

FROM WAR COLLEGES TO EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP ACADEMIES. LESSONS FROM ADVANCED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM MODELS

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Abstract

The transformation of contemporary security environments has significantly expanded the strategic responsibilities of senior military leaders. Generals and flag officers increasingly operate in contexts characterized by geopolitical complexity, technological disruption, multinational coordination, defence governance, interagency integration, and organizational transformation. Traditional Professional Military Education, largely designed around operational art, military history, defence technology and campaign planning, may therefore no longer be sufficient to prepare senior officers for strategic-level leadership in highly complex institutional environments. This paper argues that higher military education could incorporate pedagogical and curricular approaches derived from advanced executive education programs such as the Advanced Management Program (AMP), and Programs for executive development offered by leading business schools, as a way to cope with the increased complexity in complex context. The article analyses some prominent strategic-level military approaches — to identify existing convergences between senior military education and executive leadership development. The paper proposes a conceptual framework for a military executive education model integrating strategic leadership, organizational transformation, defence management, systems thinking, and interdisciplinary decision-making. It further explores pedagogical innovations including the case method, executive simulations, peer-learning systems, and strategic reflection. It explores transferable skills originating in executive development programs, into the professional military education approaches. The study concludes by suggesting that the future evolution of higher military education could likely involve increasing convergence between war-college traditions and executive education paradigms to attain a new threshold in what concerns effectiveness and efficiency.

Keywords: Advanced Management Programs; Executive Education; Military Higher Education; Strategic Leadership