



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS JUNIOR ENLISTED  
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: AN ANALYSIS OF  
THE E4 AND BELOW PERFORMANCE EVALUATION  
SYSTEM**

by

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March 2018

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<b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington, DC 20503.				
<b>1. AGENCY USE ONLY</b> (Leave blank)		<b>2. REPORT DATE</b> March 2018		<b>3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED</b> Master's thesis
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE</b> UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS JUNIOR ENLISTED PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE E4 AND BELOW PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM				<b>5. FUNDING NUMBERS</b>
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Ryan C. Aukerman				
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000				<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>
<b>9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> N/A				<b>10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b>
<b>11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government. IRB number ____N/A____.				
<b>12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for public release. Distribution is unlimited.				<b>12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE</b>
<b>13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)</b> <p>The purpose of this thesis is to examine possible areas for improvement on the current Marine Corps junior enlisted performance evaluation system—Proficiency and Conduct marks. My research questions include the following: Does the Marine Corps need a new performance evaluation system for its junior enlisted? What type of performance evaluation systems could be implemented effectively for the E1 to E4 group in the Marine Corps? What areas in performance management can the Marine Corps focus on for fostering future performance?</p> <p>The results of the study conclude that the Marine Corps does not need a new performance evaluation system for its junior enlisted but would benefit from a newly designed system that combines key elements of evaluation and development.</p> <p>Recommendations include updates to the current individual records administration manual (IRAM), a Proficiency and Conduct scale redesign, and the removal of the Proficiency and Conduct scale completely. Culture and time are complex factors in the analysis of the benchmark and all recommendations do not examine the complicated variables associated with concept of change management.</p>				
<b>14. SUBJECT TERMS</b> performance evaluation, proficiency and conduct, check-in, performance development, culture				<b>15. NUMBER OF PAGES</b> 89
				<b>16. PRICE CODE</b>
<b>17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT</b> Unclassified		<b>18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE</b> Unclassified		<b>19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT</b> Unclassified
				<b>20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b> UU

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**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS JUNIOR ENLISTED PERFORMANCE  
EVALUATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE E4 AND BELOW PERFORMANCE  
EVALUATION SYSTEM**

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requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MANAGEMENT**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this thesis is to examine possible areas for improvement on the current Marine Corps junior enlisted performance evaluation system—Proficiency and Conduct marks. My research questions include the following: Does the Marine Corps need a new performance evaluation system for its junior enlisted? What type of performance evaluation systems could be implemented effectively for the E1 to E4 group in the Marine Corps? What areas in performance management can the Marine Corps focus on for fostering future performance?

The results of the study conclude that the Marine Corps does not need a new performance evaluation system for its junior enlisted but would benefit from a newly designed system that combines key elements of evaluation and development.

Recommendations include updates to the current individual records administration manual (IRAM), a Proficiency and Conduct scale redesign, and the removal of the Proficiency and Conduct scale completely. Culture and time are complex factors in the analysis of the benchmark and all recommendations do not examine the complicated variables associated with concept of change management.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ALMAR	All Marine activities correspondence message
BARS	Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale
IRAM	Individual Records Manual
MBO	Management by Objectives
MCTFS	Marine Corps Total Force System
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PES	Performance Evaluation System

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to acknowledge and thank my wonderful wife, Bethany, and my son, Everett. They laid the seed of motivation for each word I placed into this analysis. I would also like to thank my faithful academic advisor, Dr. Chad W. Seagren, and second reader, Dr. Edward H. Powley, for their wisdom, insight, and inspiration for the research. They both challenged me and inspired me—I could ask for nothing more. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude toward the Marine Corps and the junior enlisted that bore the medium of this analysis. Without the Marine Corps and the dedicated junior enlisted, I would not have any of the former personnel to thank. I am eternally grateful. *Semper Fidelis.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Famed author and historian Army Lieutenant General Daniel P. Bolger (1999) wrote in *Death Ground: Today's American Infantry in Battle* that

in the Marines, everyone—sergeant, mechanic, cannoneer, supply man, clerk, aviator, cook—is a rifleman first. The entire Corps ... are all infantry. All speak the language of the rifle and bayonet, of muddy boots and long, hot marches. It's never us and them, only us. That is the secret of the Corps (p. 296).

From the amphibious landing at Inchon to the modern battlefields of the Middle East, the Marines labeled “The few and the proud” have been there to answer the call as the United States’ sharpest force in readiness. Their mark of success can be found in every clime and place. Yet, their success would be nothing without the outstanding actions of the majority of its elite force—the junior enlisted.

The private to corporal (E1 to E4) junior enlisted make up approximately 67% of a Corps of 182,000 warfighters (United States Marine Corps, 2010). Due to the elite nature and size of the organization, the Marine Corps must use specific approaches to manage the performance of this elite force to ensure proper talent management. Currently, the method of choice is a performance evaluation system called the Proficiency and Conduct system. Research concludes that the system is effective in its current format, but could use some improvement (Larger, 2017).

The Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct system has been around for more than five decades and the personnel inside the organization have changed dramatically during that time. The differences inside the Marine Corps as an organization are immense. Therefore, there is an opportunity to provide a valuable update the Proficiency and Conduct marking system to keep on pace with the rest of the changes in the organization.

My research compiles various contemporary methods for performance evaluation and adapts best practices in performance evaluation from around the world to the Proficiency and Conduct system. The objective of this study is to recommend improvements to make the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct system more effective

based on recommendations from previous studies and examine the Proficiency and Conduct process with consideration for the cultural dynamics within the Marine Corps.

Based on my analysis, my recommendations for this study include the following:

- updating the Marine Corps Individual Records Administration Manual (IRAM)
- redesigning the Proficiency and Conduct system to one graphic rating scale
- adapting elements of the Marine Corps Fitness Report to the Proficiency and Conduct system
- removing the Proficiency and Conduct system and implementing a system similar to Adobe's Check-In system
- removing the Proficiency and Conduct system and implementing the Marine Corps leadership development program

## **A. STUDY MOTIVATION**

The initial goal of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the Proficiency and Conduct markings. The research was conducted by Dr. Chad W. Seagren (Naval Postgraduate School), Dr. Marigee P. Bacolod (Naval Postgraduate School), and Richard Larger (United States Marine Corps). Their study explored models that included big data and regression analysis on a wide variety of variables effecting the current Proficiency and Conduct system. Yet, the research did not address every facet of performance evaluation to include future performance orientation. My motivation for this study was to pick up where their study left off. The objective is to recommend improvements to the Proficiency and Conduct system.

## **B. HYPOTHESIS BASED ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

My research combines a comparative analysis of the junior enlisted performance evaluation system of the Marine Corps with the public industrial company Adobe Systems Incorporated's performance evaluation system. Additionally, I use existing literature and

cultural artifacts to drive my hypothesis, analysis, and final recommendations. My hypothesis follows.

- (1) Does the Marine Corps Need a New Performance Evaluation System for Its Junior Enlisted?

**Hypothesis 1.** The Marine Corps does need a new performance evaluation system due to a changing administrative environment, changing mission requirements, and a conflicting understanding of the intended usage of the Proficiency and Conduct system.

**Answer 1.** Based on this working hypothesis, my results conclude that the Marine Corps does not need a new performance evaluation system but could benefit from a new performance development system.

- (2) What Type of Performance Evaluation Systems Could Be Implemented Effectively for the E1 to E4 Group in the Marine Corps?

**Hypothesis 2.** A performance development system similar to that of the software company Adobe Systems Incorporated combined with current Marine Corps performance evaluation features would assimilate effectively into the Marine Corps culture.

**Answer 2.** Based on this working hypothesis, my results conclude that the Marine Corps could benefit from the Adobe Systems Inc. Check-In performance development toolkit if the Marine Corps intends to transform their performance management tool into an artifact that captures current performance as well as develops future performance.

- (3) What Areas in Performance Management Can the Marine Corps Focus on for Fostering Future Performance?

**Hypothesis 3.** Artifact changes to the Proficiency and Conduct system that include a new rating format is an area the Marine Corps can focus on based on existing research. Other areas that could benefit performance management are new training requirements and the combination of a performance development system with an existing performance evaluation.

**Answer 3.** If the Marine Corps intends to foster future performance, artifact changes with respect to performance development must be made vice small changes to performance management tools such as the Proficiency and Conduct system.

### **C. HISTORY OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Historically, performance evaluation was not an important consideration for organizational personnel management until the late twentieth century. Fredrick Winslow Taylor used theory to relate the fundamental purpose of business personnel management, saying, “Develop each individual man to his highest state of efficiency and prosperity” (Fisher & Sirianni, 1984, p. 50). Additionally, the father of modern resource management, George Elton Mayo, used his 1920s Hawthorne studies to conclude that workers are more productive in an environment in which they are treated better and managed more effectively (Sonnenfield, 1985). Following the 1920s, performance management began to take a role in many organizations as a way of benefiting the overall organization. The result was performance rating documents that recorded and assisted in managing that process.

By 1950, the U.S. government had adopted many types of performance evaluations within the performance management system in hopes to benefit its own organizations and established the Performance Rating Act of 1950 (Staats, 1978). The Performance Rating Act of 1950 later translated into a performance evaluation requirement for Department of Defense systems and employees, which influenced the culture of the Department of Defense to continuously measure their employees’ performance through various appraisal methods.

### **D. SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE**

Extant studies show that the Proficiency and Conduct performance evaluation system is effective for its intended purpose: promotion (Larger, 2017). In contrast, literature also suggests that the Marine Corps could benefit from redirecting the current system of numerically evaluating a Marine’s current performance to a performance development tool used to influence employee future performance (Cappelli & Tavis, 2016).

In this chapter, I outline five studies that involve the Marine Corps' performance evaluation systems that include Proficiency and Conduct concepts. The five studies include Ward's 1970 comparative analysis of the Marine Corps Fitness Report and General Electric's performance management system; Mayberry's 1986 study on the effects of Proficiency and Conduct marks; Larger's 2017 quantitative study on the effectiveness of Proficiency and Conduct marks; Cole's 2014 study on promotions affected by Proficiency and Conduct marks; and Clemens, Malone, Phillips, and Lee's 2012 study on officer performance evaluations. Each study contributes to my research as a supplement but addresses different research questions.

(1) A Comparative Analysis between the Marine Corps Fitness Report and GE's Performance Evaluation System

Ward (1970) conducted a comparative analysis of the Marine Corps Fitness Report with the industrial giant GE's performance evaluation system (Ward, 1970). The study compared some of the more important attributes of performance evaluation at that time in industry and used GE as a standard for excellence in the area. Ward concluded that the overall Fitness Report systems would benefit from some of GE's methods, such as adding features that increased feedback and allowing the officer being rated to be part of the rating process. Additionally, Ward adapted the GE performance evaluation method of Management by Objectives (MBO) to the Fitness Report to apply goal setting procedures and concluded that managerial leadership could be applied through a combination of cultural and artifact changes. Some of today's Marine Corps Fitness Report elements, such as the MBO themed portion of the Fitness Report, were first introduced in his study nearly 40 years ago.

(2) Incremental Effects between Proficiency and Conduct Marks

Mayberry (1986) studied the differences in Marine performance. His 1986 study delineated performance between each Marine based on their individual Proficiency and Conduct marks and the relation to his or her productivity given a specific Proficiency and Conduct score. Mayberry's research compiled literature on labor economics and related it to the productivity of first term enlisted Marines in three different job fields. His study used

hands-on skills performance metrics to measure productivity of Marines and compared those measurements to Marines in the fifth and 95th percentiles. He explains that the fifth percentile Marine was considered a poor Marine and the 95th percentile Marine was considered an excellent Marine, based on their Proficiency and Conduct scores. The overall study showed that Marines in the 95th percentile were on average more productive.

Mayberry's study validates the theory that performance, as defined by higher productivity, is directly related to the Proficiency and Conduct mark. This research supplements my research for understanding the relationship between performance and the Proficiency and Conduct marking. However, it differs from my research because my research examines ways that could make the Proficiency and Conduct system more effective based on existing performance management literature.

(3) The Effectiveness of Officer Performance Evaluations (Clemens et al., 2012)

In 2012, a study was directed by the director of the Manpower Management division to address the original intent of the Fitness Report for Marine Corps officers. The study concluded that there is some level of inflation in the system, but the overall system and its 14 dimensions for performance evaluation were effective (Clemens et al., 2012). However, the study addressed a need for rater training and that there may be some bias in the underlying culture that affects the total performance evaluation system.

(4) First Term Marines and the Additional Systems for Performance Management

Cole (2014) studied the systems associated with the retention of junior enlisted Marines. Her study did not directly study the Proficiency and Conduct system, but the system influenced vital elements of her analysis (Cole, 2014). Her 2014 study included detailed regression analysis on quality associated with timing of re-enlistment. She concluded that the Proficiency and Conduct markings did not have an effect on retention of the best Marines after they were included into another system called the "computed tier system" (Cole, 2014, p. 17). Cole concluded that the reason for this was that after a Marine was separated into the tier system, his marks were relatively the same as everyone in his



tier, thus reducing the effect of Proficiency and Conduct marks for any Marine outside of the top tier (in a three-tier system). Ultimately, she explained that the computed tier system gave the best Marines the first pick for retention and re-enlistment, which simply added another layer to managing the performance of Marines outside of the Proficiency and Conduct marking scores.

(5) Proficiency and Conduct Effectiveness

Larger (2017) studied the effectiveness of The Proficiency and Conduct system through a quantitative lens. Larger used factor analysis and regression analysis to examine the effect that the Proficiency and Conduct system was having on the overall promotion process (Larger, 2017). His study concluded that the Proficiency and Conduct system was the largest contributor to a Marine's likelihood for promotion. Larger also concluded that Proficiency and Conduct scores are highly correlated with each other, which means that either the Proficiency rating scale or the Conduct rating scale could be removed and the Marine Corps could continue to measure a Marine's performance effectively with a single graphic rating scale. Finally, he discovered some inflation in average Proficiency and Conduct evaluations for a subset of 2016 junior enlisted Marines.

## **E. EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

Boice and Kleiner (1997) reported that for performance evaluations to be effective, “they require the support of top management to show their commitment and to translate organizational goals and objectives into personalized employee specific objectives” (p. 197). This statement offers a clear definition of performance evaluation that I use for this research.

*Performance management* is defined as

an ongoing process of communication between a supervisor and an employee that occurs throughout the year, in support of accomplishing the strategic objectives of the organization. The communication process includes clarifying expectations, setting objectives, identifying goals, providing feedback, and reviewing results. (“Performance Management,” 2018)

There are multiple performance evaluations that are effective for performance management. Most of those systems have been employed in the private sector, but fundamentally they would apply anywhere with people as the backbone of the organization. My research examines the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct system as a performance evaluation method that influences performance management.

