

# What It Means to Be a Professional

Leader Professional Development  
United States Army  
Center for Army Leadership



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## Introduction

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### WHO IS CAL

The Center for Army Leadership (CAL) is the Army's designated action agent for Leader Development and Leadership in the areas of research, assessment, doctrine, initiative management, and quality assurance to sustain excellence in the Army's core competency of growing leaders.

### INTENT OF THE LEADER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT KITS

Leadership is the unifying and multiplying element of combat power (ADP 6-0). Leader development programs are a proven method organizations can use to ensure regular improvement and refinement of critical leadership skills. In 2022, CAL began the design and development of a collection of ready-made Leader Professional Development (LPD) kits that you can use to deliver professional development sessions. These LPD sessions are designed to address topics of need; educate you on the Army Leadership Requirements Model (ADP 6-22); generate group discussion by asking thought-provoking questions; help you identify gaps in your unit, team, or organization; and determine actions leaders can take to improve the gaps.

It takes a lot of effort to create slides and briefing materials. Knowing that every Soldier's time is valuable, CAL created a pre-packaged set of materials (slides, facilitator guide, etc.) with everything you need to conduct an LPD. Now you can focus on learning and presenting the materials. Use this LPD kit as an opportunity to have a leader development discussion with others. The intent isn't for you to lecture for an entire session or read slides verbatim. Instead, think about the content, put it in the context of your unit, and get your audience talking about how to improve as Army leaders and a team.

### CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions about the LPD kits or have suggestions for additional topics, please contact CAL at [usarmy.leavenworth.tradoc.mbx.cal@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.leavenworth.tradoc.mbx.cal@army.mil).

You can also connect with CAL in the following ways:

- On the web: <https://cal.army.mil/>
- On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/USArmyCAL>
- On Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/usarmycal>
- On Twitter: <https://twitter.com/USArmyCAL>
- On YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@USArmyCAL>

You can find the materials for this LPD, as well as others, at the CAL website at <https://cal.army.mil>.

## Overview

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### PURPOSE OF THIS SESSION

The goal of this session is to teach Army leaders practical strategies for enhancing their professionalism.

The specific learning objectives for this session include:

- Discuss the importance of being a professional.
- Describe how to be a professional in the Army.
- Discuss ways to enhance your professionalism.

### TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for this LPD session encompasses NCOs from E4-E6.

The optimal facilitator-to-learners ratio for this LPD session is one facilitator to approximately 20 participants. If the anticipated audience is to be more than 20 participants, those organizing the session should consider having multiple facilitators.

**NOTE:** If the anticipated audience is greater than 50 participants, some features of this Facilitator Guide will have to be adapted. For example, instead of conducting whole group discussions, you may need to split the audience into smaller groups to ensure everyone has an opportunity to contribute. To facilitate group discussions, the allotted time may also need to be increased.

### RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

The following table lists recommended materials and equipment for facilitating this session. While these are recommended, not all of the listed equipment is required. For example, if you deliver the session out in the field and do not have access to a computer, monitor, or projector, you can still facilitate the session using just this facilitator guide and participant packets.

Materials	Quantity
Quick Start Guide	1 per facilitator
This Facilitator Guide	1 per facilitator
Participant Packet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After Action Review Form</li> </ul>	1 per participant
PowerPoint Slides	1 per facilitator
PC Computer or Laptop	1 per facilitator
Monitor or Projector and A/V cables	1 per room
Screen (if projecting)	1 per room
Chart Paper and Markers or White Board and Dry Erase Markers	1 per room

Documents can be accessed on the CAL website here: <https://cal.army.mil>

## AGENDA

The session is designed to be presented in a 45-minute block of time. Later in this guide, you will see the suggested timing for each individual slide, from which the below duration times were calculated.

Segments	Duration
Session Opening	2.5 minutes
The Importance of Being a Professional	6.5 minutes
How to be a Professional in the Army	19 minutes
Enhancing Your Army Professionalism	14 minutes
Session Closing	3 minutes
<b>Total Duration</b>	<b>45 minutes</b>







## PREPARING FOR YOUR LPD SESSION

This facilitator guide aims to provide all of the information necessary to lead a successful session and discussion on this topic. To that aim, here are steps that you should take before the session.

