

Career Newsflash

Quarterly Newsletter of the Enlisted Career Counseling & Evaluation Unit (MMEA-64) / HQMC

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 01 – 2ND QUARTER FY11 – APRIL 2011 (release)

Introductory Issue



Career Counselors Editorial

This is the introductory issue of the Career Newsflash, since it was discontinued back in 2007. We are excited about having the opportunity to be able to pass career related information to Marines, across the world, in this format. The focus of our past newsletters has always been to share with Marines all that is important, new or upcoming in an easy to read format with pertinent illustrations, and that will continue to be the goal of this quarterly newsletter. This is your newsletter!!! It is put together for Marines, by Marines. Though career related information and orders will tend to change from time to time, certain aspects continue to stay the same. We are already planning ahead to future issues of the Newsflash. It is our hope that we will receive feedback from Marines, young and old, on concerns that could possibly be added into future issues. Please send all comments or suggestions concerning this newsletter to GySgt Bell, Robert L. at: Robert.L.Bell@usmc.mil

Counselors travel extensively. We teach the SNCO Academies in CONUS as well as the Okinawa SNCOA (from time to time) (in person) and teach the Hawaii SNCOA by Video Tele-Conferencing (VTC). (Cont...)

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MMEA-64

ENLISTED CAREER COUNSELING & EVALUATION UNIT (HQMC)

COUNSELING TEAM:

- **MGySgt Buss, T.L.**
Head, Career Counselor
- **GySgt Moore, A.W.**
Career Counselor
- **GySgt Bell, R.L.**
Career Counselor
- **GySgt Kumpula, B.J.**
Career Counselor
- **GySgt Murphy, J.E.**
Career Counselor
- **LCpl Sedlacek, C.M.**
Admin Clerk

MISSION STATEMENT:

“To support the future of our Corps by assisting enlisted career Marines in improving their performance for retention and their competitiveness for promotion through performance evaluation and career counseling”.

Career Counselors Editorial

From the office of the Enlisted Career Counseling & Evaluation unit
(Continued from the previous page)



We also visit various commands throughout the world and attend many unit conferences as well as attend every MMEA road show. This allows us to be able to reach more Marines throughout our NCO and SNCO community. We would like to be able to reach every Marine throughout our Corps, but we do know that no matter how hard we may try, it is just not possible. As we continually travel abroad and talk to Marines around our Corps, we continue to talk to Marines that would benefit from career advice passed in this type of format. We ask for your support, as SNCOs, to “pass the word” and help us to distribute the Career Newsflash to all Marines throughout the globe.

We are continuing to look ahead into the future of our Corps and implement new and exciting ways to spread information to Marines, more efficiently. One easy way to do just that is for Marines to access our sections website through the Manpower & Reserve affairs website. The MMEA-64 website continues to grow as we implement new information into its pages relating to our Marines’ careers. Our section has a very diverse representation. You can now access our biographies through our website, for more information on each Counselor. Our diverse backgrounds allow us to utilize each other in certain situations for advice on MOSs that we may not be very familiar with. This is the same concept utilized by the selection boards every year. We have also added several useful pages including the FY10-11 SNCO selection board executive summaries, all of the completed promotion board debriefs (from the last several years), as well as several Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).



We are looking to put several more documents on our website within this next quarter, which will enhance the individual Marines capabilities to the fullest extent.

Providing career counseling to Marines has never been easier. Marines need to be aware that they no longer need to request their records prior to receiving career counseling. Since MMSB has implemented the online access to your Official Military Personnel File through Marine On-Line, Marines can now see their records within minutes. All Counselors have the Optical

Digital Imagery database provided through MMSB. This program allows us to pull your records within minutes so that the counseling session can occur while the Marine is either on the phone, sitting in front of us at the office or while we are on the road (if the Counselor has an NMCI drop on the visit to be able to use our databases). For those Marines that would like to be counseled by us while the Counselor is on the road, it is important for them to know that they need to have a copy of

their Master Brief Sheet printed out so that the Counselor can assess the Marines career with them at that time. While the Counselors are on the road, we typically do not have access to our databases. If a Marine has questions about specific reports or adversity, we recommend that the Marine print the information off ahead of time for the Counselor to assess as well. It takes only a few minutes of work on-line to have your Master Brief Sheet in hand. With that, the Counselor is able to assess and provide guidance on your career that can be useful for years to come.

