

MEETING ABSTRACTS

LEADER'S SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN A CONSCRIPT ARMY

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This presentation examines the processes and challenges involved in selecting and developing military leaders within the context of a conscript army, using the Swiss Armed Forces as a case study. It outlines the unique framework of Swiss conscription, where approximately 70% of male citizens undergo basic military training and may voluntarily pursue leadership roles through a structured and progressive system. The pathway from recruit to reserve officer and potentially to career officer involves increasing levels of responsibility, time commitment, and leadership development (1).

Key elements of the selection process include psychological assessment, values-based evaluation, and structured assessment centers designed to identify leadership potential and reinforce a positive leadership culture (2). Incentives such as financial compensation, academic credit, and practical leadership experience aim to motivate and retain capable individuals. The presentation also highlights ongoing efforts to align leadership development with values like trust, courage, empowerment, and integrity (3).

Finally, the presentation discusses both the strengths, such as a well-trained reserve pool and professional education, and challenges, like high attrition rates, competition with civilian careers, and limited time and personal resources, faced by the Swiss Armed Forces in fostering effective military leadership.

Keywords: conscription; leadership; selection; military values

References

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