid personnel or human resource reforms. Generally, large internal modifications necessitate approval at Service Chief of Staff level, or require additional approval and oversight from the House and/or Senate Armed Service Committees. These processes can be bureaucratic and slow, as such sweeping changes often occur in larger policy reform packages. Regardless of overarching political discourse or beltway decision making, an empowered SNCO has the ability to have a large impact on a formation. A SNCO has the talent to lead the men and women placed in their charge. They can take responsibility for subordinates’ career development while simultaneously attending to their own personal and professional growth.

Enlisted members of the U.S. Military are trained for specific functions and tasked to perform them at the direction of superiors for mission accomplishment. The book *The Non-Commissioned Officer and Petty Officer, Backbone of the Armed Forces* summarizes their distinct role(s),

As technical and functional experts, specialized practitioners, and advisors steeped in tactics, techniques, and procedures, NCOs/ POs carry out both the art and the science of the Profession of Arms. Subordinates and commanders alike draw upon enlisted leaders’ expertise and experience to achieve mission objectives and depend on them as leaders and managers.

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<sup>48</sup> Joint Staff J-7, “The Joint Command Senior Enlisted Leader Insights and Best Practices Focus Paper.”

NCOs/POs are expected to acquire and employ applicable resources efficiently and effectively, to think critically to prevent and solve problems. Moreover, they must be able to communicate continually up, down, and across Service, joint, and coalition chains of command. They accrue extensive practical experience and specialized training, professional military education, and mentoring, all of which further enhance their capabilities. It is through this dynamic process of development and maturation that NCOs/POs emerge from the ranks as the most seasoned Servicemembers capable of not only leading the enlisted force of today but also developing military leaders for tomorrow.<sup>49</sup>

Given that an enlisted career in the military contrasts sharply with civilian employment, James Fallows notes that fewer individuals have family military ties, the general U.S. population has few opportunities for interaction with military members, let alone awareness of the conflicts that they fight.<sup>50</sup> The DoD has recently focused renewed public affairs efforts toward bridging the civil-military gap.<sup>51</sup> The importance of displaying positive imagery to the public and ensuring successful outcomes for the next generation of recruits depends on the citizenry maintaining honest and positive perceptions about enlisted military service.

## **1. Public Performance and Positive Perception**

Overall, the American Voter holds a high level of trust and sureness in the military profession. Domineco Montanro's analysis of annual polling from National Public Radio regarding listener confidence demonstrates higher levels for military members than that of elected leaders, the media, or other government institutions.<sup>52</sup> Howard Bryant identified that the positive militarization of sporting events, public showcase presentations, and community volunteerism helps to demonstrate and validate public opinion or approval of military members, as these may be some of the few military interactions an average citizen

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<sup>49</sup> Enlisted Leaders of the U.S. Armed Forces, "Backbone of the Armed Forces," 9–10.

<sup>50</sup> James Fallows, "The Tragedy of the American Military," *The Atlantic*, February 2015, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/01/the-tragedy-of-the-american-military/383516/>.

<sup>51</sup> Department of Defense, "Know Your Military," U.S. Department of Defense, accessed January 31, 2019, <https://www.defense.gov/Know-Your-Military>.

<sup>52</sup> Domineco Montanaro, "Here's Just How Little Confidence Americans Have In Political Institutions," NPR.org, January 17, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/01/17/578422668/heres-just-how-little-confidence-americans-have-in-political-institutions>.

receives.<sup>53</sup> Unfortunately, the same analysis also found that with limited interaction and engagement, there is always the risk of over militarization of events which can amplify the disconnect from the military's true purpose of delivering violence instead of patriotism on demand.<sup>54</sup>

Nationally televised military ceremonies like Medal of Honor presentations and annual events like the Army/Navy football game provide unique opportunities for America to see men and women in uniform apart from their duties, and publicly lauded for their efforts at home and abroad. Often these media engagements are bookended with service member interviews and celebrations that portray positive imagery in the act of service to the nation. Sadly, some periods of media engagement of wartime or training coverage involve announcements of combat or non-combat related deaths and injuries with phrases like "in the line of duty." P.W. Singer and Emerson Brooking noted that these actions tend to remain in the media for periods of limited engagement, and over the course of continuous conflicts, like Afghanistan, have decreased in both public knowledge and awareness.<sup>55</sup> While the positive outlook on the military is not always taken for granted, the negative actions of one member wearing a U.S. uniform can spread quickly through the media and require substantial time to rebuild public trust. This can also further degrade public opinions of military members considering an enlisted career path.

## **2. Negative Observations and Organizational Actions**

While many Americans may have a broad perception of military service consisting of prestige and honor, reports and analysis that degrade the outlook of enlisted military service are also readily available. An annual report of the worst jobs in America conducted by *USA Today* journalist Grant Suneson cross referenced The U.S. Government Bureau of Labor and Statistics data with the web-based career platform Careercast, and subsequently awarded the profession fifth place out of 25 entries stating the following,

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<sup>53</sup> Howard Bryant, "Veterans Speak Out Against The Militarization Of Sports," Radio Journalism, July 20, 2018, <https://www.wbur.org/onlyagame/2018/07/20/military-sports-astore-francona>.

<sup>54</sup> Howard Bryant.

<sup>55</sup> P.W. Singer and Emerson Brooking, "Why Americans Aren't Paying Attention to the Afghan War | *Time*," October 4, 2018, <http://time.com/5415025/afghanistan-war-social-media/>.



(5.) Enlisted military personnel: Median annual wages: N/A, Projected job growth, 2016–2026: N/A, Total employment: N/A. Serving in the U.S. military differs from most jobs on this list as military personnel choose to serve their country. It may therefore seem unfair to list them among the “worst” jobs, yet they do face very high stress and one of the most difficult working environments possible – especially those serving in combat zones. Meanwhile, many often earn less than \$30,000 a year.<sup>56</sup>

In an effort to offset these negative comments about lower pay or reduced quality of life military recruiting briefs may emphasize the basic rewards or entitlements of enlistment which commonly include; medical, dental, vacation (paid), housing (lodging) allowance, food allowance, tuition assistance, free vocational training and world travel. Recognizing that public opinion can shift greatly regarding military personnel and their actions globally, military leadership much like CEOs of private firms must continuously address issues of moral, legal, or ethical lapses to ensure the proper care and functioning of their forces.

Counter to positive examples set by military members on U.S. soil and abroad, any negative press can have an immediate effect on public relations. Chuck Mason notes that internationally, crimes or improper actions conducted by U.S. military members within a host nation community can be harmful given Status of Forces Agreements and impede international relations.<sup>57</sup> Any negative actions conducted specifically by service members, or those actions even having the appearance of service member involvement, may breed distrust of the military institution and its ability to conduct warfare while policing its own formations and/or operations. The DoD understands that prominent examples of this currently in the public eye involve the military’s handling of sexual assault cases,<sup>58</sup> private

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<sup>56</sup> Grant Suneson, “The 25 Worst Jobs in US: Low Pay, High Stress, and Poor Job Security,” *USA Today*, April 20, 2019, Online Edition edition, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/04/20/the-worst-jobs-in-america/39364439/>.

<sup>57</sup> R. Chuck Mason, “Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA):What Is It, and How Has It Been Utilized?” (Congressional Research Service, March 15, 2012), <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL34531.pdf>.

<sup>58</sup> Department of Defense, “Home | SAPR,” DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, accessed April 25, 2019, <https://www.sapr.mil/>.

military contract housing difficulties,<sup>59</sup> and transgender service in uniform.<sup>60</sup> The military's ability to respond to these circumstances and overcome any negative outcomes to mission effectiveness is often limited by the organizational hierarchy that drives its centralized chains of command for reporting, delegation, and execution of duties.

## **B. THE IMPACT OF HIERARCHY AND DEMONSTRATIONS OF OCB**

### **1. Hierarchy**

In his book, *The Professional Soldier*, author and sociologist Morris Janowitz takes a comprehensive approach to the development of military and civil relations by outlining the background, entry, and progression of military members.<sup>61</sup> He describes the growth of junior members (cadre) into positions of leadership, stating

The group of top military leaders can be thought of as the “elite cadre.” They are professional elite, in that they are responsible for the management of the armed forces, yet, they are a cadre, in that from within their ranks are recruited the strategic leaders—the elite nucleus—who give the military establishment its direction.<sup>62</sup>

A military hierarchy is securely founded in centralized forms of rank, pay, responsibility, and performance delineations at each level within its structure. Janowitz highlights that with any division of responsibility and labor there are specialists and generalists, that most (members) conform to levels of task orientation, yet will require enhanced interpersonal skills at senior levels.<sup>63</sup> He also argues that specific echelons within the chain of command hold higher levels of esteem or cultural value, and that the

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<sup>59</sup> Department of Defense, “Facilities Investment & Management Directorate,” Facilities Management - Military Housing Privatization Initiative: FAQ, accessed April 25, 2019, [https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/FIM/Housing/Housing\\_FAQs.html](https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/FIM/Housing/Housing_FAQs.html).

<sup>60</sup> Department of Defense, “5 Things to Know About DoD’s New Policy on Military Service by Transgender Persons and Persons With Gender Dysphoria,” U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, March 13, 2019, <https://www.defense.gov/explore/story/Article/1783822/5-things-to-know-about-dods-new-policy-on-military-service-by-transgender-person/>.

<sup>61</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York, NY: Free Press: An Imprint of Simon & Shuster, Inc., 1960).

<sup>62</sup> Janowitz, 58.

<sup>63</sup> Janowitz, 68–72.

viewpoints and practices of delegated duties or responsibilities at a specified levels may not survive career progression or advancement.<sup>64</sup>

Through great order and discipline within a military hierarchy, members will function specifically according to orders from superiors without hesitation. This is especially important during times of crisis or combat when decisions could cost lives or determine the ability of success or failure. Tom Philpott notes that individual members have the ability to perform beyond the minimum standard for their given rank level;<sup>65</sup> however, James Hosek and Jennifer Sharp determined that unlike the civilian workforce the ability for giving recognition for this through additional monetary or positional advancement is not rapid.<sup>66</sup> Despite these drawbacks military members often demonstrate high levels of ownership and adoption of organizational norms. This greatly benefits the military complex and the ability to conduct tasks under demanding conditions. Actions of enlisted members beyond the duties described in the enlistment contractual agreement, and subsequent oath of enlistment are drawn from superiors and regulations. Positive actions beyond these requirements are easily identified as displays of OCB. Performance beyond directed compliance demonstrates organizational ownership and intentionally benefits others within an inflexible structure.

## 2. OCB

The tasks that uniformed personnel conduct are often dangerous and place them away from their friends and family for extended periods of time. It is under these arduous conditions that members are asked to give a maximum effort toward their duties in the direct performance of the mission. The assessment of military personnel and the specific

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<sup>64</sup> Janowitz, 73–75.

<sup>65</sup> Tom Philpott, “Military Update: Air Force Members Advance Slower than All Other Military Branches, Data Shows - Nj.Com,” *The Times of Trenton*, December 9, 2013, [https://www.nj.com/mercer/2013/12/military\\_update\\_air\\_force\\_members\\_advance\\_slower\\_than\\_all\\_other\\_military\\_branches\\_data\\_shows.html](https://www.nj.com/mercer/2013/12/military_update_air_force_members_advance_slower_than_all_other_military_branches_data_shows.html).

<sup>66</sup> James Hosek and Jennifer Sharp, “Keeping Military Pay Competitive: The Outlook for Civilian Wage Growth and Its Consequences” (RAND Corporation, 2010), [https://www.rand.org/pubs/issue\\_papers/IP205/index2.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/issue_papers/IP205/index2.html).

effects of OCB traits in military hierarchy were evaluated by Dr. Sait Gurbuz in 2009.<sup>67</sup> Gurbuz's analysis concluded,

The finding of this study suggests that job satisfaction, trust in supervisor, organizational justice, and organizational commitment of the military personnel are positively associated with their OCBs. The findings also reveal that while organizational commitment, trust in supervisor, and job satisfaction are important antecedents of OCB, organizational commitment is the most important predictor of OCB in the military context, surpassing the incremental variance of the others.<sup>68</sup>

This identified commitment to the organization's values and beliefs echoes a higher obligation to the nation and the oath of enlistment upon entry into the armed forces. Liane Hansen's historical analysis specified that a call to "duty," or a wars' stated justification may be overshadowed by the need to fight for others, the teammates on your left and right.<sup>69</sup>

The general public is often presented with examples of OCB during publicized military awards and decoration ceremonies. In cases of combat action, these citations will describe an individual's disregard for their own safety, health, or security in order to achieve a military objective, conduct a lifesaving action, or execute violence against enemy forces in an honorable manner. In non-combat actions the performance of duties beyond established standards is measured against how it reflects on the principles of the given armed forces branch and their unique core values. As decorations are intended to acknowledge the individual's performance, they are an expression of the validated OCB traits that each service values. As SNCOs emulate the traits of OCB they are charged to demonstrate what they want their subordinates to learn, directly from their example. This paradigm is instilled from day one of the military hiring process and demonstrated throughout the development of an enlisted member by SNCOs.

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<sup>67</sup> Sait Gurbuz, "Some Possible Antecedents of Military Personnel Organizational Citizenship Behavior," *Military Psychology* 21, no. 2 (April 1, 2009): 200–215, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08995600802574621>.

<sup>68</sup> Gurbuz, 213.

<sup>69</sup> Liane Hansen, "Why Do Soldiers Fight?," *NPR.Org*, May 29, 2005, <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4671512>.

### C. THE OATH OF ENLISTMENT (HIRE)

A civilian candidate for military enlistment has the ability to perform specific acts of OCB for the military, even before are officially hired and complete the transition from candidate to Soldier, Sailor, Airmen, Marine, or Coastguardsman. This could appear in the form of reporting early to recruiting appointments, demonstrating support for their future branch by wearing a recruiting t-shirt, or excitedly telling others about the recruiting process before it has begun. These example acts of increased organizational commitment beyond their obligation can be observed throughout the candidate's time within the Delayed Entry Program as they prepare for initial service training.

The DoD requires that before this initial training can begin the candidate must clear preliminary screening by their service specific recruiter for any glaring moral, legal, or medically disqualifying conditions that are unfit for military service.<sup>70</sup> They then proceed to a regionalized Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS). The MEPS progression is clearly explained and each portion is elaborated on through the DoD sponsored recruiting site [www.todaysmilitary.com](http://www.todaysmilitary.com) and can be summarized into a five-step overview of the Joint Service MEPS activities consisting of the following components; Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, Physical Examination, Career Counseling, Enlistment Oath, and Post MEPS Actions.<sup>71</sup>

The standardized enlistment contract lengths, sign on bonus, and additional qualifications will vary depending on the member's Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) and fluctuate with service specific operational requirements provided by strategic level human resource guidance. As various service terminologies and designators are used to specify career functions or job terminology the term MOS is commensurate with additional terms (Air Force Specialty Code, Rate) and implies a joint reference to career job or function regardless of service branch. Service idiosyncrasies in terminology and job function are not the only variations that impact the hiring process and successful entry. In

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<sup>70</sup> Department of Defense, "Eligibility Requirements — Today's Military," Eligibility Requirements — Today's Military, 2019, <https://www.todaysmilitary.com/how-to-join/eligibility-requirements>.

<sup>71</sup> The Department of Defense, "How to Join: Enlisting In The Military," Today's Military, 2019, <https://www.todaysmilitary.com/how-to-join/enlisting-military>.

cases where the proposed MOS courses are of an extreme physical or mental difficulty and hold associated high washout rates (Special Operations, Linguist Positions) initial bonuses may be higher and minimum enlistments may be up to six years to accommodate extended training timelines. Meghann Myers noted that MOSs that are more general in requirements and have shorter training periods (clerical, mechanical) may offer lesser fiscal enlistment incentives and provide shorter enlistment contract options of only two years.<sup>72</sup>

Upon completion of the MEPS and initial basic training or boot camp, the candidate is transformed from a civilian to a military member. The systemized and regimented training process the DoD uses, allows applicants from across the U.S. to be taken from all backgrounds, races, creeds, religions, or other varying criterion and turn them into a uniformed work force in both conduct, values, and basic leadership/followership. It is only upon completion of this initial training that they can proceed to MOS training and greater functional career-based training opportunities.

#### **D. INDIVIDUAL TRAINING (TRAIN)**

Military vocational training varies in length, difficulty, and time, depending on the MOS classification and the specific duties required. In all fields, training certifies the individual for specific job parameters governed by Universal Task Listings. These service specific documents, typical held as For Official Use Only, Classified, and Secret levels provide the task to be trained, the conditions (environment) the task will be performed, and the standards to which they are to be performed. The Joint Staff, Universal Joint Task Listing document provides an operations level viewpoint of how subordinate tasks are aligned for mission accomplishment.<sup>73</sup> It is to these standards that individual MOS criteria are developed for initial skills training (Army-Advanced Individual Training, Navy-A-School, Air Force - Technical Training, Marines - MOS School). Completion of this training places the member at a level of competency and capability similar to an

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<sup>72</sup> Meghann Myers, "The Army Is Offering Two-Year Contracts and Cash Bonuses to Grow the Army.," Army Times, February 19, 2017, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2017/02/19/the-army-is-offering-two-year-contracts-and-cash-bonuses-to-grow-the-army/>.

<sup>73</sup> Joint Staff, "Universal Joint Task Listing" (Department of Defense, September 1, 2018), [https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/training/ujtl\\_tasks.pdf?ver=2018-10-19-084613-470](https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/training/ujtl_tasks.pdf?ver=2018-10-19-084613-470).

apprenticeship where they are under the tutelage and supervision of more experienced members of their same specialty.

Similar to civilian occupations, periods of recertification training are required to ensure compliance with currency, task proficiency, or government regulation. If viewed in comparison to trade or apprenticeship practices, a member returns to their service MOS specific schooling for intermediate and mastery level qualification training. These graduated levels of technical skill and managerial training ensure that the member can complete MOS tasks at larger organizational levels. While they may be conducted in tandem with Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME) and personal development curriculum, the intent is to increase the supervisory abilities of the individual within their MOS, and advance their technical skill to the highest proficiency.

While individual job performance and proficiency contributes to the overall goal of unit readiness requirements, the ability to conduct operations in garrison and forward deployed environments remains the military's mission. As training advances, the individual's ability to conduct tasks with lesser supervision or in an independent manner increases. The member then transitions from the collective of those that conduct tasks and minimal management duties to those of greater task knowledge and positions of management and leadership.

