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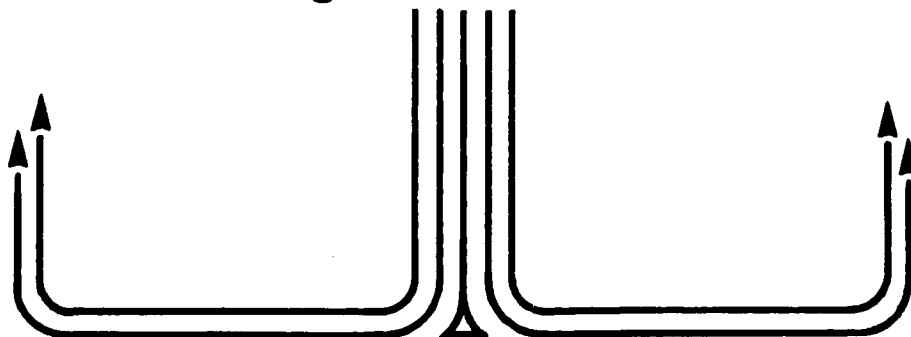
## STUDENT REPORT

THE OFFICER EFFECTIVENESS REPORT--  
IS IT LEGAL?

MAJOR MICHAEL S. REESE

88-2200

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**REPORT NUMBER** 88-2200

**TITLE** THE OFFICER EFFECTIVENESS REPORT--IS IT LEGAL?

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# —PREFACE—

This research paper focuses on the issue of legality vis-a-vis the Air Force Officer Effectiveness Report. It recognizes the increasing involvement of the courts in corporate performance appraisal systems, and discusses general guidelines the courts have issued that assist companies to make their systems more legally defensible. The author, using primarily AFR 36-10, analyzes the extent the Air Force complies with these court-issued guidelines. In areas found to be deficient or illegal the author provides suggestions that would make the OER more defensible in the courts if it were ever challenged. While making the OER more legal, these suggestions would have the immediate benefit of making the OER a more effective management tool.



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Major Reese graduated from the US Air Force Academy in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Management and Economics. He received a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1976. Following two tours in B-52s, Major Reese was assigned to the faculty at the US Air Force Academy as an instructor and professor in the Department of Management. Relevant to this paper was his involvement for three years teaching a course entitled Management of Human Resources. As a survey course in personnel management, it contained a major section on performance appraisal. In his preparation for teaching the course, and later directing others to teach the course, Major Reese conducted extensive research and attended numerous professional conferences and workshops concerning the design and implementation of corporate performance appraisal systems. Major Reese graduated from Squadron Officers School in 1980 and completed Air Command and Staff College by correspondence in 1985.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Part of our College mission is distribution of the students' problem solving products to DoD sponsors and other interested agencies to enhance insight into contemporary, defense related issues. While the College has accepted this product as meeting academic requirements for graduation, the views and opinions expressed or implied are solely those of the author and should not be construed as carrying official sanction.

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REPORT NUMBER 88-2200

AUTHOR(S) MAJOR MICHAEL S. REESE, USAF

TITLE THE OFFICER EFFECTIVENESS REPORT--IS IT LEGAL?

I. Purpose: To determine the extent of compliance of the Air Force Officer Effectiveness Report (OER) with court-issued guidelines that assist companies in the legal design and implementation of performance appraisal systems. In areas found to be deficient and/or illegal, to provide suggestions that would make the OER more defensible in the courts.

II. Problem: The trend for the courts to become increasingly more involved in a company's performance appraisal system is a recent phenomenon. As a result, the corporate world has dramatically changed the way they evaluate their employees. Given the relative stability of the OER over the same period, it is likely the OER would be difficult to defend in the civil courts.

III. Data: There exists a core collection of court cases that adequately summarize the extent of court involvement in private sector performance appraisal systems. Through these court cases, the courts have substantively affected six major areas within performance appraisals: job-relatedness, job analysis, subjectivity (or conversely, objectivity), communication, training, and rater characteristics. Consequently, management consultant groups and academicians have published numerous guidelines companies can follow to make their employee evaluations more defensible. The author has reduced these guidelines to ten operating guidelines that particularly impact the Air Force OER. They provide an excellent checklist for the Air

## CONTINUED

Force to use to determine how legal its OER is. An important internal Air Force document that must be considered before any final determination can be made is AFR 36-10. As the sole authority on officer evaluations, AFR 36-10 is the definitive, officially-sponsored guidance package on the OER. Only after thoroughly studying AFR 36-10, and comparing its guidance to the court-issued guidelines, can a final legal assessment be made concerning the OER.

IV. Conclusions: The Air Force clearly does some things right, particularly in the area of equal opportunity. However, and on balance, much work is required if the Air Force is to better defend their officer evaluation from a legal perspective. Areas receiving marginal or failing ratings and require significant changes to current policy are job-relatedness, validity, and rater training. Areas receiving satisfactory ratings but still require minor changes are rater characteristics, performance review, and ratee communication.

V. Recommendations: The US Air Force should begin listening to the free advice the courts are offering on how to better construct and implement performance appraisal systems. Significant improvements can be made without affecting the design of the OER; others require a complete overhaul of the form itself. The net effect of compliance, even minimal compliance, with the court-issued guidelines can't help but improve the overall effectiveness of the OER.

## Chapter One

### INTRODUCTION

For the past decade US civil courts have become increasingly more involved in a company's performance appraisal system. Particularly, the courts have begun to question the legality of private sector evaluation systems. Through an increasing number of important court cases in this area, companies now face extremely important legal questions. Are our performance appraisal systems defensible in the courts? Are they, in fact, legal? This paper will address these questions relevant to one particular company--the United States Air Force--and to its performance appraisal system--the Officer Effectiveness Report (OER).

Certainly there has been recent talk on the problems surrounding the OER. In fact, a recent retired Air Force general speaking to the Air Command and Staff College, and to no one's surprise, labeled the entire OER "bankrupt." Even at this writing, a special working group at the Military Personnel Center (MPC) is preparing to brief the Air Staff on recommendations for change and improvements to the current OER system. This paper is not an attempt to supplement their work, nor refute it. Nor will it propose a new and independently designed OER that meets every legal requirement. Rather, it is the paper's goal only to expose the current system to the criticisms and recommendations coming from US civil courts. It is purely a reflective paper that will answer the following questions: How defensible, in a legal sense, is the current Air Force Officer Effectiveness Report? If it was legally challenged in the civil courts, how would it hold up?

The following analysis will focus on three major areas. First, it will summarize recent (post 1970) court decisions that have had an impact on the way companies evaluate their employees. This summary evolved from a thorough literature search, primarily involving business and legal periodicals and journals. Second, it will integrate these court decisions into a set of guidelines companies should follow to legally defend their performance appraisal systems. These guidelines allow companies (and the Air Force) to conduct a quick self-assessment of their performance appraisal system. They are simple benchmarks of compliance--what are we doing right and what are we doing wrong? Finally, it will compare these guidelines to the way the Air Force manages its performance appraisal--the OER. Air Force Regulation (AFR) 36-10 is the sole authority on officer evaluations. By design, the major commands (MAJCOM) offer little additional guidance on how to administer the OER. Consequently, AFR 36-10 will be the primary source

to identify areas in which the Air Force meets or fails to meet the court-issued guidelines. Coupled with this comparison are suggestions that would make the current OER more defensible. These recommendations not only have design implications for future revisions, but have practical suggestions for how to improve the administration of any OER, regardless of design.

#### PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS: A LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

The courts' involvement with corporate performance appraisal systems is a recent phenomenon. The impetus for their involvement came from the US Congress, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the Department of Labor. "On July 2, the US Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 [Title VII]." (8:29) Title VII simply makes discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin illegal. (8:29) In 1972, the EEOC and the Department of Labor released the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures. This document established performance appraisals as a selection instrument. "The Uniform Guidelines do not apply only to written tests; they cover all selection procedures that are used in making employment decisions. Therefore, the Uniform Guidelines are clearly applicable to performance evaluations when the results of these evaluations are used in making employment decisions." (8:32) The implication behind these guidelines is critical. "The courts have generally judged the legality of employment procedures under Title VII according to the principles laid out by the guidelines." (8:32) Consequently, since 1972, courts began scrutinizing companies' performance appraisal systems from a discrimination standpoint. In those cases where the courts have found companies to discriminate through their performance appraisal, the courts have ruled the appraisals illegal.

While the issue of discrimination is at the heart of a company's legal performance appraisal system, it has a much broader application. "Whenever an employee's performance is reviewed or evaluated, we are making discriminations." (32:81) This attitude is affecting the court's decision to legally assess performance appraisals even if discrimination is not evident. "Employees must be concerned about defending their appraisals regardless of the presence of adverse impact [discrimination]." (22:109) This is important when discussing the Air Force Officer Effectiveness Report. The issue is not whether the Air Force discriminates with its OER. The courts are simply providing all companies, both private and public, important legal guidance on how to design and administer their performance appraisal systems. This guidance is not only intended to correct current discrimination, but also to prevent future discrimination.

## Chapter Two

### PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS AND THE COURTS

There exists a core collection of court cases that do an adequate job of summarizing the extent of court involvement in private sector performance appraisal systems. Without getting involved in the actual participants and their particular arguments, this paper will provide bottom-line messages the courts are sending to the private sector (and indirectly to the US Air Force). There are six major areas within performance appraisals that courts have substantively affected: job-relatedness, job analysis, subjectivity (or conversely, objectivity), communication, training, and rater characteristics.

#### JOB-RELATEDNESS

"The Uniform Guidelines issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. . . make it clear that performance appraisals must be job-related. . . ." (2:359) To be job-related, a performance appraisal must evaluate and/or measure the behaviors necessary for successful job completion. (8:32) According to the courts, the final analysis is whether the performance appraisal can, in fact, measure performance. "It must be able to identify or distinguish between the good, average, and poor performer, or different degrees or quality of performance on the job." (15:17) The "rating must demonstrate its relatedness to the particular job being rated rather than to generalized factors (appearance, leadership, etc.) that may or may not have a significant bearing on this job." (32:82) The court concluded in *USA v City of Chicago* (1978) that "when companies make performance-based decisions on the basis of appraisals, they are using the appraisals as employment tests; thus, they must be based upon identifiable job-related criteria." (3:217)

A closely related issue is validity. In the context of performance appraisals, validity--a statistical concept--measures the degree to which the performance appraisal actually measures what it is intended to measure (e.g., job performance and potential). The corollary between job-relatedness and validity is simple. The more related the appraisal is to the job being evaluated, the more valid a performance appraisal is. If job-relatedness of the performance appraisal is low, validity is low. In *Brito v Zia Company* (1973) the court ruled against the company and its performance appraisal system by noting that the company

failed to validate the test according to the EEOC guidelines because it failed to introduce evidence of the validity of its performance evaluation test consisting of empirical data demonstrating that the test was significantly correlated with important elements of work behavior relevant to the jobs for which the applicants were being evaluated. (22:111)

In summary, the courts have found the issues of job-relatedness and validity as important "litmus tests" when discussing the legality of a company's performance appraisal system. They have concluded that performance appraisal systems must reflect job-related criteria if the criteria are to be considered valid. Furthermore, the courts are in agreement that validation is a prerequisite for a defensible performance appraisal system. "When the instrument used is valid, performance appraisal is legal. Conversely, when the instrument is not valid, or even when the manager fails to provide evidence of its validity, performance appraisal is illegal." (15:20)

### JOB ANALYSIS

Closely related to the court's requirement for performance appraisals to be job-related is a similar requirement for the appraisals to be based on a job analysis. A job analysis is simply a method companies use to thoroughly understand jobs. Two products result from a job analysis--job descriptions and job specifications. A job description is the tasks, duties, and responsibilities inherent in a specific job. A job specification, though similar, expands the job specification by listing the unique qualifications necessary for job success. For example, a job specification typically states the prerequisites an individual must meet to even be considered for a job. These criteria include education, experience, and training. Job descriptions and job specifications combine to provide an employer the most relevant and necessary aspects of a job, and a company determines these aspects through a job analysis.

In the context of a legal performance appraisal, the job analysis takes on added importance. The "appraisal of job performance must be based upon an analysis of job requirements as reflected in performance standards." (11:176) Expanding this, once a company is finished with its job analysis, it is in position to state and communicate to its employees the performance standards necessary for job success. Once a company identifies the performance standards, the company can then begin to construct and ultimately administer the appropriate, and legal, performance appraisal system. (11:176)

In a landmark court decision of *Albermarle Paper Company v Moody* (1975), the court agreed that "the best way to determine whether the appraisal criteria are job-related is to do a job analysis." (3:217) The court concluded that "one of the reasons International [Albermarle] Paper Company was unable to justify certain performance appraisal practices was the fact that the rating instrument used was not based on an analysis of the job. The lack of a job analysis made it impossible to show the ratings were

job related. . . ." (15:18) In *Patterson v American Tobacco Company* (1976), the court reaffirmed the requirement for companies to conduct a thorough job analysis. The court concluded that the company's promotion decision was discriminatory, and consequently illegal, because the promotion was not based on "written job descriptions and objective criteria for appointments [promotion]." (11:177)

In summary, "the courts have repeatedly condemned the use of performance-evaluation instruments that have not been developed from a systematic analysis of the job." (8:33) In fact, the courts more recently have expanded this view. In *Carpenter v Stephen F. Austin State University* (1983), the college was criticized by the court for "using obsolete job descriptions in evaluating its employees. Consequently, periodic job analysis also seems to be important." (8:33)

### SUBJECTIVE CRITERIA

A third area that courts have become involved in with respect to performance appraisals is in the nature of the performance criteria themselves. There are basically two types of performance appraisals that distinguish the kinds of criteria selected to measure performance. Appraisal forms that require supervisors to evaluate their employees in such areas as leadership, cooperation, dependability, leadership, attitude toward people, and loyalty are labeled "subjective." (3:219; 22:115) Conversely, appraisals that require employers to evaluate their employees through "specifically defined behaviors" (3:219) are labeled "objective."

