



# CHIEF's Sight Picture

06 November 2002

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## **Total Force Development**

At CORONA Fall we adopted a new vision for how we work with the most important resource we have, all of you. As we transformed our Cold War structure into an Air and Space Expeditionary Force, it follows that we transition the way we train, educate, promote, and assign our Total Force. We call it Force Development and it applies equally to all of us -- active duty officer and enlisted, reserve components and civilians -- across all specialties in our Air Force, whether at home or in a tent city, on the flightline or the launch pad, in the air or in the lab. Day after day you demonstrate that your expertise is our greatest asset, and I truly believe your continued training and development are our wisest investment. Our goal in implementing our new Force Development construct is to make that investment in all career fields and all ranks more deliberately than we do today in order to better prepare us for the future and better meet your expectations. We have chosen to begin this transformation with the officer corps, but planning is underway and details will be provided on the unique aspects relating to our civilian and enlisted force as well as the reserve components.

Force Development will enable us to focus on each individual by emphasizing our common airman culture while offering a variety of choices that respects the distinctive elements of your career field. We plan to add a dimension to your educational experience that has not been fully exploited in our current PME and advanced education structure. Most importantly, we have made sure that this new emphasis reflects a sincere respect for your time -- time that you owe to other priorities in your life, like your families.

Every aspect of our new plan has one common goal: to continue developing professional airmen who instinctively leverage their respective strengths together. We intend to develop leaders who motivate teams, mentor subordinates, and train successors. I know that a lot of you feel there are many reasons to be discouraged or dissatisfied with our current system -- limited PME in-residence slots, limited advanced degree opportunities, or worse, square-filling master degree programs that do little to make you better at your job or get you closer to your goals. I have experienced some of these issues myself and I hear the same feedback from you. So let's fix it.

Force Development will be executed in three parts -- Officer, Enlisted, and Civilian Leadership Development -- and each will focus on training, education, and experience, especially how you are assigned to get that experience. The development programs are a new concept and are more than just PME. They couple the professional military education experience with advanced education that will prepare you with the practical knowledge and skills required to be effective in today's expeditionary air and space force and better face the challenges of tomorrow. No longer will the doctor, scientist, engineer, and operator be expected to pursue the same line of advanced degree

and PME in order to be promoted. We are creating ISS PME modules of instruction, bodies of knowledge we think all should learn, to allow greater flexibility and access a greater audience. For officers, when you get promoted to major you will be required to take at least the basic module. Additional modules of your ISS PME experience will be matched to your professional needs, making you more competent within your career field and better prepared if you are assigned outside your career field. Where it makes sense, programs will be scheduled around the rotational rhythm of our Air and Space Expeditionary Force, just like everything else we do. Each development program will be designed to ensure that your experience emphasizes a breadth of exposure to the Air Force mission while focusing on the depth of experience you need to be good at your job. Finally, the programs will be prioritized in a manner that respects your valuable time and eliminates “square filling” training and education.

Just like many of you, I spent many hours in night school to earn a master’s degree. Why? So I could get promoted. It’s not that the time was wasted, but the course of study was not designed to maximize my own development, or to deliver the best return on that investment to the Air Force. And, it took me two years of time shared with my Air Force duties and away from my family. To top it all off, the Air Force viewed my MBA in the same light for promotion as if I had attained a Master’s in Quantum Physics from MIT.

We are going to change that. Today, under our new construct, if the Air Force needs you to have an Advanced Academic Degree (AAD), we will send you to get the right one that is useful to you and the Air Force, either as part of PME or AAD. What’s more, if you are qualified, we will ensure you will have the opportunity to receive both advanced degree and PME credit. We have spent well over two years developing this construct, and now it is time for action.

This month, some majors who met the ISS in-residence board will be offered enhanced AFIT-funded development opportunities. These majors will be given modular PME and earn advanced academic degrees instead of attending traditional ISS. We intend to open the aperture on what is considered a beneficial education and training experience.

In the future, we will offer qualified individuals, in all career fields, advanced degrees in conjunction with tailored PME based on what we know they need for their jobs, period. For example, our best scientists and engineers will have a clear path to a master’s degree and a Ph.D. We will include some PME within the advanced degree programs so that they earn credit for each in pursuit of those degrees. Scientists and engineers will be competitive for promotion based on their skills, their advanced technical degrees, and their proven capability to publish and mentor. Pilots will not require an advanced degree in order to be competitive for promotion to lieutenant colonel. Their promotion will depend on their ability to sustain the highest levels of qualification such as mission lead or instructor pilot. Doctors will be able to remain in clinical practice and be competitive for promotion based on their skills, board certifications, leadership, and mentorship.

In all career fields, to be competitive for command or program leadership, you should attend a resident-level PME program and earn the associated advanced degree. Any resident program should make you highly competitive to command at the squadron level and be significant for command opportunities above the squadron level. We must recognize that the experience of command is as unique as each profession in our Air Force -- potential commanders have different education and training requirements. At

the same time, we will make sure that qualified people who do not pursue the command path will not be denied advanced professional development and a rewarding career to retirement.

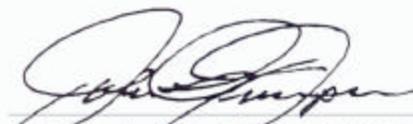
In all cases there will not be one “set solution” for success. We will examine each individual based on credibility, depth of experience, breadth of exposure, and potential to serve the AF in higher positions of responsibility. Your assignments will be tailored to offer you that breadth once you have proven your depth of experience. For example, if you are a superb officer with proven capability as an operator, your post-educational development assignment may be to an acquisition-related job. You will benefit from a new perspective and the acquisition community will benefit from the operator’s insight. In our Force Development construct, part of your education will include adequate preparation for that acquisition assignment -- gone are the days where you are thrust into a “broadening” opportunity and left to figure it out by yourself. The leverage we will gain by breaking the old molds for training, education, and experience will be a tremendous asset to the Air Force and will also better enable you to grow and succeed professionally.

It’s time for a new way of thinking. However, I realize that there is a zero percent chance that we have this one hundred percent correct. I know the cornerstone to any education, training, and experience program is you -- your involvement will mark the success of our vision. And the key to a successful plan is to keep it simple. Over the next six months we will be redesigning the way we do business in our Air Force Personnel Center. We will transition assignment officers into teams that will think in terms of developing you, rather than simply “assigning” you. At the same time education teams at AETC and AU will be designing new ISS “modules” in preparation for our next class in the summer of ’03. All the while our personnel, or “Force Development” community, will continue to design the necessary changes to things like the Officer Career Briefs, and developing new ways to simplify communication between you and those on the development teams. In short, all the required changes will be implemented to assure our Force Development construct is fully operational by the end of next year.

So, get smart on the plan as it develops and give me your feedback. There is one more thing to keep in mind: each of us who makes the Air Force a career is obliged to invest some part of that career in training or educating the airmen who will take our place -- that’s what makes us better. We are building Force Development one step at a time -- I need your direct involvement and feedback to make it work.

As always, I am incredibly proud of all that each and every one of you does for the Air Force and the United States of America. You are why we are the best Air Force on the planet!



  
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