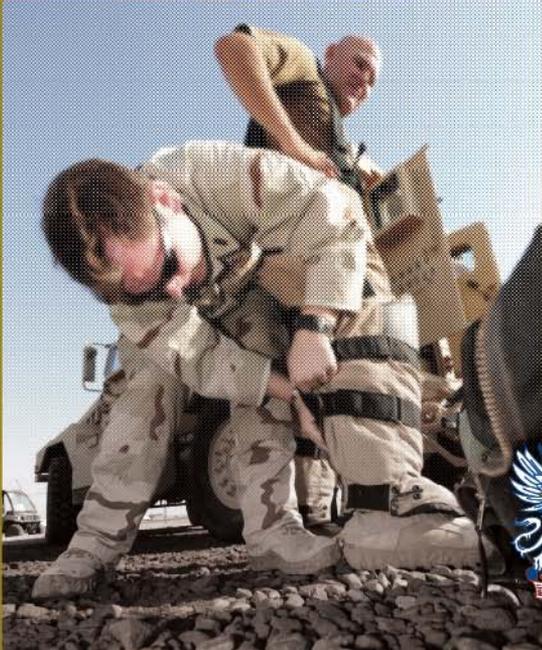


# NAVY Supply Corps



# It's Your Career



## Foreword

Technology continues to outpace how we present and share information. With that in mind we elected to use a new approach to *It's Your Career* with this edition. With the success of *It's Your Record* we found that we are better able to keep our message to mentors and protégés current using playbooks rather than our traditional career guide. With this approach *It's Your Career* becomes a more strategic, overarching discussion of career philosophy, mentoring and a general discussion of how to succeed. The playbooks are fundamental to this new approach with specific programs and details that each officer, both mentor and protégé, must be familiar with to succeed. The playbooks provide detailed guidance on specific aspects of career management essentials for every Supply Corps officer. They include:

1. *It's Your Record*
2. *It's Your Experience*
3. *It's Your Education*
4. *It's Your Board*
5. *It's Your Detail*

*It's Your Record* assists you in maintaining an accurate and up-to-date military personnel file. This is essential to each officer as it is ultimately your record that conveys your professional experiences and accomplishments to selection boards and to your detailer who will help you find your next assignment. *It's Your Record* explains how subspecialty codes (SUBSPEC) and additional qualification designators (AQD) are used and it gives examples of the codes most commonly found in a Supply Corps officer's record. It also explains where to go to access and update your Officer Data Card (ODC), Officer Summary Record (OSR), Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), and Performance Summary Report (PSR), including awards and officer photo updates.

Tactical, operational and strategic level support to the Navy and Joint Warfighter underpins where and why military officers are needed. *It's Your Experience* describes training and experience associated with principal and complementary lines of operation. Further, it highlights milestone assignments including operational assignments, joint duty assignments, highly visible assignments and competition in assignments.

Education remains a cornerstone in the development of Supply Corps officers. *It's Your Education* assists you in understanding the many

educational programs available to you and how to take advantage of them. Opportunities begin with Basic Qualification at Navy Supply Corps School and include post graduate degree programs, executive training programs, Joint Professional Military Education (JPME), Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) training and return visits to Supply Corps School. This playbook also emphasizes the Academic Profile Code (APC) and how it is used when applying for post graduate programs.

*It's Your Board* assists you in understanding the selection board process for both statutory and administrative boards. It explains how and with whom boards are constituted, when you are eligible for consideration, what the guiding principles are for board members (the precept), how you can update your record and communicate with the board, and how board results are communicated. This is a very important aspect of your career that you must understand and you are encouraged to discuss this early and often with your mentors. A key element of your success as a Supply Corps officer will be your preparation for and selection in these statutory and administrative boards.

*It's Your Detail* gives you insight into the detailing process. Officer details are made from the Office of Supply Corps Personnel located in Millington, Tennessee (Navy Personnel Command, PERS-4412). This playbook identifies who your detailer will be at varying stages within your career and when you enter your detailing window. The detailing window is when you should begin negotiating your next set of orders. This playbook also helps highlight the more common permanent change of station (PCS) regulations and shows you where to look for more detailed answers. You are encouraged to seek advice from mentors before discussing your next assignment. Detailers will also guide you throughout your career in selecting those assignments that allow you to fulfill career milestones for promotion. This process has long been performed and will continue to be executed with three aspects in mind - (1) the needs of the Navy, (2) your career needs, and (3) your personal desires.

Leveraging the structure and contents of these playbooks we aim to assist every Supply Corps officer in attaining their full career aspirations. At the same time, as a community we aim to fulfill our mission,

‘Delivering sustained global logistics capabilities to the  
Navy and Joint Warfighter.’

through attainment of our vision,

'To produce autonomous, resourceful military logisticians with broad skills who deliver operational logistics, supply chain management, and acquisition and business capabilities to provide mission readiness.'

And execution of our strategy, the more dynamic of these aspects.

## **Introduction**

*It's Your Career* lays the foundation for every officer. It addresses career development philosophies, many of which have changed little in 20 years despite our emerging roles in contingencies and expeditionary environments. A discussion of career stages, the nature of assignments and the influence of communities of interest (COI) is also provided. It elaborates on those assignments that remain 'top tier' among mentors, provides a window into the detailing process and speaks to the importance of qualifications and career milestones. Overarching thoughts on how training and education benefits both our officers and the officers and commands we support is included. Finally, a discussion of esprit de corps that addresses general etiquette, the value of personal connections, wardrooms and professional associations, office calls and biographies is addressed. *It's Your Career* concludes with a discussion of balancing your personal and professional lives amidst our community vision and strategy.

## **Career Development Philosophies**

As you progress from ensign to captain, you will find that success in the Supply Corps, and the Navy, is based on a solid foundation of performance, professional reputation, a diverse field of education and your professional portfolio. The skills and talents needed to support maritime logistics efforts are provided through job rotations, qualifications, assignments and education.

Job rotations provide valuable technical and leadership training skills and experiences for an officer, while supporting Navy and Department of Defense (DoD) operations. Rotations broaden a Supply Corps officer's perspective of how DoD operates and provides an opportunity to gain a "big picture" of how logistics impacts operations and other supply activities. Job rotations are an important means of providing officers exposure to logistics management at all levels.

Qualifications document professional achievements. They include initial and follow-on warfare qualifications, functional subspecialties achieved through master's level education and significant experience tours, joint

duty designation and formal acquisitions community experience and training.

Assignments provide the crucible where professional skills are developed. Varied assignments add skills and experiences that make an officer a more valuable member of the Supply Corps. By varying assignments, officers strengthen their résumé with both leadership and functional skills and experiences that better equip them to serve in command, staff and fleet support roles.

Training and education provide a common language and expose officers to problem solving tools and techniques. Education may be necessary to qualify for specific subspecialty coded billets. Continuing education is of value throughout a naval career to develop well-rounded, diversely qualified officers. Education may or may not result in a degree and can be obtained, for example, through self-study or by Navy sponsored programs including job training.

It should be emphasized that a successful career in the Supply Corps is a result of Sustained Superior Performance at sea and ashore. As you put your career together, mix jobs that add to your skill set and provide personal satisfaction. Focus on a path that will lead to senior logistics management positions.

## **Career Stages**

**Tactical / Developmental.** Lieutenants, lieutenants junior grade and ensigns. During this stage of an officer's career the officer develops an understanding of how the Navy and DoD are organized and how Supply Corps officers are aligned to support Navy and DoD at the tactical level. Officers serve as front line leaders and supervisors and begin to hone leadership and management skills through interaction and responsibility with and for military, civilian and contractor employees. Officers also begin to develop supply-related experience and business acumen that spans operational and ashore assignments. Through work related and social interaction officers also begin to establish mentor-protégé relationships and to develop their professional reputation and network.

**Operational.** Commanders and lieutenant commanders. In this stage, commanders employ their postgraduate education and junior officer experience to refine their supply, leadership and management acumen and become logistics experts. They begin to occupy key operational leadership positions, such as Commander at Sea, and are expected to interject creativity as they leverage their expertise to create efficiencies across Navy and DoD combatant and systems commands. Officers

enhance their resumes with both fleet policy and major shore experience. Top performers further solidify their professional reputation and nurture mentor-protégé relationships and professional networks.

**Strategic / Policy / Command.** Supply Corps captains and commanders. Senior officers develop strategy and policy and lead large organizations. They are relied on by Navy executives to understand logistics relationships across DoD, DON and with federal agency and civilian counterparts necessary to fulfill the Navy mission and to drive efficiencies. Executives further expect these officers to leverage their professional connections and reputations to overcome obstacles and to find win-win solutions in the high power world of resource competition. These officers benefit from career networking and long term mentor-protégé relationships to build successful teams.

**Executive.** Flag officers and senior captains. These are the most respected officers in the Supply Corps. These officers work hand-in-hand with Navy and DoD executives to develop and execute the Department of Defense's strategy for the defense of the nation. These officers understand the importance of horizontal integration of capabilities at strategic, operational, and tactical levels and are able to negotiate and implement related workforce and systems solutions across services and agencies. They are broad minded, innovative officers who understand when change is necessary to remain relevant. Career networking is a cornerstone of their success.

### **Nature of Assignments**

Not all assignments are created equally. Human nature leads officers to look for the 'no risk', 'guaranteed' list of assignments whereby they can be assured of promotion. Such a list neither does, nor should, exist. However, there are consistent job attributes that are believed to enhance an officer's opportunity for promotion when combined with sustained superior performance in the assignment. Operational performance, including overseas contingency operations, and the ability to break out in competition remain the most significant among these attributes. Leadership and fleet support roles are also valued; however, a competitive résumé will balance these tours with major shore and navy policy roles where an officer proves that they can also be led, ideally in a competitive environment. Promotion boards also tend to value assignments where the work is closely aligned with our principal or complimentary lines of operation. Officers should seek assignments that are progressively more challenging and assignments with greater responsibility and accountability. Additionally, who signs an officer's

FITREP can matter and assignments where an officer has a FITREP signed by a Supply Corps or URL flag officer are generally well regarded.

## **Communities of Interest**

Communities of Interest (COI) are aligned with Supply Corps principal and complementary lines of operation. They include areas of particular interest to the community such as the Supply Corps role in the Joint environment and our investment in recruiting and retaining diverse officers and promoting inclusive behavior in the work environment. Each community of interest is represented by a Supply Corps captain who leverages community experts to manage our investment in their respective COI on behalf of the Chief and the Supply Corps. COI leads serve as the community sponsor for their COI providing guidance, recommendations or direction with respect to investment, disinvestment, education, training and other related aspects of their COI. Additionally, COI leads are the senior mentor for their respective COI.

## **Top Tier Assignments**

The best job you will ever be assigned remains the job where you recognize your challenges, opportunities, and responsibilities and demonstrate the relevance of the Supply Corps and your unique contribution to the mission each and every day. With that in mind, you continue to receive focus through community briefs, from mentors and by your detailer that will help you develop your professional reputation and that strengthen your résumé. Characteristics of top tier assignments that couple well with hard work and tenacity include:

1. Operational, or in direct support of ongoing operations
2. Fitness Report is signed by a Supply Corps flag officer or other flag officer or civilian equivalent
3. Major shore or fleet policy role where competition exists with other officers of the same grade and designator
4. Challenging with visibility across the community to establish professional reputation
5. Tough, independent leadership roles and overseas assignments
6. Assignment made by virtue of a selection process
7. Directly related to a Supply Corps principal or complementary line of operation

Specific examples include:

1. Afloat/nontraditional operational assignment, including Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO)
2. Combatant command or equivalent operational support unit

3. OPNAV / SECNAV staff
4. Navy and Joint Systems Command or equivalent, including internships
5. Flag aide
6. Supply Corps School instructor
7. Training with Industry (TWI) internship
8. 810 / 811 graduate education
9. Detailer or community manager

## **The Detailing Process**

As pointed out earlier, this process is executed with three aspects in mind - (1) the needs of the Navy, (2) your career needs, and (3) your personal desires. Detailing Supply Corps officers in the grades of ensign, lieutenant junior grade and lieutenant is somewhat routine. Officers graduating from BQC can expect to be detailed to their first operational assignment where they will develop division officer or department head skills and are expected to earn their initial warfare designation, if available. Following this assignment officers will negotiate orders ashore and these orders are typically followed by an officers second set of operational orders. In some cases an officer may negotiate Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) orders or be selected to serve as a flag aide in addition to their career milestone assignments. Most officers who complete their second operational tour will next negotiate orders to attend graduate school.

Initial operational assignments include independent duty opportunities as the Supply Officer aboard a submarine or a Mine Counter Measures (MCM) ship. Initial assignments weigh an officers 'fitness' for independent duty, the officer's performance during BQC and the officer's specific assignment interest. First shore tour assignments include competitive internships, top tier assignments such as flag aide or Supply School instructor, and other non-competitive assignments. These top tier assignments are generally made using a slating process whereby the gaining command assesses candidate experience and fitness to serve in the assignment. This type of slating is the exception, vice the rule for junior officer billets. Conversely, as officers become more senior and compete for top tier assignments slating becomes more common. For this reason officers are continually reminded about the importance of sustained superior performance, challenging assignments and professional networking.

Job opportunities are published by the Supply Corps Office of Personnel (OP) and represent projected opportunities according to when they will be available, or vacant. Officers should begin thinking about the type and

location of their next assignment well before they enter their detailing window and are encouraged to engage mentors for career advice. Detailing windows are addressed in *It's Your Detail*, but as a rule of thumb officers should be narrowing their choices as they enter their final year of their current assignment. Additionally, officers should be realistic in assessing their fitness for a particular billet given their education and experience. Officers should also consider what they need to be competitive for a particular assignment that might interest them such as taking the graduate records exam if interested in grad school or completing JPME phase one if interested in a joint experience tour. A good rule of thumb is to plan three tours ahead.

Officers in the grades of captain and commander are detailed on an annual basis. These officers provide their preferences to their detailer well in advance of the projected rotation date. Unlike junior officer billets, slating is more the rule than the exception for these assignments. It is also more likely that the needs of the Navy and the qualifications of the officer will drive a detailing decision and subsequent orders.

### **Qualifications and Milestones**

In virtually every operational assignment you will have the opportunity to participate in a Supply Corps warfare specialty program. These programs enhance your knowledge and understanding of weapons platforms and contribute to a more credible relationship with your line and non-line counterparts. These warfare programs provide a framework whereby you will develop specific skills, and the AQD that you earn serves as a significant aspect of consideration by all promotion and selection boards. Evidence in your record of warfare qualification is nearly always your first career milestone.

At some point during your first operational tour you are encouraged to seek the counsel of a more seasoned Supply Corps officer, or mentor. You will want to discuss submitting your request to compete for one of approximately 80 Supply Corps internships, which, sets the stage for a shore assignment where you will participate in your internship or other similar Supply Corps related on-the-job assignment ashore. Also worthy of discussion is an assignment before, during or after your first shore assignment in an overseas contingency assignment or the opportunity to gain an executive perspective on the Navy and the Supply Corps by serving as a flag aide. Once ashore you will also want to consider a request to compete for selection to the 810 program or request consideration to participate in the 811 program. These prized programs allow 10-15 Supply Corps officers each year to attend one of *Business Week's* Top 30 universities that convey a Masters in Business

Administration or to earn a masters degree in petroleum management from the University of Kansas. Following your successful shore tour, you will return for your second operational tour after which your promotion to lieutenant commander awaits. At the completion of your second operational assignment you will be considered for orders to Naval Postgraduate School or a top tier university. Exiting postgraduate school you begin the next phase of your career.

Now a lieutenant commander, you will establish your credibility in one or more lines of operation as you begin to fill your résumé (record) with qualifications and career experiences that will allow you to compete favorably with your peers. The first step will be an assignment within a line of operation that aligns with the graduate education you have just completed. For many, this will be in an acquisition related job where you will fulfill the experience element of your education, earning a DAWIA Level II acquisition certification and related AQD. If you were unable to complete JPME phase one while attending graduate school, this will also be a priority for you to work on. As you transition from lieutenant commander to captain, you will progressively fill your resume and achieve important career milestones. Figure (1) is a useful tool that will assist you with understanding milestones and related tours that you will want to consider as your career progresses:



Figure (1): Supply Corps Officer Career Milestones

## **Training and Education**

The Supply Corps trains and educates its officers based on a continuum of education and experience. This approach produces highly knowledgeable and versatile Supply Corps officers, fully capable of supporting stakeholders with supply chain management, acquisition, operational logistics and general supply skills. It includes a mix of job-specific training, formal education and experience that yields officers with supply related qualifications, certifications, diplomas and practical experience. Joint education, internships, training with industry, fellowships and civilian MBA opportunities serve to enhance the principal and complementary capabilities of our officers.

The continuum of education can be described in three phases: junior officer (JO) Basic Technical Development and Leadership, Advanced Technical Proficiency and Leadership, and Senior Officer Development and Leadership. Each phase serves to prepare Supply Corps officers to manage and lead in supply related organizations at various stages of the officers career. Training and education serve to enhance the officer's working knowledge, to enhance the officers appreciation for emerging technologies and the realm of what is possible and to extend the officers supply related vocabulary. Training and education, coupled with related job experience, are fundamental to our success and will continue to keep our officers relevant in a DoD environment that is perpetually more resource constrained. Relevant training, education and experience will also remain essential milestones for career progression.

## **Esprit de Corps**

We are Navy officers first and we remain grounded with high moral values and in the ideals of honor, courage and commitment. An essential element of our grounding also remains our tradition of esprit de corps and our ability to 'connect'. At the heart of this is the appreciation of our officers for general etiquette, the camaraderie found in our wardrooms, our membership in professional associations and the value we place on office calls and mentoring.

As we pointed out in the beginning, our world is evolving rapidly and with this evolution is the accompanying erosion in values and the loss of an important skill known as etiquette. This document seeks to guide you in a successful career and to that end we ask you to remain mindful of your responsibilities as an officer and as a leader. Your success as a Supply Corps officer will certainly stem from this. Conversely, an error in judgment can ruin your professional reputation and in extreme examples

it can be the immediate end to your career and can greatly diminish your personal well-being.

In the first few seconds when meeting someone for the first time they will form a lasting first impression of you. Professional etiquette can make all the difference in what type of impact your first and subsequent impressions will make. Etiquette is more than manners. It includes how you carry yourself, your behavior, conduct, military and civilian appearance, demeanor and professional presence. Etiquette extends to what you do after meeting someone as well. Proper etiquette includes notes of appreciation following an office call with a senior officer or after having been a guest in someone's home or at an event that they have hosted. Proper etiquette excludes a sense of entitlement, whether to a particular assignment or a particular mark on a fitness report, and excludes embarrassing others in any setting. A strong sense of etiquette allows you to strengthen relationships, to demonstrate respect for others, and to project leadership and confidence at all levels. The shared respect for etiquette by our officers has long been a strength of our community and you are urged to refine and employ this skill throughout your career. Your etiquette is ultimately one of the principal components of your professional reputation.

Another community strength is the camaraderie that begins with Supply Corps School and extends through your career and into retirement. Supply Corps officers continue to leverage the ability to communicate and to connect to solve problems and to develop life-long friendships and professional connections. Camaraderie, like etiquette, requires effort and some inconvenience on the part of our officers. It is developed through your participation and leadership within Wardrooms, Supply Corps associations, professional engagements and through participation in command sponsored events. Although participation is often voluntary, the Supply Corps relies on your willingness to participate and to encourage your peers and protégés as well. The dividends include life-long friendships, professional connections that strengthen your professional reputation, post service opportunities and respect that you and your fellow officers enjoy.

The overarching organization that ties each of our Supply Corps associations together is the Supply Corps Foundation. The Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable organization, founded and incorporated in Georgia at the same time as the Navy Supply Corps Association. It has no members except its Board of Directors. It was established to assist the Navy Supply Corps and the Navy Supply Corps School in supporting projects for which federally appropriated funds are not authorized or available. Its tax-exempt, nonprofit, charitable status is recognized by the

IRS. The major purpose of the Foundation is to provide assistance, in the form of scholarships or in other ways, to dependents of Navy Supply Corps officers, warrant officers and enlisted personnel of the ratings associated with the Supply Corps. The amount of Foundation scholarships awarded each year has continued to grow due to the continuing support from the entire Supply Corps community. Over one million dollars in scholarships have been awarded since the program was established in 1971.

The mentor-protégé relationship is another important aspect of our success as a community. The term, 'relationship', is important. A relationship is a two-way street. As such, the relationship is particularly effective when there is mutual respect between the parties and when common interest exists. Although each officer is introduced to mentoring as they depart BQC by assignment of a mentor in geographic proximity to their first assignment, ultimately, officers are most likely to achieve enduring mentor-protégé relationships as a result of their participation in wardrooms, Supply Corps associations and similar organizations and events. Mentor-protégé relationships are often the byproduct of a successful tour whereby junior and senior officers who have served together develop a bond out of mutual respect, common personal interests and interest in seeing one another succeed. The successful mentor-protégé relationship is not one where there are expectations by either the mentor or protégé, but rather a relationship where both mentor and protégé seek each other out for both professional insight and personal and professional development. The relationship benefits greatly from interaction in more social settings. This might include a Supply Corps Birthday Ball, a golf outing, getting together for PT or having lunch together. The relationship also benefits from inclusion of family members. Mentoring is routinely thought of as a senior mentor assisting a junior protégé; however, successful mentoring often occurs in peer-to-peer relationships.

## **Work-Life Balance**

Again, we are Navy officers first and the assignment process must account for the mission. As explained earlier, assignments will always be executed with three aspects in mind - (1) the needs of the Navy, (2) your career needs, and (3) your personal desires. Ultimately, successful officers will find balance between assignments and their personal lives. Male and female Supply Corps officers alike have found this balance and continue to lead Navy and Joint organizations around the globe. These officers recognize that balance relies on productivity, efficiency and innovation rather than punching a clock or measuring success by hours served. These officers also build on the strengths of officers with whom

they have served and seek to avoid perpetuating weaknesses they observe. As your career progresses you will be encouraged to seek this balance and as you assume roles of greater responsibility you will be expected to help those who work with you to find balance. Tele-work is proving to be a viable means for accomplishing work and it is likely to improve the work-life balance of our officers well into the future; however, given the value of personal connections, face-to-face interaction should never be overlooked. Additionally, your well being benefits from physical exertion and you are expected to find time during each week to exercise and should expect the same of your peers and subordinates.

In some cases officers will be given an assignment that is inconvenient personally. If this occurs you should discuss the complications openly with your family and mentors. As a community we always seek to find the best fit for each officer and each command. Unfortunately, it is impossible to create the 'perfect fit' in every detail. Regardless of the outcome of a difficult detail you must remain professional and protect your professional reputation. In extreme examples an officer will find that separation is a better fit than accepting a difficult set of orders. If this becomes the case you are encouraged to explore opportunities to affiliate with the Supply Corps Reserve. This affiliation allows you to continue to serve and remains a bridge whereby you may reenter the Supply Corps in the future depending on community vacancies and your personal situation.

### **Final Note**

There is no better time to be or to become a Supply Corps officer. Our Navy is rapidly evolving and you will evolve with it. Despite this rapid evolution, I ask both mentors and protégés to step back from the daily hustle and movement in your assignments every now and again to review where you are with respect to your personal, your professional and our community strategy for success. Stay connected, remain informed and be relevant.

*It's Your Career*  
is on the web →





**Office of  
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