Traditionally, the courts have discouraged companies from using subjective forms of performance appraisals. "The Uniform Guidelines clearly specify (and the courts have generally upheld) that employee evaluation should concentrate on job-specific behaviors rather than on potentially relevant traits, abilities, and psychological characteristics." (8:33) In *Brito v Zia Company* (1973) the court "ruled that such aspects as appearance, ethical habits, and loyalty are vague and subjective and may not have any impact on job performance." (8:33) In three other cases (*Albemarle Paper Company v Moody* [1978], *Baxter v Savannah Sugar Refining Corporation* [1974], and *Rowe v General Motors* [1972]), the courts criticized the performance appraisal systems because they did not "produce fair or accurate evaluations." (3:219) In fact, in *Rowe v General Motors*, the court ruled that the promotion system General Motors used was in violation of Title VII. One of the reasons for its illegality was that the "standards determined to be controlling were vague and subjective." (26:17)

The courts have, however, allowed companies to use more subjective forms. For example, in *Zell v United States* (1979), the court viewed favorably the subjective performance evaluations because it was supplemented by more "objective, behavioral measures of performance." (8:33) The courts have also agreed that companies may find it extremely difficult to use objective criteria in evaluating employees, particularly in the case of professional personnel. (5:41) "It is sometimes necessary to identify specific behavior that should be reinforced and rewarded." (5:41)

In summary, performance appraisal systems may be illegal if the ratings are based on an evaluation of subjective or vague factors. (1:257) Criteria that are based upon subjective constructs, upon vague or subjective factors, may in turn not meet the test for validity. (32:82) The fundamental reason for the courts' stand is because "vague criteria are open to bias, allowing different interpretations by various raters." (15:18)

### COMMUNICATION

Once performance standards have been identified, the company must communicate those standards to its employees. "The courts have clearly stated that if performance evaluation is used. . . , performance criteria and standards must be communicated to the employee." (3:219)

In *Rowe v General Motors* (1972), "the court ruled that one of the discriminatory aspects of the motor company's performance appraisal policy was that criteria on which promotions were based were not clearly communicated. . . ." (8:35) Furthermore, in *Zell v United States* (1979), one of the reasons the court upheld the legality of the performance appraisal system was because the company had clearly informed its employees on the standards by which their performance would be measured. (8:35)

In summary, clear communication of job requirements and performance standards may often make formal legal action unnecessary. Courts have repeatedly "reacted negatively to performance evaluation systems when standards have not been communicated to employees." (8:35)

### RATER TRAINING

The courts have clearly favored companies that spend time training and indoctrinating their supervisors in how to properly evaluate their employees. In *Carpenter v Stephen F. Austin State University* (1983), the court ordered the university to prepare objective and thorough written guidelines to assist supervisors in their evaluation responsibilities. (8:36) In *Rowe v General Motors* (1972), the court further added that without written evaluation guidelines, companies would be unable to rate their employees on a constant set of promotion criteria. (26:17) Unfortunately, "supervisors are rarely trained to collect and report behavior in an objective, constructive, timely and useful manner." (32:82) The result is that such a system breeds biased and inconsistent personnel decisions, a condition the courts are finding difficult to defend. The judges are now frequently asking a company the following question: Are supervisors qualified to rate someone else's performance? (32:82) "Poorly designed [performance appraisal] systems produce poor performance information which is tough to defend. But equally damaging is a good system that is neither understood nor accepted by its users due to lack of training." (21:82)

## RATER CHARACTERISTICS

A final area courts have become involved in is the company's decision on who will actually conduct the evaluation. Courts have ruled that supervisors must have regular and personal contact with the people they evaluate, or the system itself may be illegal. ". . . the lack of daily supervision results in a lack of familiarity with the performance of the subordinate. Lack of familiarity with the employee's performance introduces subjective observations and results in an illegal appraisal." (15:18)

In *USA v City of Chicago* (1978), the courts condemned the city's performance appraisal system because it forced supervisors to rate employees when supervisors had no direct knowledge of job performance. (25:92) Consistent with this decision was the one made by the courts in *Brito v Zia* (1973). One of the reasons the courts declared the performance appraisal illegal was because "two of the three supervisory evaluators did not have daily contact with the employees being evaluated." (26:17) Finally, in *James v Stockholm Valves and Fittings Company* (1977), the courts stated that "unless each appraisal dimensions can be supported by objective, observable evidence, its continued use may well be prohibited." (11:179)

The bottom-line recommendation the courts are making is that people who conduct evaluations must be able to observe the behavior they are rating. "Valid ratings cannot be made by someone. . . unfamiliar with the work of the ratee. . . ." (22:113)

## Chapter Three

### LEGAL GUIDELINES: A SUMMARY

In light of the recent involvement of the courts in corporate performance appraisals, what guidance is being offered to the private sector to make its performance appraisals more defensible? Management consultant groups and academicians have published a wealth of suggestions that companies might follow to ensure a legal performance appraisal system. In an attempt to summarize all the previously mentioned court cases within the six performance appraisal categories, the following guidelines briefly describe the most relevant suggestions affecting the Air Force's Officer Effectiveness Report.

#### GUIDELINE #1

The performance appraisal must be job-related. The job characteristics and performance standards contained within the appraisal should depict the essence of the job. The characteristics should accurately describe the nature of the work and the standards should describe the level of performance necessary for job success. "The performance standards (traits, behavior, or results) are based upon relevant job dimensions that are appropriate to the nature of work called for and bear upon the desired job performance." (21:82) When performance appraisals meet this test for job-relatedness, it becomes less likely that criteria and dimensions used to describe one job will be the same for an entirely different job. (32:82)

#### GUIDELINE #2

The content of the performance appraisal should be based on a thorough job analysis. This will preclude employees being evaluated on "undefined, global measures of job performance." (11:76) Rather, a job analysis will ensure that employees are evaluated on "clearly defined individual components or dimensions of job performance." (11:176) In addition, performance appraisals must reflect the existing job, and should change as the job changes. This requires all jobs to be monitored and reviewed through recurring job analyses (8:36), with subsequent changes to the performance appraisal when appropriate.

### GUIDELINE #3

Performance appraisals must be valid. When validated, each performance appraisal would reflect those rating dimensions specific to the job, thereby ensuring its job-relatedness. The use of "generic designs of forms for collecting and keeping performance data" (32:82) would become more and more difficult to defend in the courts.

