

OFFICER EVALUATION SYSTEM Training Guide

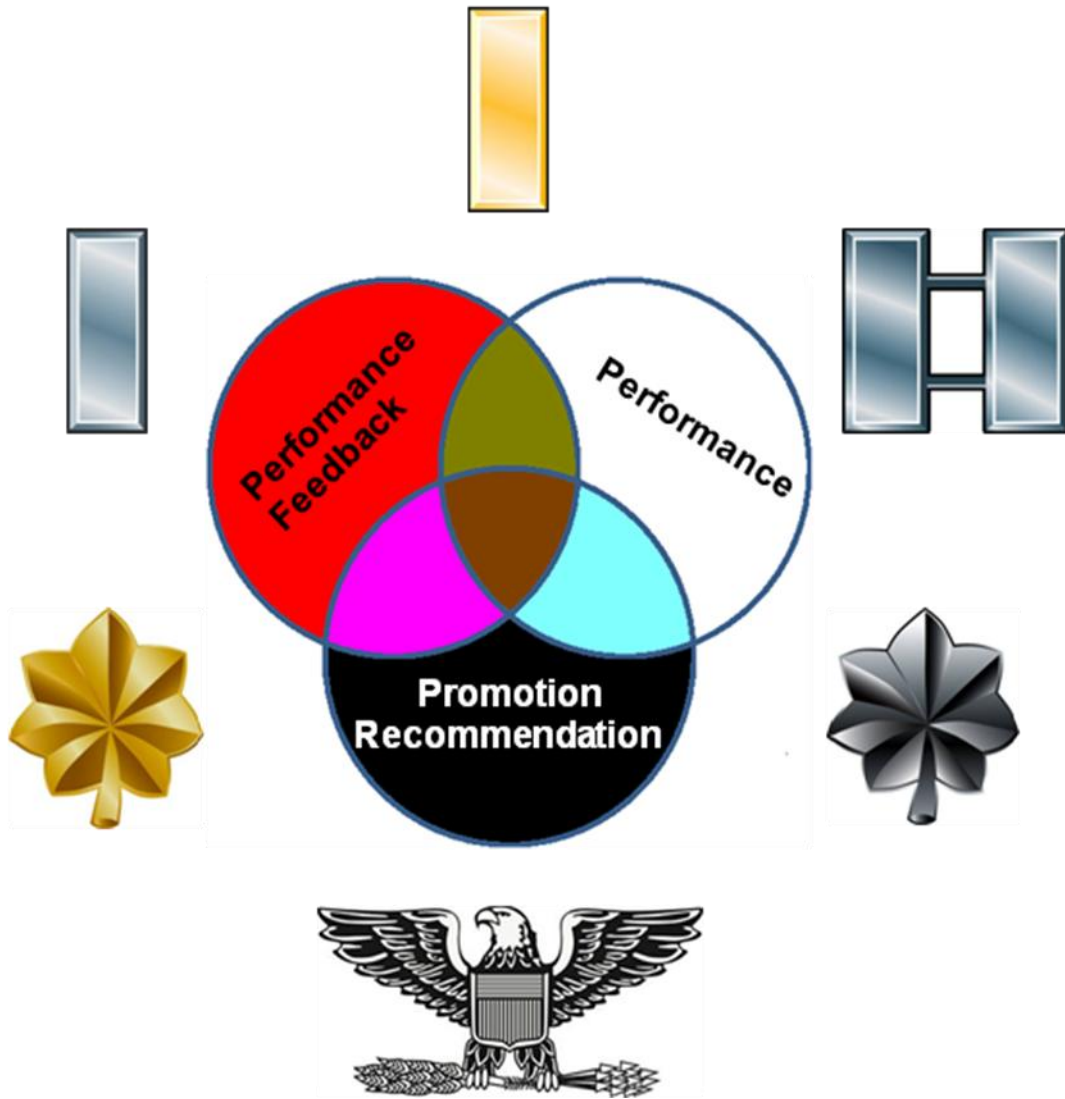


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INTRODUCTION

The Officer Evaluation System (OES) as we know it today is the result of more than fifty years of evolution. Throughout the history of the Air Force, there have been more than 8 different evaluation systems with 14 major variations, at a rate of a new version about every eight years. Today's OES was developed in 1988, and has proven successful in ensuring that officers are assessed by measuring the proper accomplishments and qualities and giving promotion boards a sound system of differentiating between eligible officers.

OFFICER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The overall goal of Officer Professional Development (OPD) is to develop a well-rounded, professionally competent officer corps prepared to meet current and future mission requirements. The Officer Evaluation System is considered an integral part of OPD and serves as the basic tool for achieving its three objectives.

The first objective of OPD is to increase the officer's qualifications and abilities in their daily duties now and in the near future. Building competence is achieved through formal training, discussions and feedback from supervisors. The most important contributor, however, is likely to be the experience gained from day to day activities.

The second objective of Officer Professional Development involves preparing the officer for future challenges. This is also the purpose of Developmental Education (DE), professional readings, and other education programs. The crucial element of this process is the opportunity to grow in experience and develop leadership capabilities that come from the challenges faced by Air Force officers every day. The emphasis on growth comes with performance of the assigned job and reflects the conviction that the most important career advancement opportunity an officer can have is his or her current job.