1. Read through this facilitator guide and review the PowerPoint slides. Make sure you feel comfortable speaking to the key points and leading the discussion(s). Based on the audience, prepare to modify discussion questions to ensure they are meaningful and apply to your specific unit/organization. The more you can get the audience discussing how they can improve the organization by applying the material, the better.
2. Be prepared to include personal experiences related to the topic or familiarize yourself with examples you can reference throughout the session. Real-life examples help tie together the individual segments, engage the audience, and enable learners to connect the content to their day-to-day jobs. Feel free to add short video clips or other materials you think the audience would find engaging.
3. Familiarize yourself with the suggested timing of slides and discussion activities.
4. Determine the anticipated audience size. Recruit additional facilitators or plan for modifications to the session if the audience size exceeds 20 participants.
5. Invite the commanding officer or organization director to speak at the beginning of the session to introduce the purpose/intent of the session. This will increase audience engagement and attention.
6. Review the additional resources so you can direct the audience to the appropriate information. Share the resources electronically via email before the session. Print participant packets ahead of the session.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The facilitator guide contains PowerPoint slides embedded with facilitation notes and discussion questions to guide you through the session. The facilitation notes include icon cues that are designed to provide visual references for you as to the type of action required, operational instructions, or other special points (e.g., discussion). Each icon is described below.

Icons	Icon Name	Descriptions
	Slide	This icon indicates that a slide should be presented. An image of each slide in the associated PowerPoint is provided. These slides help you identify which slide goes with each instructional strategy, duration, and key points.
	Duration	This icon indicates the suggested amount of time to spend on each slide.
	Key Points	This icon indicates the key points that should be covered. Although you should not read the key points verbatim during the session, you can read through it beforehand to familiarize yourself with the content.
	Discussion	This icon indicates that a discussion should be facilitated.
	Activity	This icon indicates that an activity should be facilitated.
	Resources	This icon indicates when any resource (handout, case study, example, article, etc.) should be used.

## How to Facilitate This LPD Session

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This section provides you with details on how to facilitate each slide in the session.

### OPENING SEGMENT – SLIDE 1



1 minute



- Welcome participants to this session about what it means to be a professional. This session is part of the Leader Professional Development series designed to address and generate discussion about various topics of importance and determine actions you can take to improve your organizations.
- Explain that Soldiers and Army Civilians serve as ambassadors to the world and United States Citizens. Poor representation can lead to adverse effects within the Army itself and the country as a whole. Professionals at all levels in the Army have the responsibility to ethically perform their duties to Army standards. As leaders, it's important that you take action to enhance professionalism in your organizations.
- Explain that in this session, you will learn what it means to be a professional in the Army and strategies for enhancing your professionalism.



ARMY LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS MODEL (LRM) – SLIDE 2



### Army Leadership Requirements Model (LRM)

- This LPD session focuses on the following attribute:
  - Military bearing/Professional bearing
- Learn more about the LRM by reviewing:
  - ADP 6-22
    - Describes what right looks like for all leaders
  - FM 6-22
    - Teaches you how to develop as a leader

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2



1 minute



- Explain that it's important that everyone be familiar with the Army Leadership Requirements Model, which lays out the core set of requirements of what the Army expects all leaders to be, to know, and to do. By understanding these expectations, you will be better prepared to deal with a range and variety of situations. Soldiers who regularly and successfully apply these expectations have better trained units, command climates, and leaders who possess the necessary skills to win the fight. The Leadership Requirements Model can be found in ADP 6-22 and FM 6-22, which you should also take some time to check out if you haven't already. ADP 6-22 describes what right looks like for all leaders, and FM 6-22 tells you how to develop as a leader.
- Point out that this leader professional development session ties directly to the Military Bearing/Professional Bearing attribute under the Presence section of the model. Improving your professionalism will help you make a better impression through your appearance, demeanor, actions, and words. Having a strong presence can also help you demonstrate enhanced military and professional bearing, fitness, confidence, and resilience.

