

Troop Leading Procedures

The decision making tool for direct leaders is called The Troop Leading Procedures. These steps help you organize your efforts in planning and executing your mission

STEP 1. Receive the Mission. This may be in the form of a warning order (WARNORD), an operation order (OPORD), or a fragmentary order (FRAGO). Analyze it using the factors of Mission, Terrain, Troops, Time available and Civilian considerations (METT-TC).

- (1) Use no more than one third of the available time for planning and issuing the operation order.
- (2) Determine what are the specified tasks (you were told to accomplish), the essential tasks (must accomplish to succeed) and the implied tasks (necessary but not spelled out).
- (3) Plan preparation activity backward from the time of execution.

STEP 2. Issue a Warning Order. Provide initial instructions to your soldiers in a WARNORD. Include all available information and update as often as necessary. Certain information must be in the warning order:

- (1) The mission or nature of the operation.
- (2) Participants in the operation.
- (3) Time of the operation.
- (4) Time and place for issuance of the operation order.

STEP 3. Make a Tentative Plan. Gather and consider key information for use in making a tentative plan. Update the information continuously and refine the plan as needed. Use this plan as the starting point for coordination, reconnaissance and movement instructions. Consider the factors of METT-TC:

- (1) *Mission.* Review the mission to ensure you fully understand all tasks.
- (2) *Disaster.* Consider the type, size, how it acts. Identify the greatest threat to the mission and its greatest vulnerability.
- (3) *Terrain.* Consider the effects of terrain and weather using observation, obstacles, key terrain and avenues of approach (OCOKA).
- (4) *Troops available.* Consider the strength of subordinate units, the characteristics of equipment systems and the capabilities of attached elements when assigning tasks to subordinate units.
- (5) *Time available.* Refine the allocation of time based on the tentative plan and any changes to the situation.
- (6) *Civilian considerations.* Consider the impact of the local population or other civilians on operations.

STEP 4. Start Necessary Movement. Get the unit moving to where it needs to be as soon as possible.

STEP 5. Reconnoiter. If time allows, make a personal reconnaissance to verify your terrain analysis, adjust the plan, confirm the usability of routes and time any critical movements. Otherwise, make a map reconnaissance.

STEP 6. Complete the Plan. Complete the plan based on the reconnaissance and any changes in the situation. Review the plan to ensure it meets the commander's intent and requirements of the mission.

STEP 7. Issue the Complete Order. Platoon and smaller unit leaders normally issue oral operations orders. A format for the five paragraph field order is in Appendix C.

- (1) To aid soldiers in understanding the concept for the mission, try to issue the order within sight of the objective or on the defensive terrain. When this is not possible, use a terrain model or sketch.
- (2) Ensure that your soldiers understand the mission, the commander's intent, the concept of the operation and their assigned tasks. You might require soldiers to repeat all or part of the order or demonstrate on the model or sketch their understanding of the operation.

STEP 8. Supervise. Supervise preparation for operation by conducting rehearsals and inspections.

- (1) *Rehearsals.* Use rehearsals to practice essential tasks, reveal weaknesses or problems in the plan and improve soldier understanding of the concept of the operation.
 - Rehearsals should include subordinate leaders briefing their planned actions in sequence.
 - Conduct rehearsals on terrain that resembles the actual ground and in similar light conditions.
- (2) *Inspections.* Conduct pre-operation checks and inspections. Inspect—
 - uniforms and equipment.
 - Mission-essential equipment.
 - Soldier's understanding of the mission and their specific responsibilities.
 - Communications.
 - Rations and water.
 - Deficiencies noted during earlier inspections.

In planning and preparing for missions you supervise the execution of tasks and insist on meeting the standard. You ensure your soldiers have what they need to do the job and make sure they take care of their equipment and themselves. This really means checking. You check your soldiers and subordinate leaders before, during and after operations; not to “micro-manage” them, but to get an accurate status of your soldiers and because their well being is important to you.

The Five P's: Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance Motivate

Well trained soldiers know what they are supposed to do, but under stress, their instincts might tell them to do something different. The tired, hungry, cold, wet, disoriented or scared soldier will more often do the wrong thing—stop moving, lie down, retreat—than the soldier not under that kind of stress. This is when you, the leader, must step in—when things are falling apart, when there seems to be no hope—and get the job done. A leader develops soldiers' pride in themselves and in the unit to get through the tough jobs.

"Pride gets you up the hill."

CSM Clifford West

Develop

You counsel and mentor your soldiers to develop their leadership abilities and soldier skills to their full potential. You spend time and effort to build the team you lead and improve unit cohesion and foster an ethical climate. You continue to learn and adapt to a changing world and Army.

Mentorship

Mentorship is an informal, personal and proactive commitment to foster growth in soldiers based on mutual trust and respect. The relationship is sustained through active listening, caring and sharing of professional knowledge and life experiences for the betterment of the individual and the Army. It is a one-on-one way of helping a subordinate develop into a better leader. Mentorship is more than fulfilling a soldier's responsibilities as a leader. It is helping our great NCOs get even better. After all, today's corporals and sergeants will be the first sergeants and sergeants major of the Objective Force.

Mentorship begins with setting the right example by showing soldiers a mature example of values, attributes and skills in action. Setting the example encourages them to develop their own character and leader attributes accordingly. Seeking advice or assistance from a mentor is not a sign of weakness, but is evidence of a desire to become a better soldier and leader.

"A mentor should be someone you respect. It should be someone you feel you can go to and admit you've done something wrong and expect them to give you good recommendations on how to fix it... If you've picked your mentor, you're not going to be thin-skinned when they help you see your own shortcomings. You're going to them to get help; that's the whole reason for having a mentor. When criticism is coming from someone you look up to and respect, you're going to be more receptive to your mentor's suggestions and advice on how to fix the problem."

CSM Anthony Williams

Teach

To be an Army leader, you also must be a teacher. You give your soldiers knowledge and skills all the time: in formal classroom settings and through your example. To be an effective teacher, you must first be professionally competent then create conditions in which your soldiers can learn. However, teaching is not easy. Just because you can pull the engine out of a tank doesn't mean you will be any good at teaching other people to do it. Good teaching techniques and methods may not correspond with how good you are on the job; you must know both the skills related to the subject and another set of teaching skills.

You must also be able to train your soldiers to high levels of proficiency in their individual and team skills. You are the coach; your soldiers are the team; success in battle is the payoff. Think ahead to the day one of your soldiers or subordinate leaders has to replace you. That is the way combat is; soldiers at all levels must pick up, carry on and get the mission done as their leaders become casualties. Make sure your soldiers are ready if you die in battle – one of them has to lead the others or they could all be casualties and the unit will fail in its mission.

Build the team

The Army is a team. Each of its organizations and units are themselves teams making up the Army. You build teamwork and unit proficiency to prepare for the day when your unit will have to fight. It's important to realize that the national cause, the purpose of the mission and other larger issues probably won't be evident from the battlefield. It's therefore equally important to know that soldiers will perform their duties for the other people in their squad, section or team. Your job as an NCO is to bring each member into the team because you may someday ask that person for extraordinary effort.

Teambuilding starts with your competence as a leader. Training together builds collective competence and trust is a product of that competence. Soldiers learn to trust their leaders if the leaders know how to do their jobs and act consistently — if they say what they mean and mean what they say — and that trust builds confidence. Continued training to standard makes your soldiers confident in themselves and — this is key — confident in each other because they know they can depend on each other.

“You must give [soldiers] reasons to have confidence and pride in themselves, in their leaders and in their units. Only then will you have loyalty.”

SMA George W. Dunaway

Leaders and soldiers all have contributions in teambuilding. Teambuilding also occurs in athletics, social activities and unit functions like a Dining-In or Dining-Out. Ultimately, each of your soldiers must know that their contribution is important and valued. They must know that you’ll train them and listen to their concerns. They don’t want you to let them get away with substandard performance. So constantly observe, counsel, develop and listen; you must be every bit the team player you want your soldiers to be — and more.

NCO Recognition

NCOs who demonstrate the highest qualities of leadership, professionalism and regard for the welfare of their soldiers may be recognized in unit and MACOM NCO of the Month, Quarter or Year competitions or by induction into elite organizations — the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club and the Sergeant Morales Club. This is a privilege earned by a few exceptional noncommissioned officers. Winners of such boards or members of these clubs exemplify leadership characterized by personal concern for the needs, training, development and welfare of soldiers and concern for soldiers’ families. Those NCOs selected by these boards or inducted into these clubs are not ‘punching tickets’. Rather, it is recognition of outstanding NCOs. These NCOs have contributed significantly to the development of a professional NCO Corps and a combat ready Army.