

THE BOARD BIBLE



Army Promotion Board Preparation Guide
Dennis J. Comstock

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The Board Bible

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ABOUT

My name is Dennis Comstock and I wrote this guide. I served 8 years in the Army as an Imagery Analyst and earned the rank of Staff Sergeant. I have attended 8 competition/promotion boards and helped mentor over 15 soldiers to success at the their boards. I have competed in Soldier of the Year competitions from Company to Regiment level with my strongest event (most points awarded) always being the board. I have sat on countless mock boards and have seen the difference in proper preparation and soldiers plagued with procrastination. I want to pass on my knowledge and experience to others so they can succeed at the board.



If there is more you would like to know about myself or this guide feel free to write me an email at Dennis@armyboardguidance.com.

Before you continue I would like to mention as a disclaimer, some of the links provided in this guide and on the site are affiliate links that give me a small commission at NO cost to you. The resources listed are products and companies I use and highly recommend. I will only recommend products I have used and/or believe will sincerely help you obtain your goals. Please do not purchase any of these items if you do not feel they will help you reach your goals.

INTRODUCTION

The Board Bible was created to help soldiers who need guidance on preparing for the board. The hardest part of the board is not the performance on the day of the board, it's all the preparation and hard work before the big day takes place.

A common misperception is that the most vital part of the board is answering all the questions correctly. This is not the case, board members look at all aspects of a board presentation to get an overall impression of a Soldier's ability to handle greater responsibility and deal with the stress that goes along with their next rank. A strong first impression and the ability to show confidence in speech and presentation are factors that add up to more than the ability only answer questions right.

To get started, read through the chapter: *Sequence of Events* to get a quick idea of how the board works, along with tips on events throughout the board.

Use the tools in the *Administration Preparation* section to get the board packet submitted and the sponsor prepared.

Uniform Preparation, Studying, and Performance Preparation should all be worked simultaneously.

Tip: Use the *Board Planning Guide Checklist* to maintain directions while checking tasks off the list.

Chapter Breakdown

Sequence of Events: explains how the board goes down and what to expect. It discusses step by step what happens during a board with a few tips along the way. This chapter is broken down into events within the board, like entering the room, conducting facing movements, ect. It's a great section to go over to help visualize what the board will be like and what is expected. This is ideal for first timers.

Administration Preparation: explains how to prepare all the paperwork needed to attend the board. Most S-1s have a checklist that shows what is needed for a board packet. The most common documents needed in a packet are covered, from correcting the ERB to creating a well written biography. This will benefit everyone even if they are not attending the board right away.

Uniform Preparation: is broken down into individual tasks that will lead up to a proper fitting, clean, and sharp looking uniform. The uniform can get put aside until the last minute and leave a Soldier scrambling to throw it together. This chapter will get you thinking about a plan so the uniform is ready in plenty of time.

Studying: covers techniques on how to study including: creeds, biography, history, and the almighty board questions. It's never as simple as remembering the answers to questions or memorizing a creed. Knowing how to study will speed the learning process, making it less stressful.

Chapter Breakdown

Performance Preparation: train like you fight pertains to the board as well. This section will explain how to realistically practice for the board so when the big day comes, every action is well rehearsed.

Pre-game Ritual: identifies some key things that should be done the day prior and day of the board to maintain focus.

Resources: the bonus section that houses all the checklists and resources to maintain the path to success.

CONTENTS

Sequence of Events

The line-up	10
Entering	11
Facing movements	12
Biography	13
Answering the questions	14
Unit History/Creeds	15
Dismissal	16

Administrative Preparation

Board Packet	19
Correcting the ERB (Enlisted Records Brief)	20
Biography	29
MOI (Memorandum of Instruction)	33
Sponsorship	37

Uniform Preparation

Fitting	41
Dry Cleaning	42
Rack/Awards	43
Boots/Shoes	45
Beret	47
Tie	49

CONTENTS

Studying

Bio	52
Creeds	54
History	55
Subjects	56

Performance Preparation

Mock Boards	60
Facing Movements	61
Bio/Creeds	62
Current Events	63
Answering Questions	64
Pre-game Ritual.....	66

Resources

-Board Planning Guide	69
-Preparation Checklists	71
-Most Common Mistakes	75
-Biography Outline	76
-Creeds.....	77
-11 Principles of Leadership.....	79
-Army Values, Warrior Ethos, and General Orders	80
-Chain of Command Template.....	83
-NCO Support Channel Template.....	84
-Tips & Tricks	85

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS



Sequence of Events: The Line Up

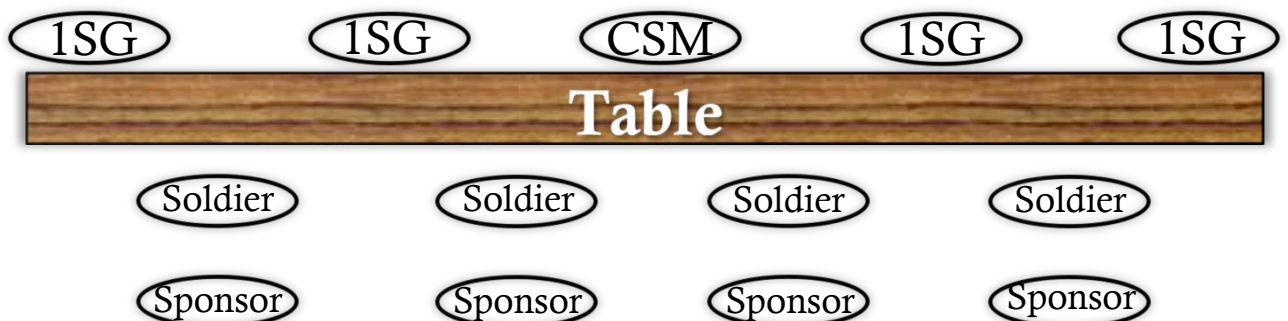
It's the same every time, the board participants are waiting in the hallway reading flashcards while their sponsors are rolling them from head to toe with lint rollers. The day has come for all the preparation to pay of. It usually goes like this:

The president of the board (usually a CSM) will call in the participants and their sponsors to line up in front of the board members. The sponsors will be standing directly behind their soldiers and the president of the board will discuss how the rest of the morning will transpire.

This is also an opportunity for the president of the board to weed out soldiers who do not have their shoulder boards, military I.D., dog tags, and any other inspectable items.

Don't forget about having the nameplate on the class B under shirt. It's a bad day when the Sergeant Major asks everyone to remove their jacket or pull out their ID cards and you get that sick feeling in your stomach knowing that you just screwed up.

After the president of the board dismisses the group, everyone will wait outside of the board room for their turn to enter.



Sequence of Events: Entering



When the board members are ready they will call in the sponsor of the next Soldier in line and have them explain why they believe their Soldier should be promoted or awarded the Soldier of the month/year. The whole process will take place with the Soldier waiting outside the room.

(Note: This is why it's very important to have a sponsor who has the soldier's best interest in mind and

willing to do the homework to prove to the board their soldier's competency. A good sponsor will ask tons of questions about you many days prior to attending the board)

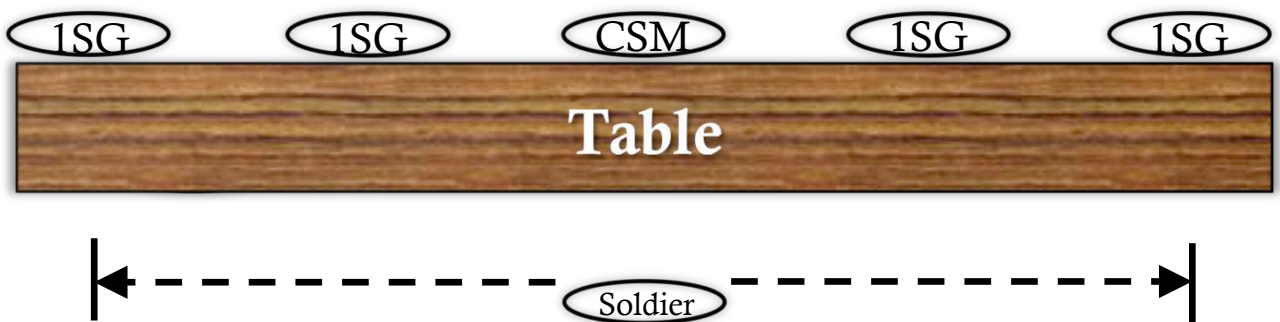
After the sponsor talks with the board members, the recorder (S1) will open the door to notify the participant that the board members are ready and to knock in about 15 seconds or so. It's go time!

