

How *F.A.S.T.* Improves *One-Size-Fits-All*

One-Size-Fits-All

The military uses a 70-year-old “one-size-fits-all” personnel system that brings young people into the military in their teens and 20s, puts them into a rigid command-and-promotion structure, and removes all but the most-senior-ranking service members by their early 40s. This system has served the military well over the years, but has critical shortcomings.

Weaknesses of One-Size-Fits-All:

- Prohibits the military from rapidly acquiring needed skills or knowledge
- Limits the development of technical expertise
- Fuels the unsustainable rise of personnel costs
- Misallocates talent and minimizes individual strengths and skills
- Kicks people out of the military at their peak
- Discourages experienced, high-demand talent from joining
- Obstructs transitions between active/guard/reserve/civilian
- Inhibits professional creativity in favor of standardized career paths
- Expands the civilian-military divide
- Favors uniformity over individual merit and performance
- Prevents military spouses from finding and keeping meaningful employment

F.A.S.T.

Ensuring the nation’s continued security and military advantage, requires a fully engaged, adaptable, sustainable, and technical (F.A.S.T.) force. This flexible system recognizes that new threats should inform personnel policy. As the global security environment become more unpredictable, the United States needs a military that is capable of rapidly adapting to face emerging challenges.

Improvements of F.A.S.T.:

- Gives commanders the flexibility to quickly recruit the right skills for the mission
- Produces strong commanders AND capable technical experts
- Increases troops’ quality-of-service without increasing the cost of personnel
- Leverages individual talents to meet military needs
- Fosters a more experienced force through extended military careers
- Expands recruiting pools to access high-demand talent
- Retains talent by building an active/guard/reserve/civilian continuum of service
- Creates new avenues of service to encourage innovation
- Strengthens the relationship between the American people and their military
- Rewards exceptional performance with meaningful incentives
- Provides stability and predictability to military families