#### (1) Types of Performance Evaluations

Performance can be examined through traits, behaviors, comparisons between employees, and results (University of Minnesota, 2016). Many organizations, such as University of Minnesota Libraries Publishing in its book *Human Resource Management* (2016), combine these methods of determining performance into nine types of performance evaluations. I outline the nine different types of performance evaluations from *Human Resource Management* (University of Minnesota, 2016) for the scope of my research. The nine performance evaluations are defined as the graphic rating scale, essay method, checklist scale, critical incidents, work standards approach, ranking method, Management by Objective (MBO), the Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale (BARS), and the 360-degree appraisal.

**Graphic rating scale method.** The continuous graphic rating scale is a tool that uses descriptors of good and bad performance and translates them into a numerical scale (MacDonald & Sulsky, 2009). In the case of the Marine Corps, the scale starts at 0 for bad performance and continues to 5 for top performance. This system is behaviorally based. It is also similar to a Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale, or BARS (University of Minnesota, 2016).

**The essay method.** The essay method for rating performance includes a supervisor's evaluation of a subordinate by the supervisor providing information about a subordinate's past performance with relation to good, bad, or both types of feedback (University of Minnesota, 2016). *Human Resource Management* notes that the essay method is trait-based or behavioral and is subjective across raters as it is subjective description of an employee's performance (University of Minnesota, 2016).

**The checklist scale method.** The checklist scale method of appraisal aims to reduce subjectivity. The system includes a series of yes or no questions that describe a subordinate's actions (University of Minnesota, 2016). *Human Resource Management* concludes that this method is often combined with other methods of appraisal to further reduce subjectivity and increase the likelihood for future effected performance.

**The critical incident method.** *Human Resource Management* reports that the critical incident method is characterized by a manager recording critical incidents or situations of a subordinate's behavior that are important to the organization. Their critical incidents method can be used for positive or negative incidents but tends to become only about negative incidents (University of Minnesota, 2016).

**The work standards method.** *Human Resource Management* concludes that the work standards approach is a results-focused metric for measuring productivity of an employee based on established standards by an organization. They mention that most of the time, this type of appraisal uses goals for employees to meet such as a certain amount of sales to meet in a given amount of time (University of Minnesota, 2016).

**The ranking method.** The ranking method of appraisal is a comparison method for appraisal in which a manager measures employees based on perceived value and ranks them from highest performer to lowest in relation to each other (University of Minnesota, 2016).

**Management by Objectives.** Management by Objective uses the work standards approach as outlined previously but adds communication between the manager and the subordinate over established goals for the organization (University of Minnesota, 2016). *Human Resource Management* notes that there is an added element of feedback after the goal period that allows the subordinate to address future performance based on the results of current performance given by the manager.

**The Behaviorally Anchored Rating System.** The BARS uses performance measures of an organization (typically descriptors that deviate above or below average scores) and then implements a critical incident scale combined with a graphic rating scale (University of Minnesota, 2016). *Human Resource Management* reports that each scale

typically includes narrative information about an employee such as how well that employee follows orders. This method is partly exemplified in the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct system.

**The 360-degree method.** The 360-degree appraisal is a performance evaluation system administered anonymously by multiple employees of an organization on a subordinate's performance (Edleson, 2012). A 1997 report by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) states that 360-appraisals foster objectivity in rating scores that may otherwise be stifled by relationship dynamics in performance evaluation delivery (Office of Personnel Management, 1997). The Office of Personnel Management (1997) also mentions that managers, customers, peers, or even other subordinates of a subject up for performance review give the 360-degree appraisal. It is a very dynamic process and must be carefully implemented for peak effectiveness.

## (2) Performance Evaluation Design

Cummings and Worley (2015) describe organizational development as “a system-wide application and transfer of behavioral science knowledge to the planned development, improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and the processes that lead to organization effectiveness” (p. 2). Within organizational development, the process of performance evaluation is designed to increase organization performance. The recommended process includes six main steps: selecting the right people, diagnosing the current situation, establishing the system's purposes and objectives, designing the performance evaluation system, experimenting with implementation, and evaluating and monitoring the system (Cummings & Worley, 2015, p. 451).

Of those recommended steps, performance evaluation design will act as a best practice framework for my research. Cummings and Worley (2015) state that to design a new system there must be at least an agreed upon purpose of the system and to be effective it must be timely, accurate, accepted by the people involved, understood by rater and subordinate, focused on critical control points defined by the organization, and should be economically feasible with relation to collection and feedback within the performance evaluation system.

## **F. FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE A PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

A performance evaluation can be different for every organization due to size, type of organization, and personnel homogeneity (Henderson, 1984). My research discusses three factors that influence performance evaluation, their usage, and implementation. The factors are rater training, cultural inertia, and organizational change.

### **1. Rater Training**

Rater training is just as important as the method of appraisal. If the person providing the appraisal feedback does not understand the feedback that he or she is giving, then the system is null and ineffective (Woehr & Huffcutt, 1994). Unfortunately, this is common in large bureaucratic organizations such as the Marine Corps due to dynamics such as ever-changing training requirements, convoluted training methods, and personnel incompetency. Rater training in the Marine Corps is discussed further in Chapter III of this analysis.

### **2. Cultural Inertia**

Alvesson (2002) reports that although there may be a clear-cut solution for any organization for an effective performance evaluation, cultural inertia may effect changes or new ideas within an organizational culture. Organizational culture is defined as a system of common symbols and meanings that apply to “the shared rules governing cognitive and affective aspects of membership in an organization, and the means whereby they are shaped and expressed” (Alvesson, 2002, chap. 1, para. 3). Carrillo and Gromb (2007) note that there is a phenomenon called cultural inertia within organizational cultures (Carrillo & Gromb, 2007). They conclude that cultural inertia is the tendency for an organization to remain unchanged due to existing cultural forces. Cultural inertia is commonly associated with an aging organization that is culturally uniform The Marine Corps as an organization fits both criteria of an aging organization that is well known for its homogenous culture.

### **3. Organizational Change**

Hayes (2002) concludes that if an organization does not have the culture to implement and enforce change quickly and efficiently, any solution is just a great idea. He also mentions when implementing a strategy, new process, or system in any organization

consideration for cultural implications is a necessity. Organizations within the Marine Corps known for rigid and homogenous cultures may have trouble with implementing change, even if there is a solution that would improve any process that may need overhaul. It's not to say change is impossible, but there are limitations.

Hayes (2002) claims that for effective change, the organization must determine if a change is necessary and then decide on how they want to change. Next, he says the organization must outline what they see their organization changing into and not just what they want to have at the end of some identified time period. Hayes continues that organizations need to identify if there will be fast change or slow incremental change, as each type has implications based on organization type.

#### **G. OTHER MARINE CORPS PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEMS**

The Marine Corps has an entirely different tool for their E-5 through general officer personnel called the Fitness Report. A recent study by Clemens et al. (2012) at the Center for Naval Analysis describes the Marine Corps Fitness Report as a tool created in 1999 used to measure the performance of E5 through O8 in the Marine Corps for future use on boards for promotion, retention, and placement (Clemens et al., 2012). The system itself is very similar to the Proficiency and Conduct system but measures the personnel in the Marine Corps that are typically in the rater population for the Proficiency and Conduct system. Fitness reports are given to a Marine reported on by a reporting senior and then re-rated by a reviewing officer. In some cases, in Clemens et al.'s (2012) report, there is a third officer sighting to verify fairness of grading. The Fitness Report uses multiple forms of modern performance management tools including multiple raters, subjective essay grading, and an additional graphic rating scale to distinguish Marines' performance between individual Marines.

It is important to notice that this system was implemented to better manage the performance of the Marine Corps Officer Corps and is newer in terms of its creation compared to the aging Proficiency and Conduct system. The appendix of this analysis displays an example of a Marine Corp Fitness Report.

## **H. SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed background information for the Marine Corps junior enlisted performance evaluation system titled the Proficiency and Conduct Marking System. Background information in this section included the importance of the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct Marking System, the history of performance evaluation, types of performance evaluations, how performance evaluations function, and how performance evaluations influence personnel performance. Additionally, I introduced my research questions and hypotheses. My research questions included the following: Does the Marine Corps need a new performance evaluation system for its junior enlisted; what type of performance evaluation system could be implemented effectively for the Marine Corps junior enlisted; and what areas in performance management can the Marine Corps focus on for fostering future performance. I also addressed additional factors such as rater training and how organizational culture effects the organization and its ability to effectively use performance evaluation.

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## II. METHODOLOGY

Cultural change in any organization demands great attention and evaluation. There are many avenues of research that address methods of change through evaluation in an organization. My methodology for evaluating the Proficiency and Conduct system is a benchmark study. I chose a benchmark study for three reasons. One, it is an approach used by past researchers for the Marine Corps with respect to similar topics. Two, benchmarking is a proven practice in industry (Mittelstaedt, 1992). Three, I use benchmarking as a comparative analysis to adapt elements of a more effective industry-based performance development system to the current Proficiency and Conduct system.

### A. BENCHMARK STUDY

*Benchmarking* is defined as “a continuous, systematic process for evaluating the products, services, and work processes of organizations that are recognized as representing best practices for the purpose of organizational improvement” (Spendolini, 1992, p. 2). Yasin (2002) reports that benchmarking began with an initiative in the 1980s for large businesses like Xerox to survive failure in hyper-competitive industries (Yasin, 2002). Yasin emphasizes that benchmarking continued through the 1990s and bridged its way into common practice in academia. By the 1990s, benchmarks were used by higher education organizations such as The National Association of College and University Business Officers and Oregon State University to improve college funding costs and increase total quality within higher education. Today, benchmarking is used to dissect an organization and identify areas for improvement based on other organizations successes (Alstete, 1995).

Scott (2013) reports that a *benchmark study* is a research technique that helps organizations identify methods for improving their organization by using various methods as “benchmarks,” or metrics, against which to compare themselves (p. 7). Benchmark studies exist in multiple variations that serve separate purposes. Scott (2013) notes that benchmarks typically include comparisons of common organizational practices and best practices as a method for guiding organizations to higher performance.

## **B. TYPES OF BENCHMARKING**

Benchmark studies contain as little as five steps or as many as thirty-three steps. At a minimum, a benchmark study must have the following elements: a plan, a similar organization to use as a metric, data for collection, an analysis, and an implementation (Bhutta & Huq, 1999). I use this five-step standard for a framework in my analysis. The five-element framework serves as baseline to my methodology to identify a recommendation for the Marine Corps junior-enlisted performance evaluation system

There are more than 12 types of benchmarking studies—sector benchmarking, generic benchmarking, best-practice benchmarking, criterion reference benchmarking, quantitative benchmarking, internal benchmarking, competitive benchmarking, industry benchmarking, process benchmarking, performance benchmarking, and strategic benchmarking (Scott, 2013).

Bhutta and Huq (1999) list the six most common benchmarks: process benchmarking, strategic benchmarking, internal benchmarking, competitive benchmarking, technical benchmarking, and generic benchmarking (Bhutta & Huq, 1999). I use a combination of process and general benchmarking for my analysis between the Marine Corps and Adobe Systems Incorporated. I adapt Bhutta and Huq's (1999) process benchmarking because it compares administrative processes between the Marine Corps and Adobe Systems Inc. to improve the struggling Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct system. Similarly, I also use their generic benchmarking process because it facilitates a general comparison to best organizations regardless of industry or organizational environment.

Nevertheless, benchmarking as a research methodology has criticisms. A common criticism, and limitation to my research, is that it promotes incremental organizational change that does not welcome sustainability. Yet, there is evidence to show that in organizations with heavy cultural inertia there is value in incremental change as long as it is driven by other periodic radical changes and upper management support (Eisenbach, Watson, & Pillai, 1999).

I use benchmarking in this study as a method to capitalize on the innovations of the Adobe software organization's combined performance evaluation and performance development systems. I examine Adobe through comparative analysis against the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct system. I then use that comparative analysis to adapt the Adobe systems to the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct process for total system improvement.

### **C. SELECTION CRITERIA**

Selection of similar organizations for comparison ensures simplicity in adaption of best practices between organizations. If two organizations are arbitrarily selected, the likelihood of effective results may be reduced. In this study, there are three selection criteria I use to identify a similar organization to compare to the Marine Corps. The first criterion is the successfulness of the organization. Adobe is well known as a successful organization in personnel management (Capelli & Tavis, 2016). The second criteria is the number of personnel working within the organization in relation to their market. The size of Adobe is directly comparable to the Marine Corps in that they both on the smaller end of their market. For example, the Marine Corps employs around 184,000, while the army stands at about 483,000. (The Heritage Foundation, 2018). In a similar situation, top tech companies such as Google have about 154,000 employees (Loudenback & Martin, 2015). Yet, Adobe lies on the smaller end of the spectrum at around 15,000 (Adobe Systems Inc., 2018).

### **D. ORGANIZATIONAL ARTIFACTS**

Artifacts are the visible elements of an organization that influence its culture (Tharp, 2009). In this study, artifacts become the data that support my analysis. Artifact data includes a subset of internal documents from the Marine Corps, an informational teleconference, and an Adobe Check-In performance evaluation template. The internal Marine Corps documents provide cultural snapshots and background information. The teleconference with personnel at Marine Corps Manpower Information Systems Division provides process and procedural data associated with the Marine Corps process.

The Adobe Check-In form provides cultural artifact data from Adobe's performance development system for benchmarking against the Marine Corps Proficiency

and Conduct performance evaluation system. The artifact is used as a metric for the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct system as a whole, as a process, and as rating artifact. It serves as a manifestation of values and norms through objects or expressions set against Adobe's Check-In performance evaluation and performance development tool (Burkus, 2014). A limitation to my data for this study is that the Adobe Systems Incorporated Check-In is not supported by employee statements on the usage of the document. The document may not have been used to its potential and could have had some other replacement administrative function to fully implement its effectiveness. Even with this limitation, the final recommendations on my research do not aim to examine Adobe culture but provide the Marine Corps with a reasonable administrative system in the form of an artifact to follow for their future in performance management. All data is qualitative in nature and aids in my final recommendations.

#### **E. SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed my methodology of comparative analysis through benchmarks. It included the various types of benchmarks across the benchmarking industry and addressed the purpose of the benchmark for best practices. My purpose for using this method of comparative analysis was to explore the topic of performance evaluation through the lens of other successful organizations and adapt their successes to the Marine Corps current performance evaluation system. This benchmark provided the mold for useful performance management techniques of other organizations that are similar to the Marine Corps, including Adobe Systems Inc.

