

FY26 SSgt Selection Board Debrief



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Manpower Management Records and Performance,
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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 SSgt Board Stats

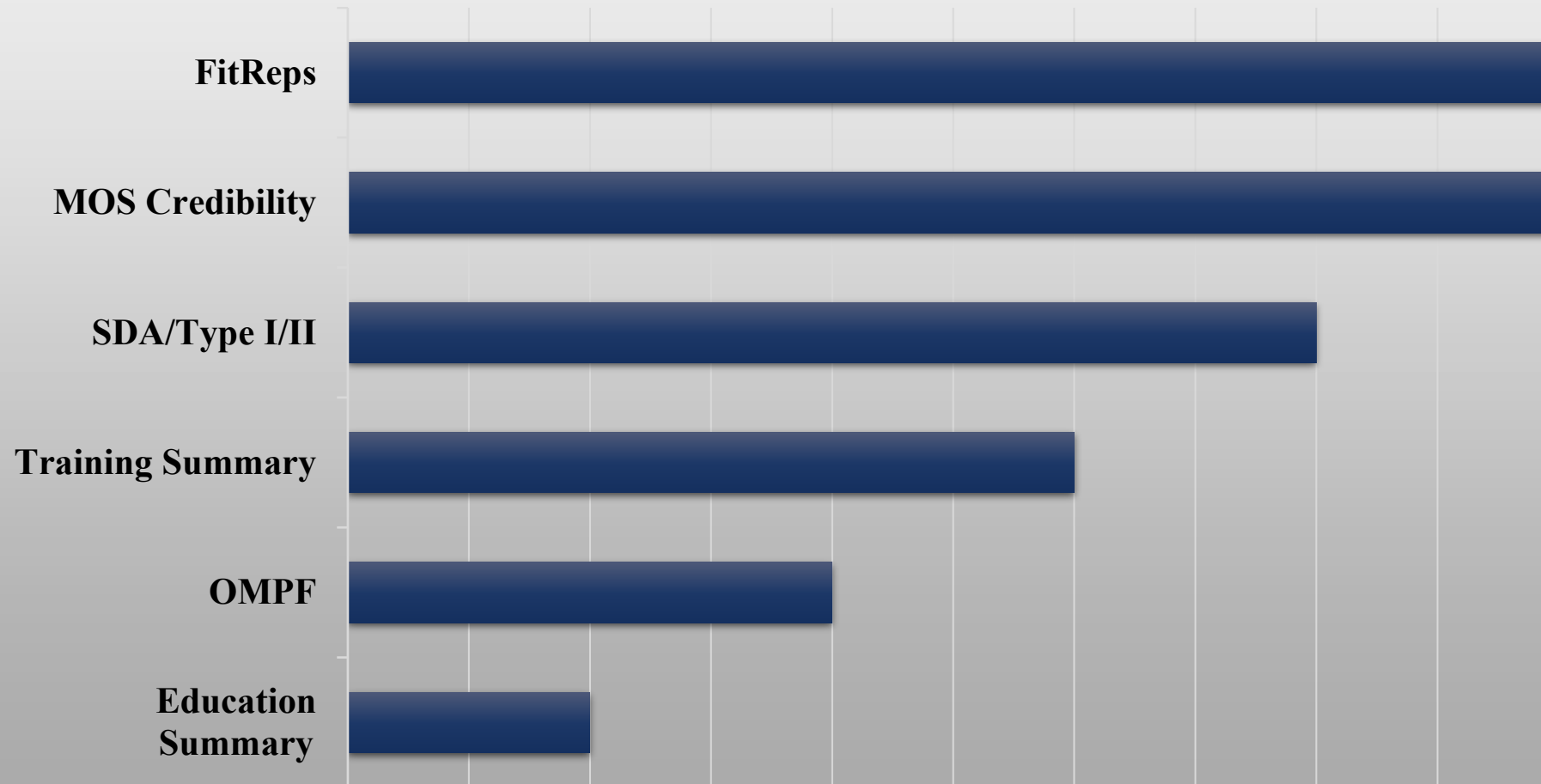
- FY26 SSgt Board consisted of a total of 9,260 Marines.
- Failed Selection 2,340 (38%) from both the above-zone/In in-zone.
- Selection Rates by zone:

Zone	Total	Selected	Selection Rate
Above Zone	1,526	628	41%
In Zone	4,609	3167	69%
Below Zone	3,125	271	9%



Performance

How would you rank these competitive factors?





Performance

When assessing a Marines performance, how would you rank the following from most to least important?

**Section I and K
Comments**



**Individual Report
RS and RO
Markings**



**RS/RO Summary
(Bottom of MBS)**

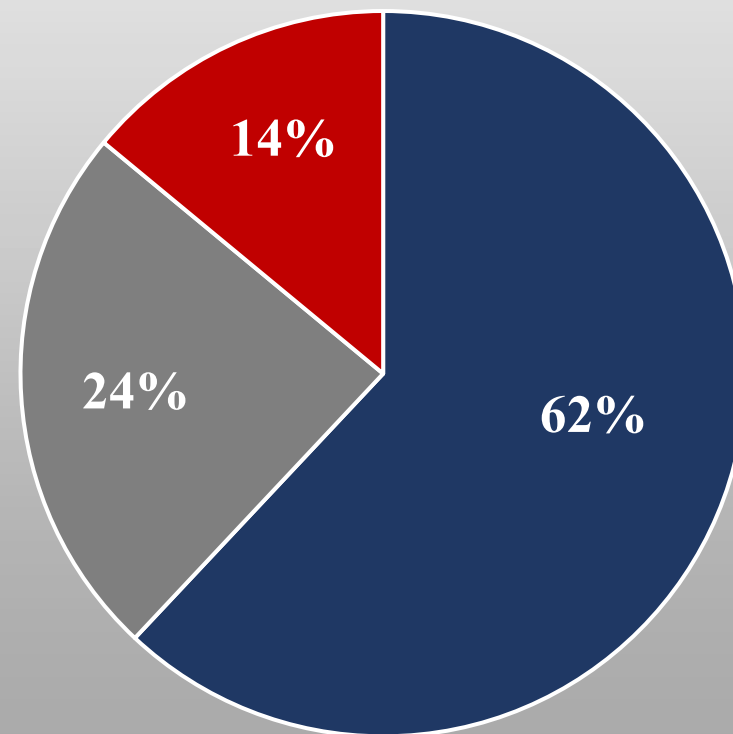




Performance

Which area did you rely on to paint the overall picture, the Marine's fitness report markings or section I and K comments?

- Both Were Considered Equally
- Fitness Report Markings
- Section I and K Comments





Performance

When fitness report markings conflicted with section I and K comments, which one did you lean towards and what context determined your decision?

- I lean towards the marks; in my opinion, an RS is less likely to make remarks that could potentially hurt an MRO's feelings.
- I leaned more towards fitness report comments, RS/RO comments.
- I lean towards Section I and K comments. Impactful section I and K comments narrative, specific, quantifiable comments on technical expertise and leadership potential.
- Markings weighed more, but I took a few things into consideration: the size of the RS profile, average points of the report, and the rank/billet of the RS. A CWO/LDO carried more weight for a technical MOS, but less for administrative or combat-related evaluations. You can't tell me to "promote ahead of peers" while also rating a Marine at 2.6 and placing them in the lower tier of the profile.
- Report Markings.
- Section I and K comments X3.
- Unless the RS/RO specifically states to take more credence with the words than the math, I lean more towards the math in my decisions.
- I would look at the trend in markings from prior reports as well as the size of the RS/RO profiles and make a judgment based on that information.
- I relied more on the section I and K comments to make my decision.
- Initial assessment was usually ballparked on the markings in the report summary, further solidified by comments. If comments are conflicting throughout multiple fitness reports, the assessment is then based on other supplemental criteria. Unfortunately, this is a more common problem than I thought it would be.



Performance

When fitness report markings conflicted with section I and K comments, which one did you lean towards and what context determined your decision? Continued...

- Comments written by R.S or R.O had more weight when written appropriately; there were multiple Fitness Reports that had copy-and-paste comments, seen in other reports. No real value in the comments, so we had to go based on the value placed in the report.
- I believe both section I and section K are important because they give the same information or a different point of view for comparison.
- I leaned towards comments. Markings can be skewed to manage and protect RS/RO profiles, unfortunately. But what they say or don't say is always compelling, especially when compared to said markings.
- "The markings often didn't match the section I & K comments. For example, the evaluated markings would be great, but the comments would say promote with peers, contemporaries, or to meet the needs of the Marine Corps. If the RS & RO truly believe that the Marine should be promoted "NOW," then it needs to be articulated, and the markings should match. One thing that was clearly evident was when RS & RO marked Marines higher for the board. This was identified when the same RS & RO gave a Marine an 80 Fitness Report and marked them low on the Christmas tree prior to board, but the board Fitness Report was both RS & RO high. No need to give Marines a pre-board bump up in grading. Board members can see right through the pre-board bumps."
- The comments painted a better picture of the markings. Many times, the markings would not match the verbiage.
- "Conflict between marks and written comments highlights mixed performance. Most leaders who want to get their Marines promoted (a good thing!) but are unwilling/unable to give the markings that make promotion happen, are telling the board with this mismatch. The Relative Value (RV) system places 50% of the force below a 90 RV; however, achieving at least one report above 90 RV is attainable in grade for everyone. Professional growth within an MOS is standard and often includes below at least one 90 RV or lower report. Consistent marks below a 90 RV are telling regardless of the comment strength. Marking trends across many reports provides the most accurate performance assessment. Written comments are less impactful when consistent marking levels are established by multiple supervisors. Comments are most valuable for reports covering limited observation periods and in reports that document the Marines' best performance."
- Markings. Comments can be subjective, and numbers should be the more accurate picture.
- I leaned towards fitness report markings, although when both sections I and K comments do not match markings, then I would consider movement towards comments. Overall, the markings hold more weight with me.
- Leaned more towards the comments, often times board members would point out when the markings/comments do not match. This was especially useful if the RS/RO has a small profile.



Performance

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

- "It was a factor, especially when it was made some type of weighted superlative."
- Both were important, but confusing when RS and RO comments didn't mirror each other.
- Very important.
- Promotion recommendations only impacted my verdict if they were written in the style of "promote ahead of peers," "excellent candidate for WO/officer programs," or "my absolute highest recommendation; it would be detrimental not to promote." But the markings still needed to support it. Too much white space or report averages below roughly 3.5 started to lose credibility and weaken the recommendation.
- If it was negative, then it carried weight.
- Vital.
- It was a minor factor.
- Promotion recommendations were heavily influential in placement.
- I played a significant role in determining the ranking, but it is only a part of the entire picture of the performance of the Marine.
- I placed more value on a promotion recommendation than I should have, based on years of reviewing fitness reports; I was just used to seeing/hearing it. I could definitely do without the recommendation from the RS/RO. Most of the time, the recommendation is given to Marines as a sound bite anyway.
- I was looking to see if the marks reflected the recommendation.
- Extremely important, however, the numerical value of the report had to match the comments being said about the MRO. If it was a promotion recommendation with an average or below-average report value during that reporting period, it did not hold much value at all.



Performance

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

- Reporting Senior and Reviewing Officer recommendations are important to board selection because they are working with MRO on a daily basis.
- Very important. It's actually the easiest thing they can do to convey whether they see value in a Marine having increased rank and responsibility.
- Very important as the RS and RO have the largest influence on the Marine's career as it relates to truly evaluating the Marine for promotion. One of the biggest problems was that most of the comments and markings didn't match, which was difficult to decipher. The lack of clear language often caused confusion among board members.
- A promotion recommendation from the (RS) and (RO) in Sections I and K was highly influential to me, especially because their markings often didn't match. Not having a recommendation left me with too much room for interpretation, doubt, and inconsistent assumptions.
- RS comments held more weight to me only due to knowing that they should be closer to the Marines being evaluated, but also considered the RO's profile for breaking out Marines as well.
- Supervisors should address promotion in every report, regardless of whether the recommendation is 'needs of the Marine Corps,' 'promote after peers,' or contingent upon future improvement. Omission of a promotion statement reflects poorly on the supervisor, particularly when accompanied by satisfactory comments and average marks. Ambiguity caused by an RS's failure to articulate a clear recommendation will favor the Marine and not be held against them. Notably, a significant number of highly rated reports (both in marks and comments) lacked explicit promotion statements.
- Very important. That recommendation, in conjunction with marking, gives a better idea of where to rate the Marine.
- Very important. I recommend ensuring a bottom-line recommendation is crystal clear, using the fitness report guide book word scale, e.g., promotion at the needs of the service, promotion with peers, highly recommended, ahead of peers, well ahead of peers, enthusiastically recommended, my highest recommendation. When an RS or RO says "my highest," the report should be 100 at reporting or highest RO tier reported at the time; otherwise, I will disregard "my highest".
- If the RS/RO did not provide a promotion recommendation, to me, it looked unfavorable, as if they didn't feel the Marine deserved the time.



