



In the season of my career following company command, I had ample opportunity each day for professional reading. Now that I'm back in the operational force, the minutes I can dedicate towards this endeavor are limited. Between carrying the workload of an "Iron Major" and being a husband and father, the day no longer lends itself to hours spent with a book. As a result of these competing demands, I have had to seek out new ways to maintain a consistent practice of self development.

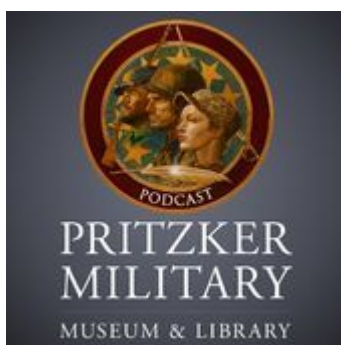
Lately, I have increased my reliance on podcasts to feed my thirst for knowledge and professional growth. Podcasts give me the opportunity to take my professional development on the go. I am able listen to them on my morning and evening commutes, while in the office, or while working out. Unlike audiobooks, I'm able to listen to multiple podcasts because of their length (15 minutes-1 hour), and their price (they're free!). Just like reading, I seek out programs that will expand my understanding of organizational leadership, military history and strategy, foreign affairs, and any other topic that will help me become a better a leader and more well-rounded military professional. If you are in the same boat as me, or just interested in using podcasts for professional development, I recommend checking some of the great content I highlighted below.

CIMSEC's Sea Control



The [Center for International Maritime Security](#) (CIMSEC), is run by a group of young, talented, and mostly snarky professionals, who produce a weekly podcast which focuses on maritime security, military technology, and foreign affairs. While the podcast is called *Sea Control*, don't be fooled by the title. Military professionals from the other Services can walk away with valuable insights into problem sets that impact every domain (land, sea, air, and human). I can't recommend this show enough, as it has been an excellent continuation to the great education I received in Newport.

Pritzker Military Museum and Library



This podcast features audio recordings of the great programming hosted at the Pritzker

Military Museum and Library in Chicago. I particularly enjoy the presentations by many of the award-winning authors who have heavily influenced military thought as well as some of the newer voices.

Leadership on Tap



Mike Skiff and Tristan Manning, host the new [Leadership on Tap podcast](#). Their show focuses on beer and leadership within military organizations—two things that always go great together! They've interviewed [Brigade Commanders](#), [military bloggers](#), and even a [Command Sergeant Major](#). This podcast is an excellent resource for leaders who are still at the tactical level and want to continue to improve their leadership abilities.

Spartan Up: Seeking Answers from Proven Leaders



This is a high-energy podcast that is great for a little motivation on those long run days. Joe Desena interviews authors, academics, athletes, adventurers, and CEOs; giving us a glimpse into some of their best practices and tips on success in all areas of life. I recommend starting with [Episode 18: Stanley McCrystal/Why Elite Special Forces Succeed](#).

The Andy Stanley Leadership Podcast



Andy Stanley is the leader of one of the largest churches in America, and because his organization is made up of mostly volunteers (people who can easily walk away from their position), his insights into organizational leadership are extremely valuable. This show is a

great resource for field grade officers and above, who lead large organizations, and with each episode being 15-30 minutes in length; it's easy to fit into a daily a commute. This podcast in particular has heavily influenced how I lead, approach work/life balance, and inspired many of my blog posts.

Ready First 6 Podcast



[Colonel Ross Coffman](#) started this [Youtube Channel](#) a year ago when he realized that getting all the leaders in his brigade in one place at one time on a weekly basis for professional development sessions was unrealistic. Instead of shrugging his shoulders, he jumped in front of the camera to film short segments on topics ranging from company leadership to maintenance programs. His podcast helped me make the transition back to the realities of being a field grade officer at the brigade level.



War on the Rocks

I'm a huge fan of their [online publication](#), so it's only natural that I listen to their podcast too. Their episodes provide great commentary on national security and foreign policy issues. To get you started, I highly recommend listening to [A Novelist and a Historian Walk Into a Bar](#) and [The War with China You've Been Waiting for](#).

Social Media Marketing with Michael Stelzner



If there is one podcast that does not look like the others, this one is it. This show is geared towards folks in the private sector, however I find value in learning about the latest trends in social media. I believe that this communication medium will play a major role in conflicts for the foreseeable future. Additionally, because this podcast focuses on marketing, it helps me better understand messaging, influencing, and insights into platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

Just as neglecting several workouts will degrade our fitness levels, I believe that neglecting self-development will negatively impact our professional performance. If you are like me, and you're in a season of your professional life in which "quiet time" is limited, I recommend listening to one of these podcasts to maintain the practice of self-development. If you have any recommendations, please leave them in the comments section below.

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