

TECHNICAL SERVICES LABORATORY  
3206th SUPPORT WING (TEST)  
Eglin Air Force Base, Florida

May 18, 1954

Mr. Robert A. Martin, Administrative Engineer  
Research and Development Laboratories  
Hughes Aircraft Company  
Culver City, California

Dear Mr. Martin:

In reply to your inquiry of May 13th, I am pleased to recommend 1st Lt. William E. Thornton for a position on your technical staff.

I have known Lt. Thornton for approximately a year while we have been working here at the Air Proving Ground in the Technical Services Laboratory. The responsibility of our branch is to devise instrumentation for the collection of data in operational suitability testing. Lt. Thornton has worked in the electronic aspects of this instrumentation program.

Two outstanding characteristics of Lt. Thornton are boundless enthusiasm and tremendous energy. Although it is quite possible in the military to do a minimum of work and a maximum of "buck-passing" without being censured, this officer rolls up his sleeves and gets right in the middle of the biggest "pile" of work to be done. He has a practical balance between theoretical training and down-to-earth techniques. His college background, I believe, includes courses in mathematics, physics, and electronics to the extent that he can design circuits for particular applications. He reads widely and wisely. In earlier years he operated a radio (and perhaps TV) repair shop which furnishes a very good apperceptive basis for trouble-shooting and maintenance. He is a good thinker as well as a hard worker.

Like most men, Lt. Thornton has some characteristics which are liabilities. I can put my finger on only two of these. First, he is not very orderly in keeping his desk and work bench cleared, clean, and tidy. I have mentioned this to him and he is fully aware of the deficiency. He feels, with considerable justification, that the matter is trivial and certainly it is, when compared with his ability to accomplish a large amount of useful work. The second trait which I would change, if I could, is

Lt. Thornton's tendency to take too much for granted in planning work. He usually thinks far ahead of his colleagues and assumes that understandings have been reached when, as a matter of fact, they are not clearly understood by all concerned.

Lt. Thornton is a big, healthy, friendly fellow with a good sense of humor and an affable personality. I think he would make a useful member of any technical staff and particularly one engaged in research and development. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind about his complete loyalty to the United States.

Very truly yours,

H. C. HAZEL