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Army Research Institute for the Behavioral + Social Sciences

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~~Research~~ Report 706

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CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL AND UNSUCCESSFUL OFFICERS STUDIED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OFFICER EVALUATION AND REPORTING FORMS.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A prerequisite to the entire problem of the development of experimental rating forms is a knowledge of the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful officers. One hopeful approach to the problem is a study carried out by the Psychological Branch, Surgeon's Division, AAF Redistribution Station #2, Miami Beach, Florida, under the supervision of the Psychological Division, Office of the Surgeon, Headquarters Army Air Forces Personnel Distribution Command, Atlantic City, New Jersey: "Characteristics of Successful and Unsuccessful Combat Leaders", Psychological Research Bulletin PDC (1945)-2, 8 March 1945. In this study each of 499 rated returnee officers wrote essays in accordance with the following directions: "...write several paragraphs describing the most effective officer you have known, emphasizing those qualities which you feel made this man a successful combat leader..... When you have finished this, describe, in the same manner, the least successful combat leader under whom you have served..." Statements made in these essays were analyzed into 32 categories descriptive of successful leaders and 28 categories descriptive of unsuccessful leaders.

II. POPULATION.

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To further explore the approach of the above cited study, an Officer Description Form was constructed and administered to a total of 265 officers and 49 noncommissioned officers at Camp Upton, New York, Camp Shank, New York, Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, and the Army Air Forces Redistribution Station at Atlantic City, New Jersey. The 49 noncommissioned officers were all in the Air Corps. The arm or service of the 265 officers is listed in Table I.

TABLE I

ARM OR SERVICE OF 265 OFFICERS COMPLETING THE OFFICER DESCRIPTION FORM

ARM OR SERVICE	NUMBER OF OFFICERS
Air Corps	158
Infantry	48
Quartermaster	16
Field Artillery	9
Transportation Corps	9
Medical Corps	5
Coast Artillery Corps	5
Ordnance	4
Signal Corps	3
Corps of Engineers	2
Cavalry	2
Finance Department	2
Chaplain Corps	1
Adjutant General's Office	1

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III. PROBLEMS.

For the purposes of the Officer Selection Project, data from the Personnel Distribution Command study presented the following limiting questions:

1. Were the characteristics of successful or unsuccessful officers sufficiently representative of all other arms and services as distinguished from the Air Corps?

2. Was the coverage of characteristics of successful and unsuccessful officers adequate?

IV. CONSTRUCTION OF THE OFFICER DESCRIPTION FORM

All information for this study was supplied anonymously. Construction of each of the four sections of the Officer Description Form is outlined below:

1. Section I. Directions for accomplishing this section are as follows:

"The purpose of this study is to find out more about the characteristics of successful officers. During your service you have had the chance to compare the actions and characteristics of different officers and no doubt you have arrived at some conclusions regarding those qualities of leadership which you feel make for success in officers' assignments. Think back over your Army career for the past six months and pick out the best officer you personally have observed during that time.

What was his rank?_____

What job did he hold?_____

What, if any, official relations existed between you and the officer selected?_____

On the basis of your experience write several paragraphs describing this officer, emphasizing those qualities which you feel made him a successful officer. You should take at least 10 minutes for this description. Do this now!"

Directions for the second part of Section I follow:

"Now think of the poorest officer you have seen during that same time.

What was his rank?_____

What job did he hold?_____

What, if any, official relations existed between you and this officer?_____

Describe this officer in the same manner as the one previous. Take at least 10 minutes for this description."

2. Section II. In order to further evaluate those characteristics which had been extracted from similar essays written in the AAF Personnel Distribution Command Study, 169 statements in the exact words of the describing officer and representative of the 32 categories descriptive of successful leaders and the 28 categories descriptive of unsuccessful leaders were rated in accordance with the following directions:

"On the following pages are statements actually used by Army officers in describing other officers. For each item, consider the likelihood that its possession will contribute to an officer's success in the performance of his duties. Indicate your opinion of its desirability or undesirability by placing on the line to the left of each item the number representing the degree of desirability or undesirability.

6 - EXTREMELY DESIRABLE

5 - STRONGLY DESIRABLE

4 - MILDLY DESIRABLE

3 - NO EFFECT ON SUCCESS

2 - MILDLY UNDESIRABLE

1 - STRONGLY UNDESIRABLE

0 - EXTREMELY UNDESIRABLE

It is not necessary to be consistent in evaluating the descriptions. React to each one independently.

EXAMPLE: 3 Had the knack of being one of the boys.

If you placed a 3 before the description, as in the example, it would mean that you felt an Army officer having "The knack of being one of the boys" would neither be aided nor handicapped in the performance of his duties."

3. Section III. In this section 30 of the 32 categories of the AAF Personnel Distribution Command Study descriptive of successful leaders were listed. Two categories were eliminated because they were applicable only to AC officers. Upon analysis of these 30 categories it was believed that three items appearing on the W.D., A.G.O. Form No. 67, Efficiency Report, were not covered and so these three items (Physically Vigorous, Initiative, and Military Bearing and Neatness) were added making 33 categories in this section. These 33 items were rated in accordance with the following directions:

"The following qualities have been found to be characteristic of many successful officers. Without regard to your answers in the previous sections, place a check mark (✓) to the right of each quality which you believe have been possessed by the most successful officer of your acquaintance. Do this before going on to the next task.

When you have finished checking, using the scale values

3 - NO EFFECT ON SUCCESS

4 - MILDLY DESIRABLE

5 - STRONGLY DESIRABLE

6 - EXTREMELY DESIRABLE

rate each quality as to the degree with which it could contribute to the success of any officer. As in Section II, indicate your opinion by placing on the line to the left of each item the number representing the degree of desirability."

4. Section IV. This section of the Officer Description Form is an experimental rating form and is not directly concerned with the problems outlined in Section III of this report, but was included in this study in order to get preliminary data on its possibilities for discriminating between good and poor officers. Data used in constructing this section was obtained from a previous study (PRS #702) entitled "Obtaining Scale Values of Adjectives with Respect to Officer Preference and Officer Characteristics."

The purpose in developing this section was to construct an adjective rating scale as free as possible from mechanical and halo bias. This was accomplished by having the "best" and "poorest" positions on the scale not only unidentified but also varying in position from scale to scale. Bipolar traits seemed the best solution to this problem.

In the above cited study, booklets entitled "Officer Characteristics, Forms A and B, were administered to 200 subjects who checked each of the 570 descriptive adjectives or phrases in accordance with the following directions:

"On the following pages are words or phrases used in describing people. For each trait, consider the likelihood that its possession will contribute to an Army officer's success in the performance of his duties. Indicate your opinion of its desirability or undesirability by placing on the line to the left of each description the number representing the degree of desirability or undesirability.

6—EXTREMELY DESIRABLE
5—STRONGLY DESIRABLE
4—MILDLY DESIRABLE
3—NO EFFECT ON SUCCESS
2—MILDLY UNDESIRABLE
1—STRONGLY UNDESIRABLE
0—EXTREMELY UNDESIRABLE"

The median response for each of the 570 items was determined to two decimal places and will be referred to as "Scale Value" in the following paragraphs of this report.

Many of these adjectives or phrases referred to traits which could be considered as falling on the same continuum (e.g. Activity Level, Persistence Self-Confidence, etc.). All of the adjectives which seemed to belong to any given continuum were listed according to scale value and from this list five final groups of three adjectives of almost equal scale values were selected so as to represent various scale values from 0 through 6.

A typical example of the construction of one of the continua is given in the list of characteristics for "Self-Confidence." (Table II)

TABLE II

ITEMS OF SELF-CONFIDENCE SELECTED FROM 570 PHRASES AND WORDS CHARACTERISTIC OF "SELF-CONFIDENCE"

Scale Value	Characteristics of "Self-Confidence"
6.00	courageous
5.64	brave
*5.64	coolheaded
5.57	believes in himself
5.39	reliant
5.33	self-respecting
*5.31	stout-hearted
5.20	game
5.09	self-confident
*5.04	expects the best
*4.86	believes in safety first
4.82	assured
*4.68	cautious
4.59	acts on the safe side
*4.46	plays it safe
4.44	daring
*4.33	bold
*4.24	untroubled
*4.08	rarely worries
*3.97	puts his health first
3.66	considers self lucky
*3.63	anxious
3.54	seeks assurance
*3.34	carries a rabbit's foot
3.13	believes in luck
2.93	thinks he can make his own luck
2.82	daredevil
2.60	cold-blooded
2.53	self-satisfied

Scale Value	Characteristics of "Self-Confidence
2.47	overcareful
2.43	overcautious
2.42	accidents can't happen to him
2.39	overbold
2.31	worries about himself
2.28	unconcerned about the future
2.26	overconfident
2.19	expects the worst
2.16	hesitating
*2.08	headstrong
2.04	worries easily
1.90	overfearful
*1.85	rash
1.78	unconcerned
1.76	wavering
1.75	reckless
*1.75	willing to take chances
1.68	foolhardy
1.68	doubtful of himself
1.64	easily flustered
1.62	jittery
1.58	lacks self-confidence
1.41	full of fears
1.17	babyish
1.14	self-worshiping
0.64	coward

* Items were selected for use in the final scale.

Brackets indicate sets of three descriptive terms and phrases used in the final scale for "self-confidence".

Following is the item for "self-confidence" as it appeared in the Officer Description Form:

SELF-CONFIDENCE

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
anxious, puts his health first, carries rabbit's foot	cautious, believes in safety first, plays it safe	coolheaded stout-hearted expects the best	untroubled bold, rarely worries	rash headstrong, willing to take chances

Table III shows the eleven continua which were finally used. (Ten other continua were constructed in the same manner as the one for "self-confidence.") Above each set of three adjectives is the approximate scale value of each of the three descriptive words or phrases:

TABLE III

FINAL CONTINUA SELECTED WITH APPROXIMATE SCALE VALUE OF THE ADJECTIVES IN EACH OF THE FIVE GROUPS OF DESCRIPTIVE ADJECTIVES AND PHRASES

1. ACTIVITY LEVEL

1	3	4	5	3
listless inactive never ready	avoids fatigue placid, takes life easy	quick tranquil self-restrained	hustler zealous punctual	overtires himself, works at high tension, beforehand

2. PERSISTENCE

2	4	5	4	2
mulish unyielding pigheaded	not submissive like clockwork once started--wont stop	sticks to whatever he starts, stable, constant	suggestible uniform settled down	yielding changeable uncertain

3. SOCIAL CONFIDENCE

2	3	4	3	2
puts on airs cocky impatient	thick skinned self complacent critical of others	never boasts modest civil	unassuming retiring placid	hesitating moody shy

4. ATTENTION TO DETAILS

4	6	5	2	1
anxious difficult to please, religiously exact	attentive looks on all sides, accurate	wide awake painstaking precise	hazy, not critical, over or under estimates	inattentive slipshod inexact

5. TAKING OF ADVICE

1	2	5	3	1
opposed to any suggestions, avoids advice, always uninterested	always uses own judgment, refuses to ask questions, bored	stands up for his rights, willing to ask questions, always interested	self-critical seeks advice seeks assurance	doubtful of himself, easily persuaded, dependent

6. TAKING DISCIPLINE

3	5	4	2	1
easy to direct slow-willed meek	takes orders, respectful, accepts criticism	willful commanding not submissive	unyielding explosive sulky	will not accept discipline, insubordinate, cannot take criticism

7. SELF-CONFIDENCE

3	4	5	4	1
anxious, puts his health first, carries rabbit's foot	cautious, believes in safety first, plays it safe	coolheaded stouthearted expects the best	untroubled bold, rarely worries	rash, headstrong, willing to take chances

8. ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHERS

1	2	4	5	4
discourteous selfish faultfinder	keeps to himself must always win growler	independent likes to beat the other fellow, crafty	sociable cooperative sincere	tender sympathetic humble

9. EMOTIONAL TONE

5	2	4	2	1
happy lively carefree	has no feelings indifferent up and down in moods	solemn grave rarely worries	gloomy moody uneasy	sullen depressed listless

10. CHARACTER

2	4	5	4	2
cynical crude mannered goes to excess	serious minded blunt bold	sober minded well-mannered dignified	pure minded polished manners modest	prudish, poses, leaves women alone

11. SPEECH HABITS

1	3	4	5	2
talks your head off, gabby braggart	loud talkative blunt	quiet entertaining plain spoken	deliberate brief close-mouthed	silent shy seclusive

Each subject accomplished Sections IVa and IVb in accordance with the following directions. The same eleven continua of Table III above were used in both sections.

Part A

"Thinking again of the best officer you have observed, rate him on the scale given below. For each of the eleven traits presented (e.g. Persistence), make a cross in the box (✓) on the line directly

above the group of three phrases or words which best describes the man you are thinking about. Please note that you will check only one box on each line. However be sure to make a cross on every line, even though you may be uncertain or are just guessing.

Part B

Now, using a similar scale (given below), rate the poorest officer you have observed by placing a cross in the appropriate box on each line. Again, do not skip any items."

5. Construction of Form O of the Officer Description Form:

Because practically all officers described an officer higher in rank, a Form O of the Description Form was later constructed which was unchanged from the form described above with the exception that it specifically asked for a description of an officer of lower rank than the officer accomplishing the form.

In an attempt to determine whether the position of the essay in the Officer Descriptive Form would affect the nature of descriptive statements made by officers, the essay in this form was placed in the last section, (Section IV) instead of in Section I as in the other forms.

6. Construction of Form N of the Officer Description Form:

A Form N of the Officer Description Form was constructed which was unchanged from the original form with the exception that wording was changed so that it could be administered to noncommissioned officers who would describe the best and poorest officers of their experience.

V. PROCEDURES AND RESULTS

1. The Essay Analysis

(a) Procedure: Essays describing the best and poorest officers were analyzed separately for the group of 107 officers in arms or services other than Air Corps, for the 49 Air Corps noncommissioned officers who completed Form N of the Officer Description Form, and for the group of 57 Air Corps officers who completed Form O of the Officers Description Form. Each characteristic mentioned was copied in the exact words of the describing officer on a separate index card. When all essays were thus analyzed, characteristics were sorted into the categories reported by the AAF Personnel Distribution Command Study. Where it was not possible to find a suitable category for a characteristic, a new one was made. For each category the number of times a characteristic fell in it was divided by the number of essays, and the percent of the essays mentioning that characteristic was determined.

(b) Results:

(1) Characteristics were relatively the same as those found in the Personnel Distribution Command study.

(2) Several new characteristics were found which would not conveniently fit into the categories made by the Distribution Command study. These were:

Personal qualities--sense of humor
Ability to give orders and instructions
Steadiness
Knowledge and experience in the Army
Loyalty to the group
Military bearing and neatness

(3) The frequency with which a characteristic was mentioned varied somewhat (Table IV). These differences are not to be interpreted rigidly because of several varying factors such as number of cases, combat experience, experiences related to the various arms of services, length of service, and differences due to subjective interpretation and categorizing of traits by various investigators.

(4) Characteristics found in essays describing poorest officers were practically all opposites of characteristics found in essays describing the best officers. Because it seemed that nothing would be gained by further analysis of these essays, further consideration of them is not made in this report.

(5) Essays written by enlisted men did not mention as many characteristics as did essays written by officers. (See Table IV). Practically all descriptions by enlisted men stressed the importance in a good officer of the characteristic "Consideration of the Men's Welfare".

(6) It seemed that the effect of placing the essay at the end of Form O of the Officers Descriptive Form instead of at the beginning was negligible. These essays seemed to be of the same length and mentioned about the same characteristics for good and poor officers as essays which appeared at the beginning of the form.

2. Degree of desirability or undesirability for officer success of characteristics studied.

(a) Procedure: In Sections II and III of the Officer Descriptive Form, the median response for each item was determined separately for each of the following four groups:

(1) The 107 officers in Arms or Services other than Air Corps

(2) The 57 Air Corps officers describing officers of lower rank than their own (Form O)

(3) The 99 Air Corps officers who described for the most part officers of higher rank than their own.

(4) The 49 noncommissioned officers (Form N)

The average of the median for the four groups was then determined.

TABLE IV

CATEGORIES OF SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP QUALITIES AND THE PERCENTAGES OF OFFICERS AND NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICERS WHO MADE DESCRIPTIVE STATEMENTS THAT WERE CLASSIFIED INTO THESE CATEGORIES.

CATEGORY	Distribution Command Study—Air Corps Officers.—212 cases.	Other Arms and Service Officers—107 cases.	AC Officers Describing Other Officers of Lower Rank—57 cases.(Form O)	AC Noncommissioned Officers Describing Commissioned Officers—49 cases. (Form N)
	PERCENT OF ESSAYS USING VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS			
1. Consideration of the Men's Welfare. Went to "bat" for men's safety, comfort, food, etc. Understood problems of rest of men, e.g., promotions, transfers, days off, etc.	47	41	45	69
2. Ability to Mix with Subordinates. Had the knack of being one of the boys, yet demanding and attaining respect of all. Knew all officers and enlisted men by name; always friendly and sociable.	29	22	0	33
3. Unusual Proficiency in his Specialty and Knowledge of his Equipment. Knew his planes. Exhibited a high degree of skill in his specialty.	25	33	54	49
4. Sharing of Dangers. Flew large percentage of raids. Flew all the "hot" ones; did not pick "milk runs".	22	4	0	0
5. Approachability. Easy to approach with new ideas or personal problems. Ready to accept suggestions.	22	21	43	7

CATEGORY	Distribution Command Study — Air Corps Officers.—212 cases.	Other Arms and Service Officers—[illegible] 97 cases.	AC Officers Describing Other Officers of Lower Rank—57 cases. (Form O)	AC Noncommissioned Officers Describing Commissioned Officers—49 cases. (Form N)
	PERCENT OF ESSAYS USING VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS			
6. Maintenance of Discipline in the Air and on the Ground. Did not allow individual flying. Wanted "team" men who cooperated with the unit. Insisted on following plans exactly.....	21	18	0	3
7. Impartiality. Did not play favorites. Allowed no politics. Maintained level of missions among flyers.....	19	27	15	[illegible]
8. Enthusiasm and Conscientiousness. Tackled every job energetically and wholeheartedly. Displayed a strong sense of duty and a tireless interest in improvements.....	16	21	50	7
9. Experience in Combat. Knew his combat tactics. Knew all the "tricks of the trade".....	15	0	0	0
10. Respect for Subordinates. Respected ability and experience of others. Very tactful when criticizing men: discussed their mistakes.....	13	21	3	0
11. Sharing of Long Hours, Dirty Work, and Hardships. Worked side by side with all the men right down the line. Never asked his men to do what he wouldn't do..	11	9	3	0
12. Courage. Fought hardest against greatest odds; displayed plenty of "guts" and self-control.....	9	18	0	7

CATEGORY	Distribution Command Study—Air Corps Officers.—222 cases.	Other Arms and Service Officers—107 cases.	AC Officers Describing Other Officers of Lower Rank—57 cases. (Form C)	AC Noncommissioned Officers Describing Commissioned Officers—49 cases. (Form N)
	PERCENT OF ESSAYS USING VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS			
13. Sharing of Information with Subordinates. Explained flight plans and targets thoroughly. Was completely honest in regard to danger of mission.....	8	3	2	0
14. Expectation of Superiority in preparation and Performance of Subordinates. Demanded that men be the best trained. Not afraid to do extra work involved in additional training. Expected equipment to be in tip-top shape.....	8	8	25	3
15. Speed and quality of Decision. Could make successful split-second decisions during combat.....	8	13	9	0
16. Knowledge of All the Jobs under Him and Familiarity with the Things Being Done.....	6	3	16	0
17. Knowledge of All His Men's Abilities and Limitations. Understood his men—what they could and could not do.....	8	6	6	0
18. Proficiency in His Job. Performed his duties (presumably general supervisory and administrative duties) in an expert manner	8	32	23	0
19. Sincerity. Straightforward; meant what he said.....	6	19	10	9

CATEGORY	Distribution Command Study—Air Corps Officers.—212 cases.	Other Arms and Service Officers—107 cases.	AC Officers Describing Other Officers of Lower Rank—57 cases. (Form O)	AC Noncommissioned Officers Describing Commissioned Officers—49 cases. (Form N)
	PERCENT OF ESSAYS USING VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS			
20. Ability to Plan Work. Scheduled work in proper sequence. Knew how to organize to get things done at the right time.....	6	13	17	0
21. Habits of Success. Results of missions were consistently good, and losses of men kept at a minimum.....	5	4	5	0
22. Judgment. Exhibited common sense, practical, clear thinker.....	5	16	34	0
23. Effective Use of Praise and Blame. Knew when and how to command or criticize.	5	15	2	3
24. Ability to Win Respect. Knew how to handle men without resorting to discpline or pulling rank.....	4	17	50	13
25. Ability to Inspire Confidence. Ability to lead well inspired confidence. His self-confidence was transmitted to the rest of the group.....	4	22	26	0
26. Ability to Assign Responsibility for Tasks. Permitted subordinates to fulfill assigned duties without undue interference	3	13	11	3
27. Willingness to Assume Responsibility. Was ready to admit his mistakes; did not shift blame.....	3	6	0	0

CATEGORY	Distribution Command Study—Air Corps Officers.—212 cases.	Other Arms and Service Officers—107 cases.	AC Officers Describing Other Officers of Lower Rank—57 cases. (Form O)	AC Noncommissioned Officers Describing Commissioned Officers—49 cases. (Form N)
	PERCENT OF ESSAYS USING VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS			
28. Modesty and Sense of Proportion.....	3	8	37	0
29. Ability to Cut Red Tape in Order to Get Things Done. Knew how and when to avoid going through channels.....	2	3	0	0
30. Civilian Aviation Experience. Peacetime aviation background	2		0	
31. Ability to Get Along with Superiors. Relations with superiors were friendly and respectful.....	1	13	2	0
32. Ability to Carry a Decision Through to a Successful Conclusion.....	1	13	2	0
33. Personal Qualities, Sense of Humor....		22	24	20
34. Ability to Give Orders and Instruction		20	2	9
35. Steadiness.....		13	17	9
36. Knowledge and Experience in the Army..		12	0	0
37. Loyalty to Group.....		6	7	3
38. Military Bearing and Neatness.....			23	11

(b). Results:

(1) Results obtained from the four groups were very similar. For example in only 14% of the 169 items in Section II of the Officer Description Form was there a difference in opinion between the group of 99 Air Corps officers and the 107 officers in other Arms and Services as to the degree of desirability or undesirability of a characteristic in an officer and when this difference did appear it was only in one category. In only one case was there a difference of more than one category and upon study this item was found to be ambiguous.

(2) The noncommissioned officers seemed significantly different from the other groups in their tendency to use the extreme parts of the scale more frequently. This was particularly true of items which involved relationships of officers with enlisted men; example: "Was not considerate or understanding." The median response for this item was "strongly undesirable" for all groups except the noncommissioned officers whose median response was "extremely undesirable."

(3) When the mean of the medians for all four groups is obtained for each item, a tally shows that 42% of these means are either 0 (Extremely Undesirable) or 1 (Strongly Undesirable); 42% of all these means are either 6 (Extremely Desirable) or 5 (Strongly Desirable); and only 16% of these means fell in the categories 4 (Mildly Desirable), 3 (No Effect on Success), and 2 (Mildly Undesirable). In the case of the 33 categories 100% of all the mean responses were either 5 (Strongly Desirable) or 6 (Extremely Undesirable).

.....

For more complete statistical data reference is made to Appendix A of this report in the statistical study file.

3. Percentage of best officers who possess various characteristics:

(a) Procedure: By tallying the times that a check appeared at the right of each of the 33 categories in Section III of the Officer Description Form it was possible to determine the percentage of officers who believed each characteristic to be possessed by the best officer of their acquaintance. This computation was done only for the Air Corps group and the other Arms and Services group.

(b) Results:

(1) Comparing percentages for each item for the Air Corps group and the other Arms and Services group, 15 items showed differences less than 10% and 18 items showed differences more than 10%. In all cases percentages were lower for the Air Corps group for items where the difference was more than 10%. This probably was due to the fact that the Air Corps group consisted wholly of officers recently commissioned and without combat experience and their opinions were therefore probably not comparable to the other Arms and Services group.

(2) Considering all percentages for both the Air Corps and other Arms and Services group, it is apparent that with the exception of several characteristics involving combat experience, the 33 characteristics in this section of the Officer Description Form are believed to be possessed by 60% to 90% of successful officers.

For more complete statistical data, reference is made to Appendix A of this report in the Statistical Study File.

4. The Experimental Adjective Rating Scale.

(a) Procedure: In order to determine whether the adjective rating scale of Section IV of the Officer Description Form could discriminate between good and poor officers, data were processed for 91 Air Corps officer subjects and 20 subjects from other Arms and Services. It is believed that this sampling was sufficient for the purpose of this preliminary study of the scale.

Responses made for each group of three descriptive adjectives and phrases in each of the 11 continua were tabulated separately for sections in which the best and poorest officer was described.

(b) Results: A frequency distribution of these responses is given in Table V. In the table, "B" represents the number of times a group of three descriptive adjectives or phrases in a given continuum was checked as being the most characteristic of the best officer in the subject's experience; "P" represents the same for the poorest officer, and "T" is the total of "B" and "P". In order to get some indication of the discriminating possibility of the scale, the percent that "B" is of "T" has been determined for every group of three descriptive adjectives or phrases. In the table, this percent is indicated as "%B". For example: In the continuum, "Activity Level", the group of descriptive adjectives and phrases "avoids fatigue, placid, takes life easy", was checked a total of 50 times, 7 times as being the most characteristic of the best officer and 43 times as being most characteristic of the poorest officer. Seven is 14% of 50 which indicates that of the times that this group of descriptive adjectives and phrases was checked, it was checked 14% of the time as being most characteristic of the best officer and 86% of the time for the poorest officer.

The above data from this preliminary run indicates that the scale does have discriminating possibilities. Further development and use of the scale is discussed in the report: "An Investigation of Various Rating Devices in Preparation of an Officer Evaluation Report Form."

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. As outlined in Section I of this report, for the purpose of the Officer Selection Project, two limitations presented themselves in the Personnel Distribution Command Study of Characteristics of Successful and Unsuccessful Officers, namely (1) representativeness of results for all Army and Services and (2) coverage of essential characteristics. This study

TABLE V

Frequency of Response for Groups of Descriptive Adjectives and Phrases Most Characteristic of Best and Poorest Officers with Percent of Total Responses Made for Best Officer.

B = Frequency of response for Best Officer

P = Frequency of response for Poorest Officer

T = Total frequency

%B = Percent of total responses made for Best Officer

1. ACTIVITY LEVEL

	listless inactive never ready	avoids fatigue self-contented, takes life easy	quick tranquil self-restrained	hustler vigorous punctual	overtires himself, works at high tension, beforehand
B	--	7	50	54	--
P	41	43	3	11	12
T	41	50	53	65	12
%B	.00	.14	.94	.83	.00

2. PERSISTENCE

	mulish unyielding pigheaded	not submissive like clock work once started-won't stop	sticks to whatever he starts, stable, constant	suggestible uniform settled down	yielding changeable uncertain
B	--	6	62	43	--
P	58	13	4	2	34
T	58	19	66	45	34
%B	.00	.32	.93	.95	.00

3. SOCIAL CONFIDENCE

	puts on airs cocky impatient	thick-skinned self complacent critical of others	never boasts modest civil	unassuming retiring placid	hesistating moody shy
B	2	4	91	12	2
P	65	37	5	--	5
T	67	41	96	12	7
%B	.03	.10	.94	1.00	.33

4. ATTENTION TO DETAILS

	anxious difficult to please, religiously exact	attentive looks on all sides, accurate	wide awake painstaking precise	hazy, not critical, over or under estimates	inattentive, slipshod inexact
B	1	64	44	2	--
P	34	2	3	24	48
T	35	66	47	26	48
%B	.03	.96	.93	.08	.00

5. TAKING OF ADVICE

	opposed to any suggestions, avoids advice, always uninterested	always uses own judgment, refused to ask questions, bored	stands up for his rights, willing to ask questions, always interested	self-critical seeks advice seeks assurance	doubtful of himself, easily persuaded, dependent
B	--	3	88	17	1
P	48	40	3	1	19
T	48	43	91	18	20
%B	.00	.07	.96	.94	.05

6. TAKING DISCIPLINE

	easy to direct slow-willed meek	takes orders respectful accepts criticism	willful commanding not submissive	unyielding explosive sulky	will not accept discipline, insubordinate, can not take criticism
B	--	83	28	--	--
P	12	12	15	37	35
T	12	95	43	37	35
%B	.00	.87	.65	.00	.00

7. SELF-CONFIDENCE

	anxious, puts his health first, carries rabbit's foot	cautious, believes in safety first, plays it safe	coolheaded stout-hearted expects the best	untroubled bold, rarely worries	rash headstrong, willing to take chances
B	1	27	61	21	1
P	25	32	3	9	42
T	26	59	64	30	43
%B	.04	.46	.95	.70	.02

8. ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS

	discourteous selfish faultfinder	keeps to himself, must always win, growler	independent likes to beat the other fellow, crafty	sociable cooperative sincere	tender sympathetic humble
B	--	--	4	105	2
P	57	20	30	2	2
T	57	20	34	107	4
%B	.00	.00	.12	.98	.50

9. EMOTIONAL TONE

	happy lively carefree	has no feelings indifferent up and down in moods	solemn grave rarely worries	gloomy moody uneasy	sullen depressed listless
B	78	10	20	--	--
P	18	59	3	16	15
T	96	69	23	16	15
%B	.81	.14	.86	.00	.00

10. CHARACTER

	cynical crude-mannered goes to excess	serious-minded blunt bold	sober-minded well-mannered dignified	pure-minded polished manners modest	prudish, poses, leaves women alone
B	--	18	73	15	--
P	75	23	4	3	5
T	75	41	77	18	5
%B	.00	.43	.94	.83	.00

11. SPEECH HABITS

	talks your head off, gabby braggart	loud talkative blunt	quiet entertaining plain-spoken	deliberate brief closed-mouthed	silent shy seclusive
B	2	6	89	13	1
P	49	30	2	19	11
T	51	36	91	32	12
%B	.04	.17	.97	.40	.08

although not accomplished with entirely satisfactory samplings, indicates that characteristics found in the Personnel Distribution Command study seem representative of what is found in other arms and services. The fact that some characteristics of successful officers have been analyzed into several new categories suggests that the present study has possibly provided a more complete coverage.

2. The experimental adjective rating scale in Section IV of the Officer Description Form shows promise in its discrimination between good and poor officers. Further development and study of this scale (Form ADJ) and further use of the data of this study in development of other experimental rating scales (Forms RCL, TCL and CR) is outlined in the report: "An Investigation of Various Rating Devices in Preparation of an Officer Evaluation Report Form."

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