LEVEL II

Research Problem Review 77-14

FIELD TRYOUT OF THE ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM

Laurel W. Oliver, Roberta W. Day

CAREER DEVELOPMENT & SOLDIER PRODUCTIVITY TECHNICAL AREA

U. S. Army
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Army Project Number
2Q762717A766

Career Progression
Systems

ARI - Research Problem Review 77-14

FIELD TRYOUT OF THE ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION AND PLANNING SYSTEM

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December 1977

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Research Problem Reviews are special reports to military management. They are usually prepared to meet requests for research results bearing on specific management problems. A limited distribution is made--primarily to the operating agencies directly involved.

FOREWORD

Research done in the Career Development and Soldier Productivity Technical Area of the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) supports the Army's manpower development in both officer and enlisted forces. In 1971 the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER) requested support from ARI to deal with issues in implementing the newly organized Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS). One facet of this request dealt with developing an acceptable and useful career information system to meet the expressed needs of the officers and career managers. The present Research Problem Review gives the results of preliminary development in terms of a field tryout of the first units of ARI's resulting computer-aided Officer Career Information and Planning System (OCIPS).

The research is responsive to the requirements of the DCSPER; it was accomplished under Army Project 2Q762717A766, FY 76.

J. E. UHLANER,
Technical Director

FIELD TRYOUT OF THE ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM

BRIEF

Requirement:

To assess operating difficulties, in a realistic setting, of the first three modules developed for the computer-aided Army Officer Career Information & Planning System (OCIPS); and to obtain initial reactions on the system's acceptability and usefulness.

Procedure:

The participating 52 lieutenants and captains first filled out an anonymous pretest questionnaire which requested information about their career goals, alternate specialty preferences, and sources of career information. Then they each used three OCIPS modules at a computer terminal: FORESIGHT, teaching principles of career planning; OVERVIEW, presenting general information on the Army officer career structure; and ALTERNATE, utilizing a data bank of information on preferences, education, and other characteristics of officers in various primary and alternate specialties. Finally, the participants indicated their reactions on posttest questionnaires.

Findings:

In general, officers responded very favorably to the OCIPS, indicated they felt a need for career planning information, and felt the computer was useful in delivering this information. No major operating problems were encountered.

Utilization of findings:

Favorable results in the preliminary tryout encouraged the continuing research on additional aspects of the system.

FIELD TRYOUT OF THE ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM

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FIELD TRYOUT OF THE ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

In response to DCSPER's request for research that will support the career development requirements of the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS), the Army Research Institute is conducting research on the concepts, approach and technology of a computer-aided Officer Career Information and Planning System (OCIPS). OCIPS is part of on-going research by ARI on the broad problems of officer career development in relation to the differential career development options of OPMS. Some of the background of the requirement for OCIPS is provided in Appendix A, and a brief description of the computer software system ARI developed to support research on the OCIPS is in Appendix B.[1]

To date, three modules, or units of interactive computer dialogues, have been created and integrated into OCIPS:

1) "FORESIGHT"
2) "OVERVIEW"
3) "ALTERNATE"

These modules allow officers to "converse" with the computer concerning various aspects of their career development.

"FORESIGHT" is designed to teach the junior officer general principles of career planning; "OVERVIEW" delivers general information about the Army officer career structure; "ALTERNATE" allows the officer to tap a large data base on the alternate specialty designations made in 1975. The "ALTERNATE" data base contains information on the characteristics (primary specialty, education level, undergraduate major, graduate major, expressed preferences, or combinations of these factors) of officers who receive various alternate specialty designations. Information requested by the officer is presented in terms of characteristics (primary specialty, major, etc.) which the user inputs to the system.

These three modules were the focus of a field tryout at Ft. Benning, Georgia, during the period 25 October to 12 November 1976; additional modules are being developed. The purpose of this field tryout was to (1) assess operating difficulties of such a system in a realistic setting and (2) obtain some initial reactions to acceptability and usefulness from a small sample of the officer population for which the system was designed.

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[1] Sally Van Nostrand, who prepared Appendix B, has made numerous significant contributions to this project as the computer science team member in charge of applications programming.

METHOD

SUBJECTS

Of the 52 Army officers who participated in the tryout, 24 were lieutenants (both 2LT and 1LT) and 28 were captains. A breakdown of the 52 officers by type and grade follows:

	LT	CPT	TOTAL
Infantry Officers, Students	4	15	19
Infantry Officers, Non-students	3	9	12
Officers of other branches	17	4	21

Of the 21 non-Infantry officers who used the system: four officers were from other combat arms specialties; five officers had Audio-Visual Instructional Technology as a primary specialty; there were two officers each from the Engineer, Combat Communications-Electronics, and Finance primary specialties; and the remaining six officers represented various other primary specialties.

All officers were identified only by a code of their own choosing and were assured of their anonymity. They all participated on a volunteer basis but were given permission to be absent from other requirements for the allotted time by the Infantry School management.

PROCEDURE

Officers were allowed three hours in which to complete a pretest questionnaire, use the three OCIPS modules at a computer terminal, complete a posttest questionnaire after each module, and participate in a voluntary debriefing interview after the third module. Only a few officers were unable to stay for three hours or complete the schedule in three hours. Most of these returned at a later date. Appendix C contains copies of the pretest, posttest, and the debriefing interview forms.

Some items were included both on the pretest questionnaire (administered to officers before they used the OCIPS) and on the posttest questionnaires (completed after using each section of the system). A comparison of the officers' pretest and posttest responses to these items gives an indication of what effect the use of the system has on officer attitudes.