Contacting a Career Counselor in our office is some-
(Cont...)

Career Counselors Editorial

From the office of the Enlisted Career Counseling & Evaluation unit
(Continued from the previous page)



times a daunting task. We have five phone lines that are tied into our primary Commercial (703.784.9241) and Toll Free (800.833.2320) phone lines. These are the best numbers to use. The best time to call is right in the beginning of your workday as we can use the time zones to our advantage. Our highest call volume is typically between 1000-1400 EST. We typically do not counsel by e-mail, as it takes up time. We will answer more or less, yes or no questions and policy related questions via e-mail, but it is not the best medium for counseling. Counseling sessions are best done by phone or in person. A large amount of our counseling calls come from Marines one to two years before a selection board. This is largely because of our outreach and presence in the SNCO Academies, where we are constantly engaged with Marines who are generally excited about being proactive and increasing their competitiveness.

We will be losing MGySgt Buss, at the end of May, and GySgt Moore, in the middle of June. MGySgt Buss will be wrapping up his tour of two years and will be returning to the fleet in Hawaii with 3rd Marine Regiment. GySgt Moore will be completing his tour of three years and will be headed to Camp Lejeune to 2nd Assault Amphibious Battalion, 2nd MarDiv.

This is great news for Marines stationed in both places, as we will field back to the FMF not only superb Leaders of Marines but also former Career Counselors who possess tremendous insight into all matters of SNCO Careers. We are proud to have had them on our team and thank them both for their dedicated service!!!

We are happy to welcome a new member to our team, MGySgt Randall Thompson, taking over as the Head, Enlisted Career Counseling unit from MGySgt Buss. MGySgt Thompson will be on deck in May and comes to us from Camp Lejeune having just served as an AVI Maintenance Chief for VMM-162. A 6391 by MOS, he has a very distinguished performance track and career and will be able to continue to enhance the effectiveness of our section. GySgt Moore's replacement has yet to be determined, so there may be a short gap in billet until that Marine can be found and brought on deck with the team. These new additions to our team will add to our experience base and allow us to perform our mission as Marines taking care of Marines in the one thing that matters most – their careers.



Semper Fidelis
Enlisted Career Counselors, HQMC

Why a Marine should contact a Career Counselor.

- As leaders of Marines, having a good understanding of the retention and promotion process will enable you to take care of your Marines better. Simply said, we are your supporting arm.
- During the promotion process, you compete with your peers. Since we counsel all career Marines and we debrief every SNCO selection board, we are aware of what your peers are doing and can advise you on what you should do to maintain a competitive edge.
- Counselors stay up to date on all promotion and retention issues as this helps to eliminate rumor control.

Seeking Counsel with your Reporting Officials

Enhancing the counseling process

This article is a cut down version of the new original eight page document that can be found on our sections website. Certain aspects have been omitted (due to space constraints). The articles intent is to enhance the counseling process.

The concepts that follow are recommendations from the Enlisted Career Counseling and Evaluation unit, which will help you to better enhance the relationship between the MRO and the RS throughout the counseling process. The below recommendations can also be utilized with current existing procedures a Marine already has in place. NOTE: These recommendations are above and beyond recommendations that are in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Performance Evaluation System (PES) manual but also go more in detail of the counseling process. These recommendations are as follows:

Start your MROW on the Automated Performance Evaluation system (APES) via Marine On-Line at the BEGINNING of the reporting period, within the first fifteen days!!! The key is to start the MROW prior to talking to the RS for the first initial (Official) counseling, and continue to update it throughout the reporting period (every several weeks or so), to keep track of all of your accomplishments and achievements.

