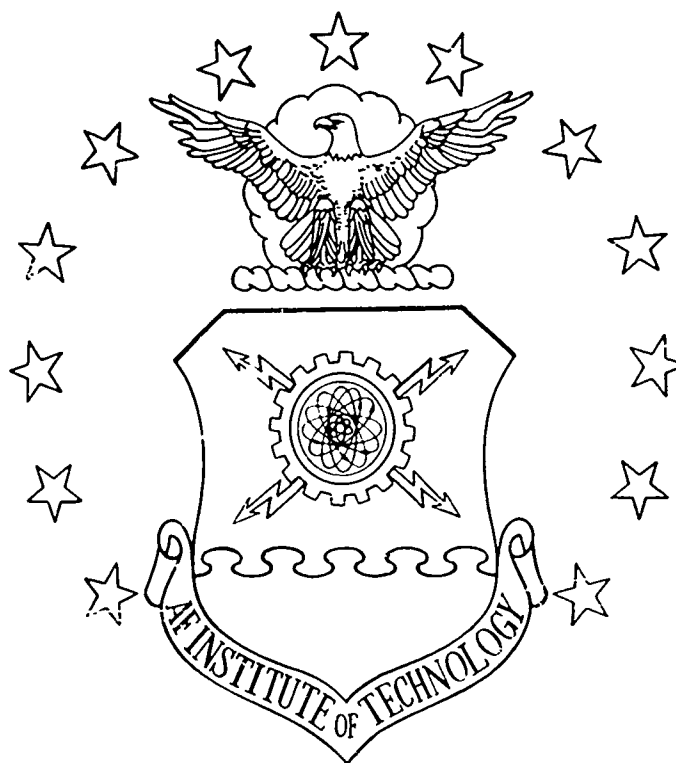
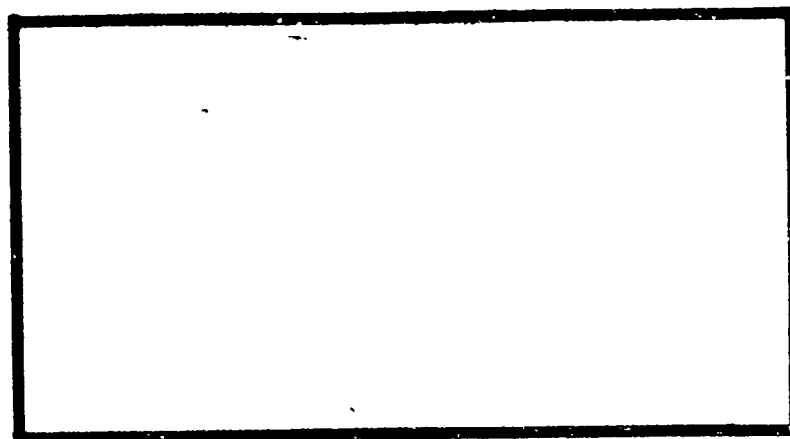


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JUNIOR OFFICER PERCEPTIONS
OF THE OER SYSTEM
THESIS

GSM/SM/76D-32

Steven Keyserling
Capt USAF

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APR 22 1977

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(14) AFIT/
GSM/SM/76D-32

JUNIOR OFFICER PERCEPTIONS
OF THE OER SYSTEM .

THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the School of Engineering
of the Air Force Institute of Technology

Air University

in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science

by

Steven Keyserling B.A.

Capt

USAF

Graduate Systems Management

December 1976

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Preface

This research was accomplished for several reasons. First, of course, it was done as part of the requirements for a degree in Systems Management from the Air Force Institute of Technology. Second, being in the position of ratee and future rater, I wanted to become aware of the opinions and facts involved in the evaluation process. Third, it was done with the intent of providing insight into the junior officer perceptions of the new OER system. Fourth, based on these insights, to identify any conflicts which may exist between the perceptions and reality.

In my opinion the research was done in an extremely objective manner in order to maintain the validity of the results. Great care was taken to collect, analyze and present the data in an unbiased fashion. I have seen a lot of statistics in regard to the OER presented in such a manner as to misrepresent the facts. I have made every effort to present my statistics so as to represent the data collected.

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Michael Stahl who suggested the topic and provided help and encouragement. Also, I would like to thank my wife, Cindy, whose typing, help and encouragement, made this effort possible.

Steven Keyserling

Contents

	Page
Preface	ii
List of Tables.	v
Abstract.	vi
I. Introduction.	1
Problem Statement.	5
Objectives	6
Scope and Limitations.	7
Assumptions.	8
Organization of Study.	9
II. Methodology	10
Survey Group	11
Questionnaire Description.	12
Questionnaire Development.	14
Data Analysis.	15
Data Presentation.	17
III. Findings.	20
Section I.	20
Introduction.	20
Factors	21
Special Assignments	23
Established DOS	26
Being in the Primary Zone for Promotion	30
Visibility.	34
Length of Time in a Job	38
Upcoming PCS.	41
Level of Assignment	44
Relationship Between Rating Officials	46
Rated versus Non-Rated.	48
Other Factors	52
Mean Rank Ordering.	53
Section II	55
Introduction.	55
Job Performance	62
Primary Zone for Promotion.	63
Visibility.	64

Additional Duties and PME	67
Established DOS	68
Relationship Between Rating Officials	68
Section III.	70
Introduction.	70
Data Presentation	70
The Rater	72
Rater Qualified	73
The Reviewer.	73
Reviewer Qualified.	74
Forced Distribution	75
Performance	77
Promotion Probability	79
Ultimate Grade.	84
Career Probability.	86
IV. Conclusions and Recommendations	88
DOS.	88
Rated versus Non-Rated	89
Visibility	89
Job Performance.	90
Primary Zone for Promotion	90
Length of Time in a Job.	91
Rater and Reviewer Qualifications.	92
Distribution Forced Downhill	93
Promotion Probability.	94
Career Probability	95
Summary and Recommendations.	95
Bibliography.	97
Additional Sources.	98
Appendix A: Officer Effectiveness Report	99
Appendix B: Questionnaire.	102
Appendix C: Demographic Breakdown of Officers Surveyed	112
Vita.	127

List of Tables

Table		Page
I	Factors Contained in the Survey.	22
II	Rank Ordering of Means Total Category	54
III	Total Category Choices For Most Important Factors.	57
IV	1's Category Choices For Most Important Factors.	58
V	2's Category Choices For Most Important Factors.	59
VI	3's Category Choices For Most Important Factors.	60
VII	No Score Category Choices For Most Important Factors.	61
VIII	Factors Changing Importance Under New OER System (Total Category)	65
IX	Performance versus Ratings	78
X	Promotability versus Ratings	80
XI	Ultimate Grade versus Ratings.	85
XII	Career Probability versus Ratings.	87

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the current OER system on the junior officers of the United States Air Force. A survey of the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of 537 Air University Students indicates that the new CER system has solved old problems and, at the same time, created new problems. The ignoring or denying of problems in a system will not cause them to cease to exist. The problems caused by the imperfections of the new system are minor in magnitude at this time and not cause for alarm or concern. However, if the imperfections continue to be denied or ignored, misconceptions and rumors will increase the magnitude of the problem out of proper perspective. The new problems can lead to demotivation and dissatisfaction, which could decrease the Air Force mission effectiveness. Recommendations include scaling, defining and establishing criterion for the evaluation of potential and methods to prevent gaming of the system. The author recommends that the appropriate agencies evaluate the conclusions and recommendations. If valid, the author suggests corrective action be initiated immediately.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The new Officer Effectiveness Report (OER) System was implemented in the United States Air Force (US) in November 1974. The new system had been under development for several years to correct deficiencies in the old system. The new system was designed specifically to eliminate the old deficiencies and at the same time, provide a better means to evaluate the performance of an officer and to measure his promotion potential. Special emphasis was placed on the ability to identify the truly outstanding officer, which was a difficult task under the old OER system (Ref 3:1).

One of the major reasons for the adoption of a new system was to correct for the "inflation" which had taken place in the old system. Under the old system, as late as 1961, less than five percent of all USAF officers received a top-block rating. By 1971, nearly ninety percent of all USAF officers received a top-block rating. Seventy-five percent of the officers had five consecutive highest block (nines) ratings. Not only was it becoming more difficult for promotion boards to identify those officers with the most potential, but the process of selecting the best qualified officer for more challenging assignments was not helped by the inflated OER's (Ref 4:1).

Not only were the officers concerned that the "system" was not working, but also the leaders of the USAF. The leadership had attempted to rectify the inflation by passing down directives to spread-out the ratings. However, the directives lacked the teeth to force compliance. Lower-echelon leaders felt that if they rated an officer anywhere below a top-block rating, without assurance that others would be doing the same, they would be jeopardizing that officer's promotion and career possibilities. As long as compliance was on a voluntary basis, no one wanted to risk the consequences. The inflation continued and was self-perpetuating. Headquarters Air Force recognized that without directives controlling the distribution of ratings, the inflation trend could not be stopped (Ref 10:54-55).

The key to the new system was to "control" the distribution of ratings by placing limits on how many officers could receive ratings in the top, second and other blocks. Under the new system only twenty-two percent of the officers being evaluated can receive a top-block rating. No more than fifty percent can receive the top and second block rating. The remaining fifty percent must receive a third-block or lower rating. In essence, this boils down to 22% receiving a top-block rating, 28% receiving a second block rating and 50% receiving a third-block rating (there are six blocks in total). (See Appendix A). These distributions apply only to those officers being evaluated and is done for each grade. The new OER affects all the grades of lieutenant through

colonel (Ref 4:22).

The majority of officers agreed that a new system was needed due to the inflation of ratings and the lack of controls to stop the inflation (Ref 3:3). However, the acceptance of the new system is varied and unknown. The main source of contention is the control on the distribution of ratings. Many officers are not sure of the impact these controls are having on their promotion, assignment and career possibilities. The author, in informal discussion with the members of class GSM-76D at the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT), found them to believe the new system to be more harmful than beneficial. The effect the new system is having on AF officers is, as yet, not fully known.

With the incorporation of the controls into the new system, the new OER system can be described as a zero-sum rating system. A zero-sum system is one in which any change adds to zero. For example, in a card game with two men, when one loses five dollars, the other wins five dollars. Similarly, in an organization of 10 men where 5 are rated "below-average" and 2 of the "below-average" men leave, then 1 of the men who was rated "above average" previously, must now be rated "below average". The use of zero-sum systems in industrial experiences has not been encouraging. Experience has shown that a comparative ranking of personnel has been a deflating experience of 70% to 80% of all those people ranked and would have a negative effect on their self-esteem. Not only does the zero-sum system have adverse

effects on those being ranked, but also on those doing the ranking. The supervisor finds it hard to motivate his personnel when he has to tell half his personnel their performance is just average (Ref 6).

The zero-sum game rating system does not necessarily reflect reality, in that, with the increased performance or effectiveness of one officer, there follows a decrease in performance or effectiveness of another officer. The reverse may be true, however. The zero-sum game rating system does let an individual know how he stands in relationship to another individual. Private companies have found that the zero-sum game system has brought about some unexpected and unpleasant results. Some of the negative results have been increased anxiety, work slow-down and morale suffering substantially (Ref 6:152).

There exists much literature on evaluation and appraisal systems in general. The author was unable to find any material dealing specifically with a zero-sum game rating system other than that provided by Dalton and Thompson. The supplementary bibliography is provided by the author for those individuals desiring additional information on rating systems in general.

Problem Statement

Under the old OER system, it was possible for every officer to receive a top-block rating. This is no longer possible under the new OER system due to the forced distribution of ratings. The perceptions that a junior officer holds as to what influences the rating he receives, have many effects on the officer. Due to the fact that not everyone can receive a top-block rating, the perceptions that junior officers (O-3 and O-2) hold as to what factors influence their ratings becomes very important. These perceptions have an impact on the attitudes, performance and career intentions of the USAF junior officer corps.

If the perceptions that the junior officers have of the new OER system are the same as ones they held under the old OER, then the USAF may have solved inflation. If, however, the old perceptions are different from the new perceptions, the USAF may have cured inflation, but with what other results? Have old problems been cured at the expense of creating new problems? By comparing the old and new perceptions, any changes can be observed. In addition, by looking at some of the unique features of the new OER system, some other results of the new system can be observed or detected.

Objectives

The objective of this study is to compare, and assess the differences of perceptions relating to the new and old OER system. In addition, to identify and analyze some of the perceptions associated with the peculiarities of the new OER system.

Scope and Limitations

There are several limitations which are imposed on this study. Due to the large number of junior officers in the USAF, only a sample was selected as a data base to reflect the perceptions of the overall group of junior officers. Secondly, in order to have surveyed as large a group as possible in a timely fashion, a questionnaire was the primary tool for data gathering.

As there could be an unlimited number of factors which influence the OER rating system, a list was compiled containing those factors believed to be the most influential. Thus, the main source of input from the questionnaire was derived from a list of factors selected by the author as having the most influence on the OER.

Assumptions

1. It was assumed that the list of factors involved contained the most important factors influencing the ratings under the OER system.
2. It was assumed that the responses given by the involved individuals were truthful and reflective of their perceptions.

Organization of Study

Research methodology is presented in Chapter II. Included are the rationales behind the use of the questionnaire and the choice of the sample group used. Included are the procedures and techniques used to extract the data obtained.

In order to present the data in a meaningful format, Chapter III will include a discussion of each factor considered to be influential in the OER rating system. Responses to most questions will be broken into 5 categories. Chapter III will also include the responses to those questions relating only to the new OER system.

Conclusions and recommendations are presented in Chapter IV. The conclusions reached about perceptions of the OER system are based on an analysis of the data obtained. The conclusions lead to the recommendations which are aimed at improving weaknesses identified by this study. The intent is to design a more effective OER rating system.

Chapter II

METHODOLOGY

The survey procedures and techniques used in this study were based on the constraints and limitations described in Chapter I. While a long-range and very broad study would have been preferred to research the impact of the OER system, this was not possible. Such a study would have provided a detailed explanation as to the effects the new OER is having on the officer corps. Many factors, principally, time and manpower, prevented such an effort. The conception, formulation, approach and reporting was compressed into a five month period, thus, preventing an Air Force wide study over any extended period of time.

While a long range study to investigate the effects of the actual OER system was not possible, this study will research the opinions and perceptions of officers with the new OER system having been implemented for almost two years. The new OER system appears to have reached a fairly stable existence in the manner in which it is being implemented. Thus, while the system is stable the perceptions and opinions being formed are likely to be static, also. The data upon which this study is based is comprised of the opinions and perceptions of those USAF officers who were in residence at Squadron Officers' School in July and August of 1976.