Nathan Toronto argues that as higher training levels are reached, the applicability of specific skills and currency remains critical as civilian and nation state (military) practices may advance faster than U.S. military learning process initiatives.<sup>74</sup> Additionally, Roy Maurer identified that civilian human resources efforts are partnering across business and military sectors to develop (military to civilian) MOS skill translators, but these are in the infant stages in both the public and private sectors and long-term outcomes remain to be seen.<sup>75</sup> The ability for a member to convert their acquired skills into a commensurate

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<sup>74</sup> Nathan Toronto, *How Militaries Learn : Human Capital, Military Education, and Battlefield Effectiveness.*, First (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2018), 8–9.

<sup>75</sup> Roy Maurer, "Google Powers Newest Military Skills Translation Tool," SHRM, November 12, 2018, <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/google-powers-military-skills-translation-hiring-veterans.aspx>.

level of civilian performance exists in the latter portion of an enlistment contract or career. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness DoD Skill Bridge program provides authorized, short term, non-binding, internships with industry, to assist a member in career conversion.<sup>76</sup> This action benefits civilian employers as they receive a trained military member early during their transition period from service, and it allows the optimization of their unique military training for civilian application. This continues to benefit the military as they are still receiving work/task expertise from their provided training in addition to any newfound civilian workforce experience. This may provide a return of relevant business knowledge and training back into the military environment, even if limited in period as the member is in the latter portion of their enlistment or career. While technical and tactical training provide the ability to perform job tasks, the specific development of management and leadership skills is provided by EPME.

**E. ENLISTED PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (DEVELOP):  
MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP INSTRUCTION**

Development of the military professional is mandated for all enlisted forces and may be uniquely tailored to each service to meet specific institutional or MOS requirements. The Joint Staff justification for specific enlisted development is clear,

Learning and leadership are at the core of our profession. Military service must continue to be our nation's preeminent leadership experience. The enduring purpose of Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME) is to develop leaders by conveying a broad body of professional knowledge and developing the habits of mind essential to our profession. Leader development therefore should become the predominant theme of the Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education (EJPME) experience.<sup>77</sup>

The Joint Staff J-7 term Professional Military Education (PME) varies greatly from the officer to enlisted corps in context, as officers will reach specific career milestones and

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<sup>76</sup> USD, P&R, "Department of Defense Instruction 1322.29: Job Training, Employment Skills Training, Apprenticeships, and Internships (JTEST-AI) for Eligible Service Members" (Department of Defense, January 24, 2014), [www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/132229p.pdf](http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/132229p.pdf).

<sup>77</sup> The Joint Staff, "CJCSI 1805.01B: Enlisted Professional Military Education Policy" (Department of Defense- CJCS, May 15, 2015), 3, [https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/education/cjcsi1805\\_01b.pdf?ver=2017-12-29-142216-520](https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/education/cjcsi1805_01b.pdf?ver=2017-12-29-142216-520).



their PME is performed at both graduate and higher-level education.<sup>78</sup> For enlisted members the aspect of civilian education qualifications is not directly tied to EPME. Alternatively, the tasks and developmental steps presented in EPME capitalize on the enlisted member's rank-level experiences and the managerial and leadership proficiencies required at duty positions assumed. By consolidating MOS's at specific career timelines the services can deliver targeted coursework that increases knowledge and performance at designated specific levels and their corresponding areas. While each military service can provide MOS unique EPME developmental opportunities, these are intended to compliment or build on DoD mandated practicum. The Joint Staff provided EPME Continuum (demonstrated in Figure 4) approved through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), clearly delineates graduated stages of EPME by grade and the specific knowledge areas to be mastered before advancing to the next level.<sup>79</sup>

These developmental courses, whether completed in-residence or online, can be compared to civilian undergraduate level coursework or graduate level coursework depending on the level of material mastery or practical application required. The service branches, through their corresponding education and training commands and service universities may award undergraduate level credit for EPME completion. Often these credits will apply directly to management, leadership, and general education requirements, but they will typically apply to elective requirements at most civilian universities. The Go-Army-Ed program demonstrates a service specific example of this through the Army's College of the American Soldier, which aims to maximize enlisted training and undergraduate education credits for civilian applicability/transferability.<sup>80</sup> Programs like these are standardized across the services with performance minimums determined by their specific departments. Christopher Coon's transcription demonstrates that the application or transferability of these credits toward specific academic programs has been an increased

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<sup>78</sup> Joint Staff J-7, "Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Instruction: 1800.01E, Officer Professional Military Education Policy" (Department of Defense- CJCS, May 29, 2015), 01.

<sup>79</sup> The Joint Staff, "CJCSI 1805.01B: Enlisted Professional Military Education Policy."

<sup>80</sup> GoArmyEd, "United States Army, College of the American Soldier," Enlisted Education Program of the College of the American Soldier, 2017, [https://www.goarmyed.com/public/public\\_eep.aspx](https://www.goarmyed.com/public/public_eep.aspx).

topic of legislative discussion with the aim of helping translate enlisted military skills to common frameworks used in civilian education.<sup>81</sup> This further adds legitimacy to enlisted military training as viewed by civilian institutions and provides a greater connection to applicable civilian-market skills and abilities.

CJCSI 1805.01B  
15 May 2015

ANNEX TO APPENDIX TO ENCLOSURE A

ENLISTED PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (EPME) CONTINUUM

Grade	E1-E3	E4-E6	E6-E7	E8-E9	E9
EDUCATION LEVEL	INTRODUCTORY	PRIMARY	INTERMEDIATE	SENIOR	EXECUTIVE
<b>Educational Institutions Courses &amp; Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Initial Entry Training</li> <li>Basic Development Schools and Courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PME Academies, Schools, &amp; Courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PME Academies, Schools, &amp; Courses</li> <li>SEIPME I Course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PME Academies, Schools, Courses, Seminars, Symposiums, &amp; Conferences</li> <li>JSOU JSOFSEA</li> <li>SEIPME II Course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PME Academies, Schools, Courses, Seminars, Symposiums, &amp; Conferences</li> <li>NDU KEYSTONE</li> </ul>
<b>Emphasized Levels of War</b>	TACTICAL		OPERATIONAL		STRATEGIC
<b>Focus of Military Education and Professional Development Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Followership &amp; Fundamentals of Leadership</li> <li>Establish Tactical Warfighter Skills</li> <li>Service-specific Competencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership &amp; Management Skills in Service and MOS/AFSC/RATING</li> <li>Expand Tactical Warfighting Skills</li> <li>Small Team/Unit Leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Leadership &amp; Management Skills in Service and MOS/AFSC/RATING</li> <li>Advanced Tactical Warfighting Skills</li> <li>Introduce Operational Level of War</li> <li>Unit / Organizational Leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Leadership &amp; Management Skills in a Joint Environment</li> <li>Expand Operational Level of Warfighting</li> <li>Introduction to Interagency &amp; Multinational Operations</li> <li>Organizational &amp; Command Senior Enlisted Leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Leadership &amp; Management Skills in a Joint Environment</li> <li>Introduction to Strategic Theater Level of Warfighting</li> <li>Expand Interagency &amp; Multinational Operations</li> <li>Command Senior Enlisted Leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Career Long Development (EDLAs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operate on commander's intent and enable mission command at all levels</li> <li>Make sound ethical decisions based on the values and standards of the profession of arms</li> <li>Utilize available resources to enhance the discipline, readiness, resiliency, and health of the total force</li> <li>Anticipate, communicate, and mitigate risks</li> <li>Operate in joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational environments</li> <li>Think critically and develop agile and adaptive leaders</li> </ul>				
<b>Joint Emphasis Areas</b>	<b>Basic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Military Capabilities</li> <li>Joint Forces Overview</li> <li>Joint Forces Non-Commissioned and Petty Officer</li> <li>Introduction to JIIM</li> </ul>		<b>Senior</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Strategic Overview</li> <li>JIIM</li> <li>Foundations of Joint Operations</li> <li>Joint Force Leadership</li> </ul>		<b>KEYSTONE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Military Capabilities and Organization</li> <li>Joint Doctrine</li> <li>JIIM Capabilities</li> <li>Joint Force Leadership</li> </ul>

Table 1. Enlisted Military Education Continuum

Annex A  
Appendix A

Figure 4. EPME Continuum<sup>82</sup>

Master Sergeant Matthew Reed notes that discussions about advancing civilian education for enlisted members, specifically SNCOs are not uncommon, as their advisory

<sup>81</sup> Christopher A. Coons, "Text - S.3318 - 115th Congress (2017–2018): Military Learning for Credit Act of 2018," webpage, August 1, 2018, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/3318/text>.

<sup>82</sup> Source: The Joint Staff, "CJCSI 1805.01B: Enlisted Professional Military Education Policy."

and leadership roles are crucial to mission accomplishment at levels of higher command and organizational position.<sup>83</sup>

Within EPME and MOS training all services can award undergraduate credit, however, the Community College of the Air Force (through Air University) is the only military institution that currently awards associates level (applied science) degrees.<sup>84</sup> Marion Cain, Ed Davin, and Jonathan Woods identify that various civilian and military certificate level programs exist to demonstrate technical skill or knowledge mastery, the services have systems in place for members to receive their award from either authorized service providers, civilian governing bodies, or awarding government agencies serviced through DoD's Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL).<sup>85</sup> Additionally, the National Defense University<sup>86</sup> and Joint Special Operations University<sup>87</sup> are two of several service providers facilitating graduate level certificates and graduate level training courses from DoD learning institutions beyond the enlisted general forces COOL program, but these are typically restricted to SNCOs and attendance may be directly tied to positional requirements.

The awarding of a baccalaureate degree or higher is dependent on the individual member's participation in off-duty education programs. Service tuition re-imbursement programs and the GI-Bill increase accessibility to civilian education, but degree completion

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<sup>83</sup> Matthew Reed, "Rethinking Enlisted Education: Expanding the Professional Military Education Debate," War on the Rocks, November 11, 2018, <https://warontherocks.com/2018/11/rethinking-enlisted-education-expanding-the-professional-military-education-debate/>.

<sup>84</sup> Air University, "Community College of the Air Force," March 2019, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Barnes/CCAF/>.

<sup>85</sup> Marion Cain, Ed Davin and Jonathan Woods, "Department of Defense Voluntary Education Program: Intersection of DoD Voluntary Education & Credentialing Initiatives Roundtable; Institutionalizing Credentialing in the Military: COOL," (January 2015), [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=11&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj2tvhzPPAhVGSK0KHfALDi4QFjAKegQIBRAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ccmeonline.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2F2015files%2FCCME\\_Vol-EdCredentialingRoundtable\\_Jan2015\\_final.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0hkIqsdTTeQHst4uBt09dI](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=11&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj2tvhzPPAhVGSK0KHfALDi4QFjAKegQIBRAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ccmeonline.org%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2F2015files%2FCCME_Vol-EdCredentialingRoundtable_Jan2015_final.pdf&usg=AOvVaw0hkIqsdTTeQHst4uBt09dI).

<sup>86</sup> National Defense University, "Joint Advanced Warfighting School (JAWS)," Welcome to the Joint Advanced Warfighting School, 2019, <https://jfsc.ndu.edu/Academics/Joint-Advanced-Warfighting-School-JAWS/>.

<sup>87</sup> USSOCOM-JSOU, "Graduate Certificates: Foundations of U.S. Special Operations.," JSOU | Home, 2019, <https://www.socom.mil/JSOU/Pages/Default.aspx>.

is overwhelmingly dependent on prioritization outside of work-related duties. In select cases, SNCOs may be nominated for service specific graduate level degree programs in order to provide special assistance in operational-strategic level assignments, as congressional fellows, or in targeted technical roles. The intention of this effort is for the military services to receive a deliberate return on investment in post-graduate assignments and capitalize on the impact to their parent MOS or total force at large after the developmental tour is complete. The knowledge gained, increased capabilities in analysis, and broader view of military and governmental processes benefits these SNCOs as they move into CSEL, Senior Enlisted Advisor (SEA), and strategic-level roles.

Intertwined with development and training over time is the process of renewing a member's career contract through the process of re-enlisting (re-hiring). Depending on service regulation this may occur a handful of times or over a dozen times in a 30-year career. This action is dependent on evaluation of the member by their command for continued service, their progression at their given rank, and the ability to continue to progress according to established service requirements. The U.S. Army identifies that a period of reenlistment may also provide the occasion for MOS reclassification or retraining to include sister service transfers, guard or reserve service, or officer commissioning opportunities.<sup>88</sup> A reenlistment ceremony is performed as a culmination of a commander's verification of the individual's performance in management, leadership, training requirements completion, and a renewed authorization for service.

The act of continuation in service is a demonstration to others that the individual has consistently displayed the values of the organization, while the ceremony is an open pledge to others that they are unwavering in this commitment. It can be viewed as a developmental career milestone, as both the commander and respective human resources office must verify adherence to standards. The individual's application for re-enlistment is never guaranteed and is commonly stated by commanders as a "privilege" and not a given

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<sup>88</sup> US Army, "Reenlistment: Frequently Asked Questions," Recruiting, goarmy.com, November 6, 2018, <https://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/current-and-prior-service/frequently-asked-questions.html>.

“right” of service, which ensures that the tone of the process is formalized and not a disposable organizational routine.

As an individual reenlists they are advancing in organizational tenure as well as generating additional opportunities for promotion. Enlisted military promotions are done in a graduated manner factoring strict requirements of time in service, time in grade, and sustained performance, with few exceptions. Variations exist at initial entry to service (E-1 through E-4) for all services based on previous civilian education, accomplishments, civic leadership, or technical qualifications. Those examples in the grades (E-5 through E-9) by immediate promotion are conducted outside of standard timing requirements after initial training, are deemed required due to advanced professional degrees or certifications, and are limited to unique skill programs (public performance teams; shooting, skydiving, and military bands). In very select cases as identified by Shawn Snow<sup>89</sup> and Drew Brooks,<sup>90</sup> NCO and SNCO promotions are awarded based on outstanding meritorious achievement or outstanding performance both on and off the battlefield, but due to their rarity they are not often broadcasted, apart from highly publicized Medal of Honor Announcements.

Matthew Cox,<sup>91</sup> The Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs,<sup>92</sup> and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations,<sup>93</sup> demonstrate that military leaders are pursuing initiatives

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<sup>89</sup> Shawn Snow, “Corps Grants First Combat Meritorious Promotion since ‘15 to Infantry Marine in Syria,” *Marine Corps Times*, September 18, 2018, <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2018/09/17/the-corps-grants-first-combat-meritorious-promotion-since-2015-to-an-infantry-marine-in-syria/>.

<sup>90</sup> Drew Brooks, “NC-Native, Fort Bragg Soldier Earns Rare Battlefield Promotion While Supporting Anti-ISIS Fight,” *The Fayetteville Observer*, April 29, 2017, <https://www.fayobserver.com/news/20170429/nc-native-fort-bragg-soldier-earns-rare-battlefield-promotion-while-supporting-anti-isis-fight>.

<sup>91</sup> Matthew Cox, “Army’s New Promotion System Could Mean Separations for Some Soldiers,” *Military.com*, April 24, 2019, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2019/04/24/armys-new-promotion-system-could-mean-separations-some-soldiers.html>.

<sup>92</sup> Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs, “Air Force Ends Promotion Testing for E-7 and Above,” *Air Force’s Personnel Center*, February 4, 2019, <https://www.afpc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1747906/air-force-ends-promotion-testing-for-e-7-and-above/>.

<sup>93</sup> CNO, “NAVADMIN 144/18 Announcement of Pilot Program for the FY-19 Enlisted Advancement-to-Vacancy Selection Board” (United States Navy, June 14, 2018), 1, <https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/reference/messages/Documents/NAVADMINS/NAV2018/NAV18144.txt>.

in the modernization of SNCO promotions by overhauling advancement systems to reflect performance or merit, changing career progression requirements, and by increasing career incentives for those that perform occupational duties in harsher environmental or occupational conditions. These efforts may provide a demonstrated increased value for developmental and managerial growth initiatives and enable early identification of the right leaders for the correct positions.

While fulfilling the duties of higher ranks is integral to proper organizational function, the demonstration of characteristics valued within leadership positions portrays the performance level demanded of subordinate members. Throughout military employment, a member will complete numerous reenlistments (career contracts), choose separation, or conduct actions unbecoming of their position. During these occasions the member will be faced with the prospect of departing military service through either actions of their own accord or through those mandated by regulation.

## **F. RETIREMENTS AND SEPARATIONS (TRANSITION)**

### **1. Retirements and Standard Separations**

Unlike the civilian marketplace the military occupation does provided the ability to transfer skills to other companies, elements, or other organizations entirely. Tasks requiring proprietary technological systems and knowledge may not have readily available application apart from uniformed service. The option of enlisted inter-service transfers, and those to guard and reserve elements are possible under specified circumstances and requirements. By rare exception can an individual be “fired” or “administratively re-assigned” pending separation from military service, and still be able to return to another military organization in a similar or greater capacity. Any involvement with government service after firing is typically associated with contracting roles. The military is a unique organization that apart from few civilian occupations still provides a pension style system for extended periods of service. The most well-known is 20 years of cumulative service and standard retirement in order to receive 50% of basic pay. It is lesser known that members are not held to remain in service beyond the standards of their established enlistment contracts and have the option to separate from the service at the conclusion of

any specific contract. Upon this separation they are placed into an inactive status for a period of time specific to their enlistment contract requirements where the government could call upon, and re-activate them for service in times of national need. A standard separation (honorable or administrative) is the most common and requires a member to complete their service obligation without receiving any outstanding violations on their military record of a moral, ethical, or legal standing.

By DoD regulation, separation entitles the member to various compensation and benefits that are specifically defined at the point of separation. These are based on the member's career history and individual circumstances including but not limited to; deployments, service connected medical conditions, and Veteran's Affairs program benefits. Currently, DoD has four military (non-medical) retirement (pension) plans for those that remain in service until or beyond 20 years.<sup>94</sup> The DoD's individual retirement account options exist through the Thrift Savings Plan and the new Blended Retirement System, however, these are solely based on individual contribution and a small government contribution match for the Blended Retirement System that allows the member to take their retirement savings with them even if they separate before DoD retirement.<sup>95</sup> The intent of all systems is for the member to depart the service and have a successful and holistic transition to civilian life. If during the course of military service a member chooses to conduct actions that are either in violation of law and/or conduct standards they may be required to separate or retire pending the conclusion of any investigation(s). It is in circumstances like these that typically the responsible commander identified a specific breach of trust, witnessed actions that do not demonstrate the required conduct of duty, or was made aware of criminal actions.

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<sup>94</sup> Department of Defense, "Retirement," Retirement, 2019, <https://militarypay.defense.gov/Pay/Retirement/>.

<sup>95</sup> Department of Defense, "Blended Retirement," December 2018, <https://militarypay.defense.gov/blendedretirement/>.