Performance

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

- When comments talked about character, intelligence, performance, leadership, authority, and potential.
- Promote to the needs of the Marine Corps, do not promote, promote with peers, promote now, promote ahead of peers, promote behind peers.
- Explicit, enthusiastic language such as "Promote Now" or "Promote ahead of peers" paints a picture of the Marine competitiveness.
- The bookends mattered. If the first sentence wasn't hyping the Marine up or making me feel like I needed to keep reading, I generally skipped to the last sentence or two. I would still skim the middle for a possible standout comment, but if it wasn't clearly confirming the Marine's billet, level of responsibility, and performance in that billet, it carried little to no weight.
- Anything that was not fluff, comments talking towards leadership ability, MOS proficiency, and unit impact. Most of what I saw was cookie-cutter fluff where the RS/RO put little effort into section I comments.
- Go-to Marine, already performing as a SNCO, the top xxx Sgt I have served with.
- Next level performance comparisons. Level of recommendations for promotion. Recommendations for Next key billets, SDA, and schools.
- Comments that did more to expand on painting a picture of the Marines' work ethic, character, and MOS proficiency vs just repeating their billet accomplishments.
- Metrics, to promote or not to promote, below, with or above peers, and stand out things that the Marine has accomplished during the reporting period.
- "Top tier Marine", "the number x of x in my profile", "promote immediately"
- Quantitative data and proficiency rating.



Performance

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

- Promote now, he is ready for the next rank, already performing at the next rank. I regularly interact with MRO/SNM, and I have the utmost confidence in his ability to perform/complete all tasks with no supervision.
- Ahead peers, first opportunity, promo now.
- How they rank amongst peers. The level of leadership, communication, technical skills, mission accomplishment, morality, etc., that they display. What the Marine brings to the mission, the unit, and the Marine Corps. How involved they are in the community is important as well because it translates to fewer off-duty incidents and typically higher moral standing.
- The comments that added the most value were the ones that were clear, concise, and articulate about the Marines' performance. Often, the comments felt as if the RS & RO were trying to be nice rather than clearly speaking on the Marines' performance.
- "Already performing at a SSgt level. Great performance while holding a SNCO billet."
- Higher performer, promote now, a must for promotion, and comments where the Marine is above their peers.
- "Effective Fitness Report comments that demand promotion use a distinct, three-part structure: (1) identify an exceptional character trait, (2) justify the trait with a specific billet accomplishment, and (3) provide an explicit recommendation for immediate promotion. Too frequently, promotion statements are isolated and conflated with retention and reassignment recommendations. This practice provides little value beyond the standard recommendation block and typically signals average performance. Some reports reiterate billet accomplishments without assessing character, or conversely, provide unsubstantiated superlatives with no reasoning. The most impactful comments seamlessly integrate character assessment, factual justification, and a promotion statement. Examples: -"Sgt [A] is a servant leader and was the linchpin in making our unit deployment a success. I enthusiastically recommend him for promotion at first look."-"Sgt [B]'s performance is outstanding, consistently the first at work and the last to leave. I intentionally marked her performance at the top of my profile and gave my highest recommendation for immediate promotion."-"Sgt [C] is already performing at the level of a SSgt. I enthusiastically recommend promotion at first look."-"Sgt [D] is a workhorse who inspires excellence in the Marines he leads. Recommend promotion ahead of peers."
- I look for power statements that add value, those that clearly distinguish the Marine's performance and potential using impactful, specific language. Statements like "fire-and-forget Marine," "apex operator in MOS," or "force multiplier" highlight exceptional initiative, technical proficiency, and leadership. Recommendations for promotion ahead of peers or "promote now" further emphasize.
- "First round draft pick", "Seismic Leadership" / "Trailblazing" / "Stellar", "A leader who makes more leaders", "Apex predator... hunts the streets of Pennsylvania like a lion roaming the African savannah - with ruthlessness, cunning, and an indefatigable thirst to win."
- Comments alluding to performing in billets normally held by higher ranks. Comments that allude to outperforming peers or standing out amongst peer group. "go-to marine", comments that exemplify/amplify technical proficiency.



Performance

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

- If the word picture is the narrative form of the billet accomplishments, then it adds no value to either section I or K.
- Promote with peers now, promote and retain.
- Phrases like "Promote with peers" or "Promote at the needs of the Marine Corps" were not viewed as competitive.
- The number one thing was any wording that suggested the Marine was anything less than capable of operating without supervision. Also, comments along the lines of "performs as expected for rank," "performs within expectations of the billet held," or "meets expected technical proficiency" usually hurt more than help. Those statements came across as baseline performance rather than a strong endorsement.
- "Requires supervision" or anything with a negative tone to it, or an average tone.
- Absence of full comments in Section I/K, no promotion recommendation, promote behind, not recommended, continued growth required.
- "-Section K comments simply repeat or summarize section I comments. -Overall comments do not match markings."
- If the RS or RO simply repeated the billet accomplishments without providing any context of the Marine.
- Paragraphs that the word picture is just fluff and doesn't really say anything of value, just filler.
- Promote with peers is the most common unattractive comment. promote when eligible, promote at the needs of the Marine Corps, etc.



Performance

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

- Routine tasks captured
- Starting with "Concur with R.S." and repeating the exact same sentences/wording in the R.O section.
- Promote with peers.
- Comments pertaining to being supervised more than normal, completing tasks no matter how long they take, promote with peers (when tied to very good remarks), a lack of promotion recommendation, "when given direction..."
- "Giving Marines the prototypical comment "promote with peers". Promote at the needs of the Marine Corps. Promote when ready. What does that mean? Promote with more experience. The RS & RO has a role in helping determine if the Marine is promotion eligible. My recommendation is to provide comments that truly break a Marine out from the majority."
- "Promote and retain at the needs of the Marine Corps. Completed tasks with guidance and supervision."
- Routinely needed ..., limited supervision, MRO performed at/as a Sgt is expected at their grade, or MRO's performance during this reporting period at the level of a Marine with this TIG/TIS.
- "If the supervisor would like to communicate well below average performance, mark in the bottom third and state that they act like a basically trained Marine. Other comments to indicate poor performance include:-"Sgt [S] completes tasks when assigned." -""Sgt [U] performs the actions expected of his rank and billet",- "When supervised, Sgt [V] produces expected results",- "I recommend Sgt [W] be promoted with future performance improvement",- "I recommend Sgt [X] be screened for promotion",- "Sgt [Y] completed annual training requirements", "Sgt [Z] should be promoted at the needs of the Marine Corps"
- " MRO is performing all tasks expected as a Sgt of Marines. "RO could use more time to hone leadership skills. "RO meets minimum standards for the current billet. "RO completes tasks with supervision to achieve desired results. "MRO's performance is consistent with peers."
- "Empathetic Leadership", Recommended to be a "small unit leader", "Promote" with no relative quantifier.
- "Promote at the needs of the Marine Corps", "screen for promotion," "promote with peers."



Performance

What are examples of valuable promotion recommendation comments?

- Promote ahead of peers, a must for promotion, promote now, MRO is a SNCO already, has my highest endorsement.
- Promote at the needs of the Marine Corps, do not promote, promote with peers, promote now, promote ahead of peers, promote behind peers.
- Promote NOW and Promote ahead of peers.
- Successfully filled a billet normally expected of a SNCO or Officer/recommendations for WO/Officer programs, but it had to read as a real endorsement, not passive encouragement like "I encourage them to pursue their desire." / "sets the standard for others to follow" / "outperforms SNCOs or more Senior NCOs."
- "MRO is a must for the billets that face the most challenging problem sets in MEF and Joint Force, • I would seek to serve in combat with this Marine, • Assign to our toughest billets - he will thrive • His command presence is magnetic, • MRO's relentless pursuit of physical and mental excellence is infectious, driving subordinates to break through their perceived limitations and achieve outstanding performance benchmarks • indispensable NCO I cannot afford to lose • MRO is a Staff Sergeant wearing Sergeant chevrons • SNM is the #1 Sergeant in my profile • Without Sgt Githinji's supervision, I am confident that the squadron would not be nearly as combat effective in this contested AOR • Sgt Murray is an irreplaceable asset to the VMU community, hand-selected over two seasoned Staff Noncommissioned Officers (SNCOs) • One of the finest Sergeants I have interacted with, if I were to mark this Marine in an observed FITREP, he would be within my top third percentile (not-observed FITREP) • SNM already demonstrates the tangible and intangible traits we seek in the best of our SNCO cohort."
- Promote ahead of peers, promote now, promote next opportunity.
- Do not promote verbiage, "Promote with or ahead of peers", "Promote Now."
- Promote ahead of peers.
- Promote with, above, or below peers. At first look, ready now, already performing as a SNCO, comments like this.
- Honest and transparent comments that match markings. An RS or RO given perspective to a briefer via comments about the Marines' performance, versus filling white space in either section for the sake of filling white space.



Performance

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

- Highly recommend, enthusiastically recommend ahead of peers, Immediate promotion, at first opportunity.
- Promote now, he is ready for the next rank, already performing at the next rank. Currently filling a billet above his rank and performing exceptionally.
- Promote with peers, ahead of peers, first opportunity, promo now, etc.
- At soonest, at first opportunity, NOW, already performing as a..., ahead of peers, with the best of his peers (ok but kind of passive)
- Promote Now, promote ahead of peers; this Marine absolutely needs to be promoted.
- Strongly recommend for promotion and retention, ahead of peers. Promote Now!
- Exceeded in the performance of their duties, held multiple billets of higher grade, and increased proficiency for command/section.
- -"Sgt [A] is a servant leader and was the linchpin in making our unit deployment a success. I enthusiastically recommend him for promotion at first look." -"Sgt [B]'s performance is outstanding, consistently the first at work and the last to leave. I intentionally marked her performance at the top of my profile and give my highest recommendation for immediate promotion". -"Sgt [C] is already performing at the level of a SSgt. I enthusiastically recommend promotion at first look." -"Sgt [D] is a workhorse who inspires excellence in the Marines he leads. Recommend promotion ahead of peers."
- "Promote ahead of peers; ready for increased responsibility.", "Top performer; recommend immediate promotion.", "Promote now; possesses all attributes of an exceptional Staff Sergeant." "Sets the standard for others to emulate, promotion is strongly recommended."
- Highly recommended, ahead of peers, well ahead of peers, enthusiastically recommended, my highest recommendation.
- "Promote now", "promote ahead of peers", "promotion at first opportunity", "promotion at earliest opportunity", ready for promotion to SSgt now", "promote immediately", "in a class of their own", and the additional recommendation to an Officer program, WO, MECEP, and so forth.



