



UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY  
**WEST POINT**®



**WEST POINT LEADER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM  
HANDBOOK**







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The United States Military Academy mission is **to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the United States Army.**

The West Point Leader Development System (WPLDS) is designed to achieve this mission and begins by defining the institution's leader development outcomes. Upon commissioning, West Point graduates will:

- **Live honorably and build trust.**
- **Demonstrate intellectual, military, and physical competence.**
- **Develop, lead, and inspire.**
- **Think critically and creatively.**
- **Make sound and timely decisions.**
- **Communicate and interact effectively.**
- **Seek balance, be resilient, and demonstrate a strong and winning spirit.**
- **Pursue excellence and continue to grow.**

The leader development outcomes provide focus and guide the development of cadets across USMA's military, academic, physical, and character programs. These programs employ synchronized and integrated lines of effort to achieve the USMA mission. Their respective goals, subordinate programs, and developmental experiences are intentionally aligned with the WPLDS outcomes.

As the Army looks to the future, our officers' need for competence and character has never been greater. Indeed, the 21st century promises to be ever more volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. To lead Soldiers and units effectively in this operating environment, USMA graduates need a strong foundation of values-based leadership skills.

Each person assigned to West Point shares the privilege to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets. All have a role in fostering a positive developmental environment and maintaining developmental experiences that contribute to achieving our mission. This document, the WPLDS Handbook, outlines the major components of WPLDS. It is the responsibility of every member of the West Point community to understand, apply, and continuously seek to improve our leader development system.

ROBERT L. CASLEN, JR.  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army  
Superintendent



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Military Academy (USMA) challenges cadets with a continuum of developmental experiences across the military, academic, physical, and character programs to develop within cadets the character, competence, and commitment necessary to be highly successful officers and professionals in the United States Army and leaders for our Nation. These programs and their associated experiences essentially comprise WPLDS. WPLDS fully supports the Army Leader Development Strategy and is fully integrated into USMA's Strategic Plan. The Superintendent, Dean of the Academic Board, Commandant of Cadets, and Director of Intercollegiate Athletics oversee the West Point Leader Development System and are accountable for its implementation.



Each of the military, academic, physical, and character programs maintains and periodically updates goals which are aligned with the WPLDS outcomes. In consideration of both WPLDS outcomes and supporting program goals, each program designs, plans, executes, and assesses developmental experiences. Department of the Army established training and education requirements, as well as individual program standards and benchmarks, may also influence program and subordinate goals and objectives.

In order to maintain relevance in an ever-changing environment and to strive continually for excellence, Academy leaders

annually assess, and when necessary, make adjustments to WPLDS components. These assessments support conclusions, and inform decisions and action plans for change which are carefully documented and tracked to completion. This continuous improvement process, entitled the WPLDS Effectiveness Model, is a critical component of WPLDS, which enables it to operate as a functional and adaptive system.

Every member of the Academy plays an important role in WPLDS to ensure it operates as designed within the intent of the Superintendent and Army guidance. All have the responsibility to foster a consistent and positive leader development environment that inspires all to perform to their highest potential and achieve the Academy mission and WPLDS outcomes.

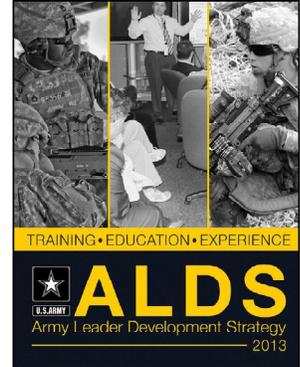


## GUIDING DOCUMENTS

### Army Leader Development Strategy

The Army Leader Development Strategy (ALDS) 2013 defines the career-long process by which we develop leaders at all levels across the Army. It states:

Leader development is the deliberate, continuous, and progressive process founded in Army values that grows Soldiers and Army Civilians into competent, committed professional leaders of character. Leader development is achieved through the career-long synthesis of the training, education, and experiences acquired through opportunities in the institutional, operational, and self-development domains, supported by peer and developmental relationships.<sup>1</sup>

