

INFORMATION PAPER

DAPE-MPO-C
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SUBJECT: Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS)

FACTS.

1. The purpose of the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS) is to enhance the effectiveness and professionalism of the Army Officer Corps. The system is the sum total of policies and procedures by which commissioned officers, with the exceptions of officers of the Judge Advocate General's Corp, the Chaplains and the Army Medical Department, are procured, trained, developed, evaluated, promoted and separated from active duty. The goals of OPMS are:

- To develop officers in the right numbers and with the right skills to satisfy Army requirements, taking maximum advantage of the abilities, aptitudes, training and interests of the individual officer.

- To assign officers according to the Army's needs and the individual's competence and desires.

- To improve the motivation, professionalism, and professional satisfaction of the officer corps through a disciplined dual specialty profession development system.

2. Officer professional development is the key element of OPMS. The development of the professional attitudes and capabilities of Army officers to meet the needs of the Army through planned assignments and schooling is what is meant by professional development. The approach used in OPMS is the concept of dual specialty development. Under this program each officer should gain and maintain proficiency in both a primary and alternate specialty. "Primary" and "alternate" are the terms used to identify an officer's two designated specialties. Neither term imparts preeminence, and there is no primacy associated with the term "primary" when viewing the professional development and utilization of officers possessing dual specialties. The significant difference between the terms "primary" and "alternate" is in the timing of training assignments, professional development and command consideration. Primary specialty professional development normally begins before professional development associated with the alternate specialty.

The primary specialty is designated simultaneously with entry on active duty; the alternate specialty is designated by the completion of the eight years of active Federal service.

3. The five phases of professional development under OPMS and their objectives are illustrated in the attached inclosure (next under).

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PHASE DEVELOPMENT

LT Phase

Normally, officers will begin development in their primary specialty by attending a basic course. An officer's first assignment should allow the officer an opportunity to apply school training and to develop leadership skills. Officers should seek leadership positions in troop units whenever possible since this duty provides the officer an understanding of Army operations and military life that will be a solid foundation for future service. A key objective of professional development in this phase of an officer's career is to serve in a troop leadership position.

CPT Phase

The objective of this phase is to continue development in the primary specialty and begin development in an alternate specialty, while continuing to grow in practical leadership experience and professional military knowledge. During this phase most officers will attend an officer advanced course which relates directly to their primary specialty. Upon completion of the advanced course, each officer should continue an educational program which will enhance professional development in the primary specialty or to become qualified in an alternate specialty, if it has been designated. A key objective of professional development in this phase of an officer's career is to serve as a company commander if such an assignment is compatible with the officer's primary specialty.

MAJOR Phase

The objective of this phase is for officers to continue development in both of their specialties. Officers will be assigned to positions of increasing responsibility requiring the application of previously developed skills as well as expanding their overall professional development. Some officers will attend the Command and General Staff College or equivalent schools and colleges while in the grade of major. Other officers may complete Command and General Staff level courses by nonresident mode. A few officers may be selected for civil schooling in a discipline related to their specialties. Officers may also pursue such education on a part time basis as

part of their individual professional development plan.

LTC
Phase

The objective of this phase is for officers to continue to advance toward attainment of the professional development objectives established for their specialties and to demonstrate their potential for assuming positions of increasing responsibility. Assignments will continue to be made to progressively more responsible and challenging positions, commensurate with demonstrated performance, ability and potential. Some officers will be selected to attend a Senior Service College such as the Army War College or the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. Officers may make application to complete the Army War College by correspondence. A few officers may be selected for advanced civil schooling in a discipline relating to their specialties. Specialty education during this phase will stress the development of managerial skills and techniques.

COL
Phase

The objective of this phase is maximum utilization of the officer's technical capabilities, managerial skills and executive talents in positions of high responsibility in either of their specialties.