Survey Group

The survey group consisted of only those officers attending SOS, thus, this research is based only on junior officers in the grade of captain and lieutenant. The survey group is a result of a screening and selection procedure which leaves them unrepresentative of the general junior officer population. As a result, this group is not a random sample of junior officers in the Air Force. One factor which makes this group unrepresentative of junior officers, in general, is the disproportionate distribution of OER ratings (Reference Appendix C for further details). Therefore, the data presented here is not from a random and truly representative group. It is the responsibility of each individual reader to weigh this bias when attempting to apply any interpretations to a less restrictive sample of Air Force junior officers. A method used to correct some of this bias is presented later in this chapter.

If the selection procedures are coupled with the professional military institution goal of developing the future leaders of the Air Force; the officers in this study should be the future supervisors and commanders. The opinions and perceptions these officers hold today will influence the course of the OER system tomorrow. In addition, the officers in this study have been selected and rewarded by the system. While the amount and type of reward may be open for debate, the system has selected these officers as

being the most qualified of their contemporaries. Thus, this survey group consists of the more secure junior officers in the Air Force.

If this secure feeling leads to any bias, it will be one of a conservative nature. Having been selected by the system, the survey group should perceive less of a threat from the new OER system. Due to this conservative nature, any misgivings or apprehensions expressed by the survey group would probably be felt more strongly by a less select group. It is left to the reader to use this rationale when any attempt is made to extrapolate the findings of this study beyond the survey group.

To assist in determining the similarity of this survey group to any other, recognition of the conservative aspect should be kept in mind. To aid the reader in determining any similarity between the survey group and any other group for which a comparison may be made, Appendix C contains a limited breakout of some of the demographics of this survey group. Additional demographic data can be found in Appendix C.

Questionnaire Description

A self-administered questionnaire was used in this research effort (See Appendix B). The use of such a questionnaire allows the respondent to work at his own pace with minimal distraction. A questionnaire also assures a standardization of stimulus and permits the respondent to

react in an unbiased atmosphere. The questionnaire makes it possible to survey a large group in a limited amount of time. This methodology made it possible to survey a much larger group than the use of a structured interview or open-ended questioning would have allowed.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections; demographics, factor comparison, factor preference, and new OER preceptions. The questions were relatively neutral statements allowing the respondent to express his perceptions on both the old and new OER system. Officers were asked to respond to some questions using a Likert-type scale on which they could express their degree of agreement with the statement in terms of a seven point scale from strongly agree, neutral/no opinion to strongly disagree. Other questions had answers which were of a multiple-choice variety. One question asked the respondent to list the choices in a preferential order. While the second and third sections contained questions on both the old and new system, the fourth section contained questions pertaining to perceptions of only the new OER system.

Each officer was individually provided with a questionnaire to complete and return at their own discretion. The officers were allowed a couple of days and completed questionnaires were returned to several collection points. The distribution and collection of questionnaires was accomplished by SOS personnel. These procedures resulted in an overall return-rate of approximately 80%.

Questionnaire Development

Initially, the author comprised a list which was thought to contain those factors which are most important in influencing the rating an individual receives under either the old or new OER system. After discussions with many other individuals and sessions with both reader and advisor, the list was narrowed to eighteen factors.

Questions, other than those concerning the eighteen factors, were developed at the same time. The author, after reading an Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) paper dealing with the OER, decided to include two questions from the forementioned paper (Ref 3). The authors of the ACSC paper found that a significant portion of the responses to their survey questions were in the Neutral/No Opinion category. This was not surprising due to the fact that the new OER system was implemented in November of 1974, and the ACSC questionnaire was administered in November and December of 1974. The two questions were included to observe the shift in the perceptions of SOS students eighteen months later.

While the author was developing his questionnaire, he received additional input in the form of some questions from the Commander of a Systems Command Laboratory who was also investigating perceptions of the OER, but was sampling a much smaller and different group. This input resulted in some additional questions concerning only the new OER system.

After the questionnaire was completed, a sample-pre-test was given to 57 officers while the questionnaire went through the official survey approval channels. Following the pre-test, the questionnaire was revised and updated. The pre-test was accomplished to check clarity, readability, ease of answering and completeness. The pre-test turned out to be invaluable and the comments and suggestions were evaluated and incorporated where appropriate. The revisions were also sent through the proper channels. An official approval and a survey control number (USAF SCN 7T-06) were forthcoming. Upon receipt of the survey control number, the questionnaire was mailed to SOS.

Data Analysis

The use of the Likert-type scale not only provides the respondent with a sufficient range of answers, but also provides for easy data interpretation. Even with a simplistic numerical count method, the relative positive or negative attitude toward a statement can be seen. Such a method is extremely useful in determining the group attitude toward any aspect of the OER system. The reader can easily get a feel for how any segment of the survey group responds to a particular question. However, each question must be considered in, and of, itself. Grouping questions to try to get an overall score would distort the true worth of the data. There are questions which, due to their natural similiarity, by pairing yield more information

than they would if each were considered separately. For example, a perception concerning a particular statement about the old OER system is much more meaningful when compared to the perception of that statement about the new OER system.

In order to calculate the significance of the difference in perceptions, a paired T-Test was used. A paired T-Test was used due to the fact that the two responses are not independent. Using the paired T-Test as an analytical tool, the following hypothesis was tested for each factor.

$$H_0: \text{mean perception}_{\text{old}} = \text{mean perception}_{\text{new}}$$

$$H_1: \text{mean perception}_{\text{old}} \neq \text{mean perception}_{\text{new}}$$

In order to maintain a high degree of confidence, only those differences with a 5% or less degree of chance of occurring randomly will be considered significant. The paired T-Test will be used to analyze all the data presented in Section I of Chapter III.

In Section II of Chapter III, simple percentages will be used to present the author's data. In Section III of Chapter III, simple percentages will also be used to present the author's data, except in those cases where the author specifically states otherwise. Additional and more complex analytical methods, such as regression analysis and canonical correlation were used on the data, however, the author was unable to detect any meaningful correlations.

Data Presentation

Out of 660 questionnaires distributed to Class 76-C of Squadron Officers School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, 541 were completed and returned. During a screening session four were eliminated for containing invalid responses. The remaining 537 were subsequently broken into 5 categories (based on the rating the individual received from his reviewing official). These were used for all analytical work done in this study. The breakdown of categories is as follows:

Category	Number of Respondents
1's	203
2's	134
3's	68
Total	405
No Score	132

The first category being those officers who received a top-block rating from their reviewing official, the second category being those officers who received a second-block rating, and third category, those officers who received a third-block rating. The fourth category contains individuals who either have not been evaluated under the new OER, received an abbreviated OER (under an abbreviated OER, the controlled potential block is not marked), or did not know their OER scores.

Initially, it was the intention of the author to combine the first three categories into another category to represent an overall view of those officers who had been evaluated under the new OER system. However, after the

initial look at the data, this procedure was not deemed appropriate. Due to the selection process for attending SOS, the scores received by the officers attending SOS were significantly higher than those received by junior officers of the Air Force as a whole. While the Air Force distribution of reviewer scores must meet the 22-28-50 percentages dictated by Air Force for top-block, second-block and third-block ratings, SOS students do not meet this controlled distribution. Ironically, the distribution of scores for the sample group is almost opposite of controlled distribution, 50% received top-block ratings, 33⁺% received second-block ratings and 16% received third-block. If a correction was not made, then the data from the total category would be heavily influenced by those who received a top-block score. In order to have a "total" category which would represent the Air Force distribution of scores, a weighting correction was used to transpose the data from the actual 50-33-16 distribution into a 22-28-50 distribution.

The weighting was accomplished in the following manner. The individual responses of the 203 officers receiving a 1 from their reviewing official were multiplied by .4389, thus, the 203 respondents were weighted so as to only make 89.1 respondents. The officers receiving 2's and 3's were weighted by .8463 and 2.9779, respectively. The result of the weighting was that the original number of respondents (405) was not changed, just the relative composition of reviewer scores was changed.

This weighting correction allows the data to more fairly represent the junior officer in the Air Force. However, no correction was made for the "conservative" aspect described in Chapter I. This results in a total of five categories for presentation; top-block, second-block, third-block, no scores, and a weighted total.

CHAPTER III

Findings

The following chapter is devoted to an analysis of the responses to the questionnaire using the methodology described in Chapter II. The discussion is divided into three sections corresponding to the last three sections of the questionnaire. The first section deals with the perceptions of junior officers concerning the eighteen factors and the amount of influence these factors have on OER ratings under the old and new system. The second section discusses the choices the officers made as to what is the most influential factor under both systems. The third section presents some discussion on issues dealing primarily with some of the unique features of the new OER system.

Section IIntroduction

The following section contains an analysis of the factors eluded to in Chapter II. Below is a typical question the officer was asked to answer in Section II of the questionnaire.

13. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly			Neutral/		Strongly	
	Disagree		No Opinion			Agree	

The respondent was asked to answer the questions one at a time and independently of each other. By presenting the choices of answers to the old and new system close to each other, the respondent could visually see his perceived difference in influence between the two systems. (In addition, it took more physical effort to show a difference such as marking a 2 and a 6 than no difference, such as marking a 3 and a 3).

Factors

The eighteen factors selected and used in this study are found in Table I. These factors appear in the order corresponding to their appearance in the questionnaire. When interpreting the data, the reader should consider the fact that some factors may have been viewed by the respondents in several different lights. For example, visibility has both positive and negative aspects. If an officer fulfills the "whole man" concept, he will naturally receive positive visibility, while the negative aspects may come from those officers who seek visibility for the sake of visibility itself. Both of these aspects, as well as others, may have been combined by the respondent and transcribed into the answer chosen. A discussion of some of the eighteen factors follows Table I.

Table I
Factors Contained in the Survey

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
UPCOMING PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION
LENGTH OF TIME IN A JOB
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS
SOURCE OF COMMISSION
ADDITIONAL DUTIES
PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION
RATED VS. NON-RATED
JOB PERFORMANCE
DIVERSITY OF PRIOR ASSIGNMENTS
ESTABLISHED DATE OF SEPARATION
PRIMARY ZONE FOR PROMOTION
NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNE
VISIBILITY
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RATING OFFICIALS
LEVEL OF ASSIGNMENT
JOB STATUS

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS influence the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 5.1969	NEW 5.4041	.048
2's	126	OLD 5.3492	NEW 5.1746	.261
3's	66	OLD 5.3485	NEW 5.2273	.618
No. Score	127	OLD 5.4488	NEW 5.1260	.034
Total	387	OLD 5.3156	NEW 5.2514	.483

Of the eighteen factors involved, only one factor decreased in influence under the new OER system. This factor being SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS, while all of the other seventeen factors increased in influence.

The probability of the difference in means of the Total group shows a high degree of chance. In a recent letter to the "Air Force Times", an officer presented his criticism of the new OER system, one of his points was that SPECATS would become less attractive. The official Air Force reply did not address the issue of SPECAT applications either increasing or decreasing. Instead, the reply was that officers in SPECAT were doing "somewhat" better than those not in a SPECAT assignment as far as promotion boards are concerned (Ref 5:17).

While the Total group shows an insignificant decrease, the 1's show a significant increase. The reason behind the perception of the 1's, may be that since they have been rewarded by the system, they feel that the system will have

other compensating effects for the officers in SPECAT assignments. The general impression the author has observed is that officers do not feel the rewards are adequate for the increase competition present in SPECAT-manned organizations. The research efforts of Carr and Rhoades tend to support this impression. The Carr study found 62.0 percent of the officers not opposing a SPECAT assignment. The Rhoades study found only 35.5 percent of the officers willing to actively seek a SPECAT assignment (Ref 13:104). While the two studies occurred about a year apart and the questions were slightly different, the results tend to support the author's impression.

Since officers in SPECAT assignments are under the same OER rating distribution as those officers not in SPECAT assignments, the perception may not be that SPECAT officers will get more than their share of higher ratings, but will receive compensating consideration by promotion boards.

The only statistical data available relating to this perception, was presented in a briefing by a ranking Air Force officer (Ref 9).

Temporary Captain Board (Jan 76)

Agency	Eligible	Promoted		
		1	2	3
Joint & Departmental	3164	100%	100%	85%
MAJCOM & BELOW	91	100%	100%	89%

Due to the high percentage of officers that are promoted to captain, the only difference occurred between the groups of officers receiving a 3 on their OER. While this difference is relatively small, the statistics for officers facing more competitive promotion boards did show SPECAT officers doing significantly better; this data supports two different attitudes (Ref 9). One attitude might be that due to the increased competition in SPECAT assignments, even if an officer were to receive less than a top rating, his chance of promotion would be greater since promotion boards are compensating for the selectively manned SPECAT assignments. The other attitude might be that by staying out of the highly competitive atmosphere of SPECAT assignments, an officer has a better chance of a top rating and thus not having to risk the compensating effect of promotion boards for SPECAT individuals.

AN ESTABLISHED DATE OF SEPARATION (DOS) influences the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 4.7876	NEW 6.1192	.000
2's	126	OLD 4.6032	NEW 6.4048	.000
3's	66	OLD 4.8788	NEW 6.3636	.000
No Score	127	OLD 5.2283	NEW 6.2520	.000
Total	387	OLD 4.7831	NEW 6.3216	.000

Within the Total and 2's categories, the factor with the largest difference in means is an ESTABLISHED DOS. While Air Force Regulation 36-10 prohibits officers with a DOS, who are near the separation date, from receiving a controlled OER under the new system, those not near separation are evaluated under the controlled distribution. The practice of using officers with an ESTABLISHED DOS to "fill-in" the bottom of the distribution does not necessarily go against Air Force policy. In fact, those officers who have indicated their desire to leave the Air Force, have little potential as far as the Air Force is concerned.

Under the old system with the inflated scores, there was no impact on other officers if an officer with a DOS received a top rating. Junior officers now perceived that any officer with a DOS will be used by the evaluators to "fill-in" the bottom of the distribution. The distribution allows 100% of the officers to be included in the top three blocks, therefore, there is no need when "filling-in" to

rate below a third-block rating. As a result, officers with little or no potential may be found in that 50% of the officers receiving 3's.