### GUIDELINE #4

Objective, behaviorally-based job dimensions should be used to the fullest extent possible. Ratings on construct (subjective) traits (e.g., dependability, drive, aptitude, attitude, initiative, interpersonal communication skills, quality of work, leadership, cooperation, stability) should be avoided. (32:82; 22:115; 3:218)

### GUIDELINE #5

Subjective appraisals must be made more objective to the fullest extent possible. A number of methods are available to do this. First, the performance appraisal should be formalized, documented, and standardized company-wide. (26:20) "This includes statements regarding purposes of appraisals, mandatory use by management, complete disclosure of the program to evaluation and due process procedures." (21:81) This also implies that the administration and scoring of the performance appraisal system are standardized and controlled. (21:82) Second, the raters themselves should be trained and qualified to do their evaluative job. (22:118) Third, subjective ratings should be only one input to the entire evaluation process, particularly to subsequent personnel actions, such as promotions. (4:237; 26:21) Fourth, "behavioral documentation should be required for extreme ratings." (3:218)

### GUIDELINE #6

An employee evaluation should be conducted by multiple, independent appraisers with personal contact with the ratee. (3:218; 26:21) Each appraiser should have continual and personal contact with the employee, and be afforded ample opportunity to observe his or her performance. (3:218; 4:237; 25:94) Such action will prevent one supervisor from acting alone, thus possibly controlling unilaterally the employee's career. (25:94)

### GUIDELINE #7

Supervisors must be trained for their evaluative responsibilities. A training program should involve (1) written instructions for completing the performance appraisal (1:257-258); (2) laws affecting performance appraisals and discrimination (3:218); (3) what the intended uses of the appraisal are (4:237); (4) an orientation of what the supervisory responsibilities are

(4:237); and (5) the skills required of evaluators. These skills include the proper motivation to evaluate, "a clear understanding of the performance appraisal instrument, the words and weights used in it, the rating errors that can be made, knowledge of what behavior should or should not be rated, and the awareness of one's own prejudice and how they affect the rating." (15:18-19)

#### GUIDELINE #8

The results of the appraisal should be reviewed by the supervisor to the employee throughout the entire evaluation process. This will allow the employee to air any appraisal disagreements. (3:218) Included in this review should be a formalized appeal process if an employee disagrees with an evaluation. (4:237; 11:177)

#### GUIDELINE #9

The performance appraisal system should be communicated to and understood by the employees. (3:218) This should include an explanation of the job dimensions and standards, how the system will be administered, and what impact it will have on future personnel actions.

#### GUIDELINE #10

Personnel decisions based on the performance appraisal must not be discriminatory. Accordingly, "an organization should keep accurate records of who is eligible for and interested in the promoted position. It should also initiate a strong EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] posture, which would include the implementation of an affirmative action program." (22:118)

## Chapter Four

### THE OER AND THE COURTS

Before comparing the Air Force's performance appraisal system with the ten guidelines summarized in Chapter 3, a quick look at USAF source documents on officer evaluations is appropriate. AFR 36-10, Officer Evaluations, is the definitive, officially-sponsored guidance package on the OER. The regulation "establishes Air Force policy regarding officer evaluations. It tells how to prepare, submit, and control AF Form 707, Officer Effectiveness Report. . ." (35:1) Consequently, the major thrust of the regulation is administrative in nature, and therefore offers little insight into the degree the Air Force meets or fails to meet court-issued guidelines. MAJCOM guidance is less helpful in determining the OER's legality. It must be emphasized that "all supplemental directives that change basic policies or merely reiterate or duplicate the text of this regulation [AFR 36-10] are prohibited." (35:1) MAJCOM supplements to AFR 36-10 therefore only provide guidelines intended to streamline administrative support specific to the MAJCOM. In addition to these supplements, each MAJCOM has issued a guide for rating officials, all quite similar in nature and content. These pamphlets provide communicative techniques that allow raters to become more effective in their written words. Essentially, they advise the rater on how to write an OER that is "universally understandable, specific, and concise."

Given the lack of official Air Force guidance on the OER, this paper assumes that there is no formal Air Force guidance unless specifically mentioned in AFR 36-10. If local units have adopted programs that ultimately make the OER more "legal-proof," they have done so at their own initiative and without formal Air Force direction.

This chapter examines each of the ten guidelines mentioned in Chapter 3 to the Air Force OER system. It will describe the extent to which the Air Force meets or fails to meet these guidelines. Following this comparison, it will conclude with possible solutions the Air Force might adopt to better comply with the court-issued guidelines.

#### GUIDELINES #1 AND #2

The first two guidelines are inextricably interrelated with each other. The primary method to ensure job-relatedness (guideline #1) is to conduct a job analysis (guideline #2). Both issues impact only on the front side of the OER, specifically on the ten performance factors (see appendix A). In

the context of the OER, the courts are advising that these performance factors be job-related, and the selection of the factors be based on a job analysis.

Are the performance factors job-related? In a telephone interview, the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) to AFR 36-10, HQ AFMPC/DPMYO, admitted that to the best of its knowledge, no historical record is available that describes how the current performance factors were selected. Lacking this information and due to the generic form that evaluates all officers alike, this author concludes that the OER is not job-related.

As previously mentioned, the courts are beginning to demand that performance appraisals be "tailored to the unique nature and expectations of each job." (17:54) "Managers should beware standardized review forms. These forms tend to focus on behavioral traits and personality factors and may be illegal because they may not be pertinent to the job being reviewed." (17:54) In adopting one standardized form to appraise every officer job below the rank of colonel, the Air Force seemingly violates this job-related advice. There are over 250 Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC) listed in AFR 36-1, excluding prefix or suffix combinations or entry level AFSCs for each career field. (34:-- ) It's difficult to believe that the ten performance factors are uniquely tailored and therefore perfectly matched to each and every Air Force officer AFSC.

The solution to this over-reliance on one form for all officers lies with the job analysis. Ironically, the Air Force has already conducted a rudimentary job analysis; this effort is reflected in AFR 36-1. This regulation provides a brief job description and the necessary qualifications (job specification) for each primary AFSC. As previously mentioned, these two descriptors are the end-products of a job analysis. Unfortunately, it is evident that the Air Force has never attempted to tie AFR 36-1 to the OER. Even though technology has exploded over the last decade, dramatically changing some jobs and creating others, the OER's performance factors have remained unchanged.

There are several things the Air Force can do to make its OER more job-related. By directly tying AFR 36-1 to the OER, the Air Force can make the OER more relevant; that is, it can ensure a clear linkage "between the critical job elements identified through a job analysis and the dimensions to be rated on an appraisal instrument." (10:70) In addition, AFR 36-1 could be supplemented by conducting observations and/or questionnaires with people actually working within each AFSC. This additional job data would strengthen AFR 36-1 and, in turn, make the evolving OER even more relevant.

The result of relating AFR 36-1 to the OER may be multiple designs of the OER that better distinguish the numerous career fields in the Air Force. As more and more emphasis is placed on AFR 36-1, the Air Force should ensure its accuracy by conducting periodic reviews of each AFSC and making appropriate changes to AFR 36-10. If AFR 36-1 substantially changes, the corresponding OER should change. At all times the Air Force should avoid using obsolete job descriptions and specifications as inputs to its OER.

