

A large, stylized graphic of two crossed pens, one in the foreground and one behind it, both pointing towards the top corners. The pens are a light brown or tan color with a subtle gradient and a soft glow around them. The background is white with a thin brown border.

Evaluation Writing Tips & Tricks

"From the Board to your Pen"

by

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Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge and thank all of the Commanding Officers, Executive Officers, Command Master Chiefs, Maintenance Master Chiefs, 3MCs, Master Chiefs, Senior Chiefs, Chiefs, previous Board Members and Recorders that provided input to this paper. Your board experience, community knowledge, and input were invaluable and will hopefully help improve evaluation writing in the fleet.

This "white paper" has taken over a year to draft and was designed to provide "TIPS & TRICKS" when drafting Chief and Senior Chief (CPO/SCPO) evaluations and I am confident it can be applied for any rank.

Keep in mind evaluation writing is a fluid process and there is no one single method to writing them, however, evaluation writing is not the same as it was 5, 10, or 12 yrs ago and as leaders we must adapt and shift as times change. The information provided is based on recent (2011, 2012 & 2013) board (CPO, SCPO, MCPO and SECB) experiences.

The first step when drafting a CPO/SCPO evaluation is to READ the PRECEPTS (SELECTION or CONTINUATION) from the previous year; the precepts are the "answer to the test" and do not drastically change from year to year.

However, when it comes to style and content the following paragraph directly out of the evaluation manual is a great starting point and applies to drafting any evaluation; regardless of rank.

*"pg.8.b. **Style and Content**. Space is limited. Avoid preambles and get directly to performance. Do not use puffed-up adjectives. Use direct, factual writing that allows the performance to speak for itself. Bullet style is preferred. Give examples of performance and results. Quantify wherever possible, but do not stress quantity at the expense of quality. Avoid stock comments that make everyone sound alike. Be consistent with the trait marks. Comment on poor performance or misconduct where necessary, but be judicious. Define seldom used acronyms. Use the sections of the report that have been set-aside for them. Remember the report will be made a part of the member's OMPF and that the report is a permanent part of the official record." [BUPERSINST 1610.10C (20 APR 2011)]*

It is assumed the CPO/SCPO has already become the technical and system matter expert so try to ensure the following areas are in the evaluations:

- Discuss SAILORIZATION
- Discuss DECKPLATE LEADERSHIP
- Discuss how the CPO/SCPO is LEADING, GUIDING and DIRECTING Sailors
- Discuss CPO Mess and CPOA involvement

As many of you are aware Master Chiefs are grading records and most of them have undocumented ADD or ADHD, try to keep things as brief as possible, but make sure the statements have merit and substance. Use the "fortune cookie" method. Think about it; the message inside the fortune cookie is small, but carries a profound and often memorable statement. However, be advised this may cause the evaluation to read "choppy" or "bulletized", but that is preferred according to the most recent (20 APR 2011) evaluation manual.

If the bullet or sentence stands out and immediately grabs the reviewer's attention it will be remembered; most likely recorded and possibly briefed. As a board member I try to use the four "R's" method when reviewing records:

Read it
Remember it
wRite it
bRief it

When you proof read the evaluation use the four "R's" method; this will help ensure the appropriate information is in the evaluation for a board member to potentially brief. Keep in mind if the sentence or bullet blends into the evaluation it will most likely not be remembered or briefed. A great exercise is to print the previous five evaluations and highlight all of the bullets or sentences that stand out. If you notice there are very few sentences highlighted, this is what the board member will see and brief; very little. This exercise will also ensure sentences/bullets are not duplicated from year to year.

Another thing to note is during the continuation board community, rate, or rank is not a factor for the person reviewing the record. For example, an AVIATION CMC could be reviewing a SUBMARINE CPO/SCPO record and vice versa so you need to write clearly and make it stand out to any Master Chief reviewing the record.

Finally, the following excerpt was taken from the Enlisted Retention Board precepts. (VADM M.E. FERGUSON III, AUG 2011)

"The Navy requires senior chief petty officers (SCPO) and chief petty officers (CPO) to serve as deckplate leaders that...

- Demonstrate the ability to develop Sailors and enforce standards while conducting themselves in a consistently professional and ethical manner.*
- Their personal and professional attributes include being a visible leader, setting the tone of the unit, and serving as the technical experts in their chosen field.*
- They produce well trained enlisted and officer teams.*
- They teach, uphold, and enforce standards while providing proactive solutions that are well founded and linked to mission accomplishment.*

- *They demonstrate uncompromising integrity; take full responsibility for their actions while demonstrating loyalty to seniors, peers, and subordinates.*
- *They encourage open and frank communications that increases unit efficiency, mission readiness, and mutual respect.*
- *They define our past and guide the Navy's future to enhance pride in service to our country.*
- *They have positive command and Navy wide mission impact.*
- *They demonstrate adherence to Navy and DoD ethical standards, physical fitness, loyalty to the Navy core values and the CPO Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles."*

The above points from Admiral Ferguson speak directly to what a CPO/SCPO is charged to emulate and should be used to help guide the drafter in developing a truthful and honest evaluation.

White Space: It is okay to have white space. Do not try to stretch things; the board will see right through the "fluff." Remember, Master Chiefs with undocumented ADD/ADHD are grading your record; white space is acceptable.

Numbers: Try not to over state things with BIG numbers. If you use numbers, use them to the CPO/SCPOs advantage. Some examples of using numbers in a positive way are:

- ITC was directly responsible for 2 Sailor's selected as JSOQ, 1 SOQ and 3 BJOQ.

- I hand selected AEC to run my LINE DIVISION in which he/she lead 37 personnel and was responsible for 7 out of 11 being advanced and 12 completing EAWS qualifications.

- AEC is top notch and it is demonstrated in his/her ability to lead, guide and direct 53 Sailor's in AV/ARM DIVISION which had the highest EAWS and CDI qualification rate at my command.

Opening bullets: This should be the attention grabber and should set the tone of the evaluation.

- #1 CHIEF at my Command!

- My #1 MP ONLY DUE TO CONSTRAINTS OF THE SYSTEM!

- He is the Chief to turn to when the job requires timely and flawless execution.

- Chief XXXXXX is a "CAN DO" leader and my second CMC!

- ***MY NUMBER 1 MUST PROMOTE; MP ONLY DUE TO NUMBERS CONSTRAINTS***

- Chief/Senior Chief XXXXXXXXXXXX's consistent drive for EXCELLENCE, persistent commitment to MISSION, and unfaltering LEADERSHIP skills set him/her apart from his/her peers.
- The best XXXXXXXX (ATC, Desk Chief, DOOW, EOOW, etc) I have EVER served with!!!
- #1 of 13 Chiefs in (CVW, SUBRON, DESRON) and #2 of 15 ONBOARD!
- FULLY QUALIFIED and BOARD CERTIFIED COMMAND SENIOR/MASTER CHIEF!!
- DUAL THREAT SENIOR CHIEF!! He/she is fully qualified CSC/CMC and EDMC/MMCPO/EOOW.
- Acting COB/CMC XX times for XX days/months.
- SCPO XXXXX was at command XXXXXX assigned as the XXXXXXXX and broke out among his/her peers as #XX of XX. He then transferred to command XXXXX to do job XXXXXX. He/she completed his/her XX degree, is involved in the CPOA, but due to being forward deployed is unable to do community service.

Transferring Out of Normal Rotation: There is nothing wrong with transferring out of rotation and it will not necessarily be viewed negatively; however, it should be addressed. If it is not addressed the board could assume there was an issue and could be a distractor. Here are some examples of transferring out of normal rotation.

- Although he/she is transferring early he/she would be ranked #XX of XX if ranked among his/her peers.
- Handpicked by ISIC to assume the role of XXXXXX; an immediate HOT FILL!
- Transferred to TPU/LIMDU due to unforeseen emergent medical issue.
- He/she was hand selected to fill the role of XXXXX which is normally reserved for a SCPO/MCPO.
- Volunteered to accept orders to XXXXX; a critical and hard to fill billet. I am confident he/she will immediately succeed.

Body bullets: The CPO evaluation does not have an area for COLLEGE or COMMUNITY SERVICE. Therefore you must use some of the body for these areas. I can assure you they help when a board member is reviewing a record. Some examples are:

Community Service:

- As a Scout Leader he volunteered over 350 man hours to leading and guiding future leaders at Troop 007.
- As the base CPOA Vice President he/she was directly responsible for the successful execution of FYXX CPO 365 season.

- Handpicked by the XXXXX (base name) Board of Governors to be the FYXX CPO 365 Phase II Chairman for 103 CPO Selectees.

- Volunteered over 30 hours a week to the United through Reading program; a MCPON directed program.

- Was my go to Chief for CPO 365!

- Portrayed a positive image for the Navy by volunteering at the local Boys and Girls Club every weekend; over 100 hours a month.

College: Give concrete numbers and NOT generalities.

- Completed his/her BA, BS, MBA, AA, AS degree and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a 3.93 GPA.

- Finished 3 additional college courses while maintaining a top notch maintenance division.

- Attained his/her AA in General Education while deployed.

Body: Try not to use the same adjective over and over. Remember be brief, but give solid concrete bullets. Some examples are:

- Displayed exceptional foresight and leadership in completing an extensive COMTUEX, maintenance work up and deployment with ZERO maintenance or personnel issues.

- Chief XXXXXXXXXXXX is the epitome of a true 24/7 Aviation Sailor.

- He/she turns young men and women into mature Sailor's ready to execute the mission.

- His/her division is full of professionals who demonstrate outstanding technical competence and superior troubleshooting skills while holding strong to the Navy's Core Values!

- His direct training and guidance lead to an overall 23% increase in advancement within his division.

- Leader and Mentor. Personally trained and mentored to 27 E6 and below resulting in the Squadron completing ALL deployment requirements ahead of schedule for the first time ever.

- His/her direct leadership and training aided in the Squadron having the highest advancement rate within CVW-1 for the Mar 20XX exam.

- Fully qualified Command Senior Chief and is ready for assignment as CMC.

- Displays recruiting-poster pride and professionalism at ALL times and exemplifies the Navy core values in and out of uniform.

- Deckplate Leader. His/her personal commitment to Sailorization directly resulted in 3 Sailor's being promoted to Chief, 3 to PO1, 7 to PO2 and 13 to PO3.
- Chief XXXXXXXXXX performs best in high pressure situations, always keeping crew morale and mission accomplishment well balanced.
- As a SFF Chief I rely heavily on his/her sage advice for all major maintenance related items and he/she is always "spot on!"
- Completely resurrected my XXXXXXXX program and his/her efforts are directly responsible for significant increase in morale at my command.
- Achieved xxx% department/command overall retention directly resulting in receiving the X Fleet Golden Anchor.
- His/her training program transformed Combat Systems Department from individual divisions into a cohesive combat team; directly resulting in the ship receiving the XXXX (award).
- His/her personal leadership and engagement culminated in the receipt of XXX Battle "E" for 20XX.
- Restructured my CDB program, increasing the number of CDBs by XXX% from the previous year; leading to an XX% increase in command retention.

Mission: This is an important area and validates the purpose of the position of the CPO/SCPO; however, this area should not be over stated. Remember, to make CPO/SCPO you are already the technical expert and the CPO/SCPO should be leading, guiding, directing and developing Sailors. Some examples of mission are:

- My best FDC he/she ensured the safe execution of over 988 sorties with a 98% completion rate; the highest in three cruises.
- Personally managed over 3,568 man hours of maintenance; ensuring the ship was able to remain on station for XX months.
- Directed the planning and execution of the first ever XXXXXX mission.

Stating The Obvious: This may sound simple, but it is very common to read evaluations stating the obvious. When the writer states the obvious it can be considered a distractor and uses space on the evaluation unnecessarily. Here are some examples of stating the obvious (underlined and in italics):

- #1 of 13 Chiefs *in a highly competitive Chiefs Mess!* [What CO is really going to say "...in a highly UNcompetitive Chiefs Mess!"]
- Supervised over 253 man hours of *by the book* maintenance. [What CO is going to say "...NOT by the book..."]

- LSC managed a 1.7 million dollar budget flawlessly and without error. [This statement says; LSC did his/her job. What CO is going to say "LSC managed a \$1.7 million dollar budget with MULTIPLE errors."?]

- Conducted 37 CDBs for his/her division. [CPO/SCPOs are expected to conduct CDBs. What CO is going to say "Did NOT conduct CDBs for his/her division."?] **NOTE the difference in this CDB bullet and the one in the "body" section.**

Major Qualifications: The progress and completion of major qualifications should be included in evaluations. Documenting progress will demonstrate initiative and motivation. Some examples of major qualifications are:

- He has completed 85% of his COB/CSC/CMC qualifications.
- Fully qualified EOOW and ready to be assigned immediately!
- Completely qualified CMC and is simply waiting assignment.
- 99% completed with SFF qualifications; only waiting to complete the required school.
- Completed ALL required courses to obtain the XXXX NEC.
- He/she has completed the XXXXX qualifications and is ready to assume the duties as XXXXXX.
- Obtained his/her MTS and is now one of my command mentors for MTS!

Collateral Duties: Often collateral duties will be listed in BLK 29 (on the front), but there will be no explanation how the CPO/SCPO is doing with them. Here are some examples of collateral duty explanations:

- As my CMEO he/she conducted two DEOMI surveys and managed the best command assessment team I have ever seen.
- As the DAPA his/her leadership directly led to over 14 months of ARI/DUI free.
- While serving as my UPC he/she conducted 239 samples, met all quotas and implemented my SPICE testing program.
- Completely resurrected and rebuilt my command indoc program. He/she executed command indoc for over 113 newly reporting personnel.

Adverse Information: This area is a double edged sword; do you mention a potentially adverse area or leave it wide open to conjecture? Recommend putting adverse areas in the evaluation. When members of a board have to "guess" or it is left to conjecture; it is normally not in favor of the member. Here are some examples of adverse information.

- Chief XXXXXX failed the Spring BCA, but scored 292 points on the PRT portion. Since the failure he/she has lost 53 lbs., passed the Fall BCA and is now my command FEP coordinator.

- Although Chief XXXXXX failed the BCA I am confident it is due to him/her quitting smoking. He/she has passed the latest BCA/PRT and is a role model of health and fitness. I can assure you this is a onetime incident.

- Chief XXXXXX found guilty of ART 111 during CO NJP on DDMMYY. This mistake is the only one I have ever seen him/her make in the last 3 yrs.

Declining Performance Mark (EP, MP, P) or Lower than RSA: If for some reason the performance mark is lowered from the previous year ensure it is discussed within the evaluation. Some examples are:

- Performance mark lowered due to increase in summary group size; member still performing at the XX level.

- Members performance mark lowered to MP only behind my CSC/CMC.

- Lowered him/her from EP to MP due to failure to qualify XXXXXX.

- Performance mark average lowered to decrease RSA, performing as a XXXXXX.

- Transfer evaluation Performance mark average lower than RSA in order to decrease RSA, he/she would normally be X.XX.

Bullets v. Evaluation Marks: This is another area where you do not want the board guessing. Give them some details so they can make educated decisions. Here are some examples of bullets v. evaluation marks.

- Chief XXXXX had his/her mark lowered in communications not because of their abilities, but to adjust my average. He/she is an EXCELLENT communicator.

- I lowered Chief XXXXX in ????????? because he/she continues to struggle in that area. I am sure he/she will rebound and exceed my expectations.

- LOYALTY and PROFESSIONALISM marks lowered in an effort to adjust my overall average. Chief is very LOYAL and always PROFESSIONAL.

Closing Body bullets: This area is one of the most important areas and should include if possible future assignment recommendations. Some examples of closing are:

****Note: Avoid standard closers (i.e., PRESS 100. Promote now. Promote to SCPO/MCPO NOW!); these are considered plain and are often over looked.****

- Ensure the Navy better utilizes his/her talents by immediately selecting him/her for SCPO and assigning him/her as a COMMAND SENIOR CHIEF!!
- Chief XXXXXXXXXXXX WILL BE a top performing Command Senior Chief in the future and should be immediately promoted!!!
- The Navy will only benefit from his/her selection to SCPO and assigned to a demanding billet as a Command Senior Chief.
- I am confident he/she will make an OUTSTANDING Command Senior Chief and continue to excel in the Navy.
- A standout performer, he/she has earned my strongest recommendation for advancement to SCPO and assignment as a Command Senior Chief.
- Even as a Chief I recognize he/she will be a GREAT CMC and is on track to become MCPON!
- On the fast track to MCPON or FLEET. Keep him/her on this track by promoting Senior Chief XXXXXXXXXXXX to MCPO NOW!!!!
- Chief XXXXXXX's drive and motivation re-define the standard; he/she leads from the front, always by example and is ready to serve as a Command Senior Chief.
- Assign Senior Chief to only the MOST CHALLENGING LEADERSHIP assignments, paving the way for FLEET, FORCE and or MCPON!!!!
- He/she has proven his/her readiness for the challenge and is already performing as a Master Chief!
- Immediately promote him/her to Master Chief and reassign him/her back to my command as my CMC!!!

Below you will find a blank evaluation worksheet and "sample" evaluation worksheet. It was designed to give the drafter all of the recommended evaluation information on one page utilizing bullets. This will also give the CPO/SCPO a chance to provide input and see exactly what they have done or have not done in the last year.

In closing if you read this paper and gained some knowledge then I am glad I was able to help. If you read some of the bullets or Tips and Tricks and thought "wow that is strong" just imagine if the Master Chief reviewing your record could say the same thing about your evaluations.

Finally, if you found this information to be useful and you think it will help someone in the fleet; please pass it on to your CO, XO, OIC, Ready Room, Wardroom, Chiefs mess, First Classes, and anyone else you think it could help. Let's keep educating the future of the Navy.

Name: _____ Rate/Warfare: _____

Fill out the below evaluation worksheet ensuring all the information provided is for the period of MMM YYYY to MMM YYYY. Provide as much information as possible to ensure the evaluation is complete and thorough. *(Attach previous 5 evaluations to worksheet)*

Return worksheet to: _____ by: _____

| AREA | COMMENT/ INFORMATION |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| ADVERSE | |
| AWARDS | |
| COLLATERAL DUTIES | |
| COMMUNITY SERVICE/ COMREL | |
| CPO INVOLVMENT | |
| EDUCATION | |
| QUALIFICATIONS | |
| SAILORIZATION/ DECKPLATE LEADERSHIP | |

****** SAMPLE WORKSHEET ******

Name: Smith, I M Rate/Warfare: ITC (AW/IDW/SW)

Fill out the evaluation worksheet ensuring all the information provided is for the period of SEP 2012 to SEP 2013. Provide as much information as possible to ensure the evaluation is complete and thorough. (**Attach previous 5 evaluations to worksheet**)

Return worksheet to: ITCM Mendez due by: 20 JULY 2013

| AREA | COMMENT/ INFORMATION |
|--|--|
| ADVERSE | - Failed BCA 12-01: first one in career. Lost 54 lbs. and relieved as CMD FEP coord |
| AWARDS | - NAM (2 nd) MAR 2012 - MOVSM (1 st) OCT 2012 |
| COLLATERAL DUTIES | - DAPA: ZERO ARI/DUIs in 14 months - MWR RSO: raised \$10K - Sponsor Coord: gained 76 personnel since OCT 2012 |
| COMMUNITY SERVICE/ COMREL | - Youth Soccer Coach - Scout Master - Volunteer at homeless shelter (50 hrs a week) - Adopt A Highway Coord |
| CPO INVOLVMENT | - CMD CPOA Treasurer - CPO 365 PH II Sponsor - Base CPOA VP |
| EDUCATION | - 3 classes towards AA - Received welding degree & certification |
| QUALIFICATIONS | - CSC/CMC chargebook 92% complete |
| SAILORIZATION/ DECKPLATE LEADERSHIP | - Leads 1 CPO, 5 P01, 17 P02, 23 P03 & 29 E3/below - 1 CAP from division - 1 SOQ & 1 BJOQ from division - 16 of 29 dual warfare qualified |