The third objective of OPD is the promotion system. The purpose of the promotion system is, simply stated, to advance the best qualified officers to the next higher grade. OES provides a crucial role in determining the best officers qualified for promotion.

OES OBJECTIVES

The Officer Evaluation System (OES) is performance-based. It focuses on how well an individual does his/her job and the qualities he or she brings to the job. OES helps develop skills and leadership through feedback, then documents performance to provide a cumulative record of performance and potential, which is in turn used in determining who will be selected for advancement through assignments, promotions, and so on. The evaluations system emphasizes the importance of performance in several ways, using periodic performance feedback, as the basis for formal evaluation reports, and through performance-based promotion recommendations.

PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK

Performance feedback is the cornerstone of OES. OPRs and PRFs are based upon the expectations and guidance given in the feedback process. An officer requires performance feedback to develop professionally and should receive it regularly through informal means in addition to the required formal feedback sessions. Feedback also serves as a method of motivation. If given frequent and specific feedback, the officer will better understand what is expected and will be motivated to perform better in order to meet and exceed expectations.

Within the first 60 days of supervision, the rater must conduct an initial feedback session to discuss with the ratee the rater's expectations for the job and standards that will be used to evaluate performance. It is not necessary to mark the scale provided during this initial feedback session. In addition to the initial feedback, field grade officers require a midterm feedback session halfway between the initial feedback and the projected close-out of the officer's next OPR. A final feedback session, called "End of Reporting Period Feedback" will now be accomplished during the ratee's acknowledgement of an OPR.

Colonels will continue to receive initial feedbacks; however, they will now also receive an end of reporting period feedback upon acknowledgement of the OPR.

Additional sessions may be held at the request of the ratee or as determined necessary by the rater.

A formal feedback session should be held face-to-face. If impractical due to geographical separation or extended TDY, conduct the feedback session via telephone.

Effective feedback is a realistic assessment of an individual's performance. The rater should discuss the officer's skills and abilities, behavior, and how he or she affected the mission. Be impartial and give evaluations based on observed behavior. Examples will lend support to feedback and ratings.

The private feedback session is an ideal opportunity to inform an individual where they need improvement. It also lets the ratee know what needs to be done before the OPR is due. Sheltering an officer from bad news is much more harmful than providing needed criticism. However, do not use a performance feedback worksheet (PFW) to document behavior that may result in administrative or judicial action.

Feedback, whether positive or negative, needs to be specific. Specific positive comments reinforce the behavior, and specific negative comments focus the attention where the officer needs improvement. A lack of information, on the other hand, tends to lower an officer's motivation to improve. Comments that are not sufficiently specific will

not concentrate the ratee's attention on exactly what he or she needs to do in order to be successful in their job. Below are examples of how you can make your comments more specific to improve the quality of the feedback session.

GENERAL	IMPROVED
Need to work on organizational skills	You tend to work on several projects at once--sometimes more than you can handle effectively. You need to come up with a system of prioritizing your projects.
Outstanding performer	You did a great job of keeping up with sortie generation. Keep it up.
You need to show more initiative	You should be more willing to step forward and take on more responsibilities such as a squadron additional duty--you are seen as someone who only works 9 to 5.

It is important to focus on the behavior and not the person. Provide feedback to the officer in a manner that the ratee understands, can accept, and is able to do something about. A measure of the success of the session is the extent to which the ratee knows where he or she stands in relation to the rater's expectations and what steps to take in order to improve daily performance.

OFFICER PERFORMANCE REPORTS

Raters must honestly observe, evaluate, and document individual accomplishment in preparing performance evaluations. The OPR is the official record of an officer's performance and provides information used for school selection, promotion, assignment, separation, and other management actions. It provides a cumulative permanent record of an officer's professional development and is the primary way of identifying outstanding performers within the officer force.

Several sections compose the OPR, each of which provides information on a different facet of the officer's performance. The OPR contains many sections, including a duty title and job description, performance factors, and the rater and additional rater assessments.

The governing directive for the OES is AFI 36-2406, Officer and Enlisted Evaluation Systems. Refer to the AFI for more detailed guidance on feedback, preparing evaluation reports and the promotion recommendation process.

DUTY TITLE AND JOB DESCRIPTION

An individual's duty title should accurately convey the scope and level of responsibility the position he or she holds. Likewise, the job description provides information about an officer's duties and explains the nature and level of the ratee's job responsibilities. This section should include: level of responsibility, number of people supervised, and dollar value of resources or projects. Describe the uniqueness of the job. Also include significant additional duties if they directly relate to the mission. Describe only the job; save how it was performed for the later sections. Be certain to use plain English and explain the meanings of all acronyms. Bullet statements are mandatory.

The following are examples of good job descriptions. Please Note: All examples given in this guide are illustrations given to provide insight or clarification on a topic. The examples are not meant to be suggestions for use in OPRs or PRFs.

II. JOB DESCRIPTION**DUTY TITLE:** Chief, Resource Management Branch

- Manages resources supporting 84 officer/enlisted recruiters over a 4 state, 200K sq mile area
- Responsible for 59 General Svc vehicles/manages real estate prgm of 37 offices/\$762K budget
- Coordinates base support w/logistics, personnel, accounting, procurement, & other activities.
- Serves as the USAF representative at US Army Corps of Engineers facility meetings.

