

FY26 GySgt Selection Board Debrief



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Purpose

After each selection board process, a comprehensive debrief PowerPoint is created to provide Marines in the fleet force with direct access to the personal insight of board members in regards to what added value or took away from an individual Marine's Record. This is a vital tool that can be utilized to better understand and prepare for upcoming promotion selection boards. These responses are collected through an anonymous survey and reflect the personal opinions of the board members.



Overview

- Performance
- MOS Credibility
- Special Duty Assignment
- Training & Education
- Adversity
- Board Preparation
- Executive Summary
- Contact Information



FY26 GySgt Board Stats

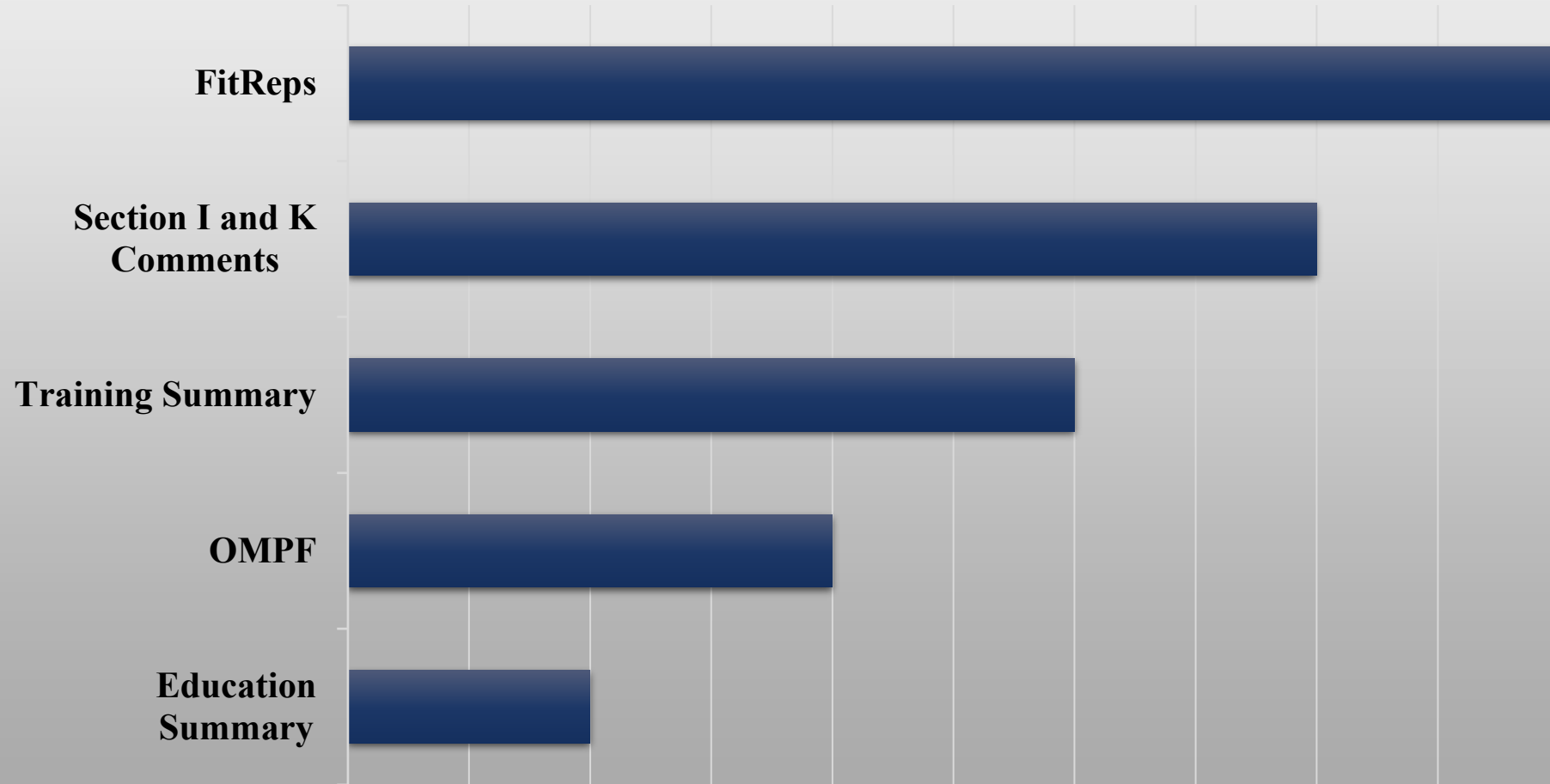
- FY26 GySgt Board consisted of a total of 6,829 Marines.
- Failed Selection 3,213 (47%) from both the above-zone/In in-zone.
- Selection Rates by zone:

Zone	Total	Selected	Selection Rate
Above Zone	2,615	761	29%
In Zone	2,664	1305	49%
Below Zone	1,550	73	5%



Performance

How would you rank these competitive factors?





Performance

When reading section I and K comments, what types of comments added value to the Marine?

- The most valuable comments were the ones that spoke to the Marine's technical capabilities, leadership, and promotion recommendation in reference to MRO's peers (with, above, and needs of the Marine Corps).
- Comments that matched the marking and spoke to the board of future potential in the next rank. Comments that spoke to MROs demonstrated performance at the level expected of the next grade.
- Comments that speak to a Marine's attributes. No need to restate what the MRO listed in their accomplishments or copy and paste what the RS said. Avoid using fluff to fill the sections I and K.
- Force multiplier- above and beyond- beyond grade- ahead of peers.
- Facts, number/word comparison showing what they did vs. what is considered good/great. Sections I and K comments lining up (same picture given from both).
- Opening comments with direct recommendations absent superfluous wording, e.g., immediate selection for GySgt. The absence of a recommendation was considered to be "not recommended." Sections I and K's qualitative comments on leadership, teamwork, value to command, and subject matter expertise provided insight into future service contributions. Explanations concerning record anomalies and RS/RO competitive RVs. Section I comments that provide context for general understanding of quantitative performance, i.e., PMOS statistics are not understood by those outside that specific community. Section K comments that discuss greater value to the Marine Corps and Joint Force, as well as level-setting performance based on more experience. Speak to the briefer and board, not the Marine.
- The comments that added value within Section I/K were one describing the Marine's value to the mission, unit, and service. Also, if the Marine should be promoted ahead of peers, with peers, or at service needs, on several occasions, I found that the RS marking didn't align with the MRO's comments.
- Key billets held above Marines' grade/rank and their impact. Promotion recommendation.
- Quantitative comments that were realistic and technical or leadership abilities that spoke to potential performance of the next grade. Comments like enthusiastically or strongly ended up being superfluous. "Promote ahead of peers" was a clear indicator of top comments. Any comments talking to specific periods during observation of outstanding work that can be used during the brief. If an RS/RO calls out past adversity and says that the Marine has overcome the adversity and is currently performing well.



Performance

When reading section I and K comments, what types of comments added value to the Marine? Continued...

- Meaningful and accurate comments. When an RS or RO said promote ahead of peers, it will make a great warrant officer or commissioned officer but was a RV of 80 or a 3 block, which made no sense and left me guessing.
- Key words like "a must promote, above his peers, performance has been exceptional, already conducts themselves as a GySgt/operating as a seasoned GySgt, hands down one of the best SNCOs, a master of his MOS, consistently performs above expectations.
- Promotion recommendation with categorization of not, with, or ahead of peers.
- How, as an RS/RO, would you brief this Marine on the board, 1-6? "Promote with peer" "Promote ahead of Peers" in some MOS's will not get them promoted due to the grading scale on some RS/RO profiles. Marines' At Processing/Cumulative values do not support the Marine.
- promotion recommendations, comments identifying specific billets (especially if on the MOS smart card not captured in the billet description), addressing if SACO or other billets outside their MOS were due to high degrees of proficiency in their MOS, regarding awards submitted but not received yet, characterizing SNM's abilities (e.g. with supervision, mostly completes tasks of a routine nature, etc.), addressing adversity / moving past adversity, addressing future potential in or outside of MOS progression.
- When reading Section I and Section K comments, the remarks that add the most value to a Marine are those that are specific, measurable, and clearly tied to performance and future potential. Strong comments highlight quantifiable achievements, demonstrate leadership impact, and explain how the Marine contributed to mission success rather than simply listing duties. Statements that rank the Marine against peers or provide clear promotion recommendations, such as "ready now for increased responsibility" or "promote ahead of peers," are especially influential because they give selection boards meaningful context. In Section K, enthusiastic endorsements and senior-level amplification of the Marine's impact further strengthen the report by signaling command confidence and long-term potential. Overall, comments that are detailed, comparative, and promotion-focused carry far more weight than generic praise or vague statements.
- Specific recommendations for advancement, such as Promote ahead of peers, with peers, or Promote now! Helped a lot. Enthusiastic recommendations went a long way. Avoid copying and pasting from previous fitreps. Comments such as "Excellent candidate for Warrant Officer" typically reflected a "4" or "5" Marine. If the Marine moved up or down in your profile, explain why.
- Describing or highlighting the Marines' moral and ethical character, tactical and technical acumen, and the impact the Marines have made in their current position or community.



Performance

When reading Section I and K comments, what types of comments added value to the Marine? Continued...

- FitReps are not counseling sheets. Write to the board, not to the Marine. Recommend SSgts for Resident PME in MCTIMS, not in Section I and K. If there is a boarded educational opportunity they're eminently qualified for, call that out. Call out MOS burn explicitly. For example, "This Marine (06XX) is being compared to a highly competitive profile of infantry platoon sergeants." Comments should expand upon information not available on the MBS. If someone has a high 1st class PFT/CFT, don't waste the characters with comments on how physically fit the Marine is, or how they look in uniform. How are they as a leader? How well do they perform independently? Are they already performing at, or beyond, the level of a GySgt? Describe the impact on the organization. Comments that sound like billet descriptions/accomplishments don't add more information. Comments that matched the marks. "Promote ahead of peers" for a Marine with an 88 from the RS and being the lowest marked Marine by the RO on a non-SDA FITREP is not helpful. For aviation MOSs, if a Marine has a qualification not in their MBS (e.g., CDI, CDQAR, QAR), call it out in Section I and describe how it has helped the Squadron. If applicable, context in an addendum page about the competitiveness of a certain billet/unit. Is the unit made up of only hand-selected Marines? Do all Marines there require special training to even be assigned there? Is the Marine an atypical MOS in a unit, and the RS/RO knows they are giving the Marine MOS burn.
- Comments that were clear communication with the board on the MRO's performance and promotion recommendation. The report is to communicate with HQMC and not to the Marine on propensity for future service. Straightforward comments that do not sugarcoat how the MRO performed during the reporting period are of the most value. Recommendations on the ability to serve in higher billets or of greater responsibility are helpful.
- Breakout promotion recommendations and highlighting billets normally held by a senior rank (and why MRO is holding it). Not all board members fully understand how MOS-specific metrics compare with the MRO's peers. Comments to the effect of "Served in a gunnery sergeant position this reporting period and performed at the level of a seasoned gunny, MRO was selected for this role over available GySgt's due to his unique (ability, qualifications, leadership, etc), and enthusiastically recommend MRO for promotion now (especially when paired with commensurate grades). Additional comments about the profile being skewed by a unique population of reports in the RS/RO profile can answer why comments are not commensurate with grading.
- Any comment that provides legitimate context to a profile that can't be gleaned by looking at the numbers. Tell me why my first glance at this FITREP might be misleading and how to properly contextualize MRO's performance. Call out billets held above the current grade. Call out MSM-level performance that has an impact Corps-wide or is felt outside of the unit.
- Comments that explained how they would rank the Marine against other SSgt's they have graded, or actually explained what they really feel about the Marine's performance, and not regurgitated what they did.



Performance

When reading section I and K comments, what types of comments took away from the Marine's competitiveness?

- When the RS/RO re-wrote the billet accomplishments, and did not provide added value to the non-tangible capabilities of the Marine.
- Comments that spoke to MRO's need for supervision or comments with a "meets expectations when tasked" style.
- Comments like, "Promote alongside highly qualified peers." This is viewed as an elaborate way of saying "Promote with peers." Saying that a Marine is in your top 5% but is clearly marked in the lower third leads one to believe that the RS either doesn't know how to manage their profile or does not want to have a negative rapport with the MRO. Comments telling the briefer to mark the Marine a 6, and the report falls in the lower third and falls in the 4/5 block.
- Don't tell me how to vote as a board member, you don't know the whole population. RO's, don't waste time concurring with the RS - there's a checkbox for that. Make sure that the picture matches the sound. If you recommend in writing that a Marine be considered "ahead of their peers" but give them a report with an 84 RV, I'm going to discount everything else you wrote.
- The normal cookie-cutter comments, such as enthusiastically recommending for promotion, retention, and PME. Enlisted don't get selected for PME; we all go. The RS and RO make it seem that they are telling the board member that the Marine needs to be better educated.
- "With peers, to standard, does what's expected".
- Lackluster or absence of recommendations left the board room to interpret meaning, which often turned against the Marine. Do not regurgitate the billet accomplishments; the briefer and board do not fully comprehend the nuances of each PMOS. RO comments that were condensed versions of the RS comments resulted in that RO's entire assessment being disregarded. Inflated comments were an obvious "Hail Mary," especially when not paired with matching marks or were an outlier in comparison to the rest of an individual's record. These comments were also perceived as the RS/RO being unable to have an honest, difficult conversation with the Marine concerning their performance and career prospects. Recommendations for SNCOs to attend resident PME were considered "filler." ROs do not need to write "concur with RS" in Section K, as there is another portion that signifies concurrence.
- Mismatch between comments and RV/CV values.



Performance

When reading section I and K comments, what types of comments took away from the Marine's competitiveness? Continued...

- I am not sure if any comments "took away" from the Marine. Non-positive comments like "will develop with time" or "compares favorably with peers" were useful in ranking the Marine amongst the eligible population.
- Needs to attend PME, ready for increased responsibility, assign to SDA.
- When reading Section I and Section K comments, the types of remarks that take away from a Marine are those that are vague, generic, inconsistent, or lukewarm in tone. Comments that simply restate billet duties without highlighting measurable impact fail to distinguish the Marine from peers and suggest average performance. Faint praise, such as "meets expectations" or "solid performer" can unintentionally signal mediocrity, especially when stronger language is expected for top performers. The absence of clear promotion recommendations, peer comparisons, or future potential statements may also raise concerns for selection boards. Additionally, inconsistent language between Sections I and K, weak concurrence from the Reviewing Officer, or subtle qualifiers like "with continued mentorship" can imply reservations about readiness. Overall, comments that lack specificity, enthusiasm, or comparative context diminish the Marine's competitiveness and reduce the report's effectiveness.
- Ambiguous and non-committal language causes the board to attempt to interpret what is being said. Recycling billet accomplishments into the section I and recycling section I comments for the section K were extremely unhelpful. Additionally, not clearly stating the promotion recommendation was extremely unhelpful. Recommendations for assignment to PME were not helpful.
- Lack of promotion recommendation, not filling up the entire space, and writing generic accomplishments of the MRO (as opposed to characterizing MRO's performance and potential). Also, any comments that do not match the grading of the report should include an explanation of why. Some RS/RO's wrote why in the section I/K, and others addressed verbiage/grading discrepancies with a letter to the board.
- Long-winded comments about what the unit is doing or the team. Specifically talk about how the Marine advanced the team or mission. We love acronyms, but not all of us know what they mean. "Recommended for billets of increased responsibility" means nothing since you control their billets.



Performance

When reading section I and K comments, what types of comments took away from the Marine's competitiveness? Continued...

- Promote at the needs of the Corps." Especially in competitive MOSs, "Performs well with clear instructions". If an RS or RO has (7) or more Marines in their profile, comments about "limited" profiles were unhelpful (especially on non-SDA FitReps). If the FitReps is 7 of 7 and the Marine is the 80, the RS knew what they were doing.
- If the Marine should be promoted ahead of peers, with peers, or at the service's discretion. From time to time, I found comments that would expand on the Marines' impact on the mission, unit, and service.
- Sending a Marine to billets of higher responsibility or PME. Speaking about how the Marine Corps ensures accountability of its Marines and the care for them.
- Comments like "performed commiserate with grade". Also, more often than not, RO's who only used 2 or 3 lines of their section K comments gave off the appearance that they did not care for the Marine. While not something that is easily briefed from, it does feel like an implicit nod.
- The Marine has potential. Do not promote this Marine. SNM is an SNCO who will make a good Gunny one day.
- Generic wording, comments that talk about what a SSgt should be doing, or basic comments about his job without expanding on why this is making that Marine great.
- Promote with contemporaries (a person of roughly the same age as another). Some RS's & RO's use and or view this as a negative connotation, while other RS's & RO's use and or view it as a positive connotation. Some board members also interpreted like that. The word contemporaries should be removed and avoided in Section I & K comments. RS's & RO's should be direct with their comments, promote with peers, or promote ahead of peers. This will help ensure board members capture the right position on that Marine.
- I and K comments sound like they are talking about two different people. Name or Gender being wrong or swapped throughout the comments.



Performance

Which area did you rely on more to paint the overall picture, the Marine's relative value or section I & K comments?