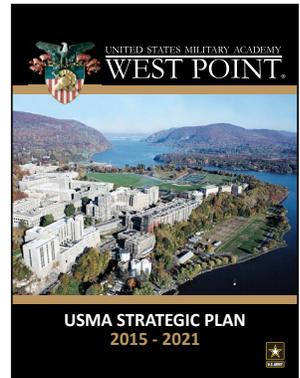


Informed by the Army's experiences since the end of the Cold War, to include combat operations since September 11, 2001, ALDS 2013 provides specific areas of leader development focus for the Army and USMA. It states:

We must ensure our leaders possess the ability to understand the security environment and the contributions of all elements of national power; lead effectively when faced with surprise and uncertainty; anticipate and recognize change and lead transitions; and operate on intent through trust, empowerment, and understanding.<sup>2</sup>

### USMA Strategic Plan

Aligned with the ALDS, the USMA Strategic Plan articulates a vision for the Academy and sets specific goals to achieve the vision. While WPLDS is focused on cadet development, the USMA Strategic Plan has an institution-wide focus. The USMA Strategic Plan's goals inform resourcing and investment decisions regarding cadet development as well as developmental efforts for faculty, staff, coaches, and the rest of the West Point community. It also informs resourcing and investment decisions on hiring, infrastructure, governance and all other areas that improve institutional effectiveness for the long term. Achieving the goals of the USMA Strategic Plan and ultimately realizing the USMA Vision will enhance WPLDS effectiveness and attainment of graduate outcomes. WPLDS supports the following USMA Strategic Plan goals:



- Goal #1 – Develop the United States Corps of Cadets
- Goal #2 – Inspire to Live Honorably and Build Trust
- Goal #4 – Sustain Professional Excellence and Develop a Culture of Winning

### ***Building Capacity To Lead***

Prior to the introduction of WPLDS, the Cadet Leader Development System (CLDS) served as the program to achieve the USMA mission. In support of CLDS, the document, *Building Capacity to Lead*, describes the process and provides the human development theory that guides how the Academy builds and implements leader development programs. *Building Capacity to Lead* will be updated and reoriented to support WPLDS as the replacement for CLDS. Whereas the purpose of this document is provide a brief overview of WPLDS, the newly updated *Building Capacity to Lead* will serve as a much more detailed complement.

<sup>1</sup> Department of the Army, ALDS – Army Leader Development Strategy 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Department of the Army, ALDS – Army Leader Development Strategy 2013.



## UNDERSTANDING WPLDS AS A SYSTEM

WPLDS provides coherence to our developmental efforts. It defines the purpose, products, and processes to develop cadets in a highly collaborative and effective manner. Additionally, WPLDS is meant to be a living, adaptive system responsive to the changing operational environment, advances in education and training, new leader guidance, and many other influences that give reason and focus in making improvements.

The ultimate purpose of WPLDS is to accomplish the USMA mission: Develop leaders of character. Therefore, the WPLDS products are West Point graduates, newly commissioned officers who embody the attributes and competencies of leaders of character.



## WPLDS COMPONENTS

### WPLDS Outcomes

Approved by the Superintendent and Academic Board, the WPLDS outcomes clearly define the product of WPLDS – what every graduate must BE, KNOW, and DO to truly embody a leader of character.

### West Point Community

Everyone assigned to West Point plays a role in developing cadets as officers to include faculty, staff, coaches, and other civilians who interact with cadets. Cadets are also charged with taking ownership of their own and other cadets' development. The West Point community is responsible for creating and maintaining a positive environment, implementing systems that empower cadets to achieve desired developmental outcomes, and holding cadets responsible for appropriate behavior.

### Military, Academic, Physical, and Character Programs

Each program creates and maintains cadet development goals which are either directly or indirectly aligned with the WPLDS outcomes as well as other relevant Army, institutional, and disciplinary requirements. In response to guidance contained in the USMA Strategic Plan and in consideration of the human development theory presented in *Building Capacity to Lead*, each program builds and implements developmental experiences to achieve its respective goals.