II. JOB DESCRIPTION**DUTY TITLE:** Weapons Director

- Responsible for control of aircraft in the AOR for \$179.5 million Airborne Warning & Control Sys
- Directs air-to-air intercepts, refueling, special missions, and tactical air-to-ground aircraft.
- Coordinates on matters pertaining to flight safety and mission accomplishment
- Executes JCS-directed objectives relating to air defense in North America, NATO/the Middle East.

These examples include specifics and show a well-described scope of responsibilities. In addition, they quantify the officer's area of responsibility by describing a dollar value or group size of resources for which the officer is responsible. They tell what the job does and the reader can sense how the ratee will impact the mission.

PERFORMANCE FACTORS

The following examples help illustrate how quantifying accomplishments can paint a more accurate and stronger picture of an officer's performance.

Example: 1.

Good:

- Saw the need and developed computer program which greatly increased unit efficiency

Better:

- Computer program he designed saved 25 hrs monthly, decreased errors to 1%-- MAJCOM made it the command standard

The second statement quantifies the levels of efficiency. It also documents the fact that the program was successful enough that higher headquarters adopted it throughout the MAJCOM.

Example: 2.

Good:

- Integrated 211 KC-10/KC-135 air refueling events, off-loading 11.8 million pounds of fuel to 567 receivers

Better:

- Integrated record number of refueling events--211 missions, 11.8M lbs of fuel to 567 receivers--huge success!

Here is another example that quantifies level of efficiency. The first version quantifies the achievement in measurable numbers, but does not communicate their significance. The second version shows what was notable about the achievement. The rater mentioned the achievement because it was distinctive, and the second version tells why it was distinctive.

Example: 3.

Good:

- Inspired FSC to new heights of achievement--oversaw doubling of families enrolled in Respite Care Program

Better:

- Built AF's largest Respite Care Program for families with severe medical problems, featured in AF Aid magazine as the AF model

The first bullet is written in the active voice and quantifies the achievement. The second, however, also compares that achievement with what similar organizations in the AF were doing. It also more fully describes the respite care program, so that those unfamiliar with it can better understand the message.

The Performance Factors section identifies six qualities all officers must demonstrate in the performance of their duties. Simply mark whichever block applies: "Does Not Meet Standards" or "Meets Standards." If any block is marked "Does Not Meet Standards," then the report becomes a referral report and is processed as directed by AFI 36-2406.

RATER/ADDITIONAL RATER ASSESSMENTS

These sections are used to assess the officer's performance and potential based upon performance. These sections can be used as a continuation of Section IV; however, they should also contain useful information relating the rater/additional rater's thoughts about the ratee as an officer and his/her performance. There are a total of 10 lines between sections IV and V to describe a year's performance and evaluate the officer's potential for increased responsibility.

Section IV also contains a block in which the rater must enter when the last performance feedback session was completed. If performance feedback was not accomplished, an explanation is required. N/A must be filled in to unlock the rater's signature block.

Write in layman's terms—do not include acronyms or technical terms that board members may not understand. Write in the active voice (Example: "Lt Doe led the mission" vice "The mission was led by Lt Doe.") Use bullet format. Do not use bold print, underlining, italics, capitalization, or extraneous punctuation merely to emphasize a point. (For example, "Make Maj Smith a squadron commander--NOW!!!")

The rater or additional rater may comment on job performance and the seven performance factors standards identified under Section IX. Comments on potential may be based only on current duty performance. Again, remember to quantify your statements. What was notable about the officer's achievements? Why is it worth mention?

For line officers, comments concerning completion of or enrollment in DE or an advanced academic degree program are not permitted in the OPR. Additionally, recommendations for promotion, whether specific or implied, are prohibited. However, remarks concerning community involvement and additional duties are permitted in these sections. Recommendations for DE, a particular assignment, command, or retention are appropriate, if warranted. In fact, absence of such comments will weaken a report.

STRATIFICATION

Stratification is the most common way to reveal where an officer stands among his or her peers. It can be a statement of opinion, a ranking among peers, or can be reflected in a recommendation for an assignment, command, or DE opportunity. However, it should be used judiciously. Not everyone can be #1. Raters must always be careful to "qualify" any stratification into his/her scope of experience, or back the claim with proof. Unless an

officer has won an AF level award, it's difficult for a wing commander to say he/she is the "best in the AF." Stratification must be the assessment, ranking, or opinion of the signing evaluator.

The best place for stratification is in the OPR's "Red Zone," the first and last lines of the rater's and additional rater's comments. These four lines are most likely to draw attention.

There are several recognized levels of stratification used by raters to convey the relative strength of an officer. Here are a few examples of stratification, listed from the strongest to weakest. Again, these statements are only examples.

Top:

"My #1 of 12...finest officer I've ever known"

"Top 3% of my 35 Majors"

"My #1 choice for SDE now...big GP/CC next!"

2nd level:

"Top 10% in wing"

"Top 10% I've known in my career"

3rd level:

"One of my best"

Lowest:

"Outstanding Officer"

"Superior Officer"

IMPROPER STATEMENTS

We've already mentioned a few comments that are not allowed on OPRs, such as mention of DE and advanced degree completion. Below are some examples of common inappropriate comments. See AFI 36-2406 for a full listing of inappropriate evaluator considerations and comments.