- Relative value. Especially when a Marine had multiple RS/ROs with a robust profile. Words are cheap, but I know the RS/RO thought hard about if they were going to put a Marine at the top, or bottom, of their profile. If an RS/RO had (3) or fewer Marines in their profile, I would look to their comments.
- The RV and CV gave me a first impression of the MRO. If the comments didn't match the RV/CV, then I would use the rating over the comments.
- The relative value.
- A combination of both, paint a broad picture with relative value, and then use section I & K comments to confirm that picture or cause me to reevaluate that picture.
- All areas played a major part, but the comments gave me the best picture when voting or recommending a Marine for promotion.
- To paint the overall picture, I relied primarily on the Section I and K comments, using the Marine's relative value as supporting context. Section I provides the detailed narrative of the Marine's performance, highlighting mission impact, leadership, initiative, judgment, and specific accomplishments. It explained not just what was achieved, but how and why it mattered. Section K added a broader perspective from the reviewing officer, offering additional context regarding competitiveness, potential, and how the Marine compares across the unit. Together, these sections provided the qualitative depth necessary to fully understand performance. The Marine's relative value was important as a quantitative indicator of standing within the reporting senior's profile, but it served to reinforce the narrative rather than define it.
- Relative value paints a picture of overall consistent or non-consistent performance. When section I & K comments are clear and straightforward, they paint a different picture. I relied more on the RV and CV because of the consistent inconsistencies in section I & K clarity.
- Both, but if I had to pick one: comments. It is easy for a comment to explain away a grade, but it's much rarer for a grade to explain away a comment. There were some instances of where comments were lukewarm with high grades on established profiles with no explanation, where the Marine was given the benefit of the doubt, and it was assumed the RS/RO lacked performance writing proficiency.
- Relative values matter more as it was a snapshot from multiple leaders or multiple reports. Comments helped if they were enthusiastic or really bland. RS and ROs typically protect their values and boxes but offer their words freely. Example: "My highest recommendation for promotion," then put the Marine in the 6 block.
- RS & RO Comments. When RS's and ROs highlight the Marines' tactical and technical acumen, contributions to the unit, and physical fitness, the rest of the information paints a good overall picture for that Marine, along with the information the board members have at their disposal.



Performance

Which area did you rely on more to paint the overall picture, the Marine's relative value or section I & K comments? Continued...

- RV/CV; especially when the Marine has multiple reports from multiple RS/RO. This provided a better understanding of the whole Marine, after reviewing FitReps, there is a larger number of RS/RO that grade low, but give above average remarks.
- Generally, both when matching, comments when RV and comments don't match.
- Section I and K painted a better picture when the comments were personable. Any comment that restated what was accomplished by the MRO took up valuable room within the respective section.
- I prioritized roughly in this order: RO marking (especially in mature and widely-distributed profiles), RV (especially in profiles >10), Section K promotion recommendations or standout comments, Section I comments, and whether or not they matched the markings.
- Overall, I focused on the RV and CV, and if their reports were miscued by SDA or MOS burn.
- When personally building a package, I would use the Marine's relative value as a starting point, and then would look to see if the comments matched the numbers, and then would make my overall recommendation. As I was listening to board members brief other Marines, I would pay more attention to the relative values under the assumption that a Marine who performs well will perform well under most circumstances, but I would also listen for comments that seemed to be incongruous with the numbers, and in those cases, I typically went with the numbers.
- Used them both; some you had to understand the Marine being briefed.
- The spread of RVs provided the initial assessment, which was either confirmed or adjusted by the comments. The RS/RO profile sizes and spreads further shaped the board's opinion of the RS's/RO's assessment. When able, marking/comment mismatches were discarded in favor of larger profile RSs/ROs and/or more aligned FitReps.
- Relative value quickly painted an overall picture, and comments were used to confirm or clarify.
- Words/comments have meanings. Relative values are a huge gray area.
- Both.
- Section I & K comments.



Performance

How is it viewed when the RS places a Marine in the Lower third (80-86.66) and RO grades the same Marine at the top of their profile (in the 7 or 8 block)? In your opinion, which held more weight, the RS or the RO and why?

- It depends on the section I and K comments. More often than not, this seemed to be the RO trying to fix or maintain their profile. More upsetting would be finding RS markings in the Lower third with extremely flowery comments. Then I have to use the history of the Marine to try to determine if this is a legitimate lower third FitRep and the RS doesn't want to have a difficult FitRep debrief, or if the RS was trying to maintain a profile.
- The RO held more value. Generally, I would like to see both the RS and RO aligned, but the ROs had more experience and larger profiles therefore a better understanding of how to grade and place Marines within an established profile.
- Depends on the length of the report, previous RS/RO relationship (i.e., was the RO the same while the RS changed), and the profile size of each. A mature RO profile generally held more weight than a small RS profile in the subject cases.
- I look at the RO's grading as holding more value over the RS, "IF" it is coming from Lt. Col. or higher. 6,7,8 block marks from an RO - O-3 are viewed as less likely of a rock star. By the time a Maj is RS or RO, they have a great understanding of how FitRep works, IRT grading, and have the experience in the MC on what a great Marine overall looks like.
- RO held more weight due to generally small profiles of RSs that did this, with an RS with a robust profile. RO comments held more weight due to direct observation of SNM. In a few instances where the RS became the RO, conflicting markings went to section I/K comments or to the RO for having more perspective (oversight of more reports). The service (USN/A) department of the civilian writing also was taken in to consideration.
- When a Reporting Senior (RS) marks a Marine in the lower third of their profile (80–86.66) but the Reviewing Officer (RO) grades that same Marine at the top of their profile (7 or 8 block), it creates a noticeable disconnect in the report. It trained me to look for consistency between profiles, comments, and marks. A spread like this signals that the RS and RO did not see the Marine's performance the same way. That inconsistency can raise questions such as: Was the Marine average at the company level but viewed more favorably at the battalion level? Was the RS protecting their profile? Or is there disagreement about performance?
- Depended on the overall profile of each and whether they made a comment addressing the grading.



Performance

How is it viewed when the RS places a Marine in the Lower third (80-86.66) and RO grades the same Marine at the top of their profile (in the 7 or 8 block)? In your opinion, which held more weight, the RS or the RO and why? Continued...

- Whoever had the larger profile was the one who carried the most weight. Also, consideration was given to whom had the longest observed time; if the RS observed MRO on multiple reports and the RO only had one but gave high markings, then the RS's marks were more relevant.
- My first assumption is that the RS and RO don't really communicate regularly about their Marines. In cases where the RO legitimately non-concurs, I tend to favor the RO opinion - they have usually seen more Marines in this grade and MOS. This is especially true for populations like 0369, where many of the RS's are junior Lts. The counter to this would be FITREPs written by senior CWOs or LDOs with large profiles - I tend to assume they know more than the RO about the billet requirements.
- RO, in my opinion, holds more value because of larger profiles and more experienced grading. Also, in most cases, if the RO knows of the Marine and ranks them higher, they obviously are familiar with them and their abilities and is in good views of that RO.
- In this situation, I normally gave more weight to the RO because typically the RO was more experienced. Cases where the RS comments may have held more weight were when the RS clearly had the more mature profile.
- Most of the board placed greater value on the RO assessment in comparison to the RS. Our perception was that the RO had greater experience and a broader view of the rank for comparison. We often reviewed the number of FitReps in each profile to better inform our impression of an RV's weight or RO's Block spread. However, recruiting and drill field RSs were often considered as more accurate assessments in comparison to the ROs.
- It depends. Is the RS a 2nd Lt with (4) or fewer FitReps, and the RO is a Major with (1), Weight going to the RO. If the RS has (8) or more FITREPs, and the RO (LtCol or below) only has (1), I would weight the RS. Even if the RS was only a 1st Lt. The RO may just be focused on building their profile. Does the Marine have an 80 RV from other RSs with robust (i.e., 7 or more FITREPs) profiles? Is it a pattern? And the new RS with a small profile can tell this Marine will likely be their 80 for a long time.
- In those situations, I found that either the RS had a small but competitive profile or that more seasoned RO viewed expectations differently from the RS. When an RS with a health profile would make that marking, then I used those comments and rating more frequently than not.



Performance

How is it viewed when the RS places a Marine in the Lower third (80-86.66) and RO grades the same Marine at the top of their profile (in the 7 or 8 block)? In your opinion, which held more weight, the RS or the RO and why? Continued...

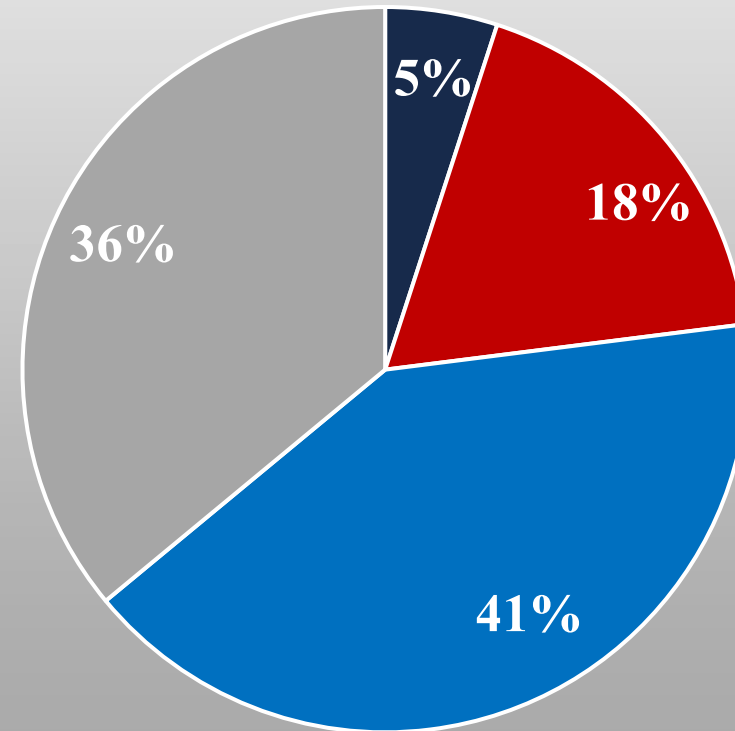
- It causes the board to question the relationship between the RS and the MRO and the RS and the RO. Is it profile management, does the RS have something personal against the MRO, or does the RS simply not know how to communicate? When this would happen, which was too often, it caused the board to spend more time looking at older reports to try and understand the Marines' likely performance. There would be some deliberation on the ranks of the RS and RO, but it was a distraction from the process.
- If this situation occurs early in the RS profile, it is assumed that the RO ranking is correct and the RS does not have the profile space to grade the Marine appropriately. There is a trend in ROs from other services putting all Marines in the 7 or 8 block or only having 1 or 2 reports that are highly ranked. If the RS is a Marine with an established profile, the RS ranking holds more weight in that situation. If the RS and RO are both Marines with established profiles, the RO concurs with the RS, and neither provides context, then I used the billet and rank of the RS and RO to try to establish who was in the best position to characterize the Marine's performance, which tended to be the RS.
- In my opinion, the RO held more weight as they often had a larger profile, or it was assumed that they knew how to manage their profiles better.
- The RS. This one held more weight to me, as the RS generally interacts with this Marine daily vice the RO. This is not true for every Marine, but for the most part, yes.
- I defer to the higher mark and give the Marine the benefit of the grading. Though it provides more value when the discrepancy is addressed in the report.
- RO, due to the larger profiles and more experience.
- When I see this, I look at other FitReps to gauge which one will have more weight.
- It's confusing when the RS/RO values differ. I defer to the RO's opinion; it held more weight due to experience and size of their profile.



Performance

When a Marine received three reports from the same RS who had a small profile and the Marine was the 80, 90, and 100 RV or lower third, middle third, or upper third, how did you view/interpret the Marine's performance on that RS's profile?

- **RS Summary (bottom of MBS) mattered most**
- **Average**
- **If the higher report was most recent, then above average**
- **The most recent report canceled out the others regardless of value**





Performance

How is it viewed when the RS/RO comments did not match the relative value/comparative assessment?

- Depends on how the Marine was graded by other RS/RO(s), if the report is in line with the rest of the Marine's reports, I trust the RV/CV; else, I give more value to the comments.
- Not favorably, however, in these instances, I used comments.
- The RV was ignored, and the most positive comments were used to brief the Marine.
- I assume the RS/RO don't understand the FitReps process and the concept of RV, and therefore can't be trusted to manage their profiles to accurately represent their Marines. I discount accordingly.
- The RS and RO weren't honest with the MRO and were just putting fluff to fill space.
- If the comments were glowing but the RV comparative assessment did not match, I typically viewed that as the writer either did not know how to manage their profile or did not have the courage to tell the Marine exactly where they stood and that they hoped the board would be able to read between the lines. If a Marine was written on as the best thing since sliced bread but was an 80 RV or in the 4 block, I went with the numbers.
- Passive-aggressive.
- Unless the mismatch was explained in the comments or either the comments/RV were more aligned to overall career performance, those assessments were not considered as part of the Marine's assessment by the board.
- I focused solely on their RVs.
- I used the RV and CA as benchmarks, except when the RS and RO stated in their comments that they had a competitive profile.
- I rarely ran into the issue where the RS/RO comments didn't match. But when it didn't match to the detriment of the Marine, the benefit goes to the Marine.
- That I shouldn't continue to look at this FitRep because I do not know how the RS/RO wants me to view this Marine.



Performance

How is it viewed when the RS/RO comments did not match the relative value/comparative assessment? Continued...

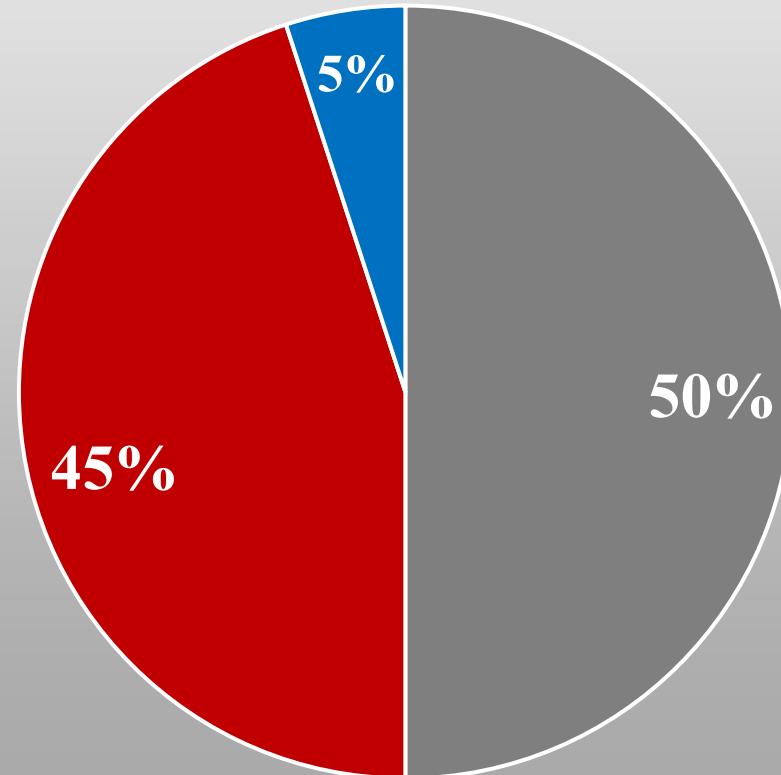
- It left me guessing. Why are the RS and RO on a different page? If it was called out within the FitRep, great! If not, I had to assume and look deeper into the record and historical FitReps.
- When this happened. I had to pay more attention to make a good determination. Usually, comments made more of an impact unless it was transparent that the RS/RO were just trying to glorify that Marine.
- Depends on the profile size; I generally discounted better comments when the RS/RO had large enough profiles to make the comments and values match.
- I give the Marine the benefit of a doubt. Go over the positives in the reporting period.
- Took more time to read billet descriptions, billet accomplishments, awards, MOS smart cards, and determine why they were conflicting.
- When the Reporting Senior (RS) and Reviewing Officer (RO) comments did not align with the Relative Value (RV) or comparative assessment, it was typically viewed as a credibility issue within the evaluation. If the narrative comments were highly laudatory but the Marine received a low relative value or weak comparative assessment, it created the perception of inflated language or a lack of full confidence in the marks assigned. However, if the Marine received a strong RV but the comments were lukewarm or lacked competitive language, it suggested inconsistency, poor articulation, or limited endorsement from the reporting chain.
- It made the RS/RO appear incompetent, non-caring, or lacking in attention to detail. It did not negatively impact the Marine and would typically be stated upfront when briefing.
- Sometimes it can be explained by a section I/K comment, size of the RS/RO profile, length of the report, or billet of the MRO (for example, assistant supply chief filled by an 8411). If it cannot be explained, the overall report is given less weight in the overall characterization of the Marine.
- Values mattered more overall. Some rare instances were briefed, such as a Marine who saved the unit by serving as the Battalion Supply Officer or served as the Company 1stSgt and received lower markings. The Marine got the benefit of the doubt that comments mattered more in these cases.
- Average.



Performance

How important was a promotion recommendation from the Reporting Senior and Reviewing Officer (Section I and K)?

- **Added significant value to the report**
- **Must be amplified, promote with peers, means nothing**
- **Most were rubberstamped and added no value**





Performance

What are examples of valuable promotion recommendation comments?