Variables assessed in the pretest and posttests were:

1) Sources of career information (pretest only).
2) Interest level of module content (posttests only).
3) Usefulness of module content (posttests only).
4) Understandability of module content (posttests only).
5) Accuracy of module content (posttests only).
6) Need for career information (pretest and posttests).
7) Perception of the usefulness of a computer for:

   (a) long-term career planning (pretest and "FORESIGHT" posttest).
   (b) information on the Army career structure (pretest and "OVERVIEW" posttest).
   (c) information on alternate specialties (pretest and "ALTERNATE" posttest).

8) Alternate specialty preference (pretest and "ALTERNATE" posttest).
9) Ten career information items (pretest and posttests).

Officers were encouraged to add "Comments" on the pretest and on the posttests.

The modules and associated data base were presented to the officer by means of a terminal which was connected by telephone lines to a computer at Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland. The terminal displayed information and choices to the user on a television-like screen, and the user responded by pressing keys on a teletype keyboard.

RESULTS

In general, officers responded very favorably to the Officer Career Information and Planning System, indicated they felt a need for career planning information, and felt the computer was useful for delivery of this information. Some specific findings are reported below.

SOURCES OF CAREER INFORMATION

Table D-1 in Appendix D presents the ratings officers gave various sources of career information. Previous research has revealed that officers perceive most sources of career information as less than adequate. The results of the field tryout confirmed the findings of these previous studies.

Table D-1 shows that "commanding officers" and "officers of higher grade" received the highest ratings from officers in both grades, but even these higher ratings fell between "undecided" and "moderately useful." Army sources of career information which tended to be perceived as inadequate by both lieutenants and captains were pre-commission training and officer basic course presentation. Captains also perceived as inadequate the officer advanced course presentation.

Army Pamphlet 600-3 ("Officer Professional Development and Utilization") describes the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS). Captains had a greater familiarity with this pamphlet than did lieutenants. All but one of the 28 captains had seen a copy of 600-3; only about half (13 of 24) of the lieutenants had seen the publication.

INTEREST LEVEL, USEFULNESS, UNDERSTANDABILITY AND ACCURACY OF MODULES

Following on-line use of each of the three modules, ratings revealed that most of the officers found the three modules to be interesting, useful, understandable, and accurate. In comments, captains reported that the module dealing with alternate specialty designation ("ALTERNATE") was of greater value to them than were the modules which dealt with principles of career planning ("FORESIGHT") and the structure of careers in the Army (OVERVIEW"). As a result of their longer experience in the Army, captains felt they already knew much of the content of the first two modules. However, in the interview, many said the modules would be useful to lieutenants. Tables D-2, D-3, and D-4 in Appendix D summarize the officers' reactions to using the three parts of the system.

NEED FOR CAREER INFORMATION

Table D-5 shows that officer ratings of the need for career information tended to drop slightly after using the Officer Career Information and Planning System. It appears that the system provides some of the career information officers feel they need.

USEFULNESS OF COMPUTER

Officers tended to be very favorable toward the use of a computer for information on long-term career planning, on the Army career structure, and on alternate specialty designation. In general, use of the system did not appreciably change the already favorable attitudes of officers toward the use of a computer-based system for providing career information. As Table D-6 shows, however, captains became slightly less favorable after using "FORESIGHT" and slightly more favorable after using "ALTERNATE." Captains might have realized that the information on long-term career planning contained in "FORESIGHT" is obtainable through means other than a computer -- in printed copy, say, or a programmed text. On the other hand, for the interactive "ALTERNATE" module, the power and capacity of a computer is essential because of the very large data base and the complicated searches and calculations which are required. To duplicate the information which this module can provide would require an unmanageable number of volumes of complicated tables and an impractical amount of time for the user. The differential ratings by

the captains reflected the reality of the situation: use of the simpler modules lowered their ratings, and use of the highly interactive one with a large data base of information increased their ratings of the usefulness of the computer mode in providing career information.

ALTERNATE SPECIALTY PREFERENCE

Before and after using the system, officers were asked to specify which alternate specialty they would prefer. In addition to making the choice, officers were asked to rate the degree of their certainty and satisfaction concerning the preference on a scale from 0% to 100%. Table D-7 shows the results of these ratings before and after using the system. The ratings of both certainty and satisfaction increased for both groups of officers; therefore, use of the system seemed to be effective in making officers feel more certain of and more satisfied with their preferences for an alternate specialty.

INFORMATION TEST

A 10-item test of career information was administered before and after using the system. Each item was scored right or wrong for a total possible score of ten. Results are summarized in Table D-8. Both groups increased their scores from pretest to posttest, with the captains scoring higher than the lieutenants both before and after using the system.

DEBRIEFING INTERVIEW

Humor and clarity issues. Before the tryout, a few of the officers who had been asked to review the dialogues expressed doubts about the appropriateness of the humor in the style of the dialogues. There was also some concern that users of the system would fail to realize that the information presented was based on what had occurred in the past and did not necessarily represent future Army policy and procedures. Accordingly, officers using the system were queried on these two points in the debriefing interviews. Overwhelmingly, the users enjoyed and approved of the humor; some suggested more of it was needed and only two differed. Also, there was no failure to understand the caveats with respect to the fact that the information did not necessarily represent future Army policy. With one exception, officers reported that they clearly understood that the material presented was based on past events.

User's career information and planning needs. The debriefing interviews also elicited some ideas as to what officers who used the system wanted in terms of further development of the system. Some areas mentioned:

- assignments
- OER averages
- education requirements for each specialty
- listing of jobs in each specialty
- possible career paths for specialties
- Army requirements by grade, location (geographic), and job
- promotion and school selection rates
- rules for promotion and selection boards
- current personnel management policies
- other information sources
- file review
- preference statements

These officers felt a stong need for more effective interaction with MILPERCEN, especially concerning file review, preference statements and assignments. In addition, some officers wanted the system to provide a description of MILPERCEN organization and procedures.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the field tryout at Ft. Benning the first three modules of the Officer Career Information and Planning System were viewed as acceptable and useful by a sample of junior officers (lieutenants and captains). Results can be summarized as follows:

1. Officers reported a need for a considerable amount of career information; they rated current sources of career information as only somewhat useful.