Examples of improper statements

“Completed master’s degree in quantum physics” For line officers, comment on an officer’s candidacy, enrollment in, completion of, or selection for advanced academic education is prohibited.

“Recommend Meritorious Service Medal for distinguished service” Recommendation for decorations are prohibited, although raters may mention a decoration approved or presented during the rating period.

“Graduated from Squadron Officers School as a DG” Accomplishments such as DG are already included in the permanent record on a Training Report (TR) and may not be duplicated on an OPR. Officially recognized extraordinary achievement earned at DE may be commented on in the officer’s Promotion Recommendation Form (PRF). (NOTE: For line officers, comments on an officer’s candidacy, enrollment in, completion of, or selection for advanced academic education are also prohibited.)

“Promote this board” Promotion recommendations are prohibited in the OPR, although statements acknowledging an officer’s selection for promotion are allowed.

“Capt Duff is the best finance officer in the business” This is a statement considered outside the evaluator’s scope of knowledge or responsibility. An evaluator may make such a statement if substantiated by an Air Force-level award. Otherwise the statement lacks credibility.

“Has seen great improvement since his last report” Raters may not comment on previous reports or ratings.

“Top 5% of all Lts” Again, this statement is outside the scope of the evaluator, because he/she does not have first-hand knowledge of all Lieutenants in the Air Force. Raters must be certain to qualify stratification within their scope of responsibility or experience.

“Top 1% in the wing” (written by Group CC) Stratification must be the assessment of the evaluator. Quoting another official’s opinion of the officer effectively adds an evaluator to the report and inflates that report.

Any statement that expressly recommends or implies a recommendation for promotion is strictly prohibited in the OPR. Implied promotion statements are those which through mention of higher rank or position suggest a promotion recommendation or make promotion a prerequisite to a recommended position.

Examples of implied promotion recommendations (with improper segments underlined):

“Mike’s future progression in rank or responsibility is unlimited”

“Maj Johnson is doing more than most Lt Cols in my unit”

“Bruce is performing at levels above his present grade”

“Capt McCauley’s work exceeds her years and rank”

“Sets the standard for my other CCs, four of whom are Lt Cols” (if ratee is a Maj.)

“She is field grade material” (on a company grade officer)

“Does the job of a much more senior officer”

“Stellar performance in an O-5 billet” (on a Major)

“My #1 BPZ choice”

Evaluators must limit assignment and position recommendations to those consistent with the officer’s current grade. Evaluators may include a recommendation for a position at the next grade only if the officer has completed or is completing the last reasonable career development step for the current grade.

REVIEWER

The reviewing official for Lieutenant to Major is the first Colonel, or equivalent, in the position of wing commander, or equivalent, who has been designated as a senior rater. For Lt Colonel and Colonel, the reviewer must be the first General Officer in the rating chain designated as a senior rater. The reviewer performs a quality review on the OPR. If the reviewer agrees with the report, then no comments are allowed in the "Reviewer's" block--the reviewer simply signs the report. If the reviewer disagrees with the report, then he or she returns the OPR for reconsideration. If no action is taken by the rater or additional rater, the reviewer then checks the "non-concur" block and notes the disagreement. The reviewer may not non-concur simply for the sake of indorsing the report.

The reviewer is also the senior rater in the promotion recommendation process. As such, he or she must take great care in ensuring the validity and quality of each comment. Remember, if the reviewer allows evaluators to inflate comments or make inappropriate remarks (such as "John is the best Major in the Air Force"), then the OPR may not be on track with the reviewer's own promotion recommendation on the PRF.

EVALUATOR DISAGREEMENT

The additional rater or reviewer may concur or non-concur with the rater's performance factors. Any disagreement with a previous evaluator must be explained. Show any disagreements with the rating(s) by making specific comments regarding the exact standard(s) and or comment(s) with which there is disagreement. Comments to support disagreement are required. (Example: Disagree with rater's assessment of Job Knowledge--Capt Doe was unable to answer critical questions concerning the operation of his flight leading to an ORI rating of "Unsatisfactory" for his squadron) Evaluators should discuss disagreements when preparing reports. Prior evaluators are first given an opportunity to change the evaluation; however, they will not change their evaluation just to satisfy the evaluator who disagrees. If, after discussion, the disagreement remains, the disagreeing evaluator marks the non-concur block, and provides specific comments to explain each item in disagreement. The evaluator who non-concurs with the report may attach an AF Form 77 if more space is required to explain the disagreement.

REFERRAL REPORTS

A referral report is a report that contains one or more markings of “Does Not Meet Standards” on any block in Section IX or contains comments that are derogatory in nature, imply or refer to behavior incompatible or not meeting standards, and/or refer to disciplinary actions. When one or more of these conditions exist, the ratee must have an opportunity to comment on the report before the report becomes a matter of record. Please refer to AFI 36-2406 if preparing a referral report. All referral reports will be accomplished with wet (hand-written) signatures and dates only.

The referring evaluator must comment and specifically detail the behavior and performance that caused the report to be referred. Do not beat around the bush or be vague; be specific and identify the underlying behavior that led to an incident.

