

Date: 25 May 2023
FROM: PY2023 Promotion Board Chairs / Assistant Surgeons General
TO: All Commissioned Corps Officers Considered for Promotion in PY2023
SUBJECT: OPEN LETTER OF CONGRATULATIONS, REFLECTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Congratulations are in order for those officers who have been selected for temporary grade promotion!

It is no exaggeration to say that we are extraordinarily impressed by the caliber of officers across all categories. After reviewing the many promotion packets submitted, we found ourselves humbled by the level of influence, contributions, impact, and leadership you all have demonstrated, and we are all the more honored to serve with you. You perform in incredible ways across all strata of government, around the world, in many austere, isolated, and remote locations, for the underserved and vulnerable.

For those promoted, we are fully confident you will continue to excel in your duties at your higher rank. For those officers who were not promoted, please know that this does not reflect a lack of recognition for your tremendous contributions. If you were not “above the line,” do not confuse this with your value, importance, contribution, and impact. We do acknowledge, however, that this distinction can be very challenging to discern in our culture where we link position and rank with success. While it’s natural to be disappointed if you didn’t receive a promotion this cycle, we encourage you to use this experience as a learning opportunity as you prepare for promotion in the next cycle.

The Chairs of the Promotion Boards – all flag officers – offer the following recommendations for your consideration to improve already solid promotion packages:

- Take advantage of the board review comments, as they required three separate reviewers to select them for a comment to register on your scoresheet, because they reflect important issues for your consideration.
- If the comments are few or absent, review the promotion benchmarks against your CV with a mentor, to identify those areas for improvement that align with your professional development.
- Be timely in package submission; always use the latest prescribed formats with your latest career updates incorporated. Prioritize the time needed to put your best foot forward (i.e., start early and invite your mentors to review your packet).
- Be attentive to detail, concision, and organization not only because doing so contributes to a more professionally polished package, but also to minimize the time reviewers take to find the information they seek, reducing the likelihood an important detail in your package is overlooked.
- With the transition to multi-disciplinary promotion boards, it is important that acronyms be spelled out the first time and that profession-specific and agency-specific jargon be minimized or clarified.

- Be succinct with your impact statements (less is typically more) and use as much of the word count space as you need to effectively tell your story. Be strategic about where and how you reiterate your most impactful work throughout your package.
- Develop your impact statements in a SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound). Use hard numbers, percentages, dollar figures wherever you can to amplify your achievements.
- Focus your time and limited space on identifying factors that set you apart. What are the **unique** contributions that you have made to your Agency and to the Corps? And explain why it is important and relevant. How your unique contributions are reflected in your Reviewing Officer's Statement is critical.
- If for example, you are participating in PAC activities, Ensemble, and Honor Guard – how did you lead, innovate, and implement in a way that sets you apart? Was there a discernable impact?

In closing, we commend every officer who was up for promotion this year and worked hard to prepare the very competitive packages we reviewed. We are extremely proud of you and the work that you do for the Nation. Having the privilege to chair the various promotion committees has reinforced for each of us that the future of the Commissioned Corps will be in the best of hands. Please continue to be vocal about the support you need from your Agency and the Corps with respect to professional development and other needs. Your collective success is our Service's success.

In Officio Salutis

Promotion Board Chairs – Assistant Surgeons General