The Soldier will knock on the door three times really hard and wait for the response, "Enter!" from the president of the board. The door opens and a direct path is made to the president of the board who is usually seated in the middle of table. Stopping at an arms length away from the table (TC 3-21.5 states within 2 steps of desk) a hand salute will be rendered with the statement "SPC _____ reporting to the president of the board" holding the hand salute until it is returned and dropped by the president.

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Sequence of Events: Facing Movements

After the hand salute is dropped the president of the board will provide facing and marching commands that will place the Soldier in front of each board member. For example, “Right face. Three steps forward, march. Left face. About face.” These commands will march you in front of a board member and allow them to see all angles of the uniform’s fit and appearance. The process will be completed for every board member.



Board members may get up out of their chair and try to get a real close look to inspect the uniform, keep composure and professionalism by maintaining an eyes front position. If comments are made amongst board members, there is no need to interject any comments unless the Soldier is spoken to.

After all board members have reviewed the uniform, the president of the board will instruct you to take a seat. The president of the board may say, “Look over your left/right shoulder and identify your seat and go ahead and sit down”. There is no need to do any facing movements on the way to the chair, stepping off with the left foot is all that needs to be done. For instance, if the chair is to the right, step off with your left foot as in marching by stepping over the right foot.

Once in the chair, the Soldier will sit at the position of attention (heels together, toes at a 45 degree angle, and hands on thighs)

Sequence of Events: Biography

While sitting at the position of attention, the hands will be positioned on top of the thighs in the same manner as if you were standing at attention. This will help keep the hands from

fidgiting. Details on sitting at the position of attention are covered in more detail in the *Performance Preparation* chapter.

“this is the most important part of the board”

The president of the board will then ask for the Soldier to take a couple minutes to explain a little history about themselves to including short-term and long-term goals. The president may also make small talk during this time, answer all questions naturally, using normal customs and courtesies (for example, “I am 25 years old, Sergeant Major”).

While the biography is being explained to the board members, the Soldier should be scanning their eyes making eye contact with each board member.

Side Note:

To me, this is the most important part of the board, this makes a good first impression and reflects confidence, professionalism, and preparation to the members of the board. It also gives the attendee a boost of confidence by talking to the board members because they are discussing something they are very familiar with, themselves. I highly encourage making the biography one of the stronger parts of the presentation; perfection here will bleed over to the rest of the board.

Sequence of Events: Answering Questions

After answering any questions about the biography, the president will pass the specific subject questions over to the other members of the board. The First Sergeant or member of the board will ask about three questions per subject (noted in the MOI). If a question is answered wrong the 1SG may ask a few additional questions to get a feel for the knowledge on that particular subject.

The subjects for each member are usually asked all at once (i.e. first aid, land navigation, weapons), occasionally they can be broken up into subjects. For instance, a member would ask about Army Programs then the next member would cover Battle Focused Training until it made it back to the original member to ask about their next subject.

When a question is asked, keep in mind that answering word for word from the study guide is not the goal. How the question is answered is where points are awarded. Common sense should be used to answer situational based questions with reference to a regulation if the answer is unknown. For example, “1SG, I do not know how many skill



badges are authorized to be worn on the duty uniform but know it can be found in DA PAM 670-1”. This shows knowledge of the Army regulations and the ability to seek the answer if needed.

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Sequence of Events: Unit History/Creeds

When the board members complete their questions, the president of the board will take control and make their way into unit history and any other topics they need to cover (listed in the MOI).

Unit history is not something that should be memorized word for word but stated in the words of the Soldier. Memorizing the exact wording will cause them to sound like a robot.

After the discussion of unit history, the president will ask if the Soldier knows a particular creed, whether it's the Soldier's Creed, NCO Creed, or Unit Creed. The response should be a big fat confident "YES".

The president will ask to hear it and the Soldier will stand up at the position of attention and get to work. After the creed is completed they may be requested to perform another creed, return to their seat, or be dismissed.

If the Soldier is returned to their seat they may be asked a few follow up questions such as "Why do you want to be an NCO" or "Why should you be the Soldier of the month". These questions should be taken into deep consideration and a good answer should be established well before attending the board.

THE CREED OF THE NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER

No one is more professional than I. I am a noncommissioned officer, a leader of Soldiers. As a noncommissioned officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army". I am proud of the Corps of noncommissioned officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the military service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watchword. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind—accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers. I will strive to remain technically and tactically proficient. I am aware of my role as a noncommissioned officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my Soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my Soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my Soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, noncommissioned officers, leaders!

Sequence of Events: Dismissal



If the president asks the Soldier if they have any questions or comments for the board, this is a perfect opportunity to clarify any missed questions. They can correct or clarify any answers given to one of the previous questions.

If there are not other comments, the president will tell the Soldier they are dismissed. They will walk up to the president of the board and render a hand salute while stating the unit motto.

When the president drops their hand salute, the Soldier will drop theirs and turn and make their way to the door (without facing movements). The sponsor will stay behind for a minute and receive notes on what the Soldier did/didn't do correctly.

Board Complete! The remainder of the time will be waiting on the rest of the board attendees to complete their turn.

After all the boards are complete, everyone will file back into the room with their sponsor standing behind them. The Soldier of the month will be announced as well as the personnel who have been recommended for promotion. Sometimes the results will be given to the sponsor instead of notifying everyone all at once.

Note: This was a detailed description on how a board normally goes down. This will vary from unit to unit but for the most part they will follow this sequence. The sponsor should be able to provide tons of valuable information on exactly what happens at their unit specifically.

ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATION



Administrative Preparation

Now that there is an understanding and visual as to what happens during a Soldier of the month or promotion board, use the following chapters as a guide to prepare for the board.

Starting early on board administration is essential, as soon as a Soldier finds out they will be attending a board, they need to ask for the MOI and a checklist for the board/promotion packet.

The packet is the documentation needed for a Soldier to attend the board. There will be less documentation needed if the Soldier is attending the SOM instead of a promotion board but for the most part they are very similar.

The board packet will be submitted to the S-1 and needs to be there at least a week before the board begins (unit specific). The main documents that will be needed in the board packet are covered in this chapter along with guidance on how to create or correct any deficiencies.

I can assure you that your hard work now, will pay off on the big day and procrastination will only leave you kicking yourself in the ass before, during, and after the board.

“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail” – Benjamin Franklin

Administrative Preparation: Board Packet

The board packet will consist of all the information needed by S-1. Each packet will be unit dependent but the checklist below covers all the essential documents that are needed for a unit board packet.

Contact the S-1 to identify what documents they need to update your records and see if they have a checklist of their own. Get the packet together quickly and submitted, having a late packet may disqualify a Soldier from the board all together. Most of the time, S-1 will have you sit down with them while they update all your records to ensure accuracy.

Board Packet Checklist

- Copy of training documents worth promotion points
- Copy of correspondence courses
- Official college transcript
- Copy of ERB
- Biography
- APFT card
- Weapons card
- Copy of all awards
- Copy of Certificates of Achievement (COA)
- Copies of NCOERS
- Make a complete copy of this packet**

Administrative Preparation: ERB

The ERB will be a quick snapshot of the Soldier before they walk into the room. Everything the board members need to see will be on that piece of paper. They are able to get a glance at physical fitness, career progression, deployments, and various other information about a Soldier that identifies how their career has progressed so far.

The following pages will identify common mistakes on the ERB that should be reviewed before submission to S-1. If there are any discrepancies on the ERB, most of the issues can be fixed by the S-1. Print out a copy of the ERB and label everything that needs to be fixed with a red pen and print all supporting documents that verify the changes need to be made. Have S-1 fix the ERB long before submitting the board packet, don't make the changes on the day the packet is due. Use the *ERB Checklist* on pg. 72 for help.

Be sure to review what information is on the ERB. It's embarrassing to be asked some personal information that is on the ERB and not know. Some common information every Soldier should know is:

- ETS Date
- PT/Weapons Score
- Last Promotion Date
- Awards/Decorations

Once corrected, ensure your sponsor has a copy so they know their soldier's information. They will be asked a few questions before the board begins about their Soldier and should have the general information memorized.

Enlisted Record Brief

The image shows a complex form titled "ENLISTED RECORD BRIEF". It is divided into several sections:

- SECTION I - Assignment Information:** Includes fields for Component, Station, and various assignment codes.
- SECTION II - Security Data:** Includes fields for Security Clearance, Sensitive Position, and other security-related information.
- SECTION III - Service Data:** Includes fields for Branch, Grade, and various service-related codes.
- SECTION IV - Personal/Family Data:** Includes fields for Name, Address, and Family Information.
- SECTION V - Foreign Language:** Includes fields for Language and Proficiency.
- SECTION VI - Military Education:** Includes fields for Education Level and Dates.
- SECTION VII - CIVILIAN Education:** Includes fields for Education Level and Dates.
- SECTION VIII - Awards and Decorations:** Includes fields for Awards and Decorations.
- SECTION IX - Assignment Information:** Includes fields for Assignment Dates and Locations.
- SECTION X - Remarks:** Includes a large text area for additional information.

Administrative Preparation: ERB

Review each red box to verify the data is correct. With a red pen, cross out wrong data and write correct data next to it.

SECTION I – Assignment Information						
OS/Deployment Combat Duty					#S -	
Start-End Date	CT	MO	TS	TT	#L -	
					#	M
					C	
					O	
					R	
					TOT:	
Dwell Time				DEROS		
Start						
Month - Days				DROS		
Date Dependents Arrived OS						
PMOS	SQT					
SMOS	PDSI/YRMO					
Bonus MOS	ASI					
Bonus Enlist Elig Dt						
Promotion Points/YRMO						
Prev Promotion Points/YRMO						
Prom Seq#			Prom Select Dt			
Promotion MOS						
ASVAB	Test # / Dt			/		
GT	ELEC		FOOD		TECH	
ADMIN	FA		COMMO			
CMBT	MECH		MAINT			
Delay Separation Reason						
AEA / Dt						
Flag Code	Flag Start Dt		Flag Expiration Dt			

- Double check start/end dates deployments or overseas time
- The # of months should reflect the Start-End Date
- Skill identifier (SQI) added
- Additional Skill Identifier (ASI) added

Note: The only items listed are considered to be the most common mistakes found on the ERB. Most of the data on the ERB is automated and will be correct but it's always good practice to look over it every now and again to ensure there are not any mistakes.

SECTION II – Security Data	
PSI Status	Fld Det PS Stat
PSI Invest INIT	
PSI Invest Compl	

- Security clearance access

Administrative Preparation: ERB

SECTION III – Service Data				
BASD		PEBD		BESD
ETS		DIEMS		Reenl Elig/Prohib
# Days Lost		AGCM Dt		AGCM Elig Dt
	PVT	PV2	PFC	SPC - CPL
DOR				
	SGT	SSG	SFC	MSG - 1SG
DOR				
DOR	SGM - CSM			

- Dates of promotion

- # of Dependents
- Marital Status
- Height/Weight
- APFT Score
- Home of Record
- Mailing address

Country of Citiz	Sex/Race
No of Dependent Adults/Children	Religion
Marital Status	Spouse Birthplace/Citz
PULHES	Height/Weight
EFMP Dt	#Cmd Sponsored
Physical Category	APFT Dt P/F Score
Last Physical Exam	MMRB Results/Dt
Home of Record	
Mailing Address	
Mil Spouse SSN/MPC	
Svc Comp / DoD	
Emergency Data Verified Date	

Administrative Preparation: ERB

SECTION V – Foreign Language			
Language	Read	Listen	Speak
DLAB			

- DLAB Score

- MEL/MES shows last NCOES school attended (WLC, ALC)
- Military courses that have been completed (especially the ones worth promo points)
- BMQ shows weapons qualification score/date
- # of Correspondence Course hours

SECTION VI – Military Education		
MEL/MES		
Course	ACH	Year
BMQ		
Correspondence CRS Total # Hrs		

Administrative Preparation: ERB

SECTION VII – CIVILIAN Education		
Level Completed DESG	Yr	
Institution Discipline	Yr	
Institution Discipline	Yr	
Number Of Semester Hours Completed		
Technical Certification		
Course Name	Dt Certified	Dt Expires

- Highest civilian education earned

- All awards and decorations listed

SECTION VIII – Awards and Decorations	
AAM	1
NOPDR	1
ASR	1
COA	5
AGCM	2
PRCHTBAD	1
AIR ASLT	1

Date of Loss		Date of Last PCS		SECTION IX – Assignment Information					Date of Last NCOER		
ASGT	FROM	MO	UNIT NO	ORGANIZATION	STATION	LOC	COMD	DUTY TITLE	DMOS	ASI	LANG
PROJ											
Current											
1st Prev											
2nd Prev											
3rd Prev											
4th Prev											
5th Prev											
6th Prev											
7th Prev											

- Date of last NCOER
- The Assignment information should list duty stations and positions while at that particular duty station (i.e. serving as a 10 level and then being promoted and serving in a 20 level position at the same duty station)

Administrative Preparation: ERB

Here is an example and explanation of the Assignment Information box. The most common part of the ERB that has mistakes.

Box #2

UNIT NO	ORGANIZATION
W2F85H	UNIT #2
W1A23G	UNIT #1
W1A23G	UNIT #1
W7F89N	AIT
W5V42L	BASIC TRAINING

Box #4

DUTY TITLE	DMOS	ASI	LANG
MOTORPOOL SERGEANT	63B30	00	YY
LIGHT WHEEL MECHANIC	63B20	00	YY
LIGHT WHEEL MECHANIC	63B10	00	YY
RA TRAINEE	63B10	00	YY
RA TRAINEE	63B10	00	YY

Date of Loss		Date of Last PCS		SECTION IX - Assignment Information					Date of Last NCOER		
ASGT	FROM	MO	UNIT NO	ORGANIZATION	STATION	LOC	COMD	DUTY TITLE	DMOS	ASI	LANG
PROJ Current 1st Prev 2nd Prev 3rd Prev 4th Prev 5th Prev 6th Prev 7th Prev			U I C	Unit	Base	C o u n t r y	C o m m a n d	Job Title	M O S	A S I	L a n g u a g e

FROM	MO
20100901	
20080901	24
20070901	12
20070601	3
20070401	2

Box #1

STATION	LOC	COMD
FORT CARSON	US	SP
FORT STEWART	US	AS
FORT STEWART	US	AS
FORT JACKSON	US	TC
FORT JACKSON	US	TC

Box #3

Box #1 - FROM: The FROM dates should show the dates of assignment.

MO: The MO (months) should coincide and add up to the dates listed. This is a very common mistake on ERBs.

Administrative Preparation: ERB

Box #2 - UNIT NO: is the Unit Identification Code (UIC) that can be found on the soldier's orders. This information will reflect the ORGANIZATION listed.

ORGANIZATION: is the unit the Soldier is assigned and may be listed twice. If this is the case it should be the result of serving under different duty positions. An example would be serving as a light wheel mechanic for a year and then being promoted to the Motorpool Sergeant. The ORGANIZATION will be listed twice to show how long a Soldier served in that position (shown in box #1).

Box #3 - STATION: Station of Assignment (ex: FT. LEWIS)

LOC: Location of assignment by country.

COMD: Major command of assignment (ex: TRADOC)

Box #4 - DUTY TITLE: shows position assigned per the MTOE. RA TRAINEE Should be removed when out of a TRADOC assignment. This usually does not get removed upon arrival to first duty station like it should.

DMOS: the duty MOS along with what skill level (skill level 10, 20, or 30)

ASI: Additional Skill Identifier, zeros will be present if none are available

LANG: Language shows the Language Indicator Code (LIC) that reflects the MTOE.

Administrative Preparation: ERB

SECTION X - Remarks			
HIV YRMO			
RGMT AFL			
Date Last Photo			
TRCMDS	CPOSCD	TRCUAD	FYCA

- Section X will automatically update and should not require any changes.
- If there is a DA Photo available it will populate in the empty box shown.

After reviewing each section and marking any changes with a red pen, the supporting documents with all the changes should be printed out to go along with the ERB. An example would be printing out the PT card that reflects what score you want added to the ERB.

Make a copy of the ERB and all supporting documents in case it gets lost after submitting the board packet.

Administrative Preparation: Biography

The biography is one of the most important parts of the board packet and presentation. Much like the ERB it gives a quick overview of history and accomplishments. The bio will be used when the president of the board asks you to talk about yourself and identify your short and long-term goals.



It's time to write out the biography and get it ready for the board packet. Writing it out will also help to put the history and accomplishments in order. The goal is to explain a little bit about life before the Army and mostly about what has been accomplished since you joined. There will also be mention of short and long term goals for the future.

Once the biography is complete, keep a copy because it will be used as a guideline in memorizing and practicing what will be repeated at the board. It sounds crazy to memorize your own life and accomplishments but if it isn't practiced the way it will be said on the day of the board, you will be surprised to find how much you jump around and search for what to say when the board members are looking at you.

How to prepare for talking the biography will be covered in the Performance Preparation section of this guide.

The next few pages will provide a template and example to assist in creating a well defined biography.

Administrative Preparation: Biography

Biography Template

Rank, Name

Location and date of birth

Where you grew up and graduated high school

Any personal information about family (wife/kids)

Enlistment Date

Date and location of basic training

Date and location of AIT and MOS earned

First duty station's location, unit, and dates assigned

Job title

Accomplishments at duty station

- Leadership positions
- Extra duties
- Deployments

Second duty station's location, unit, and dates assigned

Job title

Accomplishments at duty station

- Leadership positions
- Extra duties
- Deployments

**add more duty stations if needed

Short-term goals (at least 3 with a 1-5 year range)

Long-term goals (at least 3 with 5+ year range)

Administrative Preparation: Biography

Biography Example

My name is SGT Snuffy and I was born in Miami, FL on October 12, 1986. I grew up in North Port, FL and graduated high school in 2005. I have been married for four years and have two kids, ages one and three.

I enlisted in the Army in April of 2007 from Jacksonville, FL. After successfully completing basic training, I attended AIT at Fort Huachuca, Arizona where I became qualified as a 35G, Imagery Analyst.

After AIT, I arrived to my initial duty station located at Ft. Bliss Texas with 1st BDE, 1st Armored Division in March 2008. While at Ft. Bliss, I performed imagery analyst tasks for an exploitation cell supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) for 12 months. I was a squad leader in charge of the health, morale, and welfare of eight soldiers. Additionally, I was a section leader in charge of quality control of products being disseminated by 12 analysts.

After redeploying from Iraq in January 2011, I attended WLC where I graduated with the Leadership Award. After completing WLC I received orders to Ft. Stewart, GA in May 2011.

When arriving here at Ft. Stewart, I was assigned to HHC, 204th MI BN where I serve as an Imagery Sergeant in charge of 15 soldiers and also serve as the Battalion EO Representative. Since my time here at the 204th, I have completed one tour of duty in Afghanistan serving as a collection manager in charge of 8 soldiers. After my eight-month

Administrative Preparation: Biography

tour in Afghanistan I came back and attended ALC, graduating on the Commandant's List.

My short term goals include obtaining my Associates Degree in General Studies at American Military University. I am striving to earn my way to the Sergeant Audie Murphy club and earn the rank of Staff Sergeant.

My long-term goals are to get a Bachelor's Degree in Intelligence Studies, while pursuing the future rank of Command Sergeant Major. I am making the Army a career, and plan on serving at least 20 years.

Administrative Preparation: MOI



The MOI (Memorandum of Instruction) is a memo that explains all the information needed for the board. It states who the members of the board will be, what subjects they cover, and sometimes what regulation covers those subjects. The information on this document will help give a guideline as to what needs to be studied.

Even if a Soldier is not planning on going to the board in the immediate future but is interested in getting started early. The MOI that is being used today will most likely be identical to the MOI that will be used in 6 months. A Soldier can start preparing early with a good idea on what subjects will be covered.

The following pages show an example MOI.

Administrative Preparation: MOI

ABCD-HIJ-LM

15 September 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) for the October 2015 Promotion Board.

1. The Promotion Board will convene on 27 October 2015 at 0900 hours in the Battalion Conference room. Board members, first line supervisors, and candidates will report no later than 0850 hours for briefing.

2. The uniform for board members will be the Army Combat Uniform (ACU). The First Line Supervisors will be in ACU's and also report with their "Leaders Book". The uniform for all personnel appearing before the board will be the class "A" uniform or the Army Service Uniform (ASU) with all awards and decorations worn IAW AR 670-1.

3. Board members and their areas of questions are as follows: found in the U.S. Army Board Study Guide version 5.3, dated June 02, 2008, unless otherwise listed. Also can be found at [www.armystudyguide.com] (This is outdated and is only used as an example)

a. President of the Board – CSM Gregory, Tyler A.

1. Unit/Company/Army/NCO History
2. US Flag
3. Chain of Command
4. Soldiers Creed/ Night Stalkers Creed/ NCO Creed
5. Warrior Ethos
6. 11 Principles of Leadership

b. A Co – 1SG Mack, James L.

1. Leadership Counseling
2. Current Events (USA TODAY) (ARMY TIMES) (WORLD BROADCAST)
3. Military Customs and Courtesies/Tradition

c. B Co – 1SG Lovely, Kenneth K.

1. Wearing of the Uniform
2. Military justice
3. NCOER

Administrative Preparation: MOI

ABCD-HIJ-LM

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) for the October 2015 Promotion Board.

d. C Co – 1SG Wilson, Samuel B.

1. First Aid
2. Army Programs
3. Communications

e. D Co – 1SG Hall, Jeremy S.

1. Army Leadership
2. Battle Focused Training
3. Code of Conduct

f. HHC – 1SG Green, Aaron H.

1. Weapons
2. Map Reading/Land Navigation
3. Guard Duty
4. NBC (FM 3-7) (STP 21-1) (STP 21-24)

g. Board Recorder without vote is SGT Sherman, Billy H.

4. The following personnel are scheduled to appear before the Promotion Board for October 2015:

a. To Staff Sergeant:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COMPANY</u>	<u>SSN</u>	<u>PMOS</u>
Johnson, Trey	CCO	123-45-6789	63B
James, Dennis	HHC	123-45-6789	35G

b. To Sergeant:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>COMPANY</u>	<u>SSN</u>	<u>PMOS</u>
Johnson, Bryan	ACO	123-45-6789	11B
Smith, Samantha	DCO	123-45-6789	15U

Administrative Preparation: MOI

ABCD-HIJ-LM

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Instruction (MOI) for the October 2015 Promotion Board.

5. The point of contact for this memorandum is SGT Sherman, Billy H. at 867-5309.

TYLER A. GREGORY
CSM, USA
President of the Board

DISTRIBUTION:

Board Members (1)

Attendees (1)

Unit Files (1)

As the example shows, this is all the information needed to get started on studying and also helps to put a face to the individuals that will be on the board and what questions they will be asking.

Administrative Preparation: Sponsorship



The soldier's sponsor should be with them every step of the way to ensure they have a complete understanding on what to expect. They should be the guide on how to submit all the administrative paperwork and provide all the tips and tricks to success

at the board.

Having a good sponsor is not always going to happen and in some cases it is up to the Soldier to keep their sponsor in the loop as to what they have going on and the status of their preparation.

Identifying the sponsor is a very important part of board preparation and should be done as early as possible. Most will find out they are going to the board from their sponsor. If the sponsor is not assigned to a Soldier then the Soldier should seek out a sponsor to help them.

If the option is available to request someone who will take a personal interest in that particular soldier's success at the board, they should seek that person out and request their help. This is much better than having a random person who happens to be available to sponsor a Soldier they don't even know.

A sponsor should be there to help prepare from day one and be a great first impression on the board members when he/she explains why their Soldier should win or be promoted.

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Administrative Preparation: Sponsorship

Once the sponsor is identified, they will need a copy of the biography and ERB. These documents should be given to the sponsor as early as possible. Sponsors may be asked questions at the board about their Soldier and it's hard to recommend a Soldier for something if they don't know anything about them, their credibility will be lost.

Following up with the sponsor from time to time is always a good idea. Quizzing them on how many kids their Soldier has, their ages, PT score, weapons qual, how many years in the Army, ect. Obviously this should be done in a professional manner.

The sponsor will also be the one to setup a mock board and having a knowledgeable sponsor who has a vested interest will guarantee quality guidance.

Here are a few questions that are frequently asked:

What is the sponsors responsibilities?

The sponsor takes full responsibility of the soldier's knowledge, performance, and appearance during the board. The sponsor is the one who is in charge of leading the Soldier to success and if that Soldier does not perform well during the board because of the sponsor, the board members will most definitely let them know.

The sponsor is also responsible for informing the board members of their soldier's outstanding performance at work and why their section has chosen this particular Soldier to attend the board. The most important part for the sponsor is to inform the board members of why their Soldier deserves to win the board or be promoted.

Administrative Preparation: Sponsorship

What does the sponsor do at the board?

The sponsor will be called in a few minutes before their Soldier, the sponsor will walk in normally with no facing movements and stand in front of the board members at parade rest. If the president of the board or board members do not start off with questions about the Soldier. The sponsor can start off by saying good morning CSM, members of the board, I am SSG Johnson and I am SGT Redman's sponsor. Pause, and if no questions come, jump right into the description of SGT Redman and his accomplishments. After explaining to the board members how amazing SGT Redman is and how extraordinary his daily work ethic is, the members of the board may have a few follow up questions.

What are some questions they board members will ask the sponsor?

Why do you feel that your Soldier is ready to be promoted?
Is your Soldier prepared for this board?
Did you help your Soldier study for this board?
Tell me a little bit about your Soldier.

What is an example of answering, "tell me about your Soldier"?

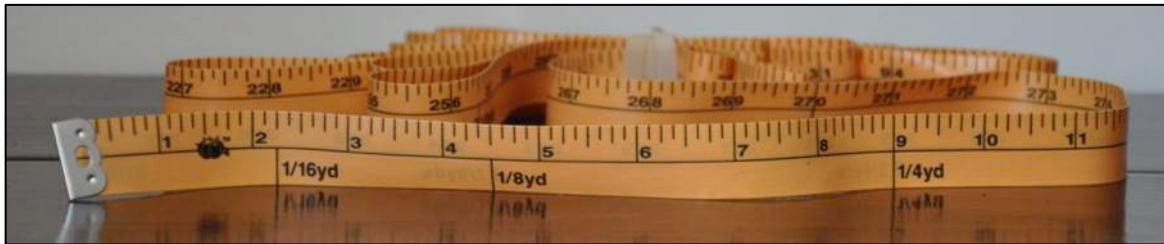
I am sponsoring SGT Redman and he has been here for 2 years and since his arrival he has been a stellar Soldier. He is always the first to volunteer for leadership opportunities like taking on new soldiers or giving classes to the platoon no matter the subject. He is always leading by example and showing his soldiers what right looks like. He maintains a 290 PT score and is the last one to leave for the day after the day's tasks are complete. He is ready to fill the squad leader role when SSG Coleman leaves in April. SGT Redman's leadership and work ethic show us everyday why he is ready for the rank of Staff Sergeant.

UNIFORM PREPARATION



- FITTING
- DRY CLEANING
- RACK/AWARDS
- BOOTS/SHOES
- BERET
- TIE

Uniform Preparation: Fitting



The uniform preparation is best started early. The MOI will state what type of uniform should be worn. The type of uniform will all depend on the location and leadership of the soldier's unit.

Make sure the uniform fits, this sounds somewhat obvious but it can be a major issue if not recognized early enough. The uniform fitting too tight is a common problem when it comes time to attend a board. When the uniform is issued in basic, a Soldier is usually a little skinnier than they are now.

Try the uniform on and take a look in the mirror. The pockets should be laying flat and the jacket should be snug but not too tight. The neck of the under shirt should not cut the circulation off to the brain. It never hurts to throw the pants and jacket on at work so the sponsor can get a warm and fuzzy on their soldier's uniform status. They might notice something that may have been overlooked.

If the uniform isn't fitting quite right, take it down to an alterations shop (with all medals/ribbons removed) and see if they can get it fitting properly. If they cannot get it right, then a new garment may need to be purchased. It's always a good idea to have alterations completed before the uniform is sent in for dry cleaning. Rank, service stripes, and overseas service stripes can also be sewn on along with any alterations that are needed.

Uniform Preparation: Dry Cleaning

Remember to take off all the metals and ribbons, including the buttons on the jacket.



Plan for dry cleaning and alterations to take over a week. Most places on post have a long turn around time. That is why it's important to get started on this as soon as possible.

As soon as the dry cleaning is done, the ribbons and medals can be attached to the uniform.

Uniform Preparation: Rack/Awards

The best tool on the internet for getting a rack in order is www.ezrackbuilder.com. They provide a great resource that allows the Soldier to choose their ribbons and save them on the site. They are put in the proper order as the rack will be seen on the uniform and can be purchased individually or all at once.

Completed Rack



Selecting Ribbons



When putting on oak leaf clusters or stars on the ribbons, it's much easier to remove the little prongs on the back and place a small speck of super glue on the back of the star or oak leaf and attach it to the ribbon. After spending hours trying to get a star to line up just right, this method was the best fix. If you want to avoid messing with the oak leaf clusters and stars all together you can have EZ Rack Builder send you a completed rack.

If an old rack is going to be used on the uniform, look at the ribbons carefully to ensure there are no frayed edges on them. A frayed ribbon on the uniform can take away a few easy points on a board.

Pin all metals and ribbons through the entire jacket so they sit flush on the material. For instance, if the nameplate only goes through the pocket flap it may droop down a bit and look sloppy.

Flush Nameplate



Uniform Preparation: Rack/Awards

The posters below are very handy when putting the uniform together. The full size posters can be found at the following link

www.army.mil/asu/resources.html

Uniform Measurement Guide

THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNIFORM January 2009

Soldiers

The Army Combat Uniform

Ribbons-Badges-Beret Guide

January 2009 Ribbons Badges Beret Wear & Army Service Uniform

The United States ARMY

Ribbons
Order of Precedence

Badges
Qualification, Membership and Identification Badges

Beret Wear & Army Service Uniform

Soldiers

Uniform Preparation: Boots/Shoes



Getting started early on the dress boots or shoes is essential. If the soldier's unit requires jump boots for the board because they are in an airborne unit, they should get started early because this can be a time consuming task.

There is always the option to pay a business to shine jump boots but realize that leadership will be able to tell if the Soldier did them on their own or not. If there is any doubt, board members will ask the Soldier about it and lying to them will guarantee a No-Go.

I will not go into detail on how to shine boots because there are hundreds of videos online that show exactly how to do it.

The best video I have found showing how to polish brand new boots is located here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdEBt8-hTc0>

I recommend the *Kiwi Boot Shining Kit* that comes with the essentials for getting started with boot shining. Starting the process early will prevent you from being up at 1am the night before the board shining boots.

Uniform Preparation: Boots/Shoes



If jump boots are worn at the soldier's unit then they will need a pair of *Boot Garters*. They are sometimes used on the duty uniform but are very handy when wearing jump boots.

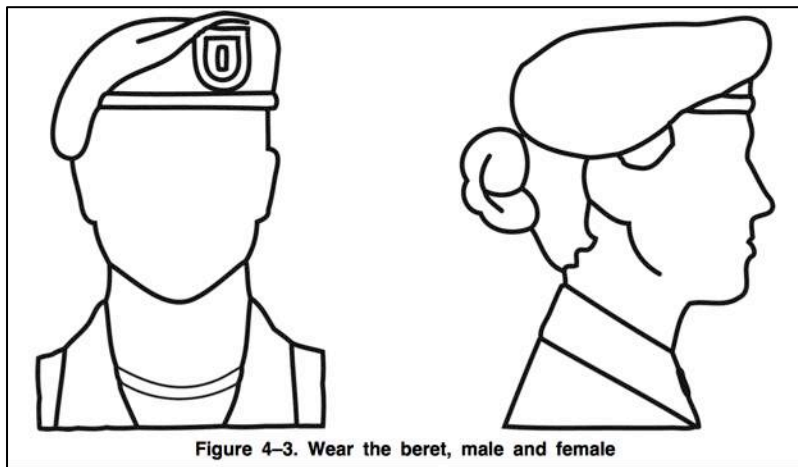
If jump boots are not necessary at the board then the dress shoes will be worn. Make sure to apply *Kiwi Heel and Edge polish* to touch up the sides. It removes the dull grey appearance and makes it a deep black. The only other thing that needs to be done for preparation is to wipe them down with a cloth to remove fingerprint smudges and dust.



Apply Edge and Heel here

After the boots/shoes are looking like a mirror they should be put in a plastic grocery bag so they look the same way the day of the board. This will also protect them during transport to work on the day of the board.

Uniform Preparation: Beret



The beret is a part of the uniform that can make a Soldier look like chewed bubble gum, especially if they are not familiar with wearing it. Knowing the proper way to wear a beret is essential to looking good and is a common board question.

When the beret is worn it should fit like the picture from DA PAM 670-1 (above), not fashionably tilted.

DA PAM 670-1 states:

“The beret is worn so that the headband (edge binding) is straight across the forehead, 1 inch above the eyebrows. The flash is positioned over the left eye, and the excess materials is draped over to the right ear, extending to at least the top of the ear, and no lower than the middle of the ear. Personnel will cut off the ends of the adjusting ribbon and secure the ribbon knot inside the edge binding at the back of the beret. When worn properly, the beret is formed to the shape of the head; therefore, Soldiers may not wear hairstyles that cause distortion of the intended shape of the beret.”

Uniform Preparation: Beret

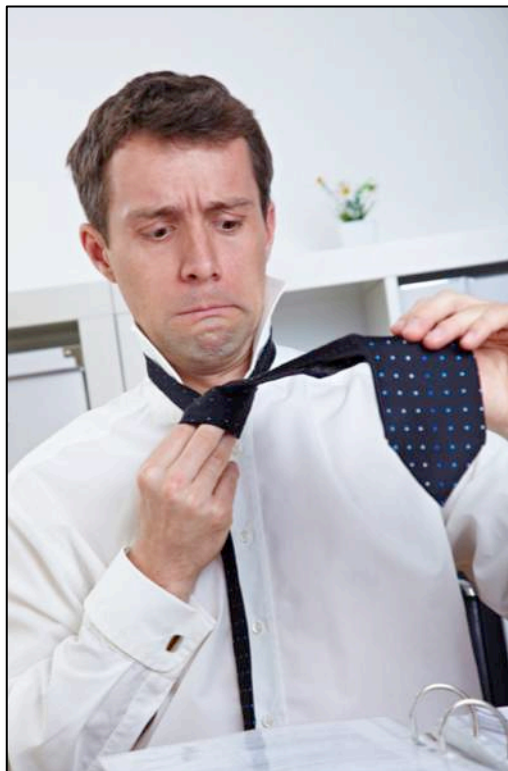
When preparing a brand new beret, make sure to use a razor and shave off ALL of the fuzz. Shave it inside and out making sure not to put any holes into the fabric.

Attaching the flash can be done in a couple different ways. Some like to cut out the cardboard entirely before having the flash sewn on but I prefer to leave the cardboard in. It's a personal preference.

When pinning the unit crest on, I like to bend the pins on the backside of the flash instead of using DAMMITS. This will prevent the crest from falling off.



Uniform Preparation: Tie



The tie seems like something not even worth mentioning but tying a tie is a task some cannot do. I recommend checking out:

www.ArmyBoardGuidance.com/Windsor to get you started.

Clip-on ties are authorized but it does not look particularly well during a board. Although there should be no points taken away for wearing a clip on tie, the board members might perceive using a clip-on tie as the easy way out or being lazy.

There are a few different knots that can be used at the board

DA PAM 670-1 states: Personnel may wear the tie in a Windsor, half-Windsor, or four-in-hand knot. A conservative tie tack or tie clasp is authorized. The necktie is tied so it is no shorter than 2 inches above the top of the belt buckle, and so it does not extend past the bottom of the belt buckle.

I recommend learning how to tie the Windsor knot, this has a better look to it than the half-Windsor or four-in-hand. Work on getting the knot figured out and keep working it until the perfect tie is made. Once the knot and length are just right, loosen the tie and put it away for game day. There is no need to work on a tie all morning before the board, now there is one less thing to worry about.

Uniform Preparation: Tie

Some may think it's a good idea to have someone else tie their tie for them and then wear it during the board. This could work out very well but sometimes the members of the board will ask the Soldier if they tied their own tie. **DO NOT LIE!**

If the Soldier tells the board members they tied their own tie, then it's not uncommon to be asked to undo the tie and tie it for the board, showing them you are not full of it. If the tie comes out a little rough in front of the board it's alright as long as the knot is correct.

STUDYING



Studying: Biography

Knowing how to speak about yourself should be pretty easy but when it's put into a formal environment the words don't always seem to come out right. In most cases the first words that come out of a soldier's mouth at the board will be their bio and this is the time to make an impression.

**“Train like
you fight”**

The president of the board asks for the Soldier to tell the board members a little history about themselves and a few short and long-term goals. Then the room gets silent and all eyes are on them, this should not be the first time these words have been spoken. Instead, the Soldier should look the president of the board right in the eyes and say, “Good morning Sergeant Major, First Sergeants. My name is SPC _____, was born in Miami, FL in 1986...” and proceed to inform them of history and accomplishments. This will skyrocket confidence and establish an impression with the board members that you are not here to play games.

To make this a success, start by using the biography that was made in the administration section of this guide. The goal is to memorize this word for word. This does not mean it has to be stated word for word but memorizing the bio will provide a guideline as it's being spoken and it will ensure the main points are being hit along the way.

While memorizing, saying the words out loud will speed the process along. Don't disregard this tip, make sure to say it out loud, this goes for anything that needs repeating whether it be the bio, creeds, or answers to questions. The more something is repeated the easier it will come out when put in a stressful situation, like the old saying, “train like you fight”.

Studying: Biography

The biography needs to be practiced in front of a mirror while making a conscious effort to scan across the mirror with your eyes. Imagine looking at every board member while talking. It helps to look at foreheads instead of eyes in a situation like this because it helps to maintain focus on exactly what is being repeated. It will look as if your looking right into the board members eyes while speaking.

The biography is a fairly quick thing to memorize since the information comes from the your brain to begin with. Don't let the confidence of knowing it on day one fool you. Repeat it once a day, along with creeds and whatever else that needs to be memorized so it stays fresh in the mind. This is perfect during the car ride to work and only takes a few minutes. Small steps taken everyday lead to huge accomplishments when they are added up over time.

If you do this everyday, I guarantee you will feel amazing during your first mock board. If you have been to a board before you know that this will get a Soldier off to an amazing start.

Studying: Creeds

Reciting a creed is something that most struggle with, especially the NCO creed because it's a creed that requires soldiers to learn on their own, without being forced like The Soldier's Creed in Basic Training. The creeds that will need to be recited at the board will be listed in the MOI.

Much like memorizing the bio, its essential to memorize creeds by reciting them out loud as you learn. This is perfect while doing chores around the house or barracks room. Reciting the words as you learn will dramatically speed up the process of memorizing.

Once the creed is memorized be sure to add it to the daily list of things to recite. This also pertains to the creeds you already know like the Soldier's Creed.

When it comes down to the big day, any creed being stated should be said at the position of attention and with a loud command voice.

If a junior enlisted Soldier is attending the board, even if it's not for a promotion board, they should consider knowing the NCO Creed. When the president of the board asks a junior Soldier if they happen to know the NCO Creed and they spit it off better than the soldiers attending the promotion board, they will earn some major credibility.

Knowing the creeds is something that has to be done eventually so it's better to tackle it head on and get it knocked out. Don't procrastinate and focus on practicing a little bit, a few times a day. It will pay off.

Studying: History

History is a subject that will be brought up a few different times during the board. History will be covered for the Army, NCO Corp, and the unit.

The Army and NCO Corp history will be covered by one of the board members during their questioning phase. The unit history will be covered by the president of the board and will be asked in a more conversation style question.

Knowing a good amount of unit history is essential for the board. If you don't get the first part of the question right about unit history, the president of the board may structure another question to see what knowledge you do have to see if any effort was attempted at studying this subject. The company history is also something that could be asked depending on your unit.

Remember, the board members are not there to fail the Soldier but to see how much they prepared for the board. Don't get too caught up in specifics because the members of the board realize that you will not know everything.

Read and study the history, sit down with someone who has no idea about the unit and explain to them it's history. After giving them a run down of history and touching on all the key dates and events, ask what questions they have pertaining to the information they just received. Find the answers to their common questions and see if there is anything that needs clarification. Slowly tweaking the unit's story over time by retelling it to others will make answering any questions your are asked during the board much easier.

Studying: Subjects

The part of the board everyone worries about the most, the board questions. Don't get too wrapped up in the ability to answer every single question right. The board is not intended to have soldiers go through and answer every question correctly. It's intended to gauge how much effort a Soldier put into studying and how well they handle the stress of being put on the spot. Don't get me wrong, if the board members looked surprised at the amount of questions being answered correctly, then you put in some serious study time.



The board members, who are usually First Sergeants, will ask the meat and potatoes of the questions. They will ask a handful of questions from each subject given to them (stated in the MOI). Studying these subjects can seem like a daunting task but if the preparation is started early enough, it will be a walk in the park.

Most basic subjects can be found at www.ArmyStudyGuide.com and can be printed from there if needed. Another resource that is a bit more current is www.armyadp.com. Don't spend all your time making flash cards when you could just print them. If flash cards are not available, studying by covering the answer on a sheet of paper works just as well. A common procrastination technique used during study time, is spending a ton of time neatly writing out flash cards because it gives a sense of accomplishment but in reality it's just a productive way of procrastinating. Just sit down and start studying, don't think of a million tasks that can be done to "help" prepare.

Studying: Subjects

If it's absolutely necessary to make flash cards do them for each subject as they are being studied. For instance, write out the flash cards for subject one and understand subject one before moving onto the next area. Divide the subjects into the amount of days available to study.

Practice responses to the questions as they would be on the day of the board. When answering questions out loud make it a habit to answer with rank. For instance, "First Sergeant, the three levels of leadership are: direct, organizational, and strategic". It's also good measure to state the question in the answer because it helps to keep focus and give a little bit more time to answer.

As the board nears, leave a week prior to the board open to study all the subjects at once. This is where an hour can be spent going over all the questions and narrowing down the subjects or questions that are difficult to remember.

Everyday your brain will try to come up with an excuse to not study:

"I will do it tomorrow"

"I had a really hard day I will look over that stuff later"

"I will do it right before bed"

"I have plenty of time"

Just get started for at least a super-focused hour a day (depending on your timeline). An hour a day means really going over the subjects with no distractions, if there is a TV on while studying, there is no way you are putting forth 100% focus. If the study time is laser focused then it will leave you feeling confident and accomplished and it won't be weighing on your mind all day.

Studying: Subjects

Lunchtime at work is a prime opportunity to get some studying in. Co-workers will be able to help with tips on remembering certain answers and will be able to throw a few random questions that have been asked on past boards that cannot be found in any study guide.

Driving in the car is by far the most wasted opportunity for achievement. Think about the amount of time spent in the car on a weekly basis, these hours can be used for focused learning. Download the audio from www.ArmyStudyGuide.com and listen to it on a regular basis.

Break up the audio by practicing the biography and creeds. The car drive could be one of the most beneficial tools to winning the board.

Knowing each subject partially is better than knowing a ton about one specific subject. Specializing in one area will show incompetence in every other field. If time is short, remember to get a broad range of subjects under the belt even if it's only a little bit of info in each area.

To sum it all up, start as early as possible and use time wisely. Do not let your brain trick you into procrastination and commit to at least one hour a day of studying, this does not include prepping for the board and other areas like administrative or uniform prep.

PERFORMANCE PREPARATION



- **MOCK BOARDS**
- **FACING MOVEMENTS**
- **BIO/CREEDS**
- **CURRENT EVENTS**
- **ANSWERING QUESTIONS**
- **PRE-GAME RITUAL**

Performance Preparation: Mock Board

Knowing how the board will go down is one thing, practicing everything that will happen is another. Practicing movements and actions in real time before the performance is how success is earned.

Creating a mock board is the greatest gift a supervisor can give to a subordinate when they are preparing for a board. This should be done up to a week prior to the official board so there is plenty of time to identify deficiencies in presentation and appearance.

The mock board should be done in full dress uniform as if it were the real deal. The members of the board should consist of supervisors from different sections who the Soldier may not be familiar with. This is the best time to become familiar with the process of how the board will happen. Going through the motions of the board with supervisors who have attended or seen the board at your particular unit will paint the perfect picture as to how it all will happen.

Use the mock board as a learning tool to make the real day a success. If there isn't anyone who volunteers to give a mock board, seek out someone who is squared away and will be willing to help out. The mock board is a vital tool to success at the board.

Things every Soldier should know before attending the mock board:

- Reporting: "SPC ____ reporting to the president of the board" while rendering a hand salute.
- Their biography
- NCO and/or Soldiers Creed
- What subjects will be covered
- How to address the board members
- How to sit at the position of attention
- Dismissal: "(state unit motto)" while rendering hand salute

Performance Preparation: Facing Movements

Facing movements will be performed when the president of the board is marching the Soldier in front of the board members so they can look over the uniform. The marching and facing movements should be natural and fluid and not create a distraction that pulls attention away from the uniform.



After reporting to the president of the board, the president will say something along the lines of, “Right...Face”, “Two steps forward... March”, “Right...Face”, “About...Face”. These commands will march the Soldier to the board member on his left, showing them all sides of the uniform. The marching will continue until all board members have viewed the uniform.

Practice facing movements at home while trying to replicate the environment of the board room. If the board room has carpet, practice facing movements on carpet. This is a very simple process and should not be over complicated.

After facing movements, you will be told to take a seat. Make sure to sit at the position of attention. Your feet will look identical as if you were standing (45° angle) and hands will be place on top of the thighs with your hands in a fist-like position as if you were standing at attention.

Performance Preparation: Bio/Creeds

The *Studying* chapter of this guide explains how to study the reciting of creeds and biography. The most important take-away is to practice how it will be performed on the big day.

When talking about yourself be sure to look at each member of the board while speaking. Talk loud. This will be the first impression of how you interact with the board members and should show them confidence. When sitting in the chair make sure to not move around in nervousness.

Practice this by sitting in front of a mirror while going over the bio. Scan from side to side and keep hands and feet still.

The same pertains to reciting creeds, practice in front of a mirror with eyes straightforward. Use a loud command voice and be proud to show off the hard work that was put into memorizing the creed. Focus on a spot on the wall or mirror in front of you and this will help maintain focus while reciting.

It will become evident that the way things are practiced at home will be the way they are performed in the real situation.

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<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Performance Preparation: Current Events



The Sergeant Major will ask a few questions concerning current events near the end of the board after the creeds have been recited. The president is wanting to make sure the Soldier is familiar with what is going on in the world. The night before is a great time to look into news stories that are topping the headlines. Take another look at the news the morning of the board and this will be enough to answer any questions that may come your way about current events.

If there is a major conflict going on the world think about your views concerning this topic, the president may ask opinions based on particular situations. There may not be a right or wrong answer here but showing knowledge and an opinion is what's valued.

Performance Preparation: Answering Questions



Answer all the board questions with rank, for instance, “First Sergeant, the three levels of leadership are: direct, organizational, and strategic”. It’s also good measure to state the question in the answer because it helps to keep focus and give a little bit more time to answer.

If an answer cannot be recalled don’t sit in silence too long pretending you’re thinking about it. If you don’t know tell them, “First Sergeant, I cannot recall the three levels of leadership at this time but know it can be found in AR 600-100”. If you don’t know the FM or AR just be truthful and say you do not recall at this time. If the answer comes to you later in the board you might be able to mention the correct answer near the end when the president asks if you have any questions or comments before being dismissed.

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Performance Preparation: Answering Questions

If a question is missed don't let it get you flustered, this is the object of the board, to see if you can be resilient enough to get back in the game and focus. Just go into the board knowing you will not get every answer right but at least try to get them partially correct by giving an answer from your own words or stating the regulation.

Maintain eye contact with each person asking questions, this is a great time to look at the forehead to maintain focus. When I sit on mock boards I can always tell if a Soldier knows an answer before they say anything because they will always do something with their body to signal they don't know. If they have the answer they will spit it out with a quickness. Try not to be predictable with your answers. Answer the questions you know and don't know the same exact way.

Work on breaking those habits of looking up in the sky for answers or saying "uummm", this happens without the soldiers even realizing.

- Find the answers to the following questions before the big day:
- Define leadership in your own words.
- Why do you want to be a SGT/SSG? (notice they did not say E-6/E-5, that is a pay grade)
- Why should you be promoted or win the Soldier of the month?

Performance Preparation: Pre-game Ritual

Before the big day everyone starts to get a little nervous thinking about tomorrow, wishing it was all over with. Be excited. Try to think of it as a day to prove to your leadership, the ones who rarely get to see you everyday, how hard you work and what you bring to the team. This is an opportunity to show them with actions, how ready you are for greater responsibility and how you want to be the first in line when promotion time comes around.

The night prior to the board, make sure to get at least eight hours of sleep. Wake up and try to get a light run in to get the blood pumping and clear the mind. Bring all the essential parts of the uniform with you if you decide not to wear it in the car for wrinkle purposes (recommended). Check out the checklist on page 71 to make sure you don't forget anything.

Don't get too crazy on trying to cram before the board, the studying has been done and stressing yourself out at the last minute will make it worse. Go over some flash cards at work for a few minutes to warm up a bit and that will be sufficient. You might have a long wait during the board so your sponsor can bring the flashcards to go over a few questions while you wait.

Bring a lint roller and a microfiber cloth for cleaning up the fabric and metals on the uniform. Also, bring a cloth or rag to go over the boots/shoes to remove fingerprints and scuffs.

Get to the board area at least 20 minutes prior just in case an emergency happens that may need your attention like a boot scuff or uniform malfunction. Once your there, look over some study questions and get ready for your turn.

The End

Now you have all the information needed to effectively and efficiently prepare yourself for the board. Implement the directions laid out in this guide and you will guarantee yourself a successful promotion or competition board.

Be sure to look through the following chapter that contains checklists and templates that can be easily printed.

More resources and information can be found at www.ArmyBoardGuidance.com.

Please contact me at Dennis@armyboardguidance.com if you have any questions or concerns regarding this guide as well as any additional information you would like to see on following versions.

RESOURCES





SOM/Promotion Board Planning Guide



Administrative

- Review MOI
- Update ERB
- Write biography
- Identify sponsor
- Give sponsor a copy of the ERB
- Make a copy of all documents being submitted to S-1
- Submit DA form 3355 online
- Give documents to S-1 for promotion packet
- Copy of training documents worth promotion points
 - Copy of correspondence courses
 - Official college transcript
 - Copy of ERB
 - Biography
 - APFT card
 - Weapons card
 - Copy of all awards
 - Copy of Certificates of Achievement (COA)
 - Copies of NCOERS
- Memo signed by Soldier agreeing to responsibilities

Uniform

- Try uniform on to ensure proper fit
- Determine if rank/stripes need to be sewn on
- Bring to alterations
- Dry clean entire uniform
- Create a rack at *EZ Rack Builder*
- Place all metals, ribbons, nameplate on jacket
- Place nameplate & shoulder boards on dress shirt
- Practice tying a Full Windsor knot



SOM/Promotion Board Planning Guide



- Tie a tie and set aside for later
- Shine Boots
- Clean shoes
- Apply heel and edge polish to shoes
- Try on beret to ensure fit
- Have at least 3 people look over the completed uniform

- Studying**
 - Review MOI
 - Print flashcards from www.ArmStudyGuide.com
 - Create a calendar with designated days for subjects
 - Memorize/Recite Bio with no mistakes
 - Memorize/Recite Creeds with no mistakes
 - Able to summarize unit history
 - Answer all questions from flash cards
 - Look over news stories for current events

- Practice Performance**
 - Schedule at least two mock boards
 - Facing movements practice
 - Recite biography with no mistakes
 - Recite Creeds with no mistakes
 - Practice answering questions
 - Complete two mock boards



Pre-game Ritual Checklist



- Set out uniform
 - Boots/Shoes
 - Boot Blouser (if necessary)
 - Jacket
 - Dress Shirts
 - Shoulder Boards (should be attached already)
 - Pants
 - Beret
 - Socks
 - White undershirt
 - Belt
 - Tie
 - ID Card/ID tags
 - Cleaning cloth/lint roller

- Get 8 hours of sleep

- Morning run

- Review current events



ERB Checklist



- Section I**
- Start-End Date
- Months
- TOT
- SQI
- ASI

- Section II**
- PSI Status

- Section III**
- Promotion dates

- Section IV**
- # of Dependents
- Marital Status
- Height/Weight
- APFT Score
- Home of Record
- Mailing Address

- Section V**
- DLAB Score (if applicable)

- Section VI**
- MEL/MES Schools (WLC, ALC)
- Military Courses
- BMQ (Weapons qual info)
- Correspondence Course Hrs

- Section VII**
- Civilian education

- Section VIII**
- All awards and decorations

- Section IX**
- Date of last NCOER
- From and Month
- Unit # and Organization
- Station, LOC, and Command
- Duty Title, DMOS, ASI, and Language



Uniform Checklist



- Uniform fits properly
- Rank and stripes are accurate
- Alterations
- Dry clean complete
- Awards rack is up to date and assembled
- Metals and ribbons attached to uniform
- Nameplate attached
- Shoulder boards attached
- Tie is pre-tied and waiting
- Belt is in proper direction (Male: left Female: right)
- Belt is shined and free of scratches
- Boots/Shoes are polished and clean
- Edge and Heel applied if necessary
- Beret is ready and fits properly
- At least 3 people have reviewed completed uniform



Study Checklist



President of the Board: _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Board Member #1: _____ ex: 1SG Johnson

- _____ ex: Army History
- _____ ex: Land Navigation
- _____
- _____

Board Member #2: _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Board Member #3: _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Board Member #4: _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Board Member #5: _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Most Common Board Mistakes



- ❖ Knocking on the door too lightly
- ❖ Dropping the salute before the president of the board
- ❖ Unnatural movements on the way to the chair
- ❖ Sitting at the position of attention incorrectly
- ❖ Fidgeting while sitting at the position of attention
- ❖ Biography is short and unrehearsed
- ❖ No eye contact when stating biography
- ❖ Not responding when an answer is unknown
- ❖ No eye contact when answering questions
- ❖ Not stating rank before speaking to board members (1SG, the regulation that covers...)
- ❖ Having predictable gestures while answering questions
- ❖ Looking up in the air when thinking of an answer
- ❖ Using the dreaded “Ummm” too much
- ❖ Unfamiliar with the creeds
- ❖ Unfamiliar with unit history
- ❖ Unfamiliar with awards on the uniform (especially unit awards)
- ❖ Unfamiliar with current events
- ❖ Calling the Sergeant Major a First Sergeant on accident
- ❖ Not using a loud enough voice throughout the board
- ❖ Not saluting the president of the board after being dismissed
- ❖ Forgetting to state the unit motto when saluting the president



Biography Outline



Rank, name _____

Location and date of birth: _____

Where you grew up and graduated high school: _____

Any personal information about family (wife/kids): _____

Enlistment Date: _____

Basic Training: Location: _____ Dates: _____

AIT: Location: _____ Dates: _____ MOS earned _____

First duty station

Location: _____ Unit: _____ Date: _____

Job title: _____

Accomplishments at duty station

-Leadership positions: _____

-Extra duties: _____

-Deployments: _____

Second duty station

Location: _____ Unit: _____ Date: _____

Job title: _____

Accomplishments at duty station

-Leadership positions: _____

-Extra duties: _____

-Deployments: _____

***add more duty stations if needed**

Short-term goals (at least 3 with a 1-5 year range)

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Long-term goals (at least 3 with 5+ year range)

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____



The Soldier's Creed



I am an American Soldier.

I am a warrior and a member of a team.

**I serve the people of the United States, and live the Army
Values.**

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

**I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and
proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.**

I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

**I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy, the enemies of
the United States of America in close combat.**

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.



The Creed of the Non-Commissioned Officer



No one is more professional than I. I am a noncommissioned officer, a leader of Soldiers. As a noncommissioned officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army". I am proud of the Corps of noncommissioned officers and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the military service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watchword. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind—accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers. I will strive to remain technically and tactically proficient. I am aware of my role as a noncommissioned officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my Soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my Soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial when recommending both rewards and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my Soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, noncommissioned officers, leaders!



11 Principles of Leadership



- 1. Know yourself and seek self improvement**
- 2. Be technically and tactically proficient**
- 3. Seek responsibility and and take responsibility for your actions**
- 4. Set the example**
- 5. Know your soldiers and look out for their welfare**
- 6. Keep your soldiers informed**
- 7. Ensure the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished**
- 8. Develop a sense of responsibility among your soldiers**
- 9. Train your soldiers as a team**
- 10. Make sound and timely decisions**
- 11. Employ your unit in accordance with its capabilities**



Army Values



✧ **Loyalty**

✧ **Duty**

✧ **Respect**

✧ **Selfless Service**

✧ **Honor**

✧ **Integrity**

✧ **Personal Courage**



Warrior Ethos



- ✧ I will always place the mission first.

- ✧ I will never accept defeat.

- ✧ I will never quit.

- ✧ I will never leave a fallen comrade.



General Orders



1st General Order

I will guard everything within the limits of my post and quit my post only when properly relieved.

2nd General Order

I will obey my special orders and perform all my duties in a military manner.

3rd General Order

I will report violations of my special orders, emergencies, and anything not covered in my instructions, to the commander of the relief.



Chain of Command



Commander-in-Chief: _____

Secretary of Defense: _____

Secretary of the Army: _____

Chief of Staff of the Army: _____

**Advisor to the Secretary of the Army*

Theater Commander: _____

Corps Commander: _____

Division Commander: _____

Brigade Commander: _____

Battalion Commander: _____

Company Commander: _____

Platoon Leader: _____

First-line Supervisor: _____



NCO Support Channel



Sergeant Major of the Army: _____

Theater Sergeant Major: _____

Corps Sergeant Major: _____

Division Sergeant Major: _____

Brigade Sergeant Major: _____

Battalion Sergeant Major: _____

Company First Sergeant: _____

Platoon Sergeant: _____

First-line Supervisor: _____



Tips and Tricks



Entering

- Remember shoulder boards, ID card, tags, shirt nameplate
- Knock 3 times with knuckles (Don't kick the door)
- Hold salute until the president completely drops his
- USE COMMAND VOICE

Facing Movements

- Execute natural movements, not robot-like
- Do not interject if board members are discussing the uniform.
only speak when spoken to.

Biography

- USE COMMAND VOICE
- Scan eye contact across each board member while speaking.

Answering Questions

- USE COMMAND VOICE
- Refer to regulation if answer is unknown
- Don't dwell on missed questions
- Maintain eye contact
- Be aware of nervous twitches
- Repeat the question while answering
- State rank in the answer (Ex: 1SG, the regulation that covers...)
- Know the answer: Define leadership in your own words
- Know the answer: What army value do you hold to the highest standard?
- Know the answer: Why do you want to be a SSG (next rank)?
- Know the answer: Why should you be promoted or be chosen for the Soldier of the month?
- Do not refer to rank as a pay grade. Say SSG, not E-6



Tips and Tricks



Answering Questions Cont...

- Don't call the Sergeant Major, 1SG because you are nervous.
- Don't get wrapped up in the exact definition for an answer, use your own words
- Practice sitting at attention before the board, to find a way to sit comfortably while still remaining at attention.

Unit History/Creed

- Practice discussing the unit history out loud before the day of the board. Be able to explain it naturally
- Be familiar with unit awards on the uniform
- State the creed at the position of attention

Dismissal

- State the unit motto while rendering the hand salute
- Do not drop the hand salute before the president of the board

www.ArmyStudyGuidance.com

Visit www.ArmyBoardGuidance.com to find more resources and information to help succeed at the board.

Don't forget to register on the site so you can get updates on board information as it becomes available.