2. Officers found the content of the three modules of the system to be interesting, useful, understandable, and accurate.

3. Officers gave highly favorable ratings on the use of the computer as a mode of presenting career information.

4. Use of the system had these effects:

   - decreased the need for career information
   - increased scores on a career information test
   - increased certainty of and satisfaction with alternate specialty preference.

In addition, it was found that doubts were not substantiated concerning appropriateness of the humor in the dialogues, and understanding that the information presented did not necessarily represent future Army policy.

The sample (52 officers) used in this tryout was small and no single result in and of itself should be viewed as statistically significant. It is reasonable to expect that overall conclusions based on a larger sample would, however, bear out the following:

1. The Officer Career Information and Planning System would be acceptable to Army lieutenants and captains for the presentation of career information.

2. The Officer Career Information and Planning System would help MILPERCEN satisfy the strong need of junior officers for career information.

APPENDIX A BACKGROUND OF THE OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM

In the late 1960's, the Army began planning for the reorganization of its officer corps to better fulfill its mission demands. This reorganization into the Officer Personnel Management Systems (OPMS) changed the focus from the concept of "generalist" to "specialist" for the individual officer. Concurrently, a number of Army studies identified some of the sources of dissatisfaction in the junior officer corps (among them, Franklin Institute Study on Junior Officer Retention, Army War College Study of Military Professionalism). Basically these dissatisfactions centered about a lack of definitive information available to the officer on the requirements for separate specialization areas, on the variables which impacted on career development, and on the advantages and pitfalls in the options available to the individual officer in planning his own career development.

Recognizing these problems, the DA DCSPER, in 1971, requested research support efforts from the Army Research Institute to deal with issues in implementing OPMS. One facet of this request, that which is addressed in this preliminary report, dealt with development of an acceptable and functionally useful career information system to meet the expressed needs of the officers concerned.

Problem. A central, readily available source did not exist of accurate up-to-date career guidance information for Army officers. Information was found to be fragmented in many regulations, in officer career branches, and in other places not easily available to all officers. Officers were largely dependent on their own resources, opinions of others, and guidance obtained from a variety of sources derived from individual efforts to obtain career information and to make career decisions. DCSPER viewed this as contributing to inefficient personal career decisions and poor use of officer capabilities. These costs, in terms of utilization of valuable personnel resources and motivation, while not quantifiable were considered unacceptable for the modern Army. In view of the wide diversity of career options, rapid changes, and lack of a systematic approach to career information and planning, DCSPER requested that ARI apply available technology and conduct research to develop a more effective career information system.

Purpose. The objective was to design and evaluate an improved modern career guidance and information system for officers which would overcome the significant objections which had been expressed in the two studies named above. The improved system was to support the concepts and requirements of the new Officer Personnel Management System and to be based upon scientific approaches to career guidance.

Scope. The projected scope of the research was:

1) To survey technology and methods already developed for career counseling in the fields of education and industry, as well as civil and governmental agencies.

2) To study thoroughly the policies and procedures of OPMS and identify appropriate areas of the officer career for information and career guidance.

3) To survey a sample of officers as to their needs and opinions on officer career information and guidance.

4) To develop and analyze alternative system approaches to providing a modern career information and planning system.

5) To design components of an officer career information and planning system, including interactive dialogues and supporting data banks.

6) To evaluate developed system(s) and components in terms of criteria, to include:

a. acceptability
b. cost effectiveness

APPENDIX B EXCERPT FROM DRAFT RESEARCH MEMORANDUM, "IDEAS--INTERACTIVE DATA-DRIVEN EXPERIMENTAL ARMY SYSTEM"

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Army Research Institute Computer Center

OBJECTIVES

The research results reported here describe the development of a software approach, utilizing interactive computer dialogues and a large data base, to research on a career information system - Interactive, Data-Driven, Experimental Army System (IDEAS).

a. Original Design

Objectives for research on a career information and management system which were specified in the original research plan include:

1. Data base management techniques (large capacity, ease of update, number of different data records and files which can be accepted, etc.) must be state-of-the-art as in existing data base management systems (DBMS).

2. The interface (dialogues) between the non-computer-sophisticated officer and the data base must be easily understood and used, with no prior training, as in existing career information systems (CIS).

3. Updating, which includes addition and deletion as well as modification of dialogues, will not require system program changes, and will be made as easily and quickly as other data updates.

4. Where needed, special computations, based upon both input from the officer and data from the data base, must be allowed, with results from these computations inserted in the dialogues. These computations will not necessitate actual changes to the system programs.

5. As this system will be used in an experimental environment, detailed histories of each officer's use of the system must be kept for later analysis.

6. Accessibility of the system must not be location bound; in an operational application it must be available to Army locations on a world-wide basis.

7. All modules of the system must be data (content) independent.

b. Design of the IDEAS Software.

The design for the IDEA system required that the total system should be a large set of independent modules, each made up of general purpose programs, which may be used in various combinations, dependent upon the research needs.

Important features, incorporated in the final IDEA system design, include:

1. Dialogues

(a) The "language" used for writing dialogues may be easily mastered by anyone in a few minutes.

(b) The dialogues may be input from the card reader (called Batch Update). Batch Update should usually be used for original input of dialogues and for later corrections and modifications. The updates will be processed by the computer within a few hours, never later than by the next morning, depending upon the number of other jobs already queued for processing.

(c) Dialogue changes may be made from the CRT, interactively, even while an officer is using the system, if necessary.

(d) Both the Batch and the Interactive Dialogue Update programs will include a comprehensive set of checks (i.e., a message is given when a dialogue is input which has no branch to it, or if the dialogue contains a branch to another one which is not in the system.)

2. Data

(a) Large amounts of data will be input by Batch Update, either from the card reader or data tapes taken to the computer site.

(b) There will be a module for Interactive Update of data. Usually, however, Army personnel records are updated in such large amounts that Batch Update is by far the most practical method.

(c) At the time an application is designed, various data for later use as data validation criteria will be input. Updates will be rejected if the data do not meet the validation criteria.

3. Special Purpose Programs

(a) The dialogue writer may request that special purpose programs (application programs) for complicated data computations, branching and display be inserted for use by the dialogue module.

(b) These programs will be application dependent, not inserted as part of the IDEA system, written in the FORTRAN language, and capable of being written and debugged by a junior programmer.

(c) The application programs may, in turn, use the dialogue subsystem for additional communication with the user.

(d) A full library of data-base manipulation routines, user-interaction subroutines (other than the dialogue module), and other general purpose functions is available to these programs.

(e) All operation of these programs is completely transparent to the user.

(f) Addition, deletion or change of these special purpose programs does not affect any other applications, other special purpose programs, or even a user already using the system.

4. User History (as needed for ARI experimental research)

(a) Every interactive use of IDEAS produces a print file which shows a sequential history of every dialogue the user sees and every program entered. This file is automatically printed on the Army Research Institute (ARI) headquarters Remote Job Entry terminal and saved on the computer until deleted by ARI research scientists.

(b) Additionally, a "Log File" of each user is automatically created on the computer, at ARI's project manager's option. The special purpose programs may easily enter anything desired on these log files. Examples of items saved are order of questions asked and alternate specialties requested. These log files can be summarized, or analyzed in other ways, at a later date.

5. Data Base Management System (DBMS)

Since an original requirement of the IDEAS was that it must also be a state-of-the-art DBMS, there are functions available to the sophisticated computer user which are not available to the non-computer-sophisticated user. Previously mentioned DBMS functions are Batch and Interactive Data Update, and Dialogue Updates which are actually "special type data" updates. An additional feature is the Query and Report module. This feature does require learning a special language, but it uses English words, similar punctuation for all commands, and can be used quickly to produce reports on the data with a minimal statistical capability such as count, total, mean, minimum and maximum.

Since direct use of the DPMS functions would require training in the use of the system, the functions are not used by the officer. Instead an extra set of functions is added which are used by the application programs to retrieve data for the officer, based on previous input from the officer, as well as the question he is asking via the dialogue module. The combination of the dialogue module and the application programs provide all necessary interface between the officer user and the data base.

6. Data Security

There are several levels of data access available, ranging from "total access to change all data" to "may change no data, and may see only data provided by special purpose programs." The latter level is provided to the non-computer-sophisticated (officer) during the sign-on procedure; the special purpose programs must be designed such that they do not display personnel data except in aggregate or statistical form. Procedures exist for allowing a user to sign-on at other levels, and only the highest level user is allowed to use the Update, Query and Report, Log and Log Analysis, and add or change special purpose programs.

APPENDIX C QUESTIONNAIRES

Pretest

ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM

Directions:

For each of the items in this questionnaire, write in the answer or place a check (✓) in the blank beside your answer.

Part I - Background Information

1-6. What code have you chosen? (Select a name or number not to exceed six letters or digits.)

_____

7. What is your current grade?

____ 2LT ____ 1LT ____ CPT ____ MAJ

8-9. What is your primary specialty?

_____ _____

code no. name of primary specialty

10-11. Your time as a commissioned officer:

_____ (years)

12. From which of the following sources did you receive your commission?

____ USMA ____ ROTC

____ OCS ____ Other

13. Do you have any close relative(s) who has/have served in the Army as an officer? (e.g., parent, uncle, brother, sister)

____ Yes ____ No

If "yes," what relationship(s) to you? _____

Comments:

Part II - Career Goals

14. My present plans for making the Army a career for twenty or more years:

____ Definitely will seek a career in the Army

____ Probably will seek a career in the Army

____ Undecided about a career in the Army

____ Probably will not seek a career in the Army

____ Definitely will not seek a career in the Army

15. I am certain of my career goals--i.e., I feel that I know exactly what I want from my career.

____ Strongly agree

____ Agree

____ Undecided

____ Disagree

____ Strongly disagree

16. I feel that I can attain my career goals in an Army career.

____ Strongly agree

____ Agree

____ Undecided

____ Disagree

____ Strongly disagree

Comments:

Part III - Career Information

Please indicate below the degree to which you think you need information on the following topics:

17. How to go about long-term career planning.

____ I need no information at all.

____ I need a little information.

____ I need a moderate amount of information.

____ I need a lot of information.

____ Not sure.

18. The structure of careers in the Army.

____ I need no information at all.

____ I need a little information.

____ I need a moderate amount of information.

____ I need a lot of information.

____ Not sure.

19. How alternate specialties are designated.

____ I need no information at all.

____ I need a little information.

____ I need a moderate amount of information.

____ I need a lot of information.

____ Not sure.

Comments:

In this tryout of the Army Officer Career Information and Planning System you will be shown material relating to career planning and to the Army career structure. In a computer-aided system, you would sit down at a computer terminal and communicate with the computer via the keyboard. If you needed information on one or more of the topics listed below, to what extent do you think you would find a computer-aided system useful?

20. For information on long-term career planning, a computer-aided system would be:

____ Very useful

____ Useful

____ Undecided

____ Not very useful

____ Not at all useful

21. For information on the Army career structure, a computer-aided system would be:

____ Very useful

____ Useful

____ Undecided

____ Not very useful

____ Not at all useful

22. For information on alternate specialties, a computer-aided system would be:

____ Very useful

____ Useful

____ Undecided

____ Not very useful

____ Not at all useful

Comments:

Items 23 through 33 describe possible sources of guidance or information on your Army career. Select the number on the scale below that indicates the usefulness of each source and write the number in the blank beside that source. (Please mark each source.)

1 = Not at all useful

2 = Not very useful

3 = Undecided

4 = Moderately useful

5 = Very useful

23. ____ Assignment officer at MILPERCEN

24. ____ Your commanding officer(s)

25. ____ DA Pamphlet 600-3 ("Officer Professional Development and Utilization")

26. ____ Pre-commission training (ROTC, USMA, OCS)

27. ____ Officer Basic Course presentation

28. ____ Officer Advanced Course presentation

29. ____ Fellow officers of same grade

30. ____ Fellow officers of higher grade

31. ____ Relatives in Army

32. ____ Friends and relatives (nonmilitary)

33. Other sources:

_____

_____

Comments:

We would like to know how familiar you are with Army Pamphlet 600-3 ("Officer Professional Development and Utilization"), which describes the Officer Personnel Management System.

34. Have you ever seen a copy of 600-3?

____ Yes.

____ No.

____ Not sure whether I have or not.

35. Do you have a copy of 600-3?

____ Yes, I have a copy.

____ No, I do not have a copy.

____ Not sure whether I do or not.

36. To what extent have you actually read 600-3?

____ I have read it completely.

____ I have read it in part.

____ I have skimmed it.

____ I have never looked at its contents.

____ Not sure whether I have read it or not.

Comments:

Part IV - Alternate Specialty

37. Has your alternate specialty already been designated for you?

____ Yes

____ No

38. If "Yes" to #37, note it below:

_____ code no.

_____ name of alternate specialty

39. If "No" to #37, have you completed the form on which you indicate preferences for an alternate specialty:

____ Yes

____ No

____ Not sure

If "Yes" to #39, what preferences did you specify? (If you are not certain of your answers, place a question mark (?) after the responses.)

40. 1st preference: _____

41. 2nd preference: _____

42. 3rd preference: _____

43. 4th preference: _____

Comments:

44. Alternate specialty preference

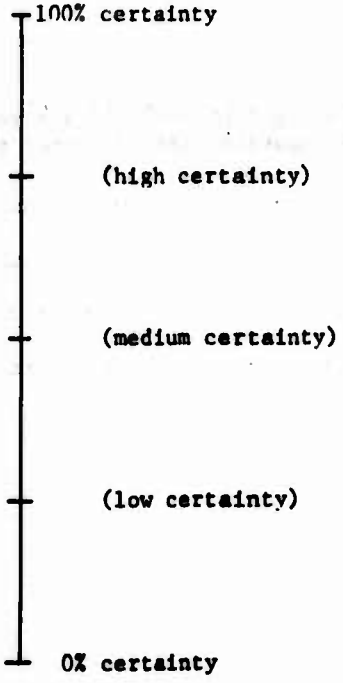
If it were necessary for you to express a preference for an alternate specialty right now, what would your first choice be? (Please respond even though you already have had an alternate specialty designated for you.)

_____ code no.

_____ (name of specialty)

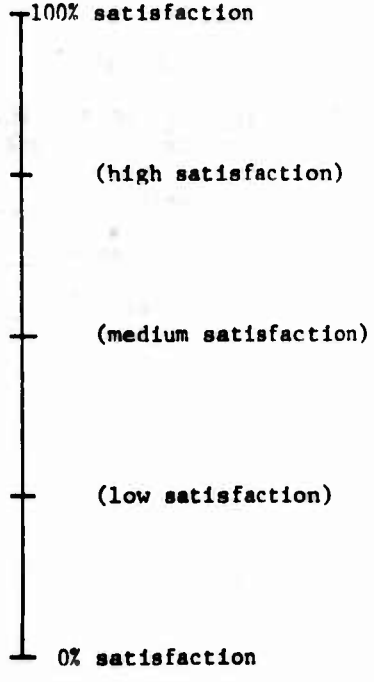
45. Certainty

How certain do you feel about this choice? Indicate your certainty by marking a short horizontal line at the appropriate level on the line below.



46. Satisfaction

How satisfied do you feel about this choice? Indicate your satisfaction by marking a short horizontal line at the appropriate level on the line below.



Part V - Information Quiz

Check the best answer to each of the following:

47. Many people don't make their important choices based on what they want from life. Usually, this is due to:

____ Choices rarely work out as planned.

____ They are trying to sabotage themselves.

____ They don't know what they want.

____ They have too many conflicting values.

48. Which of the following is an important tool for career planning?

____ knowledge of life stages

____ being able to predict the future accurately

____ having a detailed career plan, even if you're not wholly committed to it

49. If you come to a choice point and do not make a choice (e.g., do not submit a preference form), you are still exerting a strong influence on your career.

____True ____False

50. Which of the following is not a responsibility of HQDA?

____ establishing basic policy

____ selecting officers for promotion

____ providing counseling service

____ providing for officer civilian education

51. Which of the following is the most important factor in an Army officer's professional development?

____ the officer

____ the Army

____ the officer and the Army equally

____ chance or luck

52. Which of the following is correct concerning the relative emphasis on development and utilization in an officer's career?

