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U.S. Marine Corps Talent Management 2030

Bottom line. Talent Management 2030 (TM2030) directs a series of changes that will transform our service's processes, policies, and approach to human capital management.

Why we need talent management. Our current personnel system was designed in the aftermath of World War II to meet the needs of the industrial era. It is no longer suited to the requirements of today's force or the expectations of our Marines and their families and is incompatible with the objectives of Force Design 2030 (FD2030). Without a talent management system that recruits, develops, retains, and incentivizes the most talented and best performing Marines, our modern operational concepts and organizations cannot reach their full warfighting potential, and FD2030 will fail.

What is talent management? Talent management is the act of aligning the talents of individual Marines with the needs of the service to maximize the performance of both. A talent management system identifies Marines' talents, helps them develop those talents through education, training, mentorship, and experience, and assigns them to positions where they can best contribute to the success of their units and the Corps. It prioritizes diversity of perspective and adheres to the following tenets:

- Marines are individuals, not inventory. Whereas a manpower management system views personnel as inventory or a commodity to be managed, a talent management system views personnel as individuals with different skills, strengths, interests, and motivations.
- Talents can be identified and evaluated. Data, when properly collected and analyzed, can provide powerful insights about the talents and strengths of both an individual Marine and a unit.
- Talents can be developed. While a Marine may be born with certain talents, those talents can only become strengths, aptitudes, and skills through focused individual effort over an extended period, fueled by a Marine's desire to excel. The Marine Corps can help cultivate an individual's talents with the right education, training, and experience, but ultimately the responsibility for talent development rests with the Marine.
- Matching talents to duties maximizes performance. A Marine Corps that matches Marines' talents to their duties will perform at a higher level in competition and combat.
- Incentives power the system. While all Marines are motivated to serve and seek a challenge, they are also humans, and human behavior is driven by incentives. High performing Marines should be promoted faster and assigned to our most challenging and consequential billets. They should be further incentivized to excel and develop their talents with incentives tailored to their individual needs, be it duty station preference, prioritized school selection, financial compensation, or any other action within our power to affect.
- There is always a "boat space" for talent. High-performing Marines are identified and actively retained, regardless of MOS. Talented Marines can often apply their strengths in a wide variety of positions beyond their primary MOS. When provided additional education, training, or experience, they can readily satisfy talent shortfalls elsewhere in the system.
- Data drives decision-making. Successful personnel organizations rely on data and analytics to inform both institutional and individual personnel decisions.


What Marines can expect. The changes directed in TM2030 trace four broad categories:

- New models for recruiting and retention. We will mature the force in alignment with the objectives of FD2030 by better balancing enlisted recruiting and retention and taking a data-informed approach to recruit assessment and MOS assignment. We will take advantage of new authorities to award career credit to highly qualified civilians, allowing them to enter at mid-career levels – a potent tool for attracting talent, particularly in low-density, high-demand fields.
- Modern assignments process. Through establishment of a talent marketplace and reduction in the frequency of PCS moves, we will give individual Marines more influence over the trajectory of their careers and help build family stability and unit cohesion. We will adopt 360-feedback mechanisms to help leaders better understand their own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of their subordinates.
- Initiatives to increase career flexibility. We will encourage officers to pursue career expanding opportunities to increase the diversity of their experience and education. To better align talents to requirements while improving the effectiveness of our units, we will create a dedicated career path for staff officers. We will give our most talented Marines the opportunity to change career fields without restriction, and will enhance parental leave, learning from other high performing teams which have developed smart policies to improve family outcomes and increase retention.
- Advanced digital tools, processes, and analytics. We will shed antiquated HR data systems and invest in information age capabilities consistent with industry standards. To improve decision-making across the personnel enterprise, we will prioritize data analytics. We will simplify and digitize standard administrative processes, including the reenlistment process, to save Marines' time and increase efficiency.

Implementation. While the Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs will take the leading role in implementation of TM2030, talent management is not the exclusive purview of headquarters, but a shared organizational responsibility. We all have a role to play in identifying, developing, and retaining the diverse talents within our Marine Corps: recruiters, commanders, instructors, and individual Marines at all levels – active, reserve, and civilian.

Way ahead. We will aggressively implement TM2030, moving at speed to make the required changes to our organizational structures, responsibilities, policies, and mindsets. Many of the initiatives identified in TM2030 are already underway, and all will be implemented by 2025.

The ideas put forth in TM2030 represent a new intellectual starting point for conversations about talent in the Marine Corps. I expect Marines across the force to be engaged as we continue to refine how best to identify, develop, and value the talents of our workforce.

Semper Fidelis,

David H. Berger
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Commandant of the Marine Corps