## 2. Forced Separation Actions

Actions requiring forced separation from service are typically handled by the unit commander, subordinate staffs, and, if necessary, the Judge Advocate General. The duration and expediency of actions transferring the member back to civilian status is dependent on the violation's circumstances and legal courses of action available to the member and commander. The most visible of these actions are the release of members at the highest levels of leadership and management. Ben Heineman,<sup>96</sup> David Larcker and Brian Tayan,<sup>97</sup> and Jena McGregor<sup>98</sup> note that similar to high ranking civilian business positions, senior leader conduct and actions are deemed a direct reflection of the company and can also impact public opinion of the organization regardless of legal outcome.

The actions of SEAs and CSELs at high levels can easily come under scrutiny as dismissals tend to be limited in media engagement and are released upon conclusion of internal investigations. The language of these releases and subsequent updates are often vague as corresponding investigation(s) may take months before internal or heavily redacted findings are released to lower echelons of command and the general public. The most prominent of these SNCO examples are those in the CSEL positions within the services. As their roles are on prominent display alongside General Officers and Senior Executive Service Members it makes their conduct and separation actions very apparent.

In 2018 and 2019 numerous SEA and CSEL positions received this level of visibility as they were positioned across the services. The Associated Press,<sup>99</sup> Office

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<sup>96</sup> Ben W. Heineman, "News Corp, Walmart and CEO Failure to Investigate Wrongdoing," *Harvard Business Review*, May 4, 2012, <https://hbr.org/2012/05/news-corp-walmart-and-ceo-fail>.

<sup>97</sup> David Larcker and Brian Tayan, "We Studied 38 Incidents of CEO Bad Behavior and Measured Their Consequences," *Harvard Business Review*, June 9, 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/06/we-studied-38-incidents-of-ceo-bad-behavior-and-measured-their-consequences>.

<sup>98</sup> Jena McGregor, "More CEOs Are Getting Forced out for Ethics Violations," *Washington Post*, May 15, 2017, sec. Leadership, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2017/05/15/more-ceos-are-getting-forced-out-for-ethics-violations/>.

<sup>99</sup> Associated Press, "Pentagon's Top Enlisted Service Member Suspended amid Misconduct Probe," CBS News, September 28, 2018, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/sergeant-major-john-troxell-suspended-pentagon-misconduct-allegations/>.



CJCS,<sup>100</sup> Mark Faram,<sup>101</sup> and Rose Thayer<sup>102</sup> noted three varied examples and unique circumstances that gained prominent national media attention; Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman (SEAC) CSM John Troxell's temporary administrative re-assignment for allegations of misconduct and subsequent corrective action for return to duty six months later, Master Chief Petty Officer of Navy (MCPON) Steven Giordano's investigation and subsequent retirement for abusive workplace conduct, and Air Force Global Strike Command Command-Chief Master Sergeant Tommy Mazzone for an unprofessional relationship. These member's positions were held at 4-Star CJCS, Service 4-Star, and Service Major Command 4-Star levels. All three members held nearly three decades or more of service each. In all cases, allegations came forward through secondary sources like news media and social media platforms, well in advance of military public affairs information releases. By the time information was released by DoD public affairs, rumors and Freedom of Information Act Requests had identified what formal public affairs releases did not.

The structural hierarchy of the military and a need to know basis can inhibit the expedited release of information. Decision making and deliberate communication can be quickly outpaced by a wittingly distributed email or memo that is subsequently leaked to a broader audience. Shalini Ramachandran<sup>103</sup> and Danielle Wiener-Bronner<sup>104</sup> note that this action mirrors similar concerns in civilian workplaces as appropriate public relations

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<sup>100</sup> Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Public Affairs, "Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Reinstated," Joint Chiefs of Staff, March 28, 2019, <https://www.jcs.mil/Media/News/News-Display/Article/1799524/senior-enlisted-advisor-to-the-chairman-of-the-joint-chiefs-of-staff-resumes-du/>.

<sup>101</sup> Mark D. Faram, "Probe: MCPON Giordano 'Failed to Exhibit Exemplary Conduct,'" Navy Times, April 7, 2019, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2019/04/05/probe-mcpon-giordano-failed-to-exhibit-exemplary-conduct/>.

<sup>102</sup> Rose Thayer, "Relationship with Subordinate, Adultery Led to Firing of Air Force Global Strike Command's Top NCO - Stripes," Stars and Stripes, January 4, 2019, <https://www.stripes.com/relationship-with-subordinate-adultery-led-to-firing-of-air-force-global-strike-command-s-top-nco-1.563258>.

<sup>103</sup> Shalini Ramachandran, "Netflix CEO Fires Top Executive After Use of Racial Slur," *Wall Street Journal*, 23 2018, sec. Business, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/netflix-ceo-fires-top-executive-after-use-of-the-n-word-1529709156>.

<sup>104</sup> Danielle Wiener-Bronner, "How Major Companies Handle and Botch Public Relations Crises," *CNN-Money*, April 22, 2018, <https://money.cnn.com/2018/04/22/news/companies/companies-public-relations-crises/index.html>.

messaging may help shape viewpoints on organizational performance and counter overall public perceptions of senior personnel actions. Violations that warrant removal or firing from positions may provide openings for leaders to create organizational reforms that either reduce occurrences or streamline future messaging.

## **G. CASE SUMMARY**

This case provided an overview of the developmental ladder for SNCOs. Specifically, it identified the rigid hierarchical structure that guides enlisted promotions, management, and leadership roles. It discussed the commitment of the individual military member beyond their personal self and the demonstration of OCB actions that garner organizational approval. From the time that an enlisted member joins the U.S. Military at MEPS they are required to conform to specific rules and regulations. After initial training completion, advancement continues in tandem with management and leadership development. Once the individual has completed the required qualification training, proven themselves in the work environment, and passed the requisite level of EPME they enter the SNCO ranks. It is within these ranks that they assume greater responsibilities at the operational and strategic levels of their organizations and either remain in these positions until their enlistment contracts are complete, they choose to separate, or are deliberately released from military service. The CSEL release examples present clear organizational limitations based on the hierarchical structure, bureaucracy, and legal requirements for each specific case. Edward Cullen Kennedy's analysis demonstrates similarities to the Catholic Church's organizational struggles, that while dealing with criminal violations of senior (military) leaders in an established hierarchy the struggles inherent to organizational constraints cannot be overcome solely by a member's good will.<sup>105</sup> This does not mean that the military's hierarchy is ineffective at finding, training, and producing individuals for SNCO and advanced leadership positions. The deliberate timing and implementation of duty requirements at each enlisted rank is required for the military's functioning and daily operations. Any opportunities that exist alongside programmed EPME and positional

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<sup>105</sup> Edward Cullen Kennedy, "The Dangerous Side Effects of Hierarchy," *National Catholic Reporter* (blog), November 15, 2012, <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/bulletins-human-side/dangerous-side-effects-hierarchy>.

career development milestones should be used to advance member development and performance.

## IV. CHICK-FIL-A

“It’s my pleasure”

—Chick-Fil-A counter employee

### A. OVERVIEW OF CHICK-FIL-A

This section provides an analysis of Chick-fil-A and organizational insight beyond the basic public knowledge of a quality product and friendly service. It identifies the aspects that make the employee culture successful as the brand continues to grow across all regions of the U.S. The Chick-fil-A Corporation<sup>106</sup> and Rachel Siegel<sup>107</sup> note that despite very selective and restrictive control of franchisee awarding and a Sunday closure policy, the organization capitalizes on these unique characteristics that help highlight its separation from the rest of the fast-casual food service market. Examination of specific employee tenants reveals an undertone of focus on employee engagement and the services they provide the customer, ensuring that employees are *servicing* the customer, not just providing a good sandwich in exchange for currency. The Chick-fil-A history page highlights consistency as a strong factor in both company growth and brand loyalty since its founding by S. Truett Cathy in 1946 who is remembered for demonstrating, “A deep love of customers” and “A heart for employees.”<sup>108</sup> Emma Green notes that since establishment the company has not been without controversy due to their overt religious views.<sup>109</sup> On numerous occasions they have overcome negative press attention targeting statements made by the Cathy family. Despite these occurrences, the organization and

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<sup>106</sup> Chick-fil-A Corporation, “Franchise Opportunities,” Chick-fil-A, 2019, <https://www.chick-fil-a.com/Franchising/Franchise>.

<sup>107</sup> Rachel Siegel, “Getting a Chick-Fil-A Franchise Is Harder than Getting into Harvard,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 7, 2018, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-biz-pruitt-chick-fil-a-franchise-20180607-story.html>.

<sup>108</sup> Chick-fil-A Corporation, “History,” Chick-fil-A, 2019, <https://www.chick-fil-a.com/About/History>.

<sup>109</sup> Emma Green, “Chick-Fil-A: Selling Chicken With a Side of God,” *The Atlantic*, September 8, 2014, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/09/chick-fil-a-selling-chicken-with-a-side-of-god/379776/>.

overall brand continue to perform at high levels. The overtones of quality and service have done well for the company as their level of engagement with the public has developed a strong company profile.

## **B. PUBLIC PERFORMANCE AND POSITIVE PERCEPTION**

A fast food company must always remain watchful of their press in the public market. Foodborne illness, continuous unhealthy offerings, and a single bad customer experience or interaction can create company backlash and result in large amounts of lost revenue. Often, positive mention for Chick-fil-A is seen in the media for their company actions. In December of 2017 the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta airport suffered a large power outage around midnight on a Saturday. Brett Rosner described the situation when Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed called up Chick-fil-A Headquarters, the company responded immediately, and then released the following statement to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*,

The mayor called about 10 p.m. and asked for assistance. We immediately mobilized staff and team members who live and work near the airport, and they are making sandwiches and delivering them to the EOC (emergency operations center). City and airport officials there are distributing sandwiches to passengers who are stranded due to the power outage. It has been a very difficult day for thousands of travelers, and while Chick-fil-A is always closed on Sunday, our restaurants open occasionally to serve communities in need. We do not make a profit, but do what we can to offer comfort to people experiencing hardship<sup>110</sup>

This action received national media attention and was a clear contrast to stated company policy of being closed on Sundays. The act of donating the food was widely received with positive affirmation as the company is Atlanta based. Founded by Chick-fil-A, The WinShape Foundation, provides an additional example of positive community involvement that exists inside the Atlanta area called WinShape homes.<sup>111</sup> While lesser known by customers at a national level WinShape provides group and foster homes for

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<sup>110</sup> Brett Rosner, “Chick-Fil-A Comes to Rescue during Atlanta Airport’s Power Outage,” The Atlanta Journal Constitution and WSBTV, December 18, 2017, <https://www.ajc.com/news/chick-fil-comes-rescue-during-atlanta-airport-power-outage/P4szWaXYACLOpULbo0kRWJ/>.

<sup>111</sup> WinShape Foundation, “WinShape Homes,” Homes, 2019, <https://homes.winshape.org/>.

children in need. Apart from the positive public reception due to good deeds, the company has faced turbulent times due to their corporate beliefs and religious based founding principles.

### C. NEGATIVE OBSERVATIONS AND COMPANY ACTIONS

Public opinion of the Chick-fil-A brand in regard to customer service is quite high, while specified positions by company leadership on the gay community remain under continuous scrutiny through media controversies, public opposition, and disagreement over recognized principles. On many occasions the corporation has re-engaged with media releases to quell outcry and re-affirm the company's position on customer relations or company values. Discourse rapidly accelerated in July 2012 after a media interview with *The Baptist Press* when Allan Blume inquired about his personal beliefs on marriage, to which Dan Cathy stated,

We are very much supportive of the family -- the biblical definition of the family unit. We are a family-owned business, a family-led business, and we are married to our first wives. We give God thanks for that. , We operate as a family business ... our restaurants are typically led by families; some are single. We want to do anything we possibly can to strengthen families. We are very much committed to that. We intend to stay the course, We know that it might not be popular with everyone, but thank the Lord, we live in a country where we can share our values and operate on biblical principles.<sup>112</sup>

Almost immediately, a national media uproar grew in opposition to Cathy's comments. The company quickly responded with a public relations statement in an attempt to quell the rising outcry stating,

The Chick-fil-A culture and service tradition in our restaurants is to treat every person with honor, dignity and respect – regardless of their belief, race, creed, sexual orientation or gender. We will continue this tradition in the over 1,600 Restaurants run by independent Owner/Operators. Going

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<sup>112</sup> Allan Blume, “‘Guilty as Charged,’ Cathy Says of Chick-Fil-A’s Stand on Biblical & Family Values,” *Baptist Press*, July 16, 2012, <http://www.bpnews.net/38271/guilty-as-charged-cathy-says-of-chickfilas-stand-on-biblical-and-family-values>.

forward, our intent is to leave the policy debate over same-sex marriage to the government and political arena.<sup>113</sup>

As media outlets discussed the efficacy of dining at Chick-fil-A establishments based on the owner's religious views, business operations continued to function. After these occurrences the company found itself in mixed headlines again. A *Newser Composite* article highlighted an August 2012 incident where customer Adam Smith taped and posted an interaction with a drive-through attendant where Smith stated, "Chick-fil-A is a hateful corporation" and "I don't know how you live with yourself and work here. I don't understand it."<sup>114</sup> After enormous public backlash against his actions Smith was fired from his job and struggled to obtain employment. While Chick-fil-A did not publicly disseminate a corporate response to this altercation, a composite clip of national media interviews provided by *Planet Bloop* with the drive-through attendant shows journalists lauding her kindness and customer service professionalism in response to Smith's actions.<sup>115</sup>

Corrective actions by company executives in response to negative press do not always become mainstream headlines. In her book *Values, Inc* author Dina Dwyer-Owens highlights a specific occurrence.<sup>116</sup> A summary of her analysis shows the following; Dan Cathy reached out to, and met with founder of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) activist group Campus Pride, Shane Windmeyer, whose organization had been protesting Chick-fil-A locations, they connected and formed a friendship through mutual respect for one another.<sup>117</sup> This aspect of the human connection echoes throughout other areas of company relations that are discussed in further detail in this case study. Carissa

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<sup>113</sup> Chick-fil-A Corporation, "Chick-Fil-A, Public Release," Chick-fil-A Facebook Page, July 19, 2012, <https://www.facebook.com/ChickfilA/posts/10151226208515101>.

<sup>114</sup> Newser Composite, "Ex-CFO Who Slammed Chick-Fil-A Now on Foodstamps," *USA TODAY*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2015/03/29/adam-smith-chick-fil-a-video-memoir/70629290/>.

<sup>115</sup> Planet Bloop, *Chick-Fil-A Drive Thru Employee Responds To Adam Smith*, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zar5OkiHbDw>.

<sup>116</sup> Dina Dwyer-Owens, *Values, Inc.: How Incorporating Values into Business and Life Can Change the World.*, First (Boston, MA: Beacon Publishing, 2015).

<sup>117</sup> Dina Dwyer-Owens, 63–67.

Liz Castillo<sup>118</sup> and Jefferson Graham<sup>119</sup> highlight the 2019 discourse that surrounds the removal of restaurants from select airports, cities, and universities. During these headlines Chick-fil-A has also released statements regarding clarification of charitable donations and supported causes.<sup>120</sup> As opposition against the company occurs, it is likely that chicken sandwich sales will continue and kindness will be the company response. Employees that demonstrate these acts of kindness are choosing to conform to the company culture and structure.

## **D. THE IMPACT OF HIERARCHY AND DEMONSTRATIONS OF OCB**

### **1. Hierarchy**

As a large national chain that works through quick customer experiences Chick-fil-A relies on talented employees to get the job done well, even in the simple things. Examples of loyalty and longevity echo throughout the organization. The company's executive committee has six primary personnel all of whom all have decades of experience within the company, two started from behind the service counter, and they have specific references to company initiatives that state Chick-fil-A's investment in their personal and professional development.<sup>121</sup> This tone starts from the top and carries all the way down through the organization. Jenna McGregor noted in an interview with KXTV Sacramento, that franchisee owner Eric Mason was asked about why he was paying his employees so much (living wage) compared to his competitors.<sup>122</sup> The same interview continued as Mason

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<sup>118</sup> Carissa Liz Castillo, "Having Chick-Fil-A on Campus Doesn't Promote Inclusivity | The University Star," Opinion, The University Star, April 23, 2019, <http://star.txstate.edu/2019/04/having-chick-fil-a-on-campus-doesnt-promote-inclusivity/>.

<sup>119</sup> Jefferson Graham, "Buffalo Airport Says No to New Airport Location from Chick-Fil-A," *USA TODAY*, April 1, 2019, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/04/01/buffalo-airport-says-no-new-airport-location-chick-fil-a/3336958002/>.

<sup>120</sup> Chick-fil-A Corporation, "Chick-Fil-A Responds to Questions about Our Charitable Giving," *Chick-Fil-A* (blog), March 21, 2019, <https://thechickenwire.chick-fil-a.com/News/Chick-fil-A-responds-to-questions-about-our-charitable-giving>.

<sup>121</sup> Chick-fil-A Corporation, "Officers & Directors," Chick-fil-A, 2019, <https://www.chick-fil-a.com/Board-Officers>.

<sup>122</sup> Jena McGregor, "A Chick-Fil-A Is Paying \$18 an Hour to Retain Fast-Food Workers," *The Washington Post*, May 29, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2018/05/29/a-chick-fil-a-is-paying-18-an-hour-to-retain-fast-food-workers/?utm\\_term=.82588b2b7811](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2018/05/29/a-chick-fil-a-is-paying-18-an-hour-to-retain-fast-food-workers/?utm_term=.82588b2b7811).



summed up the organization's view on employee retainment stating, "What that does for the business is provide consistency, someone that has relationships with our guests, and it's going to be building a long-term culture."<sup>123</sup> Emily Schmall highlighted that throughout his life, Truett Cathy was asked specifically about employee tenure in his business and his response to a *Forbes Magazine* interview in 2007 summarized how he felt about an individual's longevity in the hierarchy,

Cathy, 86, credits the company's success to 975 franchisees and 600 employees who are unusually dedicated in an industry known for grumpy operators and high turnover among hourly workers. The turnover among Chick-fil-A operators is a low 5% a year. Among hourly workers turnover is 60%, compared with 107% for the industry. "We tell applicants, 'If you don't intend to be here for life, you needn't apply,'" says Cathy, who opened his first restaurant in 1946.<sup>124</sup>

While the concept of highly valuing an employee's development allows them to move up the hierarchy, they need to have business abilities that allow them to take ownership of their decisions within the organization and use them effectively. Jimmy Collins, a former employee that worked with founder Truett Cathy at his original store recognized that within the restaurant hierarchy Cathy instilled a culture that values both "positional power" and "personal power" at key times, in order to advance through any organizational bureaucracy or daily operational issues.<sup>125</sup> Management teams at all levels instill the value of working for the betterment of other employees, the organization, and a demonstrated corporate culture which helps new employees acclimate and explains why such overt examples of OCB are prevalent.