The Character Development Strategy (CDS), approved by the Superintendent and Academic Board, supports the first two goals in the USMA Strategic Plan: Develop the United States Corps of Cadets, and Inspire to Live Honorably and Build Trust. It guides how the West Point community integrates and synchronizes programs, experiences, and people that impact the five facets of cadet character development. The CDS leverages all four Academy programs (academic, military, physical, and character) experiences to achieve its goals. Additionally, the CDS establishes individual, group (company, team, club, etc.) and Academy-level goals to foster the optimum developmental environment. Published in the "Gold Book," the Character Program describes how the four program activities contribute to character development and how the Simon Center for the Professional Military



Ethic (SCPME) and Brigade Tactical Department (BTD) implement character development activities that are not explicitly part of the academic, military, and physical programs.

It is important to embrace the concept that all Academy activities in which cadets are involved are potential leader development opportunities. With that in mind, the term “developmental experiences” encompasses a great deal, to include individual academic courses, military training events, individual advanced development (IAD) experiences, a sports season, a semester-long company leadership position, a capstone project, and many more activities. In short, program leaders should maximize the leader development benefit of program activities in order to achieve program goals and ultimately the WPLDS outcomes.

### Continuous Improvement Processes

The most important aspects of WPLDS are the processes in place to guide the West Point Community in building, implementing, assessing and improving the Academy Programs to:

- Maintain relevance in an ever-changing environment
- Better achieve the WPLDS Outcomes and USMA Mission
- Continuously strive for excellence in all programs
- Ultimately realize the USMA Vision.

These continuous improvement processes comprise the WPLDS Effectiveness Model described in the next section.





### WPLDS EFFECTIVENESS MODEL

WPLDS Effectiveness is enhanced by periodic assessments that occur at all levels. WPLDS assessments support higher USMA institutional-level assessments, which inform changes to the USMA Strategic Plan and provide input to revised strategic guidance. At the institutional level, USMA employs a PLAN-RESOURCE-IMPLEMENT-ASSESS-IMPROVE framework for institutional effectiveness.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the WPLDS Effectiveness Model is aligned with this framework (represented on the interior of the diagram) but employs a more specific process:

- Obtain Leadership Guidance
- Adjust Outcomes, Goals and Objectives
- Adapt Developmental Experiences
- Execute Developmental Experiences
- Assess

The WPLDS Effectiveness Model should be employed at every level beginning with individual developmental experiences feeding upward to the program-level assessments and culminating with assessments at the WPLDS institutional level. The following explains each component of the WPLDS Effectiveness Model in more detail.



Figure 1 - WPLDS Effectiveness Model

#### Obtain Leadership Guidance

As mentioned previously, WPLDS is designed to be responsive to potential improvement opportunities. Examples include changes in the operating environment, advances in education and training, and of course, results of our own assessments. In response to these influences, USMA leaders provide guidance and assign action plans to adapt and improve WPLDS. This guidance could originate at the level of individual developmental experiences involving decisions by an academic course director, military training site OIC, or an intercollegiate team coach. It could also originate above the Superintendent, to include senior Army or civilian leaders. Regardless of level or source, higher leader guidance steers improvements within one or more subordinate levels of WPLDS.

#### Adapt Outcomes, Goals and Objectives

To facilitate and promote communication across WPLDS management levels, West Point utilizes standardized terminology in reference to desired developmental results. At the institutional level, “outcomes” collectively describe the desired overall developmental product – our graduates. At the Academic, Military, Physical, and Character program levels, desired program results are defined in terms of “goals.” Within each program, leaders may use a variety of terms to refer to desired developmental results. Common terms include outcomes, goals, and objectives. Leadership guidance from higher levels can result in changes to equal or lower level outcomes, goals, or objectives.

#### Adapt Developmental Experiences

Leadership guidance combined with any outcome, goal, or objective modifications can drive



improvements at the institutional level or within the Academic, Military, Physical, or Character programs down to the individual developmental experiences.

### **Execute Developmental Experiences**

Implementation of changes is followed by execution of the revised developmental experiences.

### **Assess**

In accordance with leadership guidance, assessments are completed at all levels, but generally begin at the individual developmental experience level. The outcomes, goals, or objectives associated with the assessed level form the basis for the assessment in most cases. For instance, when conducting an assessment of a course, the course director uses the course objectives as the basis for the assessment. Similarly, when conducting an assessment of a program (e.g. the Academic Program), leaders use the program goals as the basis for the assessment. Leaders consider and integrate lower-level assessments (i.e. course assessments, team assessments, military training event assessments, etc.) from within the program to complete their overall assessment. With capstone and other higher level experiences, there are opportunities to assess program goals and WPLDS outcomes directly. Leaders should exploit these opportunities as much as possible.



Directors of individual developmental experiences (i.e. course directors, coaches, etc.) integrate a variety of assessment methods to derive an overall assessment. Based upon leader guidance, assessments incorporate both direct and indirect indicators, which may include cadet performance, cadet feedback, sensing sessions, faculty observations, subordinate, peer, and superior evaluations, and many others. Academic, military, physical, and character program leaders determine the processes used when assessing program goals/objectives. Assessment results inform conclusions about cadet achievement of outcomes, goals, and/or objectives which inform conclusions about the quality of course and/or program content, management, and execution. In addition to completing assessments to evaluate performance, each level conducts an assessment of the assessment process.

Assessment results at each level support assessments at higher levels to ultimately provide the necessary data to complete an assessment of WPLDS at the institutional level. Institutional level assessments also incorporate feedback from the field in terms of West Point graduate performance in reference to the WPLDS outcomes. Validated conclusions inform new leadership guidance and the development of action plans for improvement. These action plans are tracked to completion and reviewed in subsequent assessments to ensure the desired effect was achieved.

### **Documentation**

Documentation of each step of the WPLDS Effectiveness Model is an important task as it informs future assessments and decisions and promotes consistency during leader changeover. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, it provides a product that can be shared with the appropriate stakeholders. At each level, leaders should document assessment schedules, methodology, results, recommendations, and follow-up actions addressing recommendations.



## WEST POINT LEADER DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

A short description for each WPLDS Outcome follows. These should be referenced in all facets of the WPLDS program to include refining goals and outcomes, developing and refining developmental experiences, identifying development opportunities in current programs, guiding the creation of new developmental experiences, and conducting assessments.



### **1. Live Honorably and Build Trust**

Graduates live honorably, treat people with dignity and respect, and demonstrate the character, competence, and commitment that builds trust. These ideals inspire West Point graduates to serve our nation as leaders of character who “support and defend the Constitution of the United States.” Honor and trust are critical to mission accomplishment and are values that are the core of the Army profession. They reflect what an officer is and must be able to do throughout a career of service to the Army and the Nation. These ideals, along with an evolving set of laws, values, beliefs and commitments deeply embedded within the Army culture, serve to motivate and guide the conduct of all individual members bound together by a common moral purpose. Graduates recognize, embrace, and seek to improve the values and attributes of our profession, a process which leads to a positive, productive, and supportive culture. As role-models and leaders, graduates provide direction, guidance, and ideas to keep our Army a growing and living organization. Living honorably and building trust permeate our culture at the Academy and in the Army.

### **2. Demonstrate Intellectual, Military, and Physical Competence.**

Graduates demonstrate competence by achieving established standards in the intellectual, military, and physical domains. They integrate knowledge and skills from a variety of disciplines to anticipate and respond appropriately to opportunities and challenges in a changing world. Graduates anticipate a range of military challenges and possess the requisite warrior ethos, perspectives, and military skills to respond effectively in combat and to a wide range of complex situations. They are warrior-leaders of character who are physically fit, mentally strong, and prepared to confront the physical challenges inherent in worldwide military operations and the duties required of a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army. Graduates integrate knowledge, skills, and attributes from these domains to serve the Nation.



### **3. Develop, Lead, and Inspire**

Graduates develop, lead, and inspire people and facilitate these abilities in others. They set the conditions for developing others by analyzing strengths and challenges at the individual, collective, and environmental levels; they provide the necessary resources for building competence and enabling growth. As servant-leaders, graduates are committed to putting the welfare of others before their own and to inspiring others through personal example in attitude, conduct, and appearance. They train, motivate, and influence others to achieve common goals, critical tasks, and organizational objectives with purpose and commitment, while treating them with dignity and respect. Graduates inspire selflessness and foster resilience. They seize opportunities to create an environment that develops individual members' abilities to contribute to the success of the team.

