



**STRATEGY
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THE CASE FOR A PURPLE REPORT CARD

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

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Commanders and supervisors of officers assigned to joint duty positions are burdened by having to prepare officer evaluation reports regulated by four distinct sets of service policies and procedures. The time has come to begin an earnest dialogue with respect to limited use of a common system for evaluating officers in joint positions. Such a system would alleviate the uncertainty experienced by rating officials caused by lack of familiarity with service evaluation programs. A common system would also reduce the potential for unintended results on rated officer careers caused by inadvertent acts of commission or omission.

This paper argues the benefits of a limited use joint officer evaluation reporting system, outlines essential characteristics of such a system, and suggests specific evaluation criteria that should be acceptable to all military services.

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BACKGROUND

"Our military establishment can be only as good as its officers. The effectiveness of national security is not measured only by the number of men or the ships, planes, tanks and missiles available. The quality of its leadership - the officer corps - is the limiting factor."¹

The above quote clearly indicates the leadership of the Department of Defense believes the U.S. military's most important resource is its people. The quality of people comprising America's armed forces has never been better. These high quality soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines are truly the backbone of America's military might. High technology weapons and support equipment certainly provide advantages to the U.S. military in times of armed conflict. However, its real strength is derived from well-trained, well-informed individuals who develop and execute successful operations across the broad range of complex missions currently contemplated by the U.S. National Security Strategy and the National Military Strategy.

Normally, individuals charged with planning these complex military operations are military officers from the various services assigned to joint staffs. This fact is based in the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. The basic purpose of the Act was to focus "on the excessive power and influence of the four services, which had precluded the integration of their separate

capabilities for effective joint warfighting".² Simply put, the objective was to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of military operations and Defense Department management. Officers of all services serve in staff positions on the Joint Staff in the Pentagon, the staffs of the various combatant and functional unified commands, and in various supporting Defense Department agencies such as the Defense Logistics Agency. Each of these officers' duty performance is evaluated periodically by their supervisor(s). The joint nature of these staff assignments routinely creates situations in which officers of one military service are evaluated (rated) by officers of a sister service. Currently, each military service has separate and distinct evaluation policies and procedures.

The officer efficiency report has been an accepted, permanent feature in the military services since 1895.³ From the beginning, officers preparing efficiency reports "were enjoined to exercise great care to set forth all facts to aid the Department in making a true estimate [of an evaluated officer]."⁴ It is no secret that officer evaluation reports can "make or break an officer's career."⁵

THE PROBLEM

Commanders and supervisors of officers on joint staffs are burdened and often confused by having to prepare officer evaluation reports prepared under four distinct sets of rules. "The completion of [an evaluation] report is one of an officer's most critical responsibilities."⁶ "The effectiveness with which the system works is ultimately in the hands of the individual raters."⁷ For the system to work "every officer should completely understand how the entire system works...in order that maximal benefits accrue both to the [service] and to the individual officer [being evaluated]."⁸

Accordingly, for an evaluator on a joint staff to be fair and just to both an evaluated officer and his service he must have a complete and thorough understanding of all four unique officer evaluation systems. Clearly, "the great burden of any reporting system falls upon the reporting officer, whose primary duties are otherwise."⁹ Yet, "if the task of rendering efficiency reports is overburdensome and time-consuming, and the device itself is so complicated as to defy the understanding of the user, there is great danger that the task of rendering efficiency reports will be slighted and that the primary purpose of the efficiency rating will thus be defeated."¹⁰

Rating officials on joint staffs are very familiar with the peculiarities and subtleties of their own respective service evaluation programs, but they are not necessarily familiar with evaluation "rules of the game" in sister service cultures. "Words and phrases have different meaning for each rater. Hence, the interpretation will vary for different officers...This may be an influence in rating hard or easy."¹¹ Service culture can translate directly to service language and/or interpretation. For example, one service may view the phrase "performed duties in a superior manner" as a high vote of confidence in an individual's performance and promotion potential while another service may view the exact same phrase as an indicator of mediocre performance and potential.

"As is true with any measuring device, the accuracy of the measurement of an efficiency rating instrument is dependent upon the skill and accuracy of the user. Such skill and accuracy on the part of the rater follows only from an understanding of, and confidence in, the measuring instrument itself."¹² It is a high expectation, indeed, to expect even the most senior and experienced officers in the military services to have such a complete understanding of four unique evaluation systems.

"Variance [in ratings] is a function not only of the ratee but also of the rater's selective perceptions, experience with the ratee, interpretation of the variables, and stereotypes concerning which variables are associated in behavior."¹³ The complexity associated with the use of four distinct evaluation systems ensures that the issue of variance in ratings is problematic in the joint arena.

Compounding this situation is the fact that not all of the services take positive actions to safeguard against inadvertent errors in the evaluation process that can adversely impact an officer's career. Written guidance to service promotion boards is inconsistent, and in the case of the Navy, nonexistent when it comes to treatment of evaluation reports rendered on officers serving in joint staff positions. Guidance provided to Army and Air Force promotion boards mandates that the same weight must be applied to evaluation reports rendered by evaluators from sister services. Marine Corps guidance is slightly different in that it mandates that the actual evaluation report (not the evaluator) be weighted the same as all other reports. The Navy does not provide any similar guidance to its promotion boards.

However, even with such guidance promotion board members usually don't have the time to carefully review all of the

information on an evaluation report, to include the rater's branch of service. A less than sterling evaluation report resulting from lack of familiarity with service "rules of the game" may go unnoticed. A common report format would immediately send a "red flag" to board members that they are reviewing a report that may have been completed by a senior officer from a sister service. This would cause promotion board members to review the particular report closely for service bias or variance attributable to service norms and culture.

Across the board adoption of a single officer evaluation reporting system throughout the Defense Department is unlikely in the near term because of strong parochialism. Service cultures have traditionally fostered and perpetuated service unique evaluation systems deeply rooted in service tradition and ethos. In fact, throughout history the "ability to preserve the [service] culture... is to some extent a desirable leader attribute in the eyes of superior officers."¹⁴ However, the time may be right to implement a common system for evaluating officers serving in joint positions. Such a system would alleviate uncertainty among rating officials, improve efficiency by simplifying a complex bureaucracy, and reduce the potential for unintended results on rated officer careers.

WHY THE TIME IS RIGHT

Each service evaluates its officers against criteria developed throughout its history based upon each service's perception of what values, attributes, skills and leadership competencies are deemed essential to be an effective officer in that service. Specific systems reflect a consensus of what senior, successful leaders in each service regard as legitimate and practical criteria upon which to judge performance in support of promotion, schooling, and assignment decisions.

These criteria, as well as specific evaluation report formats, have been modified periodically, but a close review of previous and current systems reveals that the criteria have remained essentially the same. Early Air Force evaluation reports included 54 individual evaluation items. In the mid-1950s these 54 items were consolidated into a handful of more generic criteria: conformity to the prescribed role of a responsible officer, proficiency in intellectual tasks, getting along with people, proficiency in supervising personnel, and facility in communication.¹⁵ These criteria are very similar to the six Air Force performance factors used today: job knowledge, leadership skills, professional qualities, organizational skills, judgement and decisions, and communication skills.¹⁶

All the criteria used today have roots pre-dating the Goldwater-Nichols Act with its focus on joint experience and expertise. The overarching personnel management aspect of the Act is to develop officers with common skills to be applied toward common, non-parochial goals. Over the past two decades the joint community has developed a comprehensive joint doctrine and joint work procedures guiding the day-to-day activities of joint staff officers.

A common thread among most modern personnel evaluation tools is that evaluations should be keyed to specific criteria. Specific service criteria may or may not be similar to essential aspects of duty performance on a joint staff. Because officers assigned to joint staff billets are not performing service specific missions or functions there is no compelling reason to evaluate that officer against service specific criteria. Certainly, the service expertise of any officer is useful, desirable and valued, but his work functions have less to do with his service identity and more to do with common staff functions such as analyzing, planning, and coordinating within and beyond the joint community.

All officers of all services are evaluated in some fashion regarding their conformance to service values and those values vary among the services (see Table 1). The Army evaluates

against 7 values, the Navy and Air Force have three each (though different), and the Marines are evaluated against 14 "qualities" instead of values. Do officers from the various services need to be evaluated against their unique set of values when serving on a joint staff? Should the raters of these officers be expected to know four different value systems? Even if they do know them, will officers from one service internalize the values of another service? The answer to these questions is "maybe", but probably

Table 1. Values of the Various Services

Army	Navy	Air Force	Marine Corps (Qualities)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loyalty • Duty • Respect • Honor • Integrity • Personal Courage • Selfless Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honor • Courage • Commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity First • Service Before Self • Excellence in all We Do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endurance • Personal Appearance • Military Presence • Attention to Duty • Cooperation • Initiative • Judgement • Presence of Mind • Force • Leadership • Loyalty • Personal Relations • Growth Potential • Economy of Management

not. Joint Publication 1 and the Joint Doctrine Primer identify five values intended to guide professionals working in joint arenas: integrity, competence, physical courage, moral courage, and teamwork (trust and confidence, delegation, and cooperation).¹⁷

The joint consensus that adopted these five common values can serve as the basis for dialogue regarding a new joint officer evaluation report. Such a visible demonstration of commitment to these joint or common values may provide the "missing link" in "jointness". A common evaluation system could put teeth into the concept of jointness in the sense that joint officers temporarily subordinate their service identities in deference to a joint association. The publication of joint values paves the way for a joint officer evaluation form. In similar fashion, joint performance criteria can and should be developed to combine with these common values in a common report format. The various service evaluation formats already include essentially the same administrative data and performance criteria. The differences are primarily semantic vice substantive. The dialogue that achieved consensus on joint values should be continued to forge a consensus on joint leader skills, attributes, and competencies.

This consensus will support a common evaluation tool for officers serving in joint assignments.

EVALUATION REPORT PURPOSES

"The purpose of efficiency reporting or performance appraisal is to summarize and systematize subjectively held opinions about rateses, thus providing a sound basis for personnel action."¹⁸ "Uses of ratings in business and the military are almost identical. Promotion and training are the two most important uses of rating systems."¹⁹ President Theodore Roosevelt recognized this fact and clearly established the precedent that evaluation reports would serve as the "basis of promotion and assignment based on merit."²⁰ All service regulations governing personnel evaluations clearly echo this precedent. For example, the Commandant of the Marine Corps has published guidance that "the 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 ... primary tool for the selection of personnel for promotion, augmentation, resident schooling, command, and duty assignments."²¹

Early reports were extremely informal, highly subjective and of limited practical value. However, the tremendous growth of U.S. military forces during the 20th century brought an urgent

need to standardize the evaluation process. The "fairness and usefulness"²² of the report became a priority interest for military leaders shortly after World War I. The first modern evaluation format, the Army's Evaluation Form 67 was introduced shortly after World War I.²³

Today, all services use the evaluation report for essentially the same purposes: selection for promotion, command, and professional military education courses. One major exception is that the Air Force uses a separate form for promotion recommendations that are not linked to the evaluation process. Promotion recommendations are completed on officers in conjunction with periodic promotion boards. The reports are also used occasionally to screen officers for selected duty assignments. In short, the evaluation report is the primary means of evaluating performance. Report formats are standardized because "unless these records are standardized for all officers, both the service and the individual may suffer."²⁴

Historically, "[evaluation] reports are obtained for administrative purposes [promotion, school selection, etc.] and they are not suitable for local guidance and counseling...To use them in such a way could materially damage or upset not only the

careers of particular officers, but also the broad pattern of [institutional] administrative action which is vital..."²⁵

Consequently, each service has developed separate counseling programs that are consciously separate and distinct from the evaluation process. Although the two processes may be closely linked in some of the services there is no intent for the official evaluation of an officer to serve as a counseling or professional development tool. The evaluation documents performance - nothing more, nothing less. This separation of purpose has long been recognized throughout the military because "the purpose in the mind of the rater affects the way in which he completes a report."²⁶ Accordingly, the adoption of a limited use joint officer evaluation report should not and would not have any impact on current service specific counseling policies and procedures.

COMPONENTS OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

Each of the service's evaluation report formats is different, but they all include similar elements. Table 2 lists 13 basic report elements derived from a review of all four service evaluation report formats. No service report contains all of these elements. Five of the elements are common to all service

TABLE 2. EVALUATION REPORT ELEMENTS OF THE VARIOUS SERVICES

SERVICE ELEMENT	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	MARINE CORPS
ADMINISTRATIVE DATA	X	X	X	X
DUTY TITLE	X	X	X	X
DUTY DESCRIPTION	X	X	X	X
CHARACTER TRAITS	X	X	X	X
INITIAL RATER PERFORMANCE COMMENTS	X	X	X	X
INITIAL RATER COMMENTS ON POTENTIAL	X		NOTE 1	X
SECOND RATER PERFORMANCE COMMENTS	X		X	X
SECOND RATER COMMENTS ON POTENTIAL	X		NOTE 1	X
PROMOTION POTENTIAL GRAPHIC	X	X		X
ASSIGNMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	X	X	NOTE 2	X
UNIT MISSION DESCRIPTION			X	
INTERMEDIATE RATER EVALUATION	X			
NON-RATING REVIEWER			X	

- NOTES: 1. ENTRY NOT APPLICABLE
2. OPTIONAL ENTRY

report formats. The Army report format contains ten of the elements plus one optional element. The Navy report contains 7 of the elements. The Air Force report includes 8 of the elements plus one optional element. Finally the Marine Corps report includes ten of the elements.

A flexible report format can be designed that contains all of the elements required to satisfy individual service needs. Elements not required by any particular service could simply be left blank or completed with the phrase "not applicable". In the case of the Air Force, a prime example would be to simply ignore the three elements on a joint report dealing with promotion

potential. Optional elements in current reports would remain optional and apply to each service as established in current policies and procedures.

Report elements could be given generic titles with service specific titles cross-referenced in an administrative annex or cover sheet as required for clarity. Similarly, basic identification data elements could be applied to generic "fill-in" blocks and completed with service specific codes and/or acronyms. For example, all service report formats require that an individual's service unique job classification code be identified. The Air Force has a "DFASC" code, the Army has "designated specialties", the Navy has a "Desig" block, and the Marine report has a "PMOS" code block. A common (generic) joint report format could have a "fill-in" block called "specialty code" or "spec code" and each service would complete that entry on the form using their current service specific codes.

For any evaluation system to be effective, evaluating officials must bring four things to any and all rating situations: job knowledge, an opportunity to observe the individual being rated, impersonalness [impartiality], and courage.²⁷ Rating officials have no need to memorize codes and acronyms, especially those that are not unique to their service.

This is not to say that a rater should not strive to be familiar with unique service customs, traditions, requirements and "rules of the game". This knowledge, however, is not essential to be a fair and effective rater.

This reality argues both for and against creation of a common evaluation report. On one hand, it suggests that raters can likely switch between report formats with little difficulty. On the other hand, it suggests that adjustment to a joint report format should not be difficult. At this point it is essential to recall two of the primary arguments for a joint report: to reduce the potential for unintended results, and to call clear attention to board members that this is a report on an officer in a joint job likely being rated by an officer from a sister service. In short, it sends an immediate "red flag" to board members.

All services except the Marine Corps currently use a two page evaluation report format. The recently revised Marine Corps format is five pages long. At first glance it would seem difficult to reconcile such a disparity in length. In actuality, much of the bulk of the Marine Corps format results from the inclusion of definitions or explanations of Marine evaluation criteria within the body of the report. Elimination of what are essentially instructions within the body of the report would

produce a much smaller report comparable in size to those of the other services.

EVALUATION REPORT CRITERIA

Given that the current differences in report structures do not preclude adoption of a common report format we are then faced with the question of report content. Specifically, what are the criteria against which all officers serving on joint staffs could be evaluated? Any selection of criteria must meet two tests. First, a joint report should not eliminate any service unique requirements considered critical. Second, any such report should not add criteria not already evaluated by any service.

A review of the four current evaluation reports reveals 35 sufficiently distinct evaluation criteria used throughout the services (see Table 3). Of course, this number is dependent upon this researcher's subjective interpretation and categorization skills. Analysis by trained professionals in the fields of behavioral science and social psychology might yield different results, but for the purpose of this analysis the result is considered adequate in detail, consistency and sophistication. The Army evaluates against 28 of these criteria. The Navy uses

TABLE 3. EVALUATION CRITERIA USED BY THE VARIOUS SERVICES

CRITERIA \ SERVICE	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	MARINE CORPS
HONOR	X	X		X
INTEGRITY	X		X	
COURAGE	X	X		X
LOYALTY	X		X	
RESPECT FOR OTHERS	X	X	X	X
SELFLESS SERVICE	X			X
DUTY	X			
COMMITMENT/DEDICATION		X	X	X
PHYSICAL FITNESS	X	X		X
INITIATIVE	X	X	X	X
DISCIPLINE	X		X	X
BEARING	X	X		X
COMPOSURE UNDER STRESS	X	X	X	X
CONFIDENCE			X	X
TAKES ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES			X	
ANTICIPATING			X	X
TENACITY				X
MENTAL AGILITY	X	X	X	X
INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS	X	X	X	X
TECHNICAL & TACTICAL PROFICIENCY	X	X	X	X
PROBLEM SOLVING	X	X	X	X
COMMUNICATING	X	X	X	X
DECISION MAKING	X		X	X
MOTIVATING	X	X	X	X
PLANNING	X	X	X	
MEETS MISSION STANDARDS	X	X	X	X
FOCUS ON CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	X			
MENTORING	X	X		X
TEAM BUILDING	X	X	X	X
SELF-DEVELOPMENT	X		X	X
ORGANIZING		X	X	
JUDGEMENT	X			X
USES RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY	X		X	X
TAKES CARE OF PEOPLE	X			X
FULFILLMENT OF EVALUATION RESPONSIBILITY				X

19 of the criteria. The Air Force report format includes 23 of the criteria. Finally, the Marine Corps evaluates against 28 of the criteria.

For purposes of this analysis these 35 criteria can be categorized into four major criteria groups: values, attributes, skills, and leadership competencies as indicated in Table 4.

TABLE 4. MAJOR EVALUATION CRITERIA GROUPS

VALUES	ATTRIBUTES	SKILLS	LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honor • Integrity • Courage • Loyalty • Respect for Others • Selfless Service • Duty • Commitment/ Dedication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Fitness • Initiative • Discipline • Bearing • Composure under Stress • Confidence • Takes Advantage of Opportunities • Anticipating • Tenacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Agility • Interpersonal Relations • Technical & Tactical Proficiency • Problem Solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating • Decision Making • Motivating • Planning • Meets Mission Standards • Continuous Improvement • Mentoring • Team Building • Self-Development • Organizing • Judgement • Uses Resources Effectively • Takes Care of People • Fulfillment of Evaluation Responsibility

Although there appears to be significant disparity among the services, especially the Navy, it is important to realize that all services evaluate against all four groups to at least some extent. The challenge to creating a joint report is how to adequately capture all service criteria concerns in a simple format that also avoids excess criteria deemed unnecessary by any of the services. The solution is to focus on the four criteria groupings selected for this analysis while ignoring the temptation to over-specify and complicate the evaluation format. This can be done. The precedent has already been set in one of these four criteria groups (values).

As noted earlier, the services have already forged a consensus on joint values that are documented in Joint Publication 1. These five values, though not identical to any service set of values, capture the essence of a values based military. Certainly, any officer, regardless of service, who measures up to these values should be considered worthy from a professional standpoint. Likewise, any officer failing to adhere to any of these values could also be expected to fall short when evaluated against service unique values.

The selection of specific criteria in the remaining three criteria groups is obviously debatable with any number of excellent solutions to choose from. The following is only one

possible solution. Each of the three remaining groups has certain criteria that are common among all services. The exact terminology may differ, but the intent is identical. The two common criteria in the attributes group are "initiative" and "composure under pressure". In the skills group, all four criteria are common to all services: "mental agility", "interpersonal skills", "technical and tactical proficiency", and "problem solving". In the leadership competencies group there are four common criteria: "communicating", "motivating", "team building", and "meets mission standards".

This simplified analysis results in five values, two attributes, four skills, and four leadership competencies that can serve as a possible focus for a joint evaluation report.

CORRELATION WITH JOINT STAFF DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS

For these criteria to be reasonable there must be a correlation between these criteria and the performance expectations of officers serving on joint staffs. Performance expectations in this sense does not relate to quality expectations, but rather the critical requirements associated with successful joint staff officer performance. These requirements have not been defined as such. However, there are two approaches that could be taken to deduce these requirements.

First, compare the selected criteria against the critical requirements outlined in Joint Vision 2010. Second, compare the selected criteria against specific promotion board criteria outlined in the guidance given to promotion boards.

Comparison with Joint Vision 2010 Requirements

Joint Vision 2010 provides an authoritative assessment of the values, skills, attributes, and leadership competencies that are required of officers in a joint environment (see Table 5).²⁸ These requirements provide a standard for comparison. Five of the 10 leader requirements identified in Joint Vision 2010 are essentially duplicates of criteria derived in the analysis. The remaining five are: versatility, knowledge of joint capabilities, an appreciation for historical context [to support operational planning], understanding of the interagency process, and understanding the elements of national power.

"Versatility" and "appreciation for historical context" can readily be added as attribute criteria. "Knowledge of joint capabilities" can be added as a skill criteria, or subsumed in the "technical and tactical competence" skill criteria (recommended). "Coordination" could be added as a skill criteria against which to evaluate an officer's effectiveness in dealing with the interagency process. Finally, "understanding the

TABLE 5. SUMMARY OF JOINT VISION 2010 LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

VALUES	ATTRIBUTES	SKILLS	LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Joint Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Versatility • Appreciation for Historical Context • Dealing with Ambiguity (Composure) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical & Tactical Expertise • Understanding the Elements of National Power • Understanding of the Interagency Process • Knowledge of Joint Capabilities • Innovation (Problem Solving) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating

NOTE: HIGHLIGHTED REQUIREMENTS ARE UNIQUE LEADER REQUIREMENTS IDENTIFIED IN JOINT VISION 2010.

elements of national power" can be added as an optional skill criteria. Only those officers who are graduates of Military Education Level One (MEL 1) professional development education courses would be evaluated against this criteria.

A review of the intent of the Goldwater-Nichols Act and the Joint Officer's Staff Guide suggests the addition of one other leadership competency criteria. One of the eight declared purposes of the Act was "to increase attention to strategy formulation and contingency planning."²⁹ "Planning" should be added as it is the essential mission of any joint staff, and the

primary work function performed by officers on a joint staff. This is reasonable given that three of the four services already include planning as an evaluation criteria.

Comparison with Promotion Board Selection Criteria

Another way to cross-check the suitability of the proposed criteria is to compare them against promotion board selection criteria. All services prepare promotion selection board instructions (precepts for the sea services) that provide guidance to selection board members. All services, except the Air Force,³⁰ identify specific performance criteria to guide board deliberations. Table 6 summarizes these selected service criteria that have not otherwise been included in the proposed joint performance criteria based upon commonality. All other specifically identified criteria have been addressed within the context of the proposed criteria. Common to all three services is the criteria to select officers demonstrating creativity, innovation and resourcefulness. Therefore, it makes sense to add "creativity" to the proposed list of attribute criteria for a joint report.

Of the Army's six remaining criteria, three are criteria already considered, rejected for lack of commonality, but are

existing candidates for inclusion in service specific evaluation sections ("military bearing", "fitness", and "takes care of

TABLE 6. ADDITIONAL SPECIAL SERVICE CRITERIA PROVIDED TO PROMOTION BOARDS

SERVICE PROMOTION BOARD CRITERIA	ARMY ³¹	NAVY ³²	MARINE ³³ CORPS
CREATIVITY/INNOVATION/RESOURCEFULNESS	X	X	X
MILITARY BEARING	X		
FITNESS	X		
APPEARANCE	X		
CONCERN FOR SOLDIERS	X		
SELFLESS SERVICE	X		
WILLINGNESS TO TAKE PRUDENT RISKS	X		

people"). A fourth criteria, "appearance", can be determined by review of the official photograph. The two remaining promotion board guidance criteria are "selfless service" and the "willingness to take prudent risk". These two criteria can be debated for consensus, or added to a common optional or service specific optional section of the joint report if deemed vital by the Army's leadership.

EVALUATION CRITERIA NOT COMMON AMONG THE SERVICES

Table 7 summarizes the current service specific evaluation criteria that would not be specifically evaluated under the joint evaluation report concept proposed. These are criteria not

TABLE 7. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA NOT COMMON AMONG THE SERVICES

SERVICE ELEMENT	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	MARINE CORPS
ATTRIBUTES	////////	////////	////////	////////
• DISCIPLINE	X		X	X
• BEARING	X	X		X
• CONFIDENCE			X	X
• TAKES ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES			X	
• ANTICIPATING			X	X
• TENACITY				X
• PHYSICAL FITNESS	X	X		X
LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES	////////	////////	////////	////////
• DECISION MAKING	X		X	X
• FOCUS ON CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	X			
• MENTORING	X	X		X
• SELF-DEVELOPMENT	X		X	X
• ORGANIZING		X	X	
• JUDGEMENT	X			X
• USES RESOURCES WISELY	X		X	X
• TAKES CARE OF PEOPLE	X			X
• FULFILLMENT OF EVALUATION RESPONSIBILITY				X

selected because they are not common among the services current criteria, not identified as joint requirements, or do not receive specific attention from promotion boards. The chart excludes service values, as joint consensus has already been achieved.

The final disposition of these seven attributes and nine leadership competencies would have to be negotiated among the services. Eventual consensus would result in either inclusion or exclusion in the common report. As suggested earlier, an alternative is to include service unique sections in the report.

This would make it clear to all raters that the items apply only to members of that particular service.

NARRATIVE COMMENTS ON PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL

All four service report formats require that specific comments be made by the initial evaluator (rater). A joint report would do likewise. The Army and Marine Corps also require specific narrative comments on potential. A joint report would provide for such comments. Remarks would be mandatory for the Army and Marine Corps, prohibited for the Air Force (in accordance with current policy), and optional for Navy officers.

Senior Evaluator narrative comments are required or permitted by all services except the Navy, and provisions should be made in a joint report. Senior rater comments on potential are mandatory for Army and Marine Corps officers and not applicable to Air Force and Naval officers. Again, a joint report would provide for such entries and would be completed in accordance with service policies.

GRAPHIC DEPICTIONS OF PROMOTION POTENTIAL

Except for the Air Force, all service evaluation reports include some type of graphic interpretation of promotion potential. In the Navy, this report element is completed by the single rating official. In both the Army and the Marine Corps, this critical report element is completed by the second rater,

and this senior rating official's performance (rating profile) is monitored. The Navy has six zones (i.e. graphic levels) against which promotion potential is assessed. The Marine Corps has five zones with varying degrees in each level. The Army has four zones that provide a basis of comparison.

Reconciling these variances, particularly in the Army, might disrupt established service procedures that effectively force the distribution of ratings to preclude inflation and report obsolescence. To avoid this, a common report format can be designed to accommodate all service preferences for classifying potential. This is not an ideal solution, but it is a practical compromise that can help foster initial acceptance of a limited use joint evaluation report format.

CONCLUSION

All service officer evaluation reports use essentially the same criteria for evaluation. The consensus required to develop and field a limited use evaluation report for officers serving in joint duty billets is achievable. The focus of all four service evaluation reports is to judge officers against the values, attributes, skills, and leadership competencies deemed desirable by the various military departments. Consensus has already been achieved regarding joint values.

The services have made significant strides toward meeting the intent of the Goldwater-Nichols Act to focus more attention on "jointness" as the norm in military operations and Defense Department management. A common evaluation system could put teeth into the concept of jointness in the sense that joint officers would be evaluated against common standards vice parochial service standards. The publication of joint values paves the way for a joint evaluation report. In similar fashion, joint performance criteria can and should be developed to combine with these common values in a common report format.

This research has identified the five values, five attributes, five skills (possibly six), and five leadership competencies that could potentially serve as a starting point to commence serious dialogue on this issue (see Table 8). These twenty criteria should allow raters to properly assess performance and potential regardless of service affiliation. This result agrees with evaluation research conducted nearly fifty years ago. "It seems likely that 15 to 20 [evaluation] items could measure the same aspects of behavior as the 54 items [included in an earlier Air Force report format]...with little loss in reliability".³⁴

TABLE 8. POTENTIAL BASELINE CRITERIA FOR A COMMON REPORT FORMAT

VALUES	ATTRIBUTES	SKILLS	LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity • Competence • Physical Courage • Moral Courage • Teamwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative • Composure under Pressure • Versatility • Creativity • Appreciation for Historical Context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Agility • Interpersonal Skills • Problem Solving • Coordination • Technical & Tactical Proficiency <p>OPTIONAL: Understanding the Elements of National Power (MEL 1 only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating • Motivating • Team Building • Meets Mission Standards • Planning

A common format will serve as a "red flag" during promotion board deliberations to alert potential board members to be aware of potential service bias or variance attributable to service norms and culture. A common format will also ease the burden on rating officials who can become frustrated and possibly ineffective as a result of contending with four separate evaluation systems. A common system could reduce the potential for unintended results on officer careers, while quickly identifying to board members those officers who have served joint duty tours.

[Word Count: 5,644]

ENDNOTES

¹ Warren H. Eisenhart, Predicting Career-Motivation of Army Officers from Personal Variables, Student Thesis, (Lafayette, IN: Purdue University, 1966), 1.

² James R. Locher III, "Taking Stock of Goldwater-Nichols," Joint Force Quarterly, (Autumn 1996): 10.

³ Malin Craig Jr., History of the Officer Efficiency Report System, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1965), III-5.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Clifford A. Druit, An Analysis of Military Officer Evaluation Systems Using Principles Presently Advanced by Authorities in This Field, thesis, (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, 1964), 4.

⁶ U.S. Marine Corps, Performance Evaluation System, MCO 1610.7E, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Marine Corps, undated), 1-3.

⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, How the Army Rates Its Officers, a report, (Washington, D.C.: Personnel Research Branch, Personnel Research and Procedures Division, The Adjutant General's Office, U.S. Department of the Army, 1953), 3.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Charles a. Riegle, The Evolution of the Army Officer Rating System, thesis, (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, 1941), 116.

¹⁰ Ibid., 117.

¹¹ Samuel S. Dubin, Reaction of General Officers to Officer Efficiency Reporting Methods, Technical Research Report 1085, (Washington, D.C.: Personnel Research and Procedures Division, The Adjutant General's Office, Department of the Army, 1954), 17.

¹² Riegle, 118.

¹³ Norman D. Bryant, A Factor Analysis of the Report of Officer Effectiveness, research report, (San Antonio, TX: Air Force Personnel and Training Research Center, 1956), 8.

¹⁴ Marvin D. Dunnette, Criteria of Executive Effectiveness, research report, (San Antonio, TX: Air Force Personnel and Training Research Center, 1956), 5.

¹⁵ Bryant, 8.

¹⁶ U.S. Department of the Air Force, USAF Officer's Guide to the OES, Air Pamphlet 36-2404, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Air Force, 14 October 1994), 20.

¹⁷ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States, Joint Publication 1, (Washington, D.C.: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 10 January 1995), II-1 thru II-6.

¹⁸ Druit, 27.

¹⁹ Ibid., 31.

²⁰ Andrew Birtle, Dr. and Mary-Ellen Condon-Rall, Dr., History of Officer and NCO Evaluation Reports Since WWI, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1988), 1.

²¹ U.S. Marine Corps, 1-3.

²² U.S. Department of the Army, How the Army Rates Its Officers, a report, (Washington, D.C.: Personnel Research Branch, Personnel Research and Procedures Division, The Adjutant General's Office, U.S. Department of the Army, 1953), 1.

²³ Ibid., 9.

²⁴ Ibid., 1.

²⁵ Ibid., 3.

²⁶ Ibid., 3.

²⁷ Ibid., 6.

²⁸ John M. Shalikhvili, Joint Vision 2010, (Washington, D.C.: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1996), 28-29.

²⁹ Locher, 11.

³⁰ U.S. Department of the Air Force, "CY97B Central Colonel (Line, Judge Advocate General and Chaplain)...Promotion Selection Boards...", Memorandum of Instructions, (Washington, D.C.: Air Force Selection Board Secretariat, Air Force Personnel Center, U.S. Department of the Air Force, 8 December 1997).

³¹ U.S. Department of the Army, Policies and Procedures for Active Component Officer Selection Boards, DA Memo 600-2, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 26 November 1993).

³² The Secretary of the Navy, "Precept Convening FY99 Selection Boards to Consider Officers in the Line on the Active-Duty List of the Navy for Promotion to the Grade of Captain", Memorandum for Board Members, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of the Navy, 7 January 1998).

³³ The Secretary of the Navy, "Precept Convening a Selection Board to Recommend Officers of the Marine Corps on the Active-Duty List for Promotion to the Grade of Brigadier General", Memorandum for Board Members, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of the Navy, undated).

³⁴ Bryant, 9.

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