Many raters are reluctant to make a report a referral. However, if a ratee’s performance, conduct or behavior warrants comment on the OPR, the rater should refer the report. A report that contains derogatory comments but was not referred to the ratee can be successfully appealed. A simple rule is: when in doubt, refer the report.

Failure to maintain Air Force Fitness Standards (including currency) constitutes a referral report.

After the closeout date, the referring evaluator should sign the report and prepare the memorandum shown in AFI 36-2406. The ratee may request assistance from the MPF or defense counsel in preparing his or her rebuttal. The next evaluator, after 10 calendar days (30 days for non-EAD members) completes the report and includes one of the following statements verbatim (that word was already underlined) in his or her comments: “I have carefully considered (ratee’s name) comments to the referral memo of (date),” or “Comments from the ratee were requested but were not received within the required period,” or “Ratee elected not to provide comments to the referral memo of (date).” If this statement is used a statement from the member must be included in the referral package. Make sure the date referenced is the date of the memo, not the closeout date of the report. This evaluator must also have at least one more line of comments.

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION FORMS

In some situations, a senior rater may be required to accomplish two PRFs. If an officer is going PCS or PCA to an AF-level school and entering student status (functional category "L"; e.g., DE, AFIT courses, etc.), a Narrative-Only PRF is required IAW AFI 36-2406. (NOTE: in the last few years, the promotion to Major has been accelerated and

captains are now meeting their promotion boards with less than 4 years TIG). Also, the officer may be eligible for a scheduled board that requires a Regular PRF as well. On day - 150, if the officer has not signed into student status, the losing senior rater is required to render a Regular PRF for the CSB, as well as the non-board specific Narrative-Only PRF for future consideration while in student status

The Promotion Recommendation Form (PRF) is an important document in the selection record that selection boards will consider. The PRF is key to assisting the promotion board in deciding who among the eligible officers is best qualified for promotion. It describes an officer's performance-based potential and provides a message to the central selection board (CSB) about the officer's fitness for promotion. Refer to AFI 36-2406, for detailed information on the promotion recommendation process.

The PRF is signed by the officer's Senior Rater no earlier than 60 days prior to the promotion central selection board and is entered into the officer's selection folder. The Senior Rater must evaluate the officer's Record of Performance (ROP), Duty Qualification History Brief, and, if applicable, Unfavorable Information File, Letter of Reprimand, Article 15 or Court- Martial action before preparing the PRF. A copy of the PRF is then provided to the officer approximately 30 days prior to the central selection board. At the conclusion of the central board, PRFs for all officers are removed from the officers' selection records.

The purpose of a PRF is to communicate the Senior Rater's promotion recommendation directly to the promotion board and to explain why an officer should or should not be promoted. The senior rater makes one of three promotion recommendations, "Definitely Promote" (DP), "Promote" (P), or "Do Not Promote" (DNP). When recommending officers for promotion, the emphasis should be on performance and potential to serve in next higher grade. Promotion boards derive scores based on the following: material in each officer's Officer Selection Record; any information the SECAF may provide to that board according to DODI 1320.14; and any information communicated by letter from the officer concerning his or her own record. Promotion boards are instructed to use the whole person concept in assessing an officer's record.

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATIONS

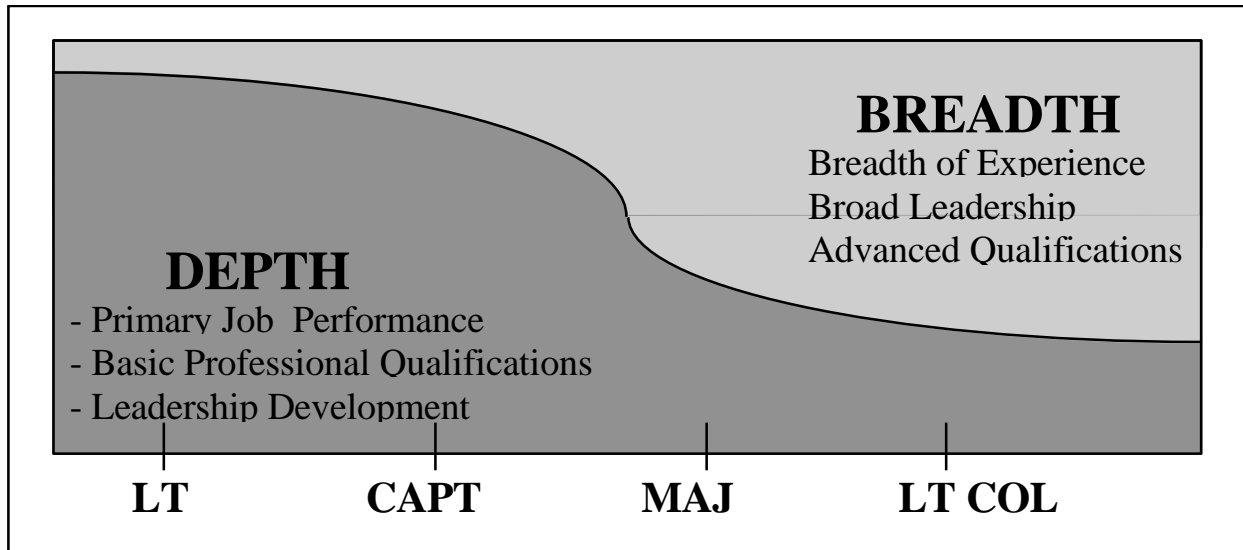
"Definitely Promote" (DP) recommendation means the strength of the officer's performance and performance-based potential warrants promotion.