### **4. Think Critically and Creatively**

Graduates explore issues, ideas, and events in depth as well as apply standard practices, innovative thinking, prudent risk-taking, and mental agility. Graduates are accustomed to complexity; they identify the essential aspects of situations and ask questions necessary to accurately define the parameters of a given challenge or opportunity. They engage both well-defined and ambiguous situations using methodical and reflective thinking as well as rapid analysis. Graduates gather and synthesize information using a wide range of techniques, and actively seek diverse viewpoints when appropriate. They reason quantitatively and qualitatively. They integrate knowledge and skills gained from the completion of a broad liberal education, an in-depth study of a discipline, a rigorous military program,





a demanding physical development program, and a ubiquitous character development program. They are open-minded and employ their knowledge and skills to make meaningful connections and distinctions across different experiences, concepts, perspectives, and cultures. When appropriate, graduates transform ideas or solutions into entirely new forms by diverging from conventional ways of thinking or reimagining

established ideas, ways of thinking, or solutions. They engage in and appreciate the value of reflection.

### **5. Make Sound and Timely Decisions**

Graduates possess the skills and abilities to organize and optimize pre-decision efforts and the poise and judgment to make effective decisions, regardless of the level of stress. Graduates plan ahead to facilitate timely decision-making. They define the problem by gathering facts and making assumptions, determining the appropriate level of urgency, and accounting for the impact of their decisions. They maintain their poise in order to apply a logical and orderly thought process which combines rational thinking, critical reasoning, sound judgment, creativity, and intuition to make risk and resource-appropriate decisions in complex and uncertain environments. Graduates incorporate prudent risk mitigation measures in action plans. They promptly and effectively communicate decisions to permit timely action that has the most beneficial effect. In cases where time does not permit a deliberate decision-making process, they make rapid decisions that are ethical, appropriate, and effective. Graduates assess and reflect on their previous decisions to improve future decisions.

### **6. Communicate and Interact Effectively**

Graduates communicate clearly, candidly, and confidently in diverse settings using suitable means. They project professionalism and maintain proper bearing. Graduates are considerate of others across all forms of communication. They employ active listening and critical reading to ensure understanding and demonstrate effective interpersonal and negotiation skills. Graduates convey clear and concise information using oral, written and non-verbal means and employ appropriate technology to accomplish the mission and enhance professional relationships. They are aware of customs and demonstrate courtesies appropriate for the situation. They are comfortable and effective interacting with subordinates, peers, and superiors as well as audiences of varied backgrounds and cultures to include Soldiers' families and community stakeholders.



## **7. Seek Balance, Be Resilient, and Demonstrate a Strong and Winning Spirit**

Graduates seek to achieve an effective work-life balance that considers the demands of military service, personal health, human spirit, and the development of lasting relationships. To maintain their health, graduates incorporate physical activity, nutrition, and sleep into their daily routines.

They possess a resilience that enables them to respond to adversity in constructive ways by developing active coping skills, building self-confidence, accepting their personal limits, and growing through adversity. Graduates develop and demonstrate a strong and winning spirit that never accepts



defeat. This spirit embodies their personal identity, core values, and worldviews, and enables their self-awareness, self-motivation, self-discipline, and social awareness. Graduates build and inspire winning teams that accomplish the mission with excellence, always consistent with our values and who we are as an Army. Graduates strive to succeed in all endeavors – remaining strong, yet humble; bold, yet respectful; and always honorable.

**The Importance of Winning:** Winning is accomplishing the mission with excellence and honor. Winning is what we as the Army do and it is what America expects of us. Developing winning attributes is critical during the cadets' 47 month experience as it has a significant carry-over to building winning teams in the Army. By learning at the Academy how to win with honor, graduates will be better prepared to exercise the necessary discipline, tenacity, resilience, and mental and physical toughness to accomplish the mission with excellence, always consistent with the Army Values. Consistently winning in today's complex environment will require achievement of the WPLDS outcomes.