- I found both promoting with or ahead of peers to be helpful in differentiating between Marines. I did not view promotion with peers as a negative, but "promote ahead of" helped to break Marines out from the pack in a competitive MOS.
- Start with "promote now " " board member brief this Marine a "X" then go into why! get rid of the fluff.
- Promote with peers, promote immediately, not recommended for promotion (not recommended ever), no mention of a promotion recommendation, promote at the needs of the Marine Corps.
- Effective examples included statements such as: "My number one Staff Sergeant out of 12; ready now for Gunnery Sergeant," which clearly established comparative standing and immediate promotion readiness. Comments like, "Top 10% of Staff Noncommissioned officers I have served with in 20 years; unlimited potential," carried weight because they quantified competitiveness and reflected a senior perspective. Similarly, "Promote at first opportunity; assign to the most demanding billets," demonstrated both confidence and a recommendation for greater responsibility. For staff noncommissioned officers, phrases such as "Best SSgt in the battalion; ready now for Gunnery Sergeant," or "Already performing at the next grade with exceptional results," showed readiness and impact beyond current rank.
- "Board, select this Marine at first opportunity," "Already performing at the next higher rank," "brief this Marine as a 6." However, the report markings and the rest of the section I & K need to match. Conversely, comments like, "meets expectations of time in service or grade," or "with continued development will grow into a solid SNCO" are also valuable.
- Comments written to the briefer and not to the MRO like: "Brief this Marine a 6," "If you have 2 promotion allocations for this MOS, promote this Marine twice, "This Marine flies higher than all others, but, unlike Icarus, this Marine's wings are solid metal wrapped in MOS proficiency. Promote now," and "The board got it wrong last year, MRO is a Gunnery Sergeant in all ways except for the second rocker." On the other end of the spectrum, "routinely performs as expected for grade and experience" quickly paints a below-average Marine.
- Promote now! Already performing at the next level, let's pay him/her for it. Promote well ahead of peers! Performance is better than that of most Marines in grades above this Marine. Senior leaders come to this Marine for advice. When this Marine speaks, everyone listens from the CO down.
- Do not promote with peers, promote with peers, or promote ahead of peers. RS's and RO's need to be clear, concise, and direct in their comments, with the Marines that they're writing on/evaluating, and the board members. Many RS's and RO's are tap dancing around being direct with their comments, making their comments sound great, when in reality they are not...they're just afraid to tell the Marine. Be honest, fair, and firm.
- Promote ahead of peers. Promote. Promote now. Promote at first glance. No promotion recommendation at all. Comments gave me a sight picture to build my recommendations off.
- A must promote, above his peers, performance has been exceptional, already conducts themselves as a GySgt/operating as a seasoned GySgt, hands down one of the best SNCOs, a master of his MOS, consistently performs above expectations, limitless potential, promote at first opportunity.



Performance

What are examples of valuable promotion recommendation comments? Continued...

- When the Marine is compared to their peers (with, above, below). There should also be a better standard for what the recommendations mean. Does promote with peers mean the same as promote with contemporaries?
- His exemplary leadership and readiness for higher responsibilities make him a must-promote to GySgt now!
- Any comment that spoke to the Marine's attributes in a positive manner. Personable comments show that there is an established relationship between the MRO and the RS/RO. Avoid fluff to fill the section I and K. "Know your Marines and look out for their welfare."
- The previous question was missing the answer I would have chosen - boilerplate promotion recommendations didn't mean much. Tailored or personalized recommendations meant a lot. The lack of a recommendation was definitely noticed and assumed to mean more than the RS/RO might have meant. Less valuable - "highly recommended for promotion". More valuable - "This Marine should be promoted as soon as possible so that their skills as _____ can be leveraged in (specific higher billet)". Promotion is an investment, not a reward - what will the Marine Corps get as a return on its investment?
- Specific recommendations that were not the normal copy-paste. Specifically saying the Marine needs to be promoted now, before peers, or MRO is my top SSgt, and should be promoted ahead of peers.
- Ready to be a GySgt now, Promote now ahead of peers = imminently qualified. Promote ahead of peers = above average. Promote with peers = average. Promote at the needs of the Marine Corps = do not promote unless absolutely necessary."
- Promote now, they speak to the board briefer, and words that aren't cookie-cutter.
- "Immediate promote," "Promote now as Marine is already performing as a GySgt," and "Promote ahead of peers" were considered positively. "Promote with peers/contemporaries," "Retain and promote," and "Promote in accordance with the needs of the Marine Corps" were viewed negatively.
- Comments must match markings. If the RS/RO doesn't put the Marine ahead of others, why should the board? MRO is already exceeding the expectations of GySgt. Promote now. Assign to the Service's most challenging assignments, and put them in front of Marines. Enthusiastically recommended for promotion ahead of peers."
- Promote now; Briefer this MSO is a 6; promote with service needs; "promote with peers" = average.
- Enthusiastically recommended; Promote now at the detriment of others; Future SgtMaj/MGySgt, promote now.
- "Promote ahead of peers" "Promote now" "Promote at first look" "A GySgt in everything but rank, promote."



Performance

Did the length of the fitness report affect how you viewed the report, i.e., did a 12-month report hold the same weight as a 4-month report?

- Yes, a 12 month report absolutely held more weight to me.
- Yes, unless the Marine was simply a rockstar or subpar, and it was evident. I could generally read between the lines and look at the Marines' historical FitReps and draw the conclusion I was looking for.
- Overall, no, unless the FitReps felt generic and MRO didn't do much, but was marked high or low, and doesn't match other FitReps.
- Yes, the length of the report was an important factor in evaluating reports. Good reports were good reports - short reporting periods with lower values were less relevant, unless they were a trend.
- No, over all picture of the Marine will be visible and help the board member get a better perspective on the Marine, as RS/RO do over time fall in love with the Marine and will naturally say they are the best, when historically they as average.
- Yes, the length of the fitness report did affect how I viewed the report, although both were considered within their proper context. A 12-month report generally carried more weight because it reflected sustained performance over time, allowed for a fuller assessment of leadership, impact, and consistency, and gave the reporting senior more opportunity to observe the Marine across multiple events or challenges. Longer reporting periods tended to provide stronger evidence of trends, either positive or negative, and demonstrated durability in performance. A 4-month report, while still valid, I typically viewed as more limited in scope. It offered a shorter observation window and therefore less opportunity to establish sustained impact. That said, a short report could still carry significant weight if it documented high-impact performance, major accomplishments, or clear comparative statements.
- It depended on how many observed reports the Marine had in grade and service and the nature of the Marine's overall career performance.
- When preparing a package, there is time to look over each report in detail and balance the time and markings, but when voting on the report, summarization is relied on more (unless the briefer specifically provides context for the report length). A limitation of the formula is that each report is weighed the same regardless of length. This can lead to 12 months of 100RV time being numerically marred by a couple of 90-day reports with a 92RV. It would sound like this: "At processing, in grade, this Marine's FitReps are in the middle." In reality, the Marine has spent twice as much time at a 100RV as in the middle.
- Length mattered. However, it was better to have multiple short observed reports than multiple non-observed reports. Regardless of the "meaningful contact" (i.e., field exercises, drill instructors, or deployment), if it's not going to be a "good report" for that Marine, don't make an exception to write a 2-month report and put the Marine at a lower value because it's a short report. That does more harm than good.



Performance

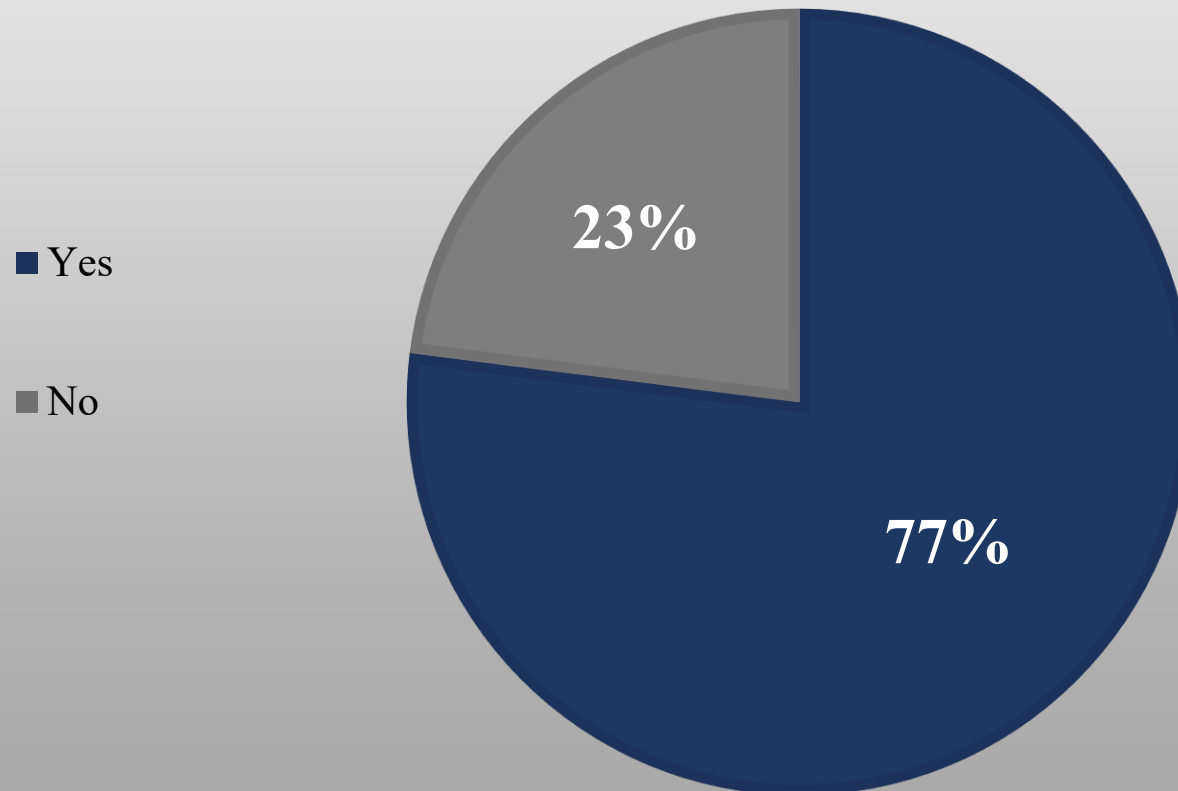
Did the length of the fitness report affect how you viewed the report, i.e., did a 12-month report hold the same weight as a 4-month report? Continued...

- It should have had a bigger effect on the value of the report, but there is no good way to assess the value of a short report over a long report in a systematic way.
- Situation dependent. If the reports were generally the same RV, they held the same weight.
- Yes, I looked for the longer reports to help paint a better picture of the MRO.
- The length matters, and one of my DBR after-actions addresses this - a 12 month report should absolutely carry more weight (including visually) than a 2-4 month report.
- More observation time is viewed by me as a more relevant evaluation.
- The length did have some effect, yes, I viewed a 12 month report with a little more weight than a 4-month report, but in some SDA cases, I tried to take the average of multiple 3-4-month reports, giving more weight to recency.
- Depends on whether there is an explanation for the short time, if it was a recent move, and if it was still in the same billet as the previous.
- Unless explained in the comments, such as providing justification for doing an observed FitRep under the required observation time, longer reports were considered to provide a more well-rounded assessment of the Marine's sustained performance. Short FitReps, especially by the same RS, were either discarded or viewed negatively.
- Yes. It was especially difficult to judge a Marine's performance if they had only ever had (3) observed reports and lots of non-observed because of changing RSs."
- Yes, if it was an observed FitRep, it held the same weight. I did focus more on the 12 month report for consistency.
- The length of the report didn't matter if the RS explained that the performance during the reporting period was notable enough, regardless of the length of time.
- The impacts made during the report held the same weight; if no outlying impacts and routine observations were made, the duration of the report would increase the weight of the report (tied with the profile of the senior).
- No. The most important thing was how the Marine performed during the reporting period.



Performance

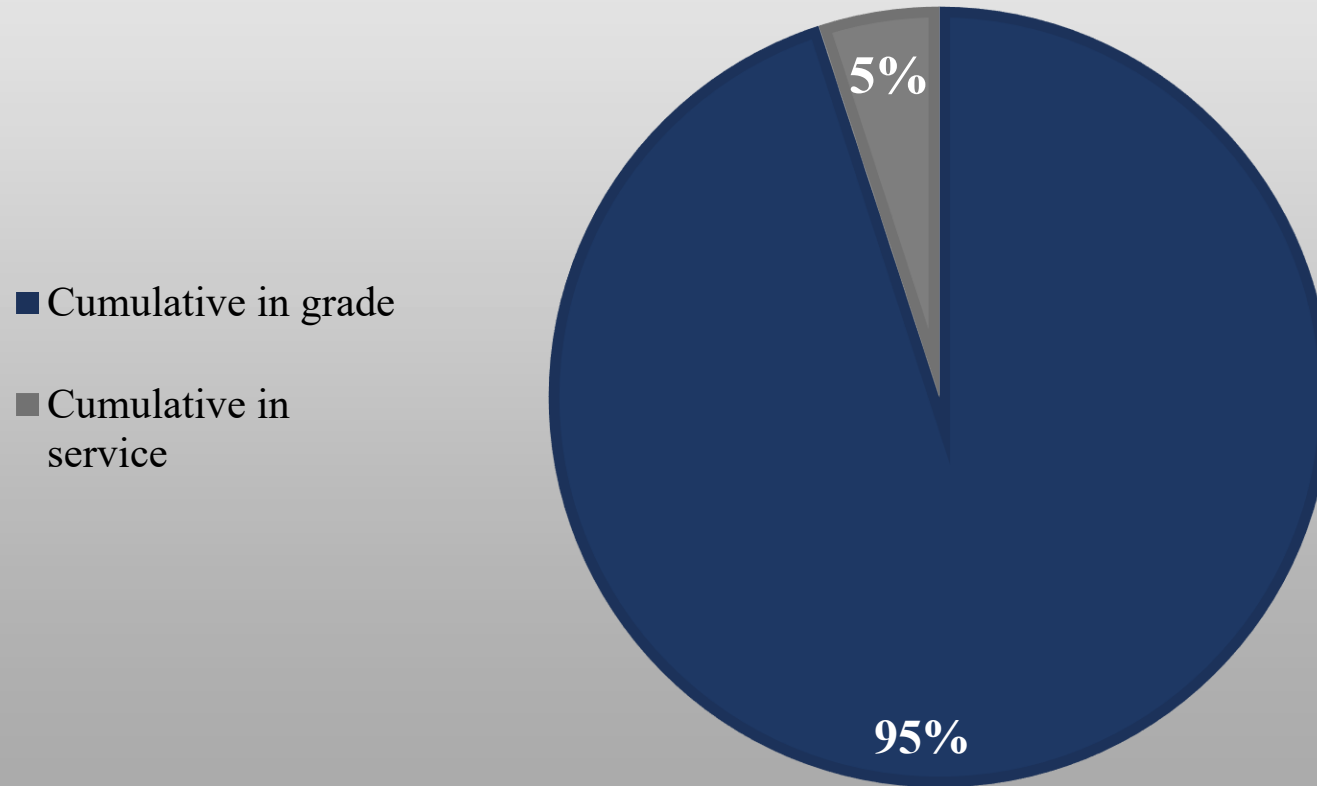
Is the RS/RO summary displayed on the bottom of the MBS a good predictor of who will get selected?





Performance

Which area did you rely on more when evaluating a Marines RS/RO summary, cumulative in grade or in service percentages?





Performance

What was the impact of the size of an RS/RO's profile when reviewing Marines' records? (seasoned profile v. new profile)

- Breaking out a Marine in a seasoned profile made it easier to brief the Marine. Breaking out a Marine in a new profile, even with a comment about how the Marine was going to stay at the top of your profile, did not carry much weight to me.
- Significant impact. The larger the profile, the better; however, when smaller profiles were identified that didn't automatically take away from the Marine. I just had to look deeper into the Marine's record to see how others graded the Marine to.
- Seasoned profiles have a bit more impact, but also depends who is the RS/RO. A seasoned profile could also be negative, especially when competing outside your MOS, and RS/RO don't know how to grade you based on MOS and grade within MOS above those. A new profile within a smaller MOS or CWOs (internal to MOS) could say more than a seasoned profile.
- Seasoned profiles carried more weight. It is helpful and positive when RS/RO's with exceptionally large profiles (Rec duty, SOI, FSI, etc.) provide context about the Marines they have evaluated.
- SDA RS/RO profiles hold no value in my eyes as they are being evaluated on mission requirements and cant paint the true picture of the Marine. FMF FitReps weren't an issue in this matter.
- Depended on the individual Marine's record, in borderline cases, it was a helpful determining factor.
- The size and maturity of an RS or RO profile influenced how much weight I gave to a Marine's relative value and comparative assessment. A seasoned profile carried greater credibility because it reflected consistent marking over time, making a high or low relative value more meaningful and deliberate. A new or small profile I viewed with more caution, as limited data made relative values less stable and harder to interpret. In those cases, greater emphasis was placed on the strength and clarity of the narrative comments to assess the Marine's true competitiveness.
- A seasoned profile was more impactful because it provided greater context on the Marines' standing. However, a new profile did not detract, and the board would look at overall performance across the career for context.
- In both, comments held the most weight. Gradings and comments not matching makes sense on new profiles, but requires further digging or explanation on a seasoned profile. There were cases where Marines' competitiveness was reduced due to unestablished RS/RO profiles.
- Larger profiles carried more weight. Senior Officers, such as Col's and Generals, writing on SSgts carried a lot of weight as well.
- No impact on me. The most important thing was how the Marine performed during the reporting period.



Performance

What was the impact of the size of an RS/RO's profile when reviewing Marines' records? (seasoned profile v. new profile) Continued...

- The impact was less about the size of the profile and more about the rank of the RS/RO. A report written by a Maj or LtCol held more value than one written by a 1stLt or Capt.
- Larger profiles had a greater impact when Marine stood out in the profile.
- The larger profiles were more favorable and provided a better understanding of how a Marine should be briefed within their MOS. A junior profile with 6 reports was only beneficial if the Marine was consistently in the upper third.
- Huge - especially if it appears that the RS/RO knows how to manage their profile over time. I would always weigh FitReps from well-established profiles above those from small profiles, especially if the small profile was tied to a relatively junior rank (1st Lt).
- If an RS and RO of the Marine didn't have a profile, then it couldn't paint a clear picture for me to determine how they were performing against their peers.
- A seasoned profile typically held more weight for me because it showed that the writer had experience on which to base their opinions of the Marines they were evaluating.
- If they spoke to their profile, it helped.
- Seasoned profile assessments were weighted more than new profiles due to a perception that the RS/RO had a greater understanding of the Marine Corps and the ability to provide impartial assessments.
- Absolutely. Having a consistent 98% or above in a profile of 50 to 100 Marines across multiple reporting periods means a lot more.
- I heavily weighted an RS/RO marking when they had a large profile, unless the MRO was on SDA. If the MRO was on SDA, those markings played a small role unless it was in the upper/below third.
- Seasoned profiles significantly impacted my decision on promotion recommendation.