## 2. OCB

Kate Taylor acknowledges that Chick-fil-A employees are well known for taking care of their customer base, and this is confirmed by their top selection, three years running, in customer satisfaction on the American Consumer Satisfaction Index annual restaurant

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<sup>123</sup> Jena McGregor.

<sup>124</sup> Emily Schmall, "The Cult of Chick-Fil-A," *Forbes Magazine*, July 6, 2007, forbes/2007/0723/080.

<sup>125</sup> Jimmy Collins, "Are You Using Your Personal Power?," *Creative Followership* (blog), February 27, 2019, <https://creativefollowership.com/are-you-using-your-personal-power/>.

survey.<sup>126</sup> That level of affirmation does not make the position of a restaurant hospitality director (manager) title seem out of place, but personalized service at a lower cost restaurant is uncommon. Examples of going the perceived extra mile with customers are prevalent in news media along with short positive comments from employee interviews stating “I love my job” or “I enjoy what I do.” Examples of putting personalized service and a human element into simple actions for the good of others are readily available. These are not actions mandated by company performance, rather they are initiatives by employees trying to provide more from the job position and in turn the brand. Michelle Gant,<sup>127</sup> ABC-7 Desk Team,<sup>128</sup> and Meghan Overdeep<sup>129</sup> recognized that examples include but are not limited to; running customers under an umbrella to and from vehicles in heavy rain, overnighting a lost purse to its owner with additional gifts, or helping a disabled customer feed themselves. The examples of OCB by Chick-fil-A employees are about far more than food. They are about people helping other people in times of need. Chick-fil-A has found a way to capitalize on the human connection and create a simple intimacy through short customer interactions beyond what is expected of a counter service employee experience. As modern culture becomes more transactional over relational in part due to technology, Chick-fil-A is capitalizing on a niche’ capability that few others seem to offer in their market share. They do this by getting the right employees in the door for all areas of operations.

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<sup>126</sup> Kate Taylor, “Chick-Fil-A Is Dominating the Fast-Food Industry in One Key Area and It Reveals the Secret to the Chain’s Success,” *Business Insider*, July 5, 2018, <https://www.businessinsider.com/chick-fil-as-customer-service-explains-success-2018-7>.

<sup>127</sup> Michelle Gant, “Chick-Fil-A Employee Holds Umbrella for Customers in Pouring Rain, Goes Viral,” Fox News, July 19, 2018, <https://www.foxnews.com/food-drink/chick-fil-a-employee-holds-umbrella-for-customers-in-pouring-rain-goes-viral>.

<sup>128</sup> ABC 7 Desk Team, “Chick-Fil-A Goes above and beyond to Help Teacher Who Forgot Her Purse,” ABC7 San Francisco, January 12, 2018, <https://abc7news.com/2929793/>.

<sup>129</sup> Meghan Overdeep, “Chick Fil-A Employee Spotted Feeding Disabled Customer in Texas Food Court - Southern Living,” *Electronic Magazine, Southern Living*, January 10, 2019, <https://www.southernliving.com/news/chick-fil-a-employee-helps-disabled-customer>.

## E. HIRE

It seems puzzling that a fast food company would actively hire teenagers expecting to retain them, or that adults would jump through an extensive application process for franchisee ownership knowing they could easily not receive one. The company attempts to use standard principles across all areas of hiring to remain consistent in their methodology. The viewpoint of hiring exceptional teenage entry-level workers has been discussed by franchisee owners on their company blog *The Chicken Wire*. Sean Ward highlights franchisee owner Ralph Stevens who stated, “When I’m thinking of bringing on a new employee, I like to ask myself three questions. First, would we be a better team by hiring this person? Second, would I want that person to serve our CEO, Dan Cathy? And third, would I let that person babysit my children?”<sup>130</sup> Accordingly, there may be very little record that a teenage hire has to go on, aside from cutting grass and having immediate family or friends as references. Ward’s observations continue with another franchisee owner David Langston who looks for the highlights in what applicants bring saying, “We look for people who have a desire to grow, an engaging personality and a naturally enthusiastic spirit,” and “Dressing in a professional matter shows that you really care about the position and are truly interested.”<sup>131</sup>

Potential applicants looking for insight on how to join the company at all levels can reference an open book formula by the company Vice President of Corporate Talent Dee Ann Turner titled *Its’ My Pleasure - The Impact of Extraordinary Talent and a Compelling Culture*.<sup>132</sup> Turner’s insight into employee hiring leans overwhelmingly on the word *who*, and how they are brought on board. She highlights a selection of the company’s 3C-method for evaluating character, competency, and chemistry of both the application and interview to fulfill the duties of the required position for which applicants are applying.<sup>133</sup> Her

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<sup>130</sup> Sean Ward, “Summer Firsts: Finding Jobs, Finding Love,” *Chick-Fil-A* (blog), July 2, 2015, <https://thechickenwire.chick-fil-a.com/Inside-Chick-fil-A/Summer-Firsts-Finding-Jobs-Finding-Love>.

<sup>131</sup> Sean Ward.

<sup>132</sup> Dee Ann Turner, *It’s My Pleasure - The Impact of Extraordinary Talent and a Compelling Culture*. (Boise, ID: Elevate Publishing, 2015).

<sup>133</sup> Dee Ann Turner, 30–40.

insight notes that the principles can be modified easily to junior hires as managers can look for various interview characteristics displayed like promptness, courtesy, and identifying specific traits or talents that can be capitalized on in the future.<sup>134</sup> As an example of Turner’s hiring discernment for management and franchisee level positions she asks herself, “Would I want my three children to work for this person?”<sup>135</sup> By recognizing that each employee has the ability to grow into the next team or shift lead she is always looking for what the new hire can become, not just what is presented on their resume. This does not mean however that Chick-fil-A does not value prior experience, training, or education.

## **F. TRAIN**

Chick-fil-A takes their training progression very seriously to ensure process and service duplication across locations. After a new hire is onboarded at the franchisee level the training curriculum begins with the immediate or direct supervisor. Chick-fil-A actively chooses to focus on employee dedicated training and do it on a personalized basis. Apart from standardized task methods for product production and basic service procedures franchisees are given a lot of freedom to train their members as they see fit. CSP Staff note that all owners are given autonomy for their businesses and a supportive methodology exists around them consisting of corporate backing, collaboration of best practices, training materials, while job titles speak to positional value (leader, customer experience) not solely by tasks performed (manger, sales person).<sup>136</sup>

The specific initial training and follow on training for franchisees is facilitated by corporate level teams. G.G. Rigsby highlighted that these teams work onsite for several weeks and assist in training functions to ensure that they are optimized in performance before the employee or restaurant location performs them individually.<sup>137</sup> The same article

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<sup>134</sup> Dee Ann Turner, 32–33.

<sup>135</sup> Dee Ann Turner, 39.

<sup>136</sup> CSP Staff, “4 Lessons in Employee Empowerment, Courtesy of Chick-Fil-A,” *Corporate Advice, Customer Service Profiles* (blog), November 2, 2016, <https://www.csp.com/chick-fil-a/>.

<sup>137</sup> G. G. Rigsby, “Rincon Chick-Fil-A Operator Has Worked with the Company All His Life,” *Savannah Morning News*, September 26, 2018, <https://www.savannahnow.com/news/20180918/rincon-chick-fil-a-operator-has-worked-with-company-all-his-life>.

noted that in an interview with the *Savannah Morning News* Owner Jason Counselman remarked that he may have to “untrain” new employees from previous employer methods also stating, “I can train you to do the job,” and “I can’t train you to be honest or come in on time.”<sup>138</sup> The focus on the individual trainee instills a level of task mastery and the ability to take on more complex roles as proficiency is achieved. Throughout the training process an employee is groomed and assessed for future roles and responsibilities. The emphasis on task training and transition into development coaching regardless of employee level helps strengthen the company culture and overall performance.

### **G. DEVELOP: MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING**

Chick-fil-A has found a way to develop and capitalize on employees who champion the human connection and create an intimate customer relationship experience through beneficence. Tom Beauchamp identified that the idea of applying beneficence to corporate acts or for economic gain can provide an incentive and increased performance on the part of the seller/producer, who in-turn wants the buyer/consumer to benefit from their product or service.<sup>139</sup> Cam Caldwell et al. determined that if leaders focus their subordinates on the needs of the customer, while simultaneously focusing on their own subordinate’s needs, the actions from benevolent attitudes may lead to greater beneficent outcomes.<sup>140</sup> If the current business model is further instilled in employee development it should increase employee personal and professional growth. This provides an opportunity for not only increased customer loyalty but amplified monetary gain as the return on investment is quality employees. Other development initiatives provided by management have been concrete in delivery and provide immediate benefits to employee job knowledge and task execution. Chick-fil-A offers early career applicants who are looking for progression opportunities additional training through the Company’s Jump Start Initiative, where

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<sup>138</sup> G. G. Rigsby.

<sup>139</sup> Tom Beauchamp, “The Principle of Beneficence in Applied Ethics,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Spring 2019 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/principle-beneficence/>.

<sup>140</sup> Cam Caldwell et al., “Beneficence as a Source of Competitive Advantage,” *The Journal of Management Development* 33, no. 10 (2014): 1057–1079, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-01-2013-0007>.

candidates are selectively hired, trained, and developed for future ownership roles across a 36-month intensive business leadership and mentorship program.<sup>141</sup>

Hayley Peterson notes that at the franchisee level some owners have personally funded certificates in restaurant specific focus areas enabling their employees to grow in their professional business knowledge, which helps prepare them to take on greater management roles at their location or within the company at large.<sup>142</sup> Additionally, the company scholarship program fosters leadership growth and flexibility in all levels of academia as employee Gregg Rossino detailed, “Scholarships are awarded for all types of higher education, including vocational/technical school, undergraduate degrees and graduate degrees,” continuing “scholarship recipients also have the flexibility to apply the funds to an online institution,” and finally “there is no length-of-service requirement associated with eligibility.”<sup>143</sup> This focus on higher education is not only a strong employee retainment tool but it also provides internal development, capitalizing on employee talents for future roles.

Additionally, Peterson demonstrated that other owners have paid for advanced education opportunities or used their ability to assist employees’ families during times of hardship.<sup>144</sup> This kindness extends greatly as Tara Bozick noticed in all cases team leads are able to communicate their support for the employees on a personal level, and not only provide a translation of values of the individual manager but larger overarching principles of the corporate culture and the necessity of employee leadership development.<sup>145</sup> Dee Ann Turner advocates looking for early opportunities to delegate responsibility,

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<sup>141</sup> Chick-fil-A Corporation, “The Jumpstart Experience,” The Jumpstart Experience, 2019, <http://www.cfajumpstart.com/>.

<sup>142</sup> Hayley Peterson, “Why Chick-Fil-A’s Restaurants Sell 3 Times as Much as KFC’s,” *Business Insider*, May 10, 2016, <https://www.businessinsider.com/why-chick-fil-a-is-so-successful-2016-5>.

<sup>143</sup> Greg Rossino, “What to Know About Chick-Fil-A’s Scholarship Program,” *Chick-Fil-A* (blog), November 15, 2017, <https://thechickenwire.chick-fil-a.com/Inside-Chick-fil-A/What-to-Know-About-Chick-Fil-As-Scholarship-Program>.

<sup>144</sup> Peterson, “Why Chick-Fil-A’s Restaurants Sell 3 Times as Much as KFC’s.”

<sup>145</sup> Tara Bozick, “Peninsula Chick-Fil-A Franchise Owner Develops Leadership Program,” *Consolidated News Reports, Daily Press*, November 17, 2017, <https://www.dailypress.com/business/tidewater/dp-fea-chick-fila-owner-20171114-story.html>.

championing individual development or opinions, and sponsoring budding leaders, knowing that they must fail with management's support in order to learn and prepare for future challenges.<sup>146</sup> Her focus on developed leaders supports using and refining them for forthcoming business outcomes and the company's future.<sup>147</sup> This development and refinement process goes up through the Chick-fil-A organization and right back down to the mid-management levels when possible.

This process occurred at the senior staff and executive levels when Chick-fil-A leaders went to the Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center in 2014 to learn from the industry leading hotel chain, and garner best practices from their customer service.<sup>148</sup> What began as a top-level effort eventually transferred down to the owner/operator level for attendance in mastering quick and memorable customer service traits. Ritz-Carlton Public Relations highlighted Ryan Magnon, Chick-fil-A's Senior Manager for Hospitality and Service Design, who summarized the training session's goals stating, "We want to keep stretching and improving our performance; to learn new strategies for consistently delivering excellent service." Magnon continued, "To be a positive influence when coming into contact with anyone, we want to create a 'wow' experience for the customer."<sup>149</sup> Focusing on the right employees benefits the company greatly when it comes to performance, but just like any other business Chick-fil-A has found its share of poor performing hires that need correction or release.

## **H. TRANSITION**

As a corporation Chick-fil-A does not provide a course of action or articulate specific measures taken when they release an employee regardless of level within the organization. There are few public cases that have gained media attention. Reporter Emily

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<sup>146</sup> Dee Ann Turner, *It's My Pleasure - The Impact of Extraordinary Talent and a Compelling Culture.*, 50–52.

<sup>147</sup> Dee Ann Turner, 57.

<sup>148</sup> Ritz-Carlton Public Relations, "Chick-Fil-A: Making Fast Service Memorable," *The Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center* (blog), February 18, 2014, <http://ritzcarltonleadershipcenter.com/2014/02/chick-fil-a-making-fast-service-memorable/>.

<sup>149</sup> Ritz-Carlton Public Relations.

Schmall highlighted over one dozen discrimination court cases from 1988–2007, with one single case claiming firing based on religious grounds, but details on the case are unavailable as the case went to settlement.<sup>150</sup> Lindsay Watts reported in 2018 on a Washington, D.C., team member’s release after getting physically attacked behind the service counter by a customer, and then exchanging blows, to which a Chick-fil-A spokesperson released a statement saying, “This situation does not live up to our brand’s commitment to hospitality, and for that, we are very sorry.”<sup>151</sup> Due to a lack of additional public information regarding employee releases the author assumes that Chick-fil-A releases or fires employees in a manner that is respectful, or mirrors stated company values and expectations of those in management roles.

## **I. CASE SUMMARY**

Chick-fil-A is an organization that prides itself on greatness in the small things. They foster long-term development within their employees, whether they are working counter service or sitting in an executive board room. They choose to never forget about the customer by placing their needs first and ensuring that the experience is personal and long lasting. This is demonstrated throughout a continuous media presence that showcases positive outcomes from customer interactions. As management finds ways to make a traditional business hierarchy work for the member they remain cognizant of positional and personal authority to ensure smooth company operations. When enveloped with negative media attention based on controversial or divisive political topics, the company has apologized when needed, and chosen to take a road of continued kindness toward their customer base, backed up by exceptional service. By simply providing more than a stereotypical customer service experience around fast food, Chick-fil-A has found a way to deliver extraordinary service to their patrons.

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<sup>150</sup> Schmall, “The Cult of Chick-Fil-A.”

<sup>151</sup> Lindsay Watts, “Employee, Man Brawl inside Chick-Fil-A Restaurant in DC,” WTTG, September 7, 2018, <http://www.fox5dc.com/news/local-news/employee-man-brawl-inside-chick-fil-a-restaurant-in-dc>.



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## V. SOUTHWEST AIRLINES - THE HAPPY COMPANY

“The essential difference in service is not machines or ‘things.’ The essential difference is minds, hearts, spirits, and souls”

—Herb Kelleher - Founder n.d.

### A. OVERVIEW OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

This section provides an overview of Southwest Airlines and the foundational principles that make the company what it is today. The analysis describes the company’s public perception regarding media events over the last several years and how former CEO Herb Kelleher instilled values into employees as if they were his own customers. This process helped create a very successful corporate culture for a budget airline. What sets Southwest apart immediately from their competition is how they handle emergencies and demonstrate their companies’ heart. Lauren Leader-Chivée highlights that when a company faces a crisis on the world stage, the actions that leaders take demonstrate their personal and company values.<sup>152</sup> Employees look to leaders for an example and guidance during unknown circumstances. Sometimes an unfortunate event can exhibit the character of a company culture. On April 17th, 2018 Southwest Flight 1380 suffered an in-flight explosion 20 minutes after departure. The National Transportation Safety Board would report,

Fragments from the engine inlet and cowling struck the wing and fuselage, resulting in a rapid depressurization after the loss of one passenger window. The flight crew conducted an emergency descent and diverted into Philadelphia International Airport (KPHL), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Of the 144 passengers and five crewmembers onboard, one passenger received fatal injuries and eight passengers received minor injuries. The airplane sustained substantial damage.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Lauren Leader-Chivée, “CEOs: Own the Crisis or It Will Own You,” *Harvard Business Review*, March 26, 2014, <https://hbr.org/2014/03/ceos-own-the-crisis-or-it-will-own-you>.

<sup>153</sup> NTSB, “Southwest Airlines Engine Accident,” DCA18MA142, May 3, 2018, <https://www.ntsb.gov/investigations/Pages/DCA18MA142.aspx>.

Scott McCartney described that in the following 96 hours the company implemented emergency response procedures and directed targeted customer support teams to meet the needs of all passengers of Flight 1380.<sup>154</sup> He further elaborated on their actions underlining that they facilitated travel to final destinations, ensured all parties received medical attention, provided \$5,000 per individual for incidental expenses, an additional \$1,000 travel voucher, an apology letter signed by CEO Gary Kelly, and then conducted constant follow up by phone and email ensuring all needs were met.<sup>155</sup> Conor Shine reported that first responder Tommy Needum, a fellow passenger who provided in flight medical aide remarked, “Southwest is a great company and they took really good care of us,” and “There’s no question in my mind as to who I’ll be flying with again. They really took care of us.”<sup>156</sup> The letter from Kelly later made news around the world as it was viewed as sincere apology, and a gesture of care and support that is not common from corporations.

Southwest’s capability to conduct operations through the Flight 1380 crisis was not generated overnight. The company’s founding in 1967 has provided over 50 years to create and reform business practices, not just for emergencies, or receiving Trip Advisor annual awards, but for growing employees that live out a company culture.<sup>157</sup> The U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics notes that Southwest supports more customers by passenger count than any other U.S. airline, which is a welcomed fact considering the company prides itself on customer service and leans heavily on its budget airline appeal for business.<sup>158</sup> The primary deliverable is service based (transportation and experience), while goods (in-

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<sup>154</sup> Scott McCartney, “At Southwest Airlines, the Minutes After Disaster Struck,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 24, 2018, sec. Life, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/at-southwest-airlines-the-minutes-after-disaster-struck-1524586032>.