### **III. ANALYSIS**

Advocates of Total Quality Management, such as famed statistician William Deming, argue that performance evaluation is useless due to the rater's inability to accurately observe and evaluate a ratee's performance. Yet, over the past decade, research has concluded that given rater training and properly managed human resource procedures, performance evaluations can have a profound effect on the future personnel that drive the performance of the organization (Deming, 1986).

The following analysis compares the attributes of the Marine Corps' Proficiency and Conduct system with the Adobe performance evaluation system as a benchmark of success through performance evaluation artifacts. I discuss the nature of each company's current system, how the two systems are similar, how they are different, and what element of Adobe's system that I would adapt to the Marine Corps' system. Graphic depictions of the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct formats and the Adobe Check-In formats are shown throughout this study.

#### **A. THE PROCESS: THE CURRENT METHOD FOR MARINE CORPS PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

##### **1. The Marine Corps**

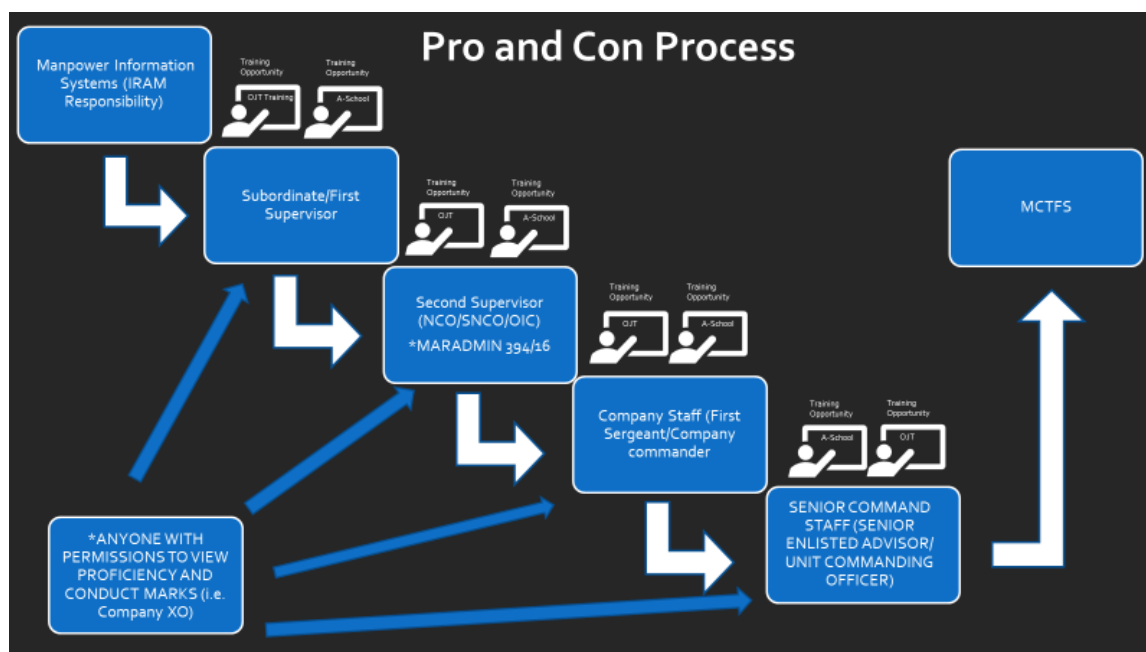
In Figure 1, I model the total process for the Proficiency and Conduct system. The process starts with a requirement to execute Proficiency and Conduct marks initiated by the IRAM (United States Marine Corps, 2000). Based on that requirement, a rater is influenced to execute the creation of Proficiency and Conduct marks for a given period. Influences exist in various forms that may include a direct order from higher command, rater initiative, or ratee reminders. Influences are verbal or formal in nature.

Once the rater begins the process of conducting Proficiency and Conduct marks, it may take as long as 10 to 20 minutes to write the marks in to the digital format shown in the Appendix of this analysis. After the marks are generated and the system is submitted to the chain of command, it may take hours, weeks, or even months to submit a Marine's Proficiency and Conduct marks. In some occasions, the Proficiency and Conduct marks

may never be submitted to higher organizations as a product of human error. The chain of command that the Proficiency and Conduct marks pass through for a typical Marine E1 to E4 begins at the IRAM and ends at the final administrative archiving of Proficiency and Conduct marks in the Marine Corps Total Force System (MCTFS).

Because a junior Marine may work in a wide variety of administrative environments, the Proficiency and Conduct system chain of command is not always the same. For example, at any given unit, a junior Marine may be rated by a first lieutenant or captain as the first supervisor in his chain of command. Under this administrative environment, the rater scores go straight to MCTFS after one step in the chain of command. On the other end of the spectrum, the first supervisor rating in the chain of command may be from a sergeant, which is the standard process flow for initiating the system. Under the standard process, the rating scores may go through three or more vertical nodes in the chain of command before ever being archived by the commanding officer at the end of process. Variation may complicate the process. For simplicity, I use the standard process flow in which the sergeant typically initiates the Proficiency and Conduct evaluations for his junior Marines. Figure 1 depicts a common chain of command flow for Proficiency and Conduct ratings.

Figure 1. Standard Process and Chain of Command for the Marine Corps Hierarchy of Proficiency and Conduct Marks



Adapted from personal communication with Scott Bullard of the United States Marine Corps' MI division on August 4, 2017.

The typical sequence after the initial requirement for a Marine to rate Proficiency and Conduct marks begins when the ratee receives marks from his first line supervisor. Next, the follow-on supervisor, typically the first officer or staff-noncommissioned officer, may review the marks if he feels necessary. From there, the company staff, such as the company senior enlisted advisor and commanding officer, may review the marks for approval and submission to the next level of the chain of command. Finally, the company staff forwards the Proficiency and Conduct recommendations to the battalion command staff. The battalion command staff includes the battalion commander and the battalion sergeant major. Once the battalion commander feels the Proficiency and Conduct marks are correct, they are submitted to MCTFS for final administrative archival.

Submission of Proficiency and Conduct marks can pass through as many raters as the battalion deems necessary to obtain the accurate markings of the Marine. That may mean one creation of marks by the Proficiency and Conduct rater and one submission by the battalion staff. Alternatively, that may include four or more layers of grading

recommendations for the staff of within the battalion before the battalion commanding officer receives the Proficiency and Conduct scores for individual Marines.

## 2. Adobe

Adobe uses “Check-In” as a new performance development tool. Check-Ins consists of a 17-page document that includes rater and ratee information on performance development in the Adobe performance development environment (Adobe Systems Inc., 2015). A front-page snapshot of the Check-In is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. A Snapshot of the Adobe Check-In.  
Source: Adobe Systems Inc. (2015).



Outside of the Adobe Check-In artifact, it is unclear how the entire system that surrounds the Adobe Check-In process exists. For the nature of this analysis, the Check-In document form of performance development serves as one part of a larger process that is



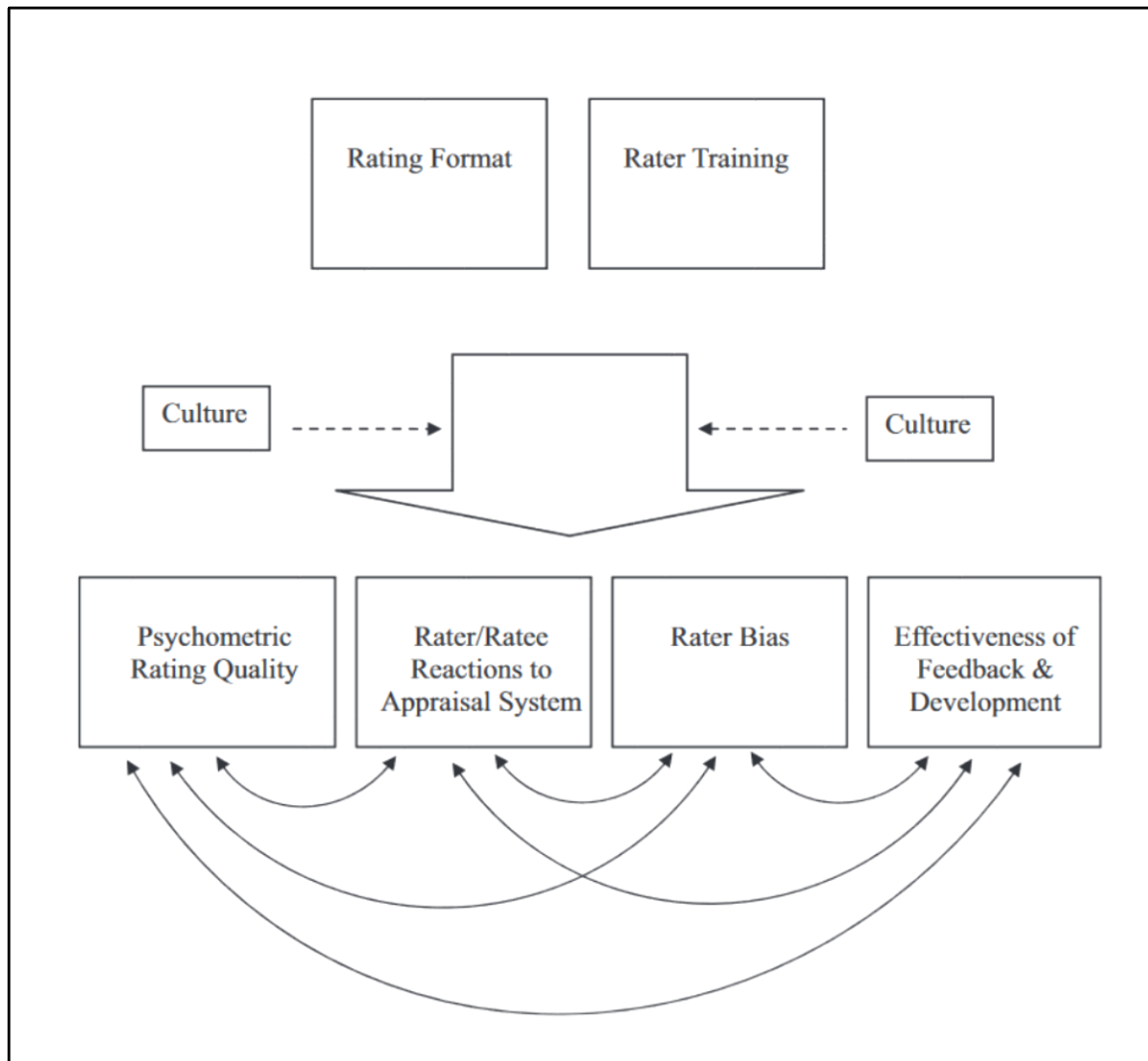
outside the scope of this research. The Check-In may aid in the overall promotion and development of future performance of the rater and ratee as well as influence the success of the total Adobe organization regarding its customer base.

### **3. Similarities**

I examine similarities between the Adobe and Marine Corps performance evaluation artifacts—the Check-In and Proficiency and Conduct marking format, respectively. The similarities I discover lie within the rating formats themselves. First, the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct marking format is a piece of the overall process that has a grade and feedback section, thus enabling the rater and ratee to conduct a feedback communication connection at some point in the performance evaluation process. In the Adobe rating format, there is also a feedback section on all of its rating format pages, which enables a feedback scenario at some point in their performance evaluation process. It is important to note that each feedback process scenario is similar but not exactly the same and will only function properly if the rater and ratee team actually uses it. Both Adobe and the Marine Corps do not dictate on their rating format the necessity to give feedback in a scenario, although, the organization may dictate the necessity of feedback in the process. For example, many junior Marines in the Marine Corps may not receive a feedback session from their rater due to time constraints or rater competency in feedback approaches.

Additionally, both the Marine Corps and Adobe place emphasis on their personnel. The two processes for each organization will always have a series of factors that affect the overall system they implement. Figure 3 displays the overall process that each organization faces when utilizing performance management systems (MacDonald & Sulsky, 2009).

Figure 3. Modeling the Process. Source: MacDonald and Sulsky (2009).



#### 4. Differences

Process differences between Adobe and the Marine Corps are based on the rating formats in their respective artifacts. Each rating format explains one element, of many elements, in the overall process that each company uses for performance evaluation. When comparing the rating format of the Proficiency and Conduct against the Check-In, the Check-In uses a larger variation of process information. Adobe uses a 17-page document and the Marine Corps has a one-page document. Given that bit of information, the overall process for the Marine Corps implies that it is much shorter when conducting a counseling

and communication session between the rater and ratee team. Additionally, Adobe has a wider array of background information within their performance evaluation document than the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct rater document. For example, Adobe discusses the purpose of their document and initiates their check in with the terms “expectations, feedback, and development” (Adobe Systems Inc., 2015). The Marine Corps displays the feedback and grading element of its format and omits the expectations and development portion of the process that is explicitly shown in Adobe’s Check-In document.

## **5. Adaption**

Adaption, the primary goal of my benchmark analysis through analyzing cultural artifact data, is a product of using what the Marine Corps is already employing effectively in performance evaluation and supplementing it with additional items from Adobe that add value to the overall performance evaluation process that push it towards a performance development mechanism. Based on the already existing Proficiency and Conduct marks process from beginning to end, there is an emphasis on one-way feedback, but the process would benefit from two more added elements that Adobe possesses—expectations and feedback.

Expectations and feedback will move the process from a performance evaluation process and move it to a performance development process, but can only be accomplished through cultural buy-in. Expectations sections are important for Marines of both parties in the rater and ratee relationship to make their roles clear and much more attainable. The expectations portion of a system is also a mechanism that supports feedback and communication. At times, missions can be very unclear in the Marine Corps, but this a good opportunity to provide clarity between individuals in an organization that demands strict adherence to orders. A more robust feedback section of the performance evaluation system would benefit all parties in the rater and ratee relationship because it enables open communication, improves goal setting, and fosters collaboration and counseling between superior and subordinate.

By adding the feedback system in conjunction with an expectations section, there is a reduction in operational time burden by weaning out other inefficient procedures for

counseling like separate counseling jackets. Additionally, rater and ratee relationships can expect higher rates of communication and foster a more effective work environment. Specific examples of expectation elements of the Proficiency and Conduct system include a new expectations dialogue box for the rater and ratee. For feedback and enhanced communication adding a new feedback format that incentivizes the rater and ratee to engage in quality communication is important. An example of this is a feedback dialogue section, such as two-way feedback boxes within the Proficiency and Conduct marks format that can only be manipulated by the rater or ratee depending on the section of the system.

