Troop Leading Steps: Begin Planning

Mission: “5 Ws”
Who, What, When, Where, Why
Understand Commander’s Intent: 2 levels above you

Enemy
Terrain and Weather
Troops and Fire Support Available
Time, Space & Logistics
Civil Considerations

Plan Use of Available Time
Issue a Warning Order

Initial Estimate of the Situation:

Situation: (Current Information)
Mission: (from HQ order)
General Instructions:
- Roster/Task Organization/Teams
- Uniform/Individual Equipment
- Weapons, ammunition, special equipment
- Tentative Schedule: Times for
  - Initial Inspections
  - Weapons test fire
  - Communications checks
  - Issuing the Order
  - Rehearsals
  - Final Pre-Combat Checks & Inspections
  - Earliest Time of Movement

Special Instructions

Observation & Fields of Fire
Cover & Concealment
Key Terrain
Avenues of Approach
Weather
Troop Leading Steps: 1

**BEGIN PLANNING**

**The Tactical Thought Process**

**Initial Estimate of the Situation**

**EMLCOA**
- **Enemy Most Likely Course of Action**
  - What do you think the enemy will do?
  - What is the enemy’s strength (Center of Gravity)?
  - What is the enemy’s weakness (Critical Vulnerability)?

**EXP**
- **Exploitation Plan**
  - A critical vulnerability is a pathway to attacking the center of gravity.
  - How can you exploit the gaps or weaknesses in the EMLCOA?

**SOM**
- **Scheme of Maneuver**
  - Achieve unity of effort
  - Integrate all Marines or subordinate elements within their capabilities to achieve the EXP.

**FSP**
- **Fire Support Plan**
  - Integrate all assets available to directly support the SOM.

**TASKS**
- The task and purpose of each subordinate unit during the operation. Each tasking statement covers at least the five W’s.

Check the logic in your analysis
- Does your plan make sense going backward through the Tactical Planning Process?

**TASKS**
- FSP
- SOM
- EXP
- EMLCOA
ARRANGE FOR RECONNAISSANCE

IDENTIFY
What questions you need answered
What priority they need to be answered

CONSIDER ALL TYPES OF RECONNAISSANCE
Time/Resources Required and Potential Risks
Map/Imagery and current intelligence reports
Aerial Reconnaissance/Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS)
Physical Reconnaissance/Leader’s Reconnaissance: For the most effective reconnaissance, you must get eyes on the enemy

TOP PRIORITY
Validate the Enemy Most Likely Course of Action
Enemy Position
Orientation
Activity
MAKE RECONNAISSANCE & COORDINATION

USE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF RECONNAISSANCE AVAILABLE

COORDINATE/REQUEST SUPPORT FROM HIGHER HQ FOR
Map/Imagery and current intelligence reports
Aerial Reconnaissance/Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS)
WHEN CONDUCTING A PHYSICAL RECONNAISSANCE PATROL
OR LEADER’S RECONNAISSANCE:
Identify the leaders you will bring with you, plan and coordinate the patrol with your higher HQ including time of departure and return, and what actions your Marines must take while you are gone and if you do not return.

VALIDATE ASSUMPTIONS AND ANSWER REMAINING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ENEMY AND THE GROUND

EMLCOA
Enemy Position
Orientation
Activity
**Troop Leading Steps: 4**

**COMPLETE THE PLAN**

Revisit the tactical thought process incorporating information collected during the reconnaissance.

Organize information into THE FIVE PARAGRAPH “OSMEAC” format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>O</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orientation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Situation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mission</strong></td>
<td><strong>Execution</strong></td>
<td><strong>Administration and Logistics</strong></td>
<td><strong>Command and Signal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Who, What, When, Where, Why</td>
<td>Concept of Operation (CONOPS) SOM &amp; FSP Tasks</td>
<td>Coordinating Instructions</td>
<td>The amount of ammunition, water, food, and batteries to carry or embark. Plans for casualty evacuation and detainee handling and resupply.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Enemy Forces (SALUTE/DRAWD)**

**Friendly Forces:**

- Higher - how your mission fits into the larger picture
- Adjacent
- Supporting

**Attachments and Detachments**

Use Correct Tactical Tasks and Terminology (MCDP 1-0 Change 2 Appendix C)

**Command** - locations of key leaders and succession of command.

**Signal** - primary and alternate frequencies and call signs; challenge and passwords; and primary, alternate, and tertiary signals for mission-specific actions. Both day and night signals.
**Issue the Order**

**Techniques for Issuing an Order**

- **Orientation**
  Orient subordinates to the medium by which the order is issued. Define and describe the battle space being operated in (METT-TC).

- **Terrain Model**
  A scaled down model of the battle space will allow your Marines to visualize the battle space they will be operating in, the enemy they are engaging, and the Scheme of Maneuver (SOM) being executed.

- **One Third/Two Third Rule**
  Divide your available time in thirds. Use one-third yourself, and give the remaining two-thirds to subordinate leaders to prepare and issue their own orders.

- **Establish Command Presence**
  Never permit distractions during your order. Conduct a roll call of subordinate leaders and key personnel. Require note taking. The