### GUIDELINE #3

The OER is not valid for two reasons. First, since the performance factors are minimally related to the job being appraised, the validity is correspondingly low. Second, given the high degree of inflation that currently exists within the OER system, even if the factors were job-related, it is doubtful the appraisal would be any more valid. "The presence of rating errors [inflation] serves to minimize validity." (22:113)

Interestingly, AFR 36-10 specifically forbids inflation. Commanders are reminded that "inflationary tendencies are not permitted." (35:11) Furthermore, AFR 36-10 states that "evaluators are responsible for preparing fair, objective evaluations that accurately differentiate among officers." (35:11) Obviously this AF regulation has done little to discourage inflation. One plausible reason for this high inflation is the multiple purposes the OER has within the Air Force personnel system. (9:50) One study suggested that "the biggest reason for performance appraisal failure is too many uses and conflicting objectives. The . . . problem is the multiplicity of the appraisal form or actual use of the data for performance feedback, compensation, identifying potential, making promotional decisions, personnel research, development and training, etc." (24:70)

Solutions that are available to ensure a valid performance appraisal therefore center around two themes--job-relatedness and inflation. This paper has already provided possible solutions to solve the job-related issue. Solutions in the literature that prevent inflation can be broken down into three general categories. The first category attempts to demand objectivity from the rater. Managers believe that if the rater is evaluated in his or her rating skills and tendencies, rater inflation will be reduced. (13:77-79; 18:640-649; 30:5) This belief is reflected in the Army's OER, wherein the Army maintains a rating profile of each endorsing official. This rating profile reflects the rating history of the senior rater with respect to potential (e.g., the percentage of "1s", "2s", "3s" he or she has given over a period of time). The second category attempts to enrich the performance evaluation by broadening the rater base to include peer and subordinate ratings. One study at the Air War College discussed this theme, concluding that peer and subordinate ratings are "valid, reliable, and acceptable" (29:20) and would be an effective supplement to the Air Force's current OER. (29:20) The final category attempts to diffuse the multiple purposes an organization often gives to appraisals. Appraisals are traditionally used to evaluate current performance as a coaching and developmental tool, and to rate potential for promotion. (6:29-30) Authors agree that these two important tasks should not be contained within the same performance appraisal. (6:30; 28:60-62; 33:130-131; 19:56) All conclude that performance appraisal systems that separate performance evaluations from potential assessments lead to more valid, less inflated rating systems.

### GUIDELINES #4 AND #5

While the courts conclude that objective job dimensions are preferred over subjective dimensions, they recognize that companies often cannot avoid

using subjective criteria. As previously mentioned, particularly within a professional or managerial setting, "it is often necessary to identify specific, subjective behavior that should be reinforced and rewarded." (5:41) This legal sentiment fortunately favors the Air Force. If asked, the courts would determine the majority of the OER's performance factors to be subjective in nature. Consequently, the Air Force must make its subjective form as objective as possible by following the four guidelines or safeguards listed on page nine.

First, the performance appraisal should be formalized, documented, and standardized company-wide. The Air Force has effectively achieved this requirement. AFR 36-10 is the sole authority on officer evaluations. The OER program is formalized and documented within this regulation, and its use is standardized through mandatory compliance Air Force wide. The administration and scoring of the OER is also standardized and controlled, as evidenced by the central promotion system currently practiced by MPC. Furthermore, in an attempt to make the subjective performance factors more objective, AFR 36-10 provides performance standards relative to each factor in the five rating categories: far below standard, below standard, meets standard, above standard, well above standard. (35:47-48) Each standard is further described in as objective and observable behavior as possible (see appendix B).

Second, the raters should be trained to do their evaluative job. The Air Force substantially fails this requirement. While formal and informal guidance is available through MAJCOM sponsored pamphlets, there exists no program that ensures every rater is trained for the job he or she is required to perform.

Third, subjective ratings should be only one input to the entire evaluation process. This is certainly true within the Air Force. While OERs are certainly the most important criteria for promotion, others are considered by the promotion board. For example, in following the "total person" concept, board members look not only at the OER, but at the officer's education (professional and civilian), experience base, and assigned history, just to name a few.

Finally, documentation must be included for extreme ratings. The Air Force achieves this requirement by stipulating that specific examples of performance be recorded for each performance factor, regardless of the rating. (35:42)

The only suggestion for improvement in this area naturally falls under rater training. This requirement is mentioned under an entirely separate guideline, and will be discussed later.

#### GUIDELINE #6

The Air Force receives both passing and failing marks under this guideline of multiple, independent, and knowledgeable appraisers. The Air Force demands at least two raters for each OER, with the norm being three.

This requirement ensures that one rater cannot act alone and thereby control an officer's career. Even though there are multiple appraisers, it does not imply that their appraisals are independent of each other. It is the Air Force practice to have the primary rater provide suggested additional rater and indorser comments for these two individuals. To the degree that these officials completely accept or reject the suggested remarks, independence may or may not be achieved. Finally, the Air Force has long recognized the importance of all rating officials having personal knowledge of the ratee's performance. In fact, in a 1985 change to AFR 36-10, the Air Force stipulates that the additional rater be the rater's rater, or "someone lower in the rating chain when deemed appropriate." (36:1) Furthermore, AFR 36-10 suggests that the indorser be the additional rater's rater, with a reminder that "deviations from the normal chain of supervision must be judicious." (36:1) It is clear that the Air Force is doing its best to meet the requirement that all raters be personally aware of the ratee's performance. Unfortunately, given the high percentage of general officer indorsements throughout all ranks, more can be done. Two suggestions follow.

The 1987 ACSC OER Working Group offered a practical solution to the above problem. In advocating a strict compliance with the rating chain (as determined by the AF Form 2095), the board recommended that colonels be the final indorser for majors and below. (38:1) This obviously minimizes general officer indorsements at the junior ranks, and more directly forces the rating officials to be at the lowest possible levels in the chain of supervision. The second suggestion was discussed under validity and could be used to keep the level of personal contact with the ratee as high as possible. By adopting peer and subordinate ratings, not only do you increase the number of independent appraisers, but you allow those individuals that are perhaps closest to the ratee to judge the real worth of the ratee's performance.

#### GUIDELINE #7

The courts are very clear--companies should provide rater training to all of their supervisors. The Air Force falls exceedingly short in meeting this guideline. AFR 36-10 provides minimal guidance on the commanders' responsibility in training their evaluators. The commanders' general obligation is to ensure that their "evaluators and personnel officers have been instructed on the contents of this regulation [AFR 36-10] so that officer evaluation reports are accurate, impartial, and accomplished on time." (35:11) Beyond this statement, there is no official guidance for any kind of training program. Air Command and Staff College has an entire block of instruction set aside for the OER. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of the entire officer population attends the school. Each MAJCOM issues a guidance package on how to write OERs. While certainly in a step in the right direction, those packages are still not formulated into a formal training program. With respect to SAC's guide to the OER, SACP 36-1, the MAJCOM leaves it up to the discretion of local CBPOs or MPOs on how the pamphlet will be used in the units. As a prior SAC evaluator, this author came upon SACP 36-1 only by chance, and has never read AFR 36-10.

