

IS Assignments - Myth, Urban Legend, or Fact?

- The Shopping List in Direct Access can be counted on all the time

This is not true. The most important thing to remember is that the Shopping List in Direct Access is only accurate during the period between when the commands finish reviewing it and the e-resume deadline. Direct Access is a funny beast. Issuing orders will change the number of open positions, but so will a myriad of other actions which can be taken by a number of HQ units.

- Assignment Priority 3 means I'll get whatever I want

Nope! This is false but you should compete well since we don't really have priority ones or two's in the IS rate. For some rates, Priority three may be a sure way to get you whatever you want on your e-resume. Please keep in mind there are other priority three members and other overseas folks in the IS rating. A priority three does not guarantee you your first choice or dream job but you should compete well. It's still a good idea to list a lot of jobs which is explained further in the IS e-resume guidance and in the paragraphs below.

- You Should Only List Jobs on your E-resume that you absolutely want

This is absolutely false. The more jobs you list the better it will be for you! We suggest you approach the e-resume jobs listing like you're doing an expanding square search pattern. Here's why: You may not want to list east coast or west coast jobs but if you don't you won't even compete for those jobs and you may end up competing for what's left over. You may end up being assigned somewhere further away from your desires and then wish you could have gone to a job you never listed instead. Essentially, you're rank ordering the jobs so it's best to list a lot of jobs if not all of them. You can even write in your e-resume text that you have rank ordered your jobs and while you don't prefer a particular coast you would rather go there than to another area. The bottom-line is we start at the top of your e-resume and work down it and stop when you earn a particular job. You don't compete for jobs you don't list. If you list eight jobs and we can't get you to one of those jobs then your e-resume goes to the bottom of the priority pile that you are competing in.

-You can call your detailer for career counseling

This is true; however, there is a time and method to do this. Everyone is entitled to career counseling but the time line is usually June through August of every year. You should not call your detailer directly for anything you want or to ask where you are going. We also suggest you arrange this through your chain of command and have the Chief call or command representative so we can schedule enough time to give good career counseling and possibly include others at the same time.

- Detailers tell me to re-submit my e-resume for a specific job or group of jobs because Detailers are evaluated on how often they get someone a pick from their e-resume

This is not true. We are not evaluated by getting you something on your e-resume. We advise you to update your e-resume for a variety of reasons (it's unrealistic, the jobs listed are no longer available, we're unable to co-locate you and your active duty spouse based on choices listed, etc.). There are two things to keep in mind. First, we have no need to try and trick you in to something. This is still the military and we can issue you orders where there is a service need (whether you pick it or not). Second and most importantly, we (Detailers) started off in your shoes and wanted to be treated fairly then as we still do now. Our actions

are an effort to afford you the opportunity to participate in the process that will dictate your life during the next tour. Your e-resume is your primary communication tool to the assignment officers and we want you to use it to communicate with us.

- Detailers keep a file on everybody

We sure do, it's part of Direct Access. This is for the benefit of the member and the Coast Guard. We use it to record any promises made (short tour, assignment priority upgrade, etc.), career counseling (member advised to request a certain type of unit/position), career intentions, etc. We normally add any message traffic or e-mails into this file.

- The Enlisted Assignments Road Show is a waste of time because the (insert your rating here) Detailer won't be there

The Enlisted Assignments Road Show presentation was developed and is updated annually collectively by all of the Enlisted Detailers. Whether it's me, the YN Detailer, or an Aviation Detailer, the message is the same and worthwhile. The CG spends thousands annually to send us on the road to help you help yourself on career planning and the assignment process. We spend a lot of time after the presentation answering questions one-on-one. If it's something we can't answer (i.e. rating specific) we'll take it back with us and get an answer for you from your Detailer. Keep in mind as an IS you are expected to be a leader and mentor to others. Although you may not see any direct personal value, the information we pass on will better prepare you to help those under your leadership.

-Qualifications Don't Matter

This is false. In the IS rate qualifications do matter and maybe in more ways than you know. It's true that we currently do not do "Qual Based" assignments but it may help you compete better for a particular job or help you promote to CWO. You cannot have too many qualifications and if your qualification isn't in Direct Access then it's really not in your record.

- In this currently challenging budget environment all I have to do is ask for an extension or no-cost orders and I'll get it

It's not quite that simple. Fiscal responsibility is only one of 16 different factors that we consider during the assignment process. If everyone in the Coast Guard wanted to stay exactly where they are right now this would be easy. However, it is likely that the PO Gone on the CGC NEVERHOME doesn't want to stay there. Therefore all of the assignment factors have to be considered. While we fully intend to maximize our fleet ups, when it comes to extensions we must consider the long-term, service-wide impact when it comes to extensions. That is why we will continue to tell you that you must compete for an extension, not just be granted one automatically. If you place an extension as the only pick on your e-resume, there is a significant chance that you will be disappointed (see e-resume guidance on our webpage). As for no-cost orders, if you ask me transfer you from NY to CA it doesn't matter if you say you'll take no cost orders. In accordance with Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) if you receive orders outside your current geographical location, you are entitled to travel funds and I can't force you to move without them.

- You can't Manage your Career Because You Really Just Go where the Detailer Sends You

This is false and a dangerous practice. There is a saying I use often: "If you're coasting you're probably going Down Hill." For your own sake, take charge of your career and your

destination. If you want to get to Florida then maybe you should ask for an overseas tour and your chances will be much better. That doesn't mean you'll serve your whole career in Florida but that's the best way to help you compete to get there. We suggest you base your career on advancement and professional growth. Manage it like a progressing career and keep having fun. I assure you that all of the assignment officers have been in your shoes and transferred a lot; however, if you look at the retirement tables I would venture to say that retiring as a CWO or MCPO is better than retiring as an E5 or E6. It's okay if you choose to do that but we don't suggest it at all. At the end of the day we are all leaving the Coast Guard. I suggest you do this on your terms with as many benefits as possible by managing your career. Take a look at this link and plug in your goal pay grade, compare it to others, and then answer this question again.

<http://militarypay.defense.gov/mpcalcs/Calculators/FinalPayHigh3.aspx>