Maximizing Human Capital with Innovative Talent Management Strategy

CHIEFS LEADERSHIP COURSE 19-B
FLIGHT 9, EXCELLENCE

Introduction

This study will analyze the Air Force's strategy to maximize human capital and how the enterprise applies talent management processes. Additionally, the research will determine if the Air Force should leverage and adopt other corporate talent management models to effectively manage our human capital with agility. Specifically, this study will compare Air Force corporate talent management processes to industry, Army, and other civilian processes to develop strategic talent management strategies.

Current State

The 2018 *National Defense Strategy* states that talent management (TM) requires a "broad revision of talent management among the Armed Services, including fellowships, civilian education, and assignments that increase understanding of interagency decision-making processes, as well as alliances and coalitions."[1] This sentiment carries forward from the 2015 *National Military Strategy* (*NMS*), which called for a system that "incentivizes faculty, rewards critical thought, and promotes our most innovative minds. Continuous, demanding education inspires new ideas and identifies better ways to accomplish our missions."[2] This analysis will determine how well we are meeting these objectives.

Senior leaders are requesting their senior enlisted counterparts be their intellectual sparring partners in providing critical thinking conversations to propel the mission forward with the multitude of fiscal constraints. There have been many articles published in *Air & Space Power Journal* that highlight the need and proposed courses of action (COA) on how to develop and codify talent management for our officer colleagues. The Human Capital Annex (HCA) to the United States Air Force (USAF) Strategic Master Plan, dated May 2015, provided specific due-outs and milestones focused on improving talent management (see table 1).[3]

Table 1. HCA objectives and tasks supporting talent management

Identifier	Descriptor	Time Frame
TM1	Adapt human capital management and talent management practices within the Air Force to ensure an institutional human resources (HR) system capable of rapidly recognizing and adapting to the changing environment.	6–10 years
TM1.1	Develop a modernized architecture for human capital management within the Air Force that will enable talent management of an agile workforce.	0–5 years
	Employ a multifunctional research group to develop alternatives to current practices that include updated career progression models, updated career lengths, assignment processes, lateral entry, time-in-grade, and promotion processes to provide a greater variety of career paths and more individual control over career trajectories and promotion systems to meet mission requirements.	FY 19
	Expand partnership with the Office of Personnel Management, Congress, and the other services to modernize personnel management legislation.	FY 20
TM 1.2	Incorporate progressive feedback mechanisms into development and assessment processes.	0-5 years
	Study best-practice instrumentation, rollout, and follow-up processes in large, complex, diverse and successful organizations and ensure funding resources are available in programming.	FY 17
	Present actionable recommendations.	FY 18
TM 1.3	Incorporate updated HR management practices to increase accountability in areas of diversity and inclusion for senior leaders and other leaders occupying critical roles. Study best practices in accountability for diversity and inclusion.	FY 17
	Present actionable recommendations.	FY 18
TM 1.4	Partner with leading assessment experts to develop and implement in-depth assessment processes for command and other critical leadership roles. Partner with leading experts in executive assessment to develop and present recommendations.	FY 18
	Implement an actionable and affordable option.	FY 20

Source: USAF, "Human Capital Annex to the USAF Strategic Master Plan," 2015.

The Directorate for Personnel Operations (AFPC/DP2) and Accessions Branch (AFPC/DP3DA) execute force development. Functional managers are responsible for developing personnel within their functional communities utilizing institutional governance structure. Their respective organization—the Air Reserve Personnel Center for Reserve—handles Total Force Partners Force Development. Each state, territory, or district for the Air National Guard has the responsibility for their members. The successful execution of force development will maximize the capabilities of all Airmen and ensure that development opportunities are transparent and visible to all Airmen. Competency requirements at each grade/rank have been identified to produce the desired capabilities at various levels of leadership.[4] An enterprise solution still requires local commander and senior leader involvement regarding talent management.

Force development depends on the senior rater, commander/director, and supervisor; their involvement is critical in making deliberate decisions about individual members to identify and maximize the capabilities of Airmen. Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2640, *Executing Total Force Development,* outlines Airman Development Plans for officers and Individual Development Plans for civilians. Officers and civilians utilize My Personnel (MyPers) and express their respective career preferences. The enlisted force utilizes MyPers and the Enlisted Quarterly Assignment Listing Plus to express their career preferences. Airmen have a responsibility for maintaining awareness of development resources and actively participating in their career development and advancement.[5] Airmen must know and value the language of all Airmen and the institutional competencies (IC).