The Air Force solution to this training deficiency is simple. The Air Force should adopt a formalized training program that is implemented by the local CBPO or MPO. Ancillary to this program would be an Air Force sponsored OER information package similar to those provided by the MAJCOM that supplements AFR 36-10. Each evaluator would be required to attend a primary course on evaluative skills, with possible periodic refresher courses. Basically, the CBPO or MPO sponsored training workshop would introduce the necessary skills required to properly evaluate officers. Following is a sampling of the kinds of orientation and skills the workshop would include:

- Clear understanding of the OER
- Written instructions for completing the OER (e.g., SACP 36-1)
- Laws affecting OERs and discrimination
- Intended uses of the OER
- Orientation of what the supervisory responsibilities are
- Proper motivation to evaluate
- Rating errors that can be made (e.g., rater bias)
- Knowledge of what behavior should or should not be rated
- Evaluator skills, such as setting objectives, providing feedback, conducting interviews, listening, and communication skills (31:39)

#### GUIDELINE #8

The courts simply suggest the appraisal be reviewed formally between the rater and ratee, and a company have a formalized appeal process. AFR 36-10 places little emphasis on the OER's use for feedback, or as a counseling tool. Only one paragraph is allotted to counseling and its importance. It states that the OER should not be used as a "counseling device." (35:6) "You should counsel as the need arises. Counseling is a day-to-day process." (35:6) More formalized, periodic counseling, if appropriate, may be conducted twice a year. (35:6) Despite these words in AFR 36-10, and unless this author's personal experience is the exception, little effort is made Air Force wide to use the OER as a vehicle to provide legitimate feedback to the ratee. On the otherhand, the Air Force does have a formal appeal process within the evaluation process. AFR 31-3 provides the formal appeal process that officers can use to question and appeal perceived unfair ratings.

AFR 36-10 needs to better establish the requirement for counseling throughout the evaluation process. It must take out such expressions "as the need arises" and "if deemed appropriate" (35:6) and replace them with a more formalized and enforced counseling and feedback program. Again, the 1987 ACSC OER Working Group offered a practical solution. In their recommendation, a separate Input Form would be used to formally document three counseling sessions with the rating cycle. This form would "neither become a permanent part of the officer's record, nor will it accompany the OER up the chain as the OER is finalized; therefore, most of the inflationary pressure is removed from the counseling form, allowing it to reflect an accurate picture of the ratee's performance." (38:7)

Further research offers a number of techniques designed to improve the level and content of feedback between the rater and ratee. Performance appraisal interviewing and review techniques (27:74-79; 12:15-17; 16:11-16; 9:28-36) offer the rater with the skills necessary in his feedback responsibilities. In addition, a new technique of self-appraisal (14:22; 10:73-74; 6:31) allows the ratee to contribute to his or her own counseling sessions in a unique, non-traditional way.

#### GUIDELINE #9

The ratee should have a clear understanding of the performance appraisal system. Consequently, the courts place strong emphasis on the communicative channels available to employees with respect to evaluations. The Air Force relies almost totally on AFR 36-10 as the sole formal communicative tool for OERs. Unfortunately, there is no statement within the regulation that formally requires all Air Force personnel, raters and ratees, to read the document. Therefore, the Air Force relies equally as much on an effective informal channel--word of mouth. Having never read AFR 36-10, this author came to understand the OER, with all its perfections and imperfections, through the eyes of fellow officers. This author is confident his experience is similar to the majority of Air Force officers. To strengthen this particular aspect, several suggestions are offered.

First, the Air Force should require all commissioning sources to indoctrinate all future officers in the OER and AFR 36-10. For example, the US Air Force Academy has an entire block of instruction during the cadet's final year on officer evaluations. As part of the cadet's formal professional military training, this block introduces cadets to the OER and how it is used in the Air Force. Second, officers, as part of their in-processing at their first duty assignment after receiving their commission, should be briefed by the local CBPO or MPO on OERs. The agenda should include the following:

- Purpose of the OER (7:37)
  - Promotion assessment
  - Career development
  - Skills/knowledge data
  - Vehicle for feedback
- Administration of the OER
- Performance standards on which they are to be evaluated
- Importance to any current and future personnel actions

Finally, officers should take a refresher course on officer evaluations, particularly during times when the OER or its administration substantively changes. One study suggested that employees be part of the formal training program designed for the supervisor. This "highly participative approach will reduce the dissonance that can result from appraisal training, increase the desire to find a meaningful use of the system, and clarify what expectations each layer of management has of the

layer above and the layer below." (20:52) This could be easily implemented within the Air Force. The local CBPO or MPO could identify overlapping areas of interest and/or importance within the rater training and the ratee's OER refresher course, and have both groups attend during those times.

#### GUIDELINE #10

In every decision impacting performance appraisals, the courts are fundamentally demanding that companies not discriminate in their personnel decisions. As an aggressive spokesperson for equal opportunity and affirmative action, the Air Force is unequivocally successful in meeting this guideline. As just one example, the Air Force monitors promotion rates of every category in the Air Force population to ensure minority representation goals are achieved over time.

## Chapter Four

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The number of civil court cases challenging the legality of corporate performance appraisals is dramatically increasing. With each new decision, the courts are generously providing companies free advice on how to construct and implement their performance appraisal systems. The last several years of court battles have been summarized into ten operating guidelines that particularly impact the Air Force Officer Effectiveness Report. The Air Force receives some high marks and some low marks in its unintentional attempt to make its OER legal. Using the following grading criteria, a summary follows that depicts the extent the Air Force complies with each legal guideline, and suggestions, when appropriate, on possible ways to improve its "grade."

- "A" - Total compliance; no changes required
- "B" - Satisfactory compliance; minor changes recommended
- "C" - Satisfactory compliance; major changes highly recommended
- "D" - Marginal compliance; substantive changes required
- "F" - Total noncompliance; complete overhaul required

### SUMMARY

#### Guideline #1 (job-relatedness): D

##### Suggestions:

- Integrate AFR 36-1 into OER
- Multiple OER designs

#### Guideline #2 (job analysis): B

##### Suggestions:

- Supplement AFR 36-1 with observations and questionnaires
- Conduct periodic AFR 36-1 revisions and updates

Guideline #3 (validity): F

Suggestions:

- Incorporate suggestions to improve job-relatedness
- "Rate-the-rater" program to ensure rater objectivity
- Broaden rater base (peer and subordinate ratings)
- Decouple evaluation from potential assessment

Guidelines #4 and #5 (objective/subjective criteria): C

Suggestions:

- Rater training

Guideline #6 (multiple, independent, knowledgeable appraisers): B

Suggestions:

- Strict compliance with rater chain
- Limit general officer indorsements
- Peer and subordinate ratings

Guideline #7 (rater training): D

Suggestions:

- Adopt formal Air Force wide training program
- Distribute formal AF pamphlet (similar to SACR 36-1) to all evaluators on how to use and write the OER

Guideline #8 (performance review): C

Suggestions:

- Formalized, documented counseling program
- Performance interviews and review sessions
- Self-appraisal program

Guideline #9 (ratee communication): C

Suggestions:

- Orientation conducted at commissioning sources
- Refresher training/orientation conducted at local CBPOs or MPOs

Guideline #10 (discrimination): A

Suggestions:

- No changes recommended

CONCLUSION

From the above review, it is clear that much work is required for the Air Force to better defend its officer evaluation from a legal perspective. Some suggestions would radically change the nature and design of the report itself. Other suggestions could be implemented regardless of the OER design. Compliance, while ensuring a more defensible system if ever challenged by the courts, would have a more immediate effect. The OER would simply become a much more effective, relevant, and responsive management tool for a variety of personnel activities (e.g., officer evaluation, career development, promotion, training, and performance feedback). In any event, there is much talk within the private and public sectors on corporate responsibility vis-a-vis performance appraisal systems. The courts are talking; the Air Force should begin listening.