## **8. Pursue Excellence and Continue to Grow**

Graduates contribute their best effort in all endeavors, do what is right, and strive for a reputation of excellence. As graduates progress through junior officership into senior leadership roles in our Army and Nation, they consistently value excellence and understand the importance of personal and professional development. They continually demonstrate both an interest in and a passion for learning to enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities. Pursuing excellence and continuing to grow enables graduates to hold increasing leadership roles and responsibilities as well as develop their competence and potential. Graduates develop and embody a mindset that rejects mediocrity, pursue excellence in every aspect of life to exceed the standard, and inspire others to do the same.



## WEST POINT COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the West Point Community as well as graduates and friends of the Academy worldwide contribute to achieving the USMA mission to develop cadets into commissioned leaders of character. Regardless of our primary Academy role, we all serve as **role models** through our professional and personal behavior and commitment to professional excellence. As Academy team members, we must endeavor to **create conditions and experiences where cadets are appropriately challenged** to operate outside of their comfort zone. As leaders, we also **support cadets through coaching, mentoring, and resourcing, while providing routine feedback and assessment and creating the impetus for self reflection** to help cadets make use of their experiences and feedback.

While some members of the West Point community, such as cadets, tactical officers and members of the staff and faculty have specific leader development responsibilities, everyone on the team plays a role in developing cadets across the eight WPLDS outcomes. This includes Soldiers, DA civilians, members of the USMA Garrison Command and Keller Army Community Hospital, military spouses, and former graduates. Most Academy team members will fulfill multiple roles during their assignment at West Point, and we should actively seek to create opportunities to coach, teach, and mentor cadets outside our normal role, such as cadet sponsorship, athletics, and extra-curricular clubs. This includes opportunities to interact socially with cadets and to provide them with a chance to reflect on their developmental experiences. For example, an instructor in the English and Philosophy Department might serve as a facilitator for the Cadet Character Development Program and serve as a staff officer supporting Cadet Summer Training. Likewise, a tactical officer might fulfill additional roles as a cadet sponsor, officer-in-charge for a competitive club, or officer representative for a Division 1 athletic team.



**Be a Leader Exemplar.** The importance of our West Point Community members serving as positive leader exemplars cannot be overstated. When our cadets graduate, they will lay it on the line for our Nation. Thus, they deserve the absolute best from our staff, faculty, and coaches. Just as we expect our graduates to reject mediocrity and pursue excellence, we must hold ourselves to the highest standards in all interactions with cadets whether it is coaching, teaching, training, mentoring, or simply setting the example in our professional and personal lives. We must monitor ourselves, and like cadets, not tolerate less than standard performance, and always demonstrate a commitment to excellence.

The following provides a sample of ideas and concepts for engaging in leader development within each of the WPLDS outcomes:



### **1. Live Honorably and Build Trust**

How can you, a member of the West Point Community, help cadets achieve this outcome?

- Engage in meaningful discussion about situations that may challenge values and beliefs
- Hold self and others accountable for actions
- Model the expected behavior of an Army Professional through words and deeds
- Discuss honorable behavior, extending beyond the letter of the Honor Code



**EXAMPLE:** As a club or team mentor, discuss a situation that you encountered during your time as a military professional that challenged your values and/or beliefs and how you resolved it. Encourage others to give insights on how the scenario could have played out differently. Share what did and didn't work well.

### **2. Demonstrate Intellectual, Military, and Physical Competence**

How can you, a member of the West Point Community, help cadets achieve this outcome?

- Discuss how academic topics tie into various military skills and functions across the Army branches
- Demonstrate a high level of physical fitness and model lifelong fitness activities
- Discuss your responsibilities across various positions and experiences as a military professional

**EXAMPLE:** As a cadet sponsor, join cadets in a physical activity or discuss how the decisions and actions of leaders influence Army Families and retention.

### **3. Develop, Lead, and Inspire**

How can you, a member of the West Point Community, help cadets achieve this outcome?

- Take a direct, active role in cadet development through informal and formal mentorship
- Encourage self reflection, analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and goal setting
- Facilitate participation in service projects and events serving at-risk and high-need groups
- Discuss how diversity (in all forms) creates robust teams

**EXAMPLE:** As an instructor, lead cadets through a session of self-reflection, having them identify strengths and weaknesses and guide him/her toward fulfilling personal goals.



#### **4. Think Critically and Creatively**

How can you, a member of the West Point Community, help cadets achieve this outcome?

- Encourage them to consider and respect alternate perspectives of others
- Challenge their thoughts and push them to examine their assumptions
- Allow them to witness your own learning
- Discuss complex issues they may face as leaders

**EXAMPLE:** Faculty and staff professionally encourage cadets to understand current thinking and decisions while exploring alternate approaches.

#### **5. Make Sound and Timely Decisions**

How can you, a member of the West Point Community, help cadets achieve this outcome?

- Demonstrate poise in pressure-filled situations
- Encourage and coach cadets in planning and executing after-action assessment of major events and decisions
- Discuss the need for time management in their preparation and leadership (obey the one-third/two-thirds principle)
- Help cadets identify and analyze a major decision they are facing

**EXAMPLE:** As a staff and faculty member supporting Cadet Summer Training, coach cadet leaders in their analysis of a situation and timely decision-making in a complex, time-constrained environment.





## **6. Communicate and Interact Effectively**

How can you, a member of the West Point Community, help cadets achieve this outcome?

- Provide cadets the opportunity to interact with diverse groups in meaningful ways
- Use only professional language and ensure cadets do the same
- Provide cadets feedback on their communication skills and provide opportunities for practice

**EXAMPLE:** As a volunteer for the West Point Special Olympics, provide cadets the opportunity to correspond with and sponsor Special Olympians and their families.

## **7. Seek Balance, Be Resilient, and Demonstrate a Strong and Winning Spirit**

How can you, a member of the West Point Community, help others achieve this outcome?

- Demonstrate work-life balance through your choices and use of time and discuss how you achieve work-life balance
- Discuss the Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, which is designed to increase the physical and psychological health, resilience and enhanced performance of Soldiers.
- Share professional and personal stories of dealing with setbacks and achieving success.

**EXAMPLE:** As a coach, inspire cadet-athletes to overcome adversity during a competition or over the course of a season; leverage these experiences to enhance resiliency and teamwork.

## **8. Pursue Excellence and Continue to Grow**

How can you, a member of the West Point Community, help cadets achieve this outcome?

- Encourage cadets to recognize the gap between their performance and their potential
- Help cadets "see themselves" and create a plan for personal and professional development
- Model and discuss your own commitment to life-long learning and development
- Model and inspire cadets to reject mediocrity and pursue excellence in themselves and their teams.

**EXAMPLE:** As a leader/volunteer with a cadet club, have cadets critically assess their performance and leadership, and coach them in planning and executing experiences that stretch their skills and abilities.

### **A few general tips to consider when interacting with cadets:**

- Remember, cadets often see things differently from instructors and other older adults based on their age, maturity, and experiences.
- Increase opportunities for cadets to make tough choices with real consequences.
- Encourage cadets to reflect and learn from their experiences.
- Support cadets' efforts to resolve problems rather than solve their problem yourself.
- Help cadets recognize opportunities for self-assessment and change.
- Increase cadets' awareness of their strengths, weaknesses, talents and biases.



## CONCLUSION

Aligned with the Army's Leader Development Strategy and the USMA Strategic Plan, the West Point Leader Development System equips future leaders of character with the capacity to anticipate and adapt to the challenges of the 21st century. Leader development is the primary focus of our academic, physical, military, and character programs. West Point Community members maximize the leader development benefit of program activities to achieve program goals and ultimately the West Point Leader Development outcomes. West Point leaders continuously assess and implement improvements to our Academy programs in order to maintain relevance in an ever changing environment, promote excellence, better achieve the WPLDS outcomes, and ultimately accomplish the USMA mission.





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