## **B. THE PURPOSE**

### **1. The Marine Corps**

After examination of the Proficiency and Conduct format, I conclude that the purpose of the Proficiency and Conduct evaluation system is three-pillared. The three pillars that define the purpose of the Proficiency and Conduct Marking system is a promotional system enabling device, a performance snapshot, and a one-way feedback session for junior enlisted Marines.

The *Marine Corps Promotion Manual, Volume 2, Enlisted Promotions* (MCO P1400.32D Ch 2) uses the Proficiency and Conduct marking evaluation system as a sub-function of the composite score (United States Marine Corps, 2012). The composite score supports promotional decisions, therefore, the intended purposes of Proficiency and Conduct evaluations are to facilitate promotion decisions for enlisted Marines. At the same time, the Proficiency and Conduct's scoring and remarks section of their artifact serves as a snapshot to capture performance of an individual Marine over a given period that could range from promotion to a semi-annual performance review. The remarks section enables communication in the performance evaluation system, albeit one-way. Yet, there is no defined purpose for Marines or stakeholders to understand that until they have read all of the surrounding manuals on administration that use the terms Proficiency and Conduct marks. An example of one of the purposes for the Proficiency and Conduct scores is shown in Figure 4, which displays a calculator that describes the cutting score as a component of the composite score.

Figure 4. An Available Composite Score Calculator from the Marine Online Resource System. Source: United States Marine Corps (n.d.).

<b>Official Composite Score:</b>			
<b>Computed Composite Score: 0</b> ( Computed thru 31 Dec 2017 )			
Computed as of:			
4th Qtr (Oct, Nov, Dec)		2017	
(Training Cutoff Date: 20 Aug 2017)			
General Military Proficiency Score:			<b>0</b>
Rifle Score			
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Qualify BEFORE 1 Oct. 2007 (250 pt scale)		0	
<input type="radio"/> Table 1/2 Qual (350 pt scale)			
PFT Score		0	
CFT Score		0	
Date of Birth:		31 Dec 2017	
Proficiency/Conduct			
Average Proficiency		0.0	<b>0</b>
Average Conduct		0.0	<b>0</b>
AFADBD/PEBD:			
31 Dec 2017		Time In Service ( 0 month ): <b>0</b>	
Date of Rank:			
31 Dec 2017		Time In Grade ( 0 month ): <b>0</b>	
Bonus Points:			<b>0</b>
Special Duty Bonus (DI/Recruiter/MSG)		0	
Education Bonus (100 Points Maximum)			
MCI/Extension School			
MARINET Courses		0	
College/CLEP/Vocational			
Command Recruiting Bonus		0	
Reenlistment Bonus Points Total		0	

The purpose for Adobe's performance evaluation and performance development document is listed on each page and varies depending on the section of the document that the user is executing. The purpose for each section is explicit and implicit based on the portion of the Check-In system timeline that is executed. For example, on the first page of the Check-In, there is a statement that describes how and what the Check-In document is used for, thus clarifying its purpose (Adobe Systems Inc., 2015). The purpose includes

performance evaluation, goal setting, performance development, and increased communication. Data limitations leave this open to interpretation.

## **2. Similarities**

The comparisons between the two documents are explicit in their formatting but are also implicit. The explicit similarities in both documents are related to their design of the remarks sections. Each rating format accounts for some method of remarks. Each organization uses a different name for that feedback section. Implicitly, the purpose of the two documents is to capture performance in some way and communicate that performance between at least two people in a rater and ratee team.

## **3. Differences**

The two primary differences in purpose between the Marine Corps system and the Adobe system are based on feedback and what they are attempting to facilitate. First, the Marine Corp's primary purpose for their document is to enable promotion decisions of their junior enlisted. Adobe does not address promotion in their Check-In artifact and this document does not address whether it is for a specific set of subordinate personnel such as junior personnel. Moreover, the Adobe document facilitates future development and the Marine Corps system only captures current performance without regard for future development.

## **4. Adaption**

By adapting the Adobe Check-In to the Proficiency and Conduct system, the Marine Corps could capitalize on Adobe's methods of clarity through direct language used inside their Check-In toolkit. Language clarity ensures the rater and ratee team understand the real purpose of their system. If the Marine Corps creates a purpose statement in their IRAM and places that same language within their Proficiency and Conduct document, it gives the rating team a better understanding of the greater value of their interactions. This incremental step allows the Marine Corps to use the familiar existing artifacts and strengthen their intrinsic value by adding to them. Additionally, the Proficiency and Conduct system could combine elements of other performance development programs into

the current Proficiency and Conduct performance evaluation system and repurpose their performance evaluation system to aid current performance and address future performance simultaneously.

## **C. THE DESIGN**

### **1. The Marine Corps**

The current Marine Corps method for junior enlisted performance evaluation is titled and commonly referred to as the Proficiency and Conduct evaluation. Its current performance evaluation measurement system is split into two individual behaviorally anchored rating scales—the Proficiency scale and the Conduct scale. Each scale is categorized over a list of individual attributes, mainly adjectives, for consideration before giving a score. Scores for both Proficiency and Conduct ratings must fall between 0.0 and 5.0, inclusively. Changes to the score occur to the tenth of a point for differentiation purposes (Larger, 2017). The current Proficiency grading scale is depicted in Figure 5. The Conduct grading scale is depicted in Figure 6.

Figure 5. Proficiency Grading Scale. Source:  
United States Marine Corps (2000).

MARK	CORRESPONDING ADJECTIVE RATING	STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY
0.0 to 1.9	Unacceptable	Does unacceptable work in most duties, generally undependable; needs considerable assistance and close supervision on even the simplest assignment.
2.0 to 2.9	Unsatisfactory	Does acceptable work in some of the duties but cannot be depended upon. Needs assistance and close supervision on all but the simplest assignments.
3.0 to 3.9	Below Average	Handles routine matters acceptably but needs close supervision when performing duties not of a routine nature.
4.0 to 4.4	Average	Can be depended upon to discharge regular duties thoroughly and competently but usually needs assistance in dealing with problems not of a routine nature.
4.5 to 4.8	Excellent	Does excellent work in all regular duties, but needs assistance in dealing with extremely difficult or unusual assignments.
4.9 to 5.0	Outstanding	Does superior work in all duties. Even extremely difficult or unusual assignments can be given with full confidence that they will be handled in a thoroughly competent manner.



Figure 6. Conduct Grading Scale. Source:  
United States Marine Corps (2000).

MARK	CORRESPONDING ADJECTIVE RATING	STANDARDS OF CONDUCT
0.0 to 1.9	Unacceptable	Habitual offender. Conviction by general, special, or more than one summary court-martial. Give a mark of "0" upon declaration of desertion. Ordered to confinement pursuant to sentence of court-martial. Two or more punitive reductions in grade.
2.0 to 2.9	Unsatisfactory	No special court-martial. Not more than one summary court-martial. Not more than two nonjudicial punishments. Punitive reduction in grade.
3.0 to 3.9	Below Average	No court-martial. Not more than one nonjudicial punishment. No favorable impression of the qualities listed in paragraph 4007.6a. Failure to make satisfactory progress while assigned to the weight control or military appearance program. Conduct such as not to impair appreciably one's usefulness or the efficiency of the command, but conduct not sufficient to merit an honorable discharge.
4.0 to 4.4	Average	No offenses. No unfavorable impressions as to attitude, interests, cooperation, obedience, after-effects of intemperance, courtesy and consideration, and observance of regulations.
4.5 to 4.8	Excellent	No offense. Positive favorable impressions of the qualities listed in paragraph 4007.6a. Demonstrates reliability, good influence, sobriety, obedience, and industry.
4.9 to 5.0	Outstanding	No offenses. Exhibits to an outstanding degree the qualities listed in paragraph 4007.6a. Observes spirit as well as letter of orders and regulations. Demonstrates positive effect on others by example and persuasion.

4-41

Within the proficiency ratings section of the IRAM, the following are the attributes that must be analyzed by a rater before giving a rating to a subordinate: mission accomplishment, leadership, intellect and wisdom, individual character, physical fitness, personal appearance, professional military education, Marine Corps Institute courses, and

off-duty education (United States Marine Corps, 2000). The IRAM notes that conduct analyzed attributes include the following: bearing, attitude, interest, reliability, courtesy, cooperation, obedience, adaptability, influence on others, moral fitness, physical fitness as affected by clean and temperate habits, participation in unit activities not directly related to unit mission, and assignment to weight control. Table 1 is a list of attributes that Marines examine for the Proficiency and Conduct grading system.

Table 1. List of Proficiency and Conduct Attributes.  
Source: United States Marine Corps (2000).

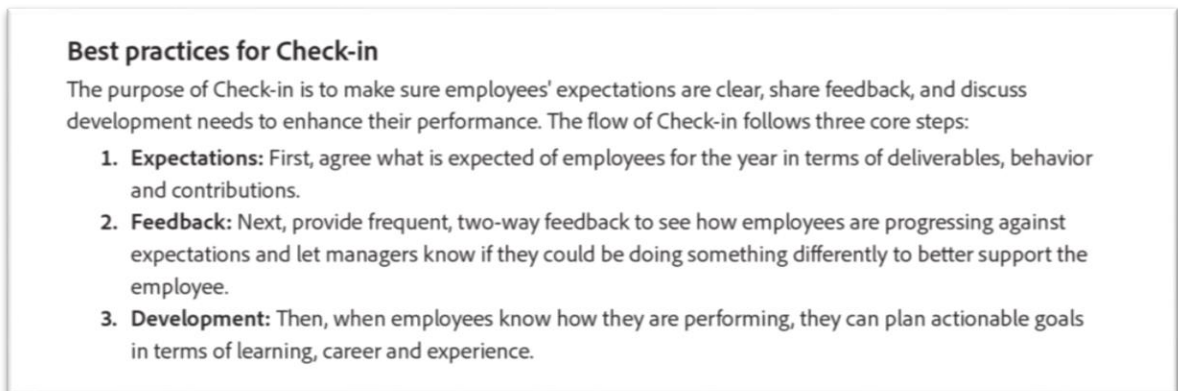
<b>Conduct</b>	<b>Proficiency</b>
Conformance to accepted usage	Mission accomplishment
Positive contributions to unit and Corps	Leadership
General bearing	Intellect
Attitude	Wisdom
Interest	Individual character
Reliability	Physical fitness
Courtesy	Personal appearance
Cooperation	Completion of professional military education
Obedience	Completion of Marine Corps Institute courses
Adaptability	Off-duty education
Influence on others	
Moral fitness	
Physical fitness as effected by clean and temperate habits	
Participation in unit activities not directly related to unit mission	

In addition to the attributes that each rater and ratee team must consider in the execution of Proficiency and Conduct markings, there is a grading scale that the rater must apply between 0.0 to 5.0 based on their individual understanding of the terms listed in Table 1 and additional comments delivered by the IRAM.

## 2. Adobe

Adobe removes the need for a computational graphic rating scale and implements a three-part paper-based guideline system called a *Check-In Toolkit*. The three-part system is composed of three main pieces: expectations, feedback, and development. The pieces are distributed throughout the entire document and used when necessary. For example, a feedback document may have elements of expectations and development included in the same document. Figure 7 shows a snapshot of the three-part system within the Adobe Check-In.

Figure 7. A Snapshot of the Adobe Check-In's Three-Part System.  
Source: Adobe Systems Inc. (2015).



Visually, the Check-In toolkit is a set of seven recommended guides and worksheets and an additional front-page introduction document that are used by a rater and ratee team during a period of work observation period, if the team decides the toolkit is necessary for their total work relationship, which implies this system is voluntary.

The introduction document includes the purpose of the Check-In Toolkit and what to expect when using the document. The seven worksheets and guides are broken into multiple sub-sections. The first worksheet is broken down into two parts for the rater and ratee team. It delivers the information necessary for the ratee to understand what they should know about the expectations element of the Check-In. Sub-sections of this

document include when the Check-Ins should occur and directions on how to use the Check-In toolkit as a guide.

### **3. Similarities**

Each system contains a comments section for feedback, a mechanism for performance measurement, and layers additional supplemental documentation that supports the evaluation system. For the Marine Corps, they use a dialogue box for raters to include comments in their feedback section. The Marine Corps utilizes their performance measurement scale, and Adobe uses multiple scaling methods that use open communication to describe performance.

### **4. Differences**

The primary difference in the two systems is that Adobe combines expectations, feedback, and development into one total product, while the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct marks artifact is a singular rating scale feedback system. Additionally, Adobe does not dictate inside their document which form must be used in their packet of Check-In documents. Adobe gives potential methods for the rater and ratee to use during their Check-In meetings.

### **5. Adaption**

By benchmarking, value for the Marine Corps lies in utilizing the effective elements of Adobe's check in system. In this analysis, I use the rating form differences that the Marine Corps omits, which includes performance development elements and an expectations section.

## **D. OCCURRENCE OF APPRAISAL**

### **1. The Marine Corps**

Marine Corps Order P1070.12H, the IRAM and ALMAR 360/97 state that

at a minimum, Proficiency and Conduct marks are required to be recorded during the semi-annual evaluation periods ending 31 January and 31 July. The minimum observation criteria require that a Marine perform the same

duties in excess of 30 days before new marks are recorded. (United States Marine Corps, 2008)

Once each score is computed by the superior it is submitted to a chain of superiors for concurrence and final submission to the Marine Information Systems division of the Marine Corps for permanent record keeping. Simultaneously, that Proficiency and Conduct score is to be delivered to the subordinate being graded in some fashion via counseling. Feedback methods may vary across the organization as there is no official standard for feedback across the organization. Historically, Proficiency and Conduct scores are used as documents for future disposition of an individual Marine's career such as court martial or duty assignment.

Raters in the Proficiency and Conduct system are comprised of the individual conducting the rating, typically a junior Marine's direct supervisor, and the chain of follow-on raters that are involved in the submission process of the Proficiency and Conduct to Headquarters Marine Corps for final record. There are 16 different occasions in which a Marine would be given Proficiency and Conduct marking scores. The occasions for reporting are unique in each situation but are not always for measuring performance. Sometimes, they are used as a critical incident indicator such as deserter status. The 16 different occasions are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Proficiency and Conduct Occasions.  
Source: United States Marine Corps (2000).