<sup>155</sup> McCartney.

<sup>156</sup> Conor Shine, “Southwest’s Heavy Heart: How the LUV Airline Is Responding to the Worst Accident in Its History.,” *Dallas News*, April 22, 2018, <https://www.dallasnews.com/business/southwest-airlines/2018/04/22/southwests-heavy-heart-luv-airline-responded-worst-accident-history>.

<sup>157</sup> Trip Advisor LLC, “Southwest Airlines Flights and Reviews (with Photos) - TripAdvisor,” 2019, [https://www.tripadvisor.com/Airline\\_Review-d8729156-Reviews-Southwest-Airlines](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Airline_Review-d8729156-Reviews-Southwest-Airlines).

<sup>158</sup> U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, “2017 Traffic Data for U.S Airlines and Foreign Airlines U.S. Flights | Bureau of Transportation Statistics,” March 22, 2018, <https://www.bts.gov/newsroom/2017-traffic-data-us-airlines-and-foreign-airlines-us-flights>.

flight services and overall airline amenities) are minor. The internal focus on employees is beyond stereotypical business rhetoric of “people are our #1 priority” and the focus on employees as customers is critical to Southwest’s outlook.

## **B. PUBLIC PERFORMANCE AND POSITIVE PERCEPTION**

Reports by Bill Ritter,<sup>159</sup> CBS Denver,<sup>160</sup> and Chelsea Wade<sup>161</sup> highlight uncommon cases where customers witnessed a flight attendant sing for a grieving mother, saw a bridesmaid get her wedding dress expedited to a friend’s wedding after leaving it at home, and heard about an employee finding a cancer patient’s lost bag and delivering it immediately at 3am with a note of encouragement attached. Ken Coleman and Gary Kelly noted that despite efforts like these, the top complaint (while few complaints total) received by the company in 2016 was for “rude customer service.”<sup>162</sup> In the budget-airline business profit margins must be balanced against timing, market, and overhead, and Southwest strives to maintain this balance while maximizing and modeling employee customer relations. Southwest capitalizes on these experiences by letting the public know about it, proclaiming statements like, “bags fly free,” which is an industry leading statement, and also demonstrates that what matters to the consumer matters to them.<sup>163</sup> Shep Hyken recognizes that the concept of hospitality when delivered in travel engagements develops a return customer.<sup>164</sup> A continued public lauding of employee efforts and praising by

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<sup>159</sup> Bill Ritter, “Be Kind: Flight Attendant Sings a Touching Tribute to Woman Who Lost Son in Line of Duty | *Abc7ny.Com*,” April 12, 2019, <https://abc7ny.com/society/be-kind-flight-attendant-sings-a-touching-tribute-/5246148/>.

<sup>160</sup> “Southwest Airlines Goes Above And Beyond To Help Bridesmaid In Need – CBS Denver,” March 4, 2019, <https://denver.cbslocal.com/2019/03/04/southwest-airlines-bridesmaid/>.

<sup>161</sup> Chelsea Wade, “Southwest Employee Goes Above And Beyond For Cancer Patient – CBS Dallas / Fort Worth,” August 10, 2017, <https://dfw.cbslocal.com/2017/08/10/southwest-employee-goes-above-and-beyond-for-cancer-patient/>.

<sup>162</sup> Ken Coleman and Gary Kelly, “#140: Gary Kelly—How Southwest Airlines Cultivates Amazing Company Culture,” *EntreLeadership* (blog), accessed April 29, 2019, <https://www.entreleadership.com/blog/podcasts/gary-kelly-southwest-airlines-amazing-company-culture>.

<sup>163</sup> Southwest Airlines HQ, “Bags Fly Free - First and Second Checked Bags Are Free | Southwest Airlines,” 2019, <https://www.southwest.com/html/air/bags-fly-free.html>.

<sup>164</sup> Shep Hyken, “Southwest Airlines Customer Experience Leads To Customer Loyalty,” *Forbes Magazine Online*, January 9, 2016, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/shephyken/2016/01/09/southwest-airlines-customer-experience-leads-to-customer-loyalty/#41e0b96636b9>.

business journals can only increase company perception so far beyond a consumer's services received. Understandably, every negative customer reaction or unfortunate company matter, much like a lost piece of airline luggage, cannot be prevented.

### C. NEGATIVE OBSERVATIONS AND COMPANY ACTIONS

Darren Dahl notes that Gary Kelly has expressed the role of ownership he and his executive team take for their actions which models a perspective for employees as additional company owners under their supervision.<sup>165</sup> When a large setback occurs that is out of company hands, operations teams must do what they can to mitigate damage fallout to other sectors of the business. Ralph Ellis identified that following the crashes of Ethiopian Flight 302 and Lion Air Flight 610 the Federal Aviation Administration grounded all 737-Max8 fleets by mandated requirement.<sup>166</sup> As Southwest flies multiple variants of the Boeing 737 aircraft the company reported the restriction disrupted, "5% of daily operations."<sup>167</sup> While this action of the grounding is not in Southwest's hands, their ability to present updated information to the public and handle cancelations of previously paid services within their network is their responsibility. This occurred simultaneously with the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association Union negotiations that were previously holding up flight turnaround times and this caused increased pressure.<sup>168</sup> Nathan Bomey illustrated that all of these confounding issues required the company to issue public statements about pending lower revenues per seat-mile flown, and a reduced overall

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<sup>165</sup> Darren Dahl, "Why Do Southwest Airlines Employees Always Seem So Happy?," *Forbes*, July 28, 2017, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/darrendahl/2017/07/28/why-do-southwest-airlines-employees-always-seem-so-happy/>.

<sup>166</sup> Ralph Ellis, "Boeing 737 Max Crashes: The Similarities in the Ethiopian Airlines and Lion Air Accidents - CNN," *CNN World*, April 4, 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/2019/03/18/world/boeing-737-crashes-similarities/index.html>.

<sup>167</sup> Southwest Airline HQ, "Southwest Airlines - 737 MAX 8 Aircraft Update," Travel Advisory, March 13, 2018, [https://www.southwest.com/html/advisories/swa\\_travel\\_advisory\\_20192141552591016643.html](https://www.southwest.com/html/advisories/swa_travel_advisory_20192141552591016643.html).

<sup>168</sup> Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association, "AMFA-Southwest Airlines," AMFA, April 9, 2019, [http://www.amfanational.org/?zone=/unionactive/view\\_page.cfm&page=Southwest20Airlines](http://www.amfanational.org/?zone=/unionactive/view_page.cfm&page=Southwest20Airlines).

quarterly outlook for investors.<sup>169</sup> As Southwest attempts to manage operations across turbulent times, their unique structure and delegation of responsibilities provides a platform to continue efficient operations.

## **D. THE IMPACT OF HIERARCHY AND DEMONSTRATIONS OF OCB**

### **1. Hierarchy**

The airline industry, much like a racing car pit crew model, requires that all employees play a role in supporting a centralized function (flight). While the customer experience typically entails only gate agents, flight attendants, pilots, and ground crew, these key groups model the organizational structure alongside the customer experience. A large organization with commensurate operational footprints and complex daily operations must have employees that function at the highest level of performance within their established structure. Kevin Freiberg highlights the usage of a lean process organization, internally viewed as a small business, where the inherent bureaucracy created by mass is overcome by an employee's flexibility to preserve and exude an "entrepreneurial spirit."<sup>170</sup> While the Freiberg analysis was conducted in a pre-9/11 operational era, the topics discussed remain relevant and are emulated publicly by company leadership. Freiberg notes that by establishing communication throughout service channels regarding company issues, leaders ensure performance metrics and results get down to the lowest levels and back up again, so employees are empowered and informed to make decisions for those items within their purview.<sup>171</sup>

To learn how Southwest's structure and culture endures, an ideal example of what not to do comes from a competitor airline's employees who struggled through a negative situation and their organizational limitations. American Airlines, while a larger airline, is not lauded publicly in the same manner as Southwest. Dan Reed acknowledged a case from

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<sup>169</sup> Nathan Bomey, "Southwest Airlines Takes Financial Hit from Boeing 737 Max 8 Grounding," *USA TODAY*, accessed April 29, 2019, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2019/03/27/southwest-airlines-boeing-737-max-8/3285829002/>.

<sup>170</sup> Kevin Freiberg, *Nuts!: Southwest Airlines' Crazy Recipe for Business and Personal Success*, 1st trade pbk. ed. (Austin, TX: Bard Press, 1996), 75–80.

<sup>171</sup> Freiberg, 82–83.

two decades ago where maintenance employees challenged the hierarchical structure and limitations of management when they went on strike and protested against the Allied Pilots Association.<sup>172</sup> He further described that in this case the union leader's referent and positional power, successful off of the first hearing got in front of the ruling judge, and then in a reversal had legal actions taken against them for not following the judge's original directions in the meantime.<sup>173</sup> Southwest's employees are heavily unionized and have taken actions against the company previously. The failures by American Airline's Employee Union Representatives is an example of what not do even when a case may be on your side. As Southwest's employees are provided an environment where they can ideally work through their organizational limitations, examples of higher service are prominently on display when the company culture promotes and celebrates OCB displays as a daily operational standard.

## 2. OCB

Through social media an act of kindness or unwanted employee action can quickly go viral in the airline industry, even before a flight has left the gate. Camila Domonoske analyzed the 2017 employee actions and forceful removal of a United Airlines passenger from his seat and the subsequent fallout that garnered national attention.<sup>174</sup> The U.S. Department of Transportation recognized that flyer rights were needed and proposed through federal recommendations "Fly Rights" (not requirements), to assist passengers and provided an opportunity for companies to look at their internal employee and customer service relationships.<sup>175</sup> Regardless of governmental influence, the commitment to conduct organizational actions in either a positive or negative manner is modeled by the

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<sup>172</sup> Dan Reed, "Risks Rise For Mechanics Union As Fight With Southwest Airlines Goes To Federal Court," *Forbes*, March 5, 2019, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/danielreed/2019/03/05/risks-are-large-for-mechanics-union-now-that-their-fight-with-southwest-airlines-is-in-federal-court/#50420630f1df>.

<sup>173</sup> Dan Reed.

<sup>174</sup> Camila Domonoske, "'It Was A Mistake Of Epic Proportions,' United CEO Testifies," NPR.org, May 2, 2017, <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/05/02/526530542/united-ceo-called-before-congress-to-explain-eviction-and-injury-of-passenger>.

<sup>175</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, "Fly Rights," Text, U.S. Department of Transportation, August 28, 2018, <https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/fly-rights>.

corporation's culture. Negative workplace environmental conditions may overrule declared organizational culture that is not adopted at all levels. Freiberg derives 13 principle elements of Southwest's Corporate Character that enable overall performance.<sup>176</sup> Drawn from an analysis of how Southwest conducts employee engagement, he notes when the traits of altruism and hard work are performed in Southwest's style they foster an employee that wants to work for others and the betterment of the organization.<sup>177</sup> The production of OCB in employees and the concept of like attraction specifically to Southwest was commented on by Denis Organ et al. who stated,

The ASA model holds that different personality types are differentially attracted to known or reputed characteristics of organizations, such as the type of work, culture, size, and reward systems. Some organizations also design systems (interviews, assessments, reference checks) to select for certain personality variables—for example, Southwest Airlines is well known for its preference for enthusiastic people who beam with jollity and other expressions of positive affect. Personalities that don't fit the desired profile might experience a discomfort that leads them to find alternative employment.<sup>178</sup>

Further analysis in the (E. HIRE) section below demonstrates that Southwest benefits from hiring people that mirror organizational character norms, which leads to an easier train and develop process. The added benefit of OCB-ready hires is reduced friction of cultural integration and an ability to optimize them for performance. Analysis by Roger Hallowell revealed that Southwest's methodology of employee need fulfillment to the point of satisfaction can be translated into actions that are valued by the company, leading to greater customer care and monetary gain.<sup>179</sup> Tenants like altruism and hard work will only hold value for employees if they produce validated positive results, and the organization

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<sup>176</sup> Freiberg, *Nuts!*, 147.

<sup>177</sup> Freiberg, 148–50.

<sup>178</sup> Dennis W. Organ, Philip M. Podsakoff, and Scott Bradley MacKenzie, *Organizational Citizenship Behavior : Its Nature, Antecedents, and Consequences*, 86–87.

<sup>179</sup> Roger Hallowell, "Southwest Airlines: A Case Study Linking Employee Needs Satisfaction and Organizational Capabilities to Competitive Advantage," *Human Resource Management* 35, no. 4 (1996): 513–34, [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-050X\(199624\)35:4<513::AID-HRM5>3.0.CO;2-Z](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-050X(199624)35:4<513::AID-HRM5>3.0.CO;2-Z).



must demonstrate that they value the individual employee throughout the course of their employment.

## **E. HIRE**

Southwest focuses on finding the right individuals to fit the organization's culture. Heather Rudolph, interviewed Southwest People Development (Human Resources) Director Shari Conway, who acknowledged the deep applicant pool and ability to be extremely selective stating,

In 2015, we received 371,202 résumés and hired nearly 6,000 new employees — less than 2 percent of all applicants. It is not unusual for us to interview more than 100 people to fill a single position. We intentionally spend an inordinate amount of time on the recruiting and hiring process. Since we believe that our employees are the key to our success, we hire tough at Southwest.<sup>180</sup>

In an effort to hire specific traits to fulfil positional roles, Southwest attempts to hire the right “fit” of the person when it comes to their attitude. By pursuing company norms in hiring practices regarding similar attitude and personality characteristics to their workforce, an attempt is made to receive returns mirroring the capability and quality of current employees. Freiberg addresses this viewpoint blended with workplace cultural insight stating,

The People Department is Southwest's equivalent of a human resources or personnel department. To Southwest, employees are more than just resources; they are real people, with real needs and real emotions, whose satisfaction is valued and respected. Libby Sartain, vice president of people, told us that fun counterbalances the stress of hard work and competition. Fun is about attitude, so Southwest hires for attitude and trains for skills.<sup>181</sup>

Sarah Grant, through consultation with Southwest's People Department, produced a corporate interview “Cheat Sheet” (Figure 5) to assist in interview execution, which also

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<sup>180</sup> Heather Wood Rudolph, “Interview Insider: How to Get a Job at Southwest Airlines,” *Cosmopolitan*, February 4, 2016, <https://www.cosmopolitan.com/career/a53162/interview-insider-southwest-airlines-career-jobs/>.

<sup>181</sup> Freiberg, *Nuts!*, 66.

provides insight into company hiring processes.<sup>182</sup> Bloomberg notes that the online version includes companion audio and perspective provided by a human resources representative.<sup>183</sup> The author was unable to find any customer/client responses specific to successful hiring utilizing the sheet provided, but the concepts presented mirror Southwest’s overarching characteristics.

Interview Cheat Sheet #18		See more in the series →
<p><b>The Job</b></p> <p><b>Southwest</b> Southwest Airlines</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Business analyst</p> <p><b>Hiring Manager</b> Shari Conaway director in People Department</p> <p><b>Salary:</b> \$60,000–\$90,000</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Support a department that has anywhere from 30 to 100 employees, studying its productivity and output. Make recommendations to the department head for how to improve performance.</p> <p><b>Qualifications:</b> Facility with Microsoft Office, positive attitude, master’s degree in business preferred.</p>	<p><b>The Method</b></p> <p><b>First Round: 40 Candidates</b> A recruiter reviews résumés, looking for relevant experience, particularly in the aviation industry. "If you've [had] 10 jobs in 10 years, and you're not a consultant, that's a red flag."</p> <p>↓</p> <p><b>Second Round: 10 Candidates</b> 45-minute phone interview in which the recruiter assesses the applicant's motivation level. It's encouraging if the applicant mentions, for instance, that Southwest is now an international carrier and flies only Boeing 737s. "When they know nothing, that's disheartening."</p> <p>↓</p> <p><b>Third Round: 5 Candidates</b> 90-minute interview at Southwest headquarters in Dallas with the same recruiter and at least one hiring leader. They will ask a series of anecdotal questions, such as how you've managed a career change, or ask you to describe a time when you were a team player.</p> <p>=</p> <p><b>The Score:</b> The recruiter and hiring leader make the ultimate decision together. More often than not, they will choose hires based on outstanding attitude over relevant job experience.</p>	<p><b>How to Ace It</b></p> <p>✔ <b>Do</b> ask questions, the more specific the better. "When the candidate interviews us, it's a sign they're serious about the position."</p> <p>✔ <b>Do</b> be positive and ambitious. "We can teach you about the aviation industry, but a good attitude is something we can't train."</p> <p>✔ <b>Do</b> communicate well. "The role is presentation-intense; we need someone who makes numbers come to life and inspires the department to strive."</p> <p>✘ <b>Don't</b> ignore gaps in your résumé. "Part of working in a team is staying with the team. Having a good, solid track record of employment is important."</p> <p>✘ <b>Don't</b> be intimidated. "Southwest's corporate environment is built on inclusiveness."</p> <p>✘ <b>Don't</b> worry if you're not a world traveler. "We happen to be in the aviation industry, but the only thing that really matters is that you can work with all types of people, at every level of management."</p>

Figure 5. Bloomberg Interview Cheat Sheet #18 Southwest<sup>184</sup>

<sup>182</sup> Sarah Grant, "Cheat Sheet: How to Become a Business Analyst at Southwest Airlines," January 7, 2016, <http://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2015-cheatsheets/southwest-airlines.html>.

<sup>183</sup> Bloomberg, "A Highly Specific Guide to Getting Every Type of Corporate Job," 2015, <http://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2015-cheatsheets/>.

<sup>184</sup> Adapted from Sarah Grant, "Cheat Sheet."

Southwest's People Department expresses total value for employees by focusing on the hire's interests and talent. Their extensive online community and hiring support forum clearly announces the company purpose, vision, and mission helping to personify both what they provide for future employees and the characteristics they inherently hold.<sup>185</sup> Freiberg summarized the Southwest specific attitude and an OCB connection stating, "By hiring the right attitude, the company is able to foster the so-called Southwest Sprit-an intangible quality in people that causes them to want to go that extra mile whenever they need to."<sup>186</sup> This hiring perspective builds the ground work of the company employee training process.

