



By Joe Byerly

On Friday, 23 October 2020 [Defense Entrepreneurs Forum](#) (DEF) will hold their annual conference. [Pivot & Press](#) will be an all-day virtual event. This is a great opportunity for you to find out about an organization that has been a catalyst for so much in the military and national security community in the last seven years.

For me personally, DEF has made an incredible impact in my life over the years. There would be no *From the Green Notebook* if I never heard about Defense Entrepreneurs Forum.

Story time!

I first became aware of the organization when I was a captain. I read an article in *Small Wars Journal* titled [The Military Needs More Disruptive Thinkers](#). I believed in the idea that military leaders who thought differently could actually create change in an organization as big as the Army. So, I attended their first annual conference in 2013. That decision changed the trajectory of my professional career.

At the conference I came into contact with young officers, young national security professionals, and a Naval Academy midshipman who all believed they could help make the military better (and in some cases life better in general). For instance, [Nate Finney](#), [Rich](#)

[Ganske](#), and [Mikhail Grinberg](#) went on to launch [The Strategy Bridge](#). [Mark Jacobsen](#) created a non-profit to air drop medical supplies into refugee camps in Syria and he's still changing lives today through [his writing and teaching](#). [Michael Madrid](#) who was a midshipman at the time, is now the Executive Director for Defense Entrepreneurs Forum and Cofounder of [Project Buna Coffee](#). And I also met Naval officer [BJ Armstrong](#), who taught me that writing could fun, while at the same time teach others about history and leadership. And those are just a handful of people I met....there were so many more.

This tribe that I met in 2013 taught me about [self-efficacy](#) in the military.

People with a strong sense of self-efficacy:

- View challenging problems as tasks to be mastered instead of threats to be avoided
- Develop deeper interest and commitment to the activities in which they participate
- Have a greater sense of resiliency and recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments

As a collective, they gave me the courage [to put my thoughts in writing and share them on the blog](#). It was their example that pushed me beyond idea to action. So, if you have the time on Friday I encourage you to check it out. You never know. You might virtually meet someone who will inspire you to do the same.

Below is the schedule for this Friday's events.

[Pivot and Press Schedule](#)

08:15AM Conference Stream Opens

08:30AM Opening comments

- Michael Madrid
- Heath Murray

08:55AM Morning Workshops

- Dan Manning - *#HumanIntelligence Training*
- Lisa Gaisford - *Dcode Mini Training Workshop*

10:30AM Firestarter Fellows Panel

- Conrad Hollomon (Moderator)
- Michele Atkinson
- Raymond Kaplan
- Todd Coursey
- Eric Romero

Lunch

12:05PM Keynote

- Frans Johansson

1:15PM Afternoon Workshops

- John Grigg - *CyberWinter Studios - Hack (Apart) Your Career - How to Fund Doing What You Love*
- Daniel Hulter - *Agitare*

2:50PM X-Work Update

- TBD

3:15PM Panel - Pivot and Press

- Ryan Benitez - *Decisive Point (moderator)*
- Jake Chapman - *Alpha Bridge*
- Tommy Hendrix - *Decisive Point*
- Rebecca Gevalt - *Dcode*

4:05PM DEF State of the Union

- Updates from DEF agoras
- DEF projects
- Looking forward

4:50PM Featured Speaker

- LTG (R) H.R. McMaster

5:40PM Closing Remarks

- Michael Madrid - Executive Director, DEF

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