Air Force Regulation 36-10 prohibits the tactic of using certain officers to "fill-in" by either removing them from the distribution quota or requiring "abbreviated reports" which do not have the control distribution potential block marked. An example is a promotion selectee. The selectees receive an abbreviated report until actual promotion takes place.

Both the Carr and Rhoades studies support the perception that officers with a DOS will be used to fill-in the bottom of the distribution. The Carr study found that 55% of the officers believed this filling-in would take place. The Rhoades study asked a somewhat broader question when they included passed-over officers along with officers with a DOS. With the inclusion of passed-over officers, 80% of the officers felt that these type officers would be used in the filling-in process (Ref 14:90).

There was no statistical data dealing with the DOS perception. However, some data was available concerning passed-over officers (Ref 9, 7:10).

OER RATINGS of
Officers Passed Over For Promotion

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Number of Officers</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
Lt. Colonel		
Block 1	195	9.7
Block 2	326	16.2
Block 3	1495	74.1
Major		
Block 1	---	17.2
Block 2	---	21.9
Block 3-6	---	60.9
Captain		
Block 1	---	9.8
Block 2	---	18.5
Blocks 3-6	---	71.7

The perception is supported by facts, in that, all grades received ratings significantly lower than the 22-28-50 distribution called for by regulation. The percentages for officers who were passed-over twice or more for promotion to colonel are even worse with only 6.2 percent receiving a Block 1 rating, 12.7 percent receiving a Block 2, and 81.1 percent receiving a Block 3 or lower rating (Ref 7).

Whether these figures reflect a filling-in process or the true potential of passed-over officers is left for the reader to decide.

While these figures deal only with passed-over officers, the author believes that officers with an established DOS would receive even less top ratings. The basis for this opinion is that reviewers probably view a DOS as a statement of potential within the Air Force environment.

BEING IN THE PRIMARY ZONE FOR PROMOTION influences the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 5.0984	NEW 6.1813	.000
2's	126	OLD 5.2063	NEW 6.5238	.000
3's	66	OLD 5.2727	NEW 6.6364	.000
No Score	127	OLD 5.2164	NEW 6.3543	.000
Total	387	OLD 5.2164	NEW 6.5061	.000

Within the 3's and No Score categories, the factor with the largest difference in means was BEING IN THE PRIMARY ZONE FOR PROMOTION. This factor, within the Total category, had the second largest change in means. One of the main reasons for this perception may be in the principle of one type of gaming. Gaming is the process whereby those senior in rank (thus up for promotion) are given the higher ratings and those junior in rank (thus not up for promotion) are given the lower ratings. Thus, gaming is not supposed to hurt anyone, yet "beat the system". The rationale being that by giving those in the PRIMARY ZONE 1's and telling the junior officers not be concerned with the 3's they are receiving because they will get the 1's when they become the senior officer.

Air Force admits that the trend of gaming is evident, yet there is no cause for concern because gaming is not blatant (Ref 8:3). Officials also state they expect to see a higher percentage of PRIMARY ZONE officer receiving

top scores. The reasoning behind this expectation being senior officers have worked their way to higher levels of responsibility and authority and thus have more potential.

Regardless of whatever underlies the basis for the perception, the data available supports the perception that officers in the primary zone have an edge over officers not in the primary zone for promotion when it comes to receiving top-block ratings. Over 75 percent of the officers surveyed by both Carr and Rhoades share the perception (Ref 4:89).

The advantage for first time eligibles was apparent in the first temporary colonel board to use the controlled OER; 39.7 percent of the officers with a controlled OER received a Block 1 rating, 31.5 percent received a Block 2 rating and 28.8 percent received a Block 3 or lower rating (Ref 7:10). Data for other grades is as follows: (Ref 9).

Promotion Eligibility Category

	Not Eligible	Secondary Zone	Primary Zone (First Time)
Lt. Colonel			
Block 1	7.3%	27.0%	37.4%
Block 2	36.9%	36.6%	29.8%
Blocks 3-6	55.8%	36.4%	32.8%
Major			
Block 1	27.2%	22.1%	27.6%
Block 2	31.8%	37.7%	30.3%
Blocks 3-6	41.0%	45.2%	42.1%
Captain			
Block 1	12.7%	24.9%	33.9%
Block 2	25.0%	30.1%	33.8%
Blocks 3-6	62.3%	45.0%	32.3%
Lieutenant			
Block 1	22.0%	---	21.2%
Block 2	28.7%	---	27.5%
Blocks 3-6	49.3%	---	51.3%

Air Force officials, in releasing these figures, said that as a year group grows in responsibility and experience the groups share of top ratings will increase. By expressing this viewpoint the Air Force in a round about way has supported and lent credibility to the gaming process. Prior to the release of the data, there had been rumors that gaming was occurring in an attempt to "beat the system"

GSM/SM/76D-32

(Ref 11:62). Whether the deviations from the 22-28-50 distributions are a result of gaming or a natural occurrence only time will tell.

VISIBILITY (with higher level rating officials) influences the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 5.4819	NEW 6.5026	.000
2's	125	OLD 5.4683	NEW 6.5556	.000
3's	66	OLD 5.3939	NEW 6.5606	.000
No Score	127	OLD 5.8346	NEW 6.5984	.000
Total	387	OLD 5.4336	NEW 6.5465	.000

Within the 1's category, the factor with the largest difference in means was VISIBILITY. Before any interpretation in the shift of means can be made, one must stop to consider what "VISIBILITY" is. The author deliberately left the definition or interpretation of VISIBILITY to the individual respondent. The reason being that the word, "VISIBILITY, is one that is quite often heard when discussion about the OER system is taking place. VISIBILITY has both positive and negative aspects and the respondents were left the opportunity to use whatever personal definition best suited their perceptions. VISIBILITY can come from many sources, such as:

1. Job Performance
2. Personal Contact (Social and Job-related)
3. Additional Duties
4. Non-Job Related Misfortunes
5. Civic Activity
6. Physical Activity

These and other sources may make up the definition of VISIBILITY used by the respondent. Regardless of the definition, the perception of VISIBILITY has increased in importance in influencing the rating an individual receives.

To say that VISIBILITY is all positive or negative would lead to erroneous interpretations. The officer who fulfills the Air Force "whole man" concept will quite naturally attain some VISIBILITY. On the other hand, there may exist individuals who attain some of the negative aspects of VISIBILITY due to unfortunate circumstances. For example, those officers who do not engage in some social activities may achieve some negative VISIBILITY.

Other aspects of VISIBILITY that must be considered are the amount of VISIBILITY and the control of VISIBILITY that the individual possesses. The officer who is physically located some distance from his evaluators may not have the same opportunities for VISIBILITY as the officer who is stationed near or with his evaluators. The officer who frequently comes in personal contact with his evaluators has a greater opportunity than an officer who seldom comes in contact with his evaluators. With the perception of the increased importance of VISIBILITY, it may become important that all officers have the same opportunities for VISIBILITY.

To possibly gain a better insight to the overall VISIBILITY factor, two other factors can be considered. In that VISIBILITY can be considered to have both positive and negative aspects, by looking at these separate aspects,

the overall VISIBILITY factor can better be comprehended. By accepting JOB PERFORMANCE as a positive aspect and NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNE as a negative aspect, two additional views of VISIBILITY can be seen. Both JOB PERFORMANCE and NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNE increase significantly in influence in all categories.

The fact that both JOB PERFORMANCE and NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNE increase significantly would tend to show that neither the positive nor the negative aspects alone accounted for the increased importance of VISIBILITY under the new OER system. The significant increase in importance of both JOB PERFORMANCE and NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNE is an important fact in and of itself. Officers perceive that their JOB PERFORMANCE is more important under the new OER than under the old OER system. Likewise, officers feel that "screw-ups" off the job will play an increasing role in influencing the rating they receive under the new OER system. Whether NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNE should or should not influence the rating an individual receives is not the point at issue; the point is that officers perceive misfortunes to have increased in influence. Whether or not NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNES are included in the "whole-man concept" and ultimately in the rating an individual receives may be a valid issue. The perception exists that off-the-job screw-ups will be considered by the officers evaluating an officer's potential.

Visibility and Misfortunes are not only hard to define, but also difficult to detect and measure. By looking at one aspect of visibility, perhaps some insight as to the importance of visibility can be gained. The frequency of contact between the ratee and reviewer has often been mentioned as being part of visibility. The Carr study found that 89.5 percent of the officers felt that the frequency of contact would be an important consideration (Ref 3:56). When the Rhoades study asked the same question, approximately a year later, 95.3 percent of the officers agreed that frequency of contact was important (Ref 13:93). Not only is the actual contact important, but also the opportunity for contact. When the two studies asked if an officer who was geographically separated from his rater and/or reviewer would suffer under the new OER system; over 80 percent felt he would (Ref 13:100).

LENGTH OF TIME IN A JOB influences the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 4.7254	NEW 5.9534	.000
2's	126	OLD 4.8413	NEW 6.0056	.000
3's	66	OLD 4.9242	NEW 6.2576	.000
No Score	127	OLD 4.9528	NEW 6.0866	.000
Total	387	OLD 4.8586	NEW 6.1356	.000

The perception underlying the increased importance of LENGTH OF TIME IN A JOB under the new OER system is that the longer an officer is in a job the more likely are his chances of receiving a higher rating. The theory is that the new officer having less time to become proficient and competent as compared to the "old head" has less of an opportunity to demonstrate potential. An assumption that might follow from the new man syndrome is that officers will be less willing to change jobs and those officers who do change jobs or stations might feel that they are at a disadvantage in receiving top ratings. If the new man getting lower ratings were to become a reality the consequences could be significant.

The obvious result would be for officers to attempt to game their moves so as to receive the lower rating at a point in their career where it would be least detrimental. A typical example would be for officers coming into the primary zone to try to delay or avoid reassignment until

after passage of this critical career point. Additionally, those officers who were to make several quick moves might feel they were being wronged in that these officers were never in one job long enough to become an old head. The evaluators might also use these temporary officers to fill in the lower ratings while saving the higher ratings for the permanent personnel.

Normally, the officer who is new on the job is given some time to get acclimated before he is given the authority and responsibility with which to demonstrate potential. The Air Force policy of attempting to stabilize assignments will help compensate the new officer by providing enough time in a job for an officer to become an old head. However, there are those officers whose frequent moves may leave them at a distinct disadvantage. The author, for example, has made five moves in only six and a half years. Without job stability he probably is at a disadvantage to those officers with more stable job lengths.

There was some data available dealing with the perception of LENGTH OF TIME IN A JOB. The data is as follows (Ref 9).

Less Than Six Months On Base

	Block 1	Block 2
Colonel	39.2%	30.4%
Lt. Colonel	20.7%	34.0%
Major	19.6%	30.2%
Captain	17.0%	27.9%
Lieutenant	9.2%	17.7%

The officers in the grade of major and above tended to do better than the officers in the grades of captain and lieutenant. While this data suggests that the new officers on base do as well as, or better than, officers who have been on base a longer period of time, certain clarifications should be made. For an officer to receive a controlled OER, he must normally be under the rater's supervision for 120 days. Therefore, an officer who has been on base less than four months and received a controlled OER will be receiving his OER from the evaluators at his prior base, based on supervision at the prior base (Ref 4:13). As a result of this policy, this data contains officers who received OER's from their former base after they departed and officers who met supervision requirements at their new base.

An UPCOMING PCS influences the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 3.5285	NEW 4.7461	.000
2's	126	OLD 3.4921	NEW 5.1111	.000
3's	66	OLD 3.7879	NEW 5.1970	.000
No Score	127	OLD 4.0472	NEW 5.0749	.000
Total	387	OLD 3.6499	NEW 5.0749	.000

An UPCOMING PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION (PCS) may be considered a corollary to the previous factor of LENGTH OF TIME IN A JOB. The perception being that those officers facing a PCS may not receive the same consideration for top ratings as those officers who are not moving. The reasoning being that the evaluator will not use his higher ratings on those individuals who will no longer be his concern; i.e., if someone has to receive a low rating, let it be the individual who will no longer be around. The perception of lower ratings for officers with an UPCOMING PCS must be weighed against the perception of higher scores for those individuals with a long time in a job.

Many interpretations of the weighting of the two perceptions can be suggested. The officer with a long time in his job who is going PCS shortly after the time when his OER must be available to him, may receive a rating unbiased by either of the perceptions. Yet, the officer who has only been in his job relatively a short time and is going PCS before his

OER is available to him, may receive a rating biased by both perceptions.

An interesting facet of the UPCOMING PCS is that under the old OER system, the mean in all categories was at or below the NEUTRAL/NO OPINION point in influence. While, under the new OER system, the mean in all categories was in the range that reflected agreement as to this factor having influence. The significant shift in means indicates that an UPCOMING PCS might have had little, or no, influence under the old OER system, but under the new OER system it has some influence. The positive or negative aspect of the perception depends on the particular circumstances involved as discussed previously.

The perception that length of time in a job is influential in determining the rating an officer receives, is complicated by the new OER procedures. All the officers in the same grade have their OER closed-out or completed on the same day. This policy coupled with the 120 days of supervision policy, has resulted in another policy. Any officer who departs PCS/PCA within a four month "window" prior to the close-out day, will have his OER held and completed at his prior base of assignment. The result of these procedures may explain part of the perception.

Presented are the statistics dealing with some of the perceptions concerning the length of time in a job (Ref 9).

PCS/PCA During Cycle Window

	Block 1	Block 2
Major	23.2%	30.4%
Captain	26.7%	29.5%
Lieutenant	27.0%	31.8%

PCS Projected Within Four Months After Cycle

	Block 1	Block 2
Colonel	28.9%	29.6%
Lt Colonel	25.8%	31.3%
Major	25.4%	29.6%
Captain	24.6%	29.4%
Lieutenant	27.4%	28.8%

These figures do not support the perception that the officers who are departing (or who soon will be) will be at a disadvantage in receiving top-block ratings. On the contrary, the departing officers do better than the officers who stay behind. Normally, the officers departing are the ones who have been at the job the longest. Therefore, these statistics tend to support the hypothesis that the longer an officer is at his job, the better are his chances for a top rating.

LEVEL OF ASSIGNMENT (i.e., Squadron, Wing, MAJCOM) influences the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 4.9585	NEW 5.4663	.000
2's	126	OLD 5.0635	NEW 5.4762	.024
3's	66	OLD 5.0758	NEW 5.5758	.055
No Score	127	OLD 5.4331	NEW 5.5748	.414
Total	387	OLD 5.0468	NEW 5.5245	.000

In the LEVEL OF ASSIGNMENT factor three out of the five categories show a significant shift in means. The No Score and 3's categories did not reflect a significant shift. The total category which includes a larger sample of 3's shows a significant shift. The shift in means of the No Score category is most likely explained by chance.