"Promote" (P) recommendation means the officer is qualified for promotion and should compete on the basis of performance, performance-based potential, and other considerations such as duty history, DE, advanced degrees, etc.

“Do Not Promote This Board” (DNP) recommendation means the officer does not warrant promotion and should not be promoted by the central selection board (CSB) for which the officer is eligible. A Senior Rater must make comments explaining to the CSB why the officer should not be promoted

When preparing recommendations for promotion, Senior Raters should consider the officer’s career progression and gear comments appropriately. At the company grade levels, officers should have a good amount of depth or specific knowledge in their career field. As they progress, their careers should incorporate a greater breadth or variety of experience and produce a well-rounded officer able to handle a variety of situations. The nature of activities and opportunities that make a captain best qualified for promotion to Major are very different from the activities and opportunities that will make a Lieutenant Colonel best qualified for promotion to Colonel.

Officer Career Progression Chart



As the above graph shows, Lieutenants and captains become best qualified for promotion by concentrating on the depth of experience in their career area. Staff assignments and other career broadening assignments are useful, but not necessary for promotion to Major. A captain should focus on the primary job and the quality of job performance. It follows that the Officer Evaluation System will put greater emphasis on daily job performance in identifying the best captains for promotion. Somewhere around

the mid-Major point, an officer's career may broaden, with the resulting broadened horizons. As the chart indicates, it is best for a Lieutenant Colonel looking for promotion to Colonel to have much more focus on broader considerations--DE, command assignments, headquarters assignments, and other career broadening assignments.

When writing PRFs on company grade officers, Senior Raters should focus on how well they have learned their basic job skills and put them to use, how they stand out from the crowd, and how they have shown their officership skills. PRFs on field grade officers should show how they have performed in successively demanding jobs and how they have demonstrated their leadership skills. At more senior levels, technical expertise is a commodity that everyone should have. In order to be promoted, the more senior officers need to show they are ready to command or lead an organization performing a vital Air Force mission.

It is important to note that on the PRF, officers are compared only to other officers with whom they are competing for promotion. Thus, officers who are eligible for below-the-zone promotion are only compared to other below-the-zone eligible officers. In the same manner, officers eligible in- and above-the-promotion zone are only compared to other officers eligible in- and above-the-promotion zone.

NARRATIVE PORTION

The narrative section of the PRF (in bullet format) explains to the promotion board what makes (or does not make) an officer best qualified for promotion. The narrative is a nine-line synopsis of the officer's career and performance-based potential. Overall, the PRF and OPRs should agree and be consistent. Even the best PRF will rarely overcome a weak record.

Narrative comments on PRFs for Above-the-Zone (APZ) active duty to Colonel and below (line and non-line), who are two or more times deferred, are optional. Senior raters retain the latitude to push their best-qualified officers but are not required to complete

Section IV of the PRF on all APZ officers already deferred two or more times.

For ADL officers eligible for promotion to the grades of colonel and below, comments on BPZ "P" PRFs are optional; comments on all I/APZ PRFs are mandatory.

Comments concerning ratings or recommendations on prior PRFs are not allowed. Like the OPR, do not underline, capitalize, use bold print, or punctuate to simply emphasize the comments. Make the recommendation nine lines of the officer's best career achievements. Highlight recognition and accomplishments (CGO of the Yr, SOS DG, BPZ promotion). Cover the officer's entire career, not just the current job. Use of stratification

is an important way to communicate to the board. Remember that not all officers are “best qualified.”

For all eligible officers, you may consider and comment on candidacy, selection, completion or enrollment in or advanced academic degrees on PRFs.

It is mandatory to mention a Courts Martial conviction on the PRF, and is recommended that an Article 15, Letter of Reprimand or Admonishment and control roster action be recorded. Comments may also be warranted if an officer displays reluctance to accept responsibility, has a negative attitude toward the job, or shows a decrease in performance-based potential. However, an approved date of separation or retirement date, or uncertainty about career intent does not necessarily detract from performance-based potential and should not be commented on in the PRF.

Developmental Education (DE) (in residence or non-residence): When preparing PRFs, evaluators will not comment on selection status on the schools list, selection for, completion of, or enrollment in developmental education. Evaluators are limited to “BDE, IDE or SDE” terminology only and will not comment on specific schools (including “joint DE” comments). Additionally, officers designated to attend DE may receive comments (“On the way to IDE/SDE” or “Following IDE/SDE make him/her (fill in with appropriate job recommendation)” only on the PRF or OPR that closes out just prior to departure for DE. Senior Raters may list the specific school when commenting on officially recognized extraordinary achievements documented in the AF IMT 475 (Training Report) (such as distinguished graduate, cum laude, speech/writing awards, Commandant's Award, etc.), example (DG ACSC).

PROMOTION OPPORTUNITY

Promotion Opportunity is the approximate percentage of officers in a year group that a Central Selection Board will select for promotion in all 3 zones – BPZ, IPZ, APZ. Promotion opportunity is fixed by law in the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) and in Title 10. This percentage is applied to the number of IPZ eligibles for a promotion board and determines the maximum board quota, or the number of officers in all three zones a board can promote.