Occasion for Reporting Proficiency and Conduct Marks	Occasion Code (Active Duty)	Occasion Code (Reserve Duty)
Transfer	TR	TR
Assignment to Active Duty (Reserve)	TR	TR
Assignment to Involuntary Active Duty (Reserve)	TR	TR
Release from Active Duty	TR	TR
Release from EAD, AR, etc. (Reserve)	TR	TR
Completion of Initial Skill Training	TR	TR
Completion of recruit training	TR	TR
Temporary Disability Retired List (TDRL)	DL	DL
Discharge	DC	DC
Promotion to Corporal or Sergeant	PR	PR
Reduction	RD	RD
Declared Deserter (first day of UA period)	DD	--
Last Day Prior to Declaring Deserter	PD	--
To TAD	TD	--
TAD Complete	TC	--
Change of Primary Duty	CD	CD
Service School Completion	SC	SC
Semiannual	SA	--
Annual	--	AN
Completion of Annual Training	--	AT
Recommended (See MCO Pl400.32.)	RE	RE
ADSW (Active Duty Special Work)	--	RT

When a rater initiates marks, he uses the guidelines of MCO P1070.12K W CH1, the Individual Records Administration Manual (IRAM) on pages 4-34 to page 4-43. The manual gives general guidance on the measures and is up for interpretation when rating. For example, the IRAM states that,

Generally, a recruit will receive a conduct mark in the 4.0-4.4 range. As an example, an average recruit would receive a conduct mark of 4.2. A recruit receiving nonjudicial punishment (NJP) will normally be assigned a conduct mark below 4.0. (United States Marine Corps, 2012)

The guidance listed in the IRAM uses the term recruit, but it synonymous with a junior enlisted Marine. Additional details on the rating of recruits is outside the scope of this research.

## 2. Adobe

Due to limitations in data, I can only speculate as where the Check-In fits into the total culture and administrative timeline within the whole organization. There is some evidence listed in Figure 8 on generally how often the system should be executed between the rater and ratee. On page 3 of the Check-In, there is a guide to employees that sets a general guideline for an employee to talk about how often each meeting should occur to conduct a Check-In. It mentions the possibility of weekly, monthly, or quarterly meetings. Given that information, there is reason to believe quarterly is the minimum occurrence for a Check-In. On page 8 of the Check-In, there is a development worksheet that delivers instructions on how to set goals for a ratee in the period of observation, which implies future meetings to validate the completion of a goal. A snapshot of this process is in Figure 9. Due to limitations in my data, there are no personal accounts from employees of how often the document was used by employees to actually foster future performance.

Figure 8. Adobe Occurrence of Appraisal Based on the Check-In Artifact.  
Source: Adobe Systems Inc. (2015).

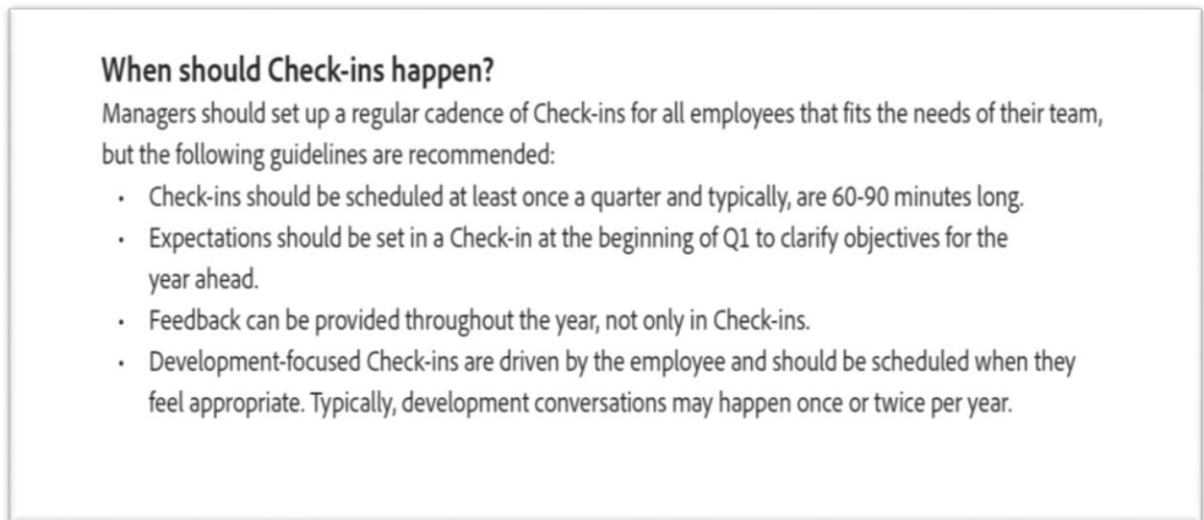


Figure 9. Goal Setting Worksheet on the Adobe Check-In.  
Source: Adobe (2015).

**Instructions**  
Identify the specific goals associated with each of your expectations. Describe the goal, success and measureable results, and the associated due dates or milestones. If you require additional pages, please print or save multiple versions of this document.

EXPECTATION:		
GOAL 1:	DEFINE SUCCESS:	DUE DATES:
GOAL 2:		
GOAL 3:		

### 3. Similarities

There are some similarities in the occurrence for appraisal if both of the documents are executed to their potential. If used to potential, the document should be used as listed in the requirements section of their system. For the Marine Corps, the requirements are listed in the IRAM. Adobe defines their occurrence for appraisal inside of the document using general terms like “often” or “weekly.” Outside of those small differences, both the Marine Corps and the Adobe Systems Inc. Check-In do propose some occurrence—whether it be weekly or semiannually.

### 4. Differences

The primary difference that exists between each systems occurrence of appraisal lies within the requirement to execute the system. The Marine Corps requires specific occurrences for appraisal formally mandated by Marine Corps policy (United States Marine Corps, 2000). As a limitation to my research, Adobe has no mandate visible inside their Check-In document. Administratively, the IRAM for the Marine Corps mandates required occurrences for appraisal as the Adobe system does not dictate inside their document when the system is required to be used. There may be pressure within Adobe to use the document, but nothing is explicitly written within the Check-In to make it appear



as a requirement. An additional difference between the two systems is that the Adobe system is not tied to administrative events such as punishment, inter-organizational moves, or even vertical advancement in the organization like the Marine Corps (Adobe Systems Inc., 2015).

## **5. Adaption**

The Marine Corps could benefit from adapting two areas from the Adobe System—the bi-weekly or monthly occurrence of appraisal and the dictation of requirements inside the Proficiency and Conduct document. First, bi-weekly occurrence of a Proficiency and Conduct would foster more meetings between the rater and ratee, which could increase team communication and reduce the likelihood of recency bias. The theory is that Marine rating teams need to keep in a more direct rating relationship that fosters comfort in the rater and ratee team. It is a dynamic approach designed to keep the rating team engaged, as well as allow the rater and ratee to give and take feedback more often. Second, in an effort to “lean” the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct system, the Marine Corps could take the requirements out of the IRAM and place them within the Proficiency and Conduct document. Populating requirements into the Proficiency and Conduct document would reduce future errors in appraisal by ensuring the rater does not forget where to find the appropriate rating occurrence.

## **E. STAKEHOLDERS**

### **1. The Marine Corps**

The Marine Corps has multiple stakeholders, or constituents, that have a vested interest in the Proficiency and Conduct system for any reason that any organization of similar size and mission may have. Internal stakeholders include the rater, the ratee, the instructors for training, the Marine Corps as an entire organization, the personnel who manage the Proficiency and Conduct data in the masses, the staffs that receive the Proficiency and Conduct marks, and even the personnel that use the system for administrative purposes such as derogatory and commendatory material. External stakeholders include the personnel that work with the users of the Proficiency and Conduct system in jobs outside of the Marine Corps, congressional panels that mandate performance

management, Department of Defense constituents that are linked in any way to the Marine Corps, and any civilian that interacts with a Marine that has engaged in the execution of the Proficiency and Conduct system. Stakeholders vary, but for the scope of this analysis, the stakeholders that take precedence are the personnel, or chain of command, that interact directly with the system during a period of observation of a Marine.

## **2. Adobe**

Adobe's Check-In process has internal and external stakeholders like the Marine Corps. Its internal stakeholders include the following: the chain of command that may influence the ratee and rater relationship, the creators of the performance development system, the rater and ratee team, and the human resources department that assists in the process of the Check-Ins. Adobe's external stakeholders include external organizations that model their performance development process, the other publicly-traded performance development environments, the everyday clients that are served by the raters, and ratees that are experiencing the Check-In system on a day-to-day basis. For the scope of this research, the stakeholders that take precedence in this analysis are the rater and ratee team.

## **3. Similarities**

The similarities that exist between the Marine Corps and the Adobe systems include the rater and the ratee team. The chain of command also exists in a similar fashion for each organization—with strict regard for each organization's special bureaucratic nuances. Stakeholders are generally the same for both organizations but may carry difference names. For example, the Marine Corps uses general staff, while Adobe may use upper level executives, which is a rough translation of the same positions between the two organizations.

## **4. Differences**

Due to cultural differences, the stakeholders hold different relationships and each organization may have more, or less, bureaucratic structure between parties in each stakeholder relationship. Additionally, the Marine Corps has more personnel associated

directly with their system than Adobe might, because there is a chain of command that is larger than just two people.

## **5. Adaption**

Given that Adobe has a chain of command that their Check-In Process flows through that is only two people, it may be challenging for the Marine Corps to maintain administrative command and control over their enlisted staff in this nature. However, it would be beneficial to use the current Marine Corps Fitness Report process and keep the three people in the chain of command. By narrowing the direct stakeholder chain of command that the Proficiency and Conduct grading system passes through, there may be room to improve the speed of the total system from beginning to end.

## **F. ADDITIONAL FACTORS**

### **1. The Marine Corps**

Four additional factors that affect the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct process and influence my research include rater training, inflation, organizational culture, and organizational change. All four processes effect the Proficiency and Conduct process directly, indirectly, internally, and externally. Rater training affects the quality of reporting. Inflation reflects the validity of reports across the system. Organizational culture and organizational change effect the execution and acceptance of the system institutionally.

Rater training emphasizes the training that is required to ensure a rater accurately reports performance of a subordinate in a given period. Under the current system for Proficiency and Conduct marks, training primarily occurs at the first formal training school the Marine attends, such as the Primary MOS school for enlisted Marines and The Basic School for commissioned officers. Additional on-the-job training may occur for raters, but the training varies from unit to unit and is unstandardized. Adobe's Check-In injects elements of rater training into their system through explicit verbiage inside their rating format. Without the information availability each time, Marine rater and ratee teams are required to find training elsewhere if time permits. The appendix of this analysis contains

an example of a standard training event for Proficiency and Conduct marks conducted at The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia (United States Marine Corps, 2016).

Inflation is a natural by-product of any numeric rating system and exists regardless of any constraints a system uses to control inflation. In the case of the Marine Corps system, if the majority of reports lie in a single region above the organizationally mandated average, there is inflation. A 2017 report confirms that inflation exists but does not adversely affect the Proficiency and Conduct process for its general purpose (Larger, 2017). In the adaption of the Adobe system, there is room to reduce existing inflation with more qualitative sections, but this may induce heavier non-numeric bias for the reporting system.

Organizational culture is the set of values and beliefs of the body of personnel in an organization, like the Marine Corps, that defines the body of people through their system of artifacts, values, behaviors, and basic assumptions (Hatch, 1993). Within those artifacts such as the Proficiency and Conduct format of the performance evaluation system, there are underlying assumptions and behaviors that the Marine Corps is fostering with the current system. The current system reflects the Marine Corps as a structured, time-deprived, and fast-paced organization that values personnel enough to grade them for some purpose. In comparison to the Marine Corps system, Adobe's current system has a similar theme, but it is reflective of an organization that values the team and fosters understanding in a process, as shown by the large amount of evaluation information included in the Check-In. Although the little elements that describe an organization conducting the same performance evaluation every day are subtle, the differences are noticeable.

Organizational change in this research applies to the change of goals and values within an organization from the individual level to the total organization level. Organizational change is not modeled in this Adobe to Marine Corps benchmark but is important to consider when implementing new performance evaluation approaches to large organizations. Research shows that 70% of the time that institutional change effort will fail due to conflicts between the values of the organizational personnel and the actual mechanism that change is instituted such as a specific leadership style (Burnes & Jackson, 2011). Thus, change in a top-down organization like the Marine Corps, in a program such as a new

performance evaluation system combined with a performance development system, may take a specific type of leadership to implement the process and to foster buy-in.

Fortunately, the Marine Corps already has some experience with a performance development system. The Marine Corps accounts for the process of development through MCO 1500.6, *Marine Leader Development*. Yet, leadership development concepts inside MCO 1500.6 force personnel to filter through a large bureaucracy of resources that may not be known by a rater and ratee team to gain all the tools necessary for rate and ratee development. Fortunately, the Fitness Report is a strong baseline in which the Marine Corps can already use to benefit its junior enlisted performance evaluation system. By adapting the graphic rating scales, feedback sections, and basic administrative elements of the Fitness Report, the Marine Corps capitalizes on its own successful system and can benefit from additional adaption from Adobe's industry model. An adapted example titled *Leadership Marks* is listed in Figure 10. Figure 10 combines Adobe's feedback mechanism using a goals section adapted from the Adobe Check-In Toolkit and supplements it with the graphic rating scale of the current Marine Corps Fitness Report.

Figure 10. Leadership Marks. Adapted from Adobe Systems Inc. (2015), Larger (2017), and United States Marine Corps (n.d.).

PURPOSE:	
The Purpose of this document is to define a performance score for Marines of rank's Private through Corporal. The attributes listed below are meant to define "The Whole Marine Concept." These scores are initiated by a rater/ratee team and are archived in the The Marine Corps Total Force System upon completion. Any discrepancies, or questions, should be directed to Manpower Information Systems (MI).	
Expectation(s): Expectations from the rater to the subordinate	
1)	
2)	
3)	
Additional Expectations:	
Completed Expectations (Unsatisfactory = 1, Satisfactory = 2, Above Average = 3, Superior = 4)	
Expectation 1:	2.0
Expectation 2:	3.0
Expectation 3:	4.0
Additional Expectation:	2.0
LEADERSHIP MARKS BEHAVIORAL ANCHORS	
MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT	0
LEADERSHIP	4.6
INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER	0
PHYSICAL FITNESS	4.8
PERSONAL APPEARANCE	4.6
TECHNICAL SKILLS	4.1
INTELLECT AND WISDOM	4.2
ATTITUDE	4.4
COURTESY	4.9
Final Score	
Available Scores (0.0-5.0 )	0.0 to 5.0
Average Score without NJP:	Redefined in IRAM
Average Score with NJP:	Redefined in IRAM
Grade to be assigned to rated Marine	3.3
Notes:	
Remarks:	
Goal Strategy to be accomplished in the next 30 days	

## **G. SUMMARY**

This analysis used benchmarking to provide comparative analysis between the cultural artifacts of Adobe Systems Incorporated Check-In performance development toolkit and the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct performance evaluation system. My scope focused on adaption of the design, purpose, and occurrence of appraisal from Adobe's system to the Marine Corps system. For each focus item, I discussed both institutions' particular evaluation development platforms, their similarities, their differences, and any adaption possibilities for the future benefit of the Marine Corps. I concluded the chapter with a discussion on stakeholders in the process as well as the dynamic cultural challenges involved with instituting change in a transformed Marine Corps performance development system. Table 3 summarizes important elements of the analysis.

