Joel Schofer's Fitrep Prep

Joel Schofer, MD, MBA, CPE, FAAEM
jschofer@gmail.com
MCCareer.org

This document is designed to help you efficiently write an excellent fitness report (fitrep). Your fitrep is the most important tool for documenting your achievements and potential for promotion. Currently, physicians get very little education on how to write them, but not anymore. Enjoy!

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO START?

Before you begin writing your fitrep, you'll need to gather a few things. They include:

- Your last fitrep, preferably your last 2-3 fitreps.
- If you have previously received a fitrep from this reporting senior and it was in your current rank, you'll need your Performance Summary Report (PSR) so that you know his/her approximate reporting senior's average. The instructions for downloading this are in Joel Schofer's Promo Prep.
- A list of your accomplishments and collateral duties you've held since your last fitrep. This could be on a "brag sheet" (a document some commands require you to submit when doing your fitrep) or somewhere else you've chosen to track these items. For example, I use my CV for this. In reality, you can use whatever you want, but you need to find an efficient way to track this information that works for you.
- Dates for any significant periods of leave, transit time, temporary additional duty (TAD), deployments, or anything else that took you away from your command for a significant period of time.
- A Windows computer loaded with NAVFIT98A, which is the program the Navy uses to write fitreps. It can be downloaded multiple places if you just Google "NAVFIT98A."
- The file "FITREP Word Template to Optimize NAVFIT98 Block 41 Spacing," which can be downloaded here:

  https://mccareer.org/useful-documents/

Let's get started…

BLOCK 1 - Enter your last name, first name, middle initial, and suffix, if any, separated by spaces. Place a comma after your last name. Omit spaces and punctuation within a name. The full middle name is acceptable, but not required.

 Examples:

DENNEY, JOHN A
STJOHN, MELVIN J II
WALTERS, J ARTHUR
OBRIEN, MARY S
MARTIN, PAUL T JR
SMITHJONES, ANN

Like in the last example above, you don't need to put a middle initial/name if you don't have one, nor do you have to put "NMN" like some people do.

BLOCK 2 - Enter the rank that you will be wearing on the ending date of the report. Use the standard grade abbreviations (CAPT, CDR, LCDR, LT, ENS). If you are a LTJG in the Medical Corps, you have a problem.

BLOCK 3 - Enter your four-digit officer designator, which is 2100.

BLOCK 4 – Enter your social security number and **make sure it is accurate**.

BLOCK 5 – All Active Duty will check "ACT".

BLOCK 6 – Enter your Unit Identification Code (UIC), which you can get from block 98 on your Officer Data Card (ODC) or your orders. The instructions to download your ODC are in Joel Schofer's Promo Prep. For activities to which no UIC is assigned, enter five zeros. The first four characters of a UIC must be numbers.

BLOCK 7 - Get the abbreviated name of your command from an old fitrep. Make sure you put the name of the command where you are assigned, not your reporting senior's command (if it is different). If you are assigned to a civilian or foreign command, enter the civilian or foreign command, not your administrative reporting senior's command. Do not spell out letters and numbers (e.g., use "A" and not "ALFA", use "1" and not "ONE").

BLOCK 8 – Put "SELECTED" if you've already been selected for promotion to your next rank, otherwise put "REGULAR". "FROCKED" or "SPOT" are usually not applicable to Medical Corps officers, but if they are you will probably know it.

BLOCK 9 - In YYMMMDD format, enter the date you reported to your command. Example for October 17, 1996: 96OCT17 (The following formats are incorrect: 17OCT96, 961017, 101796.)

BLOCKS 10-13 - Place an "X" in each block that applies to this fitrep:

- "Periodic" – It is time for your regularly scheduled fitrep.
- "Detachment of Individual" – You are getting a fitrep because you are detaching from a command.
- "Detachment of Reporting Senior" – You are getting a fitrep because your reporting senior is detaching.
- "Special" – You are getting a fitrep for a special reason/circumstance.

Note: More than one occasion may apply, except that "Special" cannot be combined with another occasion. Do not submit a Special fitrep if another occasion applies.

BLOCKS 14-15 - In YYMMMDD format, enter the beginning (FROM) and ending (TO) dates of the reporting period.

Example: 96OCT17. (The following are incorrect: 17OCT96, 961017, 101796.)

For regular reports, the FROM date must be the day following the TO date of the last Regular report. It can be earlier than block 9 (your reporting date) if there was en route leave, travel, or TAD.

For the first fitrep on a newly commissioned officer, the FROM date is the commissioning date.

BLOCK 16 - If this is a wholly Not Observed (NOB) report, enter an "X" in block 16.

The trait grades must be left blank, no career recommendation is permitted, the promotion recommendation must be NOB, and the promotion recommendation summary must be left blank. In addition, the Member Trait Average and Summary Group Average blocks must be left blank. Comments are limited primarily to administrative and training information.

BLOCKS 17-19 - Place an "X" in the block that applies. Most of the time it'll be a Regular fitrep unless you are deployed and then it'll be Concurrent.

BLOCK 20 - Enter the one-letter code for the result of each official physical fitness assessment (PFA) conducted during the reporting period. Do not use physical readiness tests (PRTs) and body composition assessments (BCAs) that are not part of an official PFA. The codes you use are:

Block 20 Physical Fitness Assessment Codes

P	Passed both PRT and BCA
B	Passed the BCA but was authorized non-participation in the PRT for other than medical waiver reasons (see code "N" for non-participation reasons). Use of this code requires a comment in the comments on performance block (block 43 – E1-E6 evaluations, block 41 – fitness reports, block 41 – E7-E9 chief evaluations) with reason for non-participation in PRT.
F	Overall PFA failure (failed BCA or PRT).
M	Medically waived from entire PFA (BCA and PRT).
W	Passed BCA but medically waived from 1 or more PRT event(s).
N	No PFA conducted during reporting period. Non-participation in entire PFA (BCA and PRT) due to deployment/operational assignment (Dep/Op), IAMM, GSA, OSA, pregnancy, temporary additional duty (TEMADD), or excused. (Note: BCAs shall be accomplished on all members even if onboard less than 10 weeks or unable to participate in PRT due to Dep/Op. Dep/Op for BCA must be approved by the immediate superior in command (ISIC). Use of this code does not require justification for PRT non-participation in the comments on performance block.

NOTE – If you were exempt from the PRT because you scored at least an Excellent Low on the previous one, you use code B.

Do not enter spaces or slashes between the characters. For example, "PPP" would be appropriate and would indicate that you passed three official PFAs during the reporting period.

Enter specific PFA cycle identification information in block 29. For example, "PFA: 15-1/15-2/16-1."

The format for block 20 shall be from oldest to most recent PFA performed during the reporting period. For example, "PBF" in block 20 and "PFA: 15-1/15-2/16-1" in block 29 indicates that the member passed 2015 cycle 1, did not participate in the PRT portion of 2015 cycle 2, and failed 2016 cycle 1.

There are a few things to note regarding block 20 and the impact it can have on the rest of your fitrep:

- If you use the code "B" in block 20, you must explain why in block 41. No other codes in block 20 require an explanation in block 41.
- For a reporting period in which you fail your first or second PFA in a 4-year period, there is no mandated or prohibited trait mark required in block 35 (Military Bearing/Character). In other words, just because you failed a PFA doesn't mean you have to get a 1.0 or 2.0. Unless…
- For a reporting period in which you failed three or more PFAs in the most recent 4-year period, you must receive:
  - A grade no greater than 1.0 in block 35 (Military Bearing/Character).

- An individual promotion recommendation in block 42 of "Significant Problems."
- If you have three PFA failures in the most recent 4-year period but have an approved waiver, according to the fitrep instruction your reporting senior is supposed to:

...use their discretion when determining 'Military Bearing' or 'Professionalism' marks for a reporting period in which the member passes two consecutive PFAs. However, the member must still receive a not recommended for...retention for that evaluation period...In those situations, insert a bullet in the evaluation stating why the member is not recommended due to having three or more PFA failures in the most recent 4-year period.

- An overall score of "outstanding" or "excellent" on your PFA is not required to receive a 5.0 in block 35 (Military Bearing/Character).

BLOCK 21 – Welcome to what is probably the most confusing block on a fitrep. **Do not leave this block blank.** If you are an intern, put "INTERN". If you are a resident, put "RESIDENT". If you have **released** resignation or retirement orders (meaning you actually can get a copy of the orders on NSIPS), put "APPROVED". If you have been deployed in the last year or are currently deployed, look at the table below to see if you meet the criteria to enter "INDIV AUG". (The website http://www.timeanddate.com/date/duration.html can help calculate the duration in days between two dates.) If you are an OIC or CO, you may have to use one of the codes detailed in the table below (OIC, CO AFLOAT, CO ASHORE).

If you don't fit any of these categories, you are likely going to be correct if you put "BASIC".

If none of this seems to fit or you are just plain confused, put "NA" and let your leadership decide what category you should be.

Block 21 - Billet Subcategory Entry

NA	**Subcategories not used.** (Should appear on most reports.)
BASIC	**Member of the basic group if subcategories are used.** Example: Training activities that subcategorize instructors and students will enter "BASIC" for administrative staff.
APPROVED	Mandatory requirement to use Approved in block 21 for anyone who has separation (release from active duty), resignation, retirement or Fleet Reserve date approved. The Message of Intent will serve as approval for this purpose. The following is the exception: E6/7/8 personnel eligible for the next advancement selection board who have an approved Fleet Reserve date matching their mandated high year tenure (HYT) date. **** See below**
INDIV AUG	Mandatory requirement to use "INDIV AUG" in block 21 for active duty (including FTS) members under NAVPERSCOM, Augmentation Management Division (PERS-4G) orders who have been at their parent command for less than 240 days or for periods of performance less than 240 days. If the member was at the parent command for greater than or equal to 240 days of the reporting period, this billet subcategory cannot be used. Regular reporting seniors must also use this billet subcategory for any Regular performance evaluations required (e.g., periodic, detachment of individual, detachment of reporting senior) with a reporting period end date less than or equal to 180 days after a member has returned to his or her parent command from an IA assignment. The 180-day period does not apply if a Sailor transfers to a new parent command. IA supported commands shall enter "INDIV AUG" code on all concurrent performance evaluation reports.

Block 21 – Billet Subcategory Entry – Continued

Standard Billet Subcategories use is optional. Approval is not required. All members in each subcategory must be summarized together. If annotated with an * below, Block 21 should match entry in Block 29.	
CO AFLOAT	COs of ships, squadrons, or other tactical units.
CO ASHORE	COs of shore activities.
OIC*	OIC of remote or deploying detachments.
SEA COMP	Members of sea component (activities with sea and shore components). Group together all sea component members who have the same reporting senior.
CRF*	Members of the career recruiter force in a recruiting command.
CANVASSER*	Canvassers and canvasser recruiters in a recruiting command.
RESIDENT*	Residents in teaching hospitals or dental centers.
INTERN*	Interns in teaching hospitals, dental centers, training commands or other government approved internship programs.
INSTRUCTOR*	Primary duty instructors in training commands and training squadrons.
STUDENT*	Primary duty students in training commands and training squadrons.
RESAC1	Inactive reservists temporarily on active duty for 1 month or more, but less than 6 months.
RESAC6	Inactive reservists temporarily on active duty for 6 months or more.
SPECIAL01 THROUGH SPECIAL20	Use the number authorized by NAVPERSCOM (PERS-32) in the approval letter. Do not include a space between the word SPECIAL and the number. Be sure that the reporting senior's UIC is also the UIC specified in the approval letter. **Ensure a copy of approval letter is attached with each batch of reports submitted.**

Table 1-1 (CONTINUED)

BLOCK 22 - Enter the last name, initials, and suffix, if any, of your reporting senior. Place a comma after the last name. Example: STJOHN, O F

BLOCK 23 - Enter the reporting senior's grade. The entry must be five characters or less. Do not use hyphens. Do not leave this block blank.

Navy and other Sea Service officers: Use ADM, VADM, RADM, RDML, CAPT, CDR, LCDR, LT, LTJG, ENS, CWO5, CWO4, CWO3, or CWO2.

Army (USA), Air Force (USAF), or Marine Corps (USMC) officers: Use GEN, LGEN, MGEN, BGEN, COL, LTC, MAJ, CPT, 1LT, 2LT, CWO5, CWO4, CWO3, CWO2, or CWO1.

Civilian reporting seniors: Use U.S. Federal Government civilian grade (e.g., GS15, SES4). If the reporting senior does not have a grade designation, enter "CIV."

Note: Reservists who submit reports as civilians must use their civilian, not military grade.

BLOCK 24 - Enter reporting senior's four-digit officer designator. **Exceptions**: If the reporting senior is a member of another Service, enter abbreviation for branch of Service (e.g., USAF, USA, USMC, USCG, USPH, NOAA). If the reporting senior is civilian, leave blank.
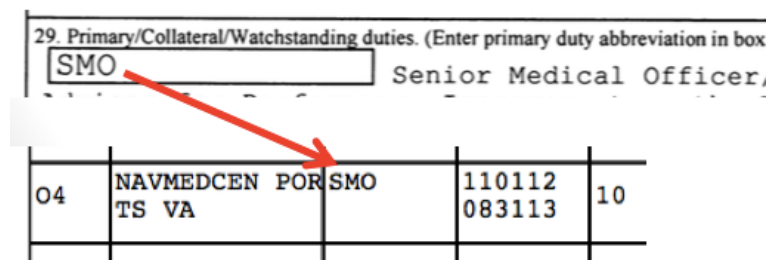
BLOCK 25 - Enter your reporting senior's title (abbreviated if necessary). The entry may be up to 14 characters and spaces. Always use "CO" for commanding officer and "OIC" for officer in charge. For other titles, use the complete title or a common abbreviation. Examples: COMMANDER, XO, DEPT HEAD.

BLOCK 26 - Enter the UIC of your reporting senior's command. Note: The reporting senior's UIC may be different from your UIC in block 6. For example, when you are in training you often have a different UIC in block 6 than what will be listed in block 26.

BLOCK 27 - Enter your reporting senior's full social security number if you know it. Use hyphens after the third and fifth digits. Example: 000-00-0000. If you don't know it, just leave this blank and they'll fill it in later.

BLOCK 28 – This is where you put a brief statement of command employment and significant command awards or achievements during the period of the report. Your command should provide the text for this block.

BLOCK 29 PRIMARY DUTY BOX - <u>THIS IS AN IMPORTANT BOX!</u> What you put here is displayed on your PSR and at the promotion board. Here you can see an example from one of my fitreps and my PSR when I was the Senior Medical Officer (SMO) in the Emergency Department at NMC Portsmouth:

In the small box enter an abbreviation of 14 or fewer characters and spaces for the **<u>most significant duty</u>** for the period reported on. Refer to block 21 because sometimes what you put in this box should exactly match what is in block 21 (RESIDENT, INTERN, OIC, etc.).

BLOCK 29 - The remainder of block 29 consists of one to four elements, as follows:

- Duty Titles: Beginning to the right of the abbreviation box, enter duty titles and the number of months each duty was assigned during this reporting period. Enter duty titles in the following order: most significant primary duty (corresponds to the abbreviation in the block 29 primary duty box), other primary duties, collateral duties, and then watchstanding duties. Example: "DEPARTMENT HEAD, PEDIATRICS-7; GENERAL PEDIATRICIAN-7; CHAIR, CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE-3; ON CALL WARD PEDIATRICIAN-7."
- Job Scope Statement: Briefly state the scope of your primary duty responsibilities. Include such items as technical or professional duties, personnel supervised, and budget administered. Job scope statements are optional for operational billets. Example: "Academic Chair of a department of over 100 military and civilian personnel providing comprehensive primary and pediatric specialty care with an annual budget of approximately $600,000."
- Periods Not Available for Duty: Identify any periods during which you had no duties assigned. Such periods may include en route time prior to reporting, TAD, unusually long leave, deployments, etc. If it is necessary to include maternity leave, identify it only as "Leave." Example: "TAD 14OCT18-14NOV30; LEAVE/TRANSIT: 14JUN18-14JUL30."
- PFA: Document specific PFA cycle(s) reported in block 20 utilizing the following format: "PFA: 14-1/14-2/15-1." This indicates the PFA results listed in block 20 were attained during the 2014 cycle 1, 2014 cycle 2, and the 2015 cycle 1 official PFAs. No entry is required if no official PFA was conducted during the period.
- In summary, when added all together, the entire block 29 would look like this:

  DEPARTMENT HEAD, PEDIATRICS-7; GENERAL PEDIATRICIAN-7; CHAIR, CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE-3; ON CALL WARD PEDIATRICIAN-7. Academic Chair of a department of over 100 military and civilian personnel providing comprehensive primary and pediatric specialty care with an annual budget of approximately $600,000. TAD 14OCT18-14NOV30; LEAVE/TRANSIT: 14JUN18-14JUL30. PFA: 14-1/14-2/15-1.

BLOCK 30 - If mid-term counseling was received during the reporting period, enter the date you were counseled. Use the YYMMMDD format. Example: 14FEB20.

If counseling was not performed because the counseling date did not fall within the reporting period, enter "NOT REQ" in block 30.

If counseling was not performed for any other reason, enter "NOT PERF," and provide a brief explanation in block 31.

BLOCK 31 - Enter the last name, initials, and suffix, if any, of whoever did your mid-term counseling. Place a comma after the last name. Example: STJOHN, O F.

If the entry in block 30 is "NOT PERF," enter a brief explanation in block 31 (e.g., TAD or ILLNESS). If a longer explanation is needed, enter "SEE COMMENT" and provide an explanation in block 41.

BLOCK 32 – You will sign this block once your fitrep is done. Your signature verifies that blocks 30 and 31 are accurate, but does not necessarily mean that you considered the counseling adequate. If you believe that the counseling was inadequate, you may submit a statement to the record, which is discussed toward the end of this document.

BLOCKS 33-39 – Before you start working on these blocks, try and find out what your reporting senior's trait average is for your rank. One of the most important markers of a good fitrep is that your trait average is above your reporting senior's trait average. Here are a few ways to find out what it is.

First, in order to have a trait average, your reporting senior has to have served as the reporting senior for officers of your same rank from any corps. If they have not done this, they'll have no pre-existing average. For example, if you are a LCDR, your reporting senior does not have to have ranked LCDR physicians. If he/she has ever ranked a LCDR of any kind (Nurse Corps, Medical Service Corps, etc.), then they will have an average.

If they have an average, here are the ways I know of to find it:

- If you've already received a fitrep from them in your current rank, then you can look at your PSR, which you download from [BUPERS On-Line]. The number in the lower right in the "AVERAGES" column (explained in blue text below) is their average for that rank.

- If you haven't received a fitrep from them, maybe you have a friend in the same rank who has received a recent fitrep from them. You can look at their PSR if they'll let you.

- You can ask your chain of command or command fitrep coordinator. They often know because they are trying to make sure that all of the fitreps being done don't change the reporting senior's average in ways he/she doesn't want.
- You can ask the reporting senior. They just may tell you.

The bottom line is that when you are drafting your fitrep, you want to try and find out the average and grade yourself above it. In the end, the ranking process may move you below it, but by submitting the draft with an above average grade you may increase the chances you stay above it.

Once you obtain your reporting senior's trait average (or if you can't), for each trait in blocks 33-39 you must place an "X" in one box. Each block will be explained individually below.

BLOCK 33 – In general, you get a 4.0 if you are board-eligible and 5.0 if you are board-certified. If that doesn't apply to you because you are not residency trained yet, what you get will be determined by your reporting senior's average and preferences.

BLOCKS 34-37 – Use these blocks to balance your score and give yourself the overall trait average you are looking for. Do not give yourself less than a 3.0 in any of these blocks.

BLOCK 38 – At promotion boards, the Navy is looking for leaders, so if there is any block you should give yourself a 5.0 this is it!

BLOCK 39 – Mark this block NOB.

BLOCKS 33-38 – THE FINAL REVIEW - Make sure you do not decrease in any of these blocks when compared to your last fitrep unless:

- You were selected for promotion.
- You were promoted.
- Your reporting senior or command changed.

You should still try not to decrease in any, but if the above situations are applicable to you a decrease may be unavoidable and is generally acceptable.

Expect that your chain of command will alter whatever you give yourself, so my advice is to round up for any blocks you are unsure of.

BLOCK 40 - Enter one or two career recommendations that are consistent with your rank and desired career path. In other words, enter the next one or two positions you want to get that would advance your career. Do not leave this blank as promotion boards will look at what is in this block. If for some reason you do not desire an entry in this block, perhaps because you are retiring or resigning, enter "NA" or "NONE" in the first block. Do not enter very long-range goals (e.g., do not recommend yourself for XO when you are a LT).

BLOCK 41 – This is where you express why you should be rated highly on this fitrep, and why you should be promoted at the promotion board. Some tips on style include:

- Be concise as space is very limited.
- Because space is limited, don't repeat what you already said in block 29.
- Bullet style is preferred, as detailed below.
- You don't have to mention your name. They know this block is about you. It is on your fitrep! For example:

  NO – "CDR Schofer is a stellar officer who…

  YES – "A stellar officer who…"

- Always write in the past tense.
- If one of the letters in block 20 is "B," make sure that somewhere in this block you enter the reason for non-participation in the official PRT.
- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms without explaining them. Every promotion board has a line officer on it, and he/she needs to understand what you are doing so they can brief your record. They won't know what a STEMI, CVA, and other medical abbreviations mean.
- Quantify wherever possible in order to give credibility to the statements.
- Make sure you don't repeat bullets from your last fitrep. Your narratives need to read like a book that describes a growing leader, not the same stuff over again.
- If you are looking for language to use in your narrative, get the convening order for the most recent promotion board for your next rank. In it you'll find all the qualities and skills they are looking for when deciding who to promote. You can find them here:

  http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/boards/activedutyofficer/Pages/default.aspx

  You just click on the promotion board you are looking for, and you'll find a link to the board convening order. Remember, you have to go to the last board to have been completed, which may be the year prior.

This is the BUMED agreed upon format for block 41:

CDR Smith is my #X CDR among 5 hand-selected CDRs and is rising Naval leader.
                              (one line of white space)
-Bullet
-Bullet
-Bullet
-Bullet
-Bullet
-Bullet
-Bullet

(one line of white space)
CDR Smith has my strongest recommendation for promotion to Captain.

Here is what you should not do:

CDR Smith is my #X CDR among 5 hand-selected CDRs and is rising Naval leader. Bullet. Bullet. Bullet. Bullet. Bullet. Bullet. Bullet. CDR Smith has my strongest recommendation for promotion to Captain.

Run-ons like this are too hard for board members to read.

Writing the Opening Line of Your Fitrep

Your opening line should get someone's attention and paint the picture of a developing leader ready to promote to the next rank. The following are good examples, but you may have to put something generic as some of these specific examples will be written by your command after all the fitreps are ranked. (In other words, you can't say you're the #2 of 5 CDRs until all of the fitreps have been tiered and ranked.) If you are writing for an operational commander who doesn't know a lot about Navy fitreps, you may be able to rank yourself.

Getting what is called a soft breakout - especially if you are getting a 1 of 1 fitrep (you are not getting ranked against anyone) – is optimal. A soft breakout is where you get ranked against all corps/designators or across services by the reporting senior. Here are some examples:

- My number #1 LCDR out of 25 of all designators.
- #3 of 15 LCDRs regardless of designator.
- In the top 10% of over 200 LCDRs I've rated across all designators.
- #1 of 17 hand-picked officers on my staff.
- Future Executive Medicine leader. #2 of 5 CDRs on my staff.

Forced distribution statements can also be good. They are when the reporting senior explains why they couldn't rank you higher despite your excellent performance. Here are some examples:
- My #1 MP, would have been EP but ranked against highly competitive senior officers.
- Would have been an EP but ranked against the Director for Medical Services.
- If not for forced distribution…

If none of these situations apply, then just write the best opening line you can about yourself. Here are some from my last few fitreps:

- Exemplary performance as Commanding Officer of a joint unit!

- Exemplary leader and academician who performed at the level of a senior Commander.
- Navy Medicine rising star with expanding leadership and academic excellence!
- National leader and superstar in Emergency Medicine with unparalleled academic production!
- Top-tier, first-rate clinician who is a national leader in Emergency Medicine.

You get the idea…

Writing Your Bullets

Here are some tips for writing fitrep bullets:

- As mentioned above, always write in the past tense.
- Also, as mentioned above, you can borrow language from the promotion board convening order.
- Clinicians – focus on how you contributed to MTF optimization, increased enrollment, improved access to care, improved customer satisfaction, etc.
- Researchers – focus on the impact of your work on DoD and the Navy, not the science.
- As discussed in more detail below, NAVADMIN 137/20 updated the fitrep instruction and requires that you list "professional military education, off-duty education and other educational and learning achievements pursued during the reporting period."
- Put your leadership in your profession into context that the promotion board will understand, including the line officer on the board.
- Tell how you contribute to your command, the Navy, and the DoD. Mention command/Navy/DoD-wide impact you made and collateral duties.
- Discuss mentorship and how you impact others.
- Make sure your bullets show growth and increased responsibility. As mentioned above, don't recycle fitrep bullets from previous fitreps.
- Mention awards, like Medical Officer of the Quarter, awards from previous commands that were not on your last fitrep, etc.

Here are some example bullets:

- Achieved diplomate status in the American College of Healthcare Executives. Increased preparation for Executive Medicine positions.
- Certified by American Board of XXXXXX. Only 10% of Navy ____ have earned this elite designation.
- Increased clinic visits by over 200 per quarter and decreased referrals to the network by X%.
- Developed XXXXXX clinical pathway and saved $X dollars annually.
- Attended training in XXXXX and enhanced her already strong skills in XXXXX.
- A member of the XXXX committee and achieved…

- Created a 70% cost savings totaling $750K/year compared to outsourcing.

NAVADMIN 137/20 updated the fitrep instruction and put an increased focus on education. It said, "FITREPs will include specific comments regarding education, learning and support for a learning culture." It also said:

"Reporting Seniors must document:

    (1) All personal achievements in education and learning that contribute to a culture of continuous learning, improved knowledge and warfighting effectiveness at both the individual and unit level. Resources include:

        (a) Resident and non-resident professional military education coursework,

        (b) Professional and academic qualifications and certifications,

        (c) Civilian education coursework,

        (d) A personal reading program that includes (but is not limited to) selections from the Chief of Naval Operations Reading List,

        (e) Participation in discussion groups and military societies,

        (f) Publishing in national security or military journals, and

        (g) Involvement in learning through new technologies.

    (2) Individual commitment to intellectual growth in ways beneficial to the Navy, including rigorous self-assessment and efforts to improve:

        (a) Leadership,

        (b) Decision making,

        (c) Creativity,

        (d) Analytic ability,

        (e) Commitment to ethics,

        (f) Geopolitical awareness, and

        (g) Understanding of emerging military technologies and complex military operations.

    (3) The effort of the individual to support the continuing education of subordinates they command or supervise.

    (4) The degree to which the officer continued to assess self, develop professionally, improve current skills and knowledge and acquire new skills.

(5) The extent to which these achievements increase the breadth and depth of warfighting and leadership aptitude."

Wow! That's a lot. What does this mean for you? It means that you need to make sure that if you did any of that stuff you put it in your bullets for block 41.

Block 41 Closing Statement

Always end with a recommendation for the next promotion and assignment/position. If you are in-zone for O6, you should try to include an Executive Medicine recommendation. Your reporting senior may have a standard way he/she likes to do the last line. For example, EPs get the "strongest recommendation" for promotion, MPs get a "strong recommendation," and Ps get a "recommendation" for promotion.

Here are some examples from my recent fitreps:

- Flag officer potential!!! My highest recommendation for early promotion!!!
- CDR Schofer should be promoted early to fill senior leadership positions in Navy Medicine!
- Destined for Executive Medicine. My strongest recommendation for promotion to Captain.
- A future senior leader in Navy/Executive Medicine. Recommended for promotion.
- A dynamic Navy leader with potential for Executive Medicine. Promote ahead of peers.
- A future senior leader of Navy Medicine. An easy choice for assignments leading to XO/CO/Executive Medicine. Promote to CDR NOW!

Block 41 – Final Thoughts

Here are a few final things to keep in mind before you wrap up your block 41:

- Remember that if there is a B in block 20 you need to enter a reason for non-participation in the official PRT. Yes, you lose a line for this but there is no way around it.
- If you are detaching from your command, try to identify your next assignment in block 41 somewhere to assist those looking at your fitrep during a promotion board in following the continuity of the record and showing them that you are about to assume increased responsibility. This, of course, assumes that you are…
- If you are in Full-Time Outservice Training (FTOS), make sure you have your program/fellowship director create a narrative to cut/paste into your NOB fitrep as block 41. It is hard enough to promote while in GME, so make sure you fill block 41 and give yourself all the help you can get.

Block 42

Place an "X" in the box for the promotion recommendation you think you deserve. In general, you will be marked NOB if you have been at the command less than 90 days, although the specific policy is up to the reporting senior. If you are a medical student and an Ensign, you are prohibited from receiving a promotion recommendation higher than a P or Promotable.

Your promotion recommendation may get changed by your chain of command, but if I was you I'd give yourself at least one higher grade than you think you deserve! Give yourself an EP if you are the only officer getting a fitrep in your competitive category. Make sure you do not downgrade yourself from your last fitrep and try to make sure you "break out to the right" and don't "move to the left" on your PSR.

This is what "breaking out to the right" or moving from a P to an MP and then an EP looks like on your Performance Summary Report (PSR) that is shown at promotion boards:

SP	PR	P	MP	EP
		X		

SP	PR	P	MP	EP
			X	

SP	PR	P	MP	EP
			X	

SP	PR	P	MP	EP
				X

This is what "moving to the left" looks like, which you want to avoid unless it is explainable:

SP	PR	P	MP	EP
		X		

SP	PR	P	MP	EP
			X	

SP	PR	P	MP	EP
				X

SP	PR	P	MP	EP
			X	

The most common reasons this would happen to you that are expected by promotion boards and generally acceptable are:
• You are selected for promotion or promote to the next rank.

- You change competitive categories, like when you graduate from residency, stay at your training institution, and are now competing with staff physicians on your fitrep.
- You move to a new command or get a new reporting senior.

Block 43

This will be added up by your command once all the fitreps are done.

Block 44

Get this address from your last fitrep, someone else's last fitrep, or your chain of command.

Block 45

Your trait average will be here, but you won't know the summary group average (and whether you are above or below it) until all the fitreps in your competitive group are done. If you are getting a 1/1 fitrep, then this average will be the same as your trait average.

Block 46 – Signing Your Fitrep

This block is filled out when your fitrep is returned to you for review before you sign it. Verify your name, social security number, and other administrative entries and make sure they are all correct.

My **strong advice** is that if you have questions about your fitrep, discuss those with your chain of command before you sign it. According to the fitrep instruction, the command is supposed to verbally discuss your performance during the period of the report and explain any adverse matters.

Once you have decided to sign the fitrep, check the box indicating your intention to submit or not to submit a statement (see below for the discussion on statements), and sign and date all copies with black or blue-black ink. Your signature does not imply agreement with the report, but merely certifies you have seen the report and understand your right to submit a statement.

Submitting a Statement

You may submit a statement on any fitrep, whether or not the reporting senior considers it adverse. I have never seen any good or tangible benefit come from submitting a statement but to each his own.

The statement must:

- Be submitted within two years after the report ending date or provide acceptable justification for the delay.
- Be no more than two pages.
- Not have enclosures.
- Be temperate in tone and confined to pertinent facts.
- Not include accusations or countercharges.
- Not question or impugn the motives of the reporting senior or other individuals.
- Not contain a request to modify, remove, replace, or investigate a report. Such requests may be made only as part of one of the appeal processes that exist.

If you want to submit a statement, you should refer to chapter 17 of the fitrep instruction, BUPERSINST 1610.10D.

The reporting senior will write a one-page endorsement that will be filed with the fitrep and your statement, and you'll get a copy.

Block 47

If you are getting a concurrent fitrep, like when you are deployed, your regular reporting senior will sign here.

The Final Check – The Top 5 Critical Fitrep Mistakes

When I was a Detailer, I would review a lot of records for people who failed to promote. Over and over again I would see fitreps that reflected poorly on the officer. A lot of the time they didn't realize it was even an issue, and sometimes they did it to themselves. Here are the top five fitrep mistakes, so let's take the time to **do one final check** and make sure you are setting yourself up for failure:

1. Getting anything other than an early promote (EP) when you are getting a 1/1 fitrep.

If you are the only officer in your competitive category (meaning that you aren't competing against anyone on that fitrep), make sure you get an early promote (EP). If you don't get an EP and get a promotable (P) or must promote (MP), it reflects poorly on you unless it is **clearly explained** in the narrative why you are getting a P or MP.

For example, if your reporting senior doesn't give newly promoted officers an EP, your narrative should say something like, "Newly promoted officers do not receive EP rankings." Sometimes this happens because your reporting senior is an officer from another service and he/she doesn't understand the "Navy rules" for fitreps. Sometimes it happens because either you or your reporting senior wants to give you a P or MP so you can "show progression" and get an EP. If you want to show progression, do it on the overall marks, not the final promotion recommendation.

For example, give yourself a 4.0 EP, then a 4.17 EP, and finally a 4.33 EP. **DO NOT** give yourself a P or MP if you are getting a 1/1 fitrep. Do not sign a P or MP fitrep if you are 1/1 without talking to your chain of command about it. This is a huge red flag to a promotion board and can be difficult to overcome.

2. Both officers in a competitive group of two getting an MP fitrep.

If you are in a competitive group of two, your reporting senior should give one of you an EP and the other an MP. If he/she gives you both an MP, it reflects poorly on both of you. Most often this will happen at an operational command and/or when there are two officers who are competing but are in the same promotion year group. Make sure your reporting senior doesn't take the easy road and give you both an MP. One of you should get the EP, and the other can get an MP with a strong narrative explaining why, like a forced distribution statement.

3. Declining from an EP to an MP without changing competitive groups (or "moving to the left").

Most often I would see this when a resident who was in a large competitive group was given an EP fitrep. Then when they graduate from residency, their competitive group shrinks and they don't get an EP but are left with an MP.

If I was you, I'd fight this like a dog. If they can't keep you at an EP and you didn't do anything wrong to deserve this, make sure the reason for your drop from an EP to an MP is clearly explained in the fitrep narrative.

If this happens to you because you are changing competitive groups, like when you get promoted or move from residency/fellowship to a staff physician at the same institution, it is not a black mark in any way and is expected.

4. Not getting a 5.0 in Leadership.

If you are writing your own fitrep, you can't give yourself a 5.0 in every category, but of all the categories Leadership is probably the most important one. Make sure you give yourself a 5.0 in Leadership because that is what the promotion board is looking to promote, future leaders. Having less than a 5.0 can send a bad message to the board.

Sometimes you have no control over this, and sometimes you may deserve less than a 5.0 in Leadership, but do your best to get a 5.0 there if at all possible.

5. Giving yourself an overall trait average less than your reporting senior's average.

Every reporting senior has an overall trait average for each rank that includes all of the fitreps that they've done for that rank. You want to try and find out what it is.

While a reporting senior can look up their average on BUPERS On-Line, you can't. You can, though, see it on your PSR if you've received a fitrep from them at your

current rank. Although it changes every time they do more fitreps, their average the last time they did a round of fitreps can be found on your PSR in the column named "AVERAGE R/S CUM." There will be a whole number, which is the number of fitreps they've ranked in that rank, like 3 in the example below, and below that will be a number to the hundredth, like 3.30 in the example below, which is their reporting senior average for that rank. That is the number you want to be above. In other words, this reporting senior has only ranked 3 officers in that rank, and they overall average is 3.30. You want to be above that.

| AVERAGE | |
| IND | R/S |
SUM	CUM
3.17	3
3.25	3.30

If you have never received a fitrep from your reporting senior at your current rank, maybe one of your friends has. The other way to find out their average is to ask your chain-of-command. Someone, usually the command's fitrep coordinator, will know his or her average for your rank.

It is probably obvious that once you find out their average, you'd like to make sure you are above it. Sometimes there is nothing you can do to be above it because you are getting a P and/or you deserve to be below it, but make sure you don't rank yourself below it if given the chance to write your own fitrep.

The Final Check - What is an Adverse Fitrep?

According to the fitrep instruction (BUPERSINST 1610.10D), an adverse fitrep has any of the following:
- A trait grade of 1.0
- A promotion recommendation mark of Significant Problems (SP)
- Command or Organizational Climate/Equal Opportunity trait graded below 3.0
- More than two traits graded as 2.0
- "Contains comments indicating serious weakness, incapacity, or lack of qualifications for promotion or assignment"

It also says, "A report shall not be considered adverse solely because it may make the member less competitive than another for promotion or assignment."

Translation of Your Fitrep to Your PSR

Another final check to make on your fitrep is to look at it from the perspective of a promotion board. In other words, you need to realize that only certain parts of your fitrep are displayed at a promotion board, and those parts are explained in this diagram. Promotion board Recorders will be double checking the last five years of

your fitreps, but boards may go back further than that, so you'll want to check everything.

Pay grade from block 2

Duty Station from block 7

Primary Duty from block 29

Report Dates blocks 14 & 15

Individual trait grades blocks 33-39

Promotion recommendation block 43 or block 46

Physical Fitness Assessment block 20

Title of Reporting Senior (block 23)

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY REPORT
NAME (LAST, FIRST MIDDLE)
SMITH, JAMES N.
SSN 000-00-0000
PAGE 3 OF 3

PG	STATION	DUTY	DATES	M O S	REP NAME	PG	TITLE	TRAITS 1	2	3	4	5	AVERAGE IND SUM	R/S CUM	PROMOTION REC SP	PR	P	MP	EP	PHY READ	RPT TYPE
02	FLTCOMBAT DIR SYS	INSTR	950930 960115	04	WILLIAMS L M	04	CO			7			3.00 3.20	14 3.22	0	0	X 6	0	0	P/WS	RG
02	DD967 ELLIOT	ENG OFF	960116 960428	03	BELL W M	05	CO		5	1			3.17 3.25	3 3.25	0	1	X 1	0	1	P/WS	RG
03	DD967 ELLIOT	ENG OFF	960429 960831	04	CUPPER S T	05	CO			2	4		4.66 4.80	3 4.80	0	0	1	X 1	1	P/WS	RG
03	DD967 ELLIOT	ENG OFF	960901 970131	05	CUPPER S T	05	CO		3	3			3.50 3.50	9 4.20	0	0	1	X 3	2	P/WS	SUPP
03	DD967 ELLIOT	ENG OFF	970201 980131	12	CUPPER S T	05	CO		3	4			3.57 3.50	19 4.20	0	0	5	X 3	2	P/WS	RG
03	DD967 ELLIOT	ENG OFF	980201 980831	08	JONES R G	05	CO		5	2			3.29 3.29	1 3.29	0	0	0	0	X 1	P/WS	CR

Report length nearest whole month

Reporting Senior's name block 22

Rank of Reporting Senior (block 23)

Individual trait average

Summary group trait average

Report Type blocks 17-19

Reporting Senior cumulative average

The most critical things to check are your primary duty in block 29. Make sure it is truly your most impressive collateral duty/position/job that is listed there. And make sure your promotion recommendation (P, MP, or EP) is breaking you out to the right, not moving you to the left.