The perception is that LEVEL OF ASSIGNMENT is more influential under the new OER system than under the old OER system. The perception is most probably, that officers at higher levels of assignment will more likely do better in ratings than officers at lower levels. The controlled distribution of ratings applies to each individual reviewer. Therefore, for this perception to occur in practice, the reviewer would have to rate individuals at different levels of assignment. This would occur at a typical base where the wing commander is normally the reviewing official and rater for both squadron and wing level officers.

There may exist some sound basis for the perception, in that the officers at higher LEVELS OF ASSIGNMENT have been selectively chosen for those positions. This is the same reasoning that promotion boards use in compensating officers with a 2 or 3 rating from SPECATS when SPECAT officers face promotion. The subjective compensating that takes place may have both positive and negative aspects.

The perception that LEVEL OF ASSIGNMENTS influences the rating an officer receives is very important. Assuming the majority of junior officers occupy positions at the lower levels of assignment then the favorable influence is reserved for the minority of officers. The line officer at the squadron level may feel that he has little chance of his potential being fairly considered against an officer working at the wing level. As long as the line officer perceives the possibility of moving into the higher LEVEL OF ASSIGNMENT and attaining the same favorable influence received by those officers already there, then perhaps the perception has balancing aspects.

The RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RATING OFFICIALS influences the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 5.0052	NEW 5.6218	.000
2's	126	OLD 5.0000	NEW 5.8254	.000
3's	66	OLD 5.0606	NEW 6.1970	.000
No Score	127	OLD 5.1811	NEW 5.7165	.000
Total	387	OLD 5.0318	New 5.9692	.000

All five categories showed a significant shift in the means of the RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RATING OFFICIALS factor. The perception that the relationship between the officers who rate an officer is influential in determining the rating an individual receives is very important. Assuming that the individual receiving the rating has little control of the relationship that exists between the evaluators this factor becomes a perception that the junior officer has little control over. If the relationship is harmonious, the officer may receive a fair or favorable rating, however, if the relationship is not harmonious, the officer may receive an unfair or unfavorable rating.

For example, if the rater is thought to be fair, equitable and objective in both his work and ratings, then the additional rater and reviewer may view the ratings the rater assigns with a great deal of competence. If, on the other hand, the rater is thought to be lacking in the ratings he assigns, or the work he does, then the additional rater

and reviewer may attach little credibility to his ratings.

Regardless of the relationship that exists between the rating officials, junior officers perceive the relationship as having more influence under the new OER system than under the old. As long as the junior officer has no control over this factor of relationship, he is subject to whatever relationship that may exist. In addition, or as part of the relationship, is the fact that rater and additional rater are being encouraged to comply with the 22-28-50 distribution of ratings. As to what impact this may have on the different types of relationships that may exist is left to the reader. A logical conclusion is that those junior officers, who perceive they are being rated where an unfavorable relationship exists, are likely to think that they will receive unfair consideration while those who perceive an unbiased relationship will receive fair consideration.

RATED VERSUS NON-RATED influences the rating an individual receives.

Category	No. of Respondents	Mean		Prob.
1's	193	OLD 4.0207	NEW 4.6062	.000
2's	126	OLD 4.1667	NEW 4.8571	.000
3's	66	OLD 3.9697	NEW 4.6212	.007
No Score	127	OLD 4.4252	NEW 4.7008	.040
Total	387	OLD 4.0350	NEW 4.6828	.000

The RATED VERSUS NON-RATED factor showed a significant shift in means for all five categories. The perception that rated officers do better than non-rated is probably one of the oldest perceptions in the Air Force. The perception exists that RATED VERSUS NON-RATED factor is more influential under the new OER system than under the old OER system. The perception has as a basis, the idea that the job of the Air Force is to fly and officers who are not rated are around to assist in getting the flying done. This perception has gained in importance under the new OER as a factor influencing the rating an individual receives.

The perception leads the rated officer to believe he has an edge over the non-rated officer, while the non-rated officer believes he is at a disadvantage when compared to the rated officer. The implementation of the rated supplement program may have been a step toward dispelling this perception. However, the perception still exists at the present time.

The perception is normally found in one of two situations. First, the situation at a typical flying base where the majority of officers are rated. Here, the non-rated officers perceive that the rated officers will get the higher ratings due to the very mission of the base and also the key positions of command (evaluators) are normally occupied by rated officers. Second, the situation at a typical non-flying base where the majority of the officers are non-rated. Here, the rated officer perceives that due to the control and mission of the base being non-flying oriented, the non-rated officer will get the higher ratings. If either side of the perception prevails, it depends on which viewpoint is in the majority, rated or non-rated.

Even within the category of rated officers, there exists mixed emotions concerning the pilot versus navigator perceptions. The available data shows that navigators do not receive as many top ratings as support personnel. The support officers do not do as well as the officers who are pilots (Ref 9).

OER RESULTS

Rank (Number)	Block 1	Blocks 1 & 2
	%	%
Colonel		
Navigator	15.0	46.9
Support	21.0	50.5
Pilot	23.7	53.1
Lt. Colonel		
Navigator	16.8	47.7
Support	20.2	47.3
Pilot	25.7	55.0
Major (12,151)		
Navigator	17.2	46.7
Support	22.4	50.9
Pilot	24.6	54.2
Captain (23,451)		
Navigator	16.4	42.9
Support	21.0	49.4
Pilot	25.2	54.1
Lieutenant (13,224)		
Navigator	19.0	45.8
Support	22.4	51.5
Pilot	22.8	51.4

In the opinion of the author, this data (Ref 9) supports the perception that differences between the rated and non-rated officers are influencing the OERs officers receive. In no case did the navigators attain the prescribed 22-28 distribution. The author does not attach much significance to the small differences between the support and pilot categories.

No one can expect any rating system to be perfect. Had the data been presented with the navigators included with the pilots, the differences would have been much smaller. The Air Force Times presented some statistics showing that officers with logistics specialties did better percentage-wise, than pilots, in receiving both top block and top two block ratings. The logistics officers received 25.6 percent top block while the pilots received 24.9 percent top block and 55.7 percent to 54.5 percent top two block respectively (Ref 5:17). Thus, one has seen that if differences are small, data can be obtained to support opposing viewpoints.

The previous factors were discussed individually, due to the fact that a considerable amount of controversy exists among different groups of junior officers concerning the fore-mentioned factors. For example, the RATED VERSUS NON-RATED factor is a point of controversy between rated and non-rated officers. The remaining factors appears to have a more common basis for a perception and, therefore, the junior officers as a group, show the same perception. This is not to say the remaining factors are less influential,

but only that there exists less controversy about the remaining factors.

OTHER FACTORS

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE influences the rating an individual receives.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL influences the rating an individual receives.

SOURCE OF COMMISSION influences the rating an individual receives.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES influences the rating an individual receives.

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME) influences the rating an individual receives.

JOB PERFORMANCE influences the rating an individual receives.

DIVERSITY OF PRIOR ASSIGNMENTS influences the rating an individual receives.

A NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNE (i.e., speeding ticket) influences the rating an individual receives.

JOB STATUS (i.e., Instructor Pilot versus Line Pilot) influences the rating an individual receives.

Of the nine remaining factors listed above, all of them, in nearly every category, showed a significant shift in the means. The result of the shift was that the nine factors increased in influence under the new OER. Of the total 18 factors, 17 followed the trend of increased influence under the new OER. Due to the necessity for the evaluators to discriminate among officers in order to assign ratings (because of the new OER controlled distribution), it is not surprising to see almost every factor increase in influence.

By using the neutral/no opinion answer as a basis of reference, some of the above factors are perceived to have a great deal of influence while others have relatively very little influence.

MEAN RANK ORDERING

Some interesting results occur if the eighteen factors are rank ordered by their respective means with respect to the TOTAL category (Refer Table II). The results of this ranking cannot, and should not be interpreted as a relative rank ordering of the importance of each factor for several reasons. First, due to the fact that the respondent was presented one factor at a time, he was not necessarily comparing that factor to any of the other factors. Second, the seven point answer scale may have played a role by distorting the answers in a relative sense. For example, if an officer wanted to show a large difference in the influence of VISIBILITY between the old and new system, he may have marked a strongly disagree for the old system visibility and a strongly agree for the new system visibility. Having done this, the same officer could still perceive old system visibility to be much more influential than some other old factors he may have marked above the strongly disagree point. The end of the scale does not necessarily mean a low/high amount of influence. The rank ordering of means in Table II does, however, present a better idea of the relative shift in means.

Table II
Rank Ordering of Means
TOTAL CATEGORY

OLD OER SYSTEM		NEW OER SYSTEM	
Factor	Mean	Factor	Mean
1. Job Performance	5.9200	Visibility	6.5465
2. Additional Duties	5.4461	Primary Zone for Promotion	6.5061
3. Visibility	5.4336	Established DOS	6.3216
4. Special Assignment	5.3156	Job Performance	6.1783
5. Primary Zone for Promotion	5.2164	Length of Time in Job	6.1356
6. P.E.	5.0532	Additional Duties	6.0843
7. Level of Assignment	5.0468	Relationship Rating Officials	5.9692
8. Job Status	5.0415	Job Status	5.8080
9. Relationship Rating Officials	5.0318	Level of Assignment	5.5245
10. Length of Time in Job	4.8580	P.E.	5.4348
11. Established DOS	4.7831	Non-Job Related Misfortune	5.3716
12. Non-Job Related Misfortune	4.7609	Special Assignments	5.2314
13. Physical Appearance	4.6266	Upcoming PCS	5.0749
14. Educational Level	4.4021	Physical Appearance	4.8431
15. Rated vs. Non-rated	4.0350	Rated vs. Non-rated	4.6828
16. Diversity of Assignments	3.9456	Educational Level	4.6552
17. Source of Commission	3.6822	Diversity of Assignments	4.1412
18. Upcoming PCS	3.6499	Source of Commission	3.8713

Rank Ordering of Means
TOTAL CATEGORY
Fig. 3-1

Section II

INTRODUCTION

This section will deal with the question that asked the respondent to list the five factors he considered most important in influencing the rating an individual receives. The officers surveyed were asked to list their choices in descending order.

- 1) Physical Appearance
- 2) Upcoming PCS
- 3) Length of Time in a Job
- 4) Educational Level
- 5) Special Assignments
- 6) Source of Commission
- 7) Additional Duties
- 8) Professional Military Education
- 9) Rated Versus Non-Rated
- 10) Job Performance
- 11) Diversity of Prior Assignments
- 12) Established DOS
- 13) Primary Zone for Promotion
- 14) Non-Job Related Misfortune
- 15) Visibility
- 16) Relationship between Rating Officials
- 17) Level of Assignment
- 18) Job Status

48. List the five factors you consider MOST important in influencing the rating an individual receives. (List in decreasing importance)

OLD OER SYSTEM 1	_____	NEW OER SYSTEM 1	_____
2	_____	2	_____
3	_____	3	_____
4	_____	4	_____
5	_____	5	_____

The results from each category will be presented in two different ways. One section will show the data gathered by looking at only the answers for the first most important factor and the second section will show the data gathered by considering all five choices with each choice weighted equally.

For example, the TOTAL category data (Ref Table III-VII) represents the responses of over four hundred officers. The first column represents the choices the officers made for the most important factor. The second column represents the cumulative total of the choices the officers made for the five most important factors. The total of the responses does not add to 405, nor does the percentages add to 100 due to some officers leaving some choices blank. The same explanation of the results of the data apply to all other categories.

Table III
TOTAL Category Choices
For Most Important Factors

Factor	First Choice		Top Five Choices	
	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%
Job Performance	273/67.4	217/53.6	370/91.4	347/85.7
Visibility	32/7.8	53/13.1	228/56.3	281/69.4
Additional Duties	26/6.3	16/4.0	255/63.0	217/53.6
Relationship Rating Officials	13/3.2	11/2.7	86/21.2	117/28.9
Level of Assignment	13/3.3	10/2.4	215/53.1	167/41.2
Length of Time in a Job	12/3.0	11/2.7	148/36.5	163/40.2
Job Status	10/2.5	5/1.3	122/30.1	100/24.7
Primary Zone	7/1.7	61/14.9	108/26.7	231/57.0
Special Assignments	4/.9	0/.0	72/17.8	32/7.9
Physical Appearance	3/.8	4/.9	37/9.1	19/4.7
Rated vs. Non-Rated	2/.5	3/.6	28/6.9	34/8.4
Established DOS	1/.2	9/2.3	44/10.9	105/25.9
Educational Level	1/.3	2/.4	76/18.8	60/14.8
PME	0/.1	1/.3	108/26.7	71/17.5
Non-Job Related Misfortune	0/.0	0/.0	31/7.7	21/5.2
Upcoming PCS	0/.0	0/.1	19/4.7	27/6.7
Diversity of Assignments	0/.1	0/.0	26/6.2	18/4.4
Source of Commission	0/.0	0/.0	8/2.0	4/.9
TOTAL	397/98.1	403/99.3	1980/489.1	2014/497.1

Table IV
1's Category Choices
For Most Important Factors

Factor	First Choice		Top Five Choices	
	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%
Job Performance	140/69.0	131/64.5	177/87.2	186/91.6
Visibility	15/5.9	17/8.4	106/52.2	139/68.5
Additional Duties	11/5.4	11/5.4	134/66.0	116/57.1
Relationship Rating Officials	4/2.0	0/0	42/20.7	47/23.2
Level of Assignment	5/2.5	5/2.5	93/45.8	81/39.9
Length of Time in a Job	8/3.9	3/1.5	82/40.4	79/38.9
Job Status	7/3.4	4/2.0	56/27.6	55/27.1
Primary Zone	1/1.5	15/7.4	45/22.2	93/45.8
Special Assignments	1/1.5	0/0	35/17.2	23/11.3
Physical Appearance	1/1.5	0/0	27/13.3	13/6.4
Rated vs. Non-Rated	3/1.5	4/2.0	18/8.9	14/6.9
Established DOS	2/1.0	9/4.4	20/9.9	45/22.2
Educational Level	1/1.5	2/1.0	45/22.2	35/17.2
PME	1/1.5	1/1.5	57/28.1	40/19.7
Non-Job Related Misfortune	0/0	0/0	17/8.4	12/5.9
Upcoming PCS	0/0	1/1.5	4/2.0	14/6.9
Diversity of Assignments	1/1.5	0/0	18/8.9	19/9.4
Source of Commission	0/0	0/0	6/3.0	1/1.5
TOTAL	201/97.6	203/100.1	982/484.0	1012/498.5