Table 3. Analysis Chapter Highlights from Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct System and the Adobe's Check-in. Adapted from United States Marine Corps (n.d.) and Adobe Systems Inc. (2015).

	Similarities	Differences	Adaption from Adobe
<b>The Process</b>	Existing process includes feedback	<b>Adobe:</b> 17- page document <b>Marine Corps:</b> 1-Page document <b>Adobe:</b> no explicit mandate on their artifact <b>Marine Corps:</b> initiation starts with a policy to conduct a rating	Adapt the expectations, feedback, and development
<b>The Purpose</b>	Implicitly communicate that the purpose is to examine personnel through current work status	<b>Adobe:</b> performance development tool <b>Marine Corps:</b> performance management tool	Adapt the topic of performance development and use goal setting in the Proficiency and Conduct process
<b>The Design</b>	Feedback section, performance evaluation section, and explicit platform for comments from the rater to the ratee	<b>Adobe:</b> uses 17 pages that include development mechanisms that include goal-setting exercises and includes two-way communication devices <b>Marine Corps:</b> only uses one digital platform to capture two scaled grades and a singular one-way feedback section	Adapt the expectations, feedback and development mechanisms and adapt them into a new format that includes goal setting and two-way communication between the rater and ratee
<b>Occurrence of Appraisal</b>	Each organization recommends a specific occurrence for appraisal	<b>Adobe:</b> at Least once a quarter and as often as the rater and ratee team feels necessary (Flexible) <b>Marine Corps:</b> occurrence required by the IRAM (Inflexible)	Adapt a more flexible time-frame similar to Adobe to foster regular feedback between the rater and ratee team
*Note: The organizational culture within the changing organization dictates the ability to adapt existing mechanisms from outside sources.			



## **IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. CONCLUSION**

Ronald Reagan once said, “Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But, the Marines don’t have that problem” (Department of Defense, 2009). The Marine Corps commonly attributes its ability to make a difference to its tough training regimen, strict disciplined culture, and a long history of fighting America’s wars in every clime and place. But it is impossible to begin to understand what makes the United States Marine Corps successful without considering the performance management of the personnel that make that organization so strong—the junior enlisted.

In this analysis, I conduct qualitative research by compiling literature on best-practice benchmarking and performance management to supplement a comparative analysis between an Adobe Systems Incorporated Check-In toolkit and the Marine Corps Proficiency and Conduct performance evaluation system. My results indicate that the Marine Corps could benefit from the adoption of performance evaluation methods that include multiple raters, the 360-degree method for performance evaluation, a combination of performance development and performance evaluation, as well as a new design adapted from Adobe Systems Incorporated’s acclaimed performance development process—the Check-In toolkit. In this analysis, I address the need for universal training requirements in the overall Proficiency and Conduct system and recommend the inclusion of training standards in the Marine Corps IRAM. My research also indicates that the overall change in the Proficiency and Conduct system is more complex than a single dimensional change in the rater system. It would require change to the organizational culture within the Marine Corps based on how it relates to the junior enlisted performance evaluation system.

### **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

My recommendations follow in the order of most easily implementable to the hardest to implement. Each recommendation is based on adaption of methods from the Adobe Systems Incorporated Check-In performance development system as well as combining already existing performance management methods for the Marine Corps

Proficiency and Conduct performance management system. The recommendations are as follows:

- Update the IRAM to include training requirements, the purpose of the Proficiency and Conduct system, and other general counseling information to the IRAM
- Change the Proficiency and Conduct graphic rating scale to just one score and retitle it to align with the desired Marine terminology
- Redesign the current Proficiency and Conduct system to a digital format similar to the Marine Corps Fitness Report
- Completely remove the Proficiency and Conduct system and replace it with a performance development system that resembles Adobe's Check-In **or** remove the Proficiency and Conduct system altogether and use the existing leadership development program

(1) Update the IRAM

Marine Corps Order P1070.12H, the IRAM, includes basic information on pros and cons for junior Marine enlisted and even has the occasions and detailed information on how to use the grading system for both proficiency marks and conduct marks. Yet, the document would benefit by increasing the communication to the rater and ratee team through the addition of the purpose of the document as well as background information on how to counsel, what to expect in a counseling, and communication methods for the chain of command executing the system.

(2) Redesign the Proficiency and Conduct Scale to One Graphic Rating Scale

Research in 2017 on the effectiveness of the Proficiency and Conduct system concluded that many attributes that are used to define proficiency or conduct are correlated. In other words, Marine raters cannot distinguish them from each other, which may negatively affect the ratings. The Marine Corps would benefit from removing the correlated terms and keeping the distinguishable terms in a single digital graphic rating scale. Benefits

for the reduction and combination include the saved time to conduct each rating and the further understanding for rater and ratee teams.

- (3) Use the Current Fitness Report System and Combine Useful Elements of Design to the Proficiency and Conduct Markings System

The current Marine Corps Fitness Report system rates all E5 and above for the Marine Corps and is a system that has been updated many times in the past 40 years. If the Marine Corps used a system similar to the current Fitness Report, it could benefit from using a system they already understand and that combines more than nine elements of modern performance evaluations. The Fitness Report system does a more thorough job than the Proficiency and Conduct system due to its all-inclusive nature. The redesign could harness the attributes that are not correlated from the previous recommendation.

- (4) Remove the Proficiency and Conduct System and Replace It with a Performance Development System Similar to Adobe

Modern performance evaluation is becoming old and outdated. As personnel and organizations change, so should the administrative functions that manage their performance. The Marine Corps has an opportunity to adapt the Adobe Check-In performance development system to the Proficiency and Conduct system to boost future performance. The Marine Corps does not have to use a 17-page document for their a newly designed system, but certain elements that encompass Adobe's Check-In such as expectations, feedback, and development prove invaluable. Time consumption is a factor in this recommendation, but as cultures shift towards talent management so do the time requirements associated with developing that talent.

- (5) Remove the Proficiency and Conduct System Completely and Replace It with an Existing Marine Corps Leadership Development System

In 2017, Larger examined the Proficiency and Conduct marking system and identified that it was a heavy contributor to the promotion of junior enlisted Marines in relation to the other elements of the composite score. Larger's concept makes sense because the Proficiency and Conduct system is a performance evaluation system that is supposed to do just that—enable or disable promotion. His research concluded that the

caveat was that there was correlation between elements of the rating attributes that defined the scores that each Marine rater was giving, thus alluding to some bias in attributes.

To combat that issue, it would save time for Marines in every element of the chain of command if the system was removed completely. If the system were removed the Marine Corps composite score could be redesigned to make up for the missing Proficiency and Conduct marks that existed in the previous promotion system and give back time to leaders that may need to execute marks under heavy workloads.

By removing the Proficiency and Conduct system, it would eliminate redundancy that is captured in the Proficiency and Conduct marks with the composite score. Time would be saved resulting in more flexibility to execute a performance development system.

#### (6) Areas Recommended for Further Study

I recommend an in-depth study into the Proficiency and Conduct rating system and whether removing the system would be beneficial to the force as a whole. Further study of the effectiveness of the current personnel development programs and their effect on the promotion of Marines. I also recommend additional study on the culture of the Marine Corps on how it associates with administrative functions like counseling. Finally, I recommend a study on cultural inertia in the Marine Corps and how that is affecting the lost opportunities across the administrative spectrum.

## APPENDIX A. MARINE CORPS FITNESS REPORT

The following document is the Marine Corps Fitness Report from the Marine Corps performance evaluation on-line service, United States Marine Corps (n.d.).

<b>USMC FITNESS REPORT (1610)</b> NAVMC 10835A (Rev. 1-01)(P) PREVIOUS EDITIONS WILL NOT BE USED				<b>COMMANDANT'S GUIDANCE</b>				<b>DO NOT STAPLE THIS FORM</b>																																									
<p>The completed fitness report is the most important information component in manpower management. It is the primary means of evaluating a Marine's performance and is the Commandant's primary tool for the selection of personnel for promotion, augmentation, resident schooling, command, and duty assignments. Therefore, the completion of this report is one of an officer's most critical responsibilities. Inherent in this duty is the commitment of each Reporting Senior and Reviewing Officer to ensure the integrity of the system by giving close attention to accurate marking and timely reporting. Every officer serves a role in the scrupulous maintenance of this evaluation system, ultimately important to both the individual and the Marine Corps. Inflationary markings only serve to dilute the actual value of each report. Reviewing Officers will not concur with inflated reports.</p>																																																	
<b>A. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION</b>																																																	
<b>1. Marine Reported On:</b> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none;">a. Last Name</td> <td style="border: none;">b. First Name</td> <td style="border: none;">c. MI</td> <td style="border: none;">d. ID</td> <td style="border: none;">e. Grade</td> <td style="border: none;">f. DOR</td> <td style="border: none;">g. PMOS</td> <td style="border: none;">h. BILMOS</td> </tr> </table>										a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	d. ID	e. Grade	f. DOR	g. PMOS	h. BILMOS																																
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<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none; width: 33%;"> <b>5. Special Case:</b>            a. Adverse <input type="checkbox"/>    b. Not Observed <input type="checkbox"/>    c. Extended <input type="checkbox"/> </td> <td style="border: none; width: 33%;"> <b>6. Marine Subject Of:</b>            a. Commendatory Material <input type="checkbox"/>    b. Derogatory Material <input type="checkbox"/>    c. Disciplinary Action <input type="checkbox"/> </td> <td style="border: none; width: 33%;"> <b>7. Recommended For Promotion:</b>            a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/>    b. No <input type="checkbox"/>    c. N/A <input type="checkbox"/> </td> </tr> </table>										<b>5. Special Case:</b> a. Adverse <input type="checkbox"/> b. Not Observed <input type="checkbox"/> c. Extended <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>6. Marine Subject Of:</b> a. Commendatory Material <input type="checkbox"/> b. Derogatory Material <input type="checkbox"/> c. Disciplinary Action <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>7. Recommended For Promotion:</b> a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> b. No <input type="checkbox"/> c. N/A <input type="checkbox"/>																																					
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<b>8. Special Information:</b>				<b>9. Duty Preference:</b> a. Code    b. Descriptive Title																																													
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c. CFT	f. Body Fat	i. Future Use	3rd																																														
<b>10. Reporting Senior:</b> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none;">a. Last Name</td> <td style="border: none;">b. Init</td> <td style="border: none;">c. Service</td> <td style="border: none;">d. ID</td> <td style="border: none;">e. Grade</td> <td style="border: none;">f. Duty Assignment</td> </tr> </table>										a. Last Name	b. Init	c. Service	d. ID	e. Grade	f. Duty Assignment																																		
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<b>11. Reviewing Officer:</b> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none;">a. Last Name</td> <td style="border: none;">b. Init</td> <td style="border: none;">c. Service</td> <td style="border: none;">d. ID</td> <td style="border: none;">e. Grade</td> <td style="border: none;">f. Duty Assignment</td> </tr> </table>										a. Last Name	b. Init	c. Service	d. ID	e. Grade	f. Duty Assignment																																		
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<b>C. BILLET ACCOMPLISHMENTS</b>																																																	

1. Marine Reported On:				2. Occasion and Period Covered:			
a. Last Name		b. First Name		c. MI		d. ID	
a. OCC		b. From		To			
<b>D. MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT</b>							
1. PERFORMANCE. Results achieved during the reporting period. How well those duties inherent to a Marine's billet, plus all additional duties, formally and informally assigned, were carried out. Reflects a Marine's aptitude, competence, and commitment to the unit's success above personal reward. Indicators are time and resource management, task prioritization, and tenacity to achieve positive ends consistently.							
ADV	Meets requirements of billet and additional duties. Aptitude, commitment, and competence meet expectations. Results maintain status quo.	Consistently produces quality results while measurably improving unit performance. Habitually makes effective use of time and resources; improves billet procedures and products. Positive impact extends beyond billet expectations.	Results far surpass expectations. Recognizes and exploits new resources; creates opportunities. Emulated; sought after as an expert with influence beyond unit. Impact significant; innovative approaches to problems produce significant gains in quality and efficiency.	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. PROFICIENCY. Demonstrates technical knowledge and practical skill in the execution of the Marine's overall duties. Combines training, education and experience. Translates skills into actions which contribute to accomplishing tasks and missions. Imparts knowledge to others. Grade dependent.							
ADV	Competent. Possesses the requisite range of skills and knowledge commensurate with grade and experience. Understands and articulates basic functions related to mission accomplishment.	Demonstrates mastery of all required skills. Expertise, education and experience consistently enhance mission accomplishment. Innovative troubleshooter and problem solver. Effectively imparts skills to subordinates.	True expert in field. Knowledge and skills impact far beyond those of peers. Translates broad-based education and experience into forward thinking, innovative actions. Makes immeasurable impact on mission accomplishment. Peerless teacher, selflessly imparts expertise to subordinates, peers, and seniors.	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JUSTIFICATION:							
<b>E. INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER</b>							
1. COURAGE. Moral or physical strength to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Personal acceptance of responsibility and accountability, placing conscience over competing interests regardless of consequences. Conscious, overriding decision to risk bodily harm or death to accomplish the mission or save others. The will to persevere despite uncertainty.							
ADV	Demonstrates inner strength and acceptance of responsibility commensurate with scope of duties and experience. Willing to face moral or physical challenges in pursuit of mission accomplishment.	Guided by conscience in all actions. Proven ability to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Exhibits bravery in the face of adversity and uncertainty. Not deterred by morally difficult situations or hazardous responsibilities.	Uncommon bravery and capacity to overcome obstacles and inspire others in the face of moral dilemma or life-threatening danger. Demonstrated under the most adverse conditions. Selfless. Always places conscience over competing interests regardless of physical or personal consequences.	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. EFFECTIVENESS UNDER STRESS. Thinking, functioning and leading effectively under conditions of physical and/or mental pressure. Maintaining composure appropriate for the situation, while displaying steady purpose of action, enabling one to inspire others while continuing to lead under adverse conditions. Physical and emotional strength, resilience and endurance are elements.							
ADV	Exhibits discipline and stability under pressure. Judgment and effective problem-solving skills are evident.	Consistently demonstrates maturity, mental agility and willpower during periods of adversity. Provides order to chaos through the application of intuition, problem-solving skills, and leadership. Composure reassures others.	Demonstrates seldom-matched presence of mind under the most demanding circumstances. Stabilizes any situation through the resolute and timely application of direction, focus and personal presence.	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. INITIATIVE. Action in the absence of specific direction. Seeing what needs to be done and acting without prompting. The instinct to begin a task and follow through energetically on one's own accord. Being creative, proactive and decisive. Transforming opportunity into action.							
ADV	Demonstrates willingness to take action in the absence of specific direction. Acts commensurate with grade, training and experience.	Self-motivated and action-oriented. Foresight and energy consistently transform opportunity into action. Develops and pursues creative, innovative solutions. Acts without prompting. Self-starter.	Highly motivated and proactive. Displays exceptional awareness of surroundings and environment. Uncanny ability to anticipate mission requirements and quickly formulate original, far-reaching solutions. Always takes decisive, effective action.	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
JUSTIFICATION:							
NAVMC 10835B (Rev. 4-03) (P)							

1. Marine Reported On:				2. Occasion and Period Covered:			
a. Last Name		b. First Name		c. MI		d. ID	
				a. OCC		b. From To	

**F. LEADERSHIP**

1. LEADING SUBORDINATES. The inseparable relationship between leader and led. The application of leadership principles to provide direction and motivate subordinates. Using authority, persuasion and personality to influence subordinates to accomplish assigned tasks. Sustaining motivation and morale while maximizing subordinates' performance.