The Air Force relies on ICs as the foundation in the development of professional military education (PME) programs as the cornerstones in critical thinking, which is key to human capital management. Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 36-2647, *Institutional Competency Development, and Management*, implements AFI 36-2640, and outlines ICs purpose is to: enhance leadership performance, provide a set behavior standard, and translate requirements and values into behavioral indicators.[6] The Air Force develops talent through PME; the 2018 NDS states it is "to be used as strategic assets," and that it "has stagnated, focused more on the accomplishment of mandatory credit at the expense of lethality and ingenuity."[7] PME correlates with an individual's rank, providing specific focus and intent based on the ICs. Table 2 shows PME by rank as outlined in AFI 36-2640 based on the tactical, operational and strategic level.

PME is further characterized by which level of IC the member must understand for successful completion. Proficiency-level definitions below are in AFMAN 36-2647:

- Basic (B)—Airmen are focused on learning and developing a foundational skillset.

- Intermediate (I)—Airmen continue to learn and develop professional skills.

- Proficient (P)—Airmen level knowledge of issues and objectives to design and develop solutions.

- Skilled (S)—Airmen leverage knowledge of strategies and issues to develop, present, and implement solutions.

- Advanced (A)—Airmen impact the organization and the Air Force by leveraging their knowledge and expertise across the theatre to identify and address the critical success factors for complex areas.

Table 2. Career field functional, career broadening, special duty and paths (officer and enlisted) comparison

Grade	Military Experience (Officer)	Professional Military Education	Grade	Military Experience (Enlisted)	Professional Military Education
01-02	NAF / Wing / Unit / Flight AO Career Broadening / Special Duty Executive Officer SPO / FOA / Center AO	Initial Skills Training	E1-E3	CDC / OJT Upgrade Training (5-Level) Technical Training School (3-Level) Broadening Experiences: Special Duty, Retraining, etc.	E4 - Airman Leadership School E2-E3 - First Term Airmen Course E1 - Basic Military Training
03	NAF / Wing Staff Unit-Level Leadership Joint / HAF / MAJCOM AO Executive Officer SPO / FOA / Center AO Career Broadening / Special Duty	Squadron Officer School Language Training Advanced Academic Training	E5-E6	Upgrade Training (7-level) Broadening Experiences: Developmental Special Duty Retraining Special Duty, etc.	Intermediate Leadership Experiences SEJPME I Professional Enhancement Seminar NCOA DL Course AU ABC CCAF
04-05	NAF / Wing Staff Executive Officer Squadron CC Unit-Level Leadership SPO / FOA / Center AO Career Broadening / Special Duty	04 – Air Command & Staff College 04 – Joint / AFIT, EWI / AAD (AFIT)	E7-E8	Skill Level Upgrade (9-level) NAF / MAJCOM / HQ USAF / Joint / AEF Broadening Experiences: Developmental Special Duty Retraining, Special Duty etc.	Advanced Leadership Experience SEJPME II Professional Enhancement Seminar
06-07	Joint Air Staff MAJCOM NAF / Wing Staff Wing CC Group CC	Senior 05-06 – Air War College Senior 05-06 – National Defense University 05-06 – Sister Service/International School 05-06 – Fellowship Senior 06-07 – Senior Leader Development Senior 06-07 – Wing Commander Course Senior 06– 07 – Group Commander Course	E9	CMSAF Joint Air Staff CFM Wing CCC MAJCOM MFM Group CEM	Senior Leader Development Air Staff CEM Orientation CCM Orientation Chiefs Leadership Course CMSgt Orientation

PME carries forward from the 2015 *NMS*, which calls for a system that "incentivizes faculty, rewards critical thought, and promotes our most innovative minds. Continuous, demanding education inspires new ideas and identifies better ways to accomplish our missions."[8] Proficiency is built into the PME courses beginning at basic military training (BMT) or the appropriate officer accession program. Table 3 shows a comparison of where each IC subcompetency is taught and at what level.