Table V
2's Category Choices
For Most Important Factors

Factor	First Choice		Top Five Choices	
	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%
Job Performance	88/65.7	69/51.5	117/87.3	116/86.6
Visibility	3/2.2	15/11.2	74/55.2	95/70.9
Additional Duties	7/5.2	3/2.2	81/60.4	73/54.5
Relationship Rating	6/4.5	6/4.5	34/25.4	36/26.9
Level of Assignment	6/4.5	2/1.5	68/50.7	43/32.1
Length of Time in a Job	3/2.2	8/6.0	52/38.8	57/42.5
Job Status	5/3.7	4/3.0	38/28.4	37/27.6
Primary Zone	4/3.0	18/13.4	37/27.6	81/60.4
Special Assignments	4/3.0	0/0	18/13.4	5/3.7
Physical Appearance	0/0	1/0.7	9/6.7	5/3.7
Rated vs. Non-Rated	0/0	1/0.7	13/9.7	15/11.2
Established DOS	0/0	3/2.2	13/9.7	27/20.1
Educational Level	1/0.7	1/0.7	21/15.7	21/15.7
PME	0/0	1/0.7	31/23.0	25/18.7
Non-Job Related Misfortune	0/0	0/0	10/7.5	5/3.7
Upcoming PCS	0/0	0/0	6/4.5	10/7.5
Diversity of Assignments	0/0	0/0	10/7.5	4/3.0
Source of Commission	0/0	0/0	3/2.2	4/3.0
TOTAL	128/95.4	132/98.3	635/473.7	659/491.8

Table VI
3's Category Choices
For Most Important Factors

Factor	First Choice		Top Five Choices	
	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%
Job Performance	46/67.6	34/50.0	65/95.6	56/82.4
Visibility	8/11.8	11/16.2	40/58.8	47/69.1
Additional Duties	5/7.4	3/4.4	43/63.2	35/51.5
Relationship Rating Officials	2/2.9	2/2.9	13/19.1	22/32.4
Level of Assignment	2/2.9	2/2.9	39/57.4	32/47.1
Length of Time in a Job	2/2.9	1/1.5	23/33.8	27/39.7
Job Status	1/1.5	0/0	22/32.4	15/22.1
Primary Zone	1/1.5	13/19.1	19/27.9	41/60.3
Special Assignments	0/0	0/0	14/20.6	6/8.8
Physical Appearance	1/1.5	1/1.5	6/8.8	3/4.4
Rated vs. Non-Rated	0/0	0/0	3/4.4	5/7.4
Established DOS	0/0	1/1.5	8/11.8	21/30.9
Educational Level	0/0	0/0	13/19.1	9/13.2
PME	0/0	0/0	19/27.9	11/16.2
Non-Job Related Misfortune	0/0	0/0	5/7.4	4/5.9
Upcoming PCS	0/0	0/0	4/5.9	4/5.9
Diversity of Assignments	0/0	0/0	3/4.4	2/2.9
Source of Commission	0/0	0/0	1/1.5	0/0
TOTAL	68/100	68/100	340/500	340/500.2

Table VII
NO SCORE Category Choices
For Most Important Factors

Factor	First Choice		Top Five Choices	
	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%	OLD OER No./%	NEW OER No./%
Job Performance	95/72.0	81/61.4	116/87.9	111/84.1
Visibility	6/4.5	9/6.8	65/49.2	84/63.6
Additional Duties	6/4.5	8/6.1	82/63.6	66/50.0
Relationship Rating Officials	2/1.5	3/2.3	24/18.2	33/25.0
Level of Assignment	6/4.5	2/1.5	66/50.0	51/38.6
Length of Time in a Job	2/1.5	1/.8	47/35.6	53/40.2
Job Status	2/1.5	1/.8	42/31.8	39/29.6
Primary Zone	3/2.3	20/15.2	45/34.1	82/62.1
Special Assignments	2/1.5	1/.8	24/18.2	15/11.4
Physical Appearance	3/2.3	1/.8	21/15.9	8/6.1
Rated vs. Non-Rated	0/0	1/.8	11/8.3	16/12.1
Established DOS	1/.8	1/.8	15/11.4	24/18.2
Educational Level	1/.8	0/0	22/16.7	15/11.4
PME	0/0	1/.8	24/18.2	24/18.2
Non-Job Related Misfortune	0/0	0/0	13/9.8	9/6.8
Upcoming PCS	0/0	0/0	8/6.1	9/6.8
Diversity of Assignments	0/0	0/0	10/7.6	6/4.5
Source of Commission	0/0	0/0	7/5.3	3/2.3
TOTAL	129/97.7	130/98.9	642/487.9	648/491.0

JOB PERFORMANCE

The figures in the first column (Ref Table III) show the changes in what officers consider the first most important factor in influencing the OER an individual receives. While JOB PERFORMANCE is obviously the most important factor under both the old and new OER systems, two other ramifications of the data must be kept in mind. First, approximately 33% of the officers under the old OER system and 46% of the officers under the new OER system selected some other factor as being most influential. Second, had JOB PERFORMANCE not been a viable choice by being excluded from the list of factors, the numbers associated with the other factors would have been of larger magnitude. The numbers in the second column will help clarify and enlarge on the data in the first column.

While JOB PERFORMANCE was considered the most important factor in both OER systems, it did take a significant drop in the number of officers who consider it most important. A possible explanation as to the relative drop in importance of JOB PERFORMANCE might be the idea that under the old OER system JOB PERFORMANCE was thought to be a necessary and sufficient factor in order to receive a top rating, while under the new OER system JOB PERFORMANCE is a necessary, but not sufficient, factor in order to receive a top rating. If this explanation of the relative drop in influence of JOB PERFORMANCE is true, then the increase

in influence of other factors is a natural corollary. Disregarding the relative drop in influence, the fact that in all categories and cases JOB PERFORMANCE is considered the most important factor in influencing the rating an individual receives is worthy of much consideration.

Most officers believe that their entire OER can be summed up in one number, the rating given by the reviewing official. The rating the reviewer assigns is a measure of the "potential" the officer possesses. Therefore, the vast majority of junior officers feel that JOB PERFORMANCE is the most important factor making up their potential. An interesting facet of this perception is that the front side of the new OER form contains a section for evaluating JOB PERFORMANCE, while the back side of the form contains the section for evaluating the potential of an officer. The logical consequence is that while JOB PERFORMANCE is directly evaluated on the front of the form, junior officers perceive the potential section on the back to also be some reflection of their JOB PERFORMANCE. As to whether or not JOB PERFORMANCE can be the prime measure of potential, is open for debate.

PRIMARY ZONE FOR PROMOTION

The factor making the most dramatic shifts was PRIMARY ZONE. Under the old OER system, PRIMARY ZONE, along with several other factors, was relatively uninfluential. Under the new OER system, PRIMARY ZONE was consistently ranked

as either the second or third most important factor in almost all categories and cases.

The fact that the perception of PRIMARY ZONE being the second or third most important factor in most categories and cases, lends more credibility to the significant shift in means discussed in Section I of this chapter. Also, the fact that this perception is consistent among the different categories of officers and is held by the majority of officers in each category suggests that the perception is a common perception held by all junior officers. In almost every area of analysis in this research effort the data and results were very consistent, regardless of the group that was broken-out. This consistency suggests that the perceptions are widespread among all junior officers.

VISIBILITY

As discussed earlier in this chapter, VISIBILITY can emanate from many different sources and have either positive or negative aspects. Trying to define what VISIBILITY is, or consists of, may be an arduous, if not impossible, task. However, this research effort has shown that junior officers perceive VISIBILITY to have increased significantly in influencing the OER an individual receives under the new OER system. (Ref Table VIII). In most instances VISIBILITY was selected as the second most important factor under the new OER system, while under the old OER system, it was relatively unimportant.

Table VIII
Factors Changing Importance
Under New OER System
(Total Category)

<u>INCREASED</u>	<u>DECREASED</u>
Visibility	Job Performance
Primary Zone for Promotion	Additional Duties
Length of Time in a Job	Level of Assignment
Relationship Between Rating Officials	Job Status
Established DOS	PME
Rated vs. Non-Rated	Educational Level
Upcoming PCS	Special Assignments
	Non-Job Related Misfortune
	Physical Appearance
	Diversity of Prior Assignments
	Source of Commission

Part of the explanation of the increased importance of VISIBILITY may lie in the fact that the ratings (under the new OER system) are under a controlled distribution. Under the new system only the reviewing official is forced to meet the controlled distribution. As a result, junior officers feel that the rating the reviewer assigns is the most important. Coupling this importance with the normal situation of the reviewing official being at least three steps up the individual's chain-of-command, the VISIBILITY the junior officer has with the reviewer is of major concern. Most officers feel that the farther up the chain-of-command a rating goes, the less direct knowledge the man at the top can possess of the individual being rated. Whatever

nowledge VISIBILITY can offer the reviewing official is certainly thought to be influential by the ratee.

Since junior officers perceive VISIBILITY to be very influential the amount and type of VISIBILITY they have must be very important to them also. In that VISIBILITY is very hard to measure and most officers are not sure what type of VISIBILITY they possess, this factor even though important, is very hard to deal with or interpret for each individual officer. Other aspects such as control of VISIBILITY and opportunities for VISIBILITY further compound this factor. When all the aspects of VISIBILITY are considered together the perception remains that VISIBILITY is the second most important factor influencing the OER a.. individual officer receives.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES & PME

Under the old OER system many junior officers believed ADDITIONAL DUTIES were very influential in determining the OER an individual received. Under the new OER system, while this viewpoint is still held by many officers, there has been a relative drop in importance. The drop could be explained by two reasons. Under the old system, a common perception was that in order to assure a top rating, an individual had to have some ADDITIONAL DUTIES to put on his OER, even if they were meaningless or trivial. Under the new OER, junior officers feel that this "square filling" is no longer beneficial if the additional duty is not of substance. Other officers may be of the opinion that ADDITIONAL DUTIES are part of the whole man the rating officials are trying to evaluate and are not in and of themselves that important.

Along these same lines of reasoning may lie the explanation for the drop in importance of PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION. Under the old OER system, PME was often the focus of many complaints when square filling was the topic under discussion. That fact that the sample, which was the basis for the data showing this drop, consisted entirely of officers attending a PME school is interesting itself. If this factor were to have gained in influence, surely those officers spending three months in residence to complete the course, would have reflected this change.

ESTABLISHED DOS

The increase in importance of an ESTABLISHED DOS may be best explained by the perception that officers with an ESTABLISHED DOS will be used to fill in the lower ratings quota. This perception is one type of gaming the system in that those officers intending to separate from the Air Force, by being given lower ratings, are giving those officers remaining in the service a better chance of receiving a higher rating. In view of the fact that an officer with an ESTABLISHED DOS is in essence demonstrating little potential the system is actually just assigning him a rating matching his potential and, therefore, maybe there is no gaming taking place at all.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RATING OFFICIALS

Under the old OER system, the common practice was to have an officer's OER enter a petitioning process for additional endorsements. In this process an OER was passed up to high ranking officers for an additional endorsement in the hope that the endorsements would be looked on favorably by promotion boards. A common occurrence was for an officer to have his OER endorsed by some general officer with whom he had little contact or knowledge, however, a rubber stamp endorsement was thought to be better than no endorsement. The system was a self-perpetuating process, in that, no one wanted to take the chance of not having the

additional endorsements.

The new OER system limited the number of officers that could evaluate an OER to three. The result was an elimination of the petitioning process. With the limit of only three evaluators, the relationship that exists among these officers has gained in importance. The limiting process also normally keeps the evaluators at a level where the evaluators are more likely to have some direct knowledge of the officer being evaluated. Also, by having only three evaluations, judgements expressed in the OER by the evaluators the promotion board is limited in the information available and therefore, increased emphasis must be placed on the evaluations the board has.

Junior officers perceive that due to the nature of distribution of scores and the limit of three evaluators, the relationship that exists among the evaluators must be of increased importance. The author feels that an officer believes part of his chances for a higher rating rest on the relationship that exists among his rating officials. For example, if an individual has a rater who he feels is not held in high regard by the higher level evaluators, he may feel that his chance of receiving a top score are limited by his rater and not by his own potential.

Section III

Introduction

In the two previous sections, the author was dealing with perceptual differences between the old and new OER systems. In this section, the author will address a few of the issues unique to the new OER system. At the heart of the new system is the controlled distribution of scores. The distribution allows only 22 percent of the officers within each grade to receive a top block rating. During the last years of the old system, nearly 90 percent of all officers received a top rating. Because so many officers received a top rating under the old system, the OER was not considered by most officers to be a decisive factor in their career of promotion opportunities. Under the new system, the OER has become a decisive factor in the career and promotion opportunities of an officer.

Data Presentation

In questions 49, 50, and 51, presented in the following pages, the answers will be grouped into three categories. All responses left of Neutral will be combined into a Disagree segment. All responses right of Neutral will be combined into an Agree segment. The Neutral/No Opinion segment will consist only of the respondents who actually chose the mid-point answer.

Question 49 and the following question (50) were intended to be follow-on questions to the Carr and Rhoades study. The author, however, did not duplicate the questions or answers for two reasons. First, the questions were not duplicated because of good questionnaire policy. In order to draw comparisons between two questions, the stems should be the same and only the stimuli should vary. For example, questions 49 and 50 are identical, except for the first word. The first word is the stimuli, the rest of the question is the stem. Carr and Rhoades changed both the stimuli and stem in the questions corresponding to 48 and 49 in this study. The other reason the author did not duplicate the questions of Carr and Rhoades, deals with the answers to the questions. In the Carr study, many of the questions had a high percentage of Neutral/No Opinion answers. The author agreed with Carr, in that part of the explanation was that the OER was relatively new at the time (Nov-Dec 74) and many officers had not formed opinions. The author also felt that the use of a five point answer scale may have contributed to the number of Neutral/No Opinion responses. The author in this survey used a seven point answer scale to afford alternatives of answers. As a result of the differences, the author cautions the reader, when comparing the Carr results with the results here, from drawing any hard conclusions.