Performance

How was a Marine selected as an Alternate viewed in terms of competitiveness for this board?

- For me, the same. Alternates should not have any value. Many Alternates were at the bottom. This means they could have been rated as a 3, 4-, 4. So, giving the board members this could potentially make voters give them a better vote than what they actually deserve. Not all if they know how to read a marine profile.
- Several of the early alternate selectees' records caused me to question the competitiveness of the previous board, as many of them were not competitive in this board. Alternate selection did help when the record was competitive, and sustained performance over the last year helped break the Marine out.
- Looks as if he or she is higher Qualified but needs to see more in the past year to get him/her over that hump, ie, just missed the selection line.
- A lot of the alternate selects from the previous board were not competitive with the regular (non 5/6 values) of this board and were valued, but in some instances made no difference in tight populations or populations with hundreds of Marines and double-digit allocations.
- Being selected as an Alternate was generally viewed as a strong indicator of competitiveness, as it meant the Marine was fully qualified and performed at or near the selection threshold for that board. I considered alternates as highly competitive, often separated from primary selectees by very narrow margins. It reflected that the Marine was in the conversation for promotion and was viewed favorably among peers. In assessing Alternate's record for the current board, I looked closely at what changed from the previous year's promotion selection board. I evaluated whether Marine addressed any potential gaps, improved performance, strengthened comparative assessments, increased relative value within a seasoned profile, or gained broader leadership experience. Evidence of growth, sustained superior performance, or stronger promotion recommendations signaled upward momentum and increased competitiveness. If the record remained largely unchanged, it suggested the Marine had not significantly enhanced their standing relative to peers. Ultimately, Alternates were seen as competitive.
- It just said they were pretty competitive last year, which did not necessarily mean they were competitive this year. However, it was briefed, and performance over the past year was weighted. Did the performance improve, remain consistent, or worsen? What did they do to help get them across the finish line in this year's board. If nothing was done (new school, improved PFT/CFT, MCMAP, etc.), it did not help the Marine.
- It depended heavily on performance since the alternate selection.
- It would be great if they were still performing well. If performance faded, it looked like the Marine got comfortable or lazy.
- Slightly above average compared to the rest, but was also heavily weighed against sustained and current performance.
- The Alternate is viewed as competitive as long as they're still performing at a high level (based on FitRep values).
- Yes, it was, unless the Marine had adversity within that year.



Performance

How was a Marine selected as an Alternate viewed in terms of competitiveness for this board? Continued...

- It provided an additional data point to the Marine, but in large part had a limited impact on my assessment of the Marine.
- These Marines were considered as Highest qualified if they maintained performance at or above the standard of their last evaluation.
- If a Marine was an Alternate, they were briefed as being an Alternate. However, they might have been highly competitive the year prior, but not so much for the current board.
- Always briefed and viewed per the precept as being comparable to a successful SDA tour in the weight that I gave it in my deliberations as a board member. The first thing I would do upon seeing an alternate selection is look at MRO's performance since the alternate selection, since downward-trending performance would negate the precept benefit.
- I believe the Majority that were alternates were most likely the ones that were just below the mark of getting selected, and most that were identified did not seem very competitive.
- If an alternate remained competitive and did things since the previous board to show that they were still working and growing, then they were viewed favorably, but just being an alternate while being average did not add to their competitiveness.
- For some, it held more weight than for others.
- It only added value if the board could understand how a previous board had selected the Marine as an alternate, and performance was sustained since the alternate selection. For example, a few prior alternate selections were assessed by this board as "below average" performers either over their entire career or since their alternate selection, which the board viewed negatively.
- The precept said it was important. However, they were being compared to a different population with different allocations and different PME completion rates. Occasionally, there were very confusing moments when it was surprising that a Marine was even an alternate last year, given the population they were being compared to this year.
- As long as they were continuing to perform without adversity or running a lower PFT/CFT score, they were considered more qualified.
- It depended on the size of the MOS, promotion zones, and allocations, but was generally less competitive than those that were selected for promotion. Some MOS's had very little to offer, and that made very competitive Marines less competitive simply by default.



MOS Credibility

How can a Marine show or capture MOS credibility?

- Be in your MOS and do well within the MOS. Leaving the MOS to do an SDA or B Billet is recommended but if you're not excelling within your MOS (which is the population you're competing for promotion with), leave and come back and are still or are now subpar, I viewed you as less favorable.
- I think this needs to be a sit down with the RS to ensure section I comments reflect to ensure it captures MOS credibility.
- Performance in MOS-related billets. Qualifications were also very useful in evaluating MOS credibility when the qualifications were listed and explained well on the smart cards (Aviation MOS!).
- Understanding there SmartCard / MOS road map as this is what the board members are looking at for the MOS Credibility.
- Education (from the smart card), FITREP billet and section I&K comments, awards.
- A Marine captured MOS credibility by demonstrating technical expertise, consistently strong performance, and recognized leadership within their specialty. This included excelling in key billets, earning qualifications or certifications, mentoring others, and contributing to mission success or unit readiness. Strong fitness report comments that highlighted MOS proficiency, impact, and leadership reinforced credibility, showing that the Marine was respected and trusted as a technical expert in their field.
- Completing schools and training per the MOS smart card, progressing in billets and commands as identified in the MOS smart card, and by comments on performance in MOS within the section I & K.
- If able, do the courses and get selected for the billets on the Smart Card. Smart cards that are up to date and provide context on which billets are most competitive were very helpful in decoding the MOS credibility of Marines. Aviation MOS Smart Cards were the best by speaking to how selective it is to be a WTI vs CDI vs CDQAR to show which Marines possessed the most MOS credibility.
- Billet descriptions on FitReps and Master Brief Sheets quickly show where the Marine is. Attend schools that show up on the MBS. Ensure the additional MOS's that are earned (such as CDI, QAR) are added to the MBS.
- Go to the schools or courses that are required for your rank and, if possible, one rank above. And more importantly, make sure certificates are submitted in MCTFS/MCTIMS and are in your OMPF. The RS's and ROs should also highlight any MOS school or course completion in the Section I & K comments.
- Capturing recent and relevant experience in their training section of the OMPF.



MOS Credibility

How can a Marine show or capture MOS credibility? Continued...

- Ensuring the RS/RO speaks to their technical and tactical capabilities in the Section I / K. Additionally, the Marine should continue to seek MOS related training.
- High performance in Key Billets and successful completion of advanced MOS-specific PME schools.
- By having minimal non-observed reports. Marines who return from SDA should attend any MOS-related PME at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that their billet descriptions on their FitReps make sense to a lay-reader and line up with the recommended billets from the MOS smart cards to the greatest extent possible.
- Performing while in MOS. I believe wherever a Marine is sent, they should perform to the best of their abilities, and one would normally perform in any place if they are high performers. If a Marine is in Zone and was only graded on an SDA as a SSgt then I will not hold MOS credibility against them. I think if we do worry too much about MOS creditability it would scare Marines away from doing SDA's.
- Marines can and should use their MOS's roadmap/smartcards because that roadmap is what lets the board members know how a Marine should be progressing and what that MOS deems as important.
- Required and extra education completed.
- The board valued the OccField Sponsor MOS smart cards. These should be agreed upon by the entire community and published for Marines to better understand expectations. While I understand their are MOS roadmaps, I can confirm the MOS smart cards for my community were not aligned to the road map. Key billets, advanced MOS training, and operational/instructor experience were all briefed for every Marine.
- Above average marks when assigned in MOS. Having the schools and AMOSs that show they have progressed professionally in the MOS. Billet progression of increased responsibility in MOS. RS/RO calling out when a Marine was specifically selected for a position because their abilities, acumen, and maturity were needed to make it successful was very helpful. Receiving an 80 and a 2 or 3 block in PMOS and then becoming a SACO did not provide confidence.
- If within MOS, by the RS/RO comments; if outside the MOS, by education/training and RS/RO comments stating the fact.
- Through online training and professional PME by attending courses tied to their MOS.



MOS Credibility

How did you view MOS credibility in terms of competitiveness?

- MOS credibility was the preeminent factor I used in determining competitiveness.
- Billets held and positive comments on Section I,K. Also, if they are holding a higher billet per unit TO.
- Very high, not only in ensuring they had completed required courses, but in gaining additional skills/qualifications toward their MOS, having skills/quals or training their peers did not, section I&K comments addressing the use of those skills/education, anything regarding instructing / evaluating T&R, MCCRE performance. Additionally, anything negatively addressing MOS credibility was deterministic in my assessment of current performance.
- I evaluated MOS credibility based on how competitive a Marine was within their occupational field and how effectively they performed the duties expected at their grade. I did not favor one MOS over another; instead, I looked for Marines who had clearly mastered their MOS, demonstrated technical credibility, and consistently performed at a high level. Strong records showed sustained superior performance, increasing responsibility, and strong endorsements from reporting seniors. The most competitive Marines also demonstrated leadership beyond their technical specialty, successfully leading Marines, managing programs, and contributing to unit readiness.
- I viewed it as most critical. A Marine completes an SDA but gets promoted within their MOS. If a Marine had poor performance before an SDA, killed it on the SDA, and then returned to below average MOS performance, it was viewed as negative. If a Marine was a killer in their MOS before SDA, had average or below average performance on the SDA, but returned to the community and killed it, it was weighted higher.
- MOS credibility was weighed most of the time heavily. There were situations where Marines performed well in assignments that did not allow them to obtain qualifications, attend schools, or hold competitive billets. In those situations, the Marine was assessed for being able to "bloom where planted."
- Performance where planted mattered most! Applying a heavy competitiveness on MOS credibility was most definitely detrimental to Marines who served on SDA's, especially at this rank. However, Marines who have not served on SDAs were viewed negatively if they did not have a great deal of credibility.
- Very high. I didn't necessarily care that someone recruited 20 Marines in one month or took the Senior Drill Instructor award, but had no MOS credibility in their community as a SNCO. All those accolades are great, but I need to see what SNCOs are doing to impact their community and make others great around them.
- Held weight.



MOS Credibility

How did you view MOS credibility in terms of competitiveness? Continued...

- I valued their MOS credibility 50/50 with leadership capabilities, as a GySgt, they should be a leader and mentor as an expert in their field. This view would change for SSgt (60/40) and MSgt (40/60) technical / leadership.
- Highly X2.
- MOS credibility carried a lot of weight, mainly for anyone that LAT moved into a new MOS. It was hard to mark anyone above a 3 when they had zero observation time in their new MOS. Marines who performed well prior to SDA and returned after a successful tour were viewed as highly competitive.
- Very strongly, especially when selecting senior SNCOs. Per the precept, successful SDA performance is important, but if a Marine had spent their entire FITREP observation life on SDA, then it was harder to choose them compared to someone who had a successful SDA but also performed well in grade in a key billet in the operating forces.
- Performing while in MOS. I believe wherever a Marine is sent, they should perform to the best of their abilities, and one would normally perform in any place if they are high performers. If a Marine is in Zone and was only graded on an SDA as a SSgt then I will not hold MOS credibility against them. I think if we do worry too much about MOS credibility it would scare Marines away from doing SDA's.
- MOS credibility was a factor in competitiveness because the GySgt is expected to be the "go to" Marine, but that MOS competitiveness could not be viewed in a vacuum because we also expect GySgts to embody the whole Marine concept.
- MOS credibility was the most important factor in my assessment of the Marine's future service contributions. SDAs, Joint Force non-MOS, and non-MOS supporting establishment billets are valuable for rounding a Marine, but it always comes back to how well this Marine is prepared to lead Marines in their MOS in a combat environment.
- Very highly. We're selecting Marines to become GySgts in their MOS. They have to be exceptionally proficient in their MOS.
- MOS credibility is viewed highly when the Marine has either just moved into that MOS and is considered for promotion or the Marine was just promoted and doesn't have any quals (aviation, EOD) required for promotion to the next grade.
- For some MOS (Aviation), credibility was more important than B billet comments.
- Excelling within your MOS and anything you did outside of the MOS (grow where planted) made a big difference.
- Very important, you can't just have 1st class PFT/CFT, look good as a Marine, but not know your MOS.



MOS Credibility

How impactful were MOS progressive schools and what value did they add?

- Doing more, whether it was required or not, told a story. To me, they always added value, especially if you were already doing well. However, if you were subpar and thought that doing a bunch of extra PME made you competitive, you were wrong.
- Important to an extent, unless it was obvious that it didn't really matter for that MOS, but looks good for those Marines.
- MOS-dependent - if the smart card/board experience deemed the progressive school to be important/essential to advancement, then those schools were highly weighted (MOS dependent).
- Great if added value and aligned to MOS Smart Card/ MOS Roadmap.
- Hugely. not having them, failing them, letters to the board addressing why they didn't have them/when they were scheduled. ensuring that their progression was in the direction of the MOS manual (required/recommended courses)/ MOS smart card set Marines apart from their peers.
- I viewed MOS progressive schools as an important indicator of a Marine's commitment to professional development and technical mastery within their occupational field. When I saw these schools completed, it demonstrated to me that the Marines had invested in becoming more proficient and staying current in their MOS. While progressive schools alone did not make a Marine more competitive than their peers, they reinforced a pattern of sustained growth, initiative, and subject matter expertise. When combined with strong performance evaluations and leadership experience, they helped validate that the Marine was serious about their profession and preparing themselves for the increased responsibility expected of a Gunnery Sergeant.
- If they were listed on the MOS smartcard and the Marine did not complete them, it detracted from the Marine. If they completed the schools but had poor performance in MOS, it negatively affected their Marine career. It was most important for technical MOSs and those who required the school for promotion and advancement. In an MOS that has multiple AMOS and the Marine has them completed, it could be the thing that separates them from their peers.
- Very impactful. If a Marine failed a recommended school (especially multiple times), their MOS credibility was not viewed favorably. Marines in MOS's with many schools on the Smart Card who had attended multiple were viewed as having much higher MOS credibility.
- It mattered a lot in certain MOS's. But bloom where planted mattered most.
- Very impactful. This demonstrates that the Marine wants to excel in their tactical and technical acumen and in their community.



MOS Credibility

How impactful were MOS progressive schools and what value did they add? Continued...

- I did not view them as impactful if the Marine had high marks from the RS/RO. Not all Marines need the formal training and education to be technically and tactically proficient.
- These were important, especially for breaking out Marines from their peers.
- The MOS smartcards provided a great snapshot of what PME a Marine should have.
- It can be hard to thin slice when Marines have been to multiple MOS schools, but a complete lack of MOS education stands out, especially for Marines with more time-in-service or grade. Certain schools stand out as legitimate accomplishments as long as they match the MOS - Winter Mountain Leader or SERE, for example, are schools where you can't really "phone it in". Same for Marines with higher-level data qualifications. Certain JKO courses like the SERE 100.2 fundamentals course, were net negative - they look like attempts to pad MRO's qualifications.
- It depended on the MOS and the smartcard. Some MOS's had several additional classes or MOS's, and the majority of all Marines had them. Usually per the MOS, it was mostly even throughout.
- MOS progressive schools were factors considered in this board and how the MOS Roadmap viewed them, but in addition to the MOS schools was the time in grade (i.e., how long the Marine had to get to the progressive school).
- Very impactful, it shouldn't be a desire to understand their complete MOS.
- If aligned to the MOS smart card, the MOS progressive schools weighed heavily into each Marine's assessment, especially if the Marine had completed schools aligned to a higher rank.
- Gatekeeper courses, like IULC or Chiefs courses called out on the smart card, were big determining factors. If a Marine has average marks, has been in grade for 3+ years, and has not completed a critical course for their grade, it was apparent that they (or their leadership) did not value their progression in the Marine Corps. Letters to the board explaining deployments or legitimate operational tempo that made it impossible to attend were helpful.
- I found that Marines who completed MOS progressive schools were more competitive within their respective MOS.
- MOS progressive schools (when the SMART Card is accurate) shows the Marines' dedication and commitment to the MOS, making them valuable and more competitive than the others that didn't complete those MOS progressive schools.
- If it was known that the MOS school is difficult and passing the school, especially on the first time was viewed very positively.



MOS Credibility

How much did a Marine's AMOS influence their competitiveness?

- Depends on the community. For the Aviation MOS, it was very important.
- It added value, especially if they were actively using it.
- Gives them an upper hand, especially if most of them have them, those few that didn't automatically fell below in that area.
- Only if deemed important by the MOS community.
- Great if added value and aligned to MOS Smart Card/ MOS Roadmap or SDA completion.
- Hugely, especially in tight MOSs, where not having these MOSs impacts their value to the unit / mission.
- I did not view a Marine's Additional MOS (AMOS) as a primary factor in determining competitiveness. My focus remained on the Marines' performance, leadership, and sustained superior performance within their Primary MOS. However, when an AMOS reflected specialized skills, instructor duty, or additional qualifications that contributed to the Marine's unit or the broader mission, it reinforced the Marine's initiative and versatility. While an AMOS alone did not significantly elevate a package, it added value when it demonstrated that the Marine had sought opportunities to broaden their experience and contribute beyond the basic expectations of their primary occupational field.
- It was MOS-dependent, but always added value.
- The AMOS only mattered when they had a direct impact on their PMOS. Such as Aviation MOSs needing a CDI, CDQAR, QAR, SFF, or QASO.
- It was viewed favorably if the AMOS was used to improve the command and did not seem to impact primary MOS proficiency. If a Marine is in a technical MOS and the entire FitRep speaks to being a MAI, it has the potential to reflect negatively.
- Impactful. This demonstrates that the Marine wants to excel in their tactical and technical acumen and in their community.
- It gave them a pump.



MOS Credibility

How much did a Marine's AMOS influence their competitiveness? Continued...