Table 3. Proficiency-level behaviors for each IC sub-competence based on PME

B = Basic I = Intermediate P = Proficient A = Advanced S = Skilled	USAFA (Officer)	ROTC	OTS	AMS	SOS	ACSC	AWC	BMT (Enlisted)	ALS	NCO	SNCOA	CLC	USAF Supervisor Course	Advanced USAF Supervisors Course	Supervisors Refresher Course	Civilian Personnel Managemen Course	Military Personnel Management Course
Sub-competency																	
Operational and strategic art	B	B	B	B	I	P	S			B	I	P	I				
Leverage technology	B	B	B	B	I	P	S			B	I	S					
Unit, Air Force, joint and coalition capabilities	B	B	B	B	I	P	S			B	I	S					
Non-adversarial crisis response	B	B	B	B	I	P	S	B	B	I	P	P					
Enterprise structure and relationships	B	B	B	B	I	P	S	B	B	I	P	S				B	
Government organization and processes	B	B	B	B	I	P	S	B	B	I	P	P					
Global, regional, and cultural awareness	B	B	B	B	I	P	S	B	B	I	P	S					
Strategic communication	B	B	B	B	I	S	S	B	B	I	P	S	P	P	P		
Resource stewardship	B	B	B	B	I	P	S		B		P	S	P	P	P	P	P
Change management	I	I	I	I	P	P	S			B	I	P	A	P	P	P	
Continuous improvement										I	P	S	P	P	P		
Vision	B	B	B	B	P	P	S		B	I	I	S	P	P	P		
Decision making	I	I	I	I	P	P	S		B	I	P	S	P	P	P		
Adaptability	B	B	B	B	I	P	S		B	I	P	S	P	P	P		
Develops and inspires others	B	B	B	B	I	P	S		B	I	P	S	P	P	P	P	P
Takes care of people	B	B	B	B	P	P	S	B	B	I	P	S	P	P	P	P	P
Diversity	B	B	B	B	P	S	S	B	B	I	S	A	P	P	P	P	P
Builds team and coalitions	I	I	I	I	P	P	S		B	I	P	S	P	P	P	P	P
Negotiating	B	B	B	B	I	P	S		B	I	S	A	P	P	P	P	P
Ethical leadership	B	B	B	B	I	P	A		B	I	S	A	P	P	P	P	P
Followership	B	B	B	B	P	S	A		B	I	S	A	P	P	P	P	P
Warrior ethos	I	I	I	I	P	S	A	B	B	I	S	A	P	P	P	B	B
Develops self	B	B	B	B	P	S	A	B	B	I	S	A	P	P	P	P	P
Speaking and writing	I	I	I	I	P	I	A		B	I	S	A	P	P	P	P	P
Active listening	I	I	I	I	P	I	A	B	B	P	A	A	S				

Source: AF/A1DI, "Institutional Competency Development and Management," 15 September 2016.

As detailed above, the Air Force has outlined specific direction, goals, and milestones to develop proficient and high performing Airmen deliberately. It is important to analyze other models of talent management to understand the effectiveness of Air Force processes fully.

Talent management is used in the early stages of the accession process with the Air Force Work Interest Navigator (AFWIN).[9] AFWIN provides a match of jobs based on personality style and Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery scores. This matching enables the right person to get the right job and decreases job mismatches while capitalizing on performance when accession requirements do not interfere.

Furthermore, Air Force Recruiting Service talent manages regarding special warfare (SW) Airmen. Applicants take a physical ability stamina test for the specific SW career specialty, and if accepted, they continue the development process to get mentally and physically prepared. The developer must give the "thumbs up" before a job can be reserved and the applicant sent to BMT.[10] In general, the Air Force does a good job of using these early talent management tools to meet the HCA statement that "declining personnel strength and constrained annual budgets, recruiting efforts are increasingly more critical and require more precision to access the individuals we need. Operational imperatives require us to leverage diversity and inclusiveness across the force and develop Airmen with unique skills to match evolving needs and address emerging challenge."[11] Once accessed, the talent management process turns to development and retention.

Air Force Human Captial Management hinges upon the Continuum of Learning (CoL). CoL is outlined within AFI 36-2640, *Executing Total Force Development,* and is designed to integrate opportunities using the IC as outlined in AFMAN 36-2647, *Institutional Competency Development and Management. CoL* is defined as "a career-long process of individual development where challenging experiences are combined with education and training through a common taxonomy to produce Airmen who possess the tactical expertise, operations competence, strategic vision and joint proficiency to lead and execute the full spectrum of Air Force and joint missions."[12] While analyzing the effectiveness of Air Force talent management, it is important to discuss private sector and other service processes.