In order to use the MROW to its fullest potential in helping you to get a report that would help break you away from your peers, you need to dig a little

deeper into the specifics of what would truly help you in the Counseling process. Additional recommendations to implement into the counseling process:

You may have to setup the initial meeting with your RS (as well as any and all future meetings) – ultimately showing that you are being proactive and taking responsibility for getting the information needed to continue and excel as a Marine throughout the reporting period. Many Marines wait to have their RSs sit them down and talk to them about their fitness report, which usually never happens. All Marines must understand that throughout a specific reporting period; it is not your RSs report, career and future selection to the next higher grade; it is yours!!!

You may need to do all of the talking, by asking questions needed to be able to head the conversation in the right direction. You need tangible answers (items that can be accomplished within the reporting period) to be able to act on, to be able to perform above and beyond your peers.

You need to have an agenda of topics to discuss before going into this initial meeting, as well as any other follow on meetings, with the RS. Your billet description on the MROW is what the RS expects of you (through your billet). You now need to piece together a script of how you want the conversation to go. If you set up the meeting and sit down with the RS, he/she may very well be expecting



WE ARE MOVING!!!:

The Enlisted Career Counselors are moving buildings on MCB Quantico from the James Wesley Marsh Center to the Manpower Management Support Branch (MMSB) building (bldg 2008).

This will be effective with a tentative completion date of June 27, 2011.

The Awards branch, PERB, as well as the Officer Career Counselors are also conducting this move; with all sections being assigned to the 3rd deck.

All POC numbers should remain the same, but are subject to change if need be.

The Officer and Enlisted Career Counselors will be assigned to MMSB-50.

More information on the status of the move will be placed on the next Career Newsflash, 2nd Quarter 2011; as well as our website.



Seeking Counsel with your Reporting Officials

(Continued from the previous page)

you to do all of the talking. So, if you are expecting that he/she will do all of the talking and he/she is expecting that you want to do the talking, then nothing will be accomplished and you will walk away from the meeting with nothing tangible to act upon.

When taking notes of the conversation with your RS, a few bullets to add, in addition with your billet description expectations are: general expectations, above and beyond, accomplishments and concerns. You should write these note headings on an additional page, or on the back of the MROW to have a record of your discussion with answers needed in each of those areas. Remember, you need to get tangible bullets from the RS to be able to actually act on the information given. Lets break these bullets down even further:

General expectations: You need to know what that RS expects of you as an average Marine. Looking back at your billet description, this gives you the expectations of the RS through your billet; however, we all know that there is more to being a Marine than just performing in your billet. What do you need to do to at least to get an average report in the RSs profile?

Above & Beyond: You also need to know what the RS expects of you to be able to break yourself away as an above average performer. Now you could say, "Okay sir, I understand what you expect of me through my billet (billet description), as well as a Marine in general (General expectations), but what do you specifically expect of me to be an

above average performer within your profile?" The key here is to not sell yourself short. It is always great to be an above average performer, but don't stop there. "What specifically do I have to do to break myself away from my peers as being the top rated report in your profile?"

Accomplishments: This is the area where you keep track of what you have accomplished from the first two bullets. In your billet accomplishments, you are keeping track of everything that you have completed in regards to your billet description. If you are keeping track of those tangible accomplishments, you don't want to short change yourself by missing all of the great things that you are doing beyond just performing in your job at your work section. General expectations and above and beyond recommendations are equally as important to show the entire picture of how you have performed throughout the entire reporting period.

Concerns: This is the area that you can bring up anything additional that wasn't discussed in previous sections of your counseling script, by bringing up topics that have some weight or bearing on the conversation. If one of your concerns is that you are lacking in reports that are strong enough to help you in your goal of breaking yourself away from your peers, you may need to bring this up to the RS so that you can discuss the relevance of this specific report towards your overall performance trend and goal.



Counseling Negative trends:

The Career Counselors counsel individual Marines on a daily basis; from Sergeants through First Sergeants and Master Sergeants.

We have put together a short list of some common negative trends to help individual Marines be able to get more out of the process of receiving counseling.

- 1) Being proactive. Seek counsel several years prior to coming in zone.
- 2) Note taking material. Most Marines won't remember everything that was said.
- 3) Understanding the PES process including how to read your Master Brief Sheet.

Update from MMSB-20:

MMSB is working with MCI and Marine Net to ensure that most, but NOT ALL, course completion certificates will eventually be automatically inserted into a Marines OMPF.

MCI and Marine Net certificates belong in a Marines OMPF; however, yearly training certificates from Marine Net are not being put in the Official records by their section at this time, due to the courses being an annual requirement for Marines.

If a Marine has any questions on what can or cannot be put into their OMPF, contact the SNCOIC or Admin Chief listed in the POC section on page 8 of this newsletter.

Seeking Counsel with your Reporting Officials

(Continued from the previous page)

You may also need to follow up with your RS periodically throughout the reporting period to be able to back brief the RS on what you have accomplished since the last time that you both talked. This is a good time to also find out what direction you need to continue in throughout the rest of the reporting period. You should never assume that the RS has seen or annotated every accomplishment that you have ever achieved throughout the reporting period. A lot of Marines tend to not start their MROW in APES until the very end of the reporting period and then they end up missing critical things completed that don't end up on the final report. You can't blame the RS for your lack of initiative after the fact when you could have prevented the problem by seeking counsel periodically throughout the reporting period.

Follow up with the RS roughly every two months or so, depending on your units OP TEMPO. Every time that you sit down with the RS, to be counseled, print two new copies of the updated MROW off of APES (the one that you already have typed out and updated). The Date-Time-Group (DTG) is always on the top left, which always reminds you what day that you both talked and conducted that counseling session (as long as you print it

out on that date, or adjust the date prior to printing it out). During a new counseling session, you should always take new notes on the back of the MROW or on an additional notes page and attach it to the MROW. This way, you have a chronological record of what you have previously discussed on past MROWs from prior counseling's, along with your accomplishments throughout that portion of the reporting period. Another good habit of getting into is to start taking note of how long your conversation lasted during that counseling, and write it down at the top of the page, along with the DTG. This way, if you get counseled within the first 15 days (initially) and follow up roughly every 2 months, by the end of an annual twelve month report, if you saved all of your notes, you would have sat down and saved on average six MROWs with all notes attached. You then can tell your RS towards the end of the reporting period what days that you talked and how long throughout the reporting period that you actually discussed that specific fitness report. By being proactive in this regards, you can actually eliminate a lot of common mistakes seen by our section, on a daily basis.



Semper Fidelis
Enlisted Career Counselors, HQMC



Manpower Management Support Branch (MMSB-31)

(Policy & Compliance section)

The policy and compliance section is responsible for review of fitness reports for compliance and fitness report training to the field.

MMSB-31 has provided a list of the most common trends that they continue to see within their section. The 13 biggest trends are shown below:

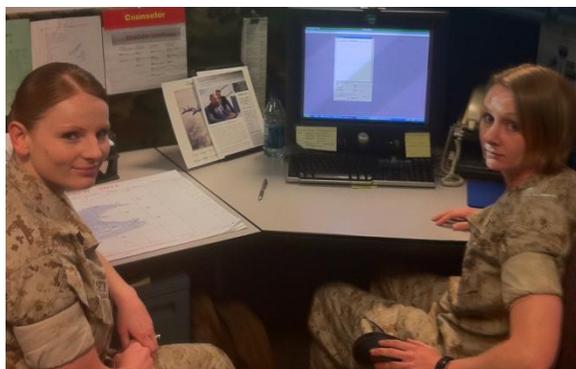
- 1) GC reports showing grade promoted "to" versus "from".
- 2) PFT/CFT scores and Good Conduct Medals being marked as commendatory material.
- 3) PFT/CFT and rifle/pistol scores being shown when they did not occur during that reporting period.
- 4) Item 8f not referencing body fat percentage, if overweight.
- 5) Item 8h being left blank on GySgt reports.
- 6) Wrong occasion code.
- 7) Wrong report dates.
- 8) Inappropriate comments; adverse, negative, counseling statements.
- 9) Omission of required "Directed Comments" (Weapons qual/Partial PFT & BCP).
- 10) Adverse reports not referred to MRO for acknowledgment.
- 11) Spelling, punctuation!!!! And CAPITALIZATION.
- 12) RS erroneously submitting incorrect comments based on "cutting and pasting".
- 13) Improper billet description listed.

Across the Corps – *Unit Spotlight*

(Units supported by our section throughout the Quarter)



GySgt Robert Bell recently attended a reception with Marines from MSG Regions 4 & 9 during their Annual joint regional Commanders' conference in Lima, Peru.



Sgt Kierstin Martin (Assistant Postal Chief with H&S Battalion, M&RA) receives counseling from GySgt Brandi Kumpula, Enlisted Career Counselor.



SUPPORTING YOUR UNIT

As a section, we travel extensively to be able to reach more Marines throughout our Corps; to better equip the individual Marine for future success and to also strengthen and enhance our SNCO Corps.

If you would like a Career Counselor to visit your command to provide Career Brief(s) and individual Career Counseling's to your Marines; contact the Head, Enlisted Career Counseling and Evaluation unit @: 703.784.0540 (or any other Counselor directly) with what the units plan would be and we can work our schedule to make sure that we can support your request, to the best of our ability.

NOTE: If a command is requesting a Career Counselor to come out and provide services to their Marines, it is on the requesting unit to fund the trip.

We also try to help out any unit requesting our services during already committed TAD trips so that the command visit would not incur an unexpected cost to the requesting unit. The command already being supported would obviously have priority over the additional unit requesting our services, but every effort will be made to try to make the event happen. We have been successful in being able to do this in the past with many units and will continue to try to make this happen for others.

At times, planning multiple command visits at once becomes somewhat tedious, and with only a minimum number of Marines within the section this may make us have to decline a units request within a specific timeframe due to improper forward planning. With projected dates provided on the Career Newsflash this allows units to conduct the 7 P's.

Getting in contact with a Career Counselor.

Q: Do I need to set up an appointment to get counseled?

This is a widely asked question, with a simple answer. No. In the past, Career Counselor's would have to request your record and then wait at least one day for it to come back before they could look into your record. With MMSBs updated Optical Digital Imagery (ODI) database, which is how your record is viewed on MOL, we can pull your record up in the time it takes us to type in your personal information and click on your name.

We counsel individual Marines, throughout the Corps, in many different ways. We always take walk-ins to our office here in Quantico, VA, over the phone from all corners of the world, and while on TAD trips to various commands throughout the Corps.

It is always recommended that you have your Master Brief Sheet with you, if you are not in our office where we can pull your record up automatically. Acknowledge that note taking material is crucial in the process of giving you as much information as possible to allow you to act upon, in order to make yourself more competitive. Calling while driving into work and not remembering anything discussed may not be the best way to map out your career.



What belongs in each folder of the OMPF?

1. Service Folder – Contract information such as your original enlistment at MEPS, additional enlistments and extensions. Discharge documents will also be placed here along with other general administrative and service documents used to compute service time for benefits, programs and/or retirement. Sometimes adverse paperwork will be placed here such as PG-11s and 6105s.

2. Commendatory/Derogatory Folder – This is the most neglected folder in most Marines' OMPFs, this is because information in this folder primarily comes from the Marine himself. The commendatory/derogatory folder has 4 sub-folders. We will cover what should be placed in each of these sub-folders below:

***Awards Folder** – Personal awards of a NAM or higher should be in this folder, your citation and summary of action for each award should be included.

***Different Schools and Training Folder** - Any and all schools that you have completed, the diploma or certificate you received reflecting completion of the school/course should be in here. Also, all Marine Net and MCI courses you have completed. Lastly, MCMAP Belt Certificates.

***Other Commendatory / Derogatory Folder** – This folder should have all of your Good Conduct awards, Letters of Appreciation, Certificates of Appreciation, Meritorious

Masts and Certificates of Commendation. This folder will also have any material pertaining to adversity such as; Courts Martial, NJPs, 6105s, PG-11s etc...

***Civilian Schools Folder** – This folder includes your High school Diploma/GED etc... and all other civilian education you have completed since the first day of boot camp to present. This includes; Diploma for Associates/Bachelor/Masters degrees, Vocational training certificates or official college transcripts reflecting number of college classes completed.

3. Performance Folder – All fitness reports and standard addendum pages for Sergeants and above.

4. X Folder – Digital Promotion Photographs.



MMSB-20 POC Info:
(OMPF concerns)

CWO3 LeDrew, B.T.
Operations Officer, MMSB-20
703.784.3950

MSgt Faggan, A.L.
SNCOIC, MMSB-20
703.784.3907

SSgt Kistner, K.A.
Admin Chief, MMSB-20
703.432.0365

MMSB-31 POC Info:
(Fitness report concerns)

CWO4 Zimmerman, S.Y.
Head, MMSB-31
703.784.3997

MSgt Gibbs, L.C.
Operations Chief, MMSB-31
703.784.3991

GySgt Thigpen, M.C.
Admin Chief, MMSB-31
703.784.3437

OMPF on Marine On-Line

Q: To be able to access my OMPF, do I still need to order my OMPF?

A: No. MMSB has now made all Marines' OMPF's available through their Marine On-Line (MOL) account!!! This is a huge benefit to all Marines, because you no longer need to order your OMPF CD and wait for it to arrive in the mail.

At the top of your MOL Home Page, click on the "My OMPF" tab, next to "My Permissions"; for full access to your OMPF.

You can learn more about updating your OMPF by clicking on the "ABOUT OMPF" tab at the far right of the OMPF screen and clicking on the link that will take you to the MMSB Homepage.



Upcoming Events – (For possible unit planning)

CVIC Conference (Austin, Texas) – May 2011

Annual CVIC conference for ComCam Marines throughout the Marine Corps. GySgt Bell will be in attendance to provide a career brief and counseling's to the enlisted Marines.

FY11 First Sergeant / Master Sergeant Regional Seminars

MCB Quantico and MCB Butler, Okinawa	18-22 April 2011
Camp Pendleton	15-19 August 2011
Camp Lejeune	22-26 August 2011

FY11 SNCO Academy visits - (Next upcoming classes)

Quantico, VA.	Counselors located on MCBQ
Camp Lejeune, NC.	4-6 May 2011
Camp Pendleton & 29 Palms, CA.	31 May – 3 June 2011
Camp Butler, Okinawa	25-29 July 2009
MCB Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii	2 June (Video Tele-Conference)

NOTE: These upcoming events take place during the 2nd quarter of FY 2011. If you notice that we will be in your area and would like a Counselor to support your unit during that time, see Page 7 for instructions on getting a hold of us to coordinate a command visit.

We are on the Web:

Our website, through the Manpower & Reserve Affairs (M&RA) portal, is literally a one-stop-shop for all matters pertaining to a Marines career.

Directions:
Click on the bottom and click on Enlisted Career Counselors, under Corps Highlights

Go to: **USMC.MIL**

Click on Enlisted Career Counselors, Scroll to the bottom and click on **Career/Manpower**, under Corps Highlights.

Click on **Enlisted Career Counselors**, under Top Requests

Career Counselors website documents:

- Career Counselor Handout
- Reporting Officials Handout
- Preparing Your Official Record
- Seeking Counsel
- Career Counselor Brochure

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