

*For Raters and Senior Raters*

## How to Write Effective and Appropriate Evaluation Narratives for OERs

POC Evaluation Systems Office (703) 375-9888 (DSN: 231) 13 SEP 07 Slide # 1

### Purpose

To provide practical guidance and advice to rating officials on writing effective and appropriate narratives for Officer Evaluation Reports (OER).

*The information in this briefing should not be perceived as definitive guidance on writing narratives that would guarantee an officer's selection for promotion. It is simply provided as an informal guide to assist rating officials in conveying to selection boards their assessment of the rated officer's performance and potential.*

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### Evaluation System (Goals)

*Why the Narrative is so important . . .*

- Provide selection boards and personnel managers adequate information to make their decisions.
- Allow for field impact on the selection of future leaders.
  - Opportunity to advance the "Best"
  - Establish Senior Rater Accountability
  - Confidence that others cannot inflate
  - Narratives focus on Quantitative Performance & Potential
- Enhance Leader Development
  - Focus on Officer Development at Company Grade Level
  - Basis in Army Values, Doctrine & Leadership
  - Emphasis on Counseling
  - Link with OPMS
- Link Performance to Mission

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### Recent Board Trends - OER Narratives

- The best rater and senior rater narratives:
  - ✓ Are short; tell a simple story about the quality of officer being evaluated; focus on potential 3-5 years out (promotions, command, school, & assignments.)
  - ✓ Quantify officer's value relative to peers and do so in concert with senior rater box check. Critical for "no box check" OERs.
- Many OER narratives are internally inconsistent:
  - ✓ Quantifying (e.g. "top 2% of my captains") with a small population.
  - ✓ Stating "the best ever"; having 10 in the population, 50 in the profile and a COM label.
- Some phrases and clichés are counterproductive or overused.
 

Examples:

  - ✓ Stellar, hit the ground running.
  - ✓ Consummate, unlimited potential.

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### Rater Narrative

Focus on specific, quantifiable performance –

- *What an officer did and how well*
- *Quantify and Quality Performance and Potential*

- The rater is the first individual to write a narrative on the reverse side of an OER.
- Narrative should explain what the rated officer did and how well he/she did it.
- A laundry list of superlatives is not helpful to selection boards – more is not necessarily better.
- Selection board members do use the rater's narrative in their file deliberations; more intensely when they are looking for in-depth information about a rated officer's performance and potential.
- When there is no senior rater (due normally to lack of rating official qualifications) the rater's narrative is the one which provides the input on both performance and potential.
- Block Vc
  - Must include specific comments concerning rated officer potential
  - Emphasize potential for the near term (next 3-5 years: command, assignment, school and promotion)
- Block Vd. – Ensure that you list any skill sets or professional qualifications that might be useful to future functional designation boards.

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### Senior Rater Narrative

Should quantify and qualify the passion (or lack thereof) that senior rater has for rated officer's performance and potential.

- Selection boards should understand what input the Senior Rater is providing without having to guess.
- There are no "magic" or "buzz" words to convey Senior Rater intent.
- Focus on potential (3 to 5 years; command, assignment, schooling and promotion).
- Cannot mention Box Check in the narrative (i.e., "ACOM Officer", "if my profile allowed, I would rate this officer higher.")
- Avoid Disconnect with Box Check
  - Example: Large population, COM Box Check, but Exclusive Narrative
  - Exceptions: Immature profiles, Back to Back reports
- Be careful with your narrative – **don't say the same thing for all your people (Boards can easily detect repeated verbiage)**

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