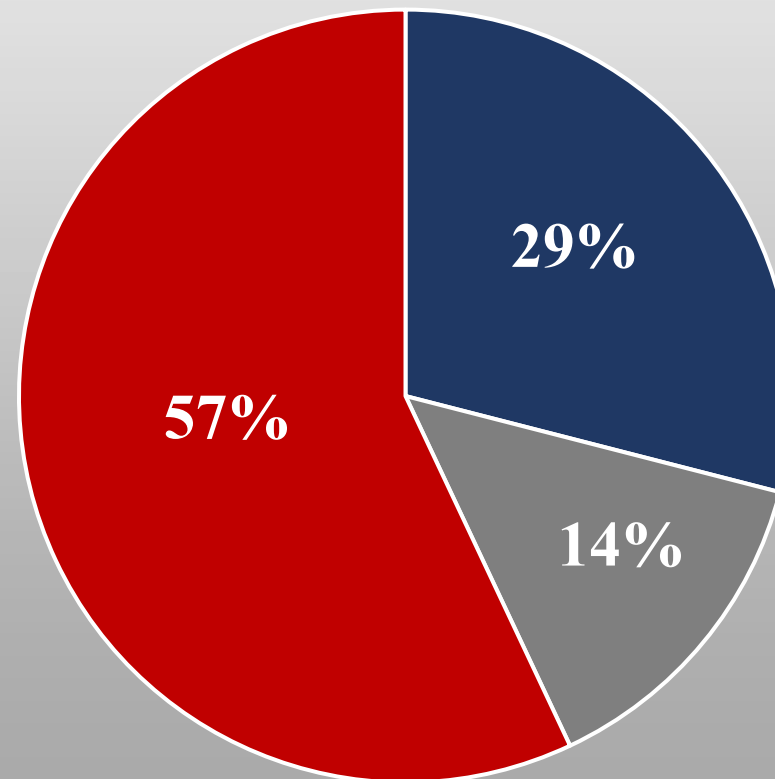
Performance

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

■ Yes

■ No

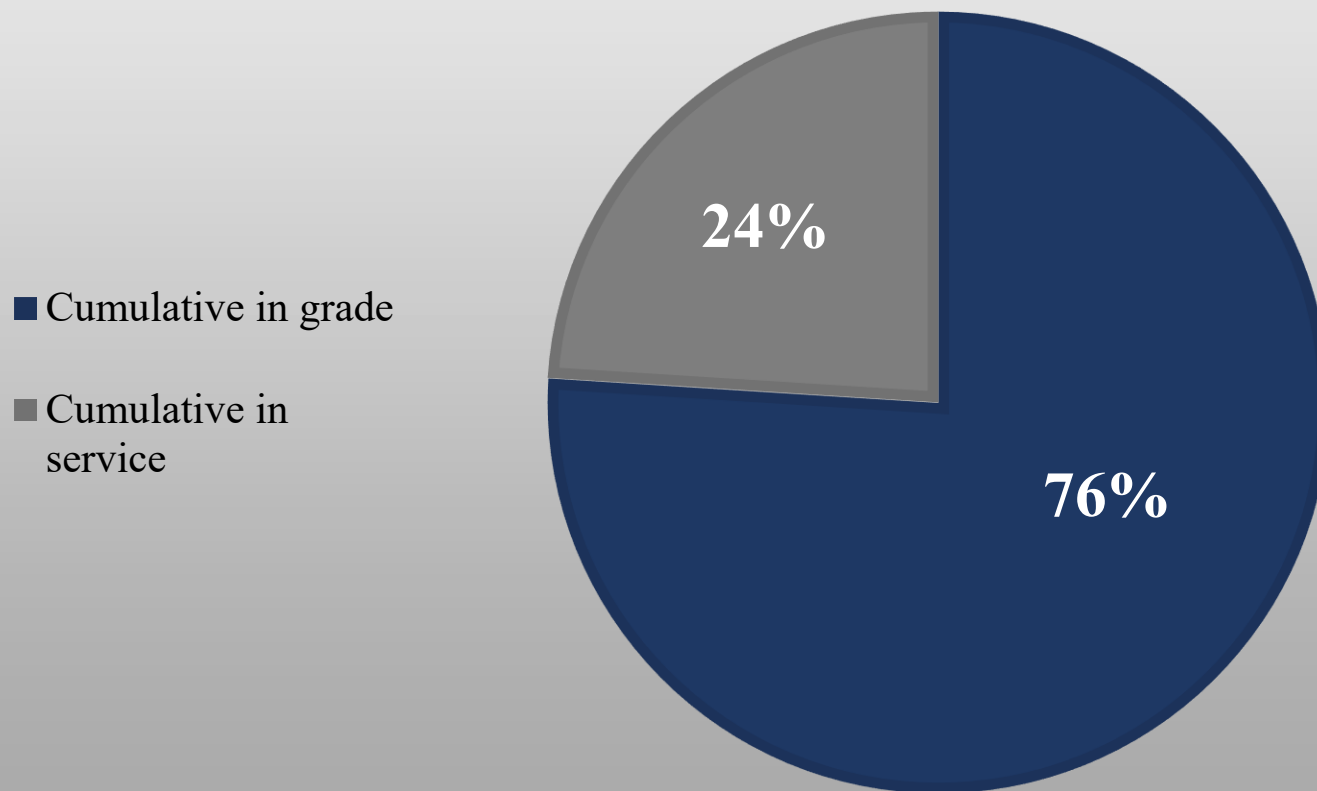
■ Depends On Additional Context





Performance

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





Performance

**How is it viewed when the RS and RO markings conflict?
e.g., RS marks Marine high and RO marks low or vice versa.**

- I rely on the word picture to find supporting language to help me make a decision.
- Negatively. Very confusing, made me question whether RS and RO had a good working relationship.
- When an RS marked the Marine low, but the RO marked the Marine high, immense value was found in the RS and RO comments that provided context behind why a Marine fell in a particular spot on a profile.
- This was tougher, but usually depended on billets held, consistency, and overall verbiage. If two or three different RSs consistently graded a Marine low, I generally leaned on that trend. CWO3+ and LDO RSs also tended to carry more weight, especially when evaluating technical competence and MOS-specific performance. Generally, when I saw a pattern like that, it was a flashing warning sign and made me go back and double-check the Marine's entire record.
- I look at the comments and how many Marines were marked above/below, then view the history of that Marine with previous RS/RO. Tend to side with RO if RS has no/small profile.
- Generally give the benefit of the doubt to the Marine depending on the billet/unit.
- I first look at how deep each profile is for the RS and RO. I defer to who has the deeper profile. If there is a marginal difference, I defer to the RO.
- It makes it difficult to get a good picture of the Marine. I tend to go more with the RS as they will have the most one-on-one interactions with the MRO.
- That they are not on the same page with the Marine, and then use all the FITERPS to make an accurate decision on the Marine's performance.
- This is when the size of the profile for either RS or RO and sections I/K comments are leaned on to provide additional context.



Performance

How is it viewed when the RS and RO markings conflict? e.g. RS marks Marine high and RO marks low or vice versa. Continued...

- RS had more weight since they have daily interactions with SNM.
- I looked at other Fitness Reports to help paint a picture of his performance overall. I would not make a decision based on only one FitRep. Looking at the qualifications earned by the Marine, PFT/CFT performance, and PME/education completion helped me make a determination.
- Regardless of marks, I will still going thought whole package.
- I take into account their profiles and patterns of markings coupled with the narrative of the fitrep and performance of the Marine.
- It was confusing because it was as if the RS & RO are disconnected in evaluating Marines, especially if they have direct contact with Marines. This even led to the potential of great Marines not being selected.
- I viewed it as a red flag because it signaled disagreement within the chain of command about the Marine's true performance and potential, and caused me to dig deeper into the Marine's record.
- RS comments held more weight to me only due to knowing that they should be closer to the Marines being evaluated, but also considered the RO's profile for breaking out Marines as well. Additionally, would look at other FitReps to see how MRO was evaluated by other RS/ROs.
- "When comparing RS and RO markings, RS markings act like a sniper rifle, and RO markings are indirect fire. They both indicate performance, but RS markings should be generally trusted over RO markings. That said, multiple reports indicate when a Marine can only succeed under a single leadership style or only has one supervisor who does/doesn't like their performance. I discount sniper fire. RS markings provide primary, direct performance assessments, whereas Reviewing Officer (RO) markings offer a broader context. An apt analogy is that RS markings are sniper fire, and RO markings are indirect fire. While RS evaluations are generally prioritized because it's easier to see and read in the master brief sheet, sniper fire is discounted when it doesn't match a multitude of different markings and mismatched comments."
- It can raise questions about the Marine's performance and the objectivity of the evaluation. I tend to think SNM had "relationship" issues with RS or RO that caused a bias.
- Depends on how extreme the divergence is. I tend to lean towards the deeper profile. If profile depth is similar, then I lean towards RO.
- It is noted, overall RS/RO profile is taken into account. RS/RO relationship length held more weight. The longer the observation time, the more accurate it would seem. markings across the Marines' record viewed.



Performance

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

- Very important, a small profile carries less of an impact than a seasoned profile. The seasoned profile is more cultivated and protected.
- The bigger the profile, the better, but a new RS's markings still held value.
- A seasoned profile provides a more in-depth understanding of the Marine's proficiency and credibility within his MOS.
- It had little impact overall, though a sub-84 or 96+ on a profile with 60+ Marines usually solidified whether the Marine was truly a top performer or not.
- If the Marine is the 100 report, it still holds value, but would not be ranked over someone with similar standout performance in larger RS/RO profiles.
- Definitely required additional attention.
- It was a key factor in weighing the credibility of the RVs.
- Smaller profiles tend to make the Marines have drastic markings and can be viewed both negatively and positively depending on placement. Smaller profiles would require more attention to be placed on the comments.
- It plays a big role in helping determine the comments and ranking; a larger profile typically means more than one where they have not written on many Marines.
- Obviously, this depends on the markings assigned to the MRO, and the MOS of both the MRO and the RS/RO comes from. Especially on an SDA.
- Out of the control of MRO and Briefer, section I comments with data was crucial.



Performance

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

- When an RS/RO's profile was more seasoned, it was looked at as being more credible and provided confidence in the report itself.
- Everyone votes differently, and outcomes are going to average out, so I don't believe it is going to make any impact.
- I always consider the size of the profile, but unless it is extreme to either end of the spectrum....I take the report for what it is. There are Marines out there who are very good Marines, regardless of a new RS/RO.
- It was a factor, but board members could determine a Marine's performance across multiple Fitness Reports within his/her career. RS & RO large profile didn't play much of a factor. The Marines' sustained performance over the course of their career was evident in Fitness Reports.
- A seasoned profile made marks more credible, easier to compare, and I trusted them more when compared to a new or small profile, which made marks less predictable and harder to interpret.
- Again, depending on the breakout for the Marines, if the word picture stated where MRO broke out, it would help determine where they saw the Marine and help shape where I thought they should be briefed.
- "Bigger profiles indicate results in bold, but smaller profiles were not discounted. Similar to rank differences. A report written by a 2nd Lt is not less valuable than one written by a Colonel, but the Colonel's experience makes the markings more bold. Performance is performance, RV is RV, and Marines are not accountable to select supervisors who have large or high-ranking profiles in order to get promoted."
- A seasoned RS/RO profile adds credibility to marks. Marks from a new or small profile carry less weight, as there's less context for comparison. Will rely more on comments and supporting evidence when the profile is new.
- A shallow profile, 80 or 100, is less impactful than a deep profile with the same marks. I will also consult the cumulative grade in either case.
- They are taking into account, but not an overwhelming factor.



Performance

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

- "The longer the observation, the better indicator of performance."
- Held the same weights.
- Yes.
- It didn't really affect how I viewed them, but sadly, I know it did for many board members because they visually tracked trends, instead of understanding the time difference between reports. A Marine with two years and ten reports was usually judged much quicker, whether positively or negatively, than a Marine with five years and only five reports, because it was harder for them to correlate the reporting timeline and overall progression.
- No
- Yes, generally. If an RS/RO felt they had sufficient time, that was taken at their word.
- The longer reports held more weight.
- The length of the reports held strength with me. A longer report is going to give a more accurate grading of a Marine's performance over an extended period of time.
- Yes to a point. Sometimes you see short ones right before the board to try to bump the average up.
- The length of the report definitely affects how it was viewed and weighted. Additionally, how long the MRO held that specific billet was evaluated in.
- We have no control over occasions, but the more observed time, the better.
- It depended on the RS/Ros' profile, and the roles performed/billet filled during that reporting period.
- It would not.



Performance

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

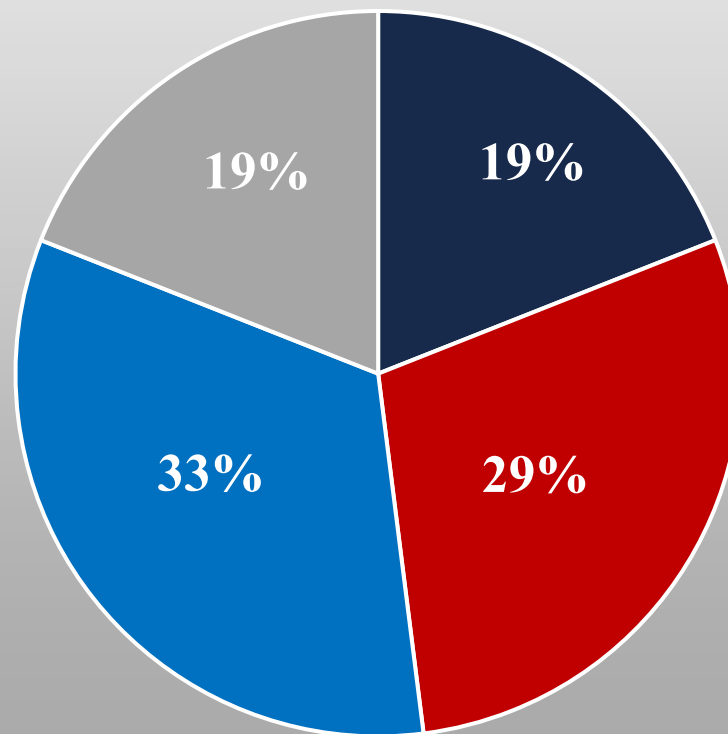
- Yes. Specifically, dips in performance for Marines new to the RS/RO, on their way out, or being bounced around. RS/Ros tend to protect their profiles for temporary Marines. RS/Ros tend to put more effort into evaluation for longer periods.
- No. If a Marine is performing, time was not a factor.
- I saw a 12-month report as more meaningful because it reflected a sustained performance over time vs. a short report.
- Yes, there were several Marines who had no reports within their MOS, only on an SDA, so it was difficult to break them out amongst their peers, especially if they did not have many certifications prior to going to SDA or being briefed. There was not enough detail of the career from Cpl to Sgt in some cases.
- This issue cut both ways. 12 months is more valuable than a 4-month report when looked at objectively, but multiple short reports make the Marine appear more seasoned, even when it spans the same time as a single report. For Sgts going to SSgt, I would write often and attempt to break up annual reports if possible. This is likely less important with promotion boards evaluating higher ranks.
- It depends, but yes, it does affect my view. A 12-month high report tells me SNM performs for the entire time with the RS/RO.
- Yes, particularly when there is a variation in performance marks. Weight leans towards the greater time.
- Performance is performance; however, if a short report greatly varied from the Marines' norm, that was taken into account as well. Meaning if the norm is high 90s and there is an anomaly of 80 for a short period, it didn't hold quite as much weight. Also, the context of the billet being filled played a role.



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 was performance evaluated when a Marine only had JEPES and no observed Fitness Reports?

