



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY ARMOR CENTER  
FORT KNOX KENTUCKY 40121-5720

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

ATZK-AR (611-1a)

4 May 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR Command Sergeant Major/Sergeant Major Selection/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 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 First Sergeant/Master Sergeant 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 1SG/MSG's for promotion to Sergeant Major that have successfully served in critical leadership assignments for at least 18 months. Those senior NCOs having served in multiple 1SG positions, i.e. tank company/troop and an HHC/HHT should be considered to have the greatest potential to excel as Sergeants Major.
4. The Armor Force believes that leadership assignments are the key for successful development. The Armor Enlisted Professional Development Guide (and DA Pam 600-25) stresses the importance of serving as a First Sergeant and recommends this experience before advancing to the next higher grade. There is no substitute for serving in the critical leadership positions throughout an Armor Soldier's career. While MTOE positions are highly valued for the development of warfighting skills, give equal weight to success as an Armor First Sergeant, whether the NCO served in a MTOE or TDA position. However, Armor First Sergeants should not serve in critical leadership assignments both as Platoon Sergeant and as First Sergeant in TDA positions. *Consider all graduates of the Sergeants Major Course to have attained the leadership skills necessary to advance to the next higher grade. Refrain from selecting anyone who has not served as a First Sergeant.* Assignment opportunities exist for all Armor Master Sergeants who desire to be First Sergeants.
5. It is sustained quality of service in critical leadership positions, combined with exceptional performance in professionally developing assignments that separates the best qualified Armor 1SG/MSG 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

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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 SGM and eventual service as a CSM. 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 Company/ Troop 1SG for 18 months or more and
- Additionally served with distinction as a HHC/ HHT 1SG
- Demonstrated proven excellence in an authorized position at a higher level (i.e. OPS SGM)
- Graduate of the Sergeants Major Course (SMC)
- Served with distinction in a professionally developing assignment as Master Sergeant

Consider the Armor NCO Exceptionally Qualified who has:

- Served with distinction as Company/ Troop 1SG for 18 months or more and
- May have served with distinction as a HHC/ HHT 1SG
- Served with distinction in a professionally developing assignment as a Master Sergeant
- Have exhibited exceptional potential for success at the next higher grade

Consider the Armor NCO Fully Qualified who has:

- Served with distinction as Company/ Troop 1SG for 18 months
- Served with distinction in a professionally developing assignment

6. 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 key TOE leadership positions. Four-year assignments at Army training centers have led to NCOs serving back-to-back TDA assignments. However, an NCO with back-to-back TDA assignments beyond four years at *different* locations or those serving four years on the same installation may indicate a desire to avoid TOE leadership positions. Additionally those 1SG/MSG's with TDA to 12 month tour to Korea and then back to TDA assignments should also be considered as avoiding operational assignments and TOE positions.

7. 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 Master Sergeant who has successfully served in a variety of Master Gunner positions and CRITICAL leadership positions, e.g. Platoon Sergeant and First Sergeant, 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 should not be a substitute for service in critical leadership positions.

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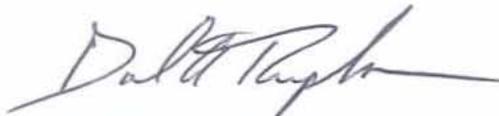
d. Physically fit Soldiers who score well beyond the minimum standard on the APFT (e.g. 270 or higher, especially on the extended scale) should be recognized as exceptional Armor Soldiers.

8. 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 Command Sergeants Major and Sergeants Major, 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".

9. 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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