



DEVELOPING ENLISTED  
**LEADERS**  
FOR TOMORROW'S WARS



OUR SHARED VISION FOR ENLISTED PROFESSIONAL MILITARY  
EDUCATION & TALENT MANAGEMENT



Foreword

The 21st Century security environment is distinguished by a rapidly changing character of war and conflict. This dynamic paradigm demands a transformative shift in our strategies towards joint enlisted leader development. We must reform the way we identify, develop, and utilize future leaders to advance our competitive advantage and successfully deter, fight, and win against any adversary.

Our shared objective is the development and sustainment of flexible, versatile, and adaptable joint warfighters—deliberately trained, educated, and empowered leaders. Armed with the distinct core values of our diverse Services, we aim to capitalize on the development of enlisted professionals who can think critically and employ joint leadership knowledge, skills, and attributes in support of National Strategy and globally integrated military operations. We must create leaders that act decisively in the absence of orders.

This document provides the collective vision of the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (SEAC) and the Service Senior Enlisted Advisors towards a 21st Century Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME) strategy. This vision is intended to guide the advancement of joint enlisted leader development and talent management policies that will produce the future leaders required by our Nation.



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# Developing Enlisted Leaders For Tomorrow's Wars

Our Shared Vision for Enlisted Professional Military Education & Talent Management

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*“In order to retain our competitive advantage into the 2030s and beyond, we are refining Professional Military Education (PME) and talent management to develop Joint Leaders with the skills, values, and intellectual agility to fight and win the wars of tomorrow.” - GEN Mark Milley, CJCS*

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The emerging operating environment demands that joint enlisted leaders be far better educated and more knowledgeable in the employment and integration of the instruments of National Power. To date, our respective Service and Joint EPME enterprises have consistently yielded the most distinguished and capable military force in the world. Nevertheless, our near-peer adversaries continue to close the gap between our military capabilities and we must respond with a robust strategy to advance our greatest and most valued competitive advantage by investing in the development of our human capital.

A necessary transition from countering violent extremist organizations towards the return of great power competition adds further complexity to the global security environment, which accelerates the need for agile, flexible, and adaptable warfighters who are capable of leading in lock-step with the chain of command to pivot our military strategy towards a high-end fight—a type of conflict and warfare that requires joint interoperability at every level.

Under the guidance and authority of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and in concert with the *Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Vision and Guidance for Professional Military Education and Talent Management*, EPME will shift towards an Outcomes-Based Military Education (OBME) approach that maximizes both Service and Joint leader development. Joint enlisted leader development will complement and thus bolster the Service cultures and core values possessed by our Joint Enlisted Professionals by delivering focused attributes and outcomes necessary for mission accomplishment across the land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace domains.

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*“The great aim of education is not knowledge but action.”*  
—Herbert Spencer  
(1820-1903)

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This vision will expedite the necessary changes in our Enlisted Professional Military Education Policy (EPME Policy). It will simultaneously align with the NDS, National Military Strategy, and JCS objectives, while leveraging the unmatched traditions in which our distinct Services develop their respective enlisted forces to elevate the lethality of the Joint Force.

Achieving our leader development objectives requires a new path for EPME that must harness the advantage of all available and emerging talent management systems across the Joint Force. Our vision endeavors toward a fully aligned PME and talent management construct that identifies, develops, and utilizes strategically-minded, critically-thinking, and innovative joint leaders skilled in the art of practical and ethical application of joint warfighting capabilities.

## LEADER ATTRIBUTES & DESIRED PME OUTCOMES

The future of enlisted leader development will focus on cultivating leader attributes and delivering desired outcomes. Our joint enlisted professionals must be deliberately educated and trained to be capable strategic advisors, versed in emerging technology, and knowledgeable in globally integrated operations across an all-domain command and control concept.

Anchored by our Joint Enlisted Leader Attributes, our vision is to reform Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education (EJPME) to ensure that we produce leaders who embody the knowledge, skills, and attributes necessary to succeed in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous battlespace.

### LEADER ATTRIBUTES

Throughout the continuum of enlisted leader development, our EPME and EJPME enterprise shall rigorously observe, evaluate, and assess members for character, competence, and commitment to the mission while exhibiting the following leader attributes:

- **Intellect.** Both cognitive and emotional—the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills. Cognitively, to think critically and thoroughly in order to provide sound and candid advice. Emotionally, having keen self-awareness with the ability to connect, empathize, and understand people and cultures.
- **Credibility.** Forged by test and trial of one's skills and validated by actions and reputation. To be a leader that is trusted, believed in, and respected.
- **Accountability.** To have an obligation and willingness to accept responsibility for one's actions. To abide by ethical behavior and actions, and expect the same from all. To be fiscally and physically accountable for resources.
- **Agility.** To be responsive, flexible, resilient, and adaptable to uncertain situations and complex problems. This encompasses both physical and mental agility.
- **Discipline.** To possess an orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior. To be steadfast in execution of duties, treatment of others, obedience to rules and policy, and to the oath of office.

Joint Enlisted Professionals will embody and foster these enduring qualities as the foundation of joint leader development. Combined with an OBME approach to deliver a specifically curated set of outcomes, our vision for a 21st Century EJPME shall deliver the leadership qualities needed for the next generation of enlisted leaders.



DESIRED EPME OUTCOMES

In following with an OBME approach, joint policy and guidance must be revised and established to ensure immediate implementation of systems and procedures to identify, select, and develop the best candidates for joint leader development. Policies must also address a leader development model that employs *deliberateness* and *consistency* as enduring principles in providing timely, targeted, and meaningful PME throughout a joint warfighter's career.

EPME curricula shall be holistically designed and reshaped as necessary to guarantee the delivery of the learning outcomes below, bearing in mind the ultimate goal is for the enlisted member to be a sensor, synchronizer, and integrator for the organization.