- Very little. It made them a better, well-rounded Marine, but if they are good in their billet, then they are likely good in AMOS billets also.
- Significantly when the Marine performed well while operating in these MOSs. For several aviation fields, AMOSs are absolutely necessary to be competitive.
- It depends on what the occ-field puts on the smart card. Some MOS's emphasized the importance of specific AMOSs, and the board prioritized briefing those. They mattered less for other MOSs.
- In my view, additional MOS's gave them an advantage because it ultimately is a force multiplier and only helps other Marines and units progress.
- If the AMOS was annotated on the MOS roadmap/smart cards, then I did lend some weight to it, but I also took into account any indicators of how they performed in that AMOS.
- If the AMOS was aligned with their PMOS, then it outweighed those Marines with only SDA MOSs.
- For MOSs that needed it (i.e., aviation maintainers), they were very influential. For example, 7 years TIG and the Marine is only a CDI?
- Within ACE MOS, a lot; within GCE and LCE MOS, it held less weight than ACE MOS.
- The AMOS, when attached to an SDA (ex. FSI-Combat Instructor says their instructing, but Combat Instructor alone does not) makes a Marine more competitive than others.
- CDI, QAR, EO, SAPR, SACO, etc. mattered a lot if the RS/RO painted a picture of how valuable the Marine was to a unit because of those billets. Holding multiple billets at once was a great factor when predicting if the Marine can handle the responsibilities of the next rank. Lack of additional billets reflected less capacity for advancement or laziness. Volunteer for the collateral duties and display your capabilities to make the team successful.



MOS Credibility

Did a Marine's assignment diversity influence their competitiveness? (Well-rounded, MLG, Division, Wing, SDA)

- Not necessarily. unless it was called out on the smart cards or it was obvious Marine was trying not to go to certain locations based on other profiles
- Marginal. Many of the TIS/TIG averages for eligible populations precluded Marine from having significant assignment diversity without negatively impacting MOS credibility.
- Not really, as Marine has no say where he/she goes.
- For populations where this is accommodatable, yes. for smaller / less diverse MOSs, no (e.g., 7212s do not have the opportunity to serve at echelons above the LAAD Bn). Opportunities for these (diverse assignments) assignments being called out in section I&K comments was helpful, highlighting trust / confidence or competence of the Marine being hand-picked / serving well in a vacated higher billet was helpful. Based on conversations between board members, monitors arbitrarily assigning Marines to higher echelons made no difference.
- I did not view assignment diversity as a determining factor in a Marine's competitiveness because not all MOS communities have the same opportunity to move between different Major Subordinate Commands, such as the Division, Wing, or MLG. Some MOSs are geographically or structurally limited to where they can serve. Instead, I focused on how well the Marines performed in the billets they were assigned, the level of responsibility they held, and the impact they had within their unit. A Marine who consistently excelled and demonstrated strong leadership within their available assignments remained just as competitive as those with broader assignment diversity.
- MOS dependent, but always added value. In particular, if it is an MOS that can serve across the MAGTF, then the Marine should have a record that reflects that.
- It depended on the MOS. Comments on the Smart Card speaking to Marines only having the ability to be assigned to certain MSC's, that they are more/less likely to go to SDA, or if it was desired for that MOS to go to multiple MSC's weighed heavily. In the absence of input from the Occ Field, performance was viewed with little regard for MSC. High performance on SDA (especially recruiting and drill instructor duty with breakout billets) was viewed competitively regardless of MOS.
- No. Marines have very little say on the billets they fill. "Orders, not options". Perform well everywhere! Do your best regardless of where you are.
- Yes. But didn't hold it much against the Marine since not all Marines have the opportunity to venture out of their community.



MOS Credibility

Did a Marine's assignment diversity influence their competitiveness? (Well-rounded, MLG, Division, Wing, SDA) Continued...

- None, Marines receive orders and have limited control over where they serve. Though assignment recommendations can help from the RS/RO, if they explain why they recommend that assignment.
- Yes, and the billets they held within that assignment were very influential.
- Yes, but it was not the chief factor.
- Yes, SDA and duty assignments build on the MRO's knowledge and experience.
- Having an SDA did influence the competitiveness, but I did not hold the lack of assignment diversity against Marines because Marines receive orders, which means they are not always able to choose where they go.
- Not as much, orders are orders. Not every Marine gets the same chances.
- Sustained performance added value to the Marine's assessment. Successful completion of a diversification billet, even if performance was poor, was neutral. Only a "relief for cause" was viewed negatively. It always came back to MOS credibility, though.
- It helped. Especially in MOSs that serve all over the MAGTF. If a Marine was above average, being marked by a variety of officers from many backgrounds, it was obvious that the Marine was above average.
- SDA did; being outside their MOS did not, unless in a CE unit.
- No. Only performance in those areas.
- Sometimes, but it was often difficult to determine what experience was relevant. A grunt serving in the wing as a SACO, for example. I am sure that Marine is still learning more about the wing; the position does not seem to show a lot of growth.
- As long as they were doing well, no matter the location, promotion to Gunny didn't make a difference to me. Now, some MOS's, the average was to do an SDA, and if you didn't have one, why not? It made me rethink how to recommend you for promotion. Generally speaking, though, how well you were doing within or out of the MOS made a big difference.



MOS Credibility

How do you evaluate a Marine's competitiveness when there is no documented performance (i.e., FitReps) in grade in their PMOS (i.e., Marines on SDAs, recently LatMove, lengthy schools. etc.)?

- I look at the entire profile. FitReps as a Sgt, awards, LOAs, and rate the Marine based on that. Then I look at what is required for that MOS to be a GySgt. If smart cards say they need to have certain things to be very competitive, and they don't have them, then that's when I start adjusting how I evaluated the Marine initially.
- Recent latmoves were at a significant disadvantage to Marines with documented MOS performance, and performance in previous MOS was generally not exceptional enough to beat out an average Marine with MOS experience. For Marines on SDAs or recently promoted without significant observed time (or RS/RO w/o profiles), I looked back to MOS performance as a Sgt and performance on SDA.
- Whole Marine concept. If they have been a rock star, they will continue to excel.
- CV, awards, section I&K comments, letters of recommendation, RVs of last reports, anything indicating positive potential.
- When a Marine did not have documented performance in grade within their PMOS, such as those serving on Special Duty Assignments, completing lengthy schools, or recently completing a lateral move, I evaluated the entirety of the Marine's record to determine sustained performance and leadership potential. I looked closely at their performance reports from previous assignments, the nature of the duties they were entrusted with, and any indicators of leadership, responsibility, and impact within those roles. In cases involving SDAs or schools, successful completion and strong reporting of senior comments still reflected professionalism, adaptability, and the Marines' ability to perform in demanding environments. Ultimately, I focused on whether the Marine's overall record demonstrated consistent superior performance and the potential to succeed at the level expected of a Gunnery Sergeant, even if recent PMOS-specific FitReps were limited or absent.
- It was viewed as negative. If a Marine has consistent non-observed reports, it is imperative for the Marine to write a letter to the board to explain and provide clarity.
- Every effort was made to characterize the Marines' propensity for success in that MOS in the next grade when it came to LatMove, but they were generally viewed as less competitive than Marines with similar history performance and with time in the MOS. "Welcome back from SDA." FitReps in MOS's that have required qualifications with short timelines negatively impacted the Marine unless the RS, RO, or MRO provided context to what they have done to obtain those qualifications.
- Some Marines were at a disadvantage due to where the zones fell, however, Marines can control their training and PME stats. Recent and current 1st Class, 1st Class, Expert, Expert, PME that greatly exceeds the requirements, college degrees and apprenticeship certifications, awards, and volunteerism also matter. Recent material matters most. What have you done lately?
- Below average. You cannot place a Marine with no documented performance ahead of other Marines who do have substantiated documentation. Keep your Master Brief Sheet and OMPF updated, at a minimum, make sure it's captured in the Section I & K comments.



MOS Credibility

How do you evaluate a Marine's competitiveness when there is no documented performance (i.e., FitReps) in grade in their PMOS (i.e., Marines on SDAs, recently LatMove, lengthy schools, etc.)? Continued...

- A high-performing Marine on an SDA will likely be a high-performing Marine in their MOS. I gave the Marine the benefit of the performance.
- Utilized the history of performance and MRO's ability to bloom where they are planted.
- MOS credibility carried a lot of weight, mainly for anyone that LAT moved into a new MOS. It was hard to mark anyone above a 3 when they had zero observation time in their new MOS. Marines who performed well prior to SDA and returned after a successful tour were viewed as highly competitive.
- It detracts from their overall presentation. I will choose demonstrated performance in grade and MOS over the unrealized possibility of greatness every day.
- Depending on their TIG, some were extremely junior in comparison to other candidates, and because of that, I believe it would not be fair to select a Marine with no quantitative evaluations over someone who has years of reports.
- If all of a Marine's FitReps in grade were on SDA, and they are performing well in the SDA, which was viewed favorably. I would also take a look at their last FitReps in their MOS. For those LatMovers with zero MOS credibility, if they were coming off of an SDA and performed well, then that was favorable. If they were coming from a similar MOS and performed well, that was also favorable. If they were crushing their previous MOS, which was also viewed favorably, but if they were just average or below average in their previous MOS, then I would assume that was how they would perform in the new MOS.
- Look at the full picture of the Marine's career.
- We reviewed the performance from the previous grade in PMOS and evaluated based upon our belief if the Marine could carry that performance to the next rank. The FitRep comments about the ability to operate at the next rank and as a leader were extremely helpful in these cases.
- It was very difficult. In a technical or demanding MOS, it's a requirement. How can they be a GySgt if they've never been in the MOS?
- Those Marines were not competitive because I had no information on their performance or how they stacked up against their peers.
- In a highly competitive MOS, a Marine without MOS credibility due to SDA's or recent LATMOV is not viewed as highly competitive. They need a year or two to attain credibility.
- Do they have the basic MOS requirements for promotion, as well as additional schools that would make them competitive?
- Less competitive and made me look deeper into the Marines' performance history.



Special Duty Assignment

Were SDA Fitness Reports viewed as being more favorable than FMF or Combat Fitness Reports?

- It depends on context. For technical MOS, it doesn't necessarily help or hurt. Recruiting FitReps, unless adverse or broken out, did not matter. I.E. a recruiting FitRep with an RV of 90 is a FitRep I will not open unless it was the most recent.
- Doing well outside of the MOS made a big difference, especially if you were doing well within the MOS. Some Marines were less competitive within their MOS's but were great DI's or recruiters! You have to remember who you are competing with for promotion with? Your MOS! Last-second Lat Move Marines greatly affected your competitiveness. Non-combat FitReps are the average in today's promotion cycle, therefore they didn't make a difference.
- No. As long as they completed the SDA. FMF and Combat Fitness Reports are more important.
- No. Successful completion or progress on the SDA overall was more important than marks on the SDA.
- No, very minimal value... Looking for SDA Completion as they are all very demanding tours.
- No. However, as time went on, it seemed that lower markings on SDAs (specifically recruiting) were viewed as holding little to no weight amongst board members. To me, FitReps were valued all the same regardless of the location they originated from.
- SDA reports were only valuable if the Marine had above average performance on the SDA. What mattered more was whether the Marine successfully completed the SDA. Reports in PMOS, regardless of type, were of the most value.
- It depended on performance and billets held on SDA.
- SDA profiles are very large and competitive. Many great Marines were graded below average on SDAs. Regardless of how well you did on SDA, you likely were graded lower on your next fleet report after returning from SDA. This often made the SDA detrimental to a career. However, if you had outstanding performance on a recent SDA, it carried a tremendous amount of weight.
- I don't think so. Board members can see all the reports and compare how a Marine performed in their MOS vs SDA in order to create a well rounded brief for that Marine.



Special Duty Assignment

Were SDA Fitness Reports viewed as being more favorable than FMF or Combat Fitness Reports? Continued...

- Same. Though if the report was low for recruiting, it was given less value. Not all Marines are extroverted and make good salesmen. If the Marine completed the SDA, they got the benefit.
- Yes X2.
- No, and they had little effect on how MROW was briefed. Only key moments or accomplishments on SDA were briefed unless a Marine only had In-grade reports on SDA. If that was the case, then their performance on SDA was taken into consideration.
- The general understanding in the board room is that most SDA populations are more competitive, and that weighted how we briefed and viewed SDA FitReps. It also depends on the MOS - Marine Combat Instructor performance is more directly applicable for a 0369 than recruiting, for example, even if recruiting is the more difficult SDA.
- No, but most reports on SDAs made Marines appear less competitive at first glance.
- SDA FitReps did start off a half point higher in my evaluations because the Marine Corps has told us that these Marines should be considered higher or highly qualified.
- Same.
- No.
- SDAs were called out in the precept. In many competitive MOSs, a Marine had to be a good performer in PMOS and on SDA to be competitive in their population. Combat FitReps could be helpful, but often Marines are in combat solely because of the unit they happen to be assigned to fill a deployment in the GFMAP. If a Marine was specifically selected to deploy on a detachment, the RS/RO should call it out in Section I/K.
- No, unless the markings were in the upper/lower third of the profile.



Special Duty Assignment

How did having an SDA/Type I/Type II screenable billet affect a Marines competitiveness? (Was a Marine with average performance with an SDA more competitive than a Marine with above average performance and no SDA?)

- Yes, very demanding tours, and they are working outside their comfort zone.
- This varied by briefer, but generally it did. Completion (not even with average performance) of an SDA was valued higher by a majority of briefers over above average performance with no SDA. This applied to type 1/2 screenable billet as well, which arguably requires more proficiency (formal school instructor, special operations capability, ect). To me, having one of these billets did make a Marine more competitive if they had positive performance in it. if they did not i compared them to their peers in the fleet for what their peers are being held to that they're potentially missing (e.g., CDI/CDQAR/QAR). I also tried to weigh/compare marines within these billets for separating them from each other. DI, EDI, SDI, chief - canvassing recruiter, RSS commander, a-gunner - instructor vs chief instructor in comparison to a fleet platoon sgt or company/squadron gysgt was defiantly a consideration that needed to be made regarding performance in SDA/screenable billet as well.
- I viewed Special Duty Assignments (SDA) and other Type I or Type II screenable billets as indicators that the Marine Corps trusted that Marine to serve in positions of significant responsibility and visibility. However, simply having an SDA did not make a Marine more competitive than their peers. Performance remained the most important factor. A Marine who demonstrated above-average or sustained superior performance in their primary duties was generally more competitive than a Marine who held an SDA but had only average performance. When a Marine both served in an SDA and performed at a high level, it strengthened their record, but the board consistently prioritized documented performance, leadership, and impact over the mere presence of a particular assignment.
- Being well-rounded was the most competitive. If the Marine was below average in MOS and average on SDA, they were less competitive than an above average Marine who stayed in the MOS. Above average in MOS and then above average on SDA was much more competitive. Crushing it in MOS and then SDA makes it very easy to brief a Marine a 6.
- SDAs often made Marines less competitive. SDA RS/RO profiles are competitive, and higher markings are generally reserved for billet holders such as Chief Drill Instructor or RSS SNCOIC. Canvassing Recruiters and Drill Instructors lost competitiveness due to lower markings during SDA's and then lost MOS credibility, which resulted in lower grades on recent reports after returning from SDA's. Do your best everywhere.



Special Duty Assignment

How did having an SDA/Type I/Type II screenable billet affect a Marines competitiveness? (Was a Marine with average performance with an SDA more competitive than a Marine with above average performance and no SDA?) Continued...

- The board was split on this topic. For me, a Marine with above average PMOS performance and no SDA was more competitive in comparison to a Marine with above average SDA and average PMOS performance.
- SDA/Type I/Type II billets were called out in the precept. However, if a Marine in PMOS is a true water walker, they likely ended up being more competitive. Having said that, in large MOSs where SDAs are common, SDA is likely needed to remain competitive.
- An SDA/Type I/Type II screenable billet made Marines more competitive than a Marine without it.
- Having an SDA and performing well in it positively affects a Marine's competitiveness. An average Marine in MOS with an SDA is more competitive than an average Marine in MOS without an SDA.
- Generally, I would say it's a double edged sword. Either this Marine is above average with no SDA, which artificially lowers their briefed score, or this Marine did an SDA but lacks MOS credibility, which also artificially lowers their briefed score. The SDA then gives a small bump, but recruiting FITREPs definitely tends to hurt the overall profile more than help. And it's up to the briefer to make the case.
- If the average within the MOS was to have an SDA, then you should too. However, if you didn't, you had better be a rockstar within the MOS, or you were less competitive. You MUST do well in all areas!
- No. The SDA/Type I/Type II screenable billet may give you a small boost, but not much if you are average performance within the FMF.
- Some MOS populations had more SDA opportunities than others, and not having an SDA in those MOS was a detractor, unless the Marine's MOS performance was exceptional. In populations w/o as many SDA opportunities, it was a plus, unless MOS performance was below average.



Special Duty Assignment

How did having an SDA/Type I/Type II screenable billet affect a Marines competitiveness? (Was a Marine with average performance with an SDA more competitive than a Marine with above average performance and no SDA?) Continued...

- It gave them a slight advantage over their peers. Though some MOS more than half the population also had an SDA, and in that case, there was no advantage.
- Successful completion of an SDA was always a positive discriminator.
- Marines who were above average were briefed as such and often had high markings due to the MOS credibility.
- It definitely affected competitiveness. I viewed each SDA/Type I as a "+2 or +1" from the baseline in my grading of a Marine's competitiveness, so if two Marines had identical career arcs and performance in the fleet, but one had a successful SDA, that Marine would end up graded one or two tiers higher than the one without the SDA.
- Yes
- Yes, for some. For Marines with above average performance and no SDA, most Marines' performance would overcome their lack of SDA. It all comes down to performance, and make sure the performance is accurately captured in the Section I & K comments.
- In most cases, a Marine with average performance in an SDA was on equal footing as a Marine with above average performance, but there was an element of time that was considered. Additionally, after the Marine completed the SDA and was back in their primary MOS, their current performance was considered more heavily than the SDA that they spent most of their Sgt time in.
- It pumped them up.
- If an average Marine successfully completed an SDA or screenable billet, it helped them. However, that does not necessarily mean they are going to be ranked higher than an above average performing Marine. The Marine Corps is a performance-based business. If an above average Marine completed an SDA or screenable billet, then they were considered most competitive.



Special Duty Assignment

How did you view adversity on an SDA?

- Same as adversity in the FMF.
- The adversity period made you less competitive. Especially in grade adversity.
- Not much weight (like 6105's) unless they were relieved from the SDA or it was obvious they did something wrong (adverse FITREP), but were retained for whatever reason.
- Depends on what it was, how it was documented, and whether or not the Marine was allowed to complete the SDA were important. Character and moral adversity were hard to overcome, even if significant time had passed. 6105s with no adverse fit-reps or RFC notifications with follow-on tour completions were hard for the board to evaluate. Fitrep documentation or a letter to the board from the RS/RO on why a significant sounding 6105 was not deemed derogatory material would help the board.
- Not a great look and will take more in the FMF and return if possible.
- No different from not on SDA.
- Adversity on a Special Duty Assignment depended largely on the nature of the adversity and the overall context within the Marine's record. For example, a 6105 issued during recruiting duty for a mission-related counseling did not carry significant weight if there was no adverse Fitness Report associated with that reporting period. Recruiting duty is a challenging assignment with unique pressures, and isolated administrative actions tied to mission performance were considered within that context.
- More weight was placed if the Marine was relieved and did not complete the SDA. If the Marine was awarded the ribbon than less weight was applied. However, if a Marine, particularly a recruiter, had inappropriate contact with an applicant/poolee, it was not recoverable for me. Compromising core values could only be overcome by subsequent years of above average performance.
- Depends on the nature of the adversity. A 6105 for a period of low performance on SDA can be recovered from. Major breaches of trust that involve abusing the trusted position were viewed much worse than fleet adversity (recruiter misconduct with poolees/applicants or abuse of power as a DI were the worst).
- Seek employment elsewhere. However, "Performance cures cancer," but it takes a long time. Marines with adversity will likely spend years at the top of RS/RO profiles before being selected. RS/RO's should not hide adversity on SDA's by putting the Marine in the 3 block and then making them the Ops Clerk. This does a disservice to Marines who do not have adversity. Often, familiarity creates favor, creating the situation where the relieved Recruiter or DI (now Ops Clerk) begins to receive higher marks than the Recruiters or DIs due to proximity.
- For some, it was detrimental, based on the date of adversity. The most important thing was to post their adversity. Did that Marine recover from his adversity, have they written a letter to the board to take accountability for their actions, and what has their performance been since adversity?



Special Duty Assignment

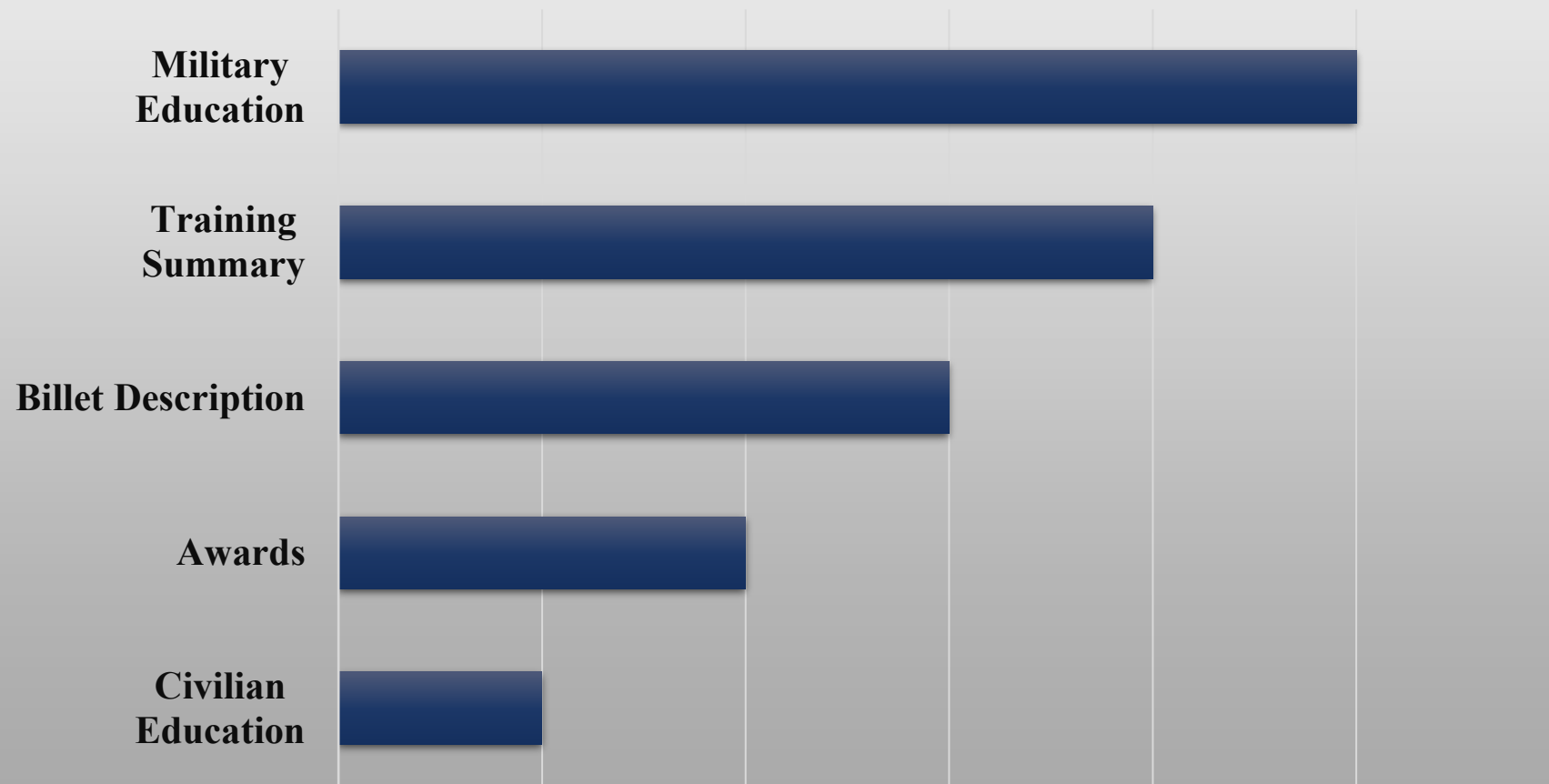
How did you view adversity on an SDA? Continued...

- Depended on the adversity; if the adversity was of technical capabilities (not making a quote on Recruiting), it was a non-factor. If the adversity was of moral character (lying, cheating, stealing, etc), it was viewed the same as adversity anywhere else.
- This made a Marine significantly less competitive.
- Recruiters with a 6105 for not meeting the required APR had no effect if the Marine had a successful tour. That was also the case with a DI and an unsubstantiated allegation. Marines who were relieved had the most influence on how they were viewed and briefed. Things that were also considered were how the Marine reacted and if they let that define them as a Marine. Their performance afterwards was a huge factor in how the Marine was considered for selection.
- Like adversity anywhere. It depends on the scope and context of the adversity and whether or not it was in grade. I personally treated any adversity involving integrity (false official statements, GTCC fraud) or harm to others (assault, DUI) more severely than other forms of adversity. Early career adversity (underage drinking, for example) was largely ignored by the board unless directly MOS-relevant.
- depended on the adversity, egregiousness, and how they overcame it. If someone was RFC'd from an SDA and came back to the same for another go. I believe that was saying more than trying a different SDA out.
- Adversity on an SDA was typically extremely negative. To be RFC'd from an independent duty did not speak well to how I thought the Marine would perform as a GySgt that we are expecting to be able to lead Marines and make decisions without supervision.
- Depends on what it was, touching kids and kicking recruits, not good.
- If a Marine successfully completed the SDA despite adversity, then it was neutrally assessed. If a Marine was relieved for adversity, then it negatively influenced our assessment.
- 6105s for low production on recruiting, IF the Marine successfully completed the tour, were not taken into account. Highly recommend Marines upload their Recruiting ribbon certificate to make it very obvious to the board that they successfully completed their Recruiting tour. If a Marine received a 6105 as DI, but was put back on the drill field (and especially if they were given additional responsibility later) there were generally not taken into account. Depending on the context provided in the 6105. Being relieved for cause was taken very seriously. Don't touch recruits. Don't sext poolies.
- Not favorable for the Marine.
- It depends on the adversity in the SDA. Cursing at a recruit can get you a 6105; that's not adversity in my opinion. Having an unduly familiar relationship with an applicant on recruiting duty will get you a "2" in my opinion.



Training and Education

When reviewing the MBS header data, what was your order of precedence? (Most to least impactful)

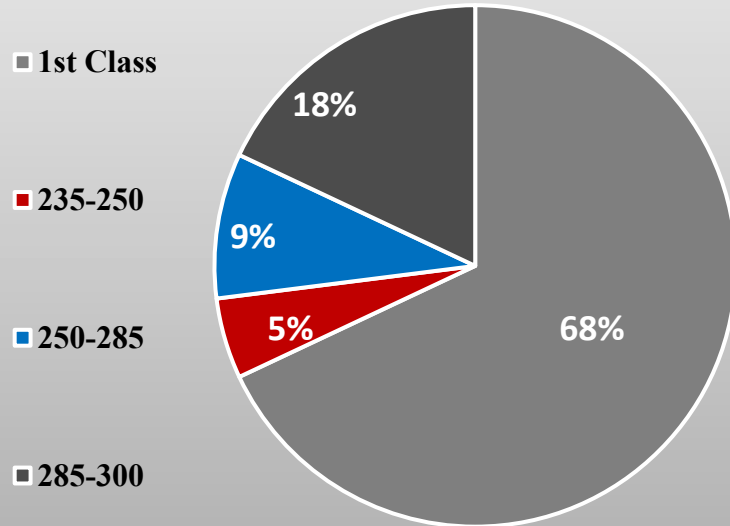




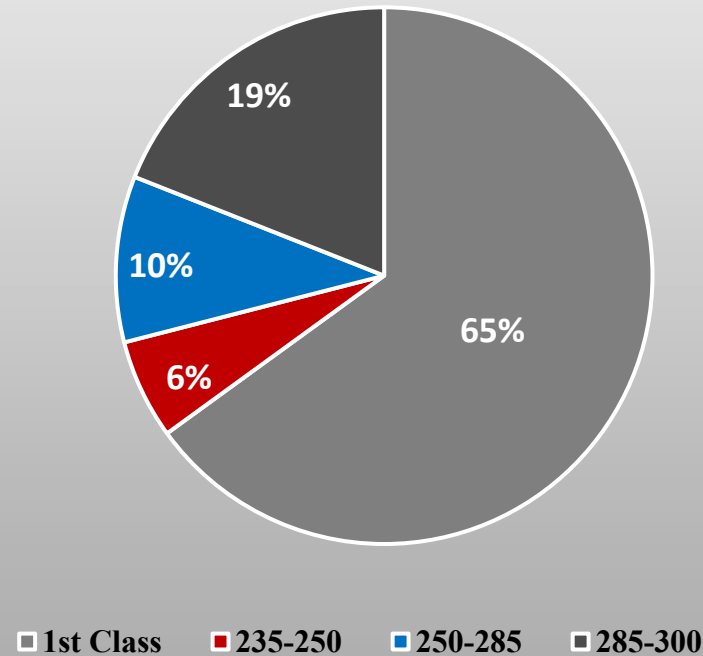
Training and Education

What is a competitive PFT/CFT/MCMAP?

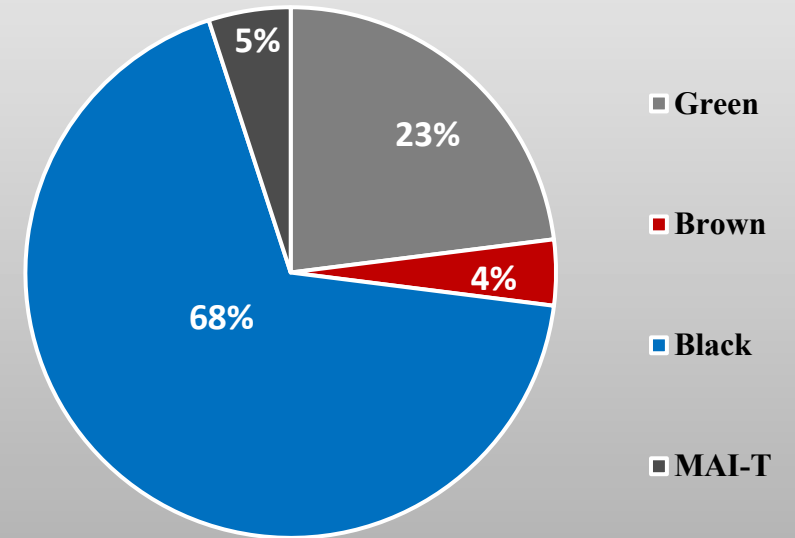
PFT



CFT



MCMAP



- 1st Class
- 235-250
- 250-285
- 285-300

- Green
- Brown
- Black
- MAI-T

- 1st Class
- 235-250
- 250-285
- 285-300



Training and Education

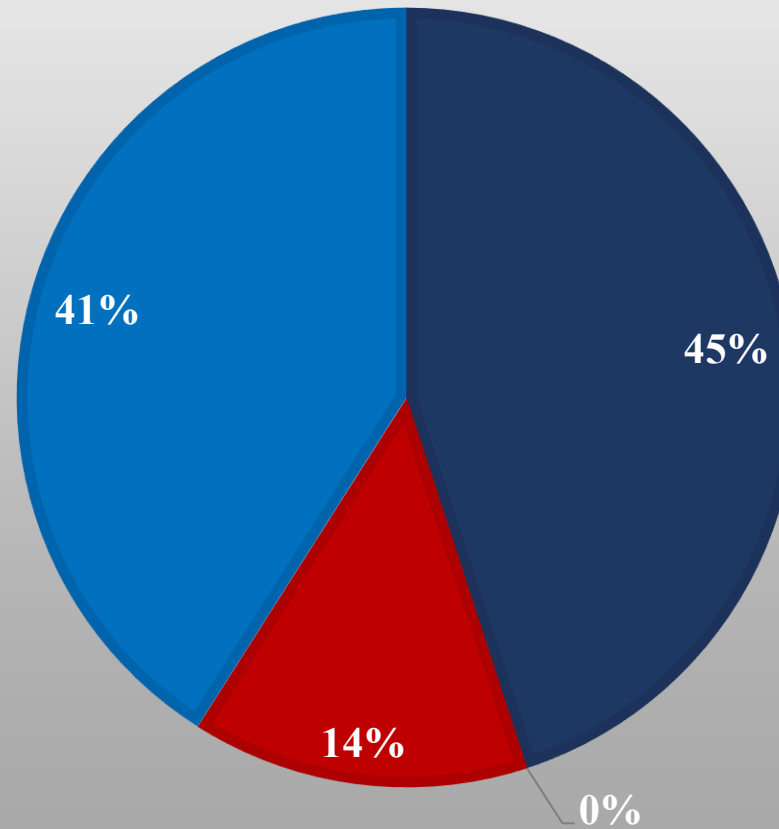
What level of college is competitive?

■ Bachelors

■ Masters

■ Associates

■ Some College (no degree earned yet)





Training and Education

Did having a college degree affect a Marine's competitiveness?

- For me, it did, especially if the degree was relevant to their MOS.
- No X3.
- Almost the same as question number 27, but this gives a bit more weight than those generic educational opportunities.
- College degrees did highlight a few Marines and set them apart from their peers, but in general, this was only a minor consideration.
- Having a college degree was viewed as a positive indicator of a Marine's commitment to personal and professional development, but it was not a determining factor in competitiveness. My primary focus remained on sustained superior performance, leadership, and the Marines' impact within their unit and MOS.
- Absolutely enhances a Marine's competitiveness. Every Marine has the opportunity to use \$4500 per FY for tuition assistance. Enlisted Marines completing degrees after hours and on weekends require sacrifice and show commitment to personal growth.
- It did not outweigh performance. If a Marine had a Masters degree but 90RV fitreps, it was viewed as less competitive as a Marine with some college but upper RVs. Marines were most competitive with a degree related to their MOS, paired with high performance in MOS and MOS-related schools.
- If everyone else has it and you don't, you are viewed as lazy or less competitive. The more, the better. In certain MOS's it does matter more, such as 0111 having Degrees in Administration, PMO having Criminal Justice degrees etc.. Don't let not having one be the reason you didn't get selected.
- Yes. This demonstrates the dedication that Marines have to improve themselves off-duty.



Training and Education

Did having a college degree affect a Marine's competitiveness? Continued...

- It depended on their degree and whether they had required MOS / leadership schools. A Marine who solely focused on a degree (outside their skill set) was not as competitive as someone who is trained and educated in their MOS.
- Yes, this made them more competitive if they had also completed advanced schools for their MOS and their grade-specific PME.
- Only if the Marine hasn't completed a resident PME or any MOS-related courses.
- See previous answer. It depends on if you're doing a good job at your day job. It also mattered more to me as a board member if your degree appeared to have anything to do with your MOS - for example, I thought an aircrew Marine getting a degree in aeronautics was impressive and career-enhancing.
- If the degree somehow aligns with their MOS, yes. However, not having MOS specific qualifications but having a BA in arts, I believe, says the priorities are not aligned.
- Having a degree enhanced competitiveness only if the Marines had the suggested training in their MOS and if they were also performing well in their positions.
- No.
- Yes, it shows additional effort placed on becoming a well-rounded, critical, and creative thinker.
- It can. But if a Marine is below average in marks and quals, it didn't make up for it. Very frustrating to see Marines with a bachelor's, but PME incomplete.
- Yes, it did, working on a degree program also held weight in my opinion.
- Does not add value to my recommendation at all.



Training and Education

Are there any additional educational opportunities you consider to be more valuable (i.e., EJPME, NWC, etc.); and how did it influence a Marine's competitiveness?

- There were not a lot of additional educational opportunities that were considered more valuable unless a board member called out that it was important to a specific MOS.
- As long as you were doing well in all areas, it helped you. If you thought that doing a bunch of extra PME made you more competitive, but you were already below average, you thought wrong.
- A lot of these additional educational opportunities are just filler. It only has weight when the Marine is performing above average. Someone average or below average has no weight. Unless called out on a smart card, because it relates to MOS.
- Required PME and MOS-specific requirements/advanced courses. EJPME, NWC, etc., held little to no value.
- Required PME, RES, Seminar, and non-res.
- Resident courses toward MOS skills were more valuable to me than distance (JKO) courses (things you can click through), advanced sniper courses, mountain leader courses ect that applicably broadened tactical experience were more influential to me regarding competitiveness for this board and population.
- I viewed additional educational opportunities such as Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education (EJPME), Naval War College distance education, and other professional development courses as positive indicators of a Marine's initiative and commitment to self-improvement.
- I weighted education heavily after overall performance. If Marine had degrees, certificates, apprenticeships, etc., it was impactful. Today, there is no excuse for enlisted Marines not to seek out educational opportunities that broaden their aperture and enhance their minds.
- It depended on the population. If nearly everyone in the population has EJPME and NWC, then Marines without it were less competitive (especially if it was listed on the Smart Card).
- If everyone else has it and you don't, you are viewed as lazy or less competitive. The more, the better. Don't let not having one be the reason you didn't get selected.



Training and Education

Are there any additional educational opportunities you consider to be more valuable (i.e., EJPME, NWC, etc.); and how did it influence a Marine's competitiveness? Continued...

- MOS building training.
- Advanced MOS schools added to the competitiveness.
- No X2.
- Not really - it depends on the MOS and the Marine's career trajectory. If you've been to all of the schools but you're struggling at your day job, I question your prioritization. Conversely, if you're rocking straight-100 RVs and you also have extra PME and mil-ed, then you're climbing into the 6 rungs of the ladder.
- Throughout the board, the amount of additional PME, such as EJPME and NWC, was so common that it had no additional value. Some would even have those and not have their Nonresident course complete.
- Additional education opportunities were "nice to haves", but they did not move the needle much for me.
- The additional educational opportunities, such as EJPME and NWC, were so abundant across the population that only outlier education was considered.
- Education specific to the PMOS was most beneficial.
- I viewed civilian education more valuable than EJPMEs and Naval Warfare PMEs.
- EJPME and MOS producing schools. NWC isn't necessary or helpful.
- No. The problem doesn't reside in educational opportunities; the problem resides with Marines not doing their required PME (Distance Education Program (DEP)). The Marine Corps asks Marines to do one thing to get selected to the next rank...DEP. The next thing the Marine Corps asks Marines to do to get promoted to the next rank is the Seminar or Resident course. Do your PME! Too many great Marines were not selected because they chose not to do the minimum required to be DEP.



Adversity

What information should be included in a letter of clarification regarding adversity?

- All formal counseling(s) (Page 11, 6105, NJP, etc.), positive and corrective, should be addressed in the Marine's next FitRep. There was a large number of Page 11 / 6105 for violation of the UCMJ, that did not have an NJP or adverse FitRep. This left it outside the Chain of Command (who know the situation and the Marine better) to assess the nature and severity of the offence. Especially when the documents are vague and provide limited insight into what the Marine did.
- Context and how MRO has grown from the event.
- If a Marine was NJP'd 4-5 years ago and no rebuttal was given at the time, but they took the time to write a letter saying they now take ownership, it was viewed as a last-ditch effort for promotion. Post-adversity performance was what mattered most.
- Clarify anything I can't already get from reading the 6105 or Adverse FitRep. Don't spend time telling me that this isn't really your character - tell me what you've done to fix the situation.
- How do they plan on bouncing back?
- Failed or missed PFT or CFT/Out of Ht/Wt or Rifle and Pistol qualifications - Let the board know the why (were you injured, not available, etc.)DUI or PAC violations in grade (very tough to overcome)- Take responsibility and let the board know what steps you have taken since.
- Facts, not emotions.
- Take ownership of the adversity, explain the situation in a neutral manner, and demonstrate growth. Keep it short, though.
- Accept responsibility and highlight things in the record that show how the adversity has been overcome.
- A clear and concise explanation of what happened that is outside the adversity paperwork (NJP, 6105, ADV FITREP, etc.); if you take responsibility for actions or you don't agree with CO/RS/RO findings and why, again clear and concise.
- Explaining what happened. 6105s doesn't get into as much detail as the letter could.
- Any relevant information. The problem is that the 6105 is often written vaguely, and allows a Marine to insert information into the record. Often, I need to look at adverse FitReps for more information.



Adversity

What information should be included in a letter of clarification regarding adversity? Continued...

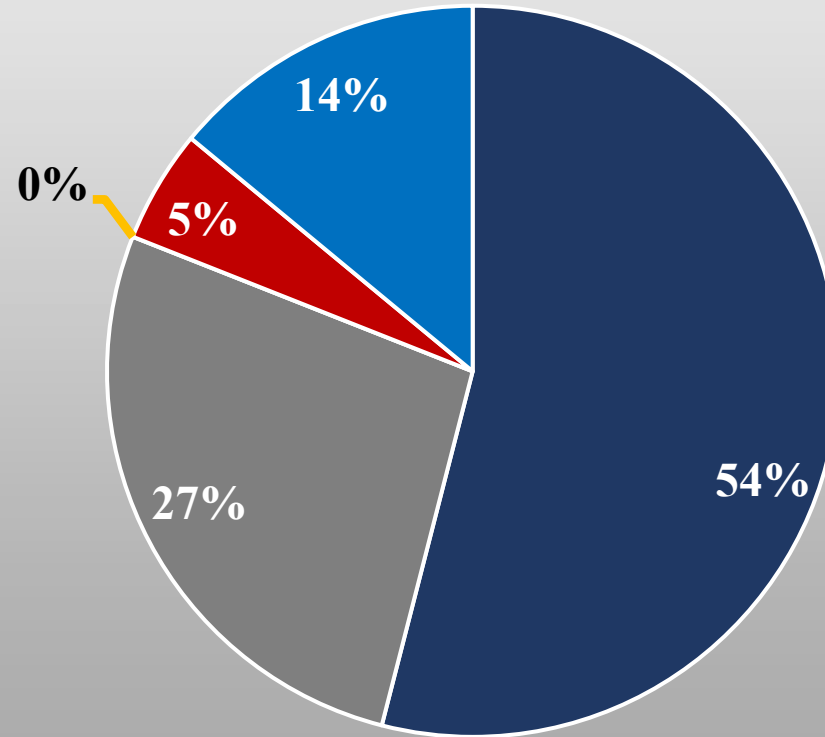
- Acceptance of your decisions and then your performance afterwards.
- I think explaining and elaborating on the adversity, but also if MRO is saying it's not true, then it needs to include proof or statements from others (leadership/citation/law enforcement) explaining/clarifying the adversity.
- Clear acknowledgement of responsibility (if appropriate) with tangible planned/effected steps to overcome. If the 6015/fitrep is vague, detailing the event would help the board from assuming the worst. If the Marine contests the adversity - simple facts and reference to performance since.
- Paint the picture of the actual situation and how this has been corrected, and what you have done since, the whole Marine Concept.
- Any context not captured in the documentation, actions taken/ing to address the adversity.
- I believed a letter of clarification regarding adversity should primarily demonstrate accountability and ownership of the situation. The purpose of the letter was not to re-litigate the event or provide a different explanation of what occurred. Attempts to dispute the facts or reinterpret the circumstances should have been addressed through the appropriate channels at the time, such as a rebuttal or the Performance Evaluation Review Board (PERB). Instead, the most effective letters acknowledged the adversity, took responsibility where appropriate, and briefly explained how the Marine moved forward, corrected deficiencies, and continued to perform and lead effectively.
- It is important to accept responsibility for the decisions that led to the adversity. However, accepting responsibility is the bare minimum expectation. A Marine who accepts responsibility and then provides concerted steps they will take to show they have overcome the adversity is the next step. Provide this plan in the adverse report statement or the rebuttal to the 6105. The next step is writing a letter to the board explaining how you followed through on the plan you laid out. Completing these actions, it shows growth and is value-added to the board.
- Speak to why it happened, take responsibility, and highlight what has been accomplished before and since the adversity. A Marine who has a history of taping, who is found to be out of standards and then has worked to be below the max weight, and provides a letter highlighting that was helpful.
- Take ownership, or don't write the letter. State what brought you to the situation (not excuses). List things you have done or actions you took to become better. How did you hold yourself accountable or ensure it would never happen again? Or how you are preventing people from making the same bad decision. If you had a PAC violation, become an EO, if possible. If you had a DUI, become a SACO, if possible. Volunteer to be the Unit Designated Driver on weekends. Performance before and after the adversity said the most.
- Take accountability for your actions. The rest...your performance, should be captured in your record. If you learned your lesson from your adversity and are making improvements to better yourself and your Marines, your record should speak for itself. Submitting letters of pity, pawning off accountability, or letters of recommendation do nothing when your record has stayed stagnant since adversity.



Adversity

How did you view adversity of any nature? (Violation of UCMJ, BCP, Adverse FITREP, 6105, NJP etc)

- In grade, significantly dropped SNM's competitiveness
- Depended on the nature of adversity
- 2 - 3 years less of an impact
- 3 - 5 years no negative impact
- No impact outside of grade





Board Preparation

In the cases you prepared, what documents in the OMPF did you find most relevant when reviewing a Marines record?

- In order of value: RS/RO values, Training, Adversity, Awards, Qualitative assessment, Section I / PFT / CFT.
- FitReps and Award documents for NA and above.
- Any letter that explains a reason for a low or partial PFT/CFT. We're not able to view medical records, so if a Marine is willing to provide that information, it would be beneficial to do so.
- Page 11 entries (which should be broken out in their own tab and not buried in the service records), award NAVMCs (and citations - rarely SOAs).
- Fitreps X4.
- Personal Awards, NAMs and Above, Training Certifications for required or highly recommended courses according to the MOS roadmap and smartcard- 6105s, College Degrees, and Transcripts.
- Award citations/SOAs, 6105s, FitReps, and uncommon educational documentation.
- DI and Recruiting ribbons. They aren't called out on the MBS. College transcripts/diplomas. Especially when there's nothing in MCTFS. Anything outside of the norm (e.g., OVSM)."
- Adversity, Letter to the Board (clear and concise), MBS, civilian education, awards, and training.
- Fitness reports and 6105's that had rebuttals.
- 6105s, NJPs.
- Adversity, rebuttals, and statements made. Letters to the board to clarify oddities in a Marine's OMPF made a HUGE difference. Otherwise, I was left to assume. Generally, I assumed the worst, which didn't help the Marines' competitiveness.



Board Preparation

In the cases you prepared, what documents in the OMPF did you find most relevant when reviewing a Marine's record? Continued...

- I would have to say the performance, FitReps.
- 6105, UPB, and Award citations.
- Performance, comments/stats, overall service.
- The most relevant documents in the OMPF when reviewing a Marine's record were the Fitness Reports, as they provided the clearest picture of sustained performance, leadership ability, and progression in responsibility over time. I also paid close attention to the Reporting Officers' comments and comparative assessments, as these often helped distinguish where the Marine ranked among their peers.
- Award certificates, board communication when written appropriately, adversity documents w/ rebuttals or statements, degrees, or course certificates from the MOS smartcard.
- Information that is not captured on the military education section of MBS (MOS schools that don't show up on MBS, awards showing high performance in school, transcripts showing progress towards a degree, etc).
- Awards, FitReps, adverse material, MBS.



Board Preparation

What documentation added little to no value in the Marine's OMPF?

- Anything MarineNet.
- Marine NET Certs.
- All of the extra MarineNet certs. The only ones you need are the final certificate. 100 LOAs did not make a difference; the OVSM did.
- All generic school/ MarineNet, JKO, and other certificates have no value to the Marines' evaluation. It needs to have a separate tab for those certificates. Only required PME certs and those required MOS certs should be in that one tab.
- Marinenet certs, life insurance verification, enlistment contracts.
- LOA, COA etc..
- I used everything available at some point.
- Routine administrative correspondence, older documents that were no longer relevant to the Marine's current grade, or excessive supporting paperwork that did not provide meaningful insight into the Marine's performance had minimal impact on my evaluation. While these documents may have been properly filed, they rarely influenced competitiveness.
- MarineNet certificates, non-medal awards received as a junior Marine, and letters of promotion recommendation.
- LOAs, Meritorious Masts from recruiting, MarineNet certs can be important for promotion to SSgt, but were generally not relevant for promotion to GySgt.
- LOAs, CertComms, Old PME, and Marine Net Certs!!
- Marine NET certificates, None MOS Related, and letters of Appreciation. Board members have to comb through hundreds of pages of documentation. These documents detract from highlighting things that need to be highlighted.



Board Preparation

What documentation added little to no value in the Marine's OMPF? Continued...

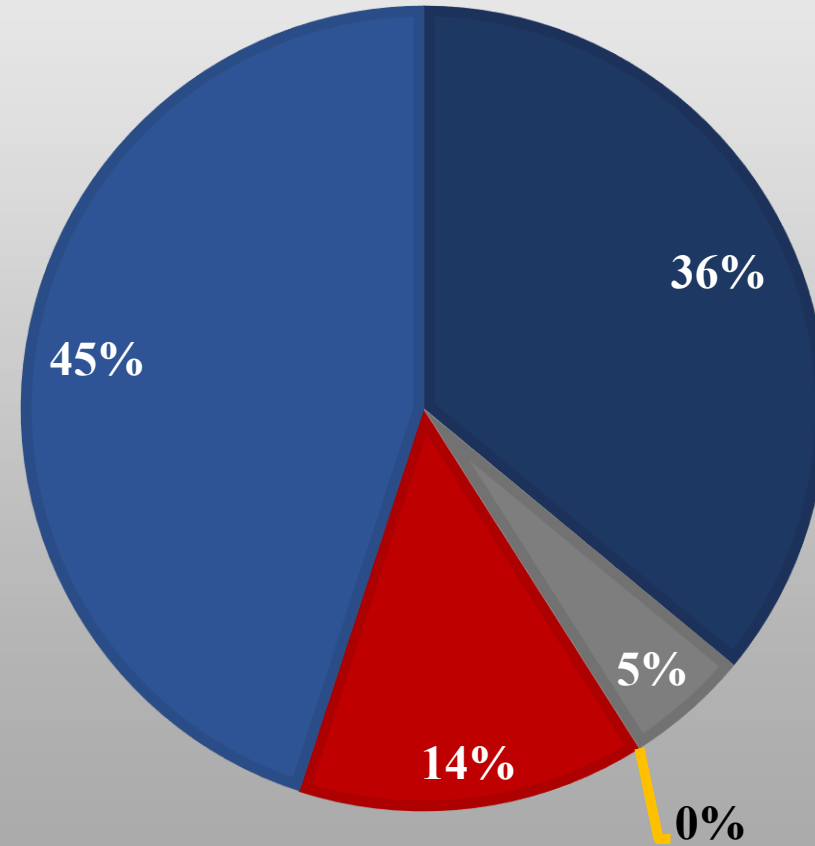
- Letters to the board that only explained items already in the Marine's record. It showed they did not review their record and understand what is in there. Additionally, Letters of Recommendation that did not provide any additional insight into the qualitative assessment of the Marine.
- Marinenet certs from when the MRO was a Cpl and below. Letters of appreciation and Certificates of Commendation from recruiting duty.
- All of the MarineNet certificates, contracts, marriage license, divorce papers, duplicate images, etc. had no value.
- Large swaths of the service record (insurance documents, for example). Marine-net certs for non-precept schools. Letters of appreciation.
- Letters to the board usually explained waivers or markings in their record that would be obvious to the board member.
- Letters of Appreciation and MarineNet Certificates were useless. Once the Marine receives the OVSM, and once the Marine is promoted to Sgt, the Marine should clear those documents out of their OMPF.
- Marine Net courses, the majority of the contract tab.
- MarineNet certificates from E-4 and below. Or any MarineNet cert not applicable to the PMOS.LOAs from PFC and LCp.
- MarineNet Certs that weren't EPME, and LOAs.



Board Preparation

How did you view letters of any type that were sent to the board?

- Letters were sometimes helpful and sometimes superfluous to the record
- Letters of recommendation were helpful
- Letters added no value
- The record spoke for itself
- Letters of clarification were helpful





Board Preparation

Were letters of any kind beneficial? If so, which ones and why? (i.e., letters of clarification, letters of recommendation, etc.)

