

Question: How do I prepare myself for promotion?

Background: NOAA Corps promotions are based on: performance, training, maintaining current medical and dental checks, time-in-grade and time-in-service. The rate of promotion is based on the needs of the Service and the authorized strength at each rank. This “How To” document describes the promotion process, resources available to officers to prepare for success, and the practices officers should follow to prepare themselves for promotion.

Reference(s):

- NOAA Corp Directive - [Chapter 1](#), Part 6, Official Personnel Records Management
- NOAA Corp Directive - [Chapter 4](#) – Career Development and Promotion
- NOAA Corp Directive - [Chapter 10](#), Part 1, Section 10008 – Officer Personnel Board
- [Officer Evaluation System](#)
- [Leadership Development Framework](#)

Summary of Promotion Process:

Each fiscal year, the Director, Commissioned Personnel Center, (CPC) sets forth recommendations and timing for the promotion zones to the Director, NOAA Corps. Prior to each Officer Personnel Board (OPB), where promotion selections recommendations are to be made, the Director, NOAA Corps, signs a precept letter that appoints the Board members, establishes the agenda of actions, and advises the members regarding the zone under consideration.

The OPB membership will consist of at least five active-duty NOAA Corps officers, not below the permanent grade of commander. One of the five appointed members is identified to serve as Chair of the OPB. During the Selection Board, the [Matrix](#) is a tool used to aid in the OPB’s deliberations. The OPB is given access to the Official Personnel Folder of each officer within the zone, and is instructed to complete the matrix according to his/her judgment based upon the criteria for promotion for the rank under consideration. In all OPB deliberations, each member swears that he/she will perform the duties imposed upon them without prejudice or partiality, and having in view both the records of officers and the efficiency of the NOAA Commissioned Corps.

The OPB makes recommendations to the Secretary for the permanent promotion of NOAA Corps officers. The Board forwards its recommendations through the Director, NOAA Corps, and he/she forwards the OPB’s recommendations, along with any comments, through the Under Secretary to the Secretary. The Secretary reviews the OPB’s recommendations, and may concur with them in whole or in part. If the Secretary concurs with the recommendations, they are forwarded through the President to the Senate for confirmation. If the Secretary does not accept the recommendations of the OPB, the OPB reconvenes and makes further recommendations as are acceptable to the Secretary.

Once the promotions have been confirmed by the Senate, the Senate confirmation scroll is returned to the White House and then returned to the Commissioned Personnel Center via the Department. When a vacancy is projected to exist the Director, NOAA Corps, will forward the necessary paperwork to the Secretary to effect permanent promotions subject to provisions of the NOAA Corps Directives. The Secretary then issues to each officer promoted a commission, in the name of the President, with the effective date specified in the commission to be deemed for all purposes to be the date of the promotion. Promotions are always effected in the order on the nomination lists unless the officer next on the list is not qualified for promotion. In this situation, the officer will be bypassed and the next qualified officer will be promoted.

Information and Practices to Prepare for Promotion:

The NOAA Corps is a uniformed service with a promotion system based on an ‘up or out’ system. In an up or out system, there are always fewer promotion slots than there are officers. So by design, not all officers will be selected to the next higher grade. Officer Evaluation Reports (OER) are an essential element for giving officers feedback on performance and providing OPBs information for decisions on promotion, assignments, and career development.

Following the fundamental practices provided below will prepare officers for promotion consideration. Ultimately, the responsibility lies in each officer’s hands to direct your career, prepare for promotion and best position yourself to compete amongst your peers.

Basic Steps at All Levels:

- 1. Plan ahead.** CPC will announce promotions zones up to four months prior to the OPB deliberations. Selection Boards typically take place between March and June each year.
- 2. Review your OPF On-line.** Ensure all required documents are in the correct location, and labeled correctly.
- 3. Get all medical check-ups.** Schedule timely physical and dental appointments. Submit the documentation and ensure your Official Medical Folder (OMF) is updated with the appointment results as soon as possible.
- 4. Fully engage in the Officer Evaluation Report (OER) process.** Provide OER input and accomplishments timely to your supervisor. Request consideration for a special OER from your chain of command, if appropriate. **Ensure the biographical summary or resume in your OPF is up-to-date and accurate.**
- 5. Update your assignment preference in your OPF on-line.** Discuss potential with your chain of command, CPC’s Officer Career Management Division, and/or seek guidance from a senior officer. Select challenging assignment preferences that will help you gain and develop new and/or improve current competencies, especially those expected at the next higher rank or above.

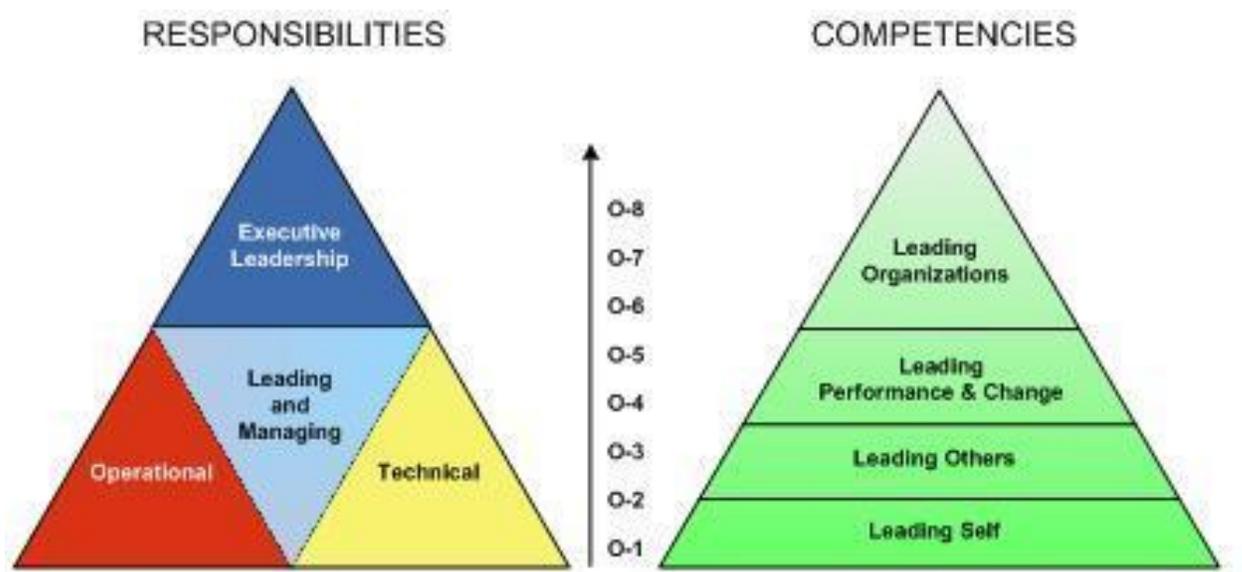


Figure 1 Leadership Development Framework

Checklist:

For Promotion to O2

- Medical and dental check-ups are timely and up-to-date. Records are documented in the OMF.
- Complete [required training courses](#). Records are documented in the OPF.
- [Officer Evaluation Reports](#) are on time and entered into the OPF.
 - Reporting period end dates - annually 31 January and 31 July.
- Demonstrate potential, lead projects, take on challenging tasks.
- Seek training opportunities aside from required training to build leadership potential.
- Seek guidance from senior officers.

For Promotion to O3

- Medical and dental check-ups are timely and up-to-date. Five-year physical completed on time. Records are documented in the OMF.
- Complete [required training courses](#). Records are documented in the OPF.
- [Officer Evaluation Reports](#) are on time and entered into the OPF.
 - Reporting Period end dates - annually 31 January and 31 July (officers >3 years only July 31).
- Seek training opportunities aside from required training to build leadership potential.
- Seek guidance from senior officers.
- Show potential for leadership.
- Gain experience as project/program lead.
- Step outside comfort zone.
- Build managerial skills.

For Promotion to O4

- Medical and dental check-ups are timely and up-to-date. Records are documented in the OMF.
- Complete [required training courses](#). Records are documented in the OPF.
- [Officer Evaluation Reports](#) are on time and entered into the OPF.
 - Reporting Period end date - annually 30 November.
- Successfully complete tasks and assignments.
- Gain management experience.
- Seek to master skills, supervisory roles, and leadership opportunities.
- Diversify your career.
- Develop your team leadership potential.
- Improve a program or project's efficiency and effectiveness.

For Promotion to O5

- Medical and dental check-ups are timely and up-to-date. Five-year physical completed on time. Records are documented in the OMF.
- [Officer Evaluation Reports](#) are on time and entered into the OPF.
 - Reporting Period end date - annually 30 November.
- Program management training and experience.
- Take on leadership opportunities and develop leadership competencies through training programs.
- Successfully complete tasks and assignments.
- Demonstrate success at leading others, including mentoring and coaching.
- Develop a wide breadth of experience.

For Promotion to O6

- Medical and dental check-ups are timely and up-to-date. Five-year physical completed on time. Records are documented in the OMF.
- [Officer Evaluation Reports](#) are on time and entered into the OPF.
 - Reporting Period end date - annually 31 October.
- Program management training and experience.
- Take on leadership opportunities and develop leadership competencies through senior-level training programs.
- Successfully complete tasks and assignments.
- Demonstrate success at leading organizations and others, including mentoring and coaching.
- Develop a wider breadth of experience, continue to diversify career.

CPC Point(s) of Contact:

- Promotion Process - Officer Personnel Management Division – katherine.raymond@noaa.gov
- Training, Career Development and Officer Evaluation System - Officer Career Management Division – todd.a.bridgeman@noaa.gov