**SESSION OBJECTIVES – SLIDE 3****Session Objectives**

- Discuss the importance of being a professional.
- Describe how to be a professional in the Army.
- Discuss ways to enhance your professionalism.



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3



30 seconds



- Explain that by the end of this session, you will be able to:
  - Discuss the importance of being a professional.
  - Describe how to be a professional in the Army.
  - Discuss ways to enhance your professionalism.
- To help make this session as impactful as possible, encourage participants to contribute to the discussions with their own perspectives, reflections, and experiences.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING A PROFESSIONAL – SLIDE 4**



30 seconds



- Explain that in this section, we'll discuss why it's important to be a professional.

## DISCUSSION – SLIDE 5



Discussion

• What does it mean to be a professional?

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5 minutes



- Ask participants:





- What does it mean to be a professional?

*Answers will vary, but explain that a professional is a member of a trusted and disciplined career that:*

- *Provides an important service needed by society.*
- *Is a lifelong learner that is inquisitive and completes professional development, a higher degree, and/or certification program in their area of expertise.*
- *Applies their expert knowledge.*
- *Earns the trust of society by doing ethical and effective work.*
- *Upholds standards.*
- *Always does the right thing and makes the right decisions without cutting corners.*

**WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO BE A PROFESSIONAL – SLIDE 6**

**Why It's Important to Be a Professional**

-  Commands respect
-  Contributes to mission success
-  Helps you overcome difficult situations
-  Allows you to gain trust, respect, and confidence

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1 minute



- Explain that like many other careers, being a professional has several benefits that include:
  - Having a professional appearance and demonstrating competence can help you command respect.
  - Making a good impression can encourage others to contribute more to mission success.
  - Having professional bearing, including fitness, courtesy, and proper military appearance, can help you overcome difficult situations.
  - It instills pride in Soldiers and allows you to gain their trust, respect, and confidence.

## HOW TO BE A PROFESSIONAL IN THE ARMY – SLIDE 7



30 seconds




- Explain that in this section, we will describe how to be a professional in the Army.

## DISCUSSION – SLIDE 8



**Discussion**



- What are examples of how we can demonstrate professionalism in the Army?

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3 minutes



- Ask participants:
  - What are examples of how we can demonstrate professionalism in the Army?  
*Answers will vary, but some examples include:*
    - *Trust*
    - *Honorable service*
    - *Competence*
    - *Stewardship*
    - *Esprit de corps*
- Explain that professionals in the Army reflect the Army Values and the Army's approach to conducting operations. We will learn about other things professionals in the Army do next.

WHAT PROFESSIONALS DEMONSTRATE – SLIDE 9



**What Professionals Demonstrate**

- Trust
- Honorable Service
- Competence
- Stewardship
- Esprit De Corps

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30 seconds



- Explain that in addition to demonstrating the Army Values, as a professional, you should demonstrate trust, honorable service, competence, stewardship, and esprit de corps. We will learn more about each of these in more detail on the slides that follow.



## HOW PROFESSIONALS DEMONSTRATE TRUST – SLIDE 10



### How Professionals Demonstrate Trust

Setting an example of trust

Taking actions to build trust

Sustaining a climate of trust



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2 minutes



- Explain that the American people place special trust and confidence in the Army. This trust is the bedrock of the Army's relationship with the American people and Army professionals preserve this earned trust. The Army's ability to fulfill its responsibilities to the Nation depends on:
  - Trust between leaders, peers, and subordinates.
  - Trust between Soldiers and Army Civilians.
  - Trust in the Army by members and their families.
  - Trust between the Army and the American people.
- Explain that some ways to demonstrate trust include:
  - **Setting an example of trust** – Mutual trust is needed to build cohesive teams that are essential to the success of the Army. As a professional, you can set a personal example for trust by following through on commitments, safeguarding confidential information, being fair and respectful, and acting with integrity. This includes admitting your mistakes and presenting the truth, even when it is difficult.
  - **Taking actions to build trust** – Take direct actions as a professional to build trust by empowering and demonstrating care for others. This includes building on shared experiences; communicating honestly and openly; and mentoring, coaching, and counseling your subordinates and leaders. You should never tolerate discrimination and correct the actions and attitudes of those who undermine trust.
  - **Sustaining a climate of trust** – You can sustain a climate of trust in your organization by assessing conditions that promote or hinder trust, maintaining high unit morale, and informing members of their goals, actions, and results. This includes following through by acting on what you say you will do and under-promising and over-delivering.

## HOW PROFESSIONALS DEMONSTRATE HONORABLE SERVICE – SLIDE 11




### How Professionals Demonstrate Honorable Service

Upholding Army Values

Obeying laws

Doing the right thing



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2 minutes



- Explain that honorable service is our support and defense of the Constitution, the American people, and the nation in a manner consistent with the Army Values. It is our professional responsibility to contribute to honorable service every day by being ethical in how we conduct our missions, perform duties, and in all other aspects of our lives.
- Explain that some ways to demonstrate honorable service include:
  - **Upholding Army Values** – As a professional, you should uphold the Army Values (Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage), which form the principles that guide our decisions and actions. This includes fulfilling your duty by completing tasks as best as you can.
  - **Obeying laws** – You should also obey laws and legal orders whether you are in uniform or not. This includes reporting illegal, unethical, or immoral orders or actions. For example, you observe a colleague commit a crime and you report it to your superior and the authorities.
  - **Doing the right thing** – Always do the right thing by acting in accordance with Army Values even when it's unpopular or difficult. This includes addressing a colleague that is disrespectful to a restaurant staff member even though neither of you is in uniform.

## HOW PROFESSIONALS DEMONSTRATE COMPETENCE – SLIDE 12



### How Professionals Demonstrate Competence

Being a life-long learner

Executing responsibilities

Supporting development of others



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2 minutes



- Explain that as a professional in the Army, you should aim to leave your organization in an equal or better condition than when you arrived. You can do this by demonstrating competence.
- Explain that some ways to demonstrate competence include:
  - **Being a life-long learner** – As a professional, it is expected that you will seek out opportunities to improve yourself tactically, technically, and as a leader. This can include assessing where to improve your leadership capabilities and then identifying and participating in opportunities that will help you grow.
  - **Executing responsibilities** – Apply your expertise by executing responsibilities effectively and ethically. For example, after growing your expertise in a specific area, demonstrate your expertise in that same area in the field.
  - **Supporting development of others** – You should also support the development of other members, especially leaders, in your organization. Prepare others to assume new leadership positions by nesting opportunities within on-going events and protecting leaders' time. This could include creating a learning environment where you assess members' developmental needs and support their growth by providing counseling, coaching, and mentoring.

## HOW PROFESSIONALS DEMONSTRATE STEWARDSHIP – SLIDE 13



### How Professionals Demonstrate Stewardship

Using resources wisely

Understanding members' needs

Supporting Army programs



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2 minutes



- Explain that Stewardship is our responsibility as Soldiers and Army civilians to strengthen the Army as a profession. Stewardship includes caring for the people and the resources entrusted to us by the American people and ensuring Army forces are ready to accomplish their missions. This also means that we understand that our work is more than just a job.
- Explain that some ways to demonstrate stewardship include:
  - **Using resources wisely** – Take care not to waste resources and maintain resources to ensure they stay in working order by either fixing or replacing those that are damaged. For example, take steps to fix barracks when a mold problem is discovered.
  - **Understanding members' needs** – Consider what your subordinates need to be successful both in and out of uniform and contribute to mission accomplishment. You can do this by observing, listening to, and anticipating what others need both on the job and in their personal lives. You should also care for your subordinates' well-being and encourage them to exercise initiative and accept responsibility. This includes listening to a member who may have an issue at home that could benefit from counseling.
  - **Supporting Army programs** – Support Army directives, policies, and programs that focus on developing people and managing resources. To support Army programs, you should encourage members to attend training that will help benefit them individually and the organization as a whole.

## HOW PROFESSIONALS DEMONSTRATE ESPRIT DE CORPS – SLIDE 14



### How Professionals Demonstrate Esprit De Corps

Building positive climates

Setting high expectations

Encouraging open communication



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2 minutes




- Explain that esprit de corps is the collective camaraderie and cohesion within a unit. Successfully completing missions requires spirited and dedicated Soldiers who have mutual trust for one another, work together as a cohesive team, and strive for excellence. Esprit de corps is embedded in the Army culture and organizational climates and is reflected in the Army's customs and traditions.
- Explain that some ways to maintain esprit de corps include:
  - **Building positive climates** – A unit's climate is based on shared perceptions and attitudes, and affects members' mutual trust, cohesion, engagement levels, and commitment to the mission. You should make efforts to build and maintain positive climates in your organization by planning activities that help foster teamwork and encouraging fairness.
  - **Setting high expectations** – You should always set and maintain high expectations for individuals and your teams. Providing direction and setting expectations are crucial to getting the best results and promoting professional development. This includes ensuring stated expectations connect to unit objectives and mission, are clearly expressed, and are mutually agreed upon.
  - **Encouraging open communication** – When you encourage open and candid communication, you also become more approachable. You can do this by showing respect for others' opinions, even if you don't agree. For example, remain objective when receiving bad news and encourage subordinates to be open and candid in their communication.

## DISCUSSION – SLIDE 15



### Discussion



- What are some things leaders in your organization do well to demonstrate professionalism?
- What are some things that could be done to enhance professionalism in your organization?

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5 minutes



- Ask participants:
  - What are some things leaders in your organization do well to demonstrate professionalism?  
*Answers will vary.*
  - What are some things that could be done to enhance professionalism in your organization?  
*Answers will vary, but some examples include:*
    - *Demonstrating trust by setting an example when openly admitting your mistakes.*
    - *Demonstrating honorable service by reporting something unethical one of your colleagues did.*
    - *Demonstrating competence by creating a plan to enhance your skills in an area you want to grow in.*
    - *Demonstrating stewardship by creating a plan to make better use of resources available to your unit.*
    - *Demonstrating esprit de corps by assessing your organization's climate and taking steps to build on areas of strengths or enhance areas of need.*

ENHANCING YOUR ARMY PROFESSIONALISM – SLIDE 16



30 seconds



- Explain that in this section we will describe how to enhance your professionalism in the Army.

## WAYS TO ENHANCE YOUR ARMY PROFESSIONALISM – SLIDE 17



### Ways to Enhance Your Army Professionalism

 <p>Develop expertise</p>	 <p>Act professionally</p>
 <p>Earn trust</p>	 <p>Uphold Army values</p>
 <p>Be humble</p>	 <p>Value self-awareness</p>

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3.5 minutes



- Explain that some ways to enhance your Army professionalism include:
  - **Developing your expertise** – Continuously develop your expertise and competence by engaging in lifelong learning and applying that expertise in difficult situations. Also maintain your moral character and regulate your actions, both on and off duty since being a Soldier doesn't stop when you aren't in uniform. Remember that incompetence is one of the worst counterproductive leadership behaviors and usually leads to a bad organizational climate.
  - **Acting professionally** – Skillful use of professional bearing—fitness, courtesy, proper military appearance, appropriate civilian attire, behaving in accordance with established Army standards, and making the right decisions both on and off duty—sets the professional tone of the organization. Demonstrating consistent professionalism helps establish credibility and expectations, reduces uncertainty in the organization, and increases mutual respect among team members. It can define how other leaders, Soldiers, and the world judge you.
  - **Earning the trust of others** – Instead of expecting it, earn trust from both subordinates and superiors by being ethical and working hard. Subordinates also need to know that you trust them to do the job you trained them to do. When people trust you, they will be more likely to listen to you and perform better.
  - **Upholding Army Values** – Live the Army Values both in and out of uniform by upholding the laws, values, and beliefs embedded in the Army culture. This includes being loyal to the Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other Soldiers; fulfilling your duties; treating others with respect; putting the welfare of the Army and others before your own; always doing what is right; and having the courage to face your fears. (ADP 6-22) You should set an example by upholding the Army Values at work in how you treat and interact with your subordinates, when posting on social media, when acting in public, and when



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driving. For example, before posting something to social media, consider if it may be offensive to some people and how it may change their perspective of you and the Army in general.

- **Being humble** – Remember that the reward for a job well done is a job well done. Instead of making it about you, it should be about the mission and your people. You also shouldn't get upset when you receive critical feedback. Instead, use that feedback to practice becoming better.
  - **Valuing self-awareness** – Be honest with yourself about what things you are good at and what things you should improve on. Be open to feedback and use it constructively to improve your capabilities. Reflect on your performance and the effectiveness of the decisions you have made.
-

## DISCUSSION – SLIDE 18



**Discussion**



- Consider one way you can enhance your professionalism. Describe what this would look like in both your professional and personal life.

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10 minutes



- Ask participants:
  - Consider one way you can enhance your professionalism. Describe what this would look like in both your professional and personal life.


*Answers will vary, but some examples include:*

- *Developing your expertise by learning something new and applying that to your job.*
- *Acting professionally by staying physically fit and dressing appropriately.*
- *Earning the trust of others by openly admitting your mistakes.*
- *Upholding the Army Values by not breaking the law or doing things that can harm others.*
- *Being humble by sharing credit with your subordinates and colleagues for a job well done.*
- *Valuing self-awareness by listening to feedback and using it to make improvements.*

**WANT TO LEARN MORE? – SLIDE 19**

**Want to Learn More?**

<https://cal.army.mil>

 **Doctrine**  
*Provides leader expectations*

- ADP 6-22
  - Paragraphs 1-1 through 1-43
- FM 6-22
  - Paragraph 4-55
  - Paragraphs 4-61 through 4-65
  - Paragraphs 4-92 through 4-100
  - Paragraphs 4-106 through 4-108

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1 minute



- Point out that, given the time constraints, we weren't able to cover everything in detail. To learn more about what it means to be a professional, go to the CAL site and check out these resources.

**AFTER ACTION REVIEW – SLIDE 20****After Action Review**

- Complete the AAR form in your Participant Packet and return it to the facilitator.
  - The form allows you to provide feedback about this session.
  - Your feedback will be used to improve future deliveries of this session.

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1 minute



- At the end of the session, tell participants to complete the AAR form in their Participant Packet (also on the next page for your reference) and to return it to you before they leave.



- Tell participants that:
  - The form allows them to provide feedback about the session.
  - Their feedback will be used to improve future deliveries of the session.

## What It Means to Be a Professional After Action Review Form

### Purpose

The purpose of this After Action Review (AAR) is to help your organization improve its Leader Professional Development (LPD) program. Your feedback will help identify areas of this session that went well and areas that could be improved.

### Session Goals

The goal of this session was to teach Army leaders practical strategies for enhancing their professionalism.

After you participate in this session, it is expected that you will be able to:

- Discuss the importance of being a professional.
- Describe how to be a professional in the Army.
- Discuss ways to enhance your professionalism.

### Your Feedback

Answer the following question below:

Question	Your Feedback
<p><b>Were the goals of this session met? If not, explain why.</b></p>	
<p><b>What went well during this session?</b></p>	
<p><b>Are there any areas in which the session could be improved? If so, please specify.</b></p>	

**LET'S CONNECT – SLIDE 21****Let's Connect**

- On the web: [cal.army.mil](http://cal.army.mil)
- On Facebook: [USArmyCAL](https://www.facebook.com/USArmyCAL)
- On Instagram: [@usarmycal](https://www.instagram.com/usarmycal)
- On Twitter: [@USArmyCAL](https://twitter.com/USArmyCAL)
- On YouTube: [@USArmyCAL](https://www.youtube.com/USArmyCAL)

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1 minute



- Display this slide while participants are completing their After Action Review.