- Only letters of clarification were beneficial because they answered possible questions a board member would have reviewing their record.
- Letters from past RS/ROs looking to add more information on their previous reports, or COs commenting on Marines' adversity that they adjudicated.
- Yes, letters that clarified any oddities within the MOS made a big difference! Letters of recommendation when your performance was subpar made zero difference. Your FitReps should speak for themselves. A letter of recommendation from the same RS/RO that graded you as an RV 80 or 3 block made no sense and made me question the letter's value. Leaders, don't write a letter of recommendation just because a Marine asked you to. It's okay to say "no." Letters explaining how you're better than your peers but your FitReps say otherwise made you less competitive and took away from your briefing time.
- Yes. Those that actually clarified adversity, no PFT/CFT or no rifle/pistol qual or RS/RO or senior officer/Enlisted explaining something to clarify something weird on the record.
- Letters of clarification were helpful when they addressed specific irregularities or adversity in a record. Letters from the RS/RO documenting why a counseling session was/was not deemed derogatory would be helpful. Letters of recommendation were helpful when highlighting improved performance after adversity, from an officer with knowledge of the situation.
- Letters were only beneficial when they provided the necessary context that could not be clearly understood from the Marine's record alone. Letters of clarification were only useful if they could address a specific issue, such as gaps in Fitness Reports, periods of adversity, or unusual career circumstances, allowing me to better understand the situation within the Marine's overall performance history. Letters of recommendation added little value, as I relied primarily on documented performance within Fitness Reports and official records rather than personal endorsements.
- Letters that explained any anomaly in the record were of value, particularly in the last two years. If there is something in your record that could cause a board member to have a question, it is important to write to provide the answer. Do not write a letter recommending yourself for promotion. I did not find letters of recommendation beneficial. The Marines' performance will tell me if they should be promoted or not.



Board Preparation

Were letters of any kind beneficial? If so, which ones and why? (i.e., letters of clarification, letters of recommendation, etc.) Continued...

- Letters that clarify why a Marine may have been out of height/weight standards, letters explaining failed PFTs or CFTs, or a dramatic drop in score. Letters explaining that there are waivers in the system for required training. -Letters that explain if some adversity in the record is being reviewed to be removed.
- Yes.
- If there is an anomaly in your record or career path, then write a clear, concise letter to the board with a neutral explanation and directly supporting enclosures. Do not send recommendation letters without a clear justification for the letter.
- If there is anything not perfect on the MBS, write a letter providing context. Writing a concise, helpful letter to the board shows the Marine is actively engaged in their career and aware that they're even on a board. Didn't shoot last year because it wasn't required for some reason, call it out and explain. Recruiting? I&I? Write a letter. Are they college transcripts in the record, not on the MBS? Write a letter. Are you only EPME complete because the government shutdown cancelled your course (or some other thing prevented you from going)? Write a letter explaining. Acknowledge you know resident PME is a requirement and explain how you're working to attend. Letters of recommendation from a period of adversity were helpful. Letters of recommendation from an RS/RO highly recommending promotion, but they gave the Marine an 80/3 block, were not helpful. If a Marine has a lot of unobserved time because of courses/relief of RS/etc. A LOR from a CO/XO for a high performer would have been very helpful.
- Letters of Clarification were helpful if they were clear and coincided; if the letter addressed something outside documented adversity, medical/missing PFT/CFT, or a FITREP concern, it provided little to no value because it lacked context. Letters of Recommendation were helpful if they came from a previous RS/RO, amplifying on comments and markings.
- Letters of clarification regarding rifle scores, PFT/CFT scores, addressing adversity, and addressing date gaps.



Board Preparation

Were letters of any kind beneficial? If so, which ones and why? (i.e., letters of clarification, letters of recommendation, etc.) Continued...

- Anything that showed the Marine overcame adversity or showed the Marine reviewed their record and highlighted a discrepancy.
- Letters of clarification were helpful because they shed light on information that is not available in MROs record.
- Any letter that explains a reason for a low or partial PFT/CFT. We're not able to view medical records, so if a Marine is willing to provide that information, it would be beneficial to do so.
- If a Marine had any adversity in grade and hadn't taken the effort to clarify things with the board, that stood out. Conversely, letters to the board to tell us things that we could easily read in the record for ourselves were detrimental - I got annoyed at the Marine for wasting my time as a board member.
- A letter explaining issues with performance, or if they had an injury. Specifically, a letter explaining a bunch of non-observed reports during a large period of time helped.
- Letters of clarification were almost always helpful, and there were plenty of ambiguous situations where a letter would have drastically helped a Marine. For example, if a Marine has a medical PFT and then runs the CFT, write a letter. If a Marine is coming off of light duty and runs his or her first-ever 2nd class PFT, write a letter. If a Marine hasn't been to the rifle/pistol range or a certain school due to funding, write a letter.
- Letters of clarification for out-of-date or waived PFT, CFT, or Rifle and Pistol ranges helped to determine whether it was waived or avoided.
- Taking accountability.
- Letters of recommendation have zero value. Only need letters to clarify Adverse.



Board Preparation

Were there any inconsistencies in a Marine's record that could have been explained or clarified by the Marine? If so, what are some examples?

- Lack of current PFT/CFT score, Date Gap on FitReps.
- Yes. Why did you not run the required PFT/CFT during the semi-annual period? Why, at 18 years of service, did you go from a regular 4 block Marine to an 8 block Marine? Service limitations are right around the corner, and it was obvious that you didn't just figure it out. It's simple: be a part of the team and perform in any capacity.
- Yes. No PFT/CFT or rifle score.
- Having a significant recent fitrep gap; multiple non-observed reports/billet changes in a short amount of time; time in a non-MOS billet like SACO, especially right after a below-average in MOS report.
- FitRep comments were copied and pasted.
- training scores (rifle specifically) due to location constraints. Iwakuni does not have a rifle range, MSG locations do not complete regular fitness tests, etc.
- A Marine's record could have been clarified by the Marine through a concise letter of clarification if they had gaps in Fitness Reports due to schools, temporary assignments, or administrative delays that were not immediately apparent when reviewing the record. In other cases, Marines who had recently completed a lateral move and had little or no documented performance in their new PMOS at the current grade, which could create questions about their current proficiency.
- Explain why there is a missing most recent PFT/CFT. Explain any adversity (especially if it was in grade) and the steps taken to overcome it. Explain any pending or missing fitreps.
- So many. Mostly related to adversity, PFT, CFT, rifle, pistol, MCMAP, and schools.
- Multiple non-observed reports. Outdated Rifle and Pistol scores. If you returned from SDA and lost all your qualifications, how have you worked to get them back after returning?
- Take accountability for your actions.



Board Preparation

Were there any inconsistencies in a Marine's record that could have been explained or clarified by the Marine? If so, what are some examples? Continued...

- There are always inconsistencies in the record, but they should be explained by an RS/RO in a FitRep. It might be worth the Marine having the opportunity to make a comment on all FitReps, just like they do on adverse reports.
- Yes, missing training, multiple years of NMED PFTs & CFTs.
- Date gaps. I had a few packages to brief on where a Marine was missing their last annual report, leaving months of unobserved time to be assumed.
- Absolutely. Anything a Marine can clarify that saves me time as a board member is appreciated. If your last annual FitRep is waiting on the Deputy Commandant's desk because he's a busy 3-star, just tell me. I appreciated short letters to the board that were straight to the point - "My PFT/CFT are partials because I'm stationed at the consulate in a virtual combat zone and we have no place to run" - attach the MSG waiver, and we're good to go. If I saw a Marine taking ownership of their own record (in helpful ways) it impacted my thought process as a board member, similarly to if they had a successful Tier II screenable billet.
- A very large number of Marines had several years of no rifle scores, and ultimately seems so normal that it began to be the norm through several MOS's.
- Missing a PFT/CFT Missing a FitRep, especially the most recent annual.
- Yes, missing PFT/CFT.
- Submit correspondence to explain low or medical PFT/CFT scores that are not annotated in FitRep s.
- Letters explaining medical exemptions (as necessary) for PFT/CFT that showed the Marine had a plan to get back to PFT/CFT were helpful. It showed the Marine knew they were on the board and that they cared.
- Yes, if inconsistencies exist in a Marine's record, a letter to the board would help board members understand any actions taken. Example: Recent injury, and could not conduct a PFT/CFT in that reporting period due to that injury. RS/RO was still working on a date gap FitRep.
- Going a year or more without any training (MED WAIVED PFT/CFT) for males and females spanning years. Or to MED WAIVE a PFT but complete a 290 CFT is questionable. You had no earlier than 30, no more than 90 days to complete a PFT; you had that time prior to the CFT to run that PFT before the promotion board. Write a letter explaining why that could not have been accomplished.



Board Preparation

What are your top recommendations for Marines preparing for a selection board?

- You control your promotion competitiveness. If you're okay with just being okay, then know you're less competitive. Nothing wrong with that, but don't complain when you're passed for promotion. You are also the gatekeeper for your record. Review it and review it often. If you find errors, correct them immediately. Don't leave a person who doesn't know you to make an assumption about your record. It's your promotion and YOUR record, take ownership.
- Ensure your record is up to date, nothing is missing, something doesn't look right, then write a letter to the board to explain, and when needed, provide proof or have RS/RO write on the Marines' behalf to explain.
- Ensure record is up to date and all appropriate data reflects (PME/PFT/CFT/AMOS/etc.) Review MBS for irregularities or areas where the board would have to make an inference about performance (multiple billet changes in a short period of time, decline in marks from the same RS/RO, report that skews from the rest of the record) and provide concise clarification.
- Clean up there, OMPF, seems like that has been lost in the MC.
- Ensure PME completion is documented, MOS required schools are documented, training scores are run, address any irregularities via letter to the board, ensure all awards are documented / SOA/certificates available.
- My top recommendation for Marines preparing for a selection board is to focus on sustained superior performance and leadership over time. Take ownership of their record by reviewing their OMPF and Master Brief Sheet for accuracy, as administrative errors or missing documentation create confusion when the board reviews the record. I also recommend that Marines complete the required Professional Military Education. Most importantly, if there are unusual circumstances, gaps in reporting, or adversity reflected in the record, Marines should provide concise letters of clarification to ensure the board has the proper context.
- Screen your record, add relevant certificates, and remove extra and irrelevant documents. Seek guidance from your senior enlisted leaders and ask them to help you audit your record. If you have a missing fitrep, get it submitted or write a letter. Write and submit a letter to the board to clarify any questions or adversity. Complete your EPME.
- Understand what information the briefer has access to and prepare your record accordingly. Anything that doesn't automatically explain itself, write a letter.
- Do your best everywhere. Become an invaluable asset to your unit by taking on more responsibilities, such as collateral duties.
- Do your PME!



Board Preparation

What are your top recommendations for Marines preparing for a selection board? Continued...

- If they were the board to see something, don't send it in a letter, move it to the top of their OMPF, and organize the section according to what they view as important. This helps the board understand the Marine.
- 1. Do your PME! 2. Audit your record. 3. Ask someone to review your letter to the board and provide you with feedback prior to submission.
- Manage your OMPF! You have the means to go in and edit your record as needed. Remove erroneous or duplicate documents. Ensure that all PME certificates are entered and legible.
- Look at the Master Brief Sheet, look at the Master Brief Sheet, look at the Master Brief Sheet. So many assumptions are made based on that snapshot. If your billet description is "Fire Team Member" for an 0369, I immediately have questions. If your CFT is dated a year and a half ago, I start digging. If your degree is listed as "invalid," it tells me you don't care enough to fix simple administrative issues.
- Ensure their Fitreps are submitted, and dates are accurate.
- Do your EPME- Ensure there are no FitRep Date Gaps. Do your required annual training or provide a reason why the training was not accomplished.
- Do your PME and write a letter to the board explaining anything that doesn't read well.
- Review your record! Ensure you have all appropriate documentation uploaded into your OMPF, e.g., certificates, diplomas, awards, etc. Remove duplicates and unnecessary documentation. Update your MBS information, such as the billet description. Ensure appropriate training and PME are current or explained in documentation. If you were not PME complete, then you were not briefed. Do not give the board room any doubt as to your desire to be selected. If something is not commonly known, send a letter to the board! Explain the situation clearly and concisely. The boardroom takes letters seriously. If we are left to guess, then it may not come out in your favor.
- Do your PME! Complete the EPME NLT 6 months after promoting to SSgt. Get a 1st class PFT/CFT every year. Especially if you have to tape. Missing PFT/CFTs in a year were taken very seriously. If you're medically unfit to take a PFT/CFT. Go to the medical first. Don't fail and then go to medical. Know yourself and seek self-improvement. Go to the range. If you can't go to the range for a legitimate reason, write a letter explaining. Complete the recommended PMOS courses for your grade.
- Review your OMPF/MBS; if you have missing FitReps, training, education, and/or awards in grade, send a clear and concise letter to the board.
- Write a letter to the board that speaks to low PFT/CFT scores, rifle/ pistol scores, and issues with reports. Let the board know you're on limited duty.
- Conduct a self-audit, write a letter to the board to clarify any gaps. This also means that Marines need to be educated on what a gap may be.



Board Preparation

What was the most common discrepancy notice during the board process?

- Marines not completing career course distance education program - EPME6000AA-Missing FitReps -Incorrect running of PFT/CFT code, units are running a class 9 (combat) when a class 5 (medical) was meant to be. -Missing a PFT/CFT score-Marines having several non-observed FitReps within grade (ex, four of five FITREPs non-observed and within the same unit).
- Marine's not completing EPME.
- The most common discrepancy would be the inability to easily see date gaps.
- A lack of PME completion. A lack of performance. A lack of ownership. You control how quickly you will or will not be recommended for promotion.
- No explanation of PFT/CFT or rifle score.
- Verification of missing PME/PFT/CFT.
- Adultery, DUI, Recruiter misconduct, and DI misconduct.
- Marines are not completing the required EPME.
- EPME verifications, missing fitreps, height/weight verifications.
- Missing training with no letter to the board explaining why. Also, there were an overwhelming number of Marines with outstanding packages who failed to take the distance education PME. There are absolutely Marines who should've be on the promotion list that weren't because they didn't prioritize taking a MarineNet course before the board convened.
- Board Members failed to notice adversity, i.e., when a Recruiter was moved to an Ops Clerk billet. The MSB stated the SDA billets in Yellow highlight even if they were relieved for Cause. An indicator of a short tour on SDA or an immediate billet change would be helpful.
- Do your PME!



Board Preparation

What was the most common discrepancy noticed during the board process? Continued...

- Missing annual FitReps and not having the last semi-annual CFT. since the board convenes in January. If a command is delinquent in submitting the training roster, the Marine may show as out of standards for completing the required assessment.
- PME incompleteness and missing PFT/CFT.
- Marines are failing to complete the minimum PME requirement.
- PME completion. After that, PFT / CFT dates and codes, as it is easy to string together years of partials / NMEDs and still look "good" on the MBS. My third-highest number of discrepancies was for missing award NAVMCs / citations, especially for combat action ribbons.
- Missing PFT's CFT's and PME.
- Marines are not even having the EPME for the grade completed.
- Missing or late FitReps.
- Changes in height over the years led to questions.
- PME incomplete.



Executive Summary

The following slides present a concise executive summary of the most recent GySgt Selection Board survey. They highlight key trends, recurring themes, and performance gaps identified by board members. This summary also provides recommended actions to strengthen your preparation, performance, and overall competitiveness for future selection boards. All insights reflect the perspectives and personal opinions of the board members who served on the FY26 GySgt Selection Board.



Executive Summary

Top Trends

- 1. Performance and Leadership:** Sustained superior performance and leadership were the most critical factors in determining competitiveness. Marines who excelled in their PMOS and demonstrated leadership potential were highly favored.
- 2. MOS Credibility:** Excelling in PMOS and completing MOS-specific progressive schools were viewed as essential for competitiveness. Marines with strong MOS credibility were consistently ranked higher.
- 3. Special Duty Assignments (SDA):** Successful completion of SDAs added value, but average performance on SDA was less competitive than above-average performance in PMOS. SDA adversity negatively impacted competitiveness unless followed by sustained superior performance.
- 4. Education:** Civilian education, particularly degrees relevant to PMOS, enhanced competitiveness but did not outweigh performance. PME completion was critical, with incomplete PME being a common disqualifier.



Executive Summary

Key Insights

- **FitRep Comments:** Clear, specific, and measurable comments in Sections I and K were highly valued. Comments that matched relative value (RV) and comparative assessments (CA) carried more weight.
- **Letters to the Board:** Letters of clarification addressing adversity, gaps, or anomalies were helpful. Letters of recommendation added little value unless they provided unique insights.
- **Assignment Diversity:** While assignment diversity was considered, performance in assigned billets was prioritized over the variety of assignments.
- **Adversity:** Adversity in grade significantly reduced competitiveness, especially for violations of core values. Marines who demonstrated accountability and growth post-adversity were viewed more favorably.



Executive Summary

Common Gaps

- 1. Incomplete PME:** Many Marines failed to complete the required PME, which significantly impacted their competitiveness.
- 2. Missing Documentation:** Missing FitReps, outdated PFT/CFT scores, and incomplete training records were frequent issues.
- 3. Inconsistent Records:** Discrepancies in RV, CA, and FitRep comments created confusion and negatively impacted evaluations.
- 4. Lack of Letters:** Marines often failed to submit letters clarifying adversity, missing training, or gaps in their records.



Executive Summary

Recommended Actions

- 1. Audit Your Record:** Regularly review your OMPF and Master Brief Sheet (MBS) for accuracy. Remove irrelevant documents and ensure all awards, training, and PME are properly documented.
- 2. Complete PME:** Prioritize completing required PME (e.g., EPME6000AA) as soon as possible after promotion to SSgt. Incomplete PME is a major disqualifier.
- 3. Clarify Inconsistencies:** Submit concise letters to the board to explain gaps, adversity, or missing documentation. Take accountability and highlight steps taken to overcome challenges.
- 4. Enhance MOS Credibility:** Focus on excelling in PMOS, completing MOS-specific progressive schools, and earning relevant qualifications. Ensure RS/RO comments highlight your technical and leadership capabilities.
- 5. Sustain Superior Performance:** Consistently perform at a high level in all assignments, including SDAs. Demonstrate leadership, initiative, and impact in your unit.
- 6. Leverage Education:** Pursue civilian education, especially degrees relevant to your MOS, and ensure all certifications and transcripts are uploaded to your OMPF.
- 7. Seek Guidance:** Consult senior enlisted leaders and career analysts to review your record and provide tailored advice.

Point of Contact

Contact the Career Analysts today to receive
an individually tailored career counseling.

Email: ecounselor@usmc.mil

Website:

