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14. ABSTRACT The Marine Corps must examine new methods to manage an officer's career in under pressure from budget cuts and geographic specialties outlined in Expeditionary Force 21. The USMC's large centralized manpower management system struggles effectively match talented individuals with an ideal command. These processes are outdated, and must be restructured. Not all officers will be future general officers, and there is no requirement for the structure to function under that assumption. The current culture of facilitating well roundedness limits the effectiveness as well as the quality of officers that the USMC can attract and retain. The catalyst for the change is to increase the PCS orders from 36 to 48 months for officers. This change will save money right away in an era of shrinking defense budgets; it will also save money over time by increasing the return on investment in its Marines. This new process will develop greater officer specialization and allow the USMC to capitalize on its investments in training, as well as capitalize on the experience officers gain during operations. In response to the specialized officers, the USMC must establish alternate career tracks based on performance, streamline the personnel assignment process, and make adjustments to the culture that drives the officer promotion process.				
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Executive Summary

Title: Marine Corps Human Resource Management for the 21st Century

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Thesis: In response to its shrinking budget and *EF21*, the United States Marine Corps (USMC) must overhaul the current officer management structure in order to maintain the highest levels of combat readiness in the face of 21st century challenges and maximize its return on investment in its most important asset – its people.

Discussion: People are the backbone of the USMC. In order to remain America's 911 force, it must continue to attract, develop, and retain the best and brightest talent America has to offer. Future operations outlined in *Expeditionary Force 21* will require individuals with increased specialization in order to operate in smaller units with greater dispersion and autonomy. Regardless of future potential, in an attempt to give fair and equitable treatment to all officers' career development, the assignment process attempts provide them with a broad view of the USMC. The promotion system is based on a culture of encouraging "checks in the block" at each rank. Officers rotate through units, spending minimal time in billets as they must meet certain wickets and continue their career path. The USMC's large centralized manpower management system struggles effectively match talented individuals with an ideal command. These processes are outdated, and must be restructured. Not all officers will be future general officers, and there is no requirement for the structure to function under that assumption. The current culture of facilitating well roundedness limits the effectiveness as well as the quality of officers that the USMC can attract and retain.

Conclusion: The catalyst to spark this reform is to increase the PCS orders from 36 to 48 months for officers. Adjustments in the PCS process should be directed from the top down and must be followed by a push for cultural change inside the USMC. This change will save money right away in an era of shrinking defense budgets; it will also save money over time by increasing the return on investment in its Marines. This new process will develop greater officer specialization and allow the USMC to capitalize on its investments in training, as well as capitalize on the experience officers gain during operations. In response to the specialized officers, the USMC must establish alternate career tracks based on performance. A change in the promotion system that promotes specialists will alleviate the requirement for rapid officer rotation through billets inside units. This process must provide specialists the opportunity to perform, while simultaneously identifying and developing future organizational leaders. Another change, the USMC must remove the centralized control of the manpower management system. It is asking too much of monitors to centrally control hundreds of more specialized officers. The USMC must provide them with a greater say in their career path. This, combined with increased promotion opportunities for high performers will allow greater flexibility in officers' career options. The overhaul in the system will utilize officers in their specialty, as well as encourage retention and development of the highest quality individuals.

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Preface

This project was inspired by my eight years stationed in the operating forces. The rapid turnover and short institutional memory created major inefficiencies in my squadron. During this time, I witnessed officers execute orders just as he or she would begin to show the slightest mastery in his or her craft. I saw leaders repeatedly “re-invent the wheel” as the rapid turnover of personnel and department heads led to recycled ideas in attempts to improve a process or business practice. Often they were returning the process to the way it was two years earlier; they would simply undo the change that their predecessors had completed during a previous tour. I witnessed the brilliant officers leave the Corps to take executive or general schedule positions for higher pay and greater advancement opportunities. As a Forward Air Controller, I learned to be proficient around month four of my combat deployment; then I received orders back to a squadron three months later.

The Marine Corps prides itself on its ability to innovate and adapt. It is time to change the personnel management model. Allow Marines to perfect their craft, provide incentives and promotion opportunities in order to retain the best people, allow units the ability to capitalize on their Marines’ performance. The Marine Corps is a people business. Expensive equipment is secondary; rifles do not shoot and clean themselves, just as aircraft and vehicles do not maintain themselves. Without the best people, the Marine Corps will not provide the best product to the American citizens.

This project would not have been completed without the love and support of my family, especially the encouragement of my wonderful wife, Brittany. Thank you so much. Thank you to my mentor, Dr. Antonoff, your help is greatly appreciated.

*Take away my people but leave my factories, and soon grass will grow on factory floors. Take away my factories but leave my people, and soon we will have a new and better factory.*¹

Andrew Carnegie

The United States Marine Corps (USMC) prides itself on being America's 911 force. In order to continue to rise and face the nation's challenges, it must adapt and ensure it remains flexible to meet the challenges of tomorrow. The USMC is facing major budget cuts as it ends a decade of fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. *Expeditionary Force 21 (EF21)*, the USMC's vision for its future, deems that upcoming conflicts will require distributed operations with regionalized, task-organized forces.² This places increased pressure on its tactical units. Today more than ever, the USMC must innovate from the top down and ensure every dollar it spends leads to maintaining or increasing readiness. In response to the shrinking budget and *EF21*, the USMC must overhaul the current officer management structure in order to maintain the highest levels of combat readiness in the face of 21st century challenges and maximize its Return on Investment (ROI) in its most important asset – its people. As it assesses this future, the USMC must reexamine the method by which it allocates, assigns, and promotes its tactical level officers (first lieutenant to lieutenant colonel).

The catalyst necessary to begin this reform is for the USMC to extend Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders for its officers from 36 to 48 months. In order for changes to the PCS schedule to have the desired effects, they must be followed by reforms in the centralized officer assignment process and, beyond the written policies, by changes in the institutional culture. The USMC will no longer be able to effectively manage careers as officers move away from a one-size-fits-most model. The USMC

must retain and promote the more specialized officers that will result from longer tours while at the same time identifying and developing future organizational leaders in the form of General Officers (GOs). The new model must provide commanders the ability to maximize the return on the USMC's investment in an individual's specialties, promote talented individuals according to their potential and performance, and support retention of top performing officers. This new system, though potentially a shock to the current officer corps, will over time become a part of Marine culture for the younger officers entering the USMC.

To understand the necessity for change, one must first understand its drivers, mandating some adjustment in the USMC manpower management system. Even as the federal budget constraints impose sizable cuts in the Marine Corps' budget every year, potentially evolving doctrine laid out in *EF21* mandates increased regional expertise and specialization. Against that background, one can examine the flaws in the current manpower management system. The USMC's institutional culture perpetuates key assumptions about how best to maximize an officer's career prospects within that system. This paper will propose an alternative method of managing human capital and a new career model for officers, to include a basis for changing the promotion process inside the USMC. Finally, it will conclude with recommendations for ensuring that the new USMC Human Resource Management (HRM) system allows for maximum ROI on its human capital in the 21st century.

Drivers of Change: Dollars and Doctrine

Budgetary Constraints

The USMC must make tough choices as the Corps cuts two billion dollars from

its budget each year until 2022.³ It must answer questions of capacity versus capability, and how to avoid “hollow” forces. To avoid direct impacts on combat readiness, it is considering cuts to Marines’ housing allowances, medical benefits, and retirement benefits in order to reduce costs.

The USMC is trimming the force from the wartime high of 202,000 Marines. The cuts to officers’ housing allowances and benefits are essentially cuts to their salary. While salary cuts may have the desired effects of less officers in the USMC, the Corps will retain fewer of the high quality officers it needs. The USMC must adopt alternate methods to cutting salaries in order to soften the blow of budget cuts. Adjusting the PCS cycle will save money right away, but the USMC must be prepared to deal with the associated “growing pains” of adjusting its manpower management system. After all, this is not the first time these changes have been proposed.

In 1996, Marine Commandant General Charles Kulak approved a proposal for four and five year tours for Marines.⁴ In 1998, as a result of Congressional PCS budget cuts, the USMC released a message that provided detailed steps to move the Corps to a four or five year PCS cycle.⁵ Again in 2002, the Senate appropriations committee attempted to cut money for PCS moves in the Department of Defense (DoD) by 30 percent, citing the belief that “moving too frequently has become one of the principal causes of dissatisfaction with military life.”⁶ In 2012, Lieutenant General Robert Milstead, then Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, told the *Marine Corps Times* that in order to give stability to Marines after ten years of war the standard tours would extend to four years.⁷ The last attempt was in 2013, when Congress attempted to cut the DoD’s PCS money in an effort to cut spending.⁸

Each of these efforts stalled. In fact, none of these attempts led to a significant change in the PCS process for USMC personnel. The 2002 Senate bill designed to cut PCS funding was halted after DoD warnings that loss of those appropriations would lead to freezes of military paychecks, tens of thousands of civilian layoffs and cancellations of training exercises.⁹

There is a reason why politicians and military leaders are targeting PCS and housing allowances. A one percent savings in DoD PCS travel and housing allowance would have allowed roughly 26 million dollars to be spent elsewhere in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014.¹⁰ In between setting up the potential pay advances, moving allowances, weight allowances, and moving companies, a Marine executing a move is costly. PCS cost estimates vary somewhere between \$5,000 and \$12,000 per move.¹¹ In FY2014, the USMC budgeted for more than 65,000 PCS moves.¹² Even if the cost is on the lower end, that equals to over 325 million dollars in USMC spending to move its members each year.

Doctrinal Change

EF21 outlines the methods by which the USMC will redefine itself in the coming years as it ends 14 years of fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. It describes how units will focus on specific areas of the globe, describes the risks of operations with a lack of naval amphibious shipping, and redefines the roles of the infantry and the ways infantry battalions will deploy their forces in smaller, greater dispersed units.¹³ Organizational change must remain consistent with doctrine, as how we fight determines how we man, equip and train our forces. *EF21* indicates significant pressure for change from a doctrinal standpoint.

EF21 outlines “tailored regionally oriented forces” and geographically oriented Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs).¹⁴ Marine Officers of the 21st Century must be more specialized and be thoroughly familiar with their operating environment. The Marines and their officers will require more extensive language and culture training. The USMC is addressing these factors with new programs and specially designed units.

In 2012, the USMC implemented the Regional, Cultural, and Language Familiarization (RCLF) Program, a career-long plan for cultural skill development provided through education. RCLF develops and sustains an operational Language, Regional, and Cultural (LRC) capability in Marines across the total force, both active and reserve. The USMC designed this program to provide the foundation for a “cross-culturally competent” force with diverse regional and cultural understanding as well as language capacity.¹⁵ Today, officers commence geographic specialization at the beginning of their career.

According to the guidance, second lieutenants commissioned after April 2009, warrant officers after February 2011 and newly promoted sergeants (after October 2012) will receive an assignment from one of 17 strategic regions. Marines must complete their RCLF requirements at each rank in order to be PME complete for their grade.¹⁶ In a *Marine Corps Times* interview, Brigadier General William Mullen, then Commanding General, Marine Corps Education Command, compared the LRC requirements to the Physical Fitness Test (PFT), “This is not optional. It's not recommended that you take the PFT, it's not recommended that you learn one of these language series - it's what you're going to do.”¹⁷ Over time, as leaders such as Mullen emphasize the importance of the program, it will place additional strain on the officers that manage personnel

assignments for the USMC.

As officers are ordered to specialize in a geographical area, the plug and play model of officer management will not have the ability to capitalize on an officer's additional training. In order to maximize efficiency, officers must be assigned to the regionally tailored force that coincides with his or her assigned geographic area of study. This will create a tremendous strain on the monitors assigned to Manpower Management Officer Assignments (MMA) under the current system. However, there is little ROI gained from the RCLF program if the USMC assigns a captain to a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) that is consistently deployed to Southeast Asia when he or she has spent eight years completing required LRC training for West Africa. Changes to the USMC assignment policy must reflect this additional factor.

The process of tying officers' geographic specialties with their assignments is an enormous undertaking both administratively and culturally. The centralized management system currently in place will have great difficulty with this process. The practice of "homesteading," where an officer remains in a specific geographic area for multiple tours, is frowned upon at command boards.¹⁸ This will lead career-minded officers to avoid staying in a unit that may be oriented on their region. Yet, if the RCLF program is not emphasized by all levels of command, as well as woven into the assignment system, it becomes a requirement which officers will pay only the minimum required attention. Just like its officers, Marine units are also beginning to focus on specific regions.

The regional oriented forces described in *EF21* are beginning to take shape. The Navy's budget crunch has led to a lack of expeditionary shipping for Marine forces. This shortage is the basis of the recent formation of USMC Special Purpose Marine Air

Ground Task Forces (SPMAGTFs). There are two currently operating in support of United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) and United States Central Command (USCENTCOM). A SPMAGTF is defined as a non-standing MAGTF formed to conduct a specific mission when a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), MEB, Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), or other unit is either unsuited or unavailable.¹⁹ The SPMAGTF has less muscle than a MEU, but includes its own headquarters unit, giving it command and control in support of the geographic combat commander.

Named for the mission that it is designed to perform, SPMAGTF Crisis Response (SPMAGTF-CR) is a 800-plus Marine force stationed in Morón, Spain. It consists of a ground combat element, MV-22 Ospreys, and KC-130J Hercules cargo aircraft. Beginning at 550 Marines, SPMAGTF-CR is expanding; the United States agreed on a deal with the Spanish government to increase the force to 850 Marines in the spring of 2014.²⁰ Fashioned to deal with situations such as the United States embassy attack in Libya, SPMAGTF-CR has performed a number of missions, including the evacuation of the United States embassy in South Sudan. SPMAGTF Central Command (SPMAGTF-CENT) is composed of 2300 Marines, and has aircraft and equipment located throughout the USCENTCOM area of operations. Based on the smaller SPMAGTF-CR, it was created in FY2014 and is designed to “provide a long-range rapid reaction force to serve the [US]CENTCOM commander.”²¹

The SPMAGTFs are not going anywhere. In light of their success, the USMC requested 47 million dollars from Congress in order to fund requirements and allow it to stand up another SPMAGTF in addition to the existing SPMAGTF-CR and SPMAGTF-CENT. The new unit would support United States Southern Command

(USSOUTHCOM).²² If the USMC succeeds in standing up the new unit, there would be crisis response forces deployed for the foreseeable future in support of Africa, the Middle East, and all of South America.

These regionally focused units were stood up as new, agile forces due to a tightening budget, and the SPMAGTF system is becoming the geographic model envisioned by *EF21*. Currently, the geographically oriented force, SPMAGTF-CR, is expected to remain staffed by units from the east coast. VMGR-252 is scheduled to provide KC-130J aircraft detachments out of MCAS Cherry Point for the foreseeable future.²³ USMC units from the west coast are currently expected to fill requirements for SPMAGTF-CENT.²⁴

Flaws in the Current USMC Personnel Management Model

While *EF21* and shrinking budgets certainly necessitate changes in personnel management, the USMC also faces the need to repair inherent flaws in the current system. Current personnel management policy presents difficulties and lost opportunity cost for the Marine Corps. These costs directly effect unit readiness and pertain primarily to turnover and training. They stem, moreover, from an antiquated form of personnel management, which is in turn reinforced by a pervasive set of unwritten assumptions in Marine Corps culture.

Although USMC policy is clearly laid out via published orders, the culturally accepted career model clashes. Officers rapidly rotate through units as they transition across crucial billets with damaging consequences for the organizational psychology of Marine units. Due to high costs of training officers in their primary Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), business theory also supports longer tours for officers as

they are increasingly asked to perform a greater variety of missions. First, this paper will discuss published USMC policy.

Marines receive two types of orders when they are assigned to a new command. The two types are described in Marine Corps Order (MCO) 1300.8R, which governs the USMC's personnel assignment system. The first type, PCS orders, require funding to move a Marine's household goods between duty stations. The second type does not specifically allocate funding. This category of orders includes low-cost PCS and Permanent Change of Assignment (PCA) orders. Low-cost PCS orders do not allow funding for the movement of a Marine's household goods, but there is a waiver process if the Marine's commander deems it necessary to relocate them. Not to exceed 150 miles, a Marine should anticipate low-cost PCS orders when moving between the Washington DC Metropolitan Area and Quantico.²⁵ PCA orders will move a Marine to a new unit "located within the same city, town, base, air station, or metropolitan area."²⁶ Moves in and around the DC metropolitan area are all PCA orders.²⁷

The USMC manpower assignment policy is specific when it comes to PCS orders. The stated goal is to PCS a Marine only when it will benefit combat readiness, guarantee fair treatment, and foster career development.²⁸ It continues, the increasing requirement to control PCS costs requires the "judicious use" of low-cost PCS and PCA orders.²⁹ The order also states that the *minimum* Time on Station (TOS) for an assignment inside the Continental United States (CONUS) shall be 36 months in order to control personnel turnover, reduce travel costs and stabilize Marines' families.³⁰ PCS transfers from a CONUS duty station shall not be assigned exclusively because of the passage of a predetermined period. There is no maximum tour length prescribed.³¹ In review, the

policy says that PCS moves are not required after 36 months, and that they should be limited in order to reduce costs and stabilize families, and only used for combat readiness and career development.

Nonetheless, practice often diverges from policy. The USMC is constantly rearranging the personnel in its battalions and squadrons as its officers turn over from unit to unit. After completing extensive training, they may spend years outside their primary MOS, moving from billet to billet in order to see multiple aspects of the organization. The personnel management system's goal is to create well-rounded Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Officers, whether their primary MOS is an engineer or an aviator. To facilitate this, officers may spend limited time at a unit before receiving a new assignment. For officers, the 36-months is a standard first tour for captains and lieutenants, but as a Marine increases in rank, usually the tours will get shorter based on promotions, schools, department head tours, and the needs of the USMC.

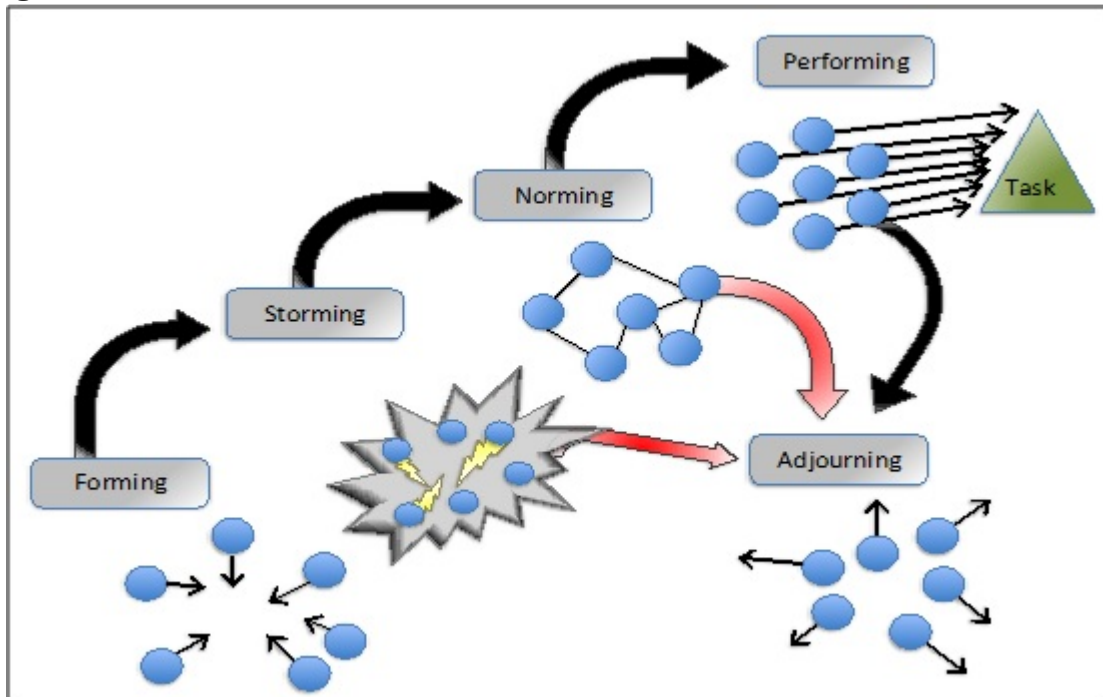
Turnover Costs

Officers rotate in and out of units and billets throughout the USMC. In order to get their "check in the box" as a department head or as a company commander, they often spend the only minimum required time in these crucial billets. Department head and commander billets are critical because they establish the operational tempo and pulse of the unit; mistakes in these billets are magnified in its lower levels. Increased officer turnover within a USMC battalion or squadron leads to decreased performance by the organization. Studies on organizational psychology can illustrate this point.

Bruce Tuckman published the Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing (FSNP) model in 1965 in order to describe organizational psychology. The five step

model (the adjourning step was later added) describes how a group transitions from getting together as a group, to accomplishing tasks, to breaking up again, see Figure 1, below.³² The next paragraph outlines the manner in which the theory applies to the way a Marine unit prepares for a deployment.

Figure 1: Tuckman's FSNP Model



Source: http://www.cengagebrain.com.mx/content/forsyth68220_0534368220_02.01_chapter01.pdf

In the forming phase, members focus on the leader's guidance and the way in which the unit will operate. The storming phase consists of group members struggling to find where they will contribute. They are searching for respect, support, and discovering potential adversarial relationships - at this time the project is a secondary focus. During the norming phase, group member's roles and relationships are established as lesser tasks are completed as a matter of routine. During the performing stage, team members are engaged in the mission as success builds upon itself. Then in the adjourning phase, team members look back on how far they have come, as some potentially strong bonds are

broken. If done correctly, it allows the individual member to have a positive influence on the next group he or she forms.³³

Inside the USMC, the described model works to explain how an infantry battalion stabilizes prior to, trains for, then operates on deployment. However, many units do not specifically work up for a single deployment and then stand down again. They are supporting continuous operations or critical training exercises from their home station. These units cannot afford to stop operations and have periods of non-production in order to progress through the FSNP steps. This means that as members consistently check in and out of the unit, at best, they could be stuck in the norming phase for long periods. More likely, as units cycle through new department heads such as operations officers and executive officers, and new leadership (sergeants major, and commanding officers), the unit is continually trapped in the storming phase, struggling mightily through what would appear to be simple unit tasks.

Training Costs

Like the FSNP model, an aspect of business theory can illustrate the point that decreased officer turnover will increase unit performance. The Optimal Product Quality Theory states the way to find the optimal level of product quality is to balance control costs with failure costs. Control costs consist of prevention costs (capital spent on preventing failure of a product or service) and appraisal costs (capital spent on assessing if there are defective components or systems). Simply stated, the more an organization spends on control costs, the less it will spend on failure costs.³⁴ On an individual level, the more money spent on maintaining one's automobile, the less money spent on replacing failed major components.

In USMC commands, failure costs can be extremely high, so they spend large amounts of money and time on quality control as well as inspecting units in their performance and record keeping. The high cost of failure during a live-fire shoot, or an aircraft sortie means that more money is invested in training the shooters and range safety officers, as well as more money spent on aircraft maintenance and aircrew training. As units look to deploy in support of future conflicts with more and more technologically advanced systems, the more money the USMC must spend on training its personnel.

The theory also states that the greater the amount of time that an individual Marine spends in a specific command, the more investment the command has placed in this individual. He or she possesses both more training and a better understanding of the unit and how to contribute to the mission with greater efficiency, providing increased ROI. As the control costs go up, the failure costs decrease. According to this theory, a command with less personnel turnover will function with greater efficiency.³⁵ It must seek that efficiency - the USMC spends huge sums of money on control costs.

The DoD spends an extraordinary amount of time and money in order to train a F/A-18 Hornet pilot. According to Boeing, the manufacturer of the Hornet, the F/A-18 costs about \$16,000 per flight hour to operate.³⁶ At the fleet replacement squadron, where pilots qualify in the aircraft for the first time, the USMC invests over 1.8 million dollars in flight hour costs for a pilot to complete the syllabus.³⁷ Once qualified in the aircraft, the new Hornet pilot will begin his or her Training and Readiness (T&R) syllabus in a fleet squadron. In order to achieve a basic level of proficiency, it takes a minimum of 16 months and roughly another 2 million dollars in flight hour costs.³⁸ Actual time to train can be longer depending on factors such as maintenance readiness,

airspace availability, and weather conditions. At this point, the USMC has a basic qualified Hornet wingman ready to deploy. He or she now has less than 18 months remaining at the squadron before executing PCS orders. The 18 months is when the pilot begins to provide return on an investment of over 3.8 million dollars. Of note, the 3.8 million dollars is only the F/A-18 flight hour costs for this one officer's aircraft. Operating costs of the other aircraft in the flight, individual pay, benefits, PCS costs, and other USMC specific training are not factored into that amount. Over time, the USMC will phase out the Hornet and replace it with the F-35B Lightning II, the USMC's strike aircraft for the future.

The estimates for F-35B operating costs range between the Office of Secretary Defense's figure developed by the Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation office of \$41,000 and the USMC's estimate of \$30,000 per flight hour.³⁹ At the lower end of that spectrum, the costs are roughly double that of the Hornet. The T&R syllabuses are similar for both aircraft, so once the operations and maintenance systems are in place, the USMC should expect a similar training time of 16 months for pilots to complete qualifications and achieve a basic level of proficiency.⁴⁰ When a pilot is a basic qualified F-35 wingman, the USMC has spent between 7.1 and 9.7 million dollars. Again, the USMC now has less than a year and a half to begin receiving ROI from this officer.

Obviously these two MOSs are the most expensive to train. However, whether an officer is a communications officer or a military policeman, regardless of the amount of money spent on training, the principle remains. The longer the USMC can utilize its officers in their primary MOS, the greater its ROI. The counter argument is that the return on investment continues in a Marine's next assignment even if it is not in his or her

primary MOS. That is true, an engineer officer working on a joint staff understands the way in which an engineer battalion or Marine wing support squadron operates. He or she can gain efficiencies for the staff when presented with the opportunity to utilize this knowledge. However, the large amount of money spent on training this officer makes this practice questionable. As the USMC is requiring its units to do a wider variety of missions, they must operate with greater efficiency.

Units are increasingly asked to do more. As Marines always do, they continue to respond to the demand for them to perform a wider variety of missions. Systems are adding capabilities, and the expanding T&R manuals increase required time to train. Two examples of this are the KC-130J Harvest Hercules Airborne Weapons Kit (HAWK) and the AV-8B Harrier's added capability of the Air Intercept Missile (AIM)-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM).

The KC-130 Hercules is a multi-engine cargo aircraft traditionally used by the USMC as an air-to-air refueler and transport aircraft. In response to an urgent needs statement, the USMC purchased a roll-on, roll-off kit consisting of a fire control console, four Air-Ground Missile (AGM) 114P Hellfire missiles to be mounted on a wing pylon. The kit also includes up to ten AGM-176 Griffin or Guided Bomb Unit (GBU) 44 Viper Strike munitions that can be employed from the paratroop door on the left side. The Harvest HAWK's endurance allows for long on-station time and its precision-guided munitions are well suited for counterinsurgency operations. The added mission means increased training for aircrews. The T&R manual for the KC-130J expanded with additional codes for this mission, increasing time to train. Additions to the Harrier's capabilities also require additional training requirements.

The AV-8B Harrier has always trained to the mission of air defense. Recently, the aircraft was upgraded with the capability to carry the AIM-120 AMRAAM. Harrier pilots must now train to the added capability; section and division lead qualifications require the ability to lead multiple aircraft and utilize the new weapon in air-to-air maneuvers against multiple aggressor aircraft. This additional requirement has created a challenge for the Harrier community. Harrier aircrews now require additional time to train, along with increasing costs due to added flight hour and sortie requirements.⁴¹ These are only two examples, but as new components and capabilities are given to units, additional training for these systems is needed. The USMC must now provide that additional time with longer tours in its units.

Centralized Management Inefficiency

Although necessary, longer tours will create havoc within the current officer personnel management system unless the USMC takes deliberate steps to change how it manages officer assignments. The Marines assigned as monitors in the MMOA branch have a very difficult job. They must manage officer's careers, but more importantly, ensure the needs of the Marine Corps are fulfilled.⁴² These individuals are extremely busy and must exert a great deal of effort to both receive and consider the careers, family needs, and personal desires of the officers assigned to them. The system hinges on one individual single-handedly balancing all of the above factors as they manage careers for hundreds of Marines. Tim Kane, an economist, Hoover Institute research fellow, and former Air Force officer describes the assignment process as "a deeply anti-entrepreneurial personnel structure. From officer evaluations to promotions to job assignments, all branches of the military operate more like a government bureaucracy

with a unionized workforce.”⁴³ The USMC will have to rework its assignment process when officers become less generalized in response to longer tours. It becomes completely unmanageable for one monitor to juggle hundreds of specialized careers and open assignments.

Colonel G.I. Wilson, USMC (Retired) and Major Donald Vandergriff, United States Army (Retired) argue in the book *America's Defense Meltdown: Pentagon Reform for President Obama and the New Congress* that the Army uses a “beer can personnel system” where individuals are simply a stack of cold beer in the refrigerator. The system reaches into the stack without looking, grabs one, chugs it, crushes the can, and discards it; then reaches for a new one as soon as necessary.⁴⁴ This takes a huge toll on the individual service members, and negatively effects readiness. The USMC, although a smaller force, uses a similar method.

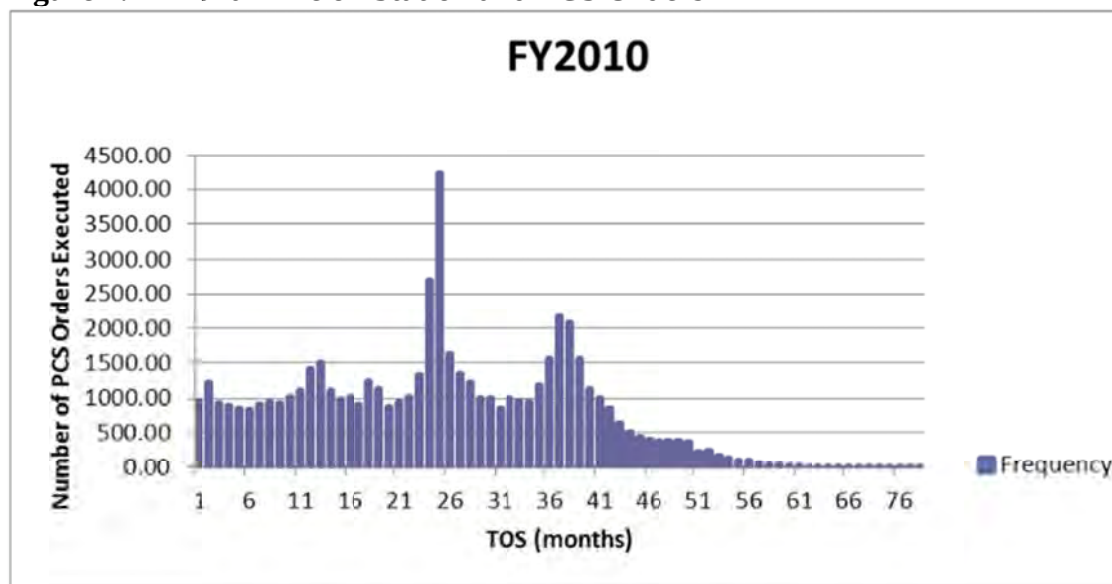
Wilson and Vandergriff argue that the antiquated system is designed using assumptions that are invalid today. The first is that there is a requirement for a large centralized structure like the one used to support the grand mobilization of World War II. Modeled after civilian corporations such as the Pennsylvania Railroad in the early 20th century, the DoD established a large, centralized personnel management system.⁴⁵ Human capital is treated very much like round pegs for round holes. If there is an opening, the system moves someone in, much like it distributes supply items from one location to another. The second assumption is that there must be a large number of officers in the middle ranks that will support the major mobilization. If the DoD must quickly expand in reaction to a long war with a near peer enemy, there must be a large number of well-rounded mid-level officers that can fill virtually any position required.⁴⁶

According to this model, there is no need to develop and promote specialists.

Policy vs. Practice

Contrary to the order governing assignments, monitors are moving Marines faster than the 36-month minimum that is prescribed in the assignment policy. Figure 2 indicates that Marines who had approximately 25 months on station executed the most PCS orders in FY2010. Over of the roughly 105,000 PCS moves executed in that year, 42,000 of them were executed with 35 months of TOS or less.⁴⁷ This high rate of turnover is a good place to begin to look for efficiencies in the manpower management system.

Figure 2: FY2010 Time on Station and PCS Orders



Source: Manpower Management Office at Headquarters Marine Corps, Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Via Freddy Morales

Other printed guidance by MMOA also conflicts with MCO 1300.8R. In 2009, the *Marine Corps Gazette* published an article with the MMOA Staff listed as its author. The article's purpose was to provide Marines information on how to effectively communicate with their monitor and what to expect in their career with regards to

changes of assignment. Diverging from the published policy, the article defines CONUS tours as a standard 36 months, but stated that they can be shortened to 24 months as required.⁴⁸ Today, the Fixed Wing Majors' monitor (at MMOA-2) tells the officers he manages via his website, "If you have been on station for two years and have completed an Operations, Maintenance, or Executive Officer billet, you may be required to PCS or PCA before your estimated rotation date."⁴⁹ In other words, if a major in a fixed-wing squadron is "department head complete" it is time to move. The career track that officers are told they must follow has become ingrained in the USMC culture.

USMC Career "Culture"

The fact that USMC practice does not reflect its signed document governing personnel assignments speaks to the power of unwritten rules, or culture. Short PCS tours have created a collective cultural memory among current officers of quick rotations, which has become a basis for making career decisions. Although not written in a manual, new lieutenants absorb this culture as fact.⁵⁰

Culturally accepted present practice differs in other forms as well. As an officer's monitor assigns orders, they cannot simply choose every job and location based on what is best for their career. According to MMOA staff, officers must "bloom where [they are] planted" and yet in the same sentence are told to "seek fertile soil."⁵¹ The precept message from the FY2016 Lieutenant Colonel Promotion Board instructs board members, "The board's evaluation of officers whose careers may have been affected by assignment policies and practices made in the best interests of the Marine Corps must afford them fair and equitable consideration."⁵² This message to the board instructs its members to promote Marines who have bloomed where they were planted. However, as

Colonel Steven Grass, Director of the USMC's Command and Staff College (CSC) stated, "Reality means nothing in the realm of perception."⁵³

In the pursuit of well roundedness, the USMC seeks to create officers who have experience outside of their specialty. Many organizations adopt job rotation practices not only to expand employee knowledge and progression, but also to better understand an employee's capabilities.⁵⁴ While the requirement to grasp an officer's capabilities is important to the USMC, the practice has received too much emphasis in officer career culture. According to MMOA via the *Marine Corps Gazette*, career diversification is "key to long-term success if you intend to rise through the ranks."⁵⁵ The message is simple, and leaders echo it early and often during a young officer's career. An officer that stays within his or her MOS for multiple tours, although potentially very skilled and polished at their craft, should not expect to get promoted.

The same point is true for remaining within a specific geographic area. As noted before, "homesteading" is loosely defined in USMC circles as remaining in one location or one unit for multiple tours. Although the assignment policy calls for the judicious use of low-cost PCS and PCA orders, homesteading is a "dirty word" in Marine culture, and must be avoided by officers seeking career advancement. This practice is an institutional stigma and has led to officers moving solely for the sake of moving in order to show that they have seen multiple geographic areas. As they moved between locations, the officers sacrificed efficiency in order to "relearn" operations in a different region.

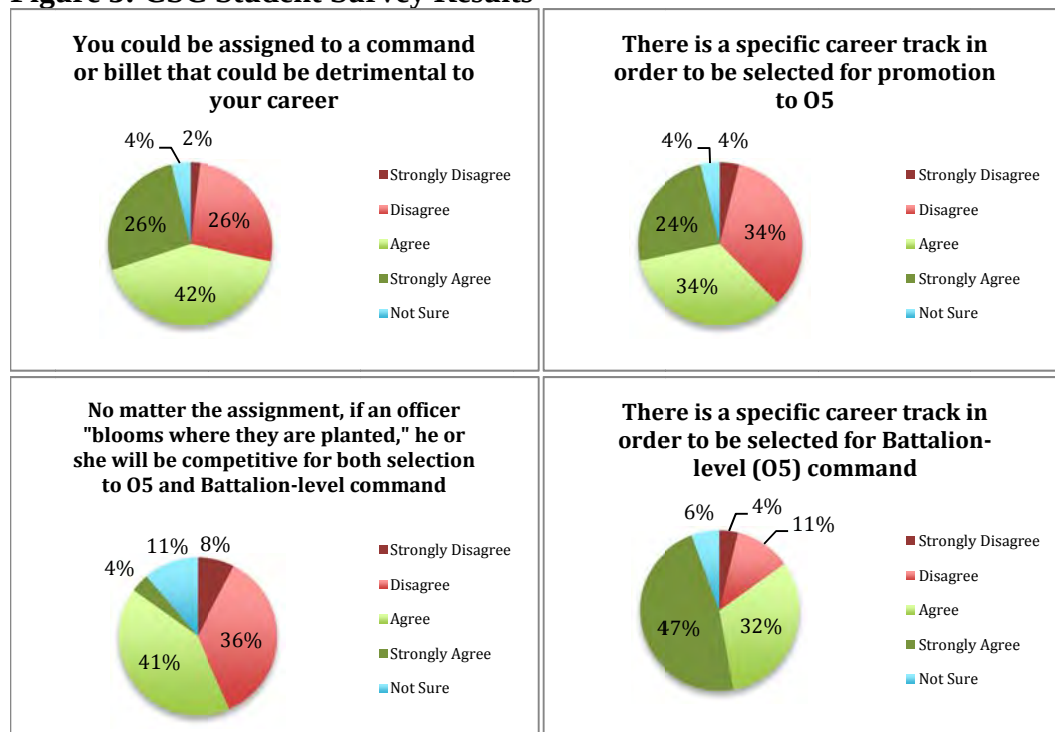
Officers in the USMC understand that many of them have a cultural career track to lieutenant colonel and selection for command. For example, aviators are instructed that if they perform well during their first tour, they should pursue the path that leads

them to squadron command. Once complete with their first tour, they should go to a ground tour, preferably as a Forward Air Controller (FAC) at an infantry battalion. After a successful FAC tour, they should go back to the fleet. A different squadron in a different geographical area is better. They are told to get as many instructor qualifications as possible, and attend the weapons and tactics instructor course at Marine Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1. Once complete with that tour, they should go to an infantry or artillery regiment and serve as an air officer, or possibly attend resident PME. Again, they should come back to a different squadron and ensure that they complete a department head billet, such as operations officer or maintenance officer as a major. If an officer has successfully completed the billets listed above, he or she should perform well on the lieutenant colonel promotion board and will make them competitive on the O5 command board.⁵⁶ Over time, this has become the cultural norm, and the model career-minded officers feel they must follow.

The culturally “standard” career path described above differs from official published guidance by the USMC as described earlier. Evidence nevertheless indicates that it rests on certain pervasive assumptions. In an unscientific survey conducted at Marine Corps University among a small sample of majors from various backgrounds attending CSC in Quantico, the author captured cultural perceptions regarding “fertile soil.” When asked via online survey if they could be assigned a billet unfavorable to their career, 68 percent agreed or strongly agreed. Per Figure 3, when asked if there is a specific career track to battalion (or any O5 level) command, 79 percent agreed or strongly agreed.⁵⁷ The perceptions of what an optimal career looks like have been hard-wired into officers since their time as second lieutenants at The Basic School, regardless

of promotion board precepts or messages.

Figure 3: CSC Student Survey Results



Results of the survey reinforce the perception among majors at CSC that there are in fact “good” jobs that benefit an officer’s career and “bad” jobs that may not help an officer promoted or selected for command. They agree that there is a perception of a specific path to O5 command selection. One “good” job could be the billet that has seen every officer leave it and get promoted. Obviously, there are billets that provide a greater challenge, or a better opportunity to succeed. These are billets where success is both tangible and recognizable. This begs the question of the chicken or the egg, do officers get promoted due to service in a “good” billet, or do officers that are going to be promoted typically fill the billet? Obviously, not all jobs see officers depart and continue to get promoted. Figure 3 shows the perception that the “bad” jobs are ones that the USMC believes are important enough to assign an officer (expend human capital), but

not “really important,” i.e. not good enough for the officer to display potential for future success regardless of the officer’s performance in his or her duties. This too must be reevaluated

An Alternative Personnel Management Model

In businesses the goal is to make money. Civilian corporations make decisions based on gaining efficiency and what will allow their business to grow. Marines do not serve a financial bottom line, but it is in the nation’s best interest for the USMC to make every dollar count. The United States must maintain a mission capable USMC that focuses on readiness. Every decision made by the USMC should start with, “will this lead to greater effectiveness in winning the nations battles?” As high failure costs will increase the quality of a product; capital spent on officer manpower must deliver a ROI. In this case, ROI must be discussed in a qualitative sense. Organizational dynamics and The generalist officer has its advantages, but he or she does not allow for full ROI by the USMC.

One advantage of the current system is that officers know a little bit of how everything in the USMC works. Officers assigned to non-combat support units such as Marine Corps Combat Development Command, or staff officers assigned to large headquarters are recently removed from the operating forces and still have the pulse of the fleet – the officers are familiar with any issues that those units may deal with on a regular basis. This is not reason enough to resist changing the current policy.

If the goal is for headquarters units and non-combat “support” units to maintain touch with the fleet, there are numerous less expensive methods than PCSing officers into and out of those units. Teleconferences or periodic phone calls to discuss challenges

faced by fleet units foster a healthy feedback loop and strong personal relationships between support establishments and the operating forces. PCA orders can make rotations into and out of undesirable billets more agreeable. Most likely, there are specific officers who would find it suitable to fill the undesirable billet, be it family reasons, the officer actually enjoys the job, or does not plan on being promoted. The large centralized manpower division has difficulty locating that specific officer, so it forces any officer to accept the position.

Longer Tours and a New Career Model

As the PCS model expands to 48 months, officers will not have the time to “check all of the boxes” embedded in the current culture. Longer tours will facilitate the creation of specialized officers. Another potential change is a new career track for officers. In order to allow the USMC to maximize on training and PCS cost savings, the USMC must change the plug and play system currently in place. Wilson and Vandergriff suggest a multiple track system for the Army. The USMC could capitalize on this as well. The three-track solution is outlined below.

The Tactical Track is when an officer remains in the division level and below virtually their entire careers. PME programs stressing tactical development can be used at every level. Officers move back and fourth between instructor billets and back to their tactical units. These officers will become true experts in the employment of their unit, and if they display continued leadership potential, can eventually promote to the rank of Colonel in order to command a Marine regiment, MAG, or MEU.⁵⁸

For the top tier of officers, just as companies identify and groom potential executives, the future organizational leaders should be placed in the Operational Track.

This track would mirror the method the USMC uses to manage its officers today. As the top performers are identified, they work in multiple facets of the organization and focus on the operational and strategic levels of war.⁵⁹ These potential future GOs complete command assignments at technical and tactical units. They will attend resident PME focused on the art of war in between staff assignments at higher and higher levels.

All other officers can be placed in a Technical Track. Lawyers, linguists, intelligence officers, and acquisitions experts would be on this track. It would also include other support unit specialists such as training commands, recruiting, and initial training specialists. Promotions for these officers would be based on technical proficiency and the potential to handle greater responsibility.⁶⁰ The system design would allow mobility between the tracks.

Not all officers would fit specifically into a single track, and there should be a process to move from track to track if the requirement exists either due to lack of proficiency, lack of motivation, or an officer is a late bloomer and shows operational potential while in the Tactical or Technical Track. There is no need for all officers to be on the Operational Track, and the ability to create tactical and technical experts allows the USMC to utilize those officers to their full potential, maximizing ROI. Corporations do not fire technical experts once they max out their leadership capability. The Corps should not force out a captain that is an excellent company commander even if his senior leadership does not think he will ever be a battalion commander. An expert pilot or tank commander that can precisely employ and instruct new officers on his or her weapon system should be retained by the USMC as value added even if he or she will never be a MEU commander.

Identify and Develop Organizational Leadership

As the USMC places officers into a track based on their performance and potential to be future top performers, it must be able to identify and develop its future leaders. Not every member of a civilian organization is going to become an executive. Corporate businesses use tools to identify its potential executives. Measures of effectiveness used to assess performance and potential are established in corporations and can be managed via officer performance reviews and counseling sessions.⁶¹

A related issue to HRM changes is the “up or out” officer retention model. A complete analysis of this issue is outside the scope of this paper, yet the overhauled HRM system must include not only greater advancement opportunities for officers, but also the capability for an officer to remain at his or her current billet as long as he or she is performing at a high level (their evaluations plot in the lower right of Figure 4, Potential versus Performance Matrix). Alternate methods of HRM could mirror the corporate world, where most officers would remain in their primary MOS for a longer period,

Figure 4: Potential Versus Performance Matrix

Potential/Performance Matrix				
Potential	Significant (move 1 or more levels in the next 2-5 years)	Counsel	Develop	Promote
	Good (move 1 level in the 5 years)	Counsel	Develop	Move Sideways
	Limited (Reached promotional potential)	Counsel	Develop	Hold
		0% - 50% Threshold	50% - 100% Target	100% - 150% Stretch
		Performance		

Source: Oracle White Paper, *Seven Steps to Effective Leadership Development*

ensuring the maximum ROI for the USMC.

The USMC's personnel evaluation system can be utilized to identify and focus on officers with high potential. Figure 4 is a tool that could be adopted and inserted into the personnel evaluation system. The y-axis shows an employee's potential, while the x-axis displays their performance. In general, an employee who scores in the upper right sector of Figure 4 displays both high performance and high potential. He or she may be promoted quickly. Capitalizing on an individual's strengths, employees who perform extremely well but otherwise display limited potential (shown by scores in the bottom right of Figure 4) remain with the company.

Civilian companies know which of their employees are their strong players. Of 45 companies surveyed by *Harvard Business Review* in 2010, 44 reported that they purposely identify the top three to five percent of individuals inside their organization who consistently outperform their peer group, exhibit behaviors that demonstrate the values and culture of their company, and display a capacity to succeed throughout their careers. More importantly, under constrained resources, companies spent extra energy on developing their identified top performers.⁶² Under pressure to make every dollar count, private corporations do not have the luxury of treating every manager as if he or she is a future executive.

The Singapore Army operates its promotion system much the same way as private corporations. Multiple looks at promotion to the next rank are provided. This practice differs from the USMC's system in that failure to be promoted is not considered a "black mark" on their career. Officers are evaluated and ranked on their potential and performance, as shown in Figure 4 above, then promoted based on quotas required to fill

the ranks as senior officers retire or get out of the army. The Singapore system understands that some officers grasp advanced concepts, display tactical proficiency, and develop leadership capabilities more quickly than others. The superstars within the organization are promoted earlier than their peers; they can make major before they turn 30 and may be on track to become a GO. The officers that get promoted later stay in the army and are utilized for their strengths. Eventually, these officers typically either time out and retire or find other employment once it is clear that they have reached their terminal rank.⁶³ In Singapore, there are rare occasions in which personnel simply have no desire to be promoted, but they eventually leave the army for another career.⁶⁴

Provide Incentives to Facilitate Talent Retention

The USMC must make changes in order to recruit and retain America's top talent. Corporate personnel management systems in the civilian sector have changed in the last 50 years. It is time for the USMC to reexamine its system. As an organization's operating environment became larger, more dynamic, and more complex, the traditional civilian management processes failed to keep up with new demands, and were at times "at a cross purpose with new initiatives."⁶⁵ According to a Development Dimensions International survey of over 150 United States companies and 50 representatives of "leading edge" corporations, companies with the best reputations for attracting, retaining and developing leaders share five common characteristics:

- Less hierarchical, flexible organization structures that provide a wide range of learning opportunities for potential leaders
- Take risks in quickly advancing the careers of their most talented managers
- Provide incentives that support leadership growth, personalized pay, and flexible

career tracks

- Encourage risk-taking and allow failure, and continually reexamine development practices
- See leadership development as an expectation of senior leaders; and show a willingness to make long-term commitments.⁶⁶

Some of the bullets describe the USMC; the last bullet does so very well. There are many excellent learning opportunities, and leadership development is stressed at all ranks. The other bullets however, are where the Corps falls short. The USMC does not have flexible organization structures, and it does not quickly advance the careers of talented officers. The USMC falls short in its ability to provide effective incentives that support leadership growth, personalized pay, or flexible career tracks for its officers. In regard to risk, compelling the USMC to move away from its zero defect mentality and encourage risk-taking is another topic large enough to merit its own study. Yet, the USMC can shift its policies and eventually the culture will change, allowing the USMC to address the other bullets. The shift will take time, but new policies must be adopted so the USMC can continue to attract, retain, and develop leaders in the 21st century.

De-centralize the Assignment Policy

The officer assignment policy can be streamlined. Today, as officers are instructed to “seek fertile soil,” the centralized process hinders an officer’s ability to pursue optimal assignments. Instead of a single officer in Quantico simultaneously juggling hundreds of careers, the process can be simplified. Kane suggests that we should have the manpower management division yield centralized control in order to facilitate the assignment process.⁶⁷ The USMC should set up simple rules to guide

officers in their career path. For example, after completing a tour in their primary MOS, officers must seek a job in one of a choice of billets. After that billet is complete, then there would be another choice of billets, and so on. Under these rules, commanders would be able to recruit officers to their units. A Marine's profile, qualifications, and evaluation rankings allow them to compete for a spot in a desired command. Officers can interview with the command in order to pursue a billet they desire, providing additional motivation for higher performance.

People perform better doing a job that they love. Officers with a larger say in their assignments would lead to an increase in "employment longevity and productivity."⁶⁸ Officers would be afforded the opportunity to effectively manage their own careers, seek "fertile soil," and match with their geographic training. This process incentivizes hard work and high performance as top performers may be sought after by multiple commands. MMOA would become facilitators and administrators, implementing the rules and ensuring orders are created in a timely manner.

In reality however, many jobs must be done whether or not they are desirable billets. The USMC could give bonuses to officers for accepting a billet that remains unfilled for a certain period.⁶⁹ This would lead to a true evaluation of available billets by creating a market inside the USMC. If a billet is undesirable, fails to be career enhancing, and is cost prohibitive to find an officer to fill it, the USMC must take a hard look at the overall requirement for that billet. Alternative methods could be spreading the billet's responsibilities across others members of the unit.

Utilize Talent and Promote Based on Performance

As stated before, any change in the PCS system will have ripple effects across

officer culture. As leaders evaluate the personnel management system, they must look at the promotion process in order to stay competitive with leading civilian companies' ability to attract the best talent. According to Kane, "the military is creating a command structure that rewards conformism and ignores merit. As a result, it's losing its vaunted ability to cultivate entrepreneurs in uniform."⁷⁰ He suggests restructuring the promotion process. Give commanders more authority to promote their stellar performers.⁷¹

The Federal Government retains its proficient General Schedule (GS) workers while at the same time rapidly promoting high performing ones. Some GS-9s just want to do their job without thought of promotion, and spend their entire careers doing so. Inversely, there are extremely motivated employees who reach GS-15 in their early 30s. As their peers remain majors or captains in the military, these individuals are out-earning them as executives and presidential appointees.⁷² One of many potential options for examination, the USMC could develop a system that mirrors the Federal Government GS promotion system.

Opponents to change will argue that the USMC should not institute a system that allows officers to hide behind a desk for their entire career just like the GS-9 mentioned above. Recruiting the right candidates alleviates this. Both civilian corporations and the USMC understand that the key to developing talent begins by hiring the right person for the company.⁷³ The USMC recruits potential officers that are typically motivated type-A individuals. Officer Candidate School and The Basic School will continue to weed out candidates and any second lieutenants that are incapable or display poor leadership potential.

Conclusion

The military profession requires adaptation and innovation in order to meet future challenges. Implementation of the new HRM system will touch many facets of USMC culture, and so they must be recognized and encouraged from the top down. Officers must be provided the time, training, and freedom to utilize their developed expertise and to capitalize on their entrepreneurial spirit. In combat, Marines are innovating and adapting to new challenges around the world. The manpower system should not be any different.

EF21 illustrates geographically specific operating forces. Officers with sustained geographic experience in a specific area will ensure the units function with greater efficiency. The USMC's plans to support geographic combat commanders with SPMAGTFs illustrate this point. The USMC is developing personnel and units with regional focus, and this must be tied into all aspects of HRM and assignments. This begins with an extension of PCS tours - this extension will also save money.

Today, budget constraints impose tough choices. Yet the personnel management system faces pressure for cuts that will only compound current difficulties. The USMC must keep faith with its personnel. It must honor the agreements made to the Marines that have served multiple combat tours. The USMC cannot simply grab the low hanging fruit of personnel benefits; it must consider changes to all aspects of itself and find cost savings elsewhere. Extending the PCS policy is the proper place to start - but necessitates in turn adjustments in assignment and promotion policies and practices.

Part of the solution is administrative. Although some jobs have to be done irrespective of whether or not they are career developing, the process can be more

efficient and provide greater ROI for the USMC. The current system is not streamlined. Perhaps even more significant, it will have difficulty moving away from the current USMC culture, which is another problem

To realize and implement a longer PCS tour for officers and adjust promotion policy, the current USMC culture must shift. The idea of longer tours is not a new one. Changes to the current practice have been resisted in the past. As an organization that prides itself on adaptability in combat, the USMC manpower process must now adapt. *EF21* and future operations indicate that units will operate in geographic regions in smaller units for longer periods. The USMC developed the RCLF program in part for this reason. The culture must recognize and utilize officers that are specialists and technical experts. A new HRM system must allow them longer time in their billets to capitalize on their tactical expertise and maximize ROI. At the same time, it must identify and develop future GOs.

Another way to facilitate combat readiness is to retain quality officers. One way to do this is to give them more influence in the organization. The USMC must move away from the large centralized “beer can” personnel system as and allow individual officers greater say in their career. It must provide commands the ability to recruit desired officers. This new system will have the ability to match the geographic units with the geographic officers. In the past, the attempts to adjust the PCS policy failed because there was no buy-in from USMC leaders.

The USMC’s institutional reluctance to change means that major modifications must be emphasized at all levels of command. Deliberate changes to the manpower management structure will soon have an effect on culture. Associated culture changes

will slow the rotation of billets inside battalions and squadrons. To Marines of today, the changes will be outrageous. Yet, over time the culture will shift as old members leave the organization, leaving new Marines that only know the new processes.

A USMC culture shift that provides longer tours for officers will not only slow the turnover between units, but also remove informal career gates or “checks in the blocks” and thus decrease the rotation of department heads and commanders inside units. Training costs can be recouped as the tours are extended. Like the FSNP model, business theory suggests that decreased officer turnover will increase unit performance.

Drastic changes in the manpower assignment system are a requirement. Both in terms of the resent austerity measures and in terms of lost ROI, the practice of creating generalized officers is costly. The USMC’s budget is shrinking each year, but the Corps’ expeditionary mindset remains. It has to be constantly ready to deploy at a moment’s notice. As the former Commandant, General James Amos, told the Marines in 2013, “Save every round, every gallon of gas... this is no time to do business as usual... the landscape [has] changed.”⁷⁴ The USMC should apply this way of thinking to every aspect of itself, to include the manpower management system.

DoD leaders must not take the all-volunteer force for granted. Some individuals volunteered to serve for a few years. Others volunteered to serve for their entire career. Each one brings strength to the organization. The USMC must do all it can to retain the Corps’ future top performers. *EF21* says high quality people, the individual Marines themselves, are the bedrock of the Corps and will be the ground upon which the future USMC stands.⁷⁵ To meet the challenges of the next century, the USMC must continue to “attract, mentor, and retain the best and brightest of America’s sons and daughters.”⁷⁶

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²⁸ MCO P1300.8R, 1-3.

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³¹ MCO P1300.8R, 1-4.

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Appendix A

Military Officer Promotion Track Survey

Military Officer Culture

This is an informal survey to get a feel for the Military Officer culture with regard to promotion and command opportunities.

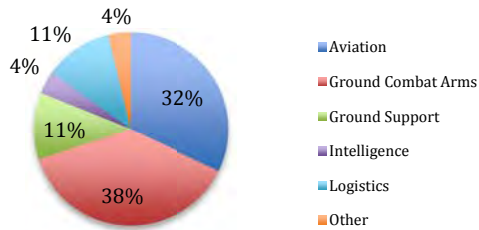
Answer quickly with your initial thoughts.

1. What is your branch of service?
 - ☐ US Army
 - ☐ US Navy
 - ☐ US Marines
 - ☐ US Air Force
 - ☐ Civilian
 - ☐ Foreign Military
 - ☐ Other
2. What is your Military Field?
 - ☐ Ground Combat Arms
 - ☐ Ground Support
 - ☐ Logistics/Supply
 - ☐ Aviation
 - ☐ Aviation Support
 - ☐ Surface Warfare
 - ☐ Other
3. How many years of service do you have?
 - ☐ 0-10 years
 - ☐ 10-14 years
 - ☐ 15-20 years
 - ☐ over 20 years
4. You could be assigned to a command or billet that could be detrimental to your career.
 - ☐ Strongly Agree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Not Sure

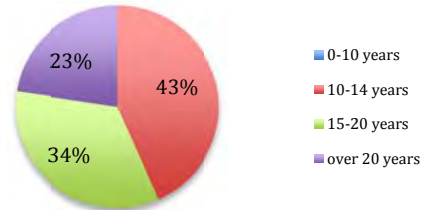
5. There is a specific career track in order to be selected for promotion to O5.
- ☐ Strongly Agree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Not Sure
6. There is a specific career track in order to be selected for battalion-level (O5) command.
- ☐ Strongly Agree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Not Sure
7. Successive tours in the same geographic area make you less competitive for promotion from your current rank.
- ☐ Strongly Agree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Not Sure
8. Successive tours in the same geographic area reduce your chances for battalion-level command.
- ☐ Strongly Agree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Not Sure
9. No matter the assignment, if an officer "blooms where they are planted," he or she will be competitive for both selections to O5 and Battalion-level command.
- ☐ Strongly Agree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly Disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Not Sure

CSC Student Survey Results

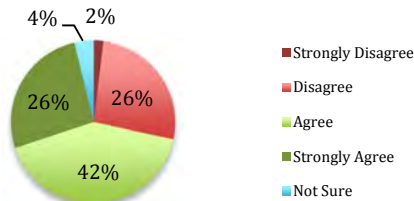
What is your military Field??



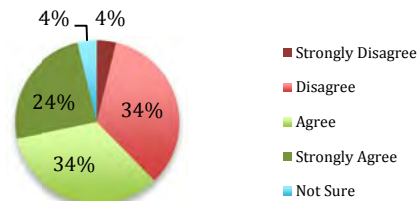
How many years of service do you have?



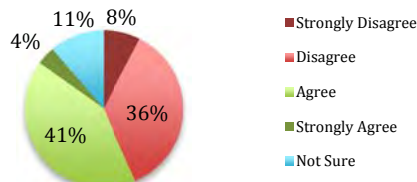
You could be assigned to a command or billet that could be detrimental to your career



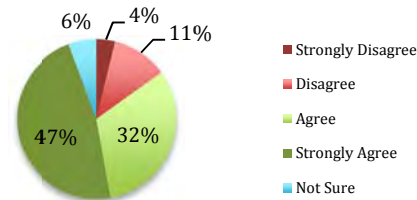
There is a specific career track in order to be selected for promotion to O5



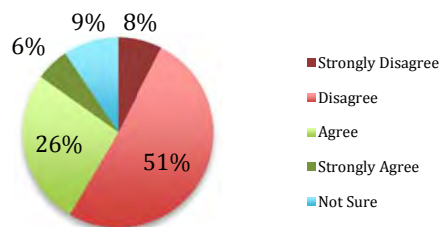
No matter the assignment, if an officer "blooms where they are planted," he or she will be competitive for both selection to O5 and Battalion-level command



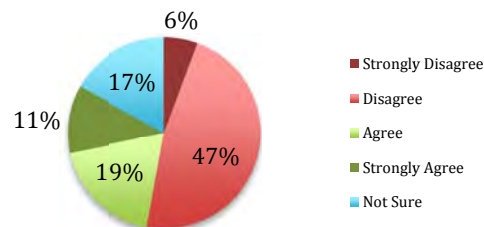
There is a specific career track in order to be selected for Battalion-level (O5) command



Successive tours in the same geographic area makes you less competitive for promotion from your current rank



Successive tours in the same geographic area reduces your chances for Battalion-level command



CSC Student Survey Results

Survey Respondant	Service Branch	Military Field	Years of Service	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9
1	Marines	Aviation	10-14	SA	D	D	A	SA	D
2	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	D	NS	SA	D	D	NS
3	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	15-20	A	SA	SA	SA	SA	D
4	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	20+	A	A	SA	A	A	D
5	Marines	law	15-20	A	D	SA	A	NS	A
6	Marines	Logistics	20+	D	D	A	D	D	D
7	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	SA	D	D	SD	SD	D
8	Marines	Aviation	15-20	A	SA	SA	D	D	SD
9	Marines	Aviation	15-20	NS	SA	SA	SD	SD	SD
10	Marines	Ground Support	20+	D	NS	NS	A	NS	NS
11	Marines	Logistics	10-14	A	A	A	D	D	A
12	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	15-20	A	A	A	NS	NS	A
13	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	A	D	SA	D	D	D
14	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	20+	SA	A	A	SA	SA	SD
15	Marines	Ground Support	20+	SA	A	SA	D	D	D
16	Marines	Aviation	10-14	A	A	A	D	D	D
17	Marines	Ground Support	10-14	D	D	A	D	A	A
18	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	20+	SA	SA	SA	D	D	A
19	Marines	Logistics	15-20	A	A	SA	NS	A	A
20	Marines	Administration	10-14	D	D	SD	D	D	A
21	Marines	Aviation	10-14	D	SA	A	D	NS	A
22	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	15-20	SA	A	A	SD	D	A
23	Marines	Aviation	10-14	A	A	SA	D	D	D
24	Marines	Intelligence	10-14	SA	A	A	A	SA	D
25	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	NS	D	A	A	A	NS
26	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	D	D	A	D	D	A
27	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	15-20	SA	A	A	NS	NS	A
28	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	15-20	D	D	SA	D	D	A
29	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	D	D	D	D	D	A
30	Marines	Ground Support	15-20	D	SD	SD	A	NS	A
31	Marines	Logistics	15-20	A	D	D	D	D	A
32	Marines	Ground Support	20+	D	D	A	A	A	A
33	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	A	A	A	NS	NS	SA
34	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	SA	D	A	A	A	D
35	Marines	Aviation	10-14	A	A	SA	A	SA	D
36	Marines	Aviation	20+	A	SA	SA	A	A	D
37	Marines	Aviation	15-20	SA	A	SA	D	D	D
38	Marines	Aviation	10-14	A	SA	A	D	D	A
39	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	20+	A	SA	SA	A	A	A
40	Marines	Logistics	20+	A	SA	SA	A	A	D
41	Marines	Logistics	15-20	D	A	SA	D	D	D
42	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	A	SA	SA	D	D	A
43	Marines	Aviation	10-14	SA	SA	SA	D	D	D
44	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	10-14	A	A	SA	D	D	D
45	Marines	Ground Combat Arms	15-20	SA	SA	SA	A	A	D
46	Marines	Aviation	15-20	SA	SA	SA	D	D	NS
47	Marines	Aviation	15-20	SD	D	D	SD	SD	SA
48	Marines	Aviation	10-14	A	D	D	D	D	A
49	Marines	Intelligence	10-14	SA	SD	A	SA	SA	SD
50	Marines	Ground Support	15-20	D	D	SA	D	D	A
51	Marines	Aviation	20+	A	A	NS	NS	NS	NS
52	Marines	Aviation	20+	A	A	NS	D	NS	NS
53	Marines	Aviation	15-20	D	D	SA	D	D	A