## **F. TRAIN**

In order to train employees how to optimize their specific task for airline operations Southwest chooses to focus on getting job performance to the expected outcome. This may include teaching employees to perform additional tasks for their role compared to other airlines, like how to fly or operate gates with reduced manpower, or how to deal with customer issues in a manner that reflects best on the whole. Southwest originally conducted designated training at Southwest's University for People, but Southwest Airlines University is now the main training platform for employees of both frontline jobs and managerial positions when it comes to their task, management, and leadership knowledge.<sup>187</sup> Southwest provides insight on this training platform and its ultimate goal stating,

Through training, continuing education, and mentorships we are able to find avenues to support the growth of our Employees. Equipping our Employees with the tools and resources for personal success empowers them to better serve our Customers, making Southwest stronger as a whole.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Southwest Airlines Co., "Careers at Southwest | Job Opportunities in Southwest," Southwest, 2018, <https://careers.southwestair.com/>.

<sup>186</sup> Freiberg, *Nuts!*, 69.

<sup>187</sup> Southwest Airlines Co., "Equipping Our Employees with Tools for Success | Southwest One Report," 2018, <http://southwestonereport.com/stories/equipping-our-employees-with-tools-for-success/>.

<sup>188</sup> Southwest Airlines Co.

While this may sound like business rhetoric and corporate lauding solely for self-gratification, a company initiative from 1996 has produced countless examples where employees translated the statement into practice. Freiberg notes a unique program was developed initially for pilots with the intention of building a greater learning mentality, appreciation, and an empathetic viewpoint for other worker's roles.<sup>189</sup> Freiberg then elaborated on this initiative called Cutting Edge and the resulting impact,

Empathy Stimulates Learning: It's amazing how much you can learn from simply putting yourself in another person's shoes. Southwest accelerates the learning process by encouraging people to understand other people's jobs. This stimulates cross-functional communication and reminds people that there are perspectives other than their own. Learning, sharing, and understanding are the result.<sup>190</sup>

Once established, this concept expanded across the company and can be seen in employee interactions today. Common examples at airports around the U.S. could include but are not limited to; seeing a pilot work with ground crew members on luggage movement, watching a gate agent assist with cleaning an aircraft and other areas outside of their immediate work environment, or seeing grounds crew personnel assist passengers entering or exiting a tarmac parked aircraft and escorting them to/from a terminal. While the lengths of these interactions may be just a few minutes each day, alongside other employees it helps build a sense of gratefulness for the skills and wisdom of others. It also helps both individuals, and the company perform to their maximum ability. A strong focus on training helps to provide clear developmental pathways for employees as they grow in their job knowledge.

## **G. DEVELOP: MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING**

The deliberate development of Southwest's employees ensures that they are creating the next generation of technicians, managers, and leaders to replace those ahead of them. It also instills a culture of career long learning that can be done at any time to increase capability and performance. Employees that progress onward to management and

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<sup>189</sup> Freiberg, *Nuts!*, 114.

<sup>190</sup> Freiberg, 114.

leadership positions can be selected for advance training from Southwest Airline University defined by the company as,

SWA U offers functional job training, and core Leadership courses like “Leadership Southwest Style” for our Frontline Leaders and “Next Level Leadership” for Managers. One particular program offered as a partnership between SWA U and our People Department is our Emerging Leader Development Program (ELDP). ELDP is an intense, fast-paced, job-rotation program that seeks to train and develop excellent Leaders for Southwest. Participants are placed in designated locations across the Southwest system for 18-months of on-the-job training in Leadership roles and provided Leadership training at our Headquarters in Dallas. In addition to Leadership training, participants also receive airport experience—both above the wing and below the wing, as well as Customer Support and Services (CS&S) experience—giving them exposure to three very different areas of our business. Upon successful completion of the program, participants are placed in a permanent Leadership role at Southwest.<sup>191</sup>

A complementary effort to the Southwest Airlines University is the component of increased civilian institution education. Southwest provides reimbursement for tuition expenses of select business degrees or certifications at the undergraduate and graduate levels.<sup>192</sup> While not a requirement for all operational, technical, or corporate positions, Southwest highlights when advanced formal education is required for specific positions. For example, the pilot credentials screening application states that having a college degree for application to become a pilot or instructor pilot is “preferred”<sup>193</sup> Matt Schudel noted that after founder Herb Kelleher’s death in January 2019 his obituary from the Washington Post stated, “Hiring the right people, Mr. Kelleher said, was a leader’s most crucial task. When other companies emphasized education and skills, Mr. Kelleher put a premium on temperament.”<sup>194</sup> J.D. Mullane’s subsequent commentary highlighted Kelleher’s

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<sup>191</sup> Southwest Airlines Co., “Equipping Our Employees with Tools for Success | Southwest One Report.”

<sup>192</sup> Southwest Airlines Co., “Benefits | Southwest,” 2019, <https://careers.southwestair.com/benefits>.

<sup>193</sup> Pilot Credentials, “PilotCredentials.Com,” SWA Pilot Credentials, 2019, <https://swa.pilotcredentials.com/index.php?a=qualifications>.

<sup>194</sup> Matt Schudel, “Herb Kelleher, Visionary Co-Founder and Chief Executive of Southwest Airlines, Dies at 87,” *Washington Post*, January 5, 2019, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/herb-kelleher-visionary-co-founder-and-chief-executive-of-southwest-airlines-dies-at-87/2019/01/04/7d3160e2-1031-11e9-84fc-d58c33d6c8c7\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/herb-kelleher-visionary-co-founder-and-chief-executive-of-southwest-airlines-dies-at-87/2019/01/04/7d3160e2-1031-11e9-84fc-d58c33d6c8c7_story.html).

approach to incorporating talent and individual attitude in the company culture regardless of a person's formal education.<sup>195</sup> For Southwest, education through the company university helps to capitalize on the abilities individuals bring to the company while additional formal education increases their capabilities and builds on professional development.

One of the key concepts that Freiberg highlights is the company's celebration of employee accomplishments.<sup>196</sup> From simple tasks to major life events the act of recognizing other's achievements and goals creates a valued workplace environment. For the individual employees this includes programs like the Southwest Airlines Gratitude Program (SWAG) or their Kick Tail Initiative which allows internal lauding of employee efforts and demonstrates the value of everyone's efforts.<sup>197</sup> Both acclaim employee customer service achievements and champion celebrations beyond the standard birthday card or staff Christmas party. By occurring at any time, within all levels of leadership, management, or staffing positions, this demonstration of internal values provides personal growth in leadership and management set by the example of others. This principle also applies to passengers' children as the company is known for First Time Flyer experiences like a child's certificate, cockpit visit, and pilot wings for children.<sup>198</sup> The act of celebrating customers and celebrating employees in tandem builds upon what Southwest wants to see in their supervisors and leaders, the acknowledgement of one another. Southwest knows that based on this strong developmental and corporate culture climate the employees who remain for long periods with the company will have invested in both themselves as well as others. An analysis of company biographies from the executive page shows all executives hold higher education degrees with the exception of a select handful who were solely educated via OJT and/or Southwest Airlines University, and held some of

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<sup>195</sup> J. D. Mullane, "Mullane: Employers Should Stop Discriminating against Hiring Non-College Job Seekers," *The Intelligencer*, January 8, 2019, <https://www.theintell.com/opinion/20190108/mullane-employers-should-stop-discriminating-against-hiring-non-college-job-seekers>.

<sup>196</sup> Freiberg, *Nuts!*, 178–89.

<sup>197</sup> Southwest Airlines Co., "Benefits | Southwest."

<sup>198</sup> Southwest Airlines Co., "A Magical First Flight," May 24, 2017, <https://www.southwestaircommunity.com/t5/Southwest-Stories/A-Magical-First-Flight/ba-p/56391>.

the longest tenure.<sup>199</sup> Furthermore, a breakdown of employee tenure averages shows Senior Management (3) 20.6yrs, Executive Vice Presidents (5) 23.8yrs, Senior Vice Presidents (9) 15.2yrs, Vice Presidents (24) 16.6yrs, and Managing Directors (24) 18.4yrs, for a Total Executive (55) Average of 18.92yrs.”<sup>200</sup> This validates that the company values longevity at their higher ranks as the majority of these employees had worked at lower internal positions previously. Employees, much like the skies they travel are not always free of turbulence. The company that is known for being kind must also release employees when required.

## **H. TRANSITION**

As an industry leader Southwest can claim specific actions around employees that most civilian companies cannot. While acknowledging the company’s 10th consecutive year of winning Glassdoors’ Best Place to Work Award, Talian Avakian noted, “To this day, the airline has never had a layoff or cut pay.”<sup>201</sup> That accomplishment across 52 years of operation reflects on how they view maintaining employee talent. Unfortunately, if Southwest has never had employee downsizing this means that the only other way to exit the overwhelmingly positive employee culture is to violate company standards. While Southwest provides a large series of public releases regarding corporate moves (promotions or lateral transfers) along with the individual retirements, little information from Southwest exists on company release processes.<sup>202</sup>

Alternatively, the Transportation Workers Union (Air Division) which advocates for Southwest’s flight attendants and ground crew does provide information as to ongoing

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<sup>199</sup> Southwest Airlines Co., “Senior Management Committee,” Southwest Airlines Newsroom, 2019, <https://www.swamedia.com/executives>.

<sup>200</sup> Southwest Airlines Co.

<sup>201</sup> Talian Avakian, “Here’s What It’s Like to Work for Southwest, One of Glassdoor’s Best Places to Work for 10 Years in a Row,” *Travel + Leisure*, February 26, 2019, <https://www.travelandleisure.com/airlines-airports/working-for-southwest-airlines-career>.

<sup>202</sup> Southwest Airlines Co., “Southwest Airlines: 2019 Press Releases,” 2019, <http://investors.southwest.com/news-and-events/news-releases/2019>.

firing matters.<sup>203</sup> In an open letter from the organization to CEO Gary Kelly, the union president John Samuelson stated, “Since January 15, 2015, Southwest has slapped their workers with more than 2,700 disciplinary actions and terminated 468 of them. In 2017, Southwest is writing up nearly three workers per day and firing one worker every other day.”<sup>204</sup> Several days after this letter was publicly released, airline industry commentator Gary Leaf conducted his own analysis of corporate numbers and determined the following,

The Transportation Workers Union, which represents flight attendants and ground workers at Southwest Airlines, is up in arms because the airline has fired 468 of their members in the last two and a half years. The TWU represents about 12,000 groundworkers and 15,000 flight attendants at the airline. So they’ve dismissed 1.7% of the union’s members since January 2015. That’s 7/10ths of 1% per year. Southwest doesn’t appear to be taking the approach of some firms that automatically let go the bottom 10% of their workforce each year. Instead, Southwest has dismissed only 17% of the employees who have had disciplinary actions in the past two and a half years. Put another way, most employees subject to disciplinary actions get to keep their jobs by more than a 5:1 margin.<sup>205</sup>

Daniella Silva<sup>206</sup> and Jamel Parker<sup>207</sup> underscored that, in a case of public firing that made national headlines, an employee was fired for an ethical violation, and later sued the company for racial discrimination. Silva acknowledged that this case is currently pending ruling, and attached Southwest’s statement to his report which reads,

“We welcome the opportunity to emphasize that Southwest is and always has been a company that puts its people first.” “We work relentlessly to foster an environment that is diverse and inclusive,” the airline added. “We do not tolerate or condone discrimination of any kind, and we cultivate a

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<sup>203</sup> Transportation Workers Union, “Air Division – TWU,” 2017, <https://www.twu.org/divisions/air-division/>.

<sup>204</sup> John Samuelson, “To: CEO Gary Kelly,” July 19, 2017, <https://www.twu.org/wheres-the-luv-twu-takes-on-southwests-bogus-disciplinary-practices/>.

<sup>205</sup> Gary Leff, “Is Southwest Airlines Destroying Its Culture By Firing Too Many People?,” *View from the Wing* (blog), July 22, 2017, <https://viewfromthewing.boardingarea.com/2017/07/22/southwest-airlines-destroying-culture-firing-many-people/>.

<sup>206</sup> Daniella Silva, “Former Southwest Employee’s Lawsuit Claims Coworkers Had ‘whites-Only’ Break Room at Houston Airport,” NBC News, September 20, 2018, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/former-southwest-employee-s-lawsuit-claims-coworkers-had-whites-only-n911611>.

<sup>207</sup> Jamel Parker, “Jamel Parker v Southwest Airlines” (The United States District Court For The Southern District Of Texas Houston Division, September 19, 2018), <http://www.documentcloud.org/documents/4912993-Jamel-Parker-v-Southwest-Airlines.html>.



workplace that mirrors the Customers we serve.” “Southwest Airlines is an Equal Opportunity Employer and prides itself on an open and inclusive work environment that consistently ranks among the world’s best places to work.<sup>208</sup>

An analysis of both of these cases in contrast with the public company information reveals that circumstances like these are isolated within such a large workforce across numerous job roles. Given that they are outliers in regard to overall numbers of employees by the company, it can be assumed that the majority of firings conducted by the company are for valid reasons that do not meet company guidelines. If followed in a communication model similar to Kelleher’s statements on dealing with people directly they would be as Freiberg notes “face-to face whenever possible and always on a first-name basis.”<sup>209</sup> Based on the company’s support and Kelleher’s foundation of valued communication, the reasons for an employee’s release can never be under-communicated.

## **I. CASE SUMMARY**

Southwest Airlines holds a unique place in the airline industry both as a budget airline and as a sought-after employer. Its intense focus on culture and values carries throughout employees from the day they are hired until they leave the company. The simultaneous effort to protect and guard corporate culture gets the right individuals in the door and interacting directly with customers. Southwest can methodically find the optimal employees and prepare them to face difficulties across customer service. Melissa Repko highlights something that cannot be re-created easily, individuals with character, specifically those that echo that of the Flight 1380 crew, their humility, and the compassion demonstrating that they (employees) are the LUV Airline.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Daniella Silva, “Former Southwest Employee’s Lawsuit Claims Coworkers Had ‘whites-Only’ Break Room at Houston Airport.”

<sup>209</sup> Freiberg, *Nuts!*, 78.

<sup>210</sup> Melissa Repko, “After Landing Troubled Southwest Plane, Pilot Tammie Jo Shults Hugged Passengers, Texted ‘God Is Good,’” *Dallas News*, April 18, 2018, <https://www.dallasnews.com/business/business/2018/04/18/texas-pilot-tammie-jo-shults-landed-southwest-plane-lauded-calm-courage>.

## VI. LAMPO GROUP (RAMSEY SOLUTIONS) - “GIVING HOPE”

“Live from the headquarters of Ramsey Solutions, broadcasting from the Dollar Car Rental Studios. It’s the Dave Ramsey Show, where debt is dumb, cash is king, and the paid off home mortgage has taken the place of the BMW as the status symbol of choice”

— *Dave Ramsey Radio Show Intro*

### A. RAMSEY SOLUTIONS OVERVIEW

This section provides an in-depth analysis of the Lampo Group and affiliated Ramsey Solutions business operations and employee development. Formed in 1992, the Lampo Group, LLC (publicly referred to and henceforth as Ramsey Solutions) was founded by Dave Ramsey.<sup>211</sup> Currently the organization consists of over 800 employees (referred to as team members)<sup>212</sup> and supports five additional Ramsey Personalities, which as sub-brands, cover distinct interest sectors and service lines.<sup>213</sup> As an organization they are in the business of content creation, books, and additional materials that are all based around financial wellness, personal growth, and professional development. The consumer of their information can do so in either in person at localized class sessions, paid conference speaking events, or by free digital download and streaming of materials.<sup>214</sup> Ramsey is often mentioned by media outlets in the same circles as Suze Orman, Tony Robbins, or alongside online financial commentary sources like "The Motley Fool" or "MarketWatch," but Ramsey focuses efforts on his own particular brand methodology and the individual listeners’ financial success.

Unlike Southwest and Chick-fil-A highlighted in the previous case studies Ramsey’s organization is headquartered and conducts operations from a single location,

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<sup>211</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “About Dave Ramsey,” Media Relations: Who is Dave Ramsey?, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/pr/about-dave-ramsey>.

<sup>212</sup> Lampo Group, LLC.

<sup>213</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “Speakers Group,” accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/speakers>.

<sup>214</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “About Dave Ramsey.”

Nashville (Brentwood), Tennessee.<sup>215</sup> The brand is able to make a global impact as the products and services are accessible both as goods (materials, books, coursework) and as services (radio, social media (advice/entertainment)). Consumers are also able to receive additional assistance from Endorsed Local Providers (ELPs) across common financial consumer industries (insurance, taxes, and real estate), who do not work directly for Ramsey Solutions, but are vetted by the company and provide services in accordance with company conduct.<sup>216</sup> While not a direct provider of financial services the company runs a program called SmartVestor which pairs customers with investment professionals around the U.S. that, “Are subject to initial vetting by Ramsey Solutions, and they affirm a code of conduct.”<sup>217</sup> To the consumer the consumption of basic material or services can be completely free through the daily radio show, website [www.daveramsey.com](http://www.daveramsey.com), or their preferred podcast provider without any interaction or monetary exchange. Advanced services or goods can be purchased to further explore and consume the brand experience, but they are not required as the customer’s adherence to the material principles and their individual success with the methodology is the primary outcome.

In his 2011 book titled *Entreleadership* Ramsey walks the reader through the evolution of his company’s development and the individual phases of the employee life cycle.<sup>218</sup> While the book explains the company business model(s) and reasons for specific actions taken in given business decisions, it keeps reasoning very general so that the material may be applied by the reader to their own organization, regardless of industry or employee position. The specifics of Ramsey’s employee development methodology and positive business outcomes seem simple at face value but upon further evaluation require extensive time and energy investment from leaders and managers alike. For Ramsey Solutions, this ensures the fostered work environment succeeds in the areas of talent

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<sup>215</sup> Lampo Group, LLC.

<sup>216</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “Dave Ramsey Endorsed Local Providers,” Connect With Local Pro’s You Can Trust, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/elp>.

<sup>217</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “SmartVestor Investing Professionals,” DaveRamsey.com, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/smartvestor>.

<sup>218</sup> Dave Ramsey, *Entreleadership*, First (New York, NY: Howard Books, A Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc., 2011).

management, product quality, and bottom line return. Alison Nash’s declaration spotlights the company is a solid employment option, as the *Nashville Business Journal* has recognized Ramsey Solutions as one of the “Best Places to Work in Nashville” for 11 consecutive years.<sup>219</sup>

## **1. Public Performance and Positive Perception**

In measures of public listenership and literary sales Ramsey’s national radio program, subsequent podcast, and books rank high on national rankings.<sup>220</sup> His written opinion editorial columns also regularly appear in national and local newspapers. As Ramsey’s media presence and dissemination is very wide, one does not have to look far for positive mentions of his efforts. Lisa Pryor identifies that examples of individuals following his teachings can be found on common large media or social media outlets and often authors will agree with Ramsey’s message up to a point where counter-cultural opinions run counter to their media outlets primary tone, position, or influences.<sup>221</sup> Ramsey lauds his employees and listeners alike often on his radio show using common terms like “rock stars,” “can do,” or “dedicated” individuals championing them for their internal culture of leadership and ensuring public recognition.<sup>222</sup> This amount of praise has not come without negative press and opinion for his viewpoints or financial methodology.

