

AXL Army Excellence in Leadership

The AXL project focuses on accelerating leadership development. AXL provides an engaging and memorable way to transfer tacit knowledge and develop critical thinking through case-method teaching, filmed storytelling and interactive training. The primary products are filmed cases created in collaboration with Hollywood talent to address specific leadership issues and an easily modifiable website, AXLnet.

Filmed Cases

ICT has developed five filmed leadership cases addressing complex decision-making skills for the U.S. Army. The films, all based on real-life situations, were brought to life by experienced Hollywood screenwriters and professional Hollywood actors. The first case, *Power Hungry*, a 13-minute film set against the backdrop of a food distribution operation in Afghanistan, addresses lessons on how to think like a commander. *Trip Wire* uses the leadership challenges posed by the threat of IEDs in Iraq to consider the balance between force presence and mission accomplished, and *Red Tight* addresses interpreting threat levels in a Patriot battery operation. Working with the U.S. Army Chaplaincy, ICT developed *Fallen Eagle*, a two-part film series for squad level training told from the perspectives of both enlisted and officer ranks. It focuses on moral and ethical decision-making on the battlefield.

AXLnet

AXLnet provides a dynamic and interactive experience for students and easy-to-use tools for instructors to author customized lessons. Students can log on to view and analyze cases, including but not limited to the AXL films that ICT has developed, and even ask questions of the characters from the films. The system draws on ICT's research in natural language processing to allow students to interview characters from the cases through free-text questions. The system can also provide feedback and tailor the learning experience based on student responses.



Facts and Figures

- + 10,000+ Soldiers trained.
- + AXL videos are shown to West Point Cadets annually as part of their leadership training.

Additional Uses

ICT has an ongoing collaboration with USC's Marshall School of Business, where AXL is being used to help address business-oriented leadership and ethical issues.

Goals

- + Accelerate the development of U.S. Army leaders who need strong team, interpersonal and critical thinking skills, and cultural awareness and adaptability in unfamiliar situations
- + Focus on acquisition of leadership skills
- + Create "blended learning" applications for use in self-directed leader development and classroom instruction

USC Institute for Creative Technologies

12015 Waterfront Drive // Playa Vista , CA 90094-2536

ict.usc.edu // 310.574.5700 tel // 310.574.5725 fax // info@ict.usc.edu

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