- Very hard to make a decision; in fact, it was not fair to the Marine because there was nothing to indicate performance in grade/MOS.
- Personally, I didn't have any cases like this, but I would have to look at all other available stats in the record to determine my vote.
- Provide some baseline insight into command input, physical fitness/combat readiness, and other pillars, but it is often viewed as subjective and less predictive of SNCO-level performance.
- Poorly, 4- at most. The only difference between that and a Marine with recent date gaps is that they are at least still in the service. / Unless the Marine received a NAM or higher, maybe even two, it usually reflected negatively. A CERTCOM, or no award at all, alongside no observed reports, said a lot. Honestly, I don't think a Marine should be eligible for promotion without at least 12 months of observed time.
- I looked at JEPES marks, evaluated MOS experience and key billets, and training summary (benefit of the doubt goes to the Marine).
- With few exceptions, difficult to.
- I viewed that as a factor that SNM did not have enough TIG to be competitive for promotion.
- If there were no fitness reports, it was viewed negatively, and the consensus of the room was that they needed some time to be evaluated.
- It was hard to get a good read on the Marine in grade.
- If not a legitimate discrepancy, the Marine lacking observation as a Sgt, to me, is yet TBD regarding their competitiveness or qualification as it pertains to selection.
- It established a baseline of performance.



Performance

How was performance evaluated when a Marine only had JEPES and no observed Fitness Reports? Continued...

- I would additionally look at the qualifications earned by the Marine, PFT/CFT performance, and PME/education completion, which helped me make a determination.
- Use JEPES on the source, then go through the whole package.
- Performance is performance. JEPES tends to be more scrutinized since more individuals are tied to the reviewing chain. And Marines tend to get buried if they aren't good at their job.
- It mattered a lot as the goal was to have performance as a Sergeant and be observed with the use of the Fitness Report system. The JEPES often has bias approach and doesn't fully articulate the performance of a Marine.
- Without FITREPs, I saw the Marine as having no long-term and supported evaluation, which made it harder to judge competitiveness.
- Made it very difficult to brief the Marine above a 3, since they had no evaluations as a Sgt, it was seen as a negative.
- I am unable to enthusiastically recommend promotion to SSgt without documented performance. Generally, these Marines were marked below average, but still recommended for promotion. If the MOS was not competitive, some of them may have been selected for promotion. I recommended the bottom third performers above Marines with no observed Fitness Reports, as long as the bottom third had a positive promotion recommendation.
- Based on other information, if there was any. i.e., awards, PFT, CFT. Could also be judged negatively and get a lower rating for lack of info IOT give an accurate rating.
- These scenarios are important to consult MOS sponsors in the Board Room and the MOS Smart Card. A sponsor emphasizing technical essentials, leadership essentials, position requirements, etc., will influence my vote, respectively.
- JEPES markings taken into account, the entire OMPF has to be taken into account. If the Marine has enhanced MOS schools.



Performance

How was it viewed when a Marine had both Fitness Reports and JEPES markings? Which was given more weight/consideration?

- Fitness reports, JEPES marks had no real impact.
- Fitreps always held more weight/consideration.
- It was viewed as very competitive. Fitness Reports were given more weight/consideration. Observed FitReps carried significant weight, as they provide detailed narrative, relative value (RV), and comparative assessments.
- Hands down, FitReps.
- FITREPs always carry more weight, but if only 1 FITREp and is marked an 80, but has 4.0+ JEPES marks, that gives the Marine some credibility.
- Fitreps held more weight.
- It was viewed positively. Fitreps had more weight.
- Fitness reports X5.
- JEPES became irrelevant.
- Fitreps and the comments made about the MRO.



Performance

How was it viewed when a Marine had both Fitness Reports and JEPES markings? Which was given more weight/consideration? Continued...

- Unless there is only one FITREP, I am going to give more weight to the FITREP.
- Potentially. If the Marines have significant fitreps, I do not bother considering JEPES. But it can highlight trends that have carried over to Sgt.
- Having both JEPES and Fitness Reports was important because it allowed board members to fully evaluate a Marine's career, especially if their time of service and time in grade were minimal.
- FITREPs carried far more weight than JEPES.
- FitRep held more weight and routinely never made it to brief the JEPES markings. JEPES was only needed if there was a very small profile for the Marine, but again held little to no weight.
- Fitness Reports are the primary source of evaluation. JEPES markings had some impact on those with limited observation in the MOS.
- Fitness Reports. JEPES markings are irrelevant and should just be removed.



Performance

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

- In my opinion, everyone started at the same point.
- Marines were selected as an Alternate with the same competitiveness as other Marines.
- Marines selected as alternates were generally viewed as competitive or highly competitive, but this provides no guarantee of selection.
- It had little impact overall. It was more of an attention highlight than a deciding factor. At most, it acted as a booster for Marines who were already considered “6s” and just needed a little extra filler to further emphasize their performance. Honestly, it brought more criticism from the board than anything else because a large portion of the “selected” population generally appeared subpar.
- That carried zero positive weight, if they were selected as alternate last year and still have not completed PME, that was negative weight for the majority of the board members.
- Higher generally.
- It was often briefed, but I gave no plus-up for it. I compared the record.
- I personally did not use the alternate selection in one way or another; I graded them the same as every other package.
- Was good to know, but didn't sway my ranking decision.
- I believe they are and should be viewed in a higher.
- It did not hold much value. I would look at how the MRO performed after his alternate selection; if performance stayed consistent (if a high performer) or if performance had declined. The competitiveness of the Marines is being graded against this Marine from the previous FY board change, and the Marines can be of a higher caliber than previous years' boards.



Performance

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

- It would not make any difference for this board.
- Most were not impressive. Other Marines who were exponentially better could have taken those spots. This is probably why a decent amount of FY25 alts either were still PME incomplete or had a dip in performance.
- It was viewed as positive because it allowed board members to see sustained performance from year to year. Additionally, it provided board members with a clear understanding of who declined, sustained, or increased in performance.
- It did not make the Marine any more competitive than anyone else.
- They were briefed as an alternate, and consideration was given to recommendations for selection. But if they had not completed their resident PME during this time, it was seen as a negative against the Marines because they had an additional year to complete their PME and to make themselves more competitive.
- Previous selection to alternate means that they were just below last year's cutline. It wasn't a good or bad thing, except when the resident PME remained incomplete. I lowered the markings for alternates who did not complete PME after being selected as an alternate.
- Very little relevance to no effect, really. Actually added some confusion when SNM was not a performer, and looks below average to this board.
- An alternate selection has zero impact on my vote.
- It was always briefed; however, what they did after mattered most. You want to see continued performance. If performance went down, it gives the impression that the Marine thought they had it in the bag next go around and didn't need to continue to perform. Marines need to realize the competition changes year to year. Regardless of being selected as an alt. the next board is completely different, and they may not stack up as well against the next board population.



MOS Credibility

How can a Marine show or capture MOS credibility?

- When a Marine has observed time in the PMOS.
- Correct MOS course certificates uploaded in OMPF.
- Marine show MOS credibility primarily through strong performance in their primary MOS billet, documented in fitness reports.
- Going forward, I'll be teaching Marines to use the acronym for the qualification or billet in the accomplishments section, followed by a "/" or ";" and then a concise word picture with numbers. For example: "CDQAR; Inspected..." This makes it much easier for boards to quickly identify qualifications, billet significance, and measurable impact.
- Key Billets, MOS-enhancing schools, reports in key billets.
- Performance in a billet directly related to MOS. Ideally, in the fleet.
- Performing well in key billets or having significant time in the MOS.
- Performance within their respective job field, as well as progression in key billets desired.
- By completing the necessary schools and having the documents uploaded to be able to see.
- Progression through MOS schools, holding key billets in MOS.
- Be placed in MOS billet, break out billets within MOS, and report it in the section I comments.
- Ensuring MOS qualifications are earned as recommended by MOS progression (SmartCard), Road Map, and having them reflect on OMPF (via EPAR) if the qualification earns MRO additional MOS. This would alleviate board members from spending extra time looking for qualifications in FitRep comments.
- Where MRO has been and what MRO Duty Assignment (descriptive title).



MOS Credibility

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

- Schools and/or performance in key billets/MOS-pertinent billets. Being an 0111 RSO for 2 years doesn't impress me. I do understand that some Marines simply aren't afforded the opportunity to get to some schools when they'd like, but awards and fitreps for a job well done in MOS are just as important.
- Marines can show or capture MOS credibility by simply being in their MOS. It is understandable that Marines will go TAD, be FAP, or be placed in a collateral billet. However, if Marine lacks the motivation to get back into the MOS negatively impacts credibility.
- By holding key billets in the MOS and having all the certifications required at the Marine's rank and billet.
- Certifications, RS/RO comments, and updating their profiles. There were many instances where it would be mentioned in the comments, but there would be no certificate provided.
- Be graded in a smart card billet with the right MOS.
- A Marine can capture MOS credibility by completing advanced MOS courses, earning relevant certifications, and excelling in key billets. Specific, positive comments from the RS/RO about technical expertise and impact in the MOS add value. Additionally, strong markings and endorsements from a Chief Warrant Officer or senior leader within the MOS further validate the Marine's credibility and proficiency.
- Impact awards, Additional MOS, Key Service Schools indicated on the MOS Smart Card, Key Billets indicated on the MOS Smart Card.
- Advanced certifications, ensuring qualifications are uploaded, if rate an additional MOS due to a qual or school attended, ensure it is uploaded, and the record accurately reflects. ensuring awards are uploaded.



MOS Credibility

How did you view MOS credibility in terms of competitiveness?

- I personally focused on performance in any billet, but there are some who felt it was a showstopper if none existed.
- MOS credibility and the whole Marine concept (PFT, CFT, MCMAF, Quals, etc) held the same weight.
- It is a key competitive factor to assess whether or not a Marine is a credible technical expert and leader who can excel in their occupational field.
- Highest, unless the RS wrote something that discredited the Marine's competence/performance.
- Major.
- MOS credibility is vital to continued service/leadership as an SNCO.
- Number two factor for me.
- MOS credibility is of utmost importance.
- It played a key role in the determination.
- Extremely valued
- We are promoting for MOS; future potential credibility is highly viewed.
- Extremely valuable. Marine is being selected to perform his current MOS. He is to lead and teach junior Marines, and if he does not hold MOS credibility, he will fail to mold the next generation of leaders within his MOS. If MRO is performing extremely well on an SDA, it is an indication that he would be able to adapt when SNM returns to FMF.



MOS Credibility

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

- As the MOS board, MOS credibility is the most important part to make MRO more competitive.
- It's the portion of the review with the most weight. How a Marine stacks up against peers is usually a determining factor in numerical range.
- Very competitive metric. Having MOS credibility was highly valued as it shows a Marine is ready for the SNCO rank and responsibilities.
- I viewed MOS credibility as one of the strongest indicators of true credibility competitiveness.
- Very high.
- Highly.
- As a plus, but not necessarily required.
- MOS credibility sets my vote baseline, then will increase or decrease based on other indicators like SDA, Higher Qualified Billets, combat skills, leadership billets, collateral duties, etc.
- HIGHLY important, at the end of the day, you are being paid to perform in PMOS.



MOS Credibility

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

- None for me, it was too hard to understand every MOS's school or credentialing requirement.
- Always added value, especially for highly competitive MOSs.
- MOS progressive schools were viewed as positive. It demonstrates initiative, technical growth, and dedication to MOS mastery, but it does not outweigh strong FitReps, leadership, billet performance, or overall "whole Marine" factors.
- The real impact was within a competitive MOS, but generally it only amounted to a simple “+.”
- It was clear who held impactful billets in their units if they went to advanced MOS schools.
- Very impactful. Breaks Marine out from the rest of the performers.
- I gave plus-ups for MOS progressive schools.
- It was very dependent on the MOS; some fields do not have any formal schooling to attend, other fields only have regimental-level training, which is hard to identify unless the certificate is uploaded into their OMPF.
- It was good to see that they have, but understand that sometimes, due to life, they were not always able to get it done.
- It was dependent on how MOS schools were coupled with markings and evaluation. An MRO can have all of the schools and credentials and still underperform in their MOS. Conversely, a Marine who has not attended MOS schools can still perform well in their MOS and hold key billets depending on the MOS.
- Highly demonstrates higher learning and proficiency in MOS.
- Extremely important, if MOS progression schools were not attended by SNM and their peers did, SNM would be briefed slightly below. Time in grade would also be a factor taken into consideration.



MOS Credibility

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

- It will give MRO a plus on board.
- Very impactful. If you do not get to a progressive school, you'd better be in a high-visibility/high-tempo or austere location. Having more than 2 years of TIG and no school is not a good look for the general population.
- It was impactful as it shows a Marine was improving their craft and was viewed by board members as a positive attribute.
- I viewed MOS progressive schools as high-impact, high-value indicators of a Marine's technical mastery and long-term potential. For me, they directly strengthened the Marines' competitiveness because they proved the Marines were advancing within their MOS in a deliberate, professional way.
- Enhancement to the billets held. There were several instances where Marine would be holding a billet, and we could not see any schooling outside the basic MOS required courses.
- Dependent on the MOS, MOS progression schools were mandatory for the board to consider them eligible.
- Depended on the MOS and if anyone on the board expressed it as a requirement. Overall, it was just a plus on most MOS's.
- MOS progressive schools supplement average and high performance. MOS progressive schools do not buoy low performance.
- Impactful, for two reasons. 1-it shows the Marine cares about progression, and 2- it shows the command's investment in the Marine.