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# APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

I RATEE IDENTIFICATION DATA <i>(Read AFR 35-10 carefully before filling in any item)</i>							
1. NAME <i>(Last, First, Middle Initial)</i>		2. SSN		3. GRADE		4. DAFSC	
5. ORGANIZATION COMMAND LOCATION					6. PAS CODE		
7. PERIOD OF REPORT FROM _____ THRU _____			8. NO. DAYS OF SUPERVISION		9. REASON FOR REPORT		
II. JOB DESCRIPTION 1. DUTY TITLE 2. KEY DUTIES, TASKS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES							
III. PERFORMANCE FACTORS <i>See 1st. example of performance required</i>							
		NOY OBSERVED	FAR BELOW STANDARD	BELOW STANDARD	MEETS STANDARD	ABOVE STANDARD	WELL ABOVE STANDARD
1. JOB KNOWLEDGE <i>(Depth, currency, breadth)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. JUDGMENT AND DECISIONS <i>(Consistent, accurate, effective)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. PLAN AND ORGANIZE WORK <i>(Timely, creative)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES <i>(Manpower, materiel, fiscal)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. LEADERSHIP <i>(Initiative, accept responsibility)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. ADAPTABILITY TO STRESS <i>(Stable, flexible, dependable)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. ORAL COMMUNICATION <i>(Clear, concise, confident)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION <i>(Clear, concise, organized)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES <i>(Attitude, dress, cooperation, bearing)</i>		0	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. HUMAN RELATIONS <i>(Equal opportunity participation, sensitivity)</i>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

AF FORM 707  
AUG 54

PREVIOUS EDITION WILL BE USED

OFFICER EFFECTIVENESS REPORT

APPENDIX A

IV ASSIGNMENT RECOMMENDATION:		1 STRONGEST QUALIFICATION													
2 SUGGESTED JOB (Include AFSC)															
3 ORGANIZATION LEVEL		4 TIMING													
V EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL:															
<p><i>Compare the ratee's capability to assume increased responsibility with that of other raters whom you know in the same grade. Indicate your rating by placing an "X" in the designated portion of the most appropriate block.</i></p>															
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: 8px; text-align: center;">RATER    ADDN    INDORS RATER    RATER    ER</p>				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: 8px; text-align: center;">RATER    ADDN    INDORS RATER    RATER    ER</p>				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: 8px; text-align: center;">RATER    ADDN    INDORS RATER    RATER    ER</p>				<table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> <td style="width: 33%;"></td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: 8px; text-align: center;">RATER    ADDN    INDORS RATER    RATER    ER</p>			
← Lowest			↑ Highest												

VI RATER COMMENTS

NAME GRADE BR OF SVC ORGN COMD LOCATION	DUTY TITLE	DATE
SSAN	SIGNATURE	

VII ADDITIONAL RATER COMMENTS  CONCUR  NONCONCUR

NAME GRADE BR OF SVC ORGN COMD LOCATION	DUTY TITLE	DATE
SSAN	SIGNATURE	

VIII INDORSER COMMENTS  CONCUR  NONCONCUR

NAME GRADE BR OF SVC ORGN COMD LOCATION	DUTY TITLE	DATE
SSAN	SIGNATURE	

## APPENDIX B

PERFORMANCE FACTORS	FAR BELOW STANDARD (Any item)	BELOW STANDARD (Any item)
1. JOB KNOWLEDGE (Depth, currency, breadth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has serious gaps in technical and professional knowledge</li> <li>• Knows only most rudimentary phases of job</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge affects productivity</li> <li>• Requires abnormal amount of checking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical and professional knowledge is inadequate for the job</li> <li>• Must be assigned only routine duties and monitored regularly</li> <li>• Requires close supervision</li> </ul>
2. JUDGMENT AND DECISIONS (Consistent, accurate, effective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reluctant to make decisions on his or her own</li> <li>• Decisions are usually not reliable</li> <li>• Declines to accept responsibility for decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually makes sound routine decisions</li> <li>• Tends to procrastinate on necessary decisions</li> <li>• Reluctant to evaluate factors before arriving at decisions</li> </ul>
3. PLAN AND ORGANIZE WORK (Timely and creative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fails to plan ahead</li> <li>• Disorganized and usually unprepared</li> <li>• Objectives are not met on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling and organizational efforts normally fail</li> <li>• Encounters difficulty with tasks other than routine</li> <li>• Finished products are usually behind schedule</li> </ul>
4. MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES (Manpower and material)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wastes or misuses resources</li> <li>• No system established for accounting of material</li> <li>• Causes delay for others by mismanagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accomplishes conservation of material on a sporadic basis</li> <li>• Squanders resources to get job done</li> </ul>
5. LEADERSHIP (Initiative, acceptance of responsibility)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often weak. Fails to show initiative and accept responsibility</li> <li>• Lacks self-confidence</li> <li>• Inconsistent in dealing with subordinates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids responsibility</li> <li>• Displays confidence only when working with familiar subjects</li> <li>• Initiative and acceptance of responsibility adequate in most situations</li> </ul>
6. ADAPTABILITY TO STRESS (Stable, flexible, dependable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Panics in new situation</li> <li>• Tendency to shirk difficult situations</li> <li>• Reaction is unpredictable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prefers to work on routine tasks</li> <li>• Jumps to erroneous conclusions in new situations</li> <li>• Hesitates to become involved in new situations</li> </ul>
7. ORAL COMMUNICATION (Clear, concise, confident)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not convey idea clearly and concisely</li> <li>• Has limited vocabulary</li> <li>• Cannot express thoughts in a logical sequence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only occasionally able to verbally convey useful information</li> <li>• Briefings and discussions frequently exhibit a lack of confidence</li> </ul>
8. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION (Clear, concise, organized)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written communications are inadequate due to errors in vocabulary, spelling, and grammar</li> <li>• Communications often raise doubt as to exact meaning</li> <li>• Others must continually seek clarification or correct errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity of written communications is inconsistent</li> <li>• Only occasionally able to convey a cogent idea</li> <li>• Extensive editing and correcting is usually required before communications can be dispatched</li> </ul>
9. PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES (Attitude, cooperation, bearing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displays insensitive attitude toward the military</li> <li>• Bearing is sloped and generally reflects carelessness</li> <li>• Unable to work with others</li> <li>• Does not accept or practice Air Force standards of bearing, behavior or grooming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not accept AF standards and must be continually reminded to comply</li> <li>• Shows lack of enthusiasm with the success or failure of AF mission</li> <li>• Is aware of shortcomings but makes excuses for them</li> <li>• Frequently unable to work with others</li> <li>• Bearing, behavior and grooming create a very poor impression</li> <li>• Does not enforce Air Force standards of bearing, behavior or grooming</li> </ul>
10. HUMAN RELATIONS (Equal opportunity, discrimination sensitivity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Openly and knowingly practices discrimination</li> <li>• Uses racial epithets or sexual slurs maliciously</li> <li>• Will deliberately be hostile to minorities or members of the opposite sex</li> <li>• Does not show any consideration or concern for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displays very limited sensitivity to equal opportunity policies</li> <li>• Treats minorities or members of the opposite sex markedly different than other personnel</li> <li>• Employs inflammatory or derogatory terms toward minorities or members of the opposite sex</li> <li>• Tends to lack concern for peers and subordinates</li> </ul>

Performance Standards: NOTE: These standards are not to be used or paraphrased as specific examples in section III of AF Form 707. They are simply standards by which the rater can judge which performance rating is supported by the specific example the rater is using. Use of general terms such as these in place of specific examples is inappropriate and is grounds for the report being returned to the rater for reaccomplishment.

## APPENDIX B

MEETS STANDARD (All Items)	ABOVE STANDARD (All Items)	WELL ABOVE STANDARD (All Items)
<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates adequate technical and professional knowledge required for the job</li> <li>• Searches out facts and arrives at sound solutions to problems</li> <li>• Broad knowledge of related jobs and functions</li> <li>• Conversant with significant job-related developments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possesses keen insight and the ability to evolve original practical solutions</li> <li>• Keeps informed of important developments in related fields</li> <li>• Can handle difficult situations effectively</li> <li>• Broad knowledge of related missions</li> <li>• Rarely requires guidance or assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possesses superb technical and professional knowledge</li> <li>• Sufficiently well versed in his or her job to discuss and implement improved methods resulting in savings in manpower or material</li> <li>• Maintains and increases professional and technical knowledge</li> <li>• Actively pursues new ideas and developments and their relation to the overall mission</li> <li>• Recognized authority in his or her field</li> </ul>
<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeks out all available data before arriving at decisions</li> <li>• Consistently provides accurate decisions</li> <li>• Accepts responsibility for decisions and learns from incorrect judgments</li> <li>• Provides effective decisions by clear and logical thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An exceptionally sound, logical thinker</li> <li>• Does not hesitate to make required decisions</li> <li>• Decisions are consistently correct</li> <li>• Opinions and judgment are often solicited by others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keen, analytical thinker</li> <li>• Makes accurate decisions under intense pressure</li> <li>• Extremely effective in exercising logic in broad areas of responsibility</li> </ul>
<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careful, effective planner</li> <li>• Anticipates and solves problems</li> <li>• Effectively balances resources</li> <li>• Finished products are consistently submitted on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans beyond requirements of present job</li> <li>• Plans coincide with related activities</li> <li>• Is flexible and able to adjust priorities</li> <li>• Frequently called on to organize complex tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to anticipate critical events and makes prior provisions to deal with them</li> <li>• Plans encompass all feasible contingencies</li> <li>• Extremely effective in utilization of resources</li> </ul>
<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses minimum material with good results</li> <li>• Establishes controls to ensure that manpower and material are accounted for and conserved</li> <li>• Develops and uses cost-effective methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent results accomplished at minimum cost</li> <li>• Consistently suggests methods of conserving resources</li> <li>• Skillfully uses cost-effectiveness studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely effective in use of material</li> <li>• Consistently seeks and projects ways of using existing equipment</li> <li>• Is often assigned to difficult and important projects where limited resources are a significant factor</li> </ul>
<p>5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepts responsibility of assigned tasks</li> <li>• Consistently displays initiative</li> <li>• Commands respect of subordinates</li> <li>• Is fair and consistent in dealing with subordinates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a high degree of initiative and acceptance of responsibility</li> <li>• Displays exceptional skill in directing others</li> <li>• Promotes enthusiasm by interest and sincerity</li> <li>• Acknowledged leader among his or her peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently demonstrates outstanding initiative and acceptance of responsibility</li> <li>• Exhibits complete confidence in his or her ability to handle any task</li> <li>• Induces maximum effort from everyone</li> <li>• Is decisive in critical situations</li> <li>• Provides direction and guidance for broad areas of responsibility</li> <li>• Leadership not limited to subordinates and peers</li> </ul>
<p>6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible and open to new ideas</li> <li>• Willingly seeks assistance in difficult situation</li> <li>• Provides reliable decisions under pressure</li> <li>• Consistently displays calm and controlled behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readily adapts to fluctuations and changing priorities</li> <li>• Consistently performs well in difficult situations</li> <li>• Anticipates changes and is prepared to react accordingly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responds quickly and effectively to crises</li> <li>• Systematically succeeds where others fail</li> <li>• Consistently provides outstanding leadership and guidance under difficult and stressful conditions</li> </ul>
<p>7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives direct and understandable responses to questions</li> <li>• Gives briefings which are organized and well presented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very articulate in a wide range of difficult communications situations</li> <li>• Puts extra effort into communicating well</li> <li>• Capable of persuading an audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivers concise, well-spaced presentations</li> <li>• Is often called on to present and explain difficult and complex subjects</li> <li>• Can sway a hostile audience to his or her point of view</li> </ul>
<p>8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing is clear and concise</li> <li>• Written instructions and reports are readily understandable</li> <li>• Written communications are consistently well organized and grammatically correct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written reports can be easily followed by all readers</li> <li>• Communications are concise and concise containing only those words necessary to express an idea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to describe complex or technical concepts so well that even the casual reader can readily comprehend the idea</li> <li>• Is consistently chosen for the most important and difficult writing assignments</li> <li>• Is frequently asked to edit the written correspondence of others</li> </ul>
<p>9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In regard of and toward Air Force policies and objectives</li> <li>• Promotes current on developments and procedures</li> <li>• Cooperates fully with new ideas and policies</li> <li>• Volunteers for additional duties and promotes participation</li> <li>• Bearing, behavior and grooming create a good impression</li> <li>• Effective in working with peers and subordinates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directs and actively promotes AF policies among peers and subordinates</li> <li>• Pursues new developments and applies them to existing procedures</li> <li>• Actively promotes participation and willingly accepts jobs that others avoid</li> <li>• Bearing, behavior and grooming create a very favorable impression</li> <li>• Demonstrates exceptional skill in working with others and eliciting their cooperation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firm, fair, and uniform in enforcing Air Force policies on bearing, behavior, and grooming</li> <li>• Represents his or her organization and the AF for the most important events</li> <li>• Actively promotes organizational and AF objectives</li> <li>• Bearing, behavior and grooming are outstanding</li> <li>• Demonstrates clearly superior ability to work with others and to elicit their cooperation</li> </ul>
<p>10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treats all personnel fairly and equitably</li> <li>• Voluntarily participates in activities in support of equal opportunity</li> <li>• Shows concern and is sensitive to needs of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforces and enthusiastically maintains standards of equal opportunity</li> <li>• Encourages practice of equal opportunity and treatment in all activities</li> <li>• Displays a high degree of sensitivity and concern for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively demonstrates strong visible and credible support of equal opportunity</li> <li>• Is extremely knowledgeable in the area of equal opportunity and treatment</li> <li>• Displays extreme sensitivity and a deep concern in all dealings with peers and subordinates</li> <li>• Is extremely effective in solving human relations problems - solutions always reflect fair and equal treatment</li> </ul>

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