**PME Outcomes.** Service PME and EJPME programs must provide graduates the initial knowledge, skills, and attributes to prepare them for service as joint warfighting leaders who are able to:

- Operate and lead in the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) environment.
- Understand the effects and relationships between all instruments of national power: Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic (DIME).
- Possess the ability to look “up and out” while simultaneously remaining focused “down and in,” and communicating effectively through all levels of the chain of command.
- Anticipate and adapt to surprise and uncertainty, recognize change and assist in transitions, and fully exemplify the attributes of mission command (understanding, intent, and trust).

**Gateway.** A primary line of effort toward this vision will be the introduction of *Gateway*, a JCS-sponsored, in-residence EJPME course designed for select E-6/7s. This course is intended to bridge the gap in learning and application between the Intermediate and Senior levels of joint leader development. It will provide the necessary education experience to build upon the enlisted member's knowledge of Joint Operations gained via previous joint assignments and/or Intermediate Senior Enlisted JPME courses (SEJPME I or equivalent). *Gateway* will facilitate practical demonstration of existing skills and attributes, while providing depth and substance in knowledge towards molding leaders who understand:

- The **U.S. Government Construct**: how each branch of the government and their various components affect the DoD's decision/policy-making process.
- The roles, responsibilities, and core functions of the *Joint Staff* (J1-J8) and the Combatant Commands.
- Operations within the **JIIM** arena, including Joint Force Leadership, Joint Operations Module, and the Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control concept.

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*“In order to set our people up for success, we must educate them on the desired outcome of their actions and the attributes necessary for mission accomplishment.”*

*–Ramón “CZ” Colón-López, SEAC#4*

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## JOINT ENLISTED TALENT MANAGEMENT

Education and training must be efficiently and appropriately aligned with talent management to maximize leader development. Despite our past success in molding Senior Enlisted Leaders and Advisors across all levels of the Joint Force, the future security environment will require that we improve the way we synchronize our selection, development, and subsequent assignments of Joint Enlisted Professionals. Identifying high-potential leaders and developing them deliberately throughout the EJPME continuum is critical to the iterative process of our PME enterprises. Talent management will lead us to a stronger bench for joint assignment selection and future nominative slates.

### INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

At present, there is an abundance of Service-dependent development programs and personnel system innovations that are in alignment with this vision. However, longstanding paradigms towards joint force development and employment have hindered our ability to fully exploit best-practices as a joint organization. In order to sustain and advance our competitive advantage in human capital, we need to harness the collaborative spirit to maximize effect.

Talent management enterprises across the Joint Force must collaborate to adapt innovative ways to tap into the talent of the force, develop high-potential leaders, and select the best candidates for nominative joint education, experience, and/or assignments.

**Capitalizing JIIM Partnerships.** Programs such as Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multi-National Fellowships/Internships serve an important role in leader development, especially as it relates to our desired EJPME outcomes. While these programs are managed primarily via respective Services, we can do better at holistically managing the input of talent into these programs to ensure a deliberate output is immediately and successively employed for maximum return on investment.

**Regard Joint Experience as a Force-Multiplying Concept.** An integrated talent management posture allows not only for effective and efficient joint leader development, it also maximizes return on investment, enabling the Joint Force to deliberately cultivate enlisted members by building upon Service-specific development efforts and leveraging an optimized EJPME and talent management construct. Coupled with appropriate and deliberate pathways, joint experience provides the Services with uniquely experienced leaders and force-multipliers who are adept in operating and leading across multi-domain environments.

**Innovate for *Jointness* in Our Personnel Systems.** The concept of a *Joint Experience Identifier* via Service Personnel Systems can have a profound impact on streamlining the identification, development, and utilization of enlisted members with joint experience. The potential of such initiatives, if adapted throughout the Joint Force, will dramatically improve the alignment of education and employment of the next generation of joint enlisted leaders. Combined with our concerted effort to classify and organize nominative joint billets, our vision for a talent management and PME reform will pave the way towards building a more lethal Joint Force.

## THE WAY FORWARD

Pursuant to the objectives of the National Defense Strategy, we are charged with developing a more lethal force to meet the demands of future conflict under conditions of disruptive change. The return of great power competition adds further complexity to the current security environment that accelerates the need for agile, flexible, and adaptable warfighters who are capable of guiding our military strategy towards a high-end fight.

This transition from countering violent extremist organizations along with our military activities across the continuum of conflict will not be swift nor linear—it will require credible, critically thinking, and creative leaders with the precise blend of education, training, and experience, deliberately cultivated throughout a military career. In order to yield this outcome, we must not be content with the status quo while our adversaries continue to close the gap in military capabilities. We must also advance and champion our imperative to achieve the NDS mandate to *build a more lethal Joint Force* in concert with the JCS vision on PME and talent management.

A revised EPME Policy will outline the way forward in delivering the requisite knowledge, skills, and attributes as well as the necessary talent management initiatives to support the outcomes herein and serve as the bedrock of joint enlisted leader development. The revised EPME Policy will drive a more robust leader development approach delivered earlier in the EJPME Continuum, while reforming all existing PME as necessary to deliver the newly defined outcomes. Our commitment to produce adaptive and capable enlisted leaders will yield a force-multiplying effect unmatched by any adversary.

The forthcoming policy reform shall pave the way for Service and Joint PME institutions to aggressively implement fundamental changes where appropriate, in order to align their respective joint warfighting curricula to those of the EPME Policy. This collective vision and the ensuing unity of effort from all stakeholders shall serve as the symbol of our steadfast commitment to develop the future leaders required by our Nation.



Published by the Joint Staff, 2021  
An electronic version can be found online at: <https://www.jcs.mil/doctrine>