Private Sector and Army Processes

Talent management in private sector industry is just as robust and vital as it is in the Air Force. Many leading business industry firms are investing a tremendous amount of time and effort to enhance their human resource directorates as evi-

denced in the plethora companies, programs, and articles when you do a simple internet search. In a recent article from *Human Resource Magazine* titled "Creating and Effective Human Capital Strategy," a major focus is put on measuring an organization's progress toward being a strategic human resource business partner.[13] With an ever-changing, diverse workforce and global competition at its height, organizations will need to focus on talent management programs to continue sustainable performance into the future. The Air Force is no different. In the civilian sector, human resource professionals can add value by providing administrative support service and becoming strategic partners who can help corporate leaders develop long-range business strategies. *Human Resource Magazine* provides a detailed checklist to aid organizations in determining how strategic they are (see table 4). Some of the key aspects of this checklist regarding measuring human capital strategy focus on the organization's current talent pool, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and the overall human resource strategy of an organization.[14]

In studying talent management best practices, the Black Rock Corporation must be considered. The Black Rock Corporation is the world's largest asset management firm, and they rewrote the playbook on talent management. One of the key aspects that make this company so successful is their approach to strategic and operational insight into fields such as talent planning and recruitment, ensuring a high-performance culture, developing employees, talent reviews, accession planning, and networking and collaboration tools.[15]

The Black Rock Corporation has developed an extensive process for reviewing all employee's talent reviews and promotion opportunities. This organization targets employees whose diverse background and expertise will benefit the organization into the future.[16] The Air Force has a similar strategy currently in place for their enlisted Airmen concerning human capital strategy—the incorporation of enlisted development teams (EDT). The enlisted Airmen have leveraged these Air Force specialty teams to vector the most qualified individuals to serve in key leadership positions within their Air Force specialty. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that the EDTs are not consistently aligned with the Air Force. Each team is composed of career-field specific experts, and not all EDTs are currently using multiple avenues to determine the right individuals are vectored into the best positions.

Networking and collaboration tools are another one of Black Rock's strengths. This innovative organization is leveraging online chat rooms and a collaboration hub to foster dialog between employees and senior human resource managers. This initiative allows the firm's leaders to truly engage with their workforce to determine the future goal for each individual, as well as form a basis for future opportunities within the organization.

Table 4. How strategic are you?

How strategic are you

Review these four checklists to rate your behavior as an HR strategic partner. Check all that apply. The questions create a continuum of progress from least to most strategic.

How do you manage talent?
By:
- Maintaining records
- Auditing and controlling
- Servicing as human resource service provider
- Developing HR systems and practices

How do you engage in strategic business activities?
Do you:
- Help identify or design strategy options
- Help plan implementation for strategy
- Help identify new business opportunities
- Assess the organization's readiness to implement strategies
- Help design the organization structure to implement strategy
- Assess possible merger, acquisition or divestiture strategies
- Work with corporate board on business

What is your HR strategy?
- A data-based talent strategy
- A human capital strategy integrated with business strategy
- A provider of analytical support for business decision-making
- A provider of HR data to support change management
- A driver of change management
- The author of rigorous data-based decisions about human capital management

How well do you measure HR effectiveness?
Do you measure efficiency by:
- Measuring the financial efficiency of HR operations such as cost-per-hire, time-to-fill or training costs
- Collecting metrics that measure the cost of providing HR programs and processes
- Benchmarking analytics and measures against data from outside organizations

Do you measure impact by:
- Measuring the business impact of HR programs and processes
- Measuring the quality of the talent decisions made by non-HR leaders
- Measuring the business impact of high vs. low performance in jobs

Source: Lawler and Boudreau, "Creating an Effective Human Capital Strategy," *Society for Human Resource Management,* August 1.

The Air Force has a similar tool—MyVector—that allows enlisted Airmen to align with mentors and map out a career path that best suits them. This tool is underutilized and is not capturing the potential of all enlisted members. MyVector is a career-field specific tool the EDTs can utilize to make key leadership moves. If all members take advantage of this tool and their future roles within the

Air Force, the EDTs leverage talent management more effectively within their Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC). The Air Force must continue to learn from leading-industry best practices, along with other organizations within the DOD, such as the United States Army (USA).