## **2. Negative Observations and Company Actions**

Separate from the positive image portrayed by the organization, Ramsey Solutions like any other company has received negative press coverage. Kristen Bahler identifies that often this is toward the teaching methods and curriculum demonstrated by Ramsey and his team, with some intermixed areas of compliment to successful customer outcomes, but

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<sup>219</sup> Alison Nash, “Here Are the NBJ’s 2019 Best Places to Work,” *Nashville Business Journal*, March 21, 2019, <https://www.bizjournals.com/nashville/news/2019/03/21/meet-nbjs-2019-best-places-to-work.html>.

<sup>220</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “About Dave Ramsey.”

<sup>221</sup> Lisa Pryor, “Opinion | I Highly Recommend Joining This Cult,” *The New York Times*, September 21, 2018, sec. Opinion, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/18/opinion/cut-spending-budget-cult-of-thrift.html>.

<sup>222</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “Inspire Passion: Lead, Don’t Manage,” [daveramsey.com](http://daveramsey.com), accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/inspire-passion-lead-dont-manage>.

rarely are negative comments directed toward employees or previous employee experiences.<sup>223</sup> Felix Salmon and Susie Poppick demonstrate that often the writer will denounce the product for religious undertones, opinions counter to debt usage and financial advice, or just generalize complaints against the business model.<sup>224</sup>

Mathew Paul Turner<sup>225</sup> and B. Lichtenwalner<sup>226</sup> provide examples of cases where articles or online commentary are against specific employee actions or conduct, with little follow up or continued press coverage generated once the articles are published, as no direct interviews are contained and inferences are developed from social media outlets and assumptions. This does not mean that internal employee issues do not occur and that Ramsey Solutions is a panacea of employment bliss, but specific allegations beyond those that taint the company brand beyond typical business employee matters are not readily available. Despite any negative press coverage the perception can be gleaned that employees thrive within the organizational structure.

## **B. THE IMPACT OF HIERARCHY AND DEMONSTRATIONS OF OCB**

### **1. Hierarchy**

Ramsey Solutions prides itself on the large number of team members, continued growth, and the talent that is developed within the organization. They openly provide examples of individuals that have joined the organization at the ground floor and have advanced to positions at the executive vice president level over 10, 15, and 20 years of

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<sup>223</sup> Kristen Bahler, “Broke Millennials Are Flocking to Financial Guru Dave Ramsey. Is His Advice Any Good?,” *Money*, April 16, 2019, <http://money.com/money/longform/dave-ramsey-money-debt-free/>.

<sup>224</sup> Felix Salmon and Susie Poppick, “Save like Dave Ramsey... Just Don’t Invest Like Him | Money,” *Investing*, September 26, 2013, <http://money.com/money/2794698/save-like-dave-ramsey-just-dont-invest-like-him/>.

<sup>225</sup> Matthew Paul Turner, “Spies, Cash, and Fear: Inside Christian Money Guru Dave Ramsey’s Social Media Witch Hunt,” *The Daily Beast*, May 29, 2014, <https://www.thedailybeast.com/spies-cash-and-fear-inside-christian-money-guru-dave-ramseys-social-media-witch-hunt?ref=scroll>.

<sup>226</sup> B. Lichtenwalner, “Jon Acuff Resignation from Dave Ramsey Team Raises Questions,” Blog, *Modern Servant Leader* (blog), September 21, 2013, <https://www.modernservantleader.com/featured/jon-acuff-resignation-from-dave-ramsey-team-raises-questions/>.

continued service.<sup>227</sup> While individuals have direct bosses, the ability exists to move to other teams in the organization if the individual demonstrates the appropriate skills and fit that the company requires. Ken Coleman and Dave Ramsey elaborate on management's care and proper support of teams, which is reinforced by strong opinions supportive of delegation, and empowered through conferring both greater responsibility and authority.<sup>228</sup> Ramsey clearly highlights the importance of delegation in the corporate structure to those that you have personally trained and clearly trust by stating, "So don't delegate the right for someone to be your role model unless they demonstrate over time the integrity, the wholeness of their lives."<sup>229</sup> The standard hierarchical structure, like that of most businesses is not limited by people, as team members are the focus of the structure. These defined opinions of employee operations within the company's structure also readily translate into the examples of OCB as demonstrated by both Ramsey and his employees.

## 2. OCB

Ramsey reinforces that the company culture prides itself on upholding public standards, and that a rule exists on providing false information about circumstances or events that people are unknowledgeable about, or have no business discussing, as information that is not in their purview. Ramsey distinctly calls his company a "gossip-free zone" and aims to eradicate it from his organization.<sup>230</sup> He elaborates on employees valuing the organization and the internal policies which are demonstrated through self-reinforcement.<sup>231</sup> He continues by explaining how employees are making an active choice to police the gossip amongst the workplace and support a culture where gossiping is not tolerated.<sup>232</sup> This demonstrates both ownership of the organization's values and of the

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<sup>227</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, "Ramsey Solutions: The Path to Leadership," daveramsey.com, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/ramsey-solutions-the-path-to-leadership>.

<sup>228</sup> Ken Coleman and Dave Ramsey, #305: *Dave Ramsey—You're Doing Delegation Wrong*, *Entreleadership Podcast*, n.d., <https://www.entreleadership.com/blog/podcasts/dave-ramsey-delegation>.

<sup>229</sup> Dave Ramsey, *Entreleadership*, 298.

<sup>230</sup> Dave Ramsey, 234.

<sup>231</sup> Dave Ramsey, 233–35.

<sup>232</sup> Dave Ramsey, 233–35.

culture that the business aims to foster. The employees that are choosing to reciprocate this action clearly demonstrate commitment to the organization and hopefully aim to model propagation by example. Finding individuals that will assimilate into company values is critical, and it all begins with evaluation through the company's in-depth hiring process.

### C. HIRE

While overt examples of OCB may exist in any organization, they are formulated from the outset in hiring practices. Ramsey specifically addresses the hiring of higher performance individuals and the necessity to create teams in the world of small business declaring, "Proper hiring creates a good team, and a good team lowers turnover. Turnover is very expensive, particularly in a small business."<sup>233</sup> He elaborates on the corporate knowledge that a quality team member brings and the inability and intellectual cost to replace their knowledge of your business, which cannot be done in an expedited manner. Ramsey's hiring methodology consists of outstanding patience and the attitude of a marathon training approach for interview execution. He notes, "We use at least twelve components in our hiring process. It takes an average of six to fifteen interviews and an average of ninety days from initial contact to hire."<sup>234</sup> The aforementioned 12 components that Ramsey highlights cover stereotypical human resource measures, but also include functions like the *DiSC Personality Test*, and a spousal interview, both of which are not commonly publicized interview options in the business world.<sup>235</sup> The intent of conducting these unique methods is to identify potential problems with the hire before they manifest only after being hired and assimilated into the organization.

Ramsey clarifies that the practice of hiring individuals from within the organization (internal hires) is only offset by referrals from someone who has connections to individuals within the organization.<sup>236</sup> Ramsey's emphasis on hiring high performing employees can

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<sup>233</sup> Dave Ramsey, 133.

<sup>234</sup> Dave Ramsey, 135.

<sup>235</sup> Dave Ramsey, 135–48.

<sup>236</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, "Hiring at Dave Ramsey's Company: 6 Ways to Stand Out," [daveramsey.com](https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/hiring-at-dave-ramseys-stand-out), accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/hiring-at-dave-ramseys-stand-out>.

is best summarized by his horse racing analogy of thoroughbreds. Ramsey notes that top performing employees draw energy off one another stating,

Once a year on the first Saturday in May, something extraordinary happens in the town of Louisville, Kentucky. Approximately 20 of the world's top horses line up to participate in what has been called "the greatest two minutes in sports": the Kentucky Derby. These 3-year olds that run for the roses are the finest and fastest. In fact, more than 400 horses are nominated by their owners to enter the Derby each year, but fewer than two dozen get in. These horses are at the top of their game, and yet when they get around other thoroughbreds, nearly all get even better. Although most of us will never have the chance to pit ourselves against the top people in the world, we can easily be winners too. The secret is to surround yourself with your own group of thoroughbreds. When you hang out with people who can help you grow, you'll naturally become a better human being and you'll definitely get smarter when it comes to your career.<sup>237</sup>

This quote is self-evident and at the same time can be very self-correcting only if a person is willing to evaluate their place and performance in the organization. The intent behind Ramsey Solutions hiring period length and methodology demonstrates that they want to get things right the first time. Ramsey quotes his human resources director with a sense of confidence in their hiring process by stating, "We have a 95 percent turnover before we hire them. That means if you make it to the second interview you still only have a one-in-twenty chance of getting hired"<sup>238</sup> Once a new hire is brought on board they are carefully trained to take on their role within the organization and set up for success with a team member assisting them in the onboarding and training journey.

#### **D. TRAIN**

Ramsey notes that after they have been hired, employees are placed on a standard 90-day probationary status.<sup>239</sup> It is not until after this period is accomplished that the individual receives greater in-depth training and increased assumption of duties. While

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<sup>237</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, "How to Become a Thoroughbred: 3 Easy Steps to Success," [daveramsey.com](https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/becoming-a-thoroughbred-3-easy-steps-to-success), accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/becoming-a-thoroughbred-3-easy-steps-to-success>.

<sup>238</sup> Dave Ramsey, *Entreleadership*, 135.

<sup>239</sup> Dave Ramsey, 147.



Ramsey does not discuss training for specific company positions, he does identify the traits and practices that require development once within the company, and those that should be portrayed by leaders to their employees. Task training is delegated to the teams of those individuals and high levels of accountability are inferred for proper completion of work.

By stressing the value of people within the organization Ramsey trains employees for greater roles and responsibilities by having supervisors train and lead through example. He specifically describes a vignette where an employee tragically lost family members in a car accident.<sup>240</sup> In the vignette he mentions how the company chartered an aircraft to expedite return of this geographically separated employee from a business event, provided a team of people to surround him, and ensured continuous care and support during and beyond the ordeal.<sup>241</sup> He further explains that from a management training perspective numerous examples or displays of the “Golden Rule” weave throughout employee daily operations with illustrations of unity and displays of personal integrity in how business decisions should be made.<sup>242</sup> Ramsey’s focus on communication can be described as a foundation of operations, stressing that more communication and openness both internally and externally to teams enables proper task feedback, clear reporting on performance measures, and continuous evaluation of stated, “Key Results Areas.”<sup>243</sup>

A listener called in to the show asking about needing a college degree for employment, Ramsey then responded to the caller referencing the need for trainability and work experience over the value of being a recent graduate.<sup>244</sup> While a degree may benefit the employee in business skills, Ramsey emphasizes that relevant marketplace skills are needed, while also being receptive to learning environments.<sup>245</sup> For a degree to be capitalized on the knowledge gained must provide a return on investment through greater

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<sup>240</sup> Dave Ramsey, 228.

<sup>241</sup> Dave Ramsey, 228.

<sup>242</sup> Dave Ramsey, 227–31.

<sup>243</sup> Dave Ramsey, 215–24.

<sup>244</sup> Dave Ramsey, “No Degree Means No Job? - Ask Dave,” Ask Dave, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/askdave/career/no-degree-means-no-job>.

<sup>245</sup> Dave Ramsey.

capability and monetary reward. The aspect of training does not seem overly regimented at Ramsey solutions to limit creativity, rather a sense of crawl, walk, run exists to advance to new tasks. Often this includes learning by example from fellow employees in your department or business area. Ramsey and his team have referenced the common colloquialism of, “more is caught, then taught” signifying the need to watch, learn, and then act versus solely being told what to do.<sup>246</sup> While this saying is generally referenced in regard to adolescent development it can be applied to the growth of employees and their adaptation or absorption of company norms. As the training of an employee takes a considerable amount of both energy and effort their continued development helps to increase their overall value and return on investment for the organization.

#### **E. DEVELOP: MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING**

Once an employee has been fully trained up in their specific role the development period begins. On his radio show, callers have asked for unique ways that Ramsey develops his employees. His responses have included variations of utilizing internal company events which allow employees to see the impact of their office’s efforts on customer outcomes, seeing other employees succeed and be lauded in their job roles, and celebrating moments of team member and company success.<sup>247</sup> In these cases, the employee is able to assist work from other departments and gain experience in the form of cross-training that develops their appreciation for other company elements. Ramsey values the role of increased employee education to ensure the individual and their team are qualified to perform their job and succeed, understanding that if they (Ramsey Solutions) choose not to educate their employee, another company could easily poach that employee to fill their own needs.<sup>248</sup> He places emphasis on not handing employees too much (work) or advanced tasks before they are ready to tackle specific roles as this ensures they can safely maximize

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<sup>246</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “Your Kids and Money: More Is Caught Than Taught,” [daveramsey.com](https://www.daveramsey.com), accessed April 25, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/more-is-caught-than-taught>.

<sup>247</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “4 Ways to Unify Your Team | DaveRamsey.Com,” accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/4-ways-to-unify-your-team>.

<sup>248</sup> Dave Ramsey, *Entreleadership*, 288.

their potential in the current role.<sup>249</sup> Ramsey strives for leaders mentoring other leaders as the optimum style of individual development, as interactions and growth will occur over both the employee's life, the company life cycle, and their own family circumstances.<sup>250</sup> No matter the amount of training and development received, the company culture cannot help an individual overcome personal limitations to adapt and perform at levels that Ramsey requires. It is in these cases that they are asked to leave in order to protect the company culture.

## F. TRANSITION

Ramsey views the process of firing someone is a necessity for both their own personal growth and the protection of the organization. He calls this process “subtracting” team members, and summarizes three key areas of failure that lead to the requirement for termination; leadership(s) failure, employee problems (personal), and lastly employee incompetence.<sup>251</sup> His process of firing individuals is very direct in cases of legal, moral, ethical, or character lapses unbecoming of the company culture, however the firing action is always done in a fair, kind, and direct manner by demonstrating respect in a manner reflecting of the golden rule.<sup>252</sup> This ensures a clean break from the employee and provides clear reasoning to bring back to the representative teams as an example of actions that are not to be tolerated. The reasoning for the firing is always clearly expressed. A common saying that Ramsey uses in countless situations to describe the reason for the succinct delivery of bad news is, “To be unclear, is to be unkind.”<sup>253</sup> Ramsey does not specifically highlight examples of re-allocation of employee talent to other business sectors unless a solid track record of employee performance exists and communication between leadership teams confirms the employee can be better used in that venture.<sup>254</sup> The company conveys

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<sup>249</sup> Dave Ramsey, 299.

<sup>250</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, “Ramsey Solutions.”

<sup>251</sup> Dave Ramsey, *Entreleadership*, 148–51.

<sup>252</sup> Dave Ramsey, 152–53.

<sup>253</sup> Dave Ramsey, “To Be Unclear Is to Be Unkind - Ask Dave,” accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/askdave/relationships/to-be-unclear-is-to-be-unkind>.

<sup>254</sup> Dave Ramsey, *Entreleadership*, 153.

confidence through their rigorous talent selection process affirming that individuals are placed in the right positions and demonstrates trust in human resource practices, however, in limited circumstances conditions may allow the hire to be used elsewhere. Ramsey identifies cases where an employee is leaving for greater success or further business opportunities and notes that this is a time to celebrate their accomplishments.<sup>255</sup> He also supports team members departing for something greater if Ramsey Solutions is unable to provide compensation or roles matching individual capabilities. Similar to valuing a customer's success with company goods and services, the same tone is reflected toward employee outcomes when departing the organization. The company's leadership and ongoing messaging through *Entreleadership* portrays that endings to employment may at times be necessary and unfortunately are common occurrences in business.

#### **G. CASE SUMMARY**

Ramsey Solutions is a unique case of a small business that has a large public footprint. They focus heavily on the satisfaction of their customer base and ensure that they have the right employees in corresponding positions, at the right time, and with the maximum chance for success. Their employee training and development regimen may not be able to be duplicated in large organizations due to the in-depth analysis and championing of employee capabilities in a small corporate culture, but the principles could be applied to departments in a larger company. The aspects of individualized attention, dedicating time to employees, and demonstrating a commitment to wellbeing, much like the military, plays a key role in employee success. Despite infrequent negative media attention, company practices deliver promising outcomes for both customers and employees alike. Ramsey Solutions demonstrates that the value of the right hire and their organizational placement solves 99% of problems even before they begin working.

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<sup>255</sup> Lampo Group, LLC, "How to Quit a Job Professionally," [daveramsey.com](https://www.daveramsey.com), accessed April 25, 2019, <https://www.daveramsey.com/blog/how-to-quit-job-professionally>.

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## VII. SNCO DEVELOPMENT: INSIGHTS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

SNCOs hold a unique role in both capability and profession when contrasted to the civilian workforce. J. Carl Ficarrotta provides further insight as the depth and breadth of responsibility may exceed the duties, responsibilities, or requirements of commensurate civilian positions and could be in addition to the imposed pressure of public perception and an established more (higher) stringent moral standard.<sup>256</sup> The DoD currently supports innovation partnerships between the military and the private sector across the areas of military processes, technology, and personnel.<sup>257</sup> This cultural willingness for all ranks, fields, and levels of education to discuss potential improvements to DoD processes is the optimum time to introduce modernized personnel reforms for enlisted that are innovative in nature. Actions that will drastically improve upon current dated processes for enhanced capabilities can be advanced with the use of modernized business practices and technological advances.

The fashioning of the aforementioned case analysis through a standardized employee development model (Figure 6) was used to provide common occupational milestones. As the contrast between military and civilian organizations is vast this model was created to streamline similarities of individual employee development processes. The case studies systematically apply the application of the model and demonstrate that various methodologies of development can emulate one another regardless of industry, good, or service. This analysis drew upon the tenets of organizational citizenship behavior and highlighted the impacts of hierarchy across employee development. The primary outcomes of this analysis are suggestions for service implementation. Leaders of military formations, both officers and enlisted can reflect on these findings and apply them to their individual organizations as they see fit.

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<sup>256</sup> J. Carl Ficarrotta, "Are Military Professionals Bound by a 'Higher' Moral Standard?," *Archive, Air & Space Power Journal - Chronicles Online Journal*, 1997, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/cadre/aspj/airchronicles/cc/standard.html>.

<sup>257</sup> Department of Defense, "Defense Innovation Board: Our Story," DIB About, April 2016, <https://innovation.defense.gov/About1/>.

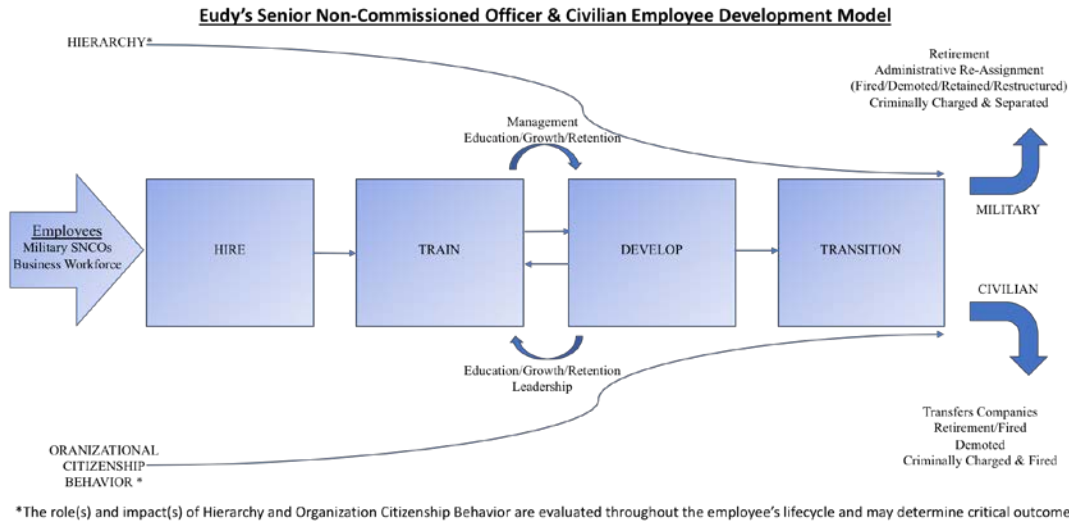


Figure 6. Alex J. Eudy's Employee Development Model<sup>258</sup>

The following recommendations to improve SNCO outcomes are proposed through the viewpoints of hire, train, develop and transition. Similar to civilian business, the implementation of improvement recommendations may come at a fiscal cost and this is not discounted. The intent of the areas of emulation or adoption is to demonstrate that increased dedication of time and effort combined with proper usage of current SNCO career resources may lead to more successful outcomes in duty and organizational performance.

## A. AREAS FOR EMULATION OR ADOPTION

### 1. Optimizing the SNCO Employment Process (Hire)

Military personnel systems retain large amounts of human resources data. In a standard personnel record this may include but is not limited to; career overview files, medals & decorations, physical training scores, performance evaluations, and formal biography photos in dress uniform. When selecting a SNCO for assignment these documents provide a concise view of an individual record and career, but cannot provide an all-inclusive perspective that interviews and on-the-job interaction may generate. As DoD PCS and PCA restrictions limit the movement of all members in given time periods

<sup>258</sup> This model is currently in usage by the Author, Alex J. Eudy for thesis methodology. For the purposes of brevity this paper uses the term SNCO to reference all services' (E7-E-9) members

by both specific location and rank/position, military commanders must ensure they hire the right individual for the job, every time. Doing so reduces second and third order effect occurrences like costly PCS/PCA moves, reductions in task performance, and failures in leadership both morally and ethically. Thomas Spoehr notes that civilian pools of eligible enlisted recruits will continue to decrease, thus the role of SNCOs will become even more critical to mission accomplishment as they will continue to execute combat tasks with less junior manpower while training and mentoring this smaller group of new recruits.<sup>259</sup>

The U.S. military should expand and optimize the hiring process for all SNCO billets. This would include directing interviews down to the lowest level of the SNCO ranks (E-7). This ensures that billets are not filled solely by automated records determination, but with immediate hiring authority and future supervision oversight. Mark Faram and Andrew Tilghman<sup>260</sup> along with The U.S. Navy<sup>261</sup> note that steps taken by the Navy to digitize this process and other personnel reforms through various mobile applications are promising in the area of talent management, but outcomes remain to be seen as this process is in its infancy. Ideally, the direct hiring authority (gaining commander and unit SEL), and their subordinate supervisor(s) (commissioned officer and ranking SNCO) of the inbound SNCO would work in tandem to evaluate the candidate's record and performance.

Direct ownership of the hiring process ensures the best individual for both the job and unit specific mission. An MOS branch or functional manager, after consultation with unit leaders in subordinate units could place progression tiers on the assignments throughout a given command. This would help align candidates records with potential open positions and career growth. By increasing the openness of the hiring process and reducing bottlenecks to assignments from gate keeper levels, SNCOs will know what positions they are qualified for. Ideally, the inclusion of gatekeepers and gaining commanders would

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<sup>259</sup> Thomas Spoehr, "The Looming National Security Crisis: Young Americans Unable to Serve in the Military," *The Heritage Foundation*, February 13, 2018, /defense/report/the-looming-national-security-crisis-young-americans-unable-serve-the-military.

<sup>260</sup> Mark D. Faram and Andrew Tilghman, "Pick Your next Duty Assignment with a Swipe on Your Phone," News Media, *Navy Times*, April 3, 2017, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2017/04/03/pick-your-next-duty-assignment-with-a-swipe-on-your-phone/>.

<sup>261</sup> U.S. Navy, "U.S. Navy Mobile Apps" (U.S. Navy, ND), [https://www.public.navy.mil/spawar/PEOEIS/Documents/SWP/FS\\_Mobile%20Apps.pdf](https://www.public.navy.mil/spawar/PEOEIS/Documents/SWP/FS_Mobile%20Apps.pdf).



provide top candidates for a particular billet based on requirements and projected unit needs. The creation of the consultation method also instills a culture of interviewing, professionalism, and connection for greater roles much like that of civilian organizations. An active interview process enables a continued incentive to develop oneself in line with organizational values. It can be assumed that SNCO applicants will exhibit or demonstrate increasing levels of OCB practices based on their emulation of service component core values. This would further strengthen areas that directly benefit organizational accomplishment. The hiring of the right individual for the job serves as an initial baseline, but their continued training to an increased level of performance enhances unit outcomes.

## **2. Training to Positive SNCO Outcomes Over Task Completion (Train)**

MOS training in both initial and upgrade (career long) throughout the military profession provides a standardized SNCO (employee product) for task completion. As assignments vary for the member, specific tasks that are required at one location or duty position may not be necessary for others based on features like equipment operated, unique jobs performed, or distinctive organizational constructs. It is not uncommon for junior members in training to work on dated equipment that is not fully operational or no longer translates to the technology used in the field. A common saying heard by junior members in initial training from training instructors may sound similar to, “We don’t use this (equipment) in the field, but regulations require we train on it, and you will use the newest capability at your unit.” While the principles of proper task completion are critical, in most cases the direct application of knowledge gained in initial training may require extensive OJT.

The DoD can optimize training by incorporating more operationally relevant training practices in the phases of technical and tactical training. This can be done by using advanced technology, personnel management reform, or by assessing the timeliness of

training performed. Dayton Ward,<sup>262</sup> Dan Hawkins,<sup>263</sup> Ashley Phillips,<sup>264</sup> and U.S. Fleet Forces Command<sup>265</sup> are currently applauding success with major operational stakeholders through initiatives like the modernization of Army Basic Combat Training, Air Force Pilot Training Next, Marine Corps Force Fitness Instructors, and the implementation of the Navy's Ready Relevant Learning Initiative. In these cases, efforts greatly reduce deliverable timelines or increase the quality of training and readiness outcomes for current and future force requirements. To ensure this process continues, commanders and SNCOs from operational units should have responsive feedback mechanisms to training institutions that produce their baseline qualified enlisted forces. The adoption of new training requirements should be processed by rapid tiger team initiatives, aligned to their respective training commands, and be responsive to fleet/force needs. This would help reduce or eliminate bureaucratic timelines in the production and capability of newly delivered operational forces.

The continued training of enlisted forces ensures that they are ready to meet the next stage of real-world combatant commander requirements. Training in technical and tactical tasks is the baseline for any MOS and enables qualified individuals to reliably, accurately, and safely perform duties for required missions. As members advance beyond the tactical portion of career development the need for leadership and management business skills only increases. Specific development of business acumen and human resources functions will prepare SNCOs for billets requiring increased responsibility, leadership, and management skillsets.

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<sup>262</sup> Dayton Ward, "Back to Basics: Big Changes to Recruit Training," *Army University Press: NCO Journal*, May 16, 2018, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/NCO-Journal/Archives/2018/May/Back-to-Basics/>.

<sup>263</sup> Dan Hawkins, "PTN Innovations Move to Undergraduate Pilot Training," *Public Affairs, Air Force Connect*, March 14, 2019, <https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1784958/ptn-innovations-move-to-undergraduate-pilot-training/>.

<sup>264</sup> Ashley Phillips, "Semper Fit, FFI Increase Force Readiness," *Public Affairs, The Official website of the United States Marine Corps*, July 13, 2018, <https://www.marines.mil/News/News-Display/Article/1573911/semper-fit-ffi-increase-force-readiness/>.

<sup>265</sup> United States Fleet Forces Command, "The Learning Continuum, Ready, Relevant, Learning" (United States Navy), accessed April 9, 2019, <https://www.public.navy.mil/usff/rrl/Pages/learning-continuum.aspx>.

### **3. Making the Most of SNCOs (Develop)**

The optimization of both management and leadership abilities assists in developing SNCOs who are multifaceted, knowledgeable, and able to assume greater obligations. The current PME structure ensures that standardized competences exist across the joint force SNCO corps in the ability to lead and manage subordinates. The mastering of business acumen, quantitative and qualitative decision making, and leadership abilities can be transferred across all MOSs regardless of service branch. Common levels of education ensure an inherent level of knowledge for the execution of duties in greater leadership roles. In practice, both the DoD and the member benefit from lifelong learning initiatives. While institutionalized career track EPME learning has built and maintained a professional SNCO corps, the U.S. military must ensure that SNCOs are continuing to enhance their intellectual capabilities for decision making in both future and unforeseen threat environments.

The Joint Staff (J7) should establish defined civilian educational milestones that are commensurate for enlisted members across the services. At a minimum an associate's degree in any specialization could be mandated for E-7 promotion eligibility. Common general education requirements corresponding with math, english, social science, humanities, and speech coursework provide a baseline of proficiency for increased administrative duties that are common within the SNCO ranks. For ranks E-7 and beyond the services should encourage pursuit of baccalaureate degrees with the insight of MOS, Branch, and Functional Managers determining immediate application to their given field and their services' performance at large. A baccalaureate degree provides an in-depth level of topic analysis for SNCOs to expand on their general knowledge for both operational and strategic roles. While specific degrees may be used as billet discriminators requiring specialized knowledge, the intent is to first foster increased total force education. If conducted as a joint force effort, SNCOs will see increased parity for joint assignments, greater opportunities for individual progression, and overall elevated workplace performance. These attributes become especially critical when SNCOs are being selected for SEL or CSEL level positions or are tasked to provide candid and knowledgeable advice to senior decision makers. While advanced education optimizes current SNCOs for today's duties and prepares them for tomorrow's challenges, they must also remain aware of

transition processes for both themselves and for those members in their formations that are approaching milestones of separation or retirement.

#### **4. When it Is Time for SNCOs to Leave (Transition)**

A fully trained, developed, and experienced SNCO has a limited shelf life based on service regulations of both time in service and time in grade limitations. Compared to the civilian case studies presented and business sector transfers, SNCOs may not be able to laterally transfer their direct duties and responsibilities to most civilian jobs unless they continue MOS duties in the National Guard, Reserve Components, or in a Government Civilian Status. This often means that one career is coming to close and a new career must begin. As SNCOs watch other SNCOs depart the service they typically take note of the opportunities presented to them and choose the most optimum course of action for their stage in family, life, career, and financial position. In order to keep a positive outlook on the process of transition to either civilian life or retirement the services must ensure clear and honest feedback with job performance outcomes, civilian skill applicability, and clear guidance regarding the transition of members.

Additionally, a renewed effort toward transparency within the highest SNCO ranks is required in the retirement, separation, or administrative re-assignment process. This keeps an open dialogue with both the taxpayer and military formations at large. It also sets the example for what behaviors are tolerated and not tolerated. Each SNCO is not only an ambassador for their specific branch, but for the U.S. at large irrespective of their conduct both in and out of uniform. Commanders at all levels should provide subordinate members of their command with timely communication regarding highly visible personnel moves, especially those in SNCO leadership and management roles. By choosing not to communicate, commanders are in-turn communicating a lack of information about the (released) member's situation. Apart from revealing information specific to ongoing investigations, simple messaging through command level emails and social media with basic information regarding an individual situation can prevent undue conversation which may negatively impact the actions of mission accomplishment, good order, and discipline. This also reinforces that the commander is the focal point and leader of the organization,

setting the example for both responsibility and actions that he or she requires in their command.

Regarding the positive departure (separation/retirement) of a SNCO, the services must ensure that skills have immediate application and transfer to civilian employment. While the principles of management and leadership are inherent in every military job, the technical skills acquired in MOS training may not always be applicable due to DoD specific systems and nomenclature. Service career transition programs are available, but only become applicable when the member has met specific timelines or deadlines to depart the organization. This brings upon a rapidity and sense of urgency to complete a transition quickly for which the demands of military obligations (deployments or temporary duties) may not allow maximum time to optimize transition. If skills were directly transferable and fashioned for civilian workplace conversion in an understood manner the uneasiness of leaving the established military hierarchy could be mitigated. The partnership of specific MOS skills to transferrable civilian qualities like administrative, managerial, electronics, or mechanical skills may give civilian employers an increased outlook on the applicability of military training beyond that of troop leadership and basic task performance.

If SNCOs are able to enhance their career skills while watching optimized peer transitions, their confidence in continued enlistment(s) could increase. The difficulties of moving to a second career are heavily tied to exit age, skills, experience, and education obtained for future employment. While civilians may be able to move to similar job positions in other workplaces, SNCOs do not have this luxury and may lack the experience for job transitions. The optimization and timing of transition training makes integration with the civilian workforce easier on the uniformed member upon separation. If SNCOs are to continue excelling in both position and performance of duties, the foundational model and DoD's approach to enlisted progression must be able to adapt and flex to changing civilian workforce and job market dynamics.

## **B. CONCLUSION AND SNCO EMULATION**

SNCOs are trained for specific purposes to work within the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of organizations. They are often key contributors to operational

success, ensuring completeness and mission accomplishment. The U.S. military must capitalize on the SNCO talent pool ensuring that it hires, trains, develops, and appropriately transitions its force. While the complexity of early and late transitions is inevitable, they can be handled in a manner which instills continued public trust and demonstrates the service specific core values to future generations of upcoming SNCOs. These SNCOs will be taking the knowledge gained and will apply to their future roles in CSEL positions as the hallmarks of their organizations wherein they set the example for others to follow.

### **1. Bridging the Civil-Military Business Practice Divide**

Civilian organizations are optimized to overcome the stereotypical drawbacks of hierarchy to meet the responses of the marketplace, while the military hierarchy does not have the same flexibility. That does not mean that SNCOs cannot be fashioned in a manner that pulls optimized practices from successful businesses. The DoD must remain receptive to innovation within our hierarchical structures and functions. SNCOs by the nature and requirements of the military profession are tasked to consistently exhibit levels of OCB beyond the “Good Soldier” standard. Compared to civilian companies, the DoD is fortunate to have extensive training pipelines that provide ample opportunity to systematize OCB traits at all career levels. The DoD should continue to capitalize on this methodology, but, it should not be taken for granted. NCOs progressing upward in rank must be fashioned for levels of performance at and above those individuals (SNCOs) they will replace.

### **2. Chick-Fil-A**

Just like the military, Chick-Fil-A champions employees who care for disadvantaged members of the community. Similarly, on a national level, both have had to focus on healthy public relationships after facing public and political backlash. Remaining successful in operations is possible despite political windfall. SNCOs can emulate this by sticking to their service core values when conducting military actions. While the military cannot close on Sundays, it can continue to advocate for aggressive leave usage and supervisor directed days off as performance rewards. It is commonly accepted that a positive work-life balance provides increased functional outcomes over the course of an individual’s career. In the age of social media, OCB examples displayed by military

members can quickly go viral, regardless of rank. Whether as high up as a televised medal ceremony from the White House, or locally by helping a community member after a car accident just off a military installation. SNCOs must remain aware of this and demonstrate high moral conduct at all times, as every interaction could be the next viral example for both subordinates and the general public.

### **3. Southwest Airlines**

Southwest Airlines chooses to focus their corporate culture on the true happiness and job satisfaction of employees while ensuring processes translate to customer gratification. The act of having an employee experience or perform additional roles apart from their primary job not only trains them for greater responsibility, but instills pride for other functions. For the military, emulating this process demonstrates the inherent value of all MOS's throughout SNCO leadership and management development. SNCOs can demonstrate this directly while mentoring subordinates. While specific character traits cannot be screened for at every stage of SNCO career progression, some can be fashioned over time and displayed at a level that the DoD wants portrayed. Excellence in uniformed work tasks and a culture of caring for others can be demonstrated at any rank. The hierarchical structure and rank formality of the military does not allow Southwest's methodology (people over title/position). However, SNCOs who value their people can place them first (servanthood leadership), and potentially receive desired outcomes from their troops regardless of their subordinates MOS, duty position, or rank/grade.

### **4. Lampo Group (Ramsey Solutions)**

Ramsey Solutions identifies ideal employees for cultural *fit* before hiring. The DoD can ensure that it hires the right SNCOs for the next PCS/PCA even before they step foot on their next duty installation. The services can employ SNCO talent management initiatives and developmental pathways that put the right individual, in the right job, at the right time. In order to ensure top performing teams, the DoD must be willing, like Ramsey, to differentiate high performers from low performers in the SNCO ranks. A corporate culture that allows sub-par performers to remain risks harming the organization, whether through gossip, reduced quality of work, or insubordination. Ramsey's centralized location

allows control from the headquarters level, but like the military his geographically separated functions (ELPs) act as extensions of brand mission and symbolism. SNCOs who actively demonstrate their service branch values help differentiate between meeting requirements and exceeding standards. This safeguards service quality and performance levels, even when command and control are centralized and decentralized execution is required.

## **5. Closing**

As the military competes for entry-level talent with civilian companies, it must maximize the development of tactical, managerial, and leadership abilities of the enlisted force by producing the best SNCOs possible. SNCOs are not only the frontline supervisors of today's formations, or future CSELs, many will also become the managers and executive staff of tomorrow's civilian workforce. A unified effort by the military services to optimize SNCO development will ensure that SNCOs & POs remain "The Backbone of the Armed Forces."



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