

FROM EVALUATION TO APPLICATION

How to Turn Military Evaluations into PMP-Eligible Project Experience

By CPT Nicholas McGregor, U.S. Army. Second edition, July 2026. This is the exact method I used on my own application: five OERs and one training program, translated into six project entries and submitted. It works the same way for officers and NCOs, in any service.

Read this first. This guide is not from PMI. It documents my method, checked against PMI's published rules as of 26 July 2026, including the application-rule changes that took effect 9 July 2026. Rules change, so verify everything at pmi.org before you submit. One more thing: you sign the application, and you answer for it if PMI audits you. Every sentence you submit must be true and provable from your own records.

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What changed in this edition. PMI's 9 July 2026 update expanded the experience window from 8 to 10 years and added a 48-month tier for associate degrees. Every number in this guide reflects the current rules.

THE METHOD ON ONE PAGE

Step 1. Confirm your eligibility path on pmi.org. Bachelor's degree = 36 months of project experience. Associate degree = 48 months. High school diploma = 60 months. (A degree from a PMI GAC-accredited program = 24.) All of it within the last 10 years.

Step 2. Pull every evaluation from the last 10 years. Add program documents you wrote or received: memos, SOPs, welcome letters, certificates.

Step 3. Find the projects. A project has a start reason, a new thing it delivered, and an end. A job does not. Test every accomplishment.

Step 4. Map each project to the PMI form fields. Team = people you directed. Budget = money you controlled, never equipment value.

Step 5. Write each description with the skeleton: Objective, Role, Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring, Closing, Outcome. 200–500 words.

Step 6. Count unique months (overlaps count once). Line up a verifier for every entry. Then submit.

The three-part project test

(1) **Trigger:** can you name the moment and reason it started? (2) **Unique deliverable:** did it create something new you can point to? (3) **Closeout:** can you say when and how it ended? All three or it is not a project.

The five mistakes that get military applications rejected or flagged

- Pasting a duty description into the project field. Jobs are not projects.
- Claiming equipment value as budget. Your hand receipt is not a budget.
- Counting supported population as team size. Your team is who you directed.
- Claiming the same accomplishment in two entries.
- Unexplained jargon. Write for a civilian who has never worn the uniform.

1. Check Your Eligibility First

PMI has four rule sets since 9 July 2026. Your education level decides which one applies to you, and that decides how many months of project experience you need. Confirm your path before you write anything. Every path also requires 35 hours of project management education (or a current CAPM certification), and all experience must fall within the 10 years before you apply.

Your education	Experience you need
High school diploma	60 months leading projects, within the past 10 years
Associate degree (new tier, added 9 July 2026)	48 months leading projects, within the past 10 years
Bachelor's degree or higher, from any accredited school	36 months leading projects, within the past 10 years
Degree from a PMI GAC-accredited program only	24 months, within the past 10 years

NCOs: with no degree you need 60 months, and an associate degree drops that to 48. The method in this guide works exactly the same. Your NCOERs replace OERs as the source material, and the months are very achievable across two or three assignments.

Three things people get wrong. First: a master's degree does not drop the requirement to 24 months. That tier only covers degrees from programs on PMI's GAC accreditation list, and very few programs are on it. Check gac.pmi.org before you assume yours counts. Many prep websites get this wrong. Second: you do not need continuous coverage. Gaps for schools, PME, or transition are fine. PMI only adds up qualifying months. Third: overlapping months count once. If two projects ran during the same calendar month, that month earns you one month of credit, not two.

Rule-change note. PMI updated both the exam and the application rules on 9 July 2026. The exam added sustainability, AI, and value delivery. The application rules grew the experience window from 8 to 10 years and added the associate-degree tier, which only helps you: project work from 10 years back that used to be expired may count again. Make sure your study materials match the exam you will sit, and take the extra window.

2. Gather Your Documents

Your evaluations are the backbone of your application. They are signed, dated, third-party proof of what you did and when. Pull every evaluation that covers the last 10 years before you start writing. Here is where the useful material sits in each format:

Service and form	Dates and scope	Where the projects hide
Army OER (DA 67-10 series)	Part I, block j (period covered). Part III duty description (team size, equipment values, population supported).	Part IV.c narratives, especially Intellect, Leads, Develops, and Achieves. Also the senior rater's comments in Part VI.
Army NCOER (DA 2166-9 series)	Administrative data and duty description.	The performance bullets under each competency. Look for 'Achieves' entries with numbers in them.

Service and form	Dates and scope	Where the projects hide
Navy and USMC FITREP / EVAL	Reporting period. Primary and collateral duties blocks.	The comments-on-performance narrative. For Marines, the billet accomplishments section.
Air Force and Space Force OPB / EPB	Duty title and duty description.	The narrative performance statements. Their action-plus-impact format translates almost directly.

Then look past your evaluations. The strongest entry in my application was a training program my OER mentions in a single clause. The real evidence was the program paperwork: a dated welcome memo that named me as the point of contact, nomination and screening forms, and a completion certificate with a state accreditation number and two colonel-level signatures. Those documents proved the dates, my role, the deliverables, and that the program outlived me. If you wrote a welcome letter, an SOP, a program of instruction, or a decision brief, you produced project deliverables. Go find them now: old shared drives, email attachments, OPOD annexes. Do this before you need them.

3. Find the Projects Inside Your Evaluations

This is the core skill, and the most common failure point. PMI defines a project as a temporary effort that creates something unique. It starts, it delivers a new thing, and it ends. A rating period is none of those. It is just a window of time in a job. Reviewers reject applications that read like job descriptions, because running day-to-day operations is not project management experience. The fix is to find the bounded efforts inside the rating period.

Run the three-part test on every accomplishment in every evaluation:

- **Trigger.** Can you name the moment and reason it started? A deployment order, a gap someone identified, a directed mission, a failed inspection.
- **Unique deliverable.** Did it create something new you can point to? A validated SOP, a certified unit, an accredited program, a completed fielding.
- **Closeout.** Can you say when and how it ended? A validation exercise, a handoff, a program institutionalized, a redeployment closed out.

All three answers must be crisp. One rating period might hold zero projects, one, or several. A project can also span two rating periods. Both are fine.

Watch your verbs. Even a real project gets rejected when it is described in day-to-day operations language. These are actual rewrites from my application. The facts are identical; the framing is not:

Sounds like a job (risky)	Sounds like a project (defensible)
“Managed daily Troop Medical Clinic operations seeing 1,200 patients.”	“Validated the redesigned patient-flow procedures through live clinic operations. More than 1,200 patient visits ran under the new procedures without incident.”
“Led over 30 medical support range missions.”	“Delivered planned medical coverage for more than 30 range missions as scheduled milestones in the certification plan.”
“Managed ordering, receipt, and distribution of medical supplies for the brigade.”	“Implemented the redesigned supply workflow, covering ordering, receipt, and distribution across all seven battalions, as the new brigade standard.”

The test for every sentence: if it could describe any random month in the job, rewrite it or cut it.

4. Fill In the PMI Form Fields

The application asks the same questions for every project. Decide these answers before you write the description, so the two never disagree.

PMI field	How to answer it
Project Title	Name the effort, not the job. "MEDEVAC Readiness and NTC Deployment Program," not "Platoon Leader." Use a noun that carries an outcome: program, fielding, integration, reestablishment.
Organization	Unit, service, location, written for a civilian. "4th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, U.S. Army, Fort Carson, CO."
Job Title	Your duty title. It can repeat across entries. The project titles do the differentiating.
Functional Reporting Area	Pick the closest civilian function: Healthcare, Operations, Engineering, Information Technology, Human Resources. There is no military option, and that is fine.
Organization Primary Focus	Government is the standard answer for uniformed service.
Approach / Methodology	Military planning (MDMP, troop leading procedures, backward planning) is predictive. Pick Traditional for most entries. Pick Hybrid only if you truly iterated, like a program refined between cohorts.
Project Team Size	The people you directed on the project. Not the population you supported. My platoon of 28 was a team of 28. The 4,600 Soldiers my company supported were stakeholders, never team size.
Project Budget	Money the project used and you can prove: an operating budget, a supply budget, a contract value. Equipment on your hand receipt is NOT a budget. Put property value in the description as 'equipment managed.' This is the most common military audit failure.
Project Dates	Month and year. Use the project's own start and end, which can be narrower than the rating period. Overlapping months count once.

5. Write Each Description (200–500 Words)

PMI's own instruction: "Provide a high-level description that summarizes your experience and includes the project objective, outcome, your role on the project, and your responsibilities and deliverables. A typical response is between 200 to 500 words." Hit every named element in plain sight. Never make the reviewer hunt or guess. This skeleton does it automatically, and it shows you know project management by walking the five process groups:

Objective (40–60 words): what the project set out to create, and why. Make it sound bounded, because it was.

Role (30–50 words): "As [duty title], I initiated the effort and served as project lead, directing a team of N with a budget of \$X." Say 'project lead' in those words. Reviewers should never wonder whether you led or just helped.

Initiating / Planning / Executing / Monitoring / Closing (150–250 words total): one to three sentences each. Name real deliverables: the SOP, the plan, the exercise, the accreditation. Closing must show a handoff or institutionalization, meaning the project ended.

Outcome (40–60 words): results with numbers a civilian understands. Numbers beat adjectives every time.

Translate the jargon. Write for a smart civilian who has never served. Spell out every acronym the first time, then convert: 'Role 2' becomes 'forward surgical care.' 'Class VIII' becomes 'medical supply.' 'MASCAL' becomes 'mass casualty.' 'BCT' becomes 'a 4,600-Soldier brigade.' Delete doctrine references entirely. An ATP number means nothing to a reviewer.

Cut the performance-review content. Rater rankings ("#1 of 5 commanders"), awards, and PT scores tell the reviewer this is a job being graded, not a project being described. That is exactly the impression you are fighting. Save them for your resume.

Check your word count before you paste. The companion workbook counts it live while you draft.

6. Count Your Months

List your entries oldest to newest. Count calendar months inclusively: May 2019 through October 2020 is 18 months. Then subtract every month that shows up in more than one entry, because PMI credits each calendar month once. Compare the result to your requirement (24, 36, 48, or 60). Here is my actual math as a pattern:

Entry	Start	End	Months
1. MEDEVAC readiness and NTC deployment	May 2019	Oct 2020	18
2. Short-notice deployment medical readiness	Jan 2021	Jun 2021	6
3. Joint medical integration (deployed, Iraq)	Jun 2021	Jun 2022	13
4. Brigade readiness-reporting overhaul	Jun 2022	Jun 2023	13
5. Accredited clinical training program	Oct 2024	May 2025	8
Gross 58, minus 2 overlapping (Jun 2021 appears in entries 2 and 3; Jun 2022 in entries 3 and 4)		TOTAL	56 unique

Notice what is missing. My 16-month company command was a legitimate project, and I drafted it as entry 5. I cut it before submitting. I already had 56 months against a 36-month requirement, the training program

stood on its own dates once the command entry was gone, and every extra entry is one more thing a reviewer can question and an auditor can probe. Drop what you do not need. A short list of your best-documented projects beats a long list.

Two cautions. If your evaluation shows non-rated time, such as student or PME codes, your project dates should only cover time you actually led project work. Claiming a service school as project experience will not survive an audit. And the 10-year window slides with your application date, so your oldest experience expires. If a strong early period is about to age out, apply sooner.

7. Prepare for an Audit

PMI randomly audits applications. An audit asks for three things: a copy of your degree (if claiming one), proof of your 35 training hours, and a signature from a supervisor verifying each project entry. That third one is the hard one. Line up your verifiers before you submit, not after the audit letter arrives. For each entry, identify the rater or senior rater from that period, confirm you can still reach them, and tell them a form may come. Deployed-period verifiers are the hardest to find later, so do those first. Keep one folder with everything: evaluations, program documents, your training certificate, your degree. Simple rule: if a fact in your application cannot be traced to that folder or confirmed by your named verifier, soften it or cut it.

8. Example 1: A Deployed Staff Job

The situation: I spent 12 months as a battalion medical officer in Baghdad. On paper, that is a staff job providing routine medical support. Here is the raw material from my OER:

From the duty description: “Oversees the medical readiness for a 653 Soldier Task Force... Manages the Union III medical clinic which is responsible for the care of over 1,400 personnel... equipment valued over \$20 million.”

From the Intellect block: “Created, tested, and trained the Union III MASCAL SOP which integrated medical assets across Union III into a cohesive and effective team.”

From the Achieves block: “Organized a highly successful joint MASCALEX between 12 external organizations spanning across three locations in the Greater Baghdad Area... managed TMC operations which saw over 1200 patients... and coordinated medical evacuation for 62 casualties.”

Running the test. Trigger: the base had no integrated casualty-response system across 12 separate organizations, and leadership wanted one. Unique deliverable: the MASCAL SOP, validated by a 12-organization exercise across three sites. Closeout: the SOP became the base standard and transferred to the follow-on unit. That passes. Notice the clinic and its 1,200 patients, which is the part that looks most like daily operations. I reframed it truthfully as proof the new system worked, not as the job itself.

The form answers: Traditional approach. Team of 11. June 2021 to June 2022. Budget stated conservatively as the clinic's operating basis. The \$20 million in equipment appears only in the description, as 'equipment managed.'

The complete entry as submitted. First the form fields, then the description word for word as it went into the application:

PMI field	As submitted
Project Title	Union III Joint Medical Operations & MASCAL Integration Program (Operation Inherent Resolve)
Organization	Task Force Pioneer, 299th Brigade Engineer Battalion, U.S. Army — deployed, Baghdad, Iraq
Job Title	Battalion Medical Officer
Functional Reporting Area	Healthcare
Organization Primary Focus	Government
Approach / Methodology	Traditional (Predictive)
Project Team Size	11
Project Budget	\$1M–\$5M (clinic and medical supply operating basis — the \$20M equipment value appears only in the description, as equipment managed)
Project Dates	June 2021 – June 2022

Objective: Integrate medical assets from 12 separate U.S., coalition, and partner organizations across the Union III base complex in Baghdad, Iraq, into a single mass-casualty (MASCAL) response system, while validating the new system through the clinic serving more than 1,400 personnel of the CJTF-OIR headquarters and NATO Mission Iraq. As Battalion Medical Officer for a 653-Soldier task force deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, I led an 11-person medical team and managed two medical evacuation vehicles and medical equipment valued at over \$20 million.

Initiating: Identified the absence of an integrated casualty-response architecture across the base complex, defined the integration requirement with battalion and base leadership, and obtained stakeholder commitment from each of the 12 participating organizations.

Planning: Authored the Union III MASCAL standard operating procedure; mapped capabilities, responsibilities, and patient flow across all stakeholder organizations; designed a joint MASCAL exercise spanning three locations in the greater Baghdad area; and planned clinic staffing, force-protection integration, and medical supply sustainment supporting the new architecture.

Executing: Trained and rehearsed the SOP across all stakeholder organizations; led the joint MASCAL exercise integrating adjacent and higher echelons of medical care; validated the redesigned patient-flow and response procedures through live clinic operations; delivered Tactical Combat Casualty Care training to more than 200 Soldiers, civilians, and coalition partners; and directed the medical response to a COVID-19 outbreak, producing force-health-protection policy recommendations adopted by the base commander and disseminated across the Combined Joint Operations Area.

Monitoring and Controlling: Tracked patient-care volume and quality, evacuation timelines, and outbreak metrics against the new procedures; refined the SOP through exercise after-action reviews.

Closing: Validated the MASCAL SOP as the enduring base standard, transferred it to follow-on forces, and conducted a deliberate handoff at the end of the deployment.

Outcome: An integrated, twelve-organization casualty-response capability institutionalized base-wide; more than 1,200 patient encounters executed under the new procedures without a single adverse incident; and 62 casualty evacuations coordinated through the system the project established.

That is 323 words: inside the 200–500 window with room to spare. Every number traces to the OER, and the named verifier for this entry is the senior rater from that deployment.

9. Example 2: A Training Program I Built

The situation: while commanding a medical company, I created a hospital-based clinical training program for combat medics. It started as 'Medic University' and became the Marne Medical Readiness Program. My OER gives it one clause: "create[d] the Marne Medical Readiness Program that integrated combat medics inside of Winn Army Hospital." One clause is not much. The program paperwork carried the real weight: a dated welcome memo naming me as point of contact and defining the 21-day rotation, nomination and screening forms proving the program had governance, and a completion certificate carrying a state EMS accreditation course number with division-level signatures. Together those documents proved the dates (chartered October 2024, first class April 2025), the deliverables, and the fact that the program outlived my command.

Two decisions worth copying. First, this program was originally also described inside my company-command entry. The same accomplishment cannot live in two entries; that is a self-inflicted audit flag. I removed it from the command entry, and when I later cut the command entry altogether (see Section 6), the program stood cleanly on its own dates. Second, it earned its slot because it is the entry a civilian reviewer

understands instantly: a state-accredited training pipeline delivering 36 continuing-education units per graduate. Nothing in that sentence needs translating.

10. Final Checklist

Run every entry through this list before you pay the exam fee:

- Eligibility path confirmed on pmi.org. Months requirement and 10-year window checked against today's date.
- Every entry passes the three-part test: trigger, unique deliverable, closeout.
- No sentence could describe any random month in the job.
- Objective, outcome, role, responsibilities, and deliverables all stated plainly in every description.
- Every description is 200 to 500 words.
- Your role says 'served as project lead' in plain words.
- Team size is the team you directed. Supported population appears only as stakeholders.
- Budget is money you can prove. Equipment value moved into the text as 'equipment managed.'
- No accomplishment appears in two entries. Overlapping months counted once.
- Every acronym spelled out. Jargon translated. Doctrine references deleted.
- Rankings, awards, and PT scores cut from descriptions.
- A named, reachable, warned verifier for every entry. One folder holding all your evidence.

Sources: PMI, Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification page and PMP Examination Content Outline, pmi.org/certifications/project-management-pmp (accessed July 2026). PMI GAC program directory, gac.pmi.org. Method validated on my own application, July 2026. Rules verified 26 July 2026 against PMI's current published requirements: 10-year experience window and the associate-degree tier, both effective 9 July 2026. The free Application Forge at sprintbank.app/military/tool/ applies these same rules interactively.