ADV	Engaged; provides instructions and directs execution. Seeks to accomplish mission in ways that sustain motivation and morale. Actions contribute to unit effectiveness.	Achieves a highly effective balance between direction and delegation. Effectively tasks subordinates and clearly delineates standards expected. Enhances performance through constructive supervision. Fosters motivation and enhances morale. Builds and sustains teams that successfully meet mission requirements. Encourages initiative and candor among subordinates.	Promotes creativity and energy among subordinates by striking the ideal balance of direction and delegation. Achieves highest levels of performance from subordinates by encouraging individual initiative. Engenders willing subordination, loyalty, and trust that allow subordinates to overcome their perceived limitations. Personal leadership fosters highest levels of motivation and morale, ensuring mission accomplishment even in the most difficult circumstances.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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2. DEVELOPING SUBORDINATES. Commitment to train, educate, and challenge all Marines regardless of race, religion, ethnic background, or gender. Mentorship. Cultivating professional and personal development of subordinates. Developing team players and esprit de corps. Ability to combine teaching and coaching. Creating an atmosphere tolerant of mistakes in the course of learning.

ADV	Maintains an environment that allows personal and professional development. Ensures subordinates participate in all mandated development programs.	Develops and institutes innovative programs, to include PME, that emphasize personal and professional development of subordinates. Challenges subordinates to exceed their perceived potential thereby enhancing unit morale and effectiveness. Creates an environment where all Marines are confident to learn through trial and error. As a mentor, prepares subordinates for increased responsibilities and duties.	Widely recognized and emulated as a teacher, coach and leader. Any Marine would desire to serve with this Marine because they know they will grow personally and professionally. Subordinate and unit performance far surpassed expected results due to MRO's mentorship and team building talents. Attitude toward subordinate development is infectious, extending beyond the unit.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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3. SETTING THE EXAMPLE. The most visible facet of leadership: how well a Marine serves as a role model for all others. Personal action demonstrates the highest standards of conduct, ethical behavior, fitness, and appearance. Bearing, demeanor, and self-discipline are elements.

ADV	Maintains Marine Corps standards for appearance, weight, and uniform wear. Sustains required level of physical fitness. Adheres to the tenets of the Marine Corps core values.	Personal conduct on and off duty reflects highest Marine Corps standards of integrity, bearing and appearance. Character is exceptional. Actively seeks self-improvement in wide-ranging areas. Dedication to duty and professional example encourage others' self-improvement efforts.	Model Marine, frequently emulated. Exemplary conduct, behavior, and actions are tone-setting. An inspiration to subordinates, peers, and seniors. Remarkable dedication to improving self and others.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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4. ENSURING WELL-BEING OF SUBORDINATES. Genuine interest in the well-being of Marines. Efforts enhance subordinates' ability to concentrate/focus on unit mission accomplishment. Concern for family readiness is inherent. The importance placed on welfare of subordinates is based on the belief that Marines take care of their own.

ADV	Deals confidently with issues pertinent to subordinate welfare and recognizes suitable courses of action that support subordinates' well-being. Applies available resources, allowing subordinates to effectively concentrate on the mission.	Instills and/or reinforces a sense of responsibility among junior Marines for themselves and their subordinates. Actively fosters the development of and uses support systems for subordinates which improve their ability to contribute to unit mission accomplishment. Efforts to enhance subordinate welfare improve the unit's ability to accomplish its mission.	Noticeably enhances subordinates well-being, resulting in a measurable increase in unit effectiveness. Maximizes unit and base resources to provide subordinates with the best support available. Proactive approach serves to energize unit members to "take care of their own," thereby correcting potential problems before they can hinder subordinates' effectiveness. Widely recognized for techniques and policies that produce results and build morale. Builds strong family atmosphere. Puts motto <i>Mission first, Marines always</i> , into action.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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5. COMMUNICATION SKILLS. The efficient transmission and receipt of thoughts and ideas that enable and enhance leadership. Equal importance given to listening, speaking, writing, and critical reading skills. Interactive, allowing one to perceive problems and situations, provide concise guidance, and express complex ideas in a form easily understood by everyone. Allows subordinates to ask questions, raise issues and concerns and venture opinions. Contributes to a leader's ability to motivate as well as counsel.

ADV	Skilled in receiving and conveying information. Communicates effectively in performance of duties.	Clearly articulates thoughts and ideas, verbally and in writing. Communication in all forms is accurate, intelligent, concise, and timely. Communicates with clarity and verve, ensuring understanding of intent or purpose. Encourages and considers the contributions of others.	Highly developed facility in verbal communication. Adept in composing written documents of the highest quality. Combines presence and verbal skills which engender confidence and achieve understanding irrespective of the setting, situation, or size of the group addressed. Displays an intuitive sense of when and how to listen.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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JUSTIFICATION:

1. Marine Reported On:				2. Occasion and Period Covered:			
a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	d. ID	a. OCC	b. From	To	

### G. INTELLECT AND WISDOM

**1. PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME).** Commitment to intellectual growth in ways beneficial to the Marine Corps. Increases the breadth and depth of warfighting and leadership aptitude. Resources include resident schools; professional qualifications and certification processes; nonresident and other extension courses; civilian educational institution coursework; a personal reading program that includes (but is not limited to) selections from the Commandant's Reading List; participation in discussion groups and military societies; and involvement in learning through new technologies.

<b>ADV</b>	Maintains currency in required military skills and related developments. Has completed or is enrolled in appropriate level of PME for grade and level of experience. Recognizes and understands new and creative approaches to service issues. Remains abreast of contemporary concepts and issues.	PME outlook extends beyond MOS and required education. Develops and follows a comprehensive personal program which includes broadened professional reading and/or academic course work; advances new concepts and ideas.	Dedicated to life-long learning. As a result of active and continuous efforts, widely recognized as an intellectual leader in professionally related topics. Makes time for study and takes advantage of all resources and programs. Introduces new and creative approaches to services issues. Engages in a broad spectrum of forums and dialogues.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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**2. DECISION MAKING ABILITY.** Viable and timely problem solution. Contributing elements are judgment and decisiveness. Decisions reflect the balance between an optimal solution and a satisfactory, workable solution that generates tempo. Decisions are made within the context of the commander's established intent and the goal of mission accomplishment. Anticipation, mental agility, intuition, and success are inherent.

<b>ADV</b>	Makes sound decisions leading to mission accomplishment. Actively collects and evaluates information and weighs alternatives to achieve timely results. Confidently approaches problems; accepts responsibility for outcomes.	Demonstrates mental agility; effectively prioritizes and solves multiple complex problems. Analytical abilities enhanced by experience, education, and intuition. Anticipates problems and implements viable, long-term solutions. Steadfast, willing to make difficult decisions.	Widely recognized and sought after to resolve the most critical, complex problems. Seldom matched analytical and intuitive abilities; accurately foresees unexpected problems and arrives at well-timed decisions despite fog and friction. Completely confident approach to all problems. Masterfully strikes a balance between the desire for perfect knowledge and greater tempo.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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**3. JUDGMENT.** The discretionary aspect of decision making. Draws on core values, knowledge, and personal experience to make wise choices. Comprehends the consequences of contemplated courses of action.

<b>ADV</b>	Majority of judgments are measured, circumspect, relevant and correct.	Decisions are consistent and uniformly correct, tempered by consideration of their consequences. Able to identify, isolate and assess relevant factors in the decision making process. Opinions sought by others. Subordinates personal interest in favor of impartiality.	Decisions reflect exceptional insight and wisdom beyond this Marine's experience. Counsel sought by all; often an arbiter. Consistent, superior judgment inspires the confidence of seniors.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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JUSTIFICATION:

### H. FULFILLMENT OF EVALUATION RESPONSIBILITIES

**1. EVALUATIONS.** The extent to which this officer serving as a reporting official conducted, or required others to conduct, accurate, uninflated, and timely evaluations.

<b>ADV</b>	Occasionally submitted untimely or administratively incorrect evaluations. As RS, submitted one or more reports that contained inflated markings. As RO, concurred with one or more reports from subordinates that were returned by HQMC for inflated marking.	Prepared uninflated evaluations which were consistently submitted on time. Evaluations accurately described performance and character. Evaluations contained no inflated markings. No reports returned by RO or HQMC for inflated marking. No subordinates' reports returned by HQMC for inflated marking. Few, if any, reports were returned by RO or HQMC for administrative errors. Section Cs were void of superlatives. Justifications were specific, verifiable, substantive, and where possible, quantifiable and supported the markings given.	No reports submitted late. No reports returned by either RO or HQMC for administrative correction or inflated markings. No subordinates' reports returned by HQMC for administrative correction or inflated markings. Returned procedurally or administratively incorrect reports to subordinates for correction. As RO nonconcurred with all inflated reports.	N/O
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A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>	E <input type="checkbox"/>	F <input type="checkbox"/>	G <input type="checkbox"/>	H <input type="checkbox"/>
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JUSTIFICATION:



1. Marine Reported On:				2. Occasion and Period Covered:			
a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	d. ID	a. OCC	b. From	To	

**I. DIRECTED AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**J. CERTIFICATION**

1. I CERTIFY that to the best of my knowledge and belief all entries made hereon are true and without prejudice or partiality and that I have provided a signed copy of this report to the Marine Reported on.

(Signature of Reporting Senior) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date in YYYYMMDD format) \_\_\_\_\_

2. I ACKNOWLEDGE the adverse nature of this report and

☐ I have no statement to make

☐ I have attached a statement

(Signature of Marine Reported On) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date in YYYYMMDD format) \_\_\_\_\_

**K. REVIEWING OFFICER COMMENTS**

1. OBSERVATION: ☐ Sufficient ☐ Insufficient

2. EVALUATION: ☐ Concur ☐ Do Not Concur

3. COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT: Provide a comparative assessment of potential by placing an "X" in the appropriate box. In marking the comparison, consider all Marines of this grade whose professional abilities are known to you personally.

DESCRIPTION	COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT
THE EMINENTLY QUALIFIED MARINE	<input type="checkbox"/>
ONE OF THE FEW EXCEPTIONALLY QUALIFIED MARINES	<input type="checkbox"/>
ONE OF THE MANY HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS WHO FORM THE MAJORITY OF THIS GRADE	<input type="checkbox"/>
A QUALIFIED MARINE	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNSATISFACTORY	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. REVIEWING OFFICER COMMENTS: Amplify your comparative assessment mark; evaluate potential for continued professional development to include: promotion, command, assignment, resident PME, and retention; and put Reporting Senior marks and comments in perspective.

5. I CERTIFY that to the best of my knowledge and belief all entries made hereon are true and without prejudice or partiality.

(Signature of Reviewing Officer) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date in YYYYMMDD format) \_\_\_\_\_

6. I ACKNOWLEDGE the adverse nature of this report and

☐ I have no statement to make

☐ I have attached a statement

(Signature of Marine Reported On) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date in YYYYMMDD format) \_\_\_\_\_

**L. ADDENDUM PAGE**

ADDENDUM PAGE ATTACHED: ☐ YES

**USMC FITNESS REPORT**  
NAVMC 11297 (Rev. 4-03) (P)

**ADDENDUM PAGE**

DO NOT STAPLE  
THIS FORM

**A. PURPOSE**

1. Marine Reported On:					2. Occasion and Period Covered:		
a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. M.I.	d. ID	e. Grade	a. OCC	b. From	To
3. Purpose:							
a. Continuation of Comments Justification	Section I	RO	b. Accelerated Promotion Justification	c. Adverse Report MRO Statement	3rd Officer	Sighter	d. Admin Review
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Supplemental Material
							f. HQMC Use
							<input type="checkbox"/>

**B. TEXT**

**C. SUBMITTED BY**

1. a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	2. ID	3. Service	4. Grade
Signature				<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
				(Date in YYYYMMDD format)	


**D. GENERAL/SENIOR OFFICER ADVERSE REPORT SIGHTING**

1. a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	2. ID	3. Service	4. Grade
5. Title				<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	
Signature				(Date in YYYYMMDD format)	

PAGE  OF

## APPENDIX B. PROFICIENCY AND CONDUCT MARKING TOOL

The following image is the Proficiency and Conduct Marking Tool used by the Marine Corps. United States Marine Corps (n.d.).