Current promotion opportunities for LAF officers are 95 percent for Major; 85 percent for Lieutenant Colonel; and 55 percent for Colonel. For each board, promotion opportunity multiplied by the number of officers eligible IPZ determines the maximum number of officers the board can promote (i.e. maximum board quota). A percentage of the board quota is allocated to BPZ selections. Current BPZ percentages are 10 percent for

Lieutenant Colonel and 15 percent for Colonel. The number of promotions available for IPZ/APZ would then be the board quota minus BPZ selections.

Sample Quota Computation (Estimated)

Lt Colonel Board (Line)

Eligibles:	IPZ - 1817	1817 Total IPZ Eligibles
	APZ - 1424	x.85 (Promotion Opportunity)
	BPZ - 3871	1544 Total Promotions Available
		1544 Total Promotions Available
		x.10 (10% BPZ Quota)
		154 BPZ Promotions Available
		1544 Total Promotions Available
		-154 BPZ Promotions
		1390 IPZ / APZ Promotions Available

In the above example, there are a total of 7,112 officers competing for promotion (IPZ/APZ/BPZ). The promotion opportunity to Lieutenant Colonel is 85 percent. Therefore, the total number of promotions available will be 1,544 (# of IPZ eligible X .85). The BPZ quota for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel is 10%, therefore out of the 1,544 promotions available, 154 of those promotions can be awarded to the 3871 officers that are BPZ. That leaves 1390 promotions for the 3,241 officers IPZ/APZ.

“DEFINITELY PROMOTE” ALLOCATION

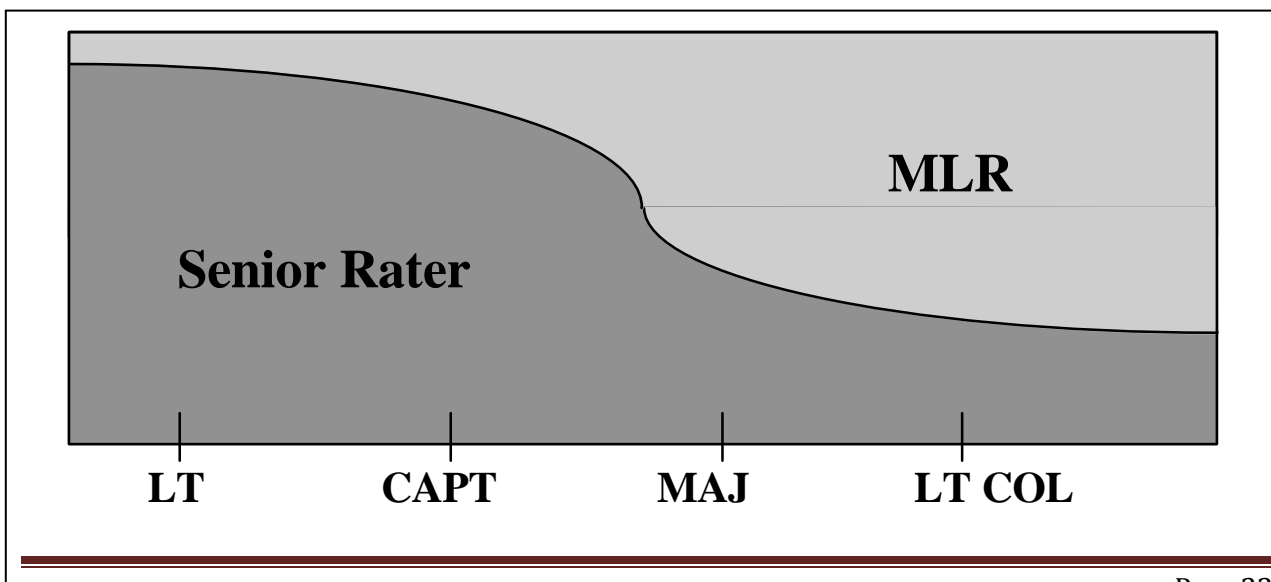
“Definitely Promotes” (DPs) are allocated at a rate lower than the total promotion rate in order to allow the senior raters to send a clear promote message to the central selection board that the officer is ready for immediate promotion. This also leaves officers with a “Promote” recommendation with a reasonable chance of promotion. In fact, this policy guarantees a fixed rate of officers having a “Promote” recommendation will be promoted. This fixed percentage is called the P-rate.

Since the total promotion opportunity and P-rate are fixed, the DP quota fluctuates as the number of IPZ or BPZ eligibles fluctuates. “Definitely Promote” allocation quotas are a percentage of the total number of IPZ or BPZ eligibles (APZ officers do not figure into DP allocation rate calculations). The rates vary by grade, zone, and competitive category, and are subject to change for each board.

Senior raters are not the only ones who can award a “DP.” A Management Level Review (MLR) can also award a “DP” in two ways, by either aggregation or carryover. A senior rater must have a minimum number of officers, depending on grade, in the promotion zone in order to earn any IPZ “DPs.” The units that are too small to merit an allocation based on the eligible population are grouped together and treated as one large unit with the MLR President acting as Senior Rater, awarding the “DPs.” For example, if a senior rater has only three eligibles and the number of eligibles required to be awarded one “DP” is ten, those three people will be combined with others in the same situation and will compete at the MLR for a “DP” versus being awarded one by their own senior rater. This is called aggregation.