MOS Credibility

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

- No impact.
- It added some value because it showed the Marine doing more and being more well-rounded as a Marine Leader.
- Marines AMOS can add value if they enhance mission effectiveness or show growth.
- It was a major boost to the overall scale of grading.
- MAI, MAIT, MCIWS, and FFI were top tier for me (if no adversity and moderate-high MOS performance).
- Showed development of skills in their trade, definitely an enhancement.
- It made them more competitive.
- It helps boost my placement in the Marine Corps, showing those who want to take on extra workloads with collateral duties.
- Did not really influence their competitiveness.
- I estimate about 25% of the overall "picture" of the Marine was based on AMOS or multiple AMOS.
- Highly shows external drive to excel.
- Their competitiveness would be graded based on SNM performance and qualifications or senior billets held pertaining to AMOS roles.



MOS Credibility

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

- If MRO AMOS enhances PMOS, it would make MRO more competitive.
- It holds weight. It aligns directly with additional training. It also means the Marine can contribute more to the Command and Marine Corps than the average Marine.
- It depended on what AMOS was gained and how it related to PMOS. If it enhanced PMOS, increased the proficiency of the unit, peers, and subordinates, it was viewed as influential to their competitiveness.
- For me, a Marine's AMOS absolutely influenced competitiveness, but its impact depended on what the AMOS was, and how relevant it was to the Marine's primary MOS.
- If it were on the Smart card held more weight, and any additional (MAI/MAIT, FFI), those stood out as well.
- Bonus marks for marksmanship and MCMAP instructors.
- Again depended on the MOS. Aviation mattered a lot. Most other MOSs did not add much value, but may be a +.
- AMOS supplements average and high performance. AMOS does not buoy low performance.
- AMOS, add value if Marine is performing in PMOS, force multiplier.



Special Duty Assignment

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

- For me, this was an important factor.
- Slightly – considering that most times, young Marines don't know what their preference is, except for geographical area, unless they volunteer for SDA.
- Yes, assignments across the MAGTF were seen as adding value to the Marine competitiveness and to the "Whole Marine" factors, well-rounded.
- Really, only SDAs carried significant weight.
- Depends on performance.
- Not in my eyes.
- None.
- Personally, I did not hold it against them; it is not an element that is in their control, and we don't always choose where we are placed.
- No, more so, overall performance.
- 100%.
- It was hard to see on the E6 Board.
- Yes, performing in Higher Billets that place more emphasis on the sole performance of the individual. Key billets require additional duties to be performed that are beyond those being performed by individuals in their peer group.
- SDA is going to make MRO more competitive if MRO does well.



Special Duty Assignment

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

- Sustained performance at multiple units or within multiple billets shows that the performance and competitiveness are deeply rooted and not just tied to a specific job or RS/RO.
- Yes, but it was not as important at the Sgt to SSgt level due to most Marines are within their first or second contract.
- Yes.
- Barrack manager, or facility manager where not considered very favorably as a good assignment within the fleet unless assigned to a schoolhouse, but it was not held against them either, just not additive.
- Occasionally, but it wasn't a key factor for Sgts. It's understood that many of them would have only one or two observed assignments that the board could evaluate. Definitely a positive for those who achieved success in multiple places, but not a recommendation.
- No influence at all for me. High-visibility billets and MOS instructors held more weight. SDAs almost did not matter at all to me.
- I do not believe diversity has an impact on Sergeants. I believe this is more of a factor with SNCO ranks.
- To an extent.



Special Duty Assignment

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

- Not possible to render a fair assessment.
- The entire package is considered along with SDA/ school performance.
- Marines in this situation were viewed as average unless standout objective factors (awards, education, etc.) demonstrated potential.
- Except for SDAs, poorly. Hopefully, they get a better look next year.
- Performance on SDA could still put them as a 5, again depends on SDA performance. If recent LATMOV with no MOS experience, they were not recommended (most times an immediate 3) unless they were a top-tier Marine (PFT, CFT, Rifle, Pistol, AMOS).
- Unfavorably. Correspondence or explaining extenuating circumstances is required to be considered competitive.
- Looking at enhanced quals received in PMOS, JPES marks, combined with performance with SDA. Latmoved Marines were not competitive if they did not complete the initial schoolhouse or did not have documented performance in a new MOS.
- It demonstrates that there is no MOS credibility yet. For the SDAs, I will judge it based on their JPES. If it is a lateral move, I view it as no credibility in the field.
- When there is no information, it makes it extremely difficult to accurately assess their ability to perform at the next rank.
- Marines lacking observation in PMOS are generally marked lower than others, despite having SDA, etc.
- Had to rely on the Briefing guide stats.
- The Marines' fitness and PME or MOS-related certifications completed or gained (if applicable) would be an indicator of their commitment to betterment.
- Awards and Marines on SDAs.



Special Duty Assignment

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

- For Marines on SDA...what did they do in their MOS prior to? Same with recent LatMoves, what MOS is the Marine moving into? For some, the leadership traits transfer immediately; for others, additional factors are required to ensure preservation of life in combat.
- It was considered, but depending on what billet they held and how they're performing within that billet, it didn't detract from their competitiveness. One thing that was considered if they were in school for their new MOS via LatMove made them less competitive as they had no MOS experience. This is not saying they were not considered for promotion, but it was a factor.
- When a Marine had no observed performance in grade in their PMOS, I viewed them as less competitive when compared to peers because they usually lacked the experience, certifications/ schools, and key billets in their MOS.
- Since they had no or limited evaluation time, this was a negative to consider them to be an SSgt. Was almost immediate, 2 or 3 at best.
- I placed them below any documented performance (above an RS80) but still recommended for promotion. I did not prevent these Marines from being selected; they were just the least competitive for promotion. They received markings above those I did not recommend for promotion only.
- Depended on the MOS, but in general, negatively, unless one had very high markings. SDAs seemed not to affect the board as much as LatMovers with no experience. LatMovers with no experience tended to get 2's or 3's across the board.
- I defaulted to assume average performance, then lightly considered JEPES. The most impactful indicator in these scenarios is an MOS-related award as a Corporal.
- Schools attended and awards received for performance in primary duties help with evaluation. Recent LatMove with no MOS experience makes it difficult to place a Marine into the SNCO ranks; this is especially true if they were average performer prior to the move.



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?)

- Not too impactful for me.
- SDA/Type I/Type II billets mattered and made Marines more competitive if they were performing well at that billet. If they were underperforming, it was not viewed as positively.
- Marines with SDA/Type I/Type II screenable billets were often viewed as more competitive than those without screenable billets.
- No, I saw an average SDA Marine, mostly Recruiting or DI, as above average.
- If they were successful (above RS AVG on SDA FITREPs, key billets as DI and MSG, above average APR for Recruiting), they were almost always bumped up a whole tier, majority 5+.
- It was a small bump; performance in PMOS and in SDA demonstrates consistency, though.
- SDA/Type I/Type II billets were viewed as competitive as long as they were performing.
- Having an SDA would add a plus to their ranking. I held more weight on being a Formal School Instructor due to it showing enhanced MOS credibility while improving their community. I & I Duty also held a lot of weight, knowing the immense workload they carry on the duty while maintaining MOS skills and learning multiple collateral duties.
- SDA if they did would bump them up slightly, would only bring them down if they received a relief for cause and sometimes a good of service depending on the reason.
- If the Marine is performing well on an SDA, they are significantly more competitive; a Marine without an SDA but performing/excelling in their PMOS is just as competitive.
- I viewed them higher as they are fulfilling a special assignment.
- Yes, a Marine with average performance in PMOS with an SDA would be considered above average. SDA will take a Marine out of their comfort zone and challenge them individually.
- An SDA more competitive than a Marine with above-average performance and no SDA. If Marines are doing well on SDA.



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...

- SDAs are always good to see and very important. However, I will place a Marine doing well in their MOS over a good SDA Marine who is mediocre in the unit. SDA combined with MOS credibility is VERY heavy. I take the average SDA performance (except adversity) lighter for heavy MOS performers. Unless it deals with leadership and taking care of Marines.
- Having an SDA/ Type I/II screenable billet added value to the Marines' record as long as they were performing within the billet.
- For me, a screenable billet had a positive impact on a Marine's competitiveness because they proved leadership, maturity, and trust. However, it did not outweigh strong MOS performance.
- It was an enhancement, and if they were doing well on the SDA and the last reports from within the MOS were average to high, it was very good for the Marine.
- Marines with an SDA got an immediate bump in grading from me. Even with poor performance in the SDA, as long as the performance was not adverse. Adverse performance in an SDA saw an opposite drop in grading.
- For me, little to no effect at all. We are not promoting SNM in their SDA. Some board members clearly viewed "their" SDA as a higher qualified plus.
- For me: A Marine with below-average performance in MOS will still be viewed as below average with SDA. An average performer in MOS will be considered slightly above average with SDA. An average performer in MOS with SDA performance above average will be considered high performing. An above-average performer in MOS with SDA performance within standards will be considered high performing. A high performer in MOS with SDA performance sub-standard will be considered average.
- Above-average performance is more favorable. SDA's average performance helps to break a Marine out of the pack. An SDA doesn't automatically turn a below-average Marine into a high performer.



Special Duty Assignment

How were Marines with minimal to no MOS credibility currently on SDAs viewed?

- I focused on performance but saw a trend of low markings while on SDAs.
- In these cases, the entire record was considered, along with performance on SDA.
- Marines with minimal to no MOS credibility serving on SDAs were viewed as less competitive than those with MOS credibility.
- For technical aviation MOS or direct combat-oriented MOS, it was generally not viewed favorably. But for most other MOS, if the Marine already had numerous awards beforehand, they were usually still competitive with an average Marine.
- Depends on SDA performance. I still marked above AVG in some cases.
- Less competitive, small bump, but generally a 4.
- Performance on SDA was weighed heavily. Looked for enhanced quals to validate MOS credibility.
- I viewed them as average in MOS and then took into consideration their performance on the SDA. I would prefer to see them receive a fitness report prior to going on SDA.
- Would not hold it against them as they did not always have a choice to go on an SDA.
- Less than competitive compared to a Marine with an abundance of MOS credibility and no SDA.
- It was harder to grade with data in MOS.
- SNM would be graded based on their current performance.
- MRO already has the PMOS, SDA would enhance MRO being well round Marine.



Special Duty Assignment

How were Marines with minimal to no MOS credibility currently on SDAs viewed? Continued...

- A small elevation unless it is an insane level of performance and acknowledgement. I do understand that Recruiters get showered at an insane rate for doing their job.
- It wasn't much of a factor. However, if the Marine had subpar performance in the MOS, and the same subpar performance on SDA was viewed as negative. Conversely, if the Marine had negative performance in the MOS, but good performance on the SDA, it was considered semipositive depending on how long they were on the SDA.
- I did not see them as competitive as Marines who had solid MOS credibility.
- Since they had no or limited evaluation time, this was a negative to consider them to be an SSgt. Was almost immediate, 2 or 3 at best. Unless they had certifications and higher marks from RS/ROs.
- I believe the board was too hard on these Marines. I gave them markings that matched their SDA performance.
- I used any MOS information as my guiding information. SDA may have only given a small bump up or down.
- Below average.
- It is hard to get an accurate gauge of Marines' performance if there are no reports within PMOS. This is especially true if the Marine is not a high performer on the SDA, and in that case, the SDA could hamper the Marine's competitiveness.



Special Duty Assignment

How did you view adversity on an SDA?

- Carried the same weight.
- Adversity on SDA was viewed negatively and hurt the Marines' competitiveness.
- Adversity on an SDA takes away from the Marine's competitiveness for promotion.
- Generally, poorly. Of course, I weighed what the offense actually was. Alcohol-related incidents or domestic violence were an immediate "2" to me. But something like a recruiter getting a speeding ticket, a DI training recruit with too much passion, or an MSG forgetting their general orders had little overall impact.
- Depends on SDA. Recruiter and MSG, it was viewed as a major flaw as impacts to the populace could have extreme ramifications - DI not so much unless it was very egregious
- Adversity in positions of trust and independence is viewed very unfavorable.
- Had a significant impact to competitiveness.
- It was heavily weighed upon; however, it was also dependent on the basis of the adversity and whether or not they were removed from the SDA for the adversity.
- It would bring them down typically, but would depend on the type of adversity.
- Adversity was viewed based on egregiousness and severity, regardless of whether experienced during an SDA or not.
- Severity was a large factor in ranking; however, adversity will always bring you down.
- My view was based on the type of adversity and circumstances that surrounded that adversity.