____Development and utilization are stressed equally throughout an officer's career.

____Development is stressed in the earlier stages and utilization in the later stages of an officer's career.

____Utilization is stressed in the earlier stages and development in the later stages of an officer's career.

____There is no consistent pattern at all concerning the relative emphasis on development and utilization during an officer's career.

53. Probably the most up-to-date information concerning the designation of alternate specialties can be obtained from:

____Army Pamphlet 600-3.

____a computer module on alternate specialty selection.

____your assignment officer.

____There is no up-to-date source.

54. The number of specialties available for alternate specialty designation is approximately:

____15.

____30.

____42.

____46.

55. In general, alternate specialties are assigned:

____at the same time as primary specialties.

____at the end of the second year of service, or upon promotion to 1LT, whichever comes first.

____in about the fifth year of service.

____in about the eighth year of service.

56. Theoretically (if not in actual practice), an officer in any primary specialty can be assigned to any other specialty as his or her alternate.

____True ____False

Code _____

Posttest (FORESIGHT)

ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM - FORESIGHT

Part I - Rating of Module Content

After viewing the module on long-term career planning ("FORESIGHT"), please evaluate the module content on the following dimensions:

1. Interest level of module content:

very interesting	moderately interesting	undecided	rather uninteresting	very uninteresting

2. Usefulness of module content:

very useful	moderately useful	undecided	not very useful	not at all useful

3. Understandability of module content:

very easy to understand	moderately easy to understand	undecided	rather difficult to understand	very difficult to understand

4. Accuracy of module content:

very accurate information	moderately accurate information	undecided	rather inaccurate information	very inaccurate information

Comments:

Part II - Career Information

5. Indicate below the degree to which you feel the need at this time for additional information on long-term career planning.

____ I need no additional information.

____ I need a little more additional information.

____ I need a moderate amount of additional information.

____ I need a lot of additional information.

____ I don't know how much additional information I need.

6. For information on long-term career planning, a computer-aided system is:

____ Very useful

____ Useful

____ Undecided

____ Not very useful

____ Not at all useful

Comments:

Part III - Information Quiz

Check the best answer to each of the following:

7. If you come to a choice point and do not make a choice (e.g., do not submit a preference form), you are still exerting a strong influence on your career.

____ True ____ False

8. Many people don't make their important choices based on what they want from life. Usually, this is due to:

____ Choices rarely work out as planned.

____ They are trying to sabotage themselves.

____ They don't know what they want.

____ They have too many conflicting values.

9. Which of the following is an important tool for career planning?

____ knowledge of life stages

____ being able to predict the future accurately

____ having a detailed career plan, even if you're not wholly committed to it

Comments:

Posttest (OVERVIEW) Code _____ _____

ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM - OVERVIEW

Part I - Rating of Module Content

After viewing the module on the Army career structure ("OVERVIEW"), please evaluate the module content on the following dimensions:

1. Interest level of module content:

very interesting	moderately interesting	undecided	rather uninteresting	very uninteresting

2. Usefulness of module content:

very useful	moderately useful	undecided	not very useful	not at all useful

3. Understandability of module content:

very easy to understand	moderately easy to understand	undecided	rather difficult to understand	very difficult to understand

4. Accuracy of module content:

very accurate information	moderately accurate information	undecided	rather inaccurate information	very inaccurate information

Comments:

Part II - Career Information

5. Indicate below the degree to which you feel the need for additional information on the structure of careers in the Army:

____ I need no additional information.

____ I need a little more additional information.

____ I need a moderate amount of additional information.

____ I need a lot of additional information.

____ I don't know how much additional information I need.

6. For information on the structure of careers in the Army, a computer-aided system is:

____ Very useful

____ Useful

____ Undecided

____ Not very useful

____ Not at all useful

Comments:

Part III - Information Quiz

Check the best answer to each of the following:

7. Which of the following is the most important in an Army officer's professional development?

____ the officer

____ the Army

____ the officer and the Army equally

____ chance or luck

8. Which of the following is correct concerning the relative emphasis on development and utilization in an officer's career?

____ Development and utilization are stressed equally throughout an officer's career.

____ Development is stressed in the earlier stages and utilization in the later stages of an officer's career.

____ Utilization is stressed in the earlier stages and development in the later stages of an officer's career.

____ There is no consistent pattern at all concerning the relative emphasis on development and utilization during an officer's career.

9. Which of the following is not a responsibility for HQDA?

____ establishing basic policy

____ selecting officers for promotion

____ providing counseling service

____ providing for officer civilian education

Code _____

ARMY OFFICER CAREER INFORMATION & PLANNING SYSTEM - ALTERNATE

Part I - Rating of Module Content

After viewing the module on the designation of an alternate specialty ("ALTERNATE"), please evaluate the module content on the following dimensions:

1. Interest level of module content:

very interesting	moderately interesting	undecided	rather uninteresting	very uninteresting

2. Usefulness of module content:

very useful	moderately useful	undecided	not very useful	not at all useful

3. Understandability of module content:

very easy to understand	moderately easy to understand	undecided	rather difficult to understand	very difficult to understand

4. Accuracy of module content:

very accurate information	moderately accurate information	undecided	rather inaccurate information	very inaccurate information

Comments:

Part II - Career Information

5. Indicate below the degree to which you feel the need for additional information on the designation of an alternate specialty:

____ I need no additional information.

____ I need a little more additional information.

____ I need a moderate amount of additional information.

____ I need a lot of additional information.

____ I don't know how much additional information I need.

6. For information on the designation of an alternate specialty, a computer-aided system is:

____ Very useful

____ Useful

____ Undecided

____ Not very useful

____ Not at all useful

Comments:

Part III - Alternate Specialty Preference

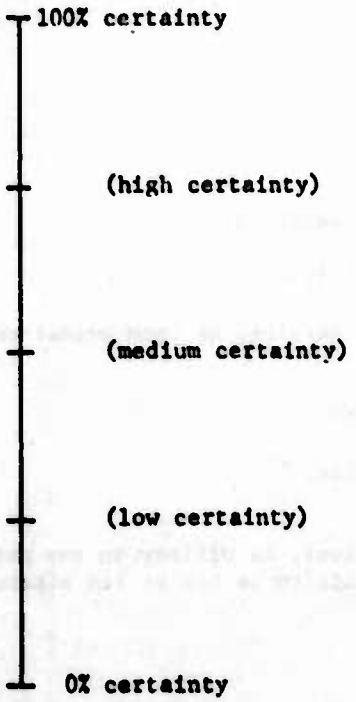
7. If it were necessary for you to express a preference for an alternate specialty right now, what would your first choice be? (Please respond even though you already have had an alternate specialty designated for you.)

_____ (code no.)

_____ (name of specialty)

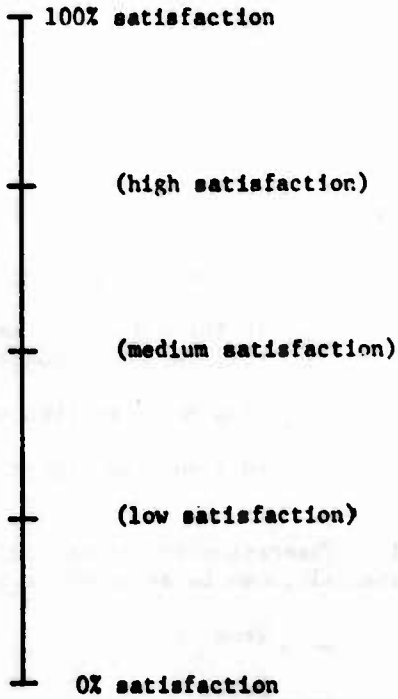
8. Certainty

How certain do you feel about this choice? Indicate your certainty by marking a short horizontal line at the appropriate level on the line below.



9. Satisfaction

How satisfied do you feel about this choice? Indicate your satisfaction by marking a short horizontal line at the appropriate level on the line below.



Part IV - Information Quiz

Check the best answer to each of the following:

10. Probably the most up-to-date information concerning the designation of alternate specialties can be obtained from:

____ Army Pamphlet 600-3.

____ a computer module on alternate specialty selection.

____ your assignment officer.

____ there is no up-to-date source.

11. The number of specialties available for alternate specialty designation is approximately:

____ 15.

____ 30.

____ 42.

____ 46.

12. In general, alternate specialties are assigned:

____ at the same time as primary specialties.

____ at the end of the second year of service, or upon promotion to 1LT, whichever comes first.

____ in about the fifth year of service.

____ in about the eighth year of service.

13. Theoretically (if not in actual practice), an officer in any primary specialty can be assigned to any other specialty as his or her alternate.

____ True

____ False

Debriefing Interview

Debriefing

Code: _____

_____ IOBC

_____ IOAC

_____ Other

If "Other", enter here: _____ LT

_____ CPT

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO LET US ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR REACTIONS TO THE SYSTEM?

(1) What was your over-all reaction to the system?

(2) Anything you particularly liked?

(3) Anything you particularly did not like?

WE'D ALSO LIKE TO ASK YOU ABOUT SOME SPECIFIC ITEMS, O.K.?

(1) Was it clear to you that the material presented was based on what's happened in the past and doesn't necessarily mean that this is what will happen in the future?

(2) Have you ever contacted your assignment officer?

How was the contact made? (phone, visit)

What made you decide to contact him?

Have your contacts with your assignment officer been helpful?

(3) Did you find the humor in the dialogues offensive or inappropriate?

(4) Do you think that you would have looked at this system during Non-duty hours?

(5) Did the computer respond quickly enough?

(6) Was the information too complex in "Alternate"? (more than you wanted or hard to understand?)

(7) What else would you like to see on such a system?

APPENDIX D TABLES

Table D-1

MEAN RATINGS BY OFFICERS OF SOURCES OF CAREER INFORMATION

Source of career information	Mean Ratings[a] Lieutenants	Captains
Assignment officer at MILPERCEN	3.2	3.4
Your commanding officer(s)	3.7	3.7
DA Pamphlet 600-3 ("Officer Professional Development and Utilization")	3.7	3.0
Pre-commission training (ROTC, USMA, OCS)	2.6	2.1
Officer Basic Course presentation	2.9	2.0
Officer Advanced Course presentation	3.4	2.6
Fellow officers of same grade	2.6	3.2
Fellow officers of higher grade	3.8	3.8
Relatives in Army	2.5	2.2
Friends and relatives (nonmilitary)	1.5	1.5

[a]Scale:

1 = Not at all useful
2 = Not very useful
3 = Undecided
4 = Moderately useful
5 = Very useful

Table D-2

OFFICER RATINGS OF "FORESIGHT" MODULE CONTENT

Dimension	Number of Responses Lieutenants	Captains
Interest level of module content:		
5 = very interesting	11	8
4 = moderately interesting	10	18
3 = undecided	1	1
2 = rather uninteresting	1	1
1 = very uninteresting	1	0
(Mean rating)	(4.2)	(4.2)
Usefulness of module content:		
5 = very useful	8	4
4 = moderately useful	10	15
3 = undecided	3	5
2 = not very useful	2	3
1 = not at all useful	1	1
(Mean rating)	(3.9)	(3.6)
Understandability of module content:		
5 = very easy to understand	17	20
4 = moderately easy to understand	7	8
3 = undecided	0	0
2 = rather difficult to understand	0	0
1 = very difficult to understand	0	0
(Mean rating)	(4.7)	(4.7)
Accuracy of module content:		
5 = very accurate information	7	12
4 = moderately accurate information	8	10
3 = undecided	9	5
2 = rather inaccurate information	0	1
1 = very inaccurate information	0	0
(Mean rating)	(3.9)	(4.2)

Table D-3

OFFICER RATINGS OF "OVERVIEW" MODULE CONTENT

Dimension	Number of Responses Lieutenants	Captains
Interest level of module content:		
5 = very interesting	15	12
4 = moderately interesting	6	12
3 = undecided	2	1
2 = rather uninteresting	1	2
1 = very uninteresting	0	1
(Mean rating)	(4.5)	(4.1)
Usefulness of module content:		
5 = very useful	8	10
4 = moderately useful	13	13
3 = undecided	1	2
2 = not very useful	2	3
1 = not at all useful	0	0
(Mean rating)	(4.1)	(4.1)
Understandability of module content:		
5 = very easy to understand	19	21
4 = moderately easy to understand	5	6
3 = undecided	0	1
2 = rather difficult to understand	0	0
1 = very difficult to understand	0	0
(Mean rating)	(4.8)	(4.7)
Accuracy of module content:		
5 = very accurate information	10	11
4 = moderately accurate information	7	13
3 = undecided	7	3
2 = rather inaccurate information	0	1
1 = very inaccurate information	0	0
(Mean rating)	(4.1)	(4.2)

Table D-4

OFFICER RATINGS OF "ALTERNATE" MODULE CONTENT

Dimension	Number of Responses Lieutenants	Captains
Interest level of module content:		
5 = very interesting	14	17
4 = moderately interesting	8	9
3 = undecided	2	2
2 = rather uninteresting	0	0
1 = very uninteresting	0	0
(Mean rating)	(4.5)	(4.5)
Usefulness of module content:		
5 = very useful	12	12
4 = moderately useful	10	13
3 = undecided	2	2
2 = not very useful	0	1
1 = not at all useful	0	0
(Mean rating)	(4.4)	(4.3)
Understandability of module content:		
5 = very easy to understand	17	17
4 = moderately easy to understand	5	10
3 = undecided	1	1
2 = rather difficult to understand	1	0
1 = very difficult to understand	0	0
(Mean rating)	(4.6)	(4.6)
Accuracy of module content:		
5 = very accurate information	12	10
4 = moderately accurate information	4	9
3 = undecided	8	8
2 = rather inaccurate information	0	1
1 = very inaccurate information	0	0
(Mean rating)	(4.2)	(4.0)

Table D-5

OFFICER RATINGS OF NEED FOR CAREER INFORMATION

Dimension	Number of Responses: Lieutenants Pretest	Lieutenants Posttest	Captains Pretest	Captains Posttest
Need for information on long-term career planning ("FORESIGHT")				
1 = Need no information	0	0	0	3
2 = Need a little information	1	1	4	4
3 = Need a moderate amount of information	6	8	15	7
4 = Need a lot of information	17	12	9	10
(Not sure)	(0)	(3)	(0)	(4)
(Mean Rating)	(3.7)	(3.5)	(3.2)	(3.0)
Need for information on the structure of careers in the Army ("OVERVIEW")				
1 = Need no information	0	2	0	6
2 = Need a little information	1	4	4	6
3 = Need a moderate amount of information	5	7	14	11
4 = Need a lot of information	18	7	9	5
(Not sure)	(0)	(4)	(1)	(0)
(Mean Rating)	(3.7)	(3.0)	(3.2)	(2.5)
Need for information on how alternate specialties are designated ("ALTERNATE")				
1 = Need no information	0	2	1	3
2 = Need a little information	1	6	6	11
3 = Need a moderate amount of information	6	7	9	10
4 = Need a lot of information	17	7	12	3
(Not sure)	(0)	(2)	(0)	(1)
(Mean Rating)	(3.7)	(2.9)	(3.1)	(2.5)

Table D-6

OFFICER RATINGS OF USEFULNESS OF COMPUTER MODE

Dimension	Number of Responses: Lieutenants Pretest	Lieutenants Posttest	Captains Pretest	Captains Posttest
Usefulness for information on long-term career planning ("FORESIGHT")				
5 = Very useful	13	15	10	5
4 = Useful	9	9	11	14
3 = Undecided	2	0	6	6
2 = Not very useful	0	0	1	1
1 = Not at all useful	0	0	0	2
(Mean Rating)	(4.5)	(4.6)	(4.1)	(3.7)
Usefulness for information on the Army career structure ("OVERVIEW")				
5 = Very useful	17	16	10	11
4 = Useful	6	8	13	12
3 = Undecided	1	0	5	2
2 = Not very useful	0	0	0	1
1 = Not at all useful	0	0	0	2
(Mean Rating)	(4.7)	(4.7)	(4.2)	(4.0)
Usefulness for information on alternate specialties ("ALTERNATE")				
5 = Very useful	15	15	10	14
4 = Useful	7	7	12	10
3 = Undecided	2	2	6	4
2 = Not very useful	0	0	0	0
1 = Not at all useful	0	0	0	0
(Mean Rating)	(4.5)	(4.5)	(4.1)	(4.4)

Table D-7

DEGREES OF CERTAINTY AND SATISFACTION WITH ALTERNATE SPECIALTY PREFERENCE

	Mean Percent			
	Lieutenants		Captains	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Certainty of preference	76%	80%	72%	75%
Satisfaction with preference	77%	78%	72%	75%

Table D-8

MEAN SCORES ON 10-ITEM INFORMATION TEST

	Mean Scores	
	Pretest	Posttest
Lieutenants	3.2	6.0
Captains	5.1	7.1