If the senior rater has more than the minimum number of IPZ officers, then he or she applies the “DP” allocation rate and awards those “DPs”. Normally, senior raters have a fraction of a percentage of “DPs” left over. For example, Senior Rater A has 31 officers eligible for Lt Col and he is authorized to award 3 “DPs” for every 10 officers. Therefore senior rater A has 10.3 “DPs” to award to the 31 eligible officers (31 divided by 3). However a senior rater cannot award .3 of a “DP.” Senior raters combine all their small percentages at the MLR to equal whole DP allocations. The MLR then competitively distributes these “DPs”. This process helps accommodate inequities in the distribution of quality individuals among units. It is called carryover.

Who Awards “DPs”



The above figure is linked to the Depth/Breadth figure. It shows which source of “DP” allocation influences officers' promotions, depending on grade. The majority of captains are in units where there are more than the minimum number of eligible officers required for the senior rater to be able to award “DPs.” In this instance, the senior rater has a larger effect on who is promoted. Conversely, most Lieutenant Colonels work for a senior rater who does not have enough IPZ Lieutenant Colonels to award “DPs.” Those officers' records are aggregated to the MLR and therefore the MLR has a larger effect on who is promoted. The senior rater is the best individual to determine an officer's expertise in an area and is best able to determine the promotion recommendation at the lower grades. The MLR, a collection of senior raters, is best able to determine the breadth of knowledge required for field grade officers to advance to a higher grade and thus determines their promotion recommendation in the higher grades.

Most officers believe they are in the top 25% of the officer force; however, mathematics dictates that not everyone can be at the top. It is the process of differentiation that allows the promotion board to determine who should be promoted. However, it is a common misconception that a “DP” is a guarantee of promotion. A promotion recommendation is just a recommendation to the central selection board. While it should certainly enhance an officer's opportunity, selection for promotion is ultimately the responsibility of the members of the promotion board, who will select officers based on the board members' independent determination as to who is best qualified. Not all of the officers awarded a “DP” are necessarily promoted, and the P-rate ensures that a number of officers who do not receive a “DP” will be promoted. The PRF is but one document in the selection record, though an important one, that selection boards will consider.

SAFEGUARDS WITHIN THE OES

Consideration for advancement to higher grades is a very important event in an officer's career. No evaluation system can operate successfully unless it is committed to ensuring boards consider all eligible officers on a fair and equitable basis. While there are certain potential pitfalls in any evaluation system, our Officer Evaluation System contains five safeguards against inequity within the OES.

The first safeguard is the Management Level Review process. The MLR, made up of senior raters, quality reviews promotion recommendations to confirm that they are properly prepared and transmit the message intended by the senior rater. MLRs ensure senior raters are fair and equitable and that the proper individuals receive the “Definitely Promote” message. If an MLR believes a DP is unsupported by the Record of Performance, they discuss with the senior rater. However, the MLR as a whole only makes suggestions to

the individual senior raters; they cannot downgrade a recommendation. The MLR also, through carry-over allocations, can compensate for an uneven distribution of the best-qualified officers between units. The final function of the MLR is to act as the senior rater for officers from small units by allocating “DP” recommendations based on the officer’s record and on the personal knowledge the senior raters bring to the board.

The second safeguard of OES is designed to protect officers in student status who could be at a disadvantage if competing with instructors assigned to the training unit. In order to eliminate that disadvantage, PCS student populations receive separate “Definitely Promote” allocations, competing at a separate MLR held at HQ AFPC.

A third safeguard is the removal of promotion recommendation forms from the selection record after a promotion board. This is to protect against any stigma that may be associated with a previous promotion recommendation. An officer who receives a “Promote” recommendation during his or her BPZ board and a “Definitely Promote” during his or her IPZ board can compete fairly with officers who received consecutive “DPs” for their BPZ and IPZ boards.

The fourth safeguard is the board rescoring process for “gray zone.” This process ensures that the borderline officers are reevaluated to validate that the best qualified are clearly delineated.

The final safeguard is the guaranteeing of the P-Rate. This guarantees that a reasonable share of promotions to all grades comes from those with a “Promote” recommendation.

CONCLUSION

The Officer Evaluation System is an integral, performance-oriented component of Officer Professional Development, building quality officers and identifying those with potential to serve in next higher grades. OES recognizes the importance of performance, both in the current job and over the course of an officer’s career. Each of the three elements of OES is important and they continually build upon each other throughout an officer’s career. Performance feedback is the cornerstone of OES, serving as an essential tool in guiding, mentoring, and motivating officers to perform at their best. Evaluation reports then document an individual’s accomplishments on the job and together form a record of performance. This record in turn is the basis for promotion recommendation form, a tool promotion board members use to make the difficult decision of who is promoted to a higher grade. Duty performance and potential, as nurtured through feedback and identified through evaluation reports and the PRF, are the basis for promotion.

It is imperative for an officer to begin building a solid record of performance long before he or she is board eligible. With a high quality officer corps and statutory ceilings on promotion, the competition for promotion is high and the task of the central selection board is difficult. However, it is through this process that the best-qualified are selected to advance and serve the Air Force from higher positions.