



By Tyler Inman

Any attempt to develop a comprehensive physical training strategy must begin with a basic understanding of the scientific underpinnings offered in [“A Leader’s Guide to Training for the ACFT.”](#) With those foundations in mind, the next step is to conduct a “mission-focused needs analysis” and assess how well the unit can meet those demands. If the physical demands of the mission are well-defined and prove vastly different than the physical demands of the ACFT, it may be appropriate to develop additional assessments of physical and motor fitness. If the physical demands of the mission are broad or unknown, the Army has already conducted a scientifically-based needs analysis and the ACFT is an appropriate fitness assessment.

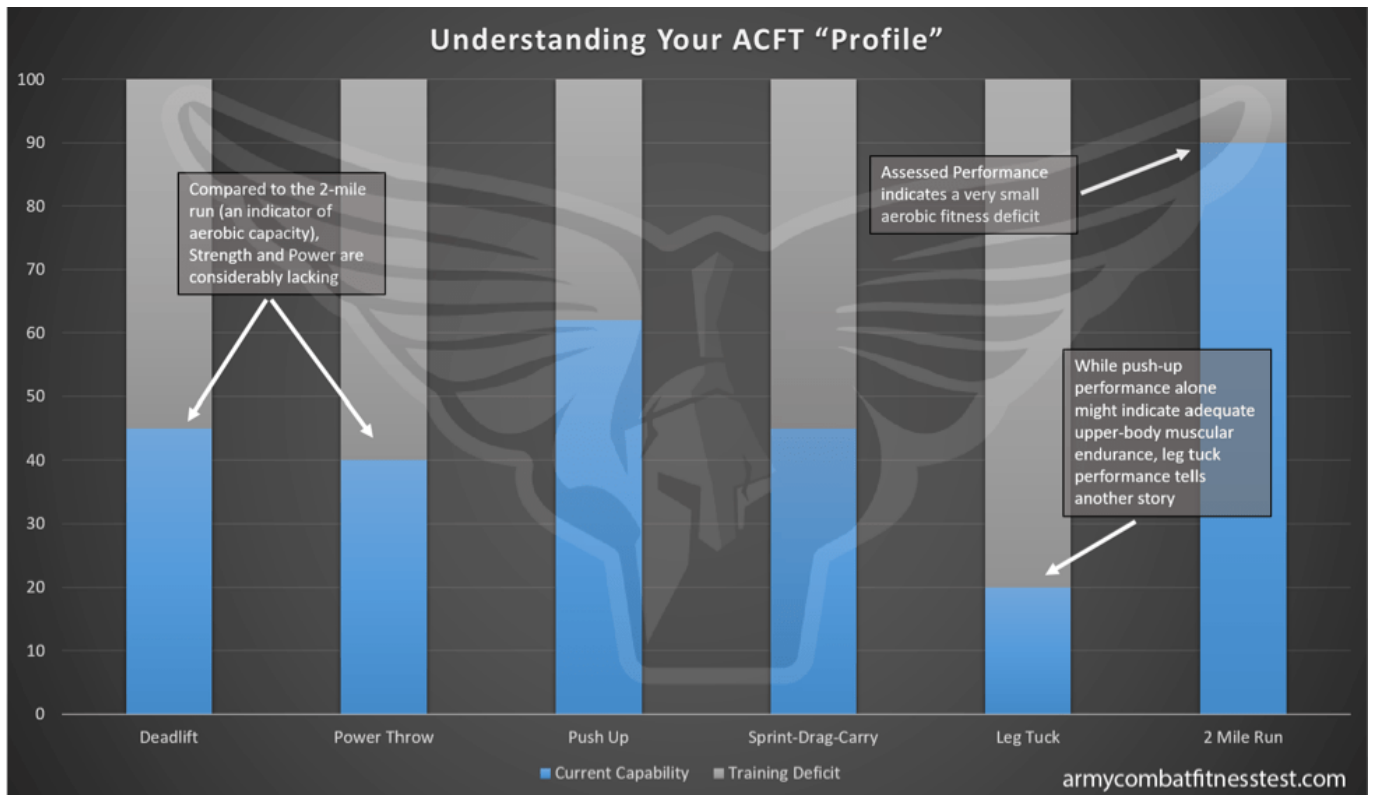
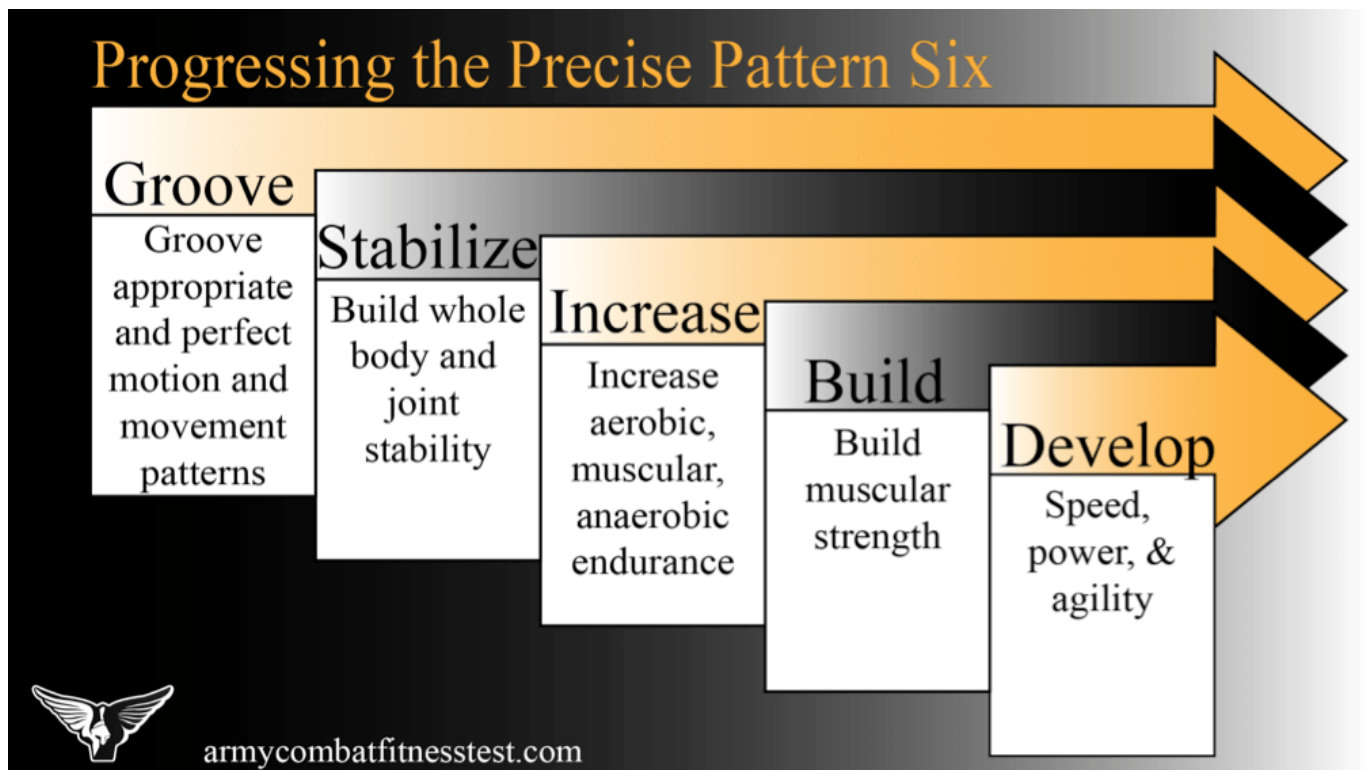