Another factor must be considered when drawing any comparisons among the Carr, Rhoades, and author's data. Neither Carr, nor Rhoades, attempted to correct their data

for the selectivity of the officers in their samples. The author attempted to correct for the disproportionate share of top block OER scores with his TOTAL category. The TOTAL category as used throughout this report represents a weighting of respondents to better represent the Air Force-wide distribution (22-28-50) of OER scores. However, in the following two instances, where the author includes his results with those of Carr and Rhoades, the author will use the same techniques and procedures as did Carr and Rhoades. The author will do this in only the two instances, so that the reader can more easily draw comparisons.

THE RATER

49. RATING officials are generally qualified to recommend who should receive the top two scores.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree		Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree	
	<u>Agree</u>		<u>Neutral/ No Opinion</u>			<u>Disagree</u>	
	(%)		(%)			(%)	
1's	84.2		5.9			9.9	
2's	82.8		4.5			12.7	
3's	72.1		8.8			19.1	
No Score	77.1		8.4			14.5	
Total	77.7		7.0			15.3	

The clear majority of respondents in every category feel the rating official qualified to assign the top two ratings. As could be expected, the higher the rating an officer received, the more agreement as to the rater being qualified.

RATER QUALIFIED

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral/ No Opinion</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Carr	63.4	12.5	22.8
Rhoades	68.7	12.5	18.8
Author	80.6	6.5	12.9

(Ref 14:35, 3:47)

The author feels that the changes in the percentage of respondents would not have been as large had he used the question and answers used by Carr and Rhoades. With this in mind, the increasing trend for officer to perceive the rater as being qualified to recommend the top two ratings continues.

THE REVIEWER

50. REVIEWING officials are generally qualified to recommend who should receive the top two scores.

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral/ No Opinion</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
	(%)	(%)	(%)
1's	61.4	8.4	30.2
2's	52.2	8.2	39.6
3's	45.6	8.8	45.6
No Score	48.8	13.0	38.2
Total	50.9	8.6	40.5

As far as the reviewer being qualified to recommend top block ratings, there exists significant differences among the five categories. Of the officers with OER ratings, the differences can be explained by a natural phenomenon. The officers with top ratings see the reviewer as qualified, while the officers with low ratings tend to see the reviewer as being unqualified.

REVIEWER QUALIFIED

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral/ No Opinion</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Carr	38.5	16.9	43.9
Rhoades	36.5	14.6	48.9
Author	54.0	9.6	36.4

(Ref 13:52, 3:48)

The increase in the percentage of officers agreeing that the reviewer is qualified to recommend ratings may be caused by the wording the author used in his question. The previous two studies ask the respondent if the reviewer was qualified to "decide", while the author asked if the reviewer was qualified to "recommend". In actual practice, the reviewer decides the ratings officers receive. The reader should keep in mind that in the above figures of the author, no correction is included for the disproportionate share of high OER scores and the high career motivation of the officers in the sample.

FORCED DISTRIBUTION

51. The distribution of scores is being FORCED downhill.

	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral/ No Opinion</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
	(%)	(%)	(%)
1's	72.1	20.4	7.5
2's	82.9	9.3	7.8
3's	85.3	10.3	4.4
No Score	75.3	18.5	6.2
Total	81.7	12.3	6.0

The Air Force regulation (AFR 36-10) covering the OER prohibits any evaluator in the OER process from forcing any lower rating officials to meet a distribution. The reviewing official can be directed to meet the prescribed distribution; should he not meet the 22-28-50 distribution (Ref 1). The reviewing official does have several options available. The reviewer can: (1) provide guidelines that will assist in the reviewing process; (2) require that OER's have ratings that are fully substantiated; (3) ask the raters to provide a list with the ratees prioritized; (4) convene a board to consider the distribution of ratings (Ref 4:8). Although no formal forcing is permitted, the rater and additional rater realize that the OER's they send to the reviewer will be forced to fit the distribution. In regards to meeting the distribution, evaluators have been told by some individuals that their attempt to meet the

distribution reflects directly on the evaluators themselves (Ref 13:2).

The forcing of the distribution downhill may have several results. The rater may perceive himself in a gaming situation. The rater may make his evaluations on what he thinks will be acceptable to the additional rater, and/or, reviewer. For example, the rater may feel that two of his five officers rate a top-block score, but he may think that he can only hope to get one top-block score accepted by the higher level evaluators. Another result is that the rater will be forced to make a more discerning comparison. The rater will not be able to give an unwarranted number of high scores.

At the present time, due to the rater and additional rater not meeting the prescribed distribution, the reviewer has only two choices. The reviewer can either assign the same score as the previous evaluators, or lower the score. Of the 405 OER scores collected by the author, there were only 2 instances where the reviewer score was higher than the rater's score. In the 31 March 1975, lieutenant colonel OER cycle, only 37 of approximately 4491 officers received a "1" or "2" from the reviewer when the rater had assigned a "3" previously (Ref 5:17, 2:26). Unless the situation changes the rater is, in essence, assigning a maximum score.

52. An officer's performance when he receives a;

Category I rating is

- A) outstanding
- B) above average
- C) average
- D) below average
- E) marginal
- F) not evaluated
- G) no opinion

Category II rating is

- A) outstanding
- B) above average
- C) average
- D) below average
- E) marginal
- F) not evaluated
- G) no opinion

Category III rating is

- A) outstanding
- B) above average
- C) average
- D) below average
- E) marginal
- F) not evaluated
- G) no opinion

Performance

In question 52, the respondent had to select the alternative that best described his perception of what each rating meant in terms of measuring performance. The most interesting aspects were the percentages of officers that felt a Category I rating was only above average and the percentages of officers that felt a Category III rating was above average (Table IX). The "3's" group was the most consistent. The 3's tended to think less of a Category I rating and more of a Category III rating than the other groups. Regardless of

TABLE IX
PERFORMANCE VS. RATINGS

An officer's performance when he receives a:

<u>Category I rating is</u>	<u>outstanding</u>	<u>above average</u>	<u>below average</u>	<u>marginal</u>	<u>not evaluated</u>	<u>no opinion</u>
1's	86.6	11.4			.5	1.5
2's	82.1	17.2				.7
3's	71.6	14.9	1.5		6.0	6.0
No Score	86.9	9.2	.8		1.5	1.5
Total	77.9	14.8	.7		3.3	3.3
<u>Category II rating is</u>						
1's	6.4	82.7	8.9		.5	1.5
2's	8.2	82.8	6.7		.7	1.5
3's	8.8	73.5	7.4		5.9	4.4
No Score	10.8	80.8	5.4		1.5	1.5
Total	8.1	78.1	7.5		3.3	3.0
<u>Category III Rating is</u>						
1's	.5	10.9	75.7	1.0	1.5	2.0
2's	.8	12.2	76.3		1.5	2.3
3's		19.1	67.6		5.9	2.9
No Score	2.3	14.0	72.9		1.6	3.9
Total	.3	15.4	71.8	.2	3.7	2.5

what they have heard or read, the majority of officers perceive a Category III rating as average.

53. An officer's promotion probability to the next higher grade if he receives a:

Category I rating is

- A) very high
- B) likely
- C) not affected
- D) unlikely
- E) very low
- F) no opinion

Category II rating is

- A) very high
- B) likely
- C) not affected
- D) unlikely
- E) very low
- F) no opinion

Category III rating is

- A) very high
- B) likely
- C) not affected
- D) unlikely
- E) very low
- F) no opinion

PROMOTION PROBABILITY

The results of the data from question 53 are very complicated and difficult to explain. The author's intent was to acquire an idea of how promotable do junior officers perceive different ratings to be. The author can only offer his general impressions of the data (Table X). The majority of officers feel that with a I or II, the probability of promotion is likely. The interpretation of the

TABLE X
PROMOTABILITY VS. RATINGS

An officer's promotion probability to the next higher grade if he receives a:

<u>Category I rating is</u>	<u>very high</u>	<u>likely</u>	<u>not affected</u>	<u>unlikely</u>	<u>very low</u>	<u>no opinion</u>
1's	85.7	13.8				.5
2's	88.8	11.2				
3's	89.7	8.8	1.5			.8
No Score	89.2	9.2	.8			.1
Total	88.6	10.6	.7			
<u>Category II rating is</u>						
1's	25.1	67.5	5.9	.5		1.0
2's	18.7	73.9	5.2	.7	.7	.7
3's	32.4	66.2	1.5			
No Score	25.4	66.2	4.6	2.3		1.5
Total	26.9	68.6	3.5	.3	.2	.4
<u>Category III rating is</u>						
1's		28.2	29.7	36.1	2.0	4.0
2's		24.2	35.6	25.8	8.3	6.1
3's	1.5	22.7	28.8	37.9	1.5	7.6
No Score	1.6	24.0	34.1	30.2	6.2	3.9
Total	.8	24.4	30.9	34.1	3.5	6.3

perceptions dealing with the III rating is more complex.

To begin with, the author assumes those individuals who selected the "Not Affected" answer, feel that the III rating will not hinder and/or help their promotion probability. The respondents who chose "Not Affected" might feel that some other factor(s) will be the driving or determining force. Of the other responses, there are significantly more officers who view a III with a less likelihood of promotion. Approximately 75 percent of the officers feel that with a III, their chance of promotion is less than likely. The reader must realize that about 80 percent of the respondents are captains and thus are reflecting their perceptions in relation to a promotion to major.

The Air Force, in numerous instances, has stated that a III is promotable through lieutenant colonel, this view is not shared by the officers sampled in this research effort. The author was unable to find any data on a promotion board for selection to major, however, data from a lieutenant colonel board was available and will be presented as a means of analyzing the data. The statistics presented below represent the results of the first temporary lieutenant colonel board to use the new OER (Ref 11:3).

LC SELECTEE OER RESULTS

	Secondary Zone	All Primary Zone	First Time Eligible	Previously Non-Selected
Total				
Selected/Considered	158/456	1954/5451	1749/3014	205/2437
% Selected	35	36	58	8
1 Rating				
Selected/Considered	138/405	816/899	687/699	129/200
% Selected	34	91	98	65
2 Rating				
Selected/Considered	1/3	667/1213	606/794	61/419
% Selected	33	55	76	15
3 Rating				
Selected/Considered	0/0	166/2414	162/1034	4/1380
% Selected		7	16	.3
No Controlled Rating				
Selected/Considered	19/48	305/888	294/476	11/412
% Selected	46	34	62	3

The perception that a I or II has a likely probability of promotion was verified by the results of the promotion board selecting temporary lieutenant colonels. The perception that an officer with a III rating not being very likely to be promoted also appears to be verified by the results. First time eligible officers with a I were selected at 6 times the rate of officers with a III and officers with a II at 5 times the rate of officers with a III.

54. The ultimate grade an officer can reach if he primarily receives:

Category I rating is

- A) General
- B) Colonel
- C) Lt Colonel
- D) Major
- E) Captain
- F) No Opinion

Category II rating is

- A) General
- B) Colonel
- C) Lt Colonel
- D) Major
- E) Captain
- F) No Opinion

Category III rating is

- A) General
- B) Colonel
- C) Lt Colonel
- D) Major
- E) Captain
- F) No Opinion

ULTIMATE GRADE

With all the discussion from the previous question in mind, less than 40 percent of the junior officers feel they can be promoted above the rank of major if they primarily (not consistently) receive a Category III rating (Table XI). The ultimate grade achievable with a I or II rating appears to be much less limited than that of a III rating.

55. An officer's probability of achieving an AF career of 20 years if he primarily receives:

Category I rating is

- A) very high
- B) likely
- C) not affected
- D) unlikely
- E) very low
- F) no opinion

Category II rating is

- A) very high
- B) likely
- C) not affected
- D) unlikely
- E) very low
- F) no opinion

Category III rating is

- A) very high
- B) likely
- C) not affected
- D) unlikely
- E) very low
- F) no opinion

TABLE XI
ULTIMATE GRADE VS, RATINGS

The ultimate grade an officer can reach if he primarily receives:

<u>Category I ratings is</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Colonel</u>	<u>Lt. Colonel</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>Captain</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
1's	57.4	33.7	2.0			6.9
2's	72.4	21.6	3.0			3.0
3's	62.7	29.9	1.5			6.0
No Score	59.5	27.5	3.1	.8		9.2
Total	64.3	28.4	2.0			5.3
<u>Category II ratings is</u>						
1's	9.4	45.8	33.7	3.5		7.4
2's	7.5	46.3	41.0	3.0		2.2
3's	6.0	44.8	41.8	3.0		4.5
No Score	5.2	44.3	31.3	5.3	.8	9.2
Total	7.2	45.5	39.8	3.1		4.5
<u>Category III ratings is</u>						
1's	.5	10.4	30.2	37.1	12.4	9.4
2's	3.0	7.5	27.8	41.4	15.0	5.3
3's		4.5	26.9	40.3	22.4	6.0
No Score	.8	8.4	32.8	36.6	12.2	9.2
Total	1.0	6.6	27.9	39.9	18.1	6.5

CAREER PROBABILITY

Nearly all the junior officers feel that a 20 year career is likely with a I or II rating. The perception of the probability of career with a III rating varies considerably, depending on the rating the individual presently has. The officers currently having a I are much more optimistic about career probability than the officers currently having a III rating (Table XII). The Air Force says that officers will get a variety of ratings as time passes. If this statement is true, then as officers receive the different ratings, their perception of their career probability may change. When an officer has a I rating, he may feel a career is very likely and when he receives a III, he may feel his career chances are very low. Perceptions on career probability and the perceptions discussed previously in this chapter have led to the conclusions and recommendations presented in the following chapter.

TABLE XII
CAREER PROBABILITY VS. RATINGS

An officer's probability of achieving an Air Force career of 20 years if he primarily receives:

<u>Category I ratings is</u>	<u>very high</u>	<u>likely</u>	<u>not affected</u>	<u>unlikely</u>	<u>very low</u>	<u>no opinion</u>
1's	91.6	6.4	1.5			.5
2's	96.2	3.8				
3's	95.6	4.4				
No Score	98.1	5.3	.8			.8
Total	94.9	4.7	.8			.1
<u>Category II ratings is</u>						
1's	51.7	42.4	4.9	.5		.5
2's	48.1	48.1	3.0	.8		
3's	50.0	48.5	1.5			
No Score	51.1	44.3	2.3		.8	1.5
Total	49.9	47.1	2.7	.3		.1
<u>Category III ratings is</u>						
1's	3.5	42.1	13.9	33.2	5.9	1.5
2's	3.8	31.6	17.3	32.3	12.0	3.0
3's	1.5	26.9	10.4	56.7	1.5	3.0
No Score	4.6	37.4	13.7	35.1	7.6	1.5
Total	2.6	31.6	13.1	44.7	5.4	2.7

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the most significant conclusions based on the results of the survey. Under the old system, good job performance apparently was a necessary and sufficient basis for receiving a top rating. Under the new system, good job performance is a necessary, but not sufficient, basis for receiving a top rating. With the evaluators being forced to discriminate among officers in order to meet the prescribed distribution of ratings, more than just job performance is being considered. The idea of the whole-man concept is being put into practice in the OER rating system. The author believes this is evident from the fact that 17 of the 18 factors investigated increased significantly in influence under the new OER system. The following conclusions and recommendations are the result of junior officer perceptions of the new OER system.

DOS: The officers with an established DOS, who do not qualify for an abbreviated OER, are being used to fill in the lower part of the distribution. While the low rating may or may not be an accurate reflection of the officer's potential, the result is not necessarily beneficial. The conscientious officer who receives the same rating as an individual with an established DOS is

not likely to view the system as fair. Also, the officer who sees others receiving a high rating due to the presence of officers with a DOS will hardly see the system as being fair. The author recommends that any officer with a DOS, receive an abbreviated OER.

RATED VERSUS NON-RATED: Junior officers perceive that certain segments of the Air Force receive higher ratings than other segments. There exists data to support the perception. The new OER system was never thought, nor intended, to be perfect. Some of the imperfections, such as rated officers receiving a slightly higher percentage of the top rating, than do support personnel, do exist. The magnitude of the imperfection is probably not cause for alarm, but by either ignoring or denying the imperfection, more harm is caused than that created by the imperfection. The author recommends that the imperfections be admitted and that the effects of such minor imperfections be fully explained. The Air Force junior officer is not an individual from whom reality must be hidden.

VISIBILITY: Visibility is a factor that cannot be easily defined or measured, yet junior officers feel that it is very influential in determining the rating an individual receives. In that every officer cannot come in personal contact with the reviewing official, each officer is concerned that he receive some visibility with the reviewer. The belief that officers geographically separated

from their reviewing official will be at a disadvantage is evidence of the impact of visibility. In order to assure each officer some visibility every reviewing official should use a review board staffed with officers who know the individuals being rated. In this manner, the opportunity for visibility may become more equal for all concerned.

JOB PERFORMANCE: Job performance is still a necessary, but no longer sufficient factor in determining the rating an individual receives. Apparently, the majority of officers believe that the entire OER distills into one thing, the rating the reviewing official assigns. That one number sums up the entire OER. A natural happening then occurs. Because there exists no criterion for the potential or explicit definition, the officer translates the score into an index of job performance. While the Air Force may not intend for potential to be equated to job performance, it happens. Even Air Force general officers cannot agree on "what" potential is measuring. The potential, as evaluated on the OER, should be defined, criterion established and a measure associated with each block on the OER form.

PRIMARY ZONE FOR PROMOTION: The factor of being in the primary zone for promotion made the most significant increase in importance under the new system. Data show that the officers in the primary zone for the first time are

receiving a much higher percentage of top ratings, than that prescribed by the 22-28-50 distribution. Part of the explanation may be that officers in the primary zone have attained higher positions of authority and responsibility from which to demonstrate potential.

Another possible explanation may be that of gaming. By always giving the senior officers in a grade the top ratings, no one is hurt and everyone is taken care of in the long run. The Air Force tends to discount gaming based on the fact that the percentages of officers in the primary zone receiving top ratings is not blatantly out of line with the normal 22-28-50 distribution. The inflation of the old system was caused by gaming. Gaming is a natural phenomenon, in that it is an attempt to beat the system. As long as gaming is viewed as a way of beating the system, it will continue to survive. As more officers become aware of all the aspects of the new OER system, gaming will become more prevalent. The author cannot recommend any solution to gaming because whatever the system is there will be those individuals who will attempt to beat the system.

LENGTH OF TIME IN A JOB: Under the old system, in order not to penalize the new man on the job, he was given a top rating. Because of the forced distribution under the new system, no longer can anyone practice the policy of giving a top rating. The only data available to

the author showed that the officers with six months or less on base were receiving a fair proportion of top scores. These statistics appear to be distorted by certain factors. Normally an officer must be supervised by an individual for 120 days before he can qualify for an OER from that individual. Therefore, the majority of officers with six months or less on base with a current OER would have received that OER from their previous assignment. At the previous assignment the officer would normally have been there an extended period of time before being transferred.

Nevertheless, junior officers think that the length of time in a job influences the rating an individual receives. The problem lies with the officer who due to any reasons has several short assignments. Continually being new on the job may put an officer at an unfair disadvantage. Part of the solution may come from relatively less money or reasons for transfers, thereby, providing assignment stability. This may be part of the solution. Also, a minimum time on base (perhaps 12 months) should be established before an officer can receive an OER.

RATER AND REVIEWER QUALIFICATION: Approximately 77 percent of the officers feel the rater is qualified to recommend who should receive the top two scores while only 50 percent feel the reviewer is qualified. The higher the rating an individual received the more likely he felt the

rater or reviewer was qualified. Part of the explanation may be that human nature dictates that some sort of rationalization or blaming occur when an individual does not do as well as he had hoped. As long as raters assign more top ratings than the distribution allows the only alternative the reviewer has is to downgrade enough OERs to meet the distributions. This rater inflation and reviewer downgrading could be part of the reason officers perceive the evaluators in different perspectives. As long as the inflation and downgrade situation exists, the credibility and fairness of the OER system is judged by the individual based on the score he recieved. The rater must be made aware of the situation he is causing for the reviewer.

DISTRIBUTION FORCED DOWNHILL: The point at issue dealing with the distribution being forced downhill is not whether or not the distribution should exist at the lower levels of evaluations. The issue is the fact that junior officers perceive that the distribution is being forced upon the lower level evaluators. The rater is the individual caught in the middle. The rater must attempt to meet the distribution that the reviewer is required to meet and at the same time evaluate the officers whose cooperation and respect he needs on a daily basis. In doing both these tasks the rater must be fair and objective.

Due to the rater knowing the ratees, the ratees are more likely to accept his judgement than that of an officer a couple of steps up the chain of command. The rater, therefore, tends to inflate his ratings in order to maintain harmony and at the same time create a problem for the reviewer. In reality all the rater does is establish a maximum score the ratee can obtain from the reviewer. The concern of the ratee is that the rater sets the tone of the OER with the reviewer actually determining the score with which he is most concerned.

If some mechanism can be devised to attach more importance to the rater and additional rater score, then perhaps the inflation can be cured. For example, if some sort of weight based on the number of ratings and the scores a rater assigns can be attached to the OER, then maybe inflation can be stopped.

PROMOTION PROBABILITY: Most officers feel that if an individual receives a rating in either of the top two blocks, his chances for promotion are good. Most officers feel that if an individual receives a third block rating, his chances for promotion are not nearly as good. Telling junior officers that sixteen percent of the first time eligible majors with 3's were promoted is not going to make junior officers believe a 3 is promotable.

Until the results of the promotion board to major are in and explained, junior officers are going to perceive

a 3 as not very likely to be promoted. If the officers in the primary zone met the 22-28-50 distribution and the normal percentages for each rank were selected for promotion, then a 3 would be competitive for promotion through lieutenant colonel.

CAREER PROBABILITY: The majority of officers feel that if an officer primarily receives a 3, he will probably not achieve a 20 year Air Force career. If this perception matches Air Force desires, then there is no problem. However if this is not the intention, then a problem does exist. The career attainability for 50% of the junior officers (those with a 3) is not viewed with high hopes. The aspect of a 20 year career may not be the main motivating factor in junior officers, but it could easily become a demotivating influence.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: As long as factors over which the individual has no control, such as, being in the primary zone for promotion, length of time in a job, and rater and reviewer qualification, are perceived to have significant influence on the rating an individual receives, there will be some dissatisfaction and demotivation. As long as 3's are viewed as not promotable and unlikely to achieve a career, then demotivation will occur. As long as an undefined, unscaled and criterionless potential is used as a measure of an officer, then there will be some who are upset. Therefore, the author recommends

that potential be defined, be scaled and criterion established.

With the future implementation of Defense Officer Personnel Management system, any problems presently existing in the new OER system will probably increase in magnitude. If the professed purpose of the new OER system is to cure inflation, help promotion boards, and let the individual officer know where he stands, then the system is a success. Should there exist a purpose other than the ones listed above, then maybe this unknown purpose is also being accomplished. Regardless of the purpose, the system does have some problems. The ignoring or denying of problems in a system will not cause them to cease to exist. The problems caused by the imperfections of the new system are minor in magnitude at this time and not cause for alarm or concern. However, if the imperfections continue to be denied or ignored, misconceptions and rumors will increase the magnitude of the problems out of proper perspective. The people and agencies responsible for the OER system should review and analyze the problems and issues discussed in this research effort.

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GSM/SM/76D-32

Appendix A

Officer Effectiveness Report

OFFICER EFFECTIVENESS REPORT

I. RATEE IDENTIFICATION DATA (Read AFR 16-10 carefully before filling out any item)

1. NAME (Last, First, Middle Initial)	3. SSAN (Include Suffix)		8. PERIOD OF REPORT
2. ORGANIZATION, COMMAND, LOCATION AND PAS CODE	4. PAFSC	5. DAFSC	FROM:
	6. ACTIVE DUTY GRADE		THRU:
	7. PERMANENT GRADE		9. DAYS OF SUPERVISION
			10. REASON FOR REPORT

II. JOB DESCRIPTION 1. DUTY TITLE:

2. UNIQUE DUTIES AND TASKS:

3. TYPE AND LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY UNIQUE TO JOB:

III. PERFORMANCE FACTORS

Specific example of performance required	NOT OBSERVED OR NOT RELEVANT	FAR BELOW STANDARD	BELOW STANDARD	MEETS STANDARD	ABOVE STANDARD	WELL ABOVE STANDARD
1. JOB KNOWLEDGE (Depth, currency, breadth) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
2. JUDGMENT AND DECISIONS (Consistent, accurate, effective) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
3. PLAN AND ORGANIZE WORK (Timely and creative) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
4. MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES (Manpower and material) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
5. LEADERSHIP (Initiative, human relations, accept responsibility) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
6. ADAPTABILITY TO STRESS (Stable, flexible, dependable) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
7. ORAL COMMUNICATION (Clear, concise, confident) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
8. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION (Clear, concise, organized) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
9. PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES (Attitude, cooperation, bearing) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:	0					
10. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PARTICIPATION (Sensitivity and treatment) SPECIFIC EXAMPLE:						

IV. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

1. STRONGEST QUALIFICATION:
2. SUGGESTED JOB ASSIGNMENT (Indicate AFSC):
3. ORGANIZATION LEVEL (SQ, WG, MAJCCM, HQ USAF, Etc.):
4. TIMING.

V. EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL

EVALUATE THIS OFFICER'S POTENTIAL FOR INCREASED GRADE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN COMPARISON WITH CONTEMPORARIES, INDICATE YOUR RATING BY PLACING AN "X" IN THE DESIGNATED SECTION OF APPROPRIATE BLOCK.

--	--	--

RATER ADDN REVR
RATER RATER REVR
LOWEST ←

--	--	--

RATER ADDN REVR
RATER RATER REVR

--	--	--

RATER ADDN REVR
RATER RATER REVR

--	--	--

RATER ADDN REVR
RATER RATER REVR

↑ HIGHEST

VI. RATER COMMENTS

COMMENTS ON OVERALL EVALUATION

NAME, GRADE, ORGANIZATION, LOCATION

DUTY TITLE

DATE

SSAN (Include Suffix)

SIGNATURE

VII. ADDITIONAL RATER COMMENTS

COMMENTS ON OVERALL EVALUATION

☐ CONCUR☐ NONCONCUR

NAME, GRADE, ORGANIZATION, LOCATION

DUTY TITLE

DATE

SSAN (Include Suffix)

SIGNATURE

VIII. REVIEWER COMMENTS

COMMENTS ON OVERALL EVALUATION

☐ CONCUR☐ NONCONCUR

NAME, GRADE, ORGANIZATION, LOCATION

DUTY TITLE

DATE

SSAN (Include Suffix)

SIGNATURE

GSM/SM/76D-32

Appendix B
Questionnaire

THESIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Please don't throw this away!!!!!!

The following questionnaire is a thesis effort by one of your fellow officers! Please take the time to fill it out. (How would you feel if your efforts depended on someone else and he didn't come through for you?)

Place the completed form in a box marked "Questionnaire Return Box" located in your mailroom.

Thank you for your cooperation.

PRIVACY STATEMENT

In accordance with paragraph 30, AFR 12-35, the following information is provided as required by the Privacy Act of 1974:

a. Authority

(1) 10 U.S.C., 80-12, Secretary of the Air Force. Powers Duties, Delegation by Compensation; and/or

(2) EO 93-97, 22 Nov 43, Numbering System for Federal Accounts Relating to Individual Persons; and/or

(3) DOD Instruction 1100.13, 17 Apr 68, Surveys of Department of Defense Personnel; and/or

b. Principal purposes. The survey is being conducted to collect information to be used in research aimed at illuminating and providing inputs to the solution of problems of interest to the Air Force and/or DOD.

c. Routine Uses. The survey data will be converted to information for use in research of management related problems. Results of the research based on the data provided, will be included in written master's theses and may also be included in published articles, reports, or texts. Distribution of the results of the research, based on the survey data, whether in written form or presented orally, will be unlimited.

d. Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary.

e. No adverse action of any kind may be taken against any individual who elects not to participate in any or all of this survey.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE ANSWERING
THE SURVEY

To facilitate your response to some of the questions in the questionnaire some pertinent facts are provided below:

1. Under the OLD OER system three persons could normally be involved in the evaluation process; the reporting official, the endorsing official, and the additional endorser.
2. Under the NEW OER system three persons will normally be involved in the evaluation process; the rating official, the additional rating official, and the reviewing official.
3. Under the OLD OER system there was no control on the distribution of scores.
4. Under the NEW OER system the reviewing official is controlled in his distribution of scores.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

DO NOT sign the survey or identify yourself in any way.

Be sure that your marks are heavy and legible.

SECTION I

INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle the appropriate letter for questions 1-11 and provide the numbers requested in question 12.

1. What is your present active duty grade?
A) Lieutenant B) Captain
2. Which one of the following do you consider yourself?
A) Black D) Spanish American or Mexican American
B) American Indian E) White (other than Spanish or Mexican American)
C) Oriental American F) Other
3. What is your sex?
A) Male B) Female
4. What is your highest level of education now?
A) Less than college degree
B) College degree (BS, BA, or equivalent)
C) Graduate work beyond bachelor degree
D) Master's degree
E) Postgraduate work beyond master's degree
F) Doctorate degree
5. What is your command of assignment (the command that maintains your personnel records prior to coming to SOS)?
A) ADC D) ATC G) TAC
B) AFLC E) MAC H) AU
C) AFSC F) SAC I) Other
6. What is your primary aeronautical rating?
A) Pilot B) Navigator C) Flight Surgeon D) Non-Rated
7. How much time in grade do you have?
A) Less than 1 year D) 4 years but less than 6
B) 1 year but less than 2 E) 6 or more years
C) 2 years but less than 4
8. What is your source of Commission?
A) OTS B) ROTC C) AIR FORCE ACADEMY D) Other
9. Have you been evaluated under the NEW Officer Effectiveness Report (OER)?
A) YES B) NO
10. If you have been evaluated using the NEW OER please circle the code for the scores you received.

RATER	ADDITIONAL RATER	REVIEWER
A) 1	E) 1	I) 1
B) 2	F) 2	J) 2
C) 3	G) 3	K) 3
D) 4 or lower	H) 4 or lower	L) 4 or lower

11. Which of the following best describes your attitude toward making the Air Force a career?
- A) Definitely intend to make the Air Force a career
 - B) Most likely will make the Air Force a career
 - C) Undecided
 - D) Most likely will not make the Air Force a career
 - E) Definitely do not intend to make the Air Force a career
12. What are the first TWO digits of your duty Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC)? — —

SECTION II

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer the questions one at a time and independently of each other. Each question has two parts which ask for your perception of the OLD OER and NEW OER systems. Please circle the number which most closely corresponds to your perception.

13. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree		Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree	

15. An UPCOMING PCS influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree		Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree	

17. LENGTH OF TIME IN A JOB influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree		Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree	

19. EDUCATIONAL LEVEL influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree		Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree	

21. SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS influence the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree

23. SOURCE OF COMMISSION influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree

25. ADDITIONAL DUTIES influence the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree

27. PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION(PME) influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree

29. RATED VERSUS NON-RATED influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree

31. JOB PERFORMANCE influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree

33. DIVERSITY OF PRIOR ASSIGNMENTS influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree

35. An ESTABLISHED DATE OF SEPERATION(DOS) influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly		Neutral/			Strongly	
	Disagree		No Opinion			Agree	

37. BEING IN THE PRIMARY ZONE FOR PROMOTION influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly		Neutral/			Strongly	
	Disagree		No Opinion			Agree	

39. A NON-JOB RELATED MISFORTUNE(i.e.,speeding ticket) influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly		Neutral/			Strongly	
	Disagree		No Opinion			Agree	

41. VISIBILITY(with higher level rating officials) influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly		Neutral/			Strongly	
	Disagree		No Opinion			Agree	

43. The RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RATING OFFICIALS influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly		Neutral/			Strongly	
	Disagree		No Opinion			Agree	

45. LEVEL OF ASSIGNMENT(i.e.,Squadron, Wing, MAJCOM) influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly		Neutral/			Strongly	
	Disagree		No Opinion			Agree	

47. JOB STATUS(i.e., instructor Pilot versus Line Pilot) influences the rating an individual receives.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly		Neutral/			Strongly	
	Disagree		No Opinion			Agree	

SECTION III

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the following list of 18 factors to answer the question below.
Please write one number in each blank provided.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1) Physical Appearance | 10) Job Performance |
| 2) Upcoming PCS | 11) Diversity of Prior Assignments |
| 3) Length of Time in a Job | 12) Established DOS |
| 4) Educational Level | 13) Primary Zone for Promotion |
| 5) Special Assignments | 14) Non-Job Related Misfortune |
| 6) Source of Commission | 15) Visibility |
| 7) Additional Duties | 16) Relationship between Rating Officials |
| 8) Professional Military Education | 17) Level of Assignment |
| 9) Rated Versus Non-Rated | 18) Job Status |

48. List the five factors you consider MOST important in influencing the rating an individual receives. (List in decreasing importance)

OLD OER SYSTEM 1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

NEW OER SYSTEM 1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

SECTION IV

INSTRUCTIONS: The following questions pertain to the NEW OER SYSTEM only.
Please circle the number or letter that most closely corresponds to your perception.

49. RATING officials are generally qualified to recommend who should receive the top two scores.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly			Neutral/			Strongly
Disagree			No Opinion			Agree

50. REVIEWING officials are generally qualified to recommend who should receive the top two scores.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly			Neutral/			Strongly
Disagree			No Opinion			Agree

51. The distribution of scores is being FORCED downhill.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neutral/ No Opinion			Strongly Agree

52. An officer's performance when he receives a;

<u>Category I rating is</u>	<u>Category II rating is</u>	<u>Category III rating is</u>
A) outstanding	A) outstanding	A) outstanding
B) above average	B) above average	B) above average
C) average	C) average	C) average
D) below average	D) below average	D) below average
E) marginal	E) marginal	E) marginal
F) not evaluated	F) not evaluated	F) not evaluated
G) no opinion	G) no opinion	G) no opinion

53. An officer's promotion probability to the next higher grade if he receives a:

<u>Category I rating is</u>	<u>Category II rating is</u>	<u>Category III rating is</u>
A) very high	A) very high	A) very high
B) likely	B) likely	B) likely
C) not affected	C) not affected	C) not affected
D) unlikely	D) unlikely	D) unlikely
E) very low	E) very low	E) very low
F) no opinion	F) no opinion	F) no opinion

54. The ultimate grade an officer can reach if he primarily receives:

<u>Category I ratings is</u>	<u>Category II ratings is</u>	<u>Category III ratings is</u>
A) General —	A) General —	A) General —
B) Colonel	B) Colonel	B) Colonel
C) LtColonel	C) LtColonel	C) LtColonel
D) Major	D) Major	D) Major
E) Captain	E) Captain	E) Captain
F) No Opinion	F) No Opinion	F) No Opinion

55. An officer's probability of achieving an AF career of 20 years if he primarily receives:

<u>Category I ratings is</u>	<u>Category II ratings is</u>	<u>Category III ratings is</u>
A) very high —	A) very high —	A) very high —
B) likely	B) likely	B) likely
C) not affected	C) not affected	C) not affected
D) unlikely	D) unlikely	D) unlikely
E) very low	E) very low	E) very low
F) no opinion	F) no opinion	F) no opinion

GSM/SM/76D-32

APPENDIX C

Demographic Breakdown of Officers Surveyed

VAR001	RANK								
CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)				
LIEUTENANT	1.	114	21.2	21.2	21.2				
CAPTAIN	2.	423	78.8	78.8	100.0				
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0	100.0				
VALID CASES	537								
	MISSING CASES	0							

VAR002	RACE								
	CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	SUM FREQ (PCT)			
	BLACK	1.	11	2.0	2.1	2.1			
	ORIENTAL AMERICAN	3.	4	.7	.8	2.8			
	SPANISH OR MEXICAN A	4.	1	.2	.2	3.0			
	WHITE	5.	509	94.8	95.5	95.5			
	OTHER	6.	8	1.5	1.5	100.0			
		0	4	.7	MISSING	100.0			
		TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0				
	VALID CASES	533	MISSING CASES	4					

VAR003 SEX

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	SUM FREQ (PCT)
MALE	1.	524	97.6	97.6	97.6
FEMALE	2.	12	2.2	2.2	100.0
	0	1	.2	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0	

VALID CASES 536 MISSING CASES 1

VAR004 EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
LESS RS	1.	2	.4	.4	.4
PS	2.	200	37.2	37.2	37.6
GRAD WORK	3.	164	34.3	34.3	71.9
MASTERS	4.	122	22.7	22.7	94.6
POSTGRAD	5.	23	4.3	4.3	98.9
DOCTORATE	5.	5	1.1	1.1	100.0
TOTAL		537	100.0	100.0	
VALID CASES	537				
MISSING CASES	0				

VAR005	COMMAND					
CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)	
ADC	1.	22	4.1	4.1	4.1	
AF	2.	9	1.7	1.7	5.8	
AFSC	3.	39	7.3	7.3	13.0	
ATC	4.	60	11.2	11.2	24.2	
HAC	5.	85	16.0	16.0	40.2	
SAC	6.	137	25.5	25.5	55.7	
TAG	7.	70	13.0	13.0	78.8	
AU	8.	10	1.9	1.9	80.6	
OTHER	9.	104	19.4	19.4	100.0	
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0		
VALID CASES	537	MISSING CASES	0			

VAR006	RATING								
CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	SUM FREQ (PCT)				
PILOT	1.	219	40.8	40.9	40.9				
NAVIGATOR	2.	77	14.3	14.4	55.2				
NON-RATED	4.	240	44.7	44.8	100.0				
	0	1	.2	MISSING	100.0				
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0					
VALID CASES	536								
MISSING CASES	1								

VAR007 TIME IN GRADE

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
LESS THAN 1 YEAR	1.	143	25.6	25.6	25.6
1 YEAR BUT <2	2.	156	29.1	29.1	55.7
2 YEARS BUT <4	3.	55	17.7	17.7	73.4
4 YEARS BUT <6	4.	119	22.2	22.2	95.5
6 YEARS OR MORE	5.	24	4.5	4.5	100.0
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0	
VALID CASES	537				
MISSING CASES	0				

VAR008	SOURCE OF COMMISSION					
CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	SUM FREQ (PCT)	
OTS	1.	224	41.7	41.9	41.9	
ROTC	2.	250	46.6	45.7	85.6	
AIR FORCE ACADEMY	3.	50	9.3	9.3	97.9	
OTHER	4.	11	2.0	2.1	100.0	
	0	2	.4	MISSING	100.0	
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0		
VALID CASES	535	MISSING CASES	2			

VAR009 EVALUATED UNDER THE NEW OER					
CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	SUM FREQ (PCT)
YES	1.	467	87.0	87.0	87.0
NO	2.	70	13.0	13.0	100.0
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0	
VALID CASES	537	MISSING CASES	0		

VAR010 RATER SCORE

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	SUM FREQ (PCT)
1	1.	272	50.7	55.2	55.2
2	2.	116	21.6	27.9	93.0
3	3.	29	5.4	7.0	100.0
	0	120	22.3	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0	

VALID CASES 417 MISSING CASES 120

VAR011 ADDITIONAL RATER SCORE

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	200H FREQ (PCT)
1	1.	240	44.7	52.9	53.9
2	2.	115	21.4	22.7	23.5
3	3.	46	8.6	11.5	100.0
	0	136	25.3	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0	

VALID CASES 401 MISSING CASES 136

VAR012 REVIEWER SCORE

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
1	1.	203	37.8	50.1	50.1
2	2.	134	25.0	33.1	83.2
3	3.	68	12.7	16.8	100.0
	0	132	24.6	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0	

VALID CASES	405	MISSING CASES	132
-------------	-----	---------------	-----

VAR013 CAREER INTENT

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
DEF INTEND	1.	223	41.5	41.0	41.0
MOST LIKELY	2.	224	41.7	41.9	83.7
UNDECIDED	3.	73	13.6	13.7	97.4
MOST LIKELY WILL NOT	4.	10	1.9	1.9	99.3
DEF DO NOT INTEND	5.	4	.7	.7	100.0
	0	3	.6	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	537	100.0	100.0	

VALID CASES 534 MISSING CASES 3

VAR014 AFS

CODE	FREQ	ADJ PCT	CUM PCT	CODE	FREQ	ADJ PCT	CUM PCT	CODE	FREQ	ADJ PCT	CUM PCT
9.	3	1	1	29.	4	1	56	59.	3	1	87
10.	77	15	15	30.	19	4	70	70.	21	4	91
11.	73	7	23	31.	1	0	70	73.	12	2	94
12.	23	4	27	40.	28	5	75	75.	1	0	94
13.	75	7	34	46.	3	1	76	79.	4	2	95
14.	11	2	36	51.	13	2	78	80.	12	2	97
15.	72	14	50	53.	13	2	81	91.	2	0	97
17.	6	1	51	57.	2	0	81	92.	4	1	98
19.	25	5	56	60.	3	1	82	87.	1	0	98
20.	1	0	56	62.	2	0	82	90.	1	0	98
22.	2	0	57	63.	1	0	82	91.	1	0	99
23.	1	0	57	64.	12	2	85	92.	2	0	99
25.	5	1	58	65.	2	0	85	97.	3	1	100
26.	8	2	59	67.	1	0	85	98.	2	0	100
28.	31	6	65	67.	8	2	87				

MISSING DATA

CODE FREQ

CODE FREQ
0 17

Vita

In background, Steven Keyserling is a Southerner. From birth on 22 March 1947, until he left for college, his only home was Beaufort, South Carolina. Home was left behind on departure for the United States Air Force Academy, where he majored in Aeronautical Engineering.

Upon graduation, he was commissioned in the United States Air Force and his first assignment was undergraduate pilot training in Texas. Completion of pilot training was followed with an assignment to Vietnam flying the C7-A, Caribou. This tour was followed by an assignment to Peterson Field, Colorado Springs, Colorado, as an instructor pilot in the T-41C. Two years later, he was transferred to Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, as an instructor in the T-38. This tour was shortened with his assignment to the Air Force Institute of Technology.

He is married, and his wife's name is Cindy. They have two daughters, Holly Melissa and Hillary Michelle.

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20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the current OER system on the junior officers of the United States Air Force. A survey of the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of 537 Air University Students indicates that the new OER system has solved old problems and, at the same time, created new problems. The ignoring or denying of problems in a system will not cause them to		

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cease to exist. The problems caused by the imperfections of the new system are minor in magnitude at this time and not cause for alarm or concern. However, if the imperfections continue to be denied or ignored, misconceptions and rumors will increase the magnitude of the problem out of proper perspective. The new problems can lead to demotivation and dissatisfaction, which could decrease the Air Force mission effectiveness. Recommendations include scaling, defining and establishing criterion for the evaluation of potential and methods to prevent gaming of the system. The author recommends that the appropriate agencies evaluate the conclusions and recommendations. If valid, the author suggests corrective action be initiated immediately.

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