Special Duty Assignment

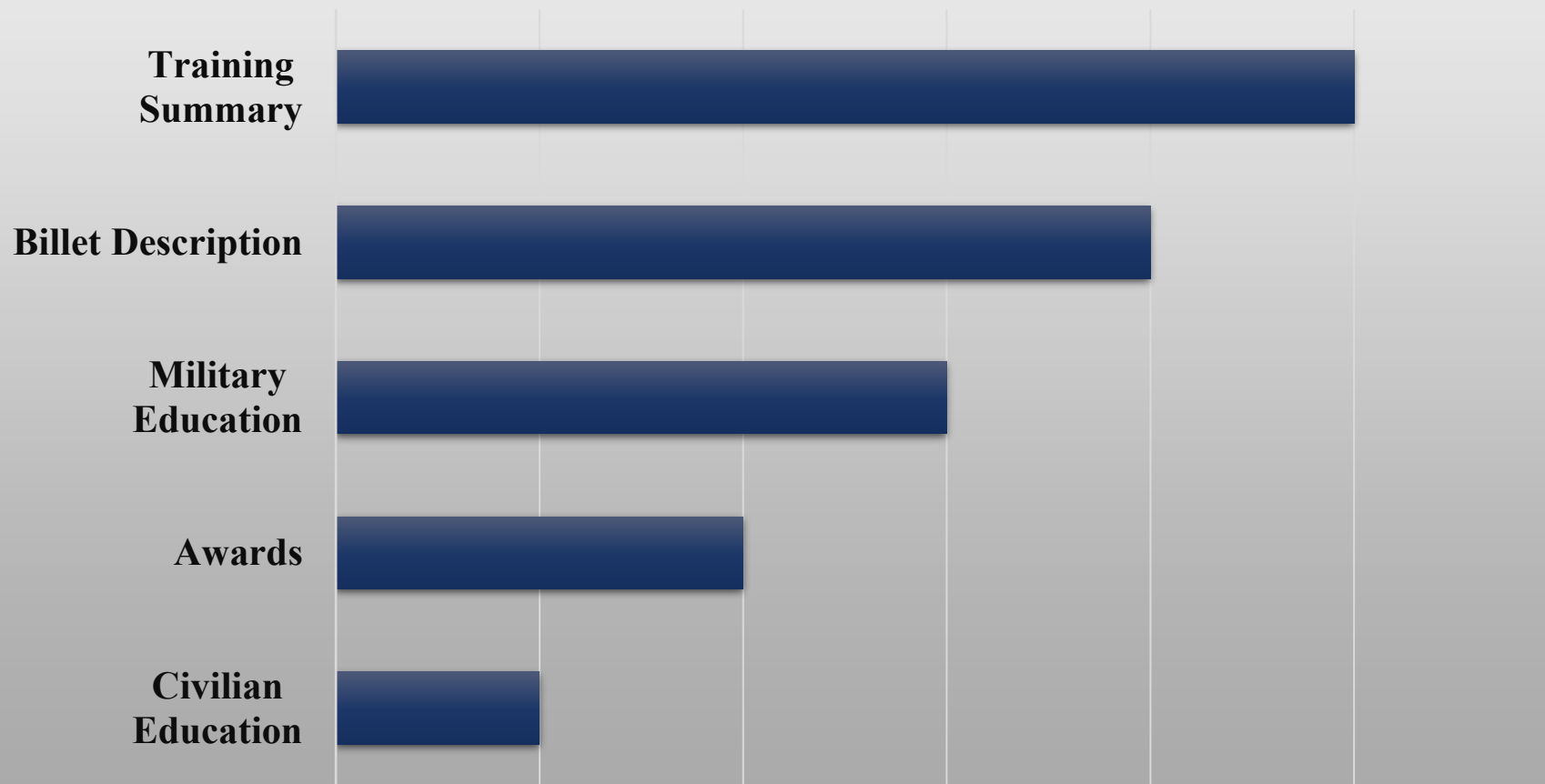
How did you view adversity on an SDA? Continued...

- It seems that the Board has the possibility to think as if they are the jury for adversity. What's the point of staying in the Marine Corps if 5 straight boards react the same way to something that happened 6 years ago? My thoughts are: show me 2 years of redemption, and you get a chance. Exceptions are domestic violence, drugs, PAC violations, and severe dereliction of duty. In some instances, a revocation of previous selection IS the punishment...continued performance after that should be considered for fresh boards. Patterns of misconduct are a different story.
- Negative, as it's a screenable billet and has some of the highest performing Marines on those duties.
- It hurt competitiveness when adversity resulted in poor performance, disciplinary issues, or incomplete duties.
- Depending on the adversity type, it would be viewed accordingly. Ethical, moral, DUI or alcohol, character, PAC were all, without a question, negative, and depending on timing, it held could hold more weight.
- Legal adversity on an SDA was an immediate recommendation to not promote. Especially if that conduct was witnessed by Jr Marines, recruits, or poolees. Failure to perform on SDA, but eventual survival still received a slight bump in grading from me. Excellence in an SDA received double or triple bumps.
- Adversity is adversity. It all depends on what it is for. If there were an SDA-specific adversity that highlighted the inability to perform in SDA, had no weight.
- Depends on the nature of adversity, regardless of whether on SDA or otherwise.
- The type of adversity matters more. i.e., adversity for character issues weighed more heavily.



Training and Education

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

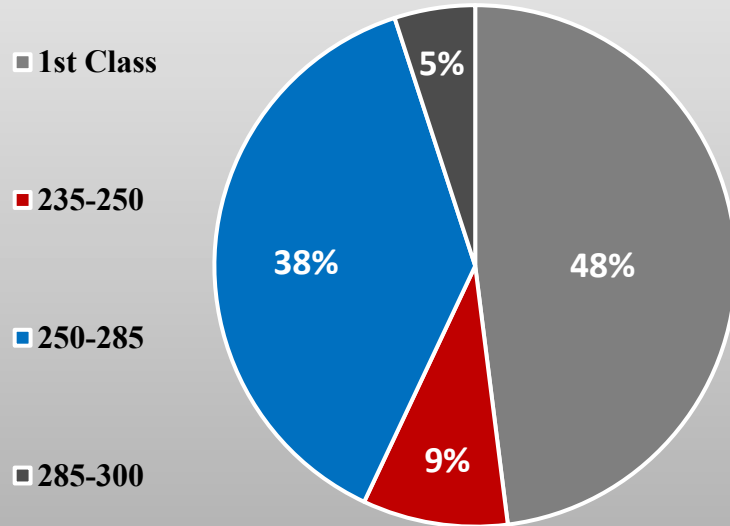




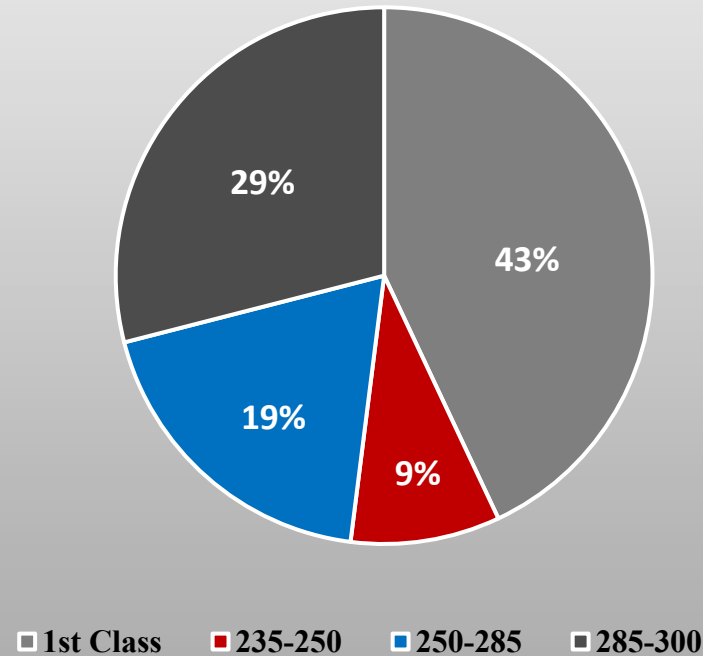
Training and Education

What is a competitive PFT/CFT/MCMAP?

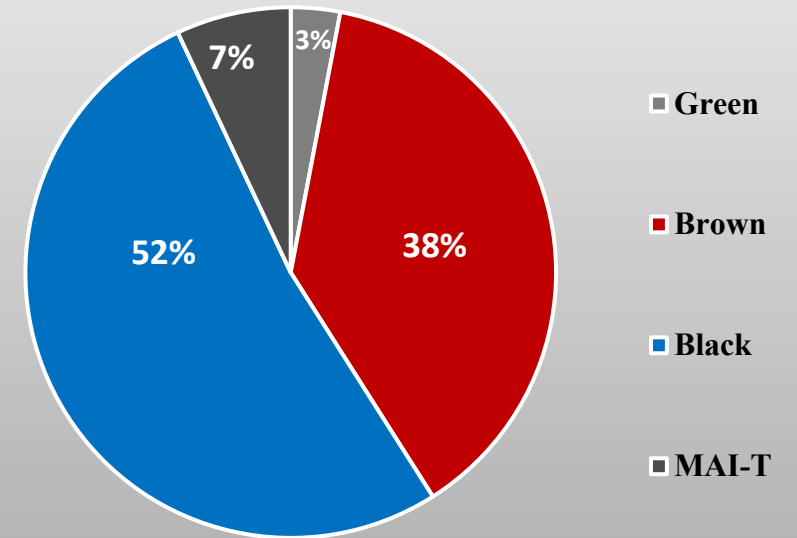
PFT



CFT



MCMAP





Training and Education

Did having a college degree affect a Marines competitiveness?

- No, but if it was done while in service, it did have weight.
- Yes X3.
- No X2.
- Only if it was achieved after enlistment.
- Held zero weight in my book (especially if they were still PME incomplete, had anything but a 1st class PFT/CFT, or sucked at their job).
- Slightly, but not much.
- Yes, increased significantly.
- It was helpful if the Marine was an average performer to give them a little boost; not having one was not used against them.
- Was good that they did, but it was not really a determining factor.
- If achieved in service, however, generally, if a Marine completed their college degree prior to their service, it was not considered as enhancing.
- If complete while on active duty.
- If MRO spends its own time on a college degree, it will make MRO more competitive on the board.
- Absolutely. There is a reason why civilians with degrees get paid more.
- Not particularly. It did add value to the Marines' record and competitiveness. However, if a Marine had a college degree but didn't complete their MOS/military PME, it was viewed as negative.



Training and Education

Did having a college degree affect a Marines competitiveness?

- Viewed as an enhancement.
- Very small bump if completed while serving. Prior college held no weight.
- A degree earned while in service supplements average and high performance. A degree earned in service does not buoy low performance. A degree before service has no impact on me.
- It enhances the Marine record, especially useful if the Marine is also a performer. A degree is not the magic elixir to fix substandard performance; MOS proficiency is key, the Marine Corps is paying you to be a MOS- XXXX.



Training and Education

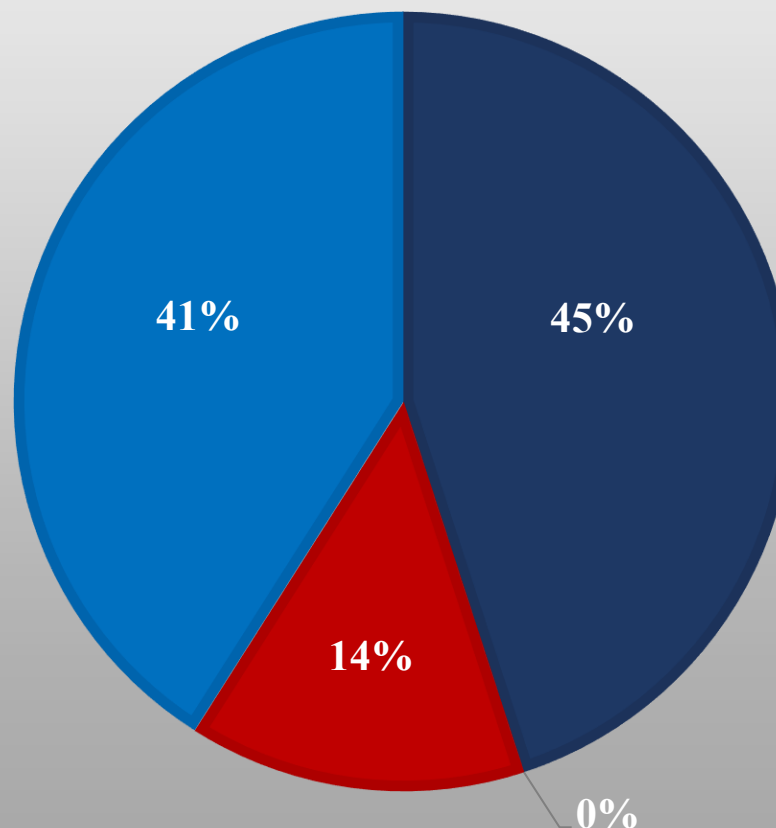
What level of college is competitive?

■ Bachelors

■ Masters

■ Associates

■ Some College (no degree earned yet)





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?

- No X2.
- Additional MOS progression courses showed that Marines have the drive to excel and stay in the organization.
- EJPME I & II and NWC are viewed as supplementary education rather than decisive factors. They demonstrated initiative and self-improvement, but carry less weight than strong FitReps, MOS credibility, leadership, billet performance, or core PME completion.
- NWC, no. EJPME was favorable if the Marine also had their MOS schools completed or possessed MOS-desired qualifications. I didn't really care about the completion of these if the Marine still lacked their advanced school or the qualifications expected for their rank.
- JKO EJPME and NWC were very common, showing you took the extra time to improve competitiveness.
- EJPME and NWC for sure.
- EJPME and NWC.
- Formal resident courses, such as advanced MOS schooling, were more valuable. The EJPME and NWC were slightly weighted and showed that the Marine was trying to do extra to enhance their career.
- Education, as it translates to MOS credibility, influences competitiveness more than the EJPME and Naval War College, in my opinion.
- This would be MOS specific.
- Any EJPME that was completed above the "required" PME was looked at positively. Most of the Sergeants in this FY Board did not complete any additional PME, including their Resident PME. In my opinion, if a Marine went above their required PME, it would be looked at positively.
- EJPME, NWC, and MRO PMOS RODMAP educational opportunities.
- DEP is important. It's also the easiest way to show a willingness to expand knowledge. It also takes time and effort. I value the time they value.