Figure 1: Representative Individual or Unit Average Performance.

Figure 1 is a graphic depiction of ACFT results that could represent an individual performance or unit averages. Visualizing the results in this manner may assist in determining the focus of a comprehensive training program. In this example, performance in the leg tuck event indicates that trunk strength and/or stability is significantly lacking. This weakness in the kinetic chain not only impacted leg tuck performance, but poor trunk stability likely contributed to weak deadlift and power throw performances as well. When compared to 2 mile run performance, sprint-drag-carry scores indicate a less-developed anaerobic energy system. Given this insight, this Soldier or unit should focus on stabilizing the trunk and increasing anaerobic endurance.



A comprehensive program should:

1. Consider the “groove, stabilize, increase, build, and develop<sup>[1]</sup>” model as training progresses through each of the fundamental movement patterns.
2. Appropriately load each pattern according to an individual’s readiness as determined by an iterative PMCS process.
3. Develop the [components of fitness](#) (aerobic and anaerobic endurance; muscular strength and endurance) according to the specific needs of the Soldier via stressing the appropriate energy systems and physiological mechanisms frequently enough to elicit an adaptation.
4. Generally, progress from prescriptions of high volumes and low intensities to prescriptions of low volumes and high intensities.
5. Intelligently sequence activities for a single training day. Elements of motor fitness are generally practiced first; precision should be maintained throughout.
  1. Warm-up: general to specific; less to more dynamic
  2. Agility, coordination, balance
  3. Power
  4. Strength
  5. Muscular endurance

6. Energy system development
  1. Anaerobic endurance
  2. Aerobic endurance

The Army's Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) vision includes important [initiatives](#) like integrating physical therapists, strength and conditioning coaches, and nutritionists at the battalion level. While these additions appear imminent for some units, it may be several years before the Army implements a broader solution. In either case, unit fitness will remain the primary responsibility of the small-unit leader. Leaders should consider the new requirements of the ACFT a call to action and approach this event like any other well-planned training: assess, plan, prepare, execute, and repeat. The models offered in this article are not a comprehensive solution, but they may serve as a guide as junior leaders develop their own innovative techniques to train Soldiers like warrior-athletes.

### **Sample Week of Training. Focus: Trunk Stability and Anaerobic Endurance**

*\* This is not an introductory week of physical training and not intended for beginners. Instead, it is intended to demonstrate how training should be sequenced within a single day, and how the various components of fitness can be addressed during a single week.\_*

#### Monday - Hinge & Horizontal Pull

**Warmup.** 3 rounds of: banded RDL (10 reps); knee-hug lunge-twist (10m); static inch worm (5 reps)

**Develop.** 3 sets of: hip extension (15 reps) + ring row (10-12 reps)

**Run Specific Warmup.** 10m A-march, 10m hi-knees, 10m A-skip, 1x400m run @ 50%, 1x400m run @ 75%

**Anaerobic Interval Training.** 6x400m repeats @ 90% of max effort (1:4 work to rest ratio)

**Cool-down.** 5-10 minute jog or bike

#### Tuesday - Squat & Vertical Push

**Warmup.** 3 rounds of: spiderman crawl w/ elbow drop (10m); shoulder pass thrus w/ PVC pipe (10 reps); scap depressions (10 reps); then: 3 rounds of Cindy (5 pull-ups, 10 push-ups,

15 squats).

**Power.** 5 x single broad jumps; 3 x 15-20lb reverse medicine ball toss

3 x double broad jump (w/ pause); 3 x 15-20lb reverse medicine ball toss

5 x triple broad jump (no pause); 3 x 15-20lb reverse medicine ball toss

**Groove.** 3 sets of: 15 goblet squats + 15 standing DB/KB shoulder press

**Stabilize & Increase.** 6 rounds for time:

Single arm farmer's carry 20m right arm

Single arm farmer's carry 20m left arm

80m shuttle sprint (sprint 40m to start line and 40m back to KB/DB)

### Wednesday - Lunge & Vertical Pull

**Warmup.** 3 rounds of: 30 sec deadbug hold, 30 sec contralateral deadbug; cossack squats (5RT/5LT); glute bridge (10 reps w/3 sec hold at top of each rep).

**Groove.** 3 sets of: plate overhead walking lunge (20m)

Then, accumulate 25 pull-ups (as few sets as possible; if you can do this in 2 sets or less, accumulate 40 pull-ups)

**Increase.** Aerobic endurance training - 20 minute bike, run, row, versa-climber or stairs @ 60-65% max heart rate (talk-test)

### Thursday - Move Under Load

**Warmup.** 3 rounds of: knee-hug lunge-twist (10m); static inch worm (5 reps); pillar hold w/ hand reach (5RT/5LT)

**Stabilize & Increase.** Ruck 4 miles (15 min/mile)

### Friday - Hinge & Horizontal Push

**Warmup.** 3 rounds of: air squat (15 reps); lunge w/ jump switch (5RT/5LT); captain morgan's (5RT/5LT)

**Groove & Increase.** As many repetitions as possible in 7 sets of:

KB Swing - 15 seconds

Rest - 15 seconds

HRPU - 15 seconds

Rest 15 seconds

**Run Specific Warmup.** 10m A-March, 10m hi-knees, 10m A-skip, 1x400m run @ 50%, 1x400m run @ 75%

**Anaerobic Interval Training.** 8 Sets of: 30:60s (30 second run + 60 second walk)

**Cool-down.** 5-10 minute jog or bike

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<sup>[1]</sup>McGill, Stuart. "Core training: Evidence translating to better performance and injury prevention." *Strength & Conditioning Journal* 32, no. 3 (2010): 33-46.

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