The USA has determined it must recruit competent Soldiers and continuously develop its service members for employment to optimize performance. To meet the needs of the service component, the *Army Talent Management Strategy (ATMS)* institutes talent management as its strategic concept to exploit human capital management and includes Army leadership's objectives to meet its future requirements upon the complex battlefront and enhance Army readiness. This is in line with Air Force initiatives as evidenced by the statement that "defines the emerging necessity for our Air Force to become a more agile, diverse, inclusive, and capable force in a rapidly changing environment. Success in that endeavor rests squarely upon providing the right Airmen, sufficiently developed, equipped, and organized, to defend national interests through airpower."[17] For years, the Army has addressed "competency" as a desired attribute of its Soldiers but has evolved to further state it is necessary for one to be "talented." Much like the Air Force, the ATMS aims to build upon one's talents and form teams of talented professionals to sustain its workforce and meet the challenges of tomorrow's operational environment.[18] By optimizing the productivity of each Soldier and aligning an individual's unique talents against organizational talent demands, the Army ensures the mutual benefit of both the individual and the service component by aligning the most talented personnel to the right job at the right time, assigning a Soldier where the member can maximize his or her contributions.[19] This study focuses on what the Air Force is currently executing regarding talent management. Additionally, it compared some private sector and sister service approaches to talent management. Next, research will analyze performance gaps this study revealed in talent management.

Agile Methodology. The Air Force HCA states that it will take agile and innovative approaches to meet talent management and Airmen retention challenges. The HCA states, "In addressing human capital, A Call to the Future emphasizes how our Service will 'pursue a strategically agile force to unlock the innovative potential resident within our Airmen and then it follows under Intended Audience.' This document is intended for action by Headquarters Air Force, Major Commands, Core Function Leads, and Total Force Component leadership to provide direction in developing policies, procedures, and program choices."[20] Yet it has specific timelines and due-outs following a top-down waterfall project management model. Currently, the HCA addressed six strategic goals; however, the only progress to be found remains in the strategic and theoretical realms. The

Air Force can better address progress if it were to follow the US Digital Service (USDS) playbook based on agile innovation methodology, which has already demonstrated successful results.

In the USDS *Fall 2017 Report to Congress*, there were 11 projects underway that all had met significant milestones using this methodology, to include delivering an online training environment to the Transforming Federal Information Technology (IT) with Digital IT Acquisition line-of-effort. This innovation framework grants access to the Airmen at large and allows for all three tactical, operational and strategic level domains to provide immediate and continuous user input/user experience feedback. Additionally, it could leverage Airmen as force multipliers in the development of such applications.

The entire force has the desire to tackle the major objectives outlined in the HCA. To facilitate and energize a collaborative total force effort, a transparent forum where the major lines-of-effort are managed, should be created and highly publicized. As new ideas and items are being developed, Airmen should be able to use and provide that iterative feedback and more rapid delivery to the field. This type of environment would also benefit from the natural innovative and collaborative spirit of the Airmen voluntarily contributing and participating in the processes.

Research-Focused Gaps

Accessions. Experience and research identified a disparity in our ability to gain and appropriately use the talent of the new accessions. New recruits are joining the Air Force with completed (or almost completed) advanced degrees; however, they are not being gained to the equivalent AFSC. Often times due to recruitment quotas, ASVAB scores or simply a desire to serve now and do not want to wait for the specific AFSC to become available for a "guaranteed job." Alternatively, those who are interested in joining the Air Force take a significant pay cut from their civilian job, which means the Air Force is missing out on these creative thinkers who have experience to enhance the mission.

Career Talent Management. Based on the professional experiences of the team, current talent management practices focus mostly on officer development. Talent management for the enlisted force is limited to human resource management programs geared toward matching talent against vacant authorizations based on rank, AFSC and skill level. The few unique opportunities offered to the enlisted ranks either focus solely on developing advanced education competencies, enhancing leadership and management skills or broadening functional skills, none of which provide a clear path to maximize the return on investment.

Methods for attracting new talent through accessions are outdated, therefore limiting the pool of prospective candidates. The *NMS* specifically states: "Our military and civilian professionals are our decisive advantage. They are the foundation of our operational excellence and our ability to successfully innovate. Therefore, we are dedicated to building creative, adaptive professionals skilled at leading organizational change while operating in complexity. To accomplish this, we are evolving our organizational culture and strengthening our leadership."[21]

Agile Methodology. The real challenge for the Air Force as a whole will be to create the ecosystem of Innovation and agile project management to accomplish its goals of transforming itself from the industrial age model to an information age talent and human capital management model.

Proposed Courses of Action

Accessions COA. Another avenue to consider would be to institutionalize career option changes. One way could be to reduce standards for entry based on the AFSC entering to attract a larger talent pool, supporting retention and talent management with pay incentives, or adjusted pay tables based on an increase for scope of responsibilities, leadership positions held and their education level. For instance, Airmen joining with a master's degree within the AFSC become staff sergeants versus an Airman Basic. Recognizing leadership skills are gained as they grow within the Air Force, yet they often have leadership skills from their civilian experience, similar to how an Airman who enters the Air Force with a master's degree in Music becomes a technical sergeant after training. Institutionalize changes that encourage potential recruits to view military service as a viable career instead of a means to an end.

Career Talent Management. While the Air Force has stated the vision of talent management, there is an obvious disparity between the opportunities available for our enlisted and officer corps. The Air Force needs to enhance the current talent management platform, utilizing MyVector and mimicking (and improving) existing officer initiatives, focusing on Airmen once they become career Airmen. A MyVector or LinkedIn type program links that Airmen to their career field manager beginning the talent management and vectoring them to a strategic position. By introducing talent management earlier in an Airman's career, we will gain a greater return on investment, developing specific individual Airmen plans like our officer and civilian counterparts have available. The Air Force needs to expand on the partners with industry to the enlisted; attending Exxon, Google, or Coca-Cola and seeing how agile and diverse they manage their mission gains us a more critical-thinking, disruptive innovator with a "There is no box" mindset.

AFI 36-2640, *Executing Total Force Development* provides the guidance on how the Air Force manages its most important weapon system—its people. The enlisted corps forms EDTs similar to the officer corps. These vectors intend to align Air Force mission needs with knowledgeable enlisted leaders. However, filling these positions are hindered by Air Force instructions not allowing the movement of high performing individuals due to permanent change of station (PCS) guidance. Instead of relying on filling the key leadership position (KLP) and key developmental position (KDP) positions as they become vacant from a list of eligibles (provided they meet PCS rules) and apply for the positions when published on the Assignment Management System. KLP and KDP positions tend to be at the senior noncommissioned officer level; however, talent management needs to begin earlier in the Airmen's Air Force career. The Air Force needs to thoughtfully and deliberately grow Airmen to be ready to fill the KLP and KDP positions.[22]

Agile Methodology. The current Industrial Age model of strategic initiative management works in theory; however, to be agile and innovative, the HCA should call for a holistic bridge for all Airmen to include tactical and operational levels. If the Air Force desires to implement agile and innovative methods, it should more closely follow the USDS Playbook to address talent management issues. The first two plays for innovation are to: "1. Understand what people need. 2. Address the whole experience, from start to finish."[23]

A first experiment to leverage today's technology, to meet the rapidly changing talent management skillsets and IC the Air Force needs, would be to build an application similar to LinkedIn. This app would integrate items found in MyVector, the Assignment Management System, Education and Training Course Announcements, Talent Market Place, Senior Leader Career Management System, Enlisted Performance Reports, and LinkedIn, using data metrics to match position descriptions, training, skillsets, and interests required to an individual's record would mirror what the civilian sector has developed. Also, the specific ICs and their specific competency levels and technical expertise can be better defined and leveraged, rather than the current generic training and assignments found in MyVector. This would be accomplished similarly to "Skills" and "Skills Endorsements" used in LinkedIn, providing better personnel assignment choices for career field managers and commanders. The Airmen would be more able to vector their careers, development and gain access to, and customize their military and civilian training choices by having a transparent model with realistic feedback on their current "Skills Endorsements." Further, Airmen and supervisors would have a better tool to establish goals during their Airmen Comprehensive Assessment to mentor job descriptions that match their interests and skills for future job assignments. These are all tools that are being used by the Air Force, that do not talk to

each other, and do not leverage current technical capabilities of data analytics for force development and talent management found in the civilian sector.

Conclusion

As referenced in the *Harvard Review* article, "Building a Game-Changing Talent Strategy," Black Rock has consistently outperformed their peers in the arena of talent management. This organization has a tremendous sense of pride and a concrete mission, similar to the USAF. Talent management and human capital are imperative to our *National Military Strategy*—we must retain our war-fighting edge for the all-volunteer military. Talent management has increased during the past few years, but there is still room for improvement. Given the courses of action provided in this research, the Air Force is headed in the right direction with applications such as MyVector. In an effort to attract and retain talent in the enlisted force, the Air Force will need to continue to evolve its talent management strategies as outlined in this research. As we continue to enhance our programs, we need to evolve leveraging twenty-first-century skills to develop that critical thinking sparring partner our senior leaders desire—the disruptive innovator who has the knowledge, skills, and experience in the Air Force journey. A more effective talent management system will attract more talent and produce Airmen who view military service as a career, not a job. ✪

Notes

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