**PROFICIENCY / CONDUCT MARKS**

ProCon Occasion: December promotions / Promotion to Cpl or Sgt for 30 Nov 2017

---

[Reports: Awards Report](#) | 
 [Basic Individual Report](#) | 
 [Basic Training Report](#) | 
 [Education Report](#) | 
 [Record of Service](#)

---

Members

Pro/Con Occasion: **Draft/Public**

Status:

Rank: **CPL** Name: [REDACTED]

PMOS: **3521** DOR: **Wed Jun 01 00:00:00 CDT 2016** EAS: **Fri Sep 07 00:00:00 CDT 2018**

ECC: **Fri Sep 07 00:00:00 CDT 2018** Time in Grade: **1 Mon** Time in Service: **3 Yrs 4 Mons**

Duty Status: **1 FULL DUTY STATUS** Promotion Restricted: **NO** Unit: **[REDACTED] HQS4-MTUT**

---

Command Recommendation Pro: **4.5** Con: **4.4**

---

Recommendation: PRO  CON  [Pro Con Guidelines](#)

Comments:

---

Remark History:

Submitter Name	Pro	Con	Rec Date	Action	Comments
[REDACTED]	4.5	4.4	11 Dec 2017 @ 1550	Made Command Marks	SNM is a solid performer and NCO.
[REDACTED]	4.5	4.4	11 Dec 2017 @ 1550	Made Public	SNM is a solid performer and NCO.
[REDACTED]	4.5	4.4	11 Dec 2017 @ 1502	Made Command Marks	Concur with SNCOIC and OIC.
[REDACTED]	4.5	4.4	11 Dec 2017 @ 1502	Made Public	Concur with SNCOIC and OIC.
[REDACTED]	4.5	4.4	11 Dec 2017 @ 1403	Made Command Marks	Concur with leadership. SNM performs his duties with professionalism and can be counted on to complete tasks in a timely manner.
[REDACTED]	4.5	4.4	11 Dec 2017 @ 1403	Made Public	Concur with leadership. SNM performs his duties with professionalism and can be counted on to complete tasks in a timely manner.
[REDACTED]	4.5	4.4	08 Dec 2017 @ 1547	Made Public	I concur with leadership. A solid Marine NCO that continues to excel at his daily duties.
[REDACTED]	4.5	4.4	08 Dec 2017 @ 1516	Made Public	SNM holds the billet of Layettes NCO, he performs the duties expected and strives to better the area of Layettes. SNM will continue to grow and be a good leader for his younger Marines to follow.

---

Other Occasions Member is a part of:

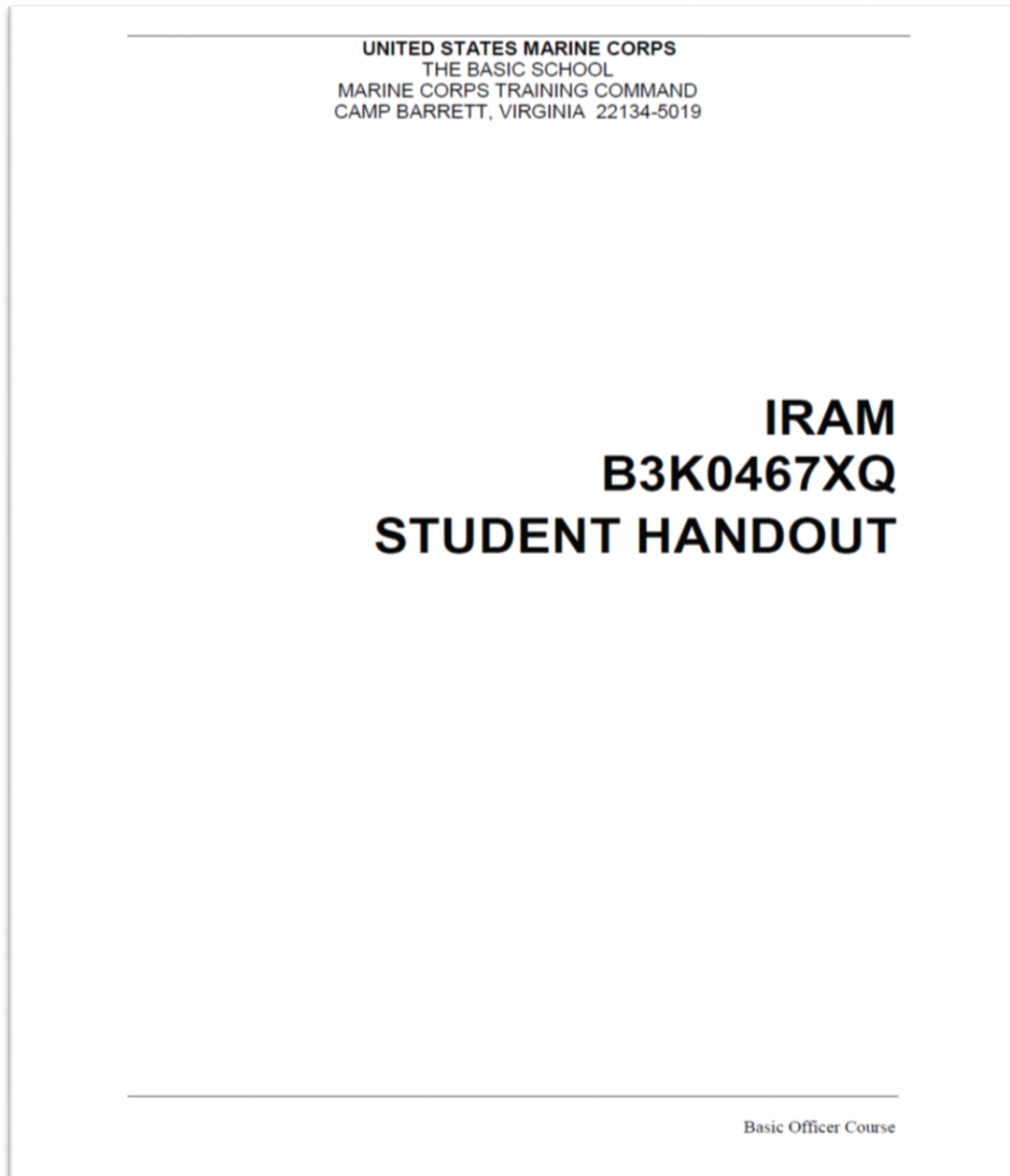
Member is not in any other occasions

2.3.2.22.10734.88 | tfas-p2s-04
 [Contact Help Desk](#) | [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

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## **APPENDIX C. PROFICIENCY AND CONDUCT MARKS**

The following document is from the Basic Officer Course training course on Proficiency and Conduct marks from the United States Marine Corps (2016).



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**IRAM**


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**Introduction**

As you further develop your understanding of the authority you possess as a leader of Marines, you must keep in mind that your authority must be tempered by the knowledge of the responsibility inherent in leadership. One of the areas of leadership where this will be evident on a regular basis is the responsibility to ensure that you know and understand how to navigate through MCO P1070.12K, the Individual Records Administration Manual (IRAM).

**Importance**

As officers, it is imperative that we understand how to manage personnel records and follow the IRAM to properly document misconduct or appropriately score pro/con marks. The IRAM gives extensive guidance on how to properly write a Page 11 with the appropriate verbiage pending the circumstance. In some cases, you will be forced to issue a 6105 counseling. Grading Proficiency/Conduct marks is a critical responsibility of an officer as it will determine the outcome of a Marine's career.

**In This Lesson**

Topic	Page
Page 11	3
6105 Counseling	4
Proficiency/Conduct marks	5

---

**Learning Objectives**


---

**Terminal Learning Objectives:**

TBS-LDR-1003. Without the aid of references, describe the factors affecting career development, without omitting key components.

**Enabling Learning Objectives:**

Given an evaluation, identify the process for determining proficiency/conduct marks without omission. (TBS-LDR-1003h)

Given a scenario and MCO P11070.12k (IRAM), reference the IRAM to ensure compliance with the MCO. (TBS-LDR-1003k)

Given an evaluation, identify differences between Page 11 and "6105" entries without omission. (TBS-LDR-1003i)

---

**Page 11**

---

Page 11s are a way of formally documenting material, both adverse and routine in nature. Most of the time, you will associate Page 11s with adverse material, but this isn't always the case. For instance, someone could receive a Page 11 for annotating that they understand the Marine Corps' policy on motorcycles – which is not adverse. Below are some of the most likely Page 11s you'll see in the Fleet. Refer to Chapter 4 of the IRAM for correct format and verbiage.

<b>Entries</b>	Page 11 is the administrative remarks page located in a Service Record Book / Official Military Personnel File. Page 11 entries may or may not be adverse. Entries should be reduced to the <b>briefest</b> possible form. Entries should always be professional; free from <i>italics</i> , <b>bold text</b> , exclamation points, name calling, etc.
<b>Mandatory</b>	<b>Mandatory adverse</b> Page 11 entries include: Not recommended for promotion entries Promotion restriction entries Confirmed incidences of illegal drug abuse Alcohol abuse <b>Sample entries are located in Paragraph 4006 of the IRAM.</b>
<b>Other</b>	Marines who are retained or receive a suspended discharge via an Administrative Separation case. Marines who completed or were dropped from drug/alcohol rehab. Marines who attended anger management classes.

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## 6105 Counseling Statements

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Paragraph 6105 in the Separations Manual (MCO P1900.16F/6105) requires leaders to make reasonable efforts to identify and address Marines' deficiencies help them overcome the deficiencies before proceedings are initiated to separate the Marine from the Marine Corps. A "6105" counseling statement is a first step in this counseling and rehabilitation process. 6105s are formatted similar to Page 11s, but serve a different function.

### Elements

- Written notification concerning deficiency or impairment.
- Specific recommendations for corrective action and sources of further assistance.
- Comprehensive explanation of the consequences if they fail to successfully take the recommended corrective action.
- Reasonable opportunity for the Marine to undertake the recommended corrective action.
- ***If any of these elements are missing from the 6105, the system hasn't been followed and the administrative requirement for separation has not yet been satisfied!***

### Things to document

- 
- Commander's discretion.
  - Diagnosis of a personality disorder.
  - Suicide attempt or gesture.
  - Misconduct (late to work, alcohol-related misconduct, etc.).
  - Unsatisfactory performance of duties.
  - After a Non-Judicial Punishment proceeding in which the Marine was found guilty.
  - Upon assignment to weight control

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## Sample 6105

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     [Date] . Counseled this date concerning the following misconduct, specifically, violation of article 86 of the UCMJ in that I was 25 minutes late to work. Recommendations for corrective action are: arrive at my appointed place of duty on time; comply with all military rules and regulations; do not violate the UCMJ or federal state/local statutes, and to seek assistance, which is available through the chain of command. Failure to take corrective action and any further violations of the UCMJ may result in judicial or adverse administrative action, including but not limited to administrative separation. I was advised that within 5 working days after acknowledging this entry I may submit a written rebuttal which will be filed on the document side of the service record. I choose (to) (not to) make such a statement.



### Proficiency and Conduct Marks

Guidelines for proficiency and conduct marks ("Pro Cons") can be found in Chapter 4, Paragraph 4005 in the IRAM. They are issued to Marines in the grades of Private – Corporal and are directly correlated to a Marine's performance and conduct as a Marine.

#### Importance

- Feedback on job performance
- Composite score computation
- Promotion
- Billet consideration

#### Table of Occasions

Occasion	Regular	Reserve
Transfer	TR	TR
Promotion to Corporal or Sergeant	PR	PR
Reduction	RD	RD
Discharge	DC	DC
TO TAD (excess of 30 days)	TD	--
TAD Complete	TC	--
Change of Primary Duty	CD	CD
Service School Completion	SC	SC
Semiannual	SA	--
Annual	--	AN
Recommended	RE	RE

#### Proficiency Occasions

- Technical skill
- Specialized knowledge
- Mission accomplishment
- Leadership
- Intellect and wisdom
- Individual character
- Physical fitness
- Personal appearance
- Marine Corps Institute (MCI) courses
- Professional military education (PME)

**Proficiency and Conduct Marks (Continued)**

MARK	CORRESPONDING ADJECTIVE RATING	STANDARDS OF PROFICIENCY
0.0 to 1.9	Unacceptable	Does unacceptable work in most duties, generally undependable; needs considerable assistance and close supervision on even the simplest assignment.
2.0 to 2.9	Unsatisfactory	Does acceptable work in some of the duties but cannot be depended upon. Needs assistance and close supervision on all but the simplest assignments.
3.0 to 3.9	Below Average	Handles routine matters acceptably but needs close supervision when performing duties not of a routine nature.
4.0 to 4.4	Average	Can be depended upon to discharge regular duties thoroughly and competently but usually needs assistance in dealing with problems not of a routine nature.
4.5 to 4.8	Excellent	Does excellent work in all regular duties, but needs assistance in dealing with extremely difficult or unusual assignments.
4.9 to 5.0	Outstanding	Does superior work in all duties. Even extremely difficult or unusual assignments can be given with full confidence that they will be handled in a thoroughly competent manner.

### Proficiency and Conduct Marks (Continued)

- Conduct Occasions**
- Obedience
  - Personal appearance
  - Influence on others
  - Intellect and wisdom
  - Physical fitness
  - Technical skills
  - General bearing
  - Leadership
  - Interest
  - Reliability
  - Individual character
  - Cooperation

MARK	CORRESPONDING ADJECTIVE RATING	STANDARDS OF CONDUCT
0.0 to 1.9	Unacceptable	Habitual offender. Conviction by general, special, or more than one summary court-martial. Give a mark of "0" upon declaration of desertion. Ordered to confinement pursuant to sentence of court-martial. Two or more punitive reductions in grade.
2.0 to 2.9	Unsatisfactory	No special court-martial. Not more than one summary court-martial. Not more than two nonjudicial punishments. Punitive reduction in grade.
3.0 to 3.9	Below Average	No court-martial. Not more than one nonjudicial punishment. No favorable impression of the qualities listed in paragraph 4007.6a. Failure to make satisfactory progress while assigned to the weight control or military appearance program. Conduct such as not to impair appreciably one's usefulness or the efficiency of the command, but conduct not sufficient to merit an honorable discharge.
4.0 to 4.4	Average	No offenses. No unfavorable impressions as to attitude, interests, cooperation, obedience, after-effects of intemperance, courtesy and consideration, and observance of regulations.
4.5 to 4.8	Excellent	No offense. Positive favorable impressions of the qualities listed in paragraph 4007.6a. Demonstrates reliability, good influence, sobriety, obedience, and industry.
4.9 to 5.0	Outstanding	No offenses. Exhibits to an outstanding degree the qualities listed in paragraph 4007.6a. Observes spirit as well as letter of orders and regulations. Demonstrates positive effect on others by example and persuasion.

## Summary

As a leader of Marines, you are responsible for the future longevity of the Marine Corps. Ensuring that you are properly documenting events per the IRAM, and grading accurate Pro's/Con's ensures that we are retaining the best Marines possible in the Corps. While official counseling have many technical aspects, never hesitate to research the IRAM to ensure it is accurate, or utilize your Company First Sergeant for their expertise.

## References

Reference Number or Author	Reference Title
MCO P1000.6_	Assignment, Classification, and Travel System Manual (ACTS MANUAL)
MCO P10701.12_	Marine Corps Individual Records Administration Manual
MCO P1400.32_	Marine Corps Promotion Manual, Volume 2, Enlisted Promotions (MARCORPPROMMAN, VOL 2, ENLPROM)

## Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Term or Acronym	Definition or Identification
Pros/Cons	Proficiency/Conduct
IRAM	Individual Records Administration Manual
TAD	Temporary Additional Duty
UCMJ	Uniform Code of Military Justice

## Notes

[illegible]

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