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...

- Not particularly. If Marines had some of the additional educational opportunities, made them more competitive. But again, the Marines failed to complete their MOS/required PME, which made them less competitive.
- A Marine's additional education absolutely increased competitiveness because it shows the Marine is going above and beyond just the requirements, improving their leadership skills.
- LSS, program management, project management, and/or MOS-related civilian education.
- Online training is less valuable (often pointless). The board wants to see dedicated time physically in a school when those schools are available or part of the career path for the MOS.
- Lean Six Sigma held a little more weight. But the click-through EJPME-type course didn't matter to me. In-person courses held a little more value.
- A singular online course does not influence my vote; 3+ online courses get my attention, then I scrutinize the courses for challenge level.
- Anything additional helps; it shows the Marine cares and is trying to enhance their record, and taking the time to do so.



Training and Education

Are there any additional educational opportunities you consider to be more valuable, other than the examples listed in the previous question?

- No X6.
- MOS-related certifications are often viewed as competitive, adding weight to the Marine profile.
- Six Sigma Green Belt or higher.
- Anything MOS enhancing.
- None X3.
- Resident schooling, advanced MOS, additional MOS, enhanced training such as jungle warfare, airborne, SERE, etc. Something to show training in the whole Marine concept.
- No, Marines seem to have a difficult enough time completing what used to be the required courses; now, Marines are eligible for selection having completed less education, promotion being contingent on education completed within a year.
- This would be MOS specific.
- Resident courses over online courses were looked at as more valuable.
- MRO PMOS RODMAP educational opportunities.
- USMAP, MCCOOL, Process Improvement Training (ISIL, SCRUM, Lean 6 Sigma, etc), JKO/War College/NKO.
- Military Scrum Master is very interesting. Aviation maintenance is supplemented by the MAWTS Maintenance Management Course (3MC) and Aircraft Confined Space Program (ACSP).
- Additional leadership courses, as well as anything outside the norm that adds value to the Marine. Something like the completion of some type of certificate that correlates to PMOS helps expand the Marines' knowledge base.



Adversity

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

- It was a determining factor, especially if it was recent.
- Determination was based on the date and nature of the adversity, as well as Marine's performance since the adversity happened.
- Adversity is viewed as less competitive for selection.
- It was relative to the severity, time since the incident, and whether it reflected a pattern. BCP, failed PFT/CFTs, DUIs, and domestic violence were usually fast "2s." I could get past an NJP if the Marine had already been reduced in rank because that was their punishment, and I tried not to keep punishing them for the same mistake. This one is harder to explain because a lot depended on whether the record showed growth, recovery, or repeated behavior.
- Depends, 6105/NJP in-grade were not good (immediate kill if sexual assault, DUI, or domestic/assault).
- Determination of the nature of adversity, amount of time passed, and performance since adversity determined whether or not it was considered towards making the.
- Negatively overall, but severity wanes after 2-3 years with sustained performance. Adversity with integrity at the heart of the issue was viewed as non-competitive.
- It was heavily weighted if it occurred within the last two years. If it was older than 2 years and there wasn't a trend of adversity, I did not use it against them. There was a trend of Marines refusing NJP due to the lack of evidence against them, and the command still issued a 6105 and gave them an adverse report. On those occasions, I did not hold it against them because there should be a burden of proof required to provide adverse material that will affect their career progression.
- It was good to know if they had some, but only recent adversity really played a role in the decision on promotion, and I would say within the last 2 years, as well as the performance after the adversity.
- Adversity more than 2 years old did not influence my recommendation.
- PAC violations: Domestic violence, drug use, DUI, and Integrity violator were heavily weighted.
- It would be considered based on the time that had lapsed since the offense occurred, the type of adversity, habitual offender, or one-time lapse in judgment.
- IF the adversity is not in grade, it would be affected that much. Unless it became a trend.



Adversity

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

- The context is always important. I'm not a lawyer or the CO, if the command waters down an obvious setback or hides a performer to save face...I'm making my determination based on what is presented. It is very easy to make assumptions, and assumptions do not belong in the boardroom. I give the Marine the benefit of the doubt if the Command is too weak to hold the Marine accountable appropriately. Most Marines can bounce back from most adversity. Some more egregious acts...the Marine Corps is better off admin separate these devils.
- Adversity was seen as a negative. However, depending on the nature of the adversity and the timeframe, the infraction that occurred didn't impact the Marine as much. Typically, if the Marine's adversity was more than 1-2 years old wasn't much of a factor, again depending on the adversity. It was still briefed regardless of when the infraction occurred.
- I viewed adversity of any kind as a major negative factor. However, what mattered most was the nature of the adversity, the severity, the timing, and the Marine's recovery afterward.
- Timeframe of the event, severity of the event, and trends all played a role in my recommendations. Additionally, depending on the adversity type, there were different thoughts and values I related to the event.
- Recent Adversity is an immediate recommend not a promotion. Adversity that is both sufficiently in the past (3 years or more), where the Marine has been accountable for the behavior (either in a statement with the adversity or in a letter to the board), and where the Marine has sustained performance post-adversity, is considered minor.
- Depended on how they recovered and how long ago it happened. Recovery and growth reflected well in my view of the Marine.
- Adversity is weighted differently based on MOS-related, morality, and ethics.
- What it was for and when it occurred were more important. How the Marine responded to said adversity was more important. Unless it was in grade or there was a pattern of adversity, it didn't hold quite as much weight.



Adversity

Did a rebuttal/letter to the board affect any members' decision to overlook adversity?

- No, but it showed career interest.
- Rebuttals/letters to the board assisted, but more often than not, did not trump the adversity.
- No, all depends on the situation and the severity of the adversity.
- Yes, unless they were shifting blame or writing a novel trying to explain their side. Just the effort of submitting the letter usually highlighted that they cared about their career and were still invested in continuing to serve.
- Yes, if they took responsibility for their actions, if they wrote a patronizing, cocky letter to the board members bragging about their section's comments, or how their leadership was wrong, it hurt them, as it paints a great picture of their selfishness and immaturity.
- Depending on the nature of adversity, it could shed context. But anything other than taking accountability is viewed unfavorably.
- No X2.
- There is no exact answer here; it was dependent on a case-by-case basis. Some of them helped provide clarity, some of them made the adversity sound worse.
- It was good to see a letter; it was taken into consideration. Sometimes it would, other times would not, would depend on the circumstances and type of adversity.
- Not overlooked, but certainly influenced the consideration and perspective.
- If it explained the plan of action to correct the deficiency.
- It was highly encouraged to provide clarity and to acknowledge ownership of actions.
- Yes, it does. It gives board members a better understanding of the case to make a better judgment to vote.
- Yes. Rebuttals/letters can be very important. Unfortunately, most Marines do not submit anything.



Adversity

Did a rebuttal/letter to the board affect any members' decision to overlook adversity? Continued...

- “Letters/rebuttals were considered, but didn’t make board members overlook adversity. Some added value, and others detracted from the briefs. -Letters that tell board members they're currently enrolled in PME didn't add any value. Board members can see the TD Fitness Report. -Letters to discuss Medical took away from briefs. Board members can see NMED on Fitness Reports. Letters concerning rifle range didn’t add value, as board members can see Marines’ duty stations and smart cards are provided for duty locations. My recommendation is to reserve letters for unclear information within the record ie Date gaps with the coinciding case number of correction.
- Depending on what the Marine said, but they were typically viewed as favorable, especially if they took responsibility for any negativity (3rd class physical fitness), and if they took responsibility for their actions seen as favorable. Many just explained what was already seen on DBR, or was a negative/presented something that we would not have seen.
- If the Marine simply admitted fault and committed to do better (or indicated that they had made decisions that ensured they would always do better), it was easier to discount the adversity. I held it against a Marine if adversity was never acknowledged, or if worse, they tried to take accountability for the adversity but came across as bragging about it. "I teach Jr marines to not to be like me. I am thankful for this adversity in my career.
- Only when it clarified the adversity or the situation that happened. Accepting responsibility held no weight.
- A letter arguing that adjudication processes were deviated is not helpful; it is actually more harmful. A letter articulating extenuating circumstances is worth considering.
- Only if it added value, this is also dependent upon the type of adversity. If the letter expounded on or clarified something, it helps to put the adversity into perspective.



Board Preparation

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

- Fitreps, RS, RO Sections I and K, Fitness, Combat Skills.
- Training certs, adversity (6105s).
- The Master Brief Sheet is the most relevant single document.
- 6105/NJP adversity, legitimate school/course certifications [not MarineNet], and the award NAVMC with the associated narrative write-up.
- College degree (if claimed), advanced school certs, IF IT IS ON THEIR MASTER BIREF SHEET, WE CHECK FOR THE CERT, and look for overall organization – it is really telling who cares about their career. If you have adversity, we verify the UPB or 6105
- UPB, Awards, any correspondence.
- FitReps, Awards, Comparative Assessment.
- Awards, Training Certificates, and School documentation.
- Pg 11, 6105, additional school certs, merit promotion documents.
- Performance, Board Correspondence, the Service tab to screen adversity, and the Comm Dera tab for awards and adversity.
- Service record, performance, and Con/Der.
- Adversity documentation, rebuttals, and award documentations.
- Service, performance, and command tabs give the most inside information for MRO.
- Award SOAs, certificates of any type, rebuttals to adversity.



Board Preparation

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

- I found those Marines who took the time to actually update their personal records most valuable. There were many Marines whose records were not updated. This caused board members to submit a discrepancy notice, and took away from preparation. Board members took a significant amount of time trying to find certificates and documents that were listed in the OMPF.
- Documents showing performance/leadership (fitreps), MOS credibility (MOS schools), or adversity (6105, NJPs).
- All documents provided some merit and, in some cases, provided the needed missing information. Fitness reports, PG11, 6150s, UPBs, dependent adds.
- NJP, 6105, awards, school records.
- 6105's and school certs that did not populate.
- Awards with all pages, detail in 6105 and NJP, Fitness Report I & K section promotion recommendations, College degrees or transcripts substantiating off-duty education.
- Awards documentation-helpful to see why the Marine received an award. any supporting documentation, i.e., if a Marine has a college or an MOS course done, ensure it is properly documented, ensure it's not viewed as an erroneous entry.



Board Preparation

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

- Yes, in some cases, added context.
- Letters explaining missing training scores, such as Rifle, PFT, CFT, and medical waivers.
- Letter of clarification. It shows the Marine's willingness to take full responsibility and ownership for actions impacting the Marine's potential for selection.
- Brief letters of clarification, two paragraphs at most, carried weight. The effort alone often had a major impact and could make the board more willing to look past certain adversity.
- Do not leave anything up to the board's interpretation - If you are pregnant, I would highly recommend writing a letter and explaining the timeline for medical/waived training requirements. If you are on light duty, I would write a letter. If something is missing from your master brief sheet, or OMPF, write a letter to the board and submit correspondence - this shows you give a shit about your career, otherwise your brief could turn negative in nature.
- Yes, those from a Lt Col and above held a lot of weight.
- Ones that explained drops in performance (Long periods of LIMDU). Explains gaps in FITREPS. PME enrollment, expected completion date.
- Yes, letters of clarification for prior adversity helped give a better understanding of what happened and the degree of the incident.
- Letters of clarification provided perspective if they made sense, and depending on how well/poor they were written.
- Letters of explanation and clarification were helpful to understand a Marine's perspective.
- Letter of clarification to address any adversity or assist in painting a narrative for performance shortfalls, if any medical or relevant circumstances apply to the degradation.
- Letters of clarification, letters of recommendation.
- Yes, clarifications of lack of fitrep, training event, and current limitations are important. It prevents the board from making assumptions about anything. Rebuttals to adversity are important. No correction to the board after adversity or a drop in performance is a bad look. Redemption letters from the CO who adjudicated the adversity are very helpful.



Board Preparation

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

- Both letters of clarification and letters of recommendation were beneficial, but again, Marines and those writing letters need to be clear, concise, and get to the point, not adding extra fluff.
- Yes, letters of clarification were helpful when the Marine's record was confusing, mostly due to the Marine's assignments/billets.
- Letters of clarification were very beneficial if they actually spoke to the event or adversity. Letters of recommendation from senior personnel (rank of at least most of the board members) were seen as additive too.
- The best letters addressed some discrepancy before the board and were short and simple. Current enrollment in resident PME for the sequence PME Marines was highly effective at getting a bump in promotion grading. Letters of recommendation only helped when that same officer issued adverse material in the Marine's record. All other recommendations were ignored.
- Letters of clarification were good to understand why a Marine is missing something or has something in their record that could be considered adverse. Letters of recommendation added a little weight depending on who it was from. RS/RO didn't matter; they can do that on the fitrep.
- Letters or clarification to extenuating circumstances around adversity and fitness shortcomings. Letters from historical RS or RO that are still observing (perhaps nearby, indirectly, or adjacently) that can add perspective to current performance. Letters from current RS or RO that can add perspective to date gaps or significant events between the current report and the board convene.
- Letters of all kinds were beneficial; to me, it shows the Marine cares and is going above and beyond. Letters are especially helpful if they are to clarify some type of adversity. There is, however, no value added by simply stating what already exists in the Marines record.
- Letters of clarification were of value.



Board Preparation

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

- Add the details that the 6105 does not include that show the other side of the story.
- Marine's honest explanation of exactly what occurred, taking ownership and a plan to bounce back.
- A successful letter addressing adversity must demonstrate maturity, take absolute ownership of the shortfall, briefly explain the context without making excuses, and highlight the sustained, positive performance that followed the incident.
- For adversity, the biggest thing was accepting that it happened and continuing to make an effort to improve. For missed schools or outdated qualifications, it helped if the Marine was actively trying to fix it, even if it was due to unit funding or scheduling issues. Simply acknowledging the deficiency, taking ownership of it, and showing they were working to rectify it carried weight.
- Corrective action taken, lessons learned, and personal and professional goals going forward.
- The situation, recognition that the command still found sufficient cause to punish the Marine. Desire to let their performance and conduct moving forward depict their true nature.
- Any new information or updated outcome that is not included in the record.
- The letter should give a quick summary of what took place, assume responsibility, and outline the actions that have been taken to correct their actions.
- Information that helps further explain the situation provides insight into what actually happened.
- Information not already included in the rebuttal (if written) to the adversity. Adversity outside of 2 years was not considered by me.
- Plan of action to correct the deficiency, and what has been done since to improve.
- Details pertaining to the adversity. Lessons learned, what has been done moving forward.
- More detailed information is better.
- How the adversity has changed them, how they adjusted individually and professionally, I like to see acceptance of responsibility. By all means, double down on innocence, mishandling of procedures, clashes with leadership, or misunderstandings...but understand the risk and how it is perceived.



Board Preparation

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

- Be concise, talk about how one plans to improve, and do not regurgitate the adversity.
- A letter of clarification addressing adversity is most effective when it gives the board members exactly what they need to know to understand the incident without making excuses.
- What the event(s) were, what led up to the event(s), the ownership or responsibility the Marine took for the event(s), and how they have made corrective actions.
- Admit you did wrong, below the standard expected. Communicate your desire to change and the choices you've made to ensure the change isn't just a hope (treatment, substance avoidance). Keep it short. The longer you talk about your adversity, the more it sounds like bragging about how you're better now because of the bad decisions you made.
- If it was not entirely accurate, paint a better picture.
- Any extenuating circumstances. A letter or statement taking responsibility carries no weight with me, as I will consider actions after adversity.
- Anything that expounds on the adversity. Simply rehashing what is in the record adds no value. The circumstances behind the adversity may not be captured in the 6105 entries.



Board Preparation

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

- "Ask your RS where you fall in their profile. Make sure you understand what is said in your record. Know what the numbers mean."
- "Ensure your entire record is accurate and only contains YOUR information, NOT other Marines'. A consecutive pattern of non-observed FITREPs is questionable. A Marine who hasn't completed a PFT/CFT for a consecutive number of years is questionable; submit a letter to the board! Ensure all awards are in your record."
- "Audit Date Gaps - Ensure there is not a single day of 'unaccounted for' time between FITREPs. If a gap exists, contact MMRP-31 immediately or draft a Letter to the Board. Verify PME Completion - Confirm that all required PME (both resident and non-resident) are accurately reflected on the MBS. MOS Accuracy: Verify that your Primary MOS (PMOS) and any Additional MOSs (AMOS) are correct in MBS. Boards look for career progression within your designated occupational field."
- Improve and fix what you can on your own, i.e., PFT. A current-year score, even a low 1st Class, held a lot of weight because you had months to knock it out. -Don't be afraid to write a letter, just keep it brief. Tell the board you have a Sgt Course seat, a scheduled school, or are working toward a qual. -Confront your RS and ask what will actually set you apart within their profile and what they need to see to write stronger verbiage.
- "-Do you job well (either PMOS, SDA, Collateral Duties, ect) -Perform like a Marine -Improve your personal scores (PFT, CFT, Marksmanship, MCMAP) -Be a leader (where you're planted) -We promote leaders, not average Marines -Focus on PME and MOS before volunteerism and off-duty education -You have been in the Marine Corps for over 4 years, you should be well-exceeding the minimum standard in all that you do. What will make you stand out amongst your peers? (who are all average), How much has the Marine Corps invested in you? Your FITREPs don't lie, and if something is wrong with your record, fix or address it before the board!!! -If you have adversity on your record, it can easily be set aside if you are a high performer in all aspects -One bad FITREP (or great FITREP) does not ruin your chances."
- Do your PME. If there's anything noncompetitive, even if it's not adverse, letters explaining recognition held a lot of weight.
- Get your PME done!



Board Preparation

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

- My top recommendations would be to clean up their OMPF, get rid of non-essential certificates in files no one cares about, the MarineNet certs, ensure to run up-to-date fitness tests, and ensure rifle range is up to date or an appropriate waiver is submitted. If they have partial fitness tests or medical waivers over a long period of time, submit a letter of clarification.
- Ensure you have gone through your record and make sure all material in it is yours, and submit a letter to the board to clarify anything that may need to be further explained.
- Contact the career Analyst for guidance and record review/accuracy, make sure everything is as recent as possible, i.e., fresh PFT/CFT Rifle Score.
- Ensure all accolades and school certs are up to date and reflecting properly, and do your best to ensure your training stats are up to date.
- Ensuring documentation is up to date and accurate in OMPF. Completion of PME and a letter of their attempt to attend was looked at positively. Their attempt to run/attempt to get a higher fitness score if second class on the previous FY.



Board Preparation

What was the most common discrepancy you noticed during the board process?

- "Height and Weight PME Date Gaps."
- Other Marines' awards and certs in a Marine's record – this showed that the Marine did not dedicate any time to reviewing their record before the board convened.
- Duplicate/missing documents in the OMPF.
- Missing adversity documents from service record, no explanation for missing training events (PFT, rifle, pistol), Marines not completing annual marksmanship qualifications.
- Incomplete records on adversity, verification of current status/eligibility.
- PME incomplete verification.
- Rifle range dates with no waivers submitted, common with anyone in the air wing.
- HtWt standards verification, sometimes a Marine has conflicting information displayed, having to verify that a Marine has not completed the appropriate non-resident PME for grade was a common submission.
- Ht/Wt post pregnancy reporting waived, but still shows out of standard.
- Marines are not reflecting their qualifications on OMPF if they gain additional MOS. This was very evident in the Aviation field MOS. This would have a great negative impact if a Marine were briefed as not having the qualifications expected of that grade.
- PME incomplete.
- No documented PME, Other Marines' HSMs in their record.



Board Preparation

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

- "Date GapLack of updating OMPF. Marines not completing basic training, i.e., PFT/CFT/ non-resident PMERS & RO giving Marines pre-board bump. Not needed because board members can see right through it."
- Missing documents (awards, adversity, ect) on OMPF.
- Missing Sgt Dep, awards on DBR but not within the record, missing FitReps/date gaps.
- If RS's and ROs were legally accountable for the mistakes that are contained in their fitness reports, there would be a lot fewer officers in the Marine Corps. Many RS's are not using command reviewers and not validating ht/wt, rifle, or fitness scores. RS's and ROs should not be using bullet points to talk to the board. The CMC wrote on a Sgt this year using full sentences, making a normal paragraph. If he has time to do it, so do we.
- Fitness Reports not processed.
- Missing certs, multiple certs for the same thing, items being in the wrong section of OMPF.



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?

- Marines who haven't qualified on the rifle range or completed a PFT/CFT for several consecutive years were questionable and could've been explained via a letter to the board. The same applies to Marines who had medical waivers for an extended period of time.
- Yes, FitRep Date Gaps and Missing PME or education.
- Yes, date gaps, short drops in performance due to command climate or personal factors.
- Drops in FITREP performance (circumstances surrounding. Drops in PFT/CFTP performance (LIMDU).
- Consistent partial fitness tests with no medical waiver.
- None that I can think off.
- Medical waivers for PFT/CFT and inconsistent scores. Few Marines explained, and in some cases, it is understandable if you provide clarity with a letter.
- "Waived or Partial PFT/CFT, letters of explanation of medical reasons: letters or waivers clarification."
- Fitness waivers if not covered under medical, if the sole justification was partial.
- Letters of clarification.
- Dips in physical performance due to medical issues.



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...

- Not particularly. Most Marines were doing fairly well with their records, but there were Marines who were very competitive but failed to do the basics.
- Serving in another billet and out of the PMOS for an extended period of time.
- Physical fitness with a medical status, and then having to go into the record to locate why (assumption) they had not run any physical fitness evaluations over a long period of time.
- The best example was a Marine who identified that someone else's 6105 was placed into his record. He wrote the board and saved his brief as we ignored the erroneous 6105.
- Dips in performance due to injury, life, etc.
- Any extenuating circumstances around physical fitness shortcomings and morality shortfalls.
- Date gaps, missing certs, and adversity in some instances.



Executive Summary

The following slides present a concise executive summary of the most recent SSgt 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 SSgt Selection Board.



Executive Summary

Top Trends

- **Performance Documentation is Paramount:** Fitness Reports (FitReps) and their narrative comments (Sections I and K) are the most heavily weighted factors in selection decisions. Both quantitative markings and qualitative comments are scrutinized, with a strong preference for alignment between the two.
- **MOS Credibility is Critical:** Demonstrated proficiency and progression in the Marine's Primary MOS (PMOS) is a major competitive factor. Key billets, advanced MOS schools, and relevant certifications significantly enhance competitiveness.
- **Special Duty Assignments (SDAs) Add Value:** Marines who perform well in SDAs or screenable billets (Type I/II) receive a competitive boost, but only if their performance is above average. Poor or adverse performance in these roles is viewed very negatively.
- **Education and Training:** Completion of PME, advanced MOS courses, and in-service college degrees are viewed positively, especially when achieved while serving. Resident courses and MOS-related certifications are more valuable than online or generic training.
- **Adversity and Recovery:** Recent or severe adversity (UCMJ violations, adverse FitReps, NJP, etc.) is a significant negative factor. However, demonstrated recovery and sustained positive performance over time can mitigate past issues.



Executive Summary

Key Insights

- **Alignment of Comments and Markings:** Board members are wary of discrepancies between FitRep markings and narrative comments. Consistency and honesty in evaluations are essential.
- **Promotion Recommendations:** Explicit, enthusiastic, and well-justified promotion recommendations (e.g., "Promote now," "Ahead of peers") add significant value. Vague or generic statements (e.g., "Promote with peers") are seen as non-competitive.
- **Profile Size and Report Length:** Larger, seasoned RS/RO profiles and longer observation periods lend more credibility to evaluations. Short or new profiles require more reliance on narrative comments and supporting evidence.
- **JEPES vs. FitReps:** FitReps are always given more weight than JEPES. Marines with only JEPES and no observed FitReps are at a disadvantage.
- **Letters of Clarification:** Well-written, concise letters addressing adversity, missing documentation, or extenuating circumstances can positively influence board perceptions.



Executive Summary

Common Gaps

- **Incomplete or Inaccurate Records:** Missing awards, PME, or fitness documentation; duplicate or irrelevant documents (e.g., MarineNet certs, LOAs) clutter records and frustrate board members.
- **Unexplained Date Gaps:** Gaps in FitRep timelines or missing training events (PFT, CFT, rifle range) without explanation are viewed negatively.
- **Lack of MOS Documentation:** Failure to upload MOS course certificates or reflect additional MOS qualifications in the OMPF reduces perceived credibility.
- **PME Incompletion:** Not completing the required PME or failing to document attendance is a recurring issue.
- **Generic or Fluff Comments:** Narrative comments that lack specificity, quantifiable achievements, or clear recommendations diminish competitiveness.



Executive Summary

Recommended Actions

- **Audit and Update Your Record:** Ensure all documentation (FitReps, awards, PME, MOS schools, certifications) is current, accurate, and relevant. Remove or minimize non-essential documents.
- **Seek Honest Feedback:** Ask your Reporting Senior (RS) where you stand in their profile and what you can do to improve your evaluation and narrative comments.
- **Prioritize PME and MOS Progression:** Complete required PME and pursue advanced MOS schools or certifications. Document all achievements in your OMPF.
- **Address Gaps and Adversity:** Write concise letters of clarification for any gaps, missing events, or adversity. Take ownership, explain corrective actions, and highlight sustained improvement.
- **Maximize Physical Fitness:** Maintain first-class PFT/CFT scores and ensure all scores are up to date and documented.
- **Craft Impactful Comments:** When writing or reviewing FitRep comments, ensure they are specific, quantifiable, and aligned with markings. Use clear language to distinguish performance and potential.
- **Consult Career Analysts:** Utilize available resources for record review and career counseling to ensure your package is as competitive as possible.

Point of Contact

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

Email: ecounselor@usmc.mil

Website:

