

## ABOUT SELECTION PROCESS FOR MILITARY PROFESSIONALS IN THE ROMANIAN ARMY

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**Abstract:** *Promoting the military profession is the main tool to ensure a solid basis for selection. Within the system of human resources activities recruitment and selection, two phases of the same process, are highly interconnected, as the quality of selection greatly depends on recruitment. Promoting the military offer as well as a more flexible system, based on non-discrimination, equal chances, transparency and free access to information policies, are conferring the possibility of choosing this profession according to principles and criteria established by the military organization .*

**Keywords:** *personnel recruitment process, selection of personnel, military career, candidates for military profession, evaluation, interview.*

### 1. CONSIDERATIONS ON PERSONNEL SELECTION

Supplying an organization with personnel, also called employment, comprises several activities: *human resources planning, recruitment and selection of personnel.*

The process of outsourcing organizations with personnel comprises: recruitment, selection and orientation or integration of personnel, while supplying personnel from within the organization implies transfers, promotions, requalifying, rehiring, development, as well as eventual retirements, resignations, firing or deaths.

In essence, *the personnel insurance process is one of filtering applicants* by means of successive specific human resources activities.

The human resources selection is the process of choosing, according to principles and criteria established by the organization and applied by the human resources department. Military professional personnel recruitment implies an exchange of the entire recruitment and selection “philosophy”, as the entire process is now based on principles that provide it with flexibility and coherence.

Fundamentals basic principles at recruitment and selection process’s organization and functioning are as follows: *the continuity principle* - the military profession’s promotion activities must be permanent; *the national coverage principle* - all promotion and candidate recruitment activities must be performed all over the country; *the pro-activity principle* - military personnel recruitment is based on scouting for candidates, establishing direct contact, so that the most focus be placed on the more difficult objectives; *the unity in action principle* - the recruitment process implies the same type of activities, documents and information, in accordance with regulations, no matter where it takes place; *the non discrimination and equal chances principle* - all Romanian citizens that comply with all general and specific standards can chose the military profession (regardless of their sex, nationality, religion etc.); *the transparency principle* - all recruitment and selection standards, criteria, procedures, military life and work, reasons for dismissal or admission must be familiar to all candidates, without restrictions; *the adaptability principle* - promotion methods for the military profession must be a flexible system, adjusted

to socio-demographic features of the target group, taking into account the area of responsibility and recruitment tasks, as well as feedback from recruitment environments.

The selection is subsequent to personnel recruitment and this is the phase where the most suitable candidates are selected for the available positions. Recruitment and selection, two phases of the same process, are highly interconnected, as the quality of selection greatly depends on recruitment. Within the system of human resources activities, personnel selection logically follows position analysis and personnel planning, phases that produce a report on occupied positions, as well as the personnel recruitment phase, that should attract a large enough number of candidates to choose from, in order to have the most capable and competitive fill in the vacancies.

Human resources department assignments in the selection process, usually are as follows: welcoming candidates, preliminary check of documents presented by candidates, informing candidates on the organization's objectives, performance and structure, informing candidates on selection procedures, preselecting candidates, medical/psychological testing, checking references and information submitted by candidates in their documentations, candidate evaluation based on specific means, charge sheet checking, decision making on intermediary and final selection, managing selection documents and procedures. Potential candidates may be recruited from *the inside*: soldiers, military high school seniors, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers, public workers, as well as civilian employees of the Ministry of National Defense, or from *the outside*: high-school graduates, college, university graduates, with or without prior military training, military high-school graduates that work outside the Ministry of National Defense.

Recruiting military professionals depend on a series of factors, the most important being: the emergence of new education institutions, a decrease in the degree of attractiveness to the military profession, as compared to civilians ones, as a consequence of economic development, the decrease in

personnel numbers and the fact that contracts are signed for a limited amount of time thus working in the military no longer provides the job security feeling, military conflict burning points as well as terrorism escalating facts that bring into attention the military profession, as young people become more pragmatic, well-informed and eager to choose.

## 2. SELECTION OF MILITARY PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

Under the circumstances of a market economy, where traditional values (patriotism, pride etc) fade away, moving on to an active, even incisive strategy to make the military profession more attractive to target groups, stood for a step forward to a modern and efficient recruitment and selection concept, that provided the necessary candidates for a profession that requires motivation and aptitudes. Within this system, *military professional personnel selection process* stands for the process of selecting recruited candidates based on specific criteria that determine their cognitive, aptitude and motivational potential.

The process of selecting candidates for the military profession is organized, according to selection strategies and policies established by the ministry, into two phases: the first one in a selection and orientation centre, and the second in the military education institutions.

The selection system for the military profession ensures: an increase in candidate quality and quantity, the selection of candidates as well as building awareness on the place and role of the military profession in the society. This selection system comprises territorial specialized structures, i.e. three regional selection and orientation centers, in Alba Iulia, Breaza and Câmpulung Moldovenesc garrisons.

*Regional selection and orientation centers* have the mission of evaluating candidates from the point of view of their motivation and skills, to professionally orient them, according to their potential, military requirements as well as what is expected of them on their first assignment in the military. These structures' attributes are: to organize and perform the

selection process while ensuring logistics as well, to evaluate the recruited candidates' potential in terms of motivation, skills and intelligence while complying with standards of non-discrimination and transparency, to advise and orient suitable candidates, to experiment new selection tools and to improve existing selection methods.

The selection is performed based on the following *issues*: complying with regulation standards, physical abilities, military abilities and comprises the following elimination trials: *psychological* (I.Q. tests, personality tests), *physical*, *final evaluation interview*. Selection is open only for those candidates that are "medically cleared" and that sign a release form stating that they are psychologically and physically able to take the selection tests.

The selection process takes one or two days (24 or 48 hours, depending on the type of candidates), a period that the candidate must spend completely integrated in a strict routine. Each trial is either passed, or marked *ACCEPTED (ABLE-BODIED)*, or failed, and marked *REJECTED (UNSERVICEABLE)*.

## 2.1. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION

*The psychological evaluation* has the role of identifying and selecting candidates with optimum potential for military life and activities, in terms of aptitudes and personality. The examination area includes general skill potential, as well as the ability to adjust to military specifics (personality and motivational structure) so that he/she is able to comply with the requirements of the military profession. This stands for one of the trials in candidate admission processes and it is mandatory and eliminatory. Psychological evaluations are based on standard methods and techniques and include *intelligence tests* (for intellectual potential evaluation), *personality tests* (for ability to adjust to military life evaluation), and *situational tests* (for leadership abilities evaluation). Psychological evaluation is relevant and result interpretation is performed by professionals in the field. The information obtained is discussed and explored during the final evaluation interview.

## 2.2. PHYSICAL APTITUDES EVALUATION

*The testing of physical aptitudes* stands for another phase of the selection process and deals with evaluating the development degree of basic movement skills and how they are put into practice under utilitarian-applicative circumstances by means of two trials: covering a utilitarian-applicative track and an endurance trial. The objectives of this testing process are: identifying candidates with the necessary abilities for adequate evolution during the formative process within military education institutions, evaluation of speed development abilities in terms of: movement, reaction, execution and repetition, evaluation of the level of dexterity in terms of space-time orientation, coordination of body segments, precision and mobility, evaluating overall body endurance in terms of physical stress over a period of time.

The principles that guide the candidates' movement abilities evaluation are: *the relevance principle* - trials deal with the four basic movement qualities: speed, dexterity, endurance, force, as well as with their degree of maturity, *the accessibility principle* - training candidates for the tests can be performed without acquiring complicated techniques, *the transparency principle* - all procedures ensure objectivity and transparency.

## 2.3. THE FINAL EVALUATION INTERVIEW

The interview can be defined as "*a purposeful conversation or normal verbal interaction between two persons*". The purpose of the interview is to explore areas such as: family environment, education, work experience, other interests, as well as an evaluation of candidates from the point of view of: manners, emotional stability, maturity, attitude, motivation, interests etc. there are some obvious advantages: easy to organize, candidates can be seen and talked to, feed-back ensured. It also stands as a decisive stage in the selection process, as it facilitates the evaluation of candidate compatibility with

the military profession, the analysis of previously obtained information and the analysis of candidate reaction under specific circumstances.

*The final evaluation interview* represents a formal exchange of ideas and points of view, between candidates and interviewers, with the purpose of information gathering. The interview clarifies aspects arose from personality tests, candidates' communication skills and motivation for the military profession. Successful interviews must ensure an environment that is suitable for communication and cooperation. Instead of imprecise, general questions (that will have similar answers) or instead of general discussions, it is preferable to state question and points of view accurately and get information on who, what, where, when, how, why, what purpose or circumstances, what effects etc.

Those who develop a pattern in doing so will obtain great results in terms of clarifying issues and building interlocutor awareness on the issues covered.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

Recruitment and selection process approach three conceptual highly enchainned and interconnected delimitations must be made. They incorporate all the activities that exist within the system:

- *promotion of military profession* has to be made by means of systematically diffusing purposeful information within target groups, with the goal of increasing the attractiveness of military profession;
- *military professional personnel recruitment* is a complex process of informing, drawing and orienting civilian education institutions' graduates towards military institutions or the profession of soldier and, later on, of promoting according to each person's competency and aspirations;
- *military professional personnel selection* stands for the process of selecting candidates for the military profession based on specific criteria and standards dealing with cognitive potential, aptitudes and motivation.

Drawing young people towards the military career must be approached taking into account the need for rapid reaction to the labor market signals as well as for adjusting the offers to the evolution of demands. This implies diversification of forms and means of promoting the military offer as well as a more flexible system, based on non-discrimination, equal chances, transparency and free access to information policies.

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