



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY ARMOR SCHOOL
193 6TH AVENUE, SUITE 101
FORT KNOX KENTUCKY 40121-5720

ATZK-AR

18 August 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR Master Sergeant Promotion Board Panel Members for CMF 19

SUBJECT: Career Management Field (CMF) 19 Information Paper

1. The Office of the Chief of Armor, Fort Knox, Kentucky, provides this information paper to assist you in better understanding CMF 19 and the caliber of Soldier the Armor Force desires to lead its Soldiers at this important level. This paper will provide an overview of CMF 19 career development and some of the Armor programs that we believe you should be aware of to assist with your selection process.
2. Armor Soldiers are valued for their warfighting skills. They acquire and perfect their warfighting skills primarily through operational deployments, realistic training, professional military education, and service in the most demanding leadership positions Armor Branch offers. Service with troops is of primary importance to the Armor Branch. With troops, Armor Soldiers polish their tactical and technical proficiencies through practical application of warfighting skills. Civilian education achievement, while indicative of time-management skills and motivation, is not a substitute for service in the line.
3. The Cavalry Scout and Armor Crewman professional development models serve as a guide for Armor NCOs when setting professional goals. These models show how rank, critical leadership assignments, developmental assignments, and military schooling relate to grade structure. Armor Soldiers, to remain competitive, must show initiative to attain these goals. The Sergeant First Class (SFC) should be at the level shown on the model and already have successfully completed an assignment in each of the critical leadership positions and various developmental assignments. The Armor Branch desires you to select SFC's for promotion to Master Sergeant that have successfully served in critical leadership assignments for at least 18 months. Those senior NCOs with at least 18 months of critical leadership time (Platoon Sergeant) should be considered to have the potential to excel as First Sergeants.
4. Critical leadership assignments are key for successful development within Armor branch. The Armor Enlisted Professional Development Guide (and DA Pam 600-25) stresses the importance of serving as a Platoon Sergeant (PSG) and recommends this experience before advancing to the next higher grade. There is no substitute for serving in critical leadership positions throughout an Armor Soldier's career. Assignment opportunities exist for all Armor Sergeant First Classes who desire to be Platoon Sergeants. Therefore those SFC's that do not have at least 18 months PSG time should not be considered for promotion. While MTOE positions are highly valued for the development of warfighting skills, give equal weight to success as an Armor PSG, whether the NCO served in a MTOE or TDA PSG position. However, Armor NCO's should not serve in critical leadership assignments in back to back skill levels in TDA positions.
5. Armor branch has had several SFC's placed on transition teams in support of both OIF and OEF over the past several years. Some of these NCO's were selected to these positions before they had the opportunity to complete their critical leadership time of 18 months. Therefore, you should consider the successful completion of a Military Transition Team (MiTT), a Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT), or a Transition Team (TT) assignment as part of the SFC's critical leadership time. While service on a transition team provides a portion of the requisite skills, it must be combined with time spent as a PSG to

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fully prepare the NCO to serve as a 1SG. Our goal is a minimum of 18 months combined time. *Consider all graduates of the Maneuver Senior Leader Course to have attained the appropriate level of NCOES and the leadership skills necessary to advance to the next higher grade.*

6. It is sustained quality of service in critical leadership positions, combined with exceptional performance in professionally developing assignments that separates the best qualified Armor SFC from the pack. The Armor NCO should have achieved a well-rounded background. To be considered for promotion, an Armor NCO must have demonstrated these qualities. Follow-on positions are important, but all NCOs must serve in the critical leadership position at each rank to establish a solid warfighting foundation. Quality of service, not time in grade, is the key determinant of success and the primary indicator of potential for promotion to MSG and eventual service as a 1SG. Use the following guidelines when determining between Best qualified, Exceptionally qualified, and Fully qualified.

Consider the Armor NCO Best Qualified who has:

- Served with distinction as a Platoon Sergeant for 18 months or more
- Graduated Maneuver Senior Leaders Course
- Served with distinction in a professionally developing assignment as a Sergeant First Class
- Demonstrated proven excellence in an authorized position at a higher level (i.e. 1SG, OPS SGM)

Consider the Armor NCO Exceptionally Qualified who has:

- Served with distinction as Platoon Sergeant for 18 months or more
- Graduated Maneuver Senior Leaders Course
- Served with distinction in a professionally developing assignment as a Sergeant First Class
- Has exhibited exceptional potential for success at the next higher grade

Consider the Armor NCO Fully Qualified who has:

- Served with distinction as a Platoon Sergeant for 18 months or more
- Graduated Maneuver Senior Leaders Course
- Served with distinction in a professionally developing assignment as Sergeant First Class

7. Armor NCOs should avoid back-to-back TDA assignments. While Armor Branch values the experience gained in these positions, the focus of the NCO must be on warfighting skills and returning to the operational force. Four-year assignments at Army training centers have led to some NCOs serving back-to-back TDA assignments. However, an NCO with back-to-back TDA assignments beyond four years at the *same or different* locations may indicate a desire to avoid MTOE leadership positions. Additionally those SFC's who served in TDA, followed by a 12 month tour to Korea, and then back to TDA assignments should also be considered as avoiding operational assignments and MTOE positions. These NCOs should not be considered as best qualified.

8. Other key factors to consider:

a. Exceeding course standards or becoming Honor/Distinguished graduates in NCOES courses indicates intelligence, leadership, and initiative. NCOs who complete functional military courses demonstrate initiative to further their knowledge and a desire to be of greater value to the Army.

b. The Master Gunner Program is a volunteer program designed to train the most technically competent MOS 19K and MOS 19D Soldiers to become the commanders' technical advisors for training, gunnery, and gunnery-related maintenance. The Sergeant First Class who has successfully served in a

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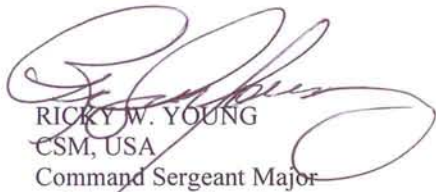
variety of Master Gunner positions and CRITICAL leadership positions, e.g. Platoon Sergeant and Master Gunner, is ahead of his peers.

c. Self-development through degree completion is important and shows the Soldier has the initiative and time-management skills to further his knowledge and understanding in a variety of subjects. College degree completion is not a substitute for service in critical leadership positions.


d. Physically fit Soldiers who score well beyond the minimum standard on the APFT (e.g. 270 or higher, especially on the extended scale) should be recognized as exceptional Armor Soldiers.

9. In summary, this information paper has given you an overview of CMF 19 and has tried to emphasize the importance of promoting top quality Soldiers above their peers. We “highlighted” critical leadership positions, and emphasized that successful performance in these positions is essential. The Armor force wants NCOs promoted who will be excellent ISG’s, who seek challenges, who are versatile, and who genuinely care for Soldiers. Remember, “When all else is equal”, look for those indicators that separate the “best qualified from fully qualified”.

10. Please feel free to contact the Office, Chief of Armor at DSN 464-1321/5155 to request additional information or for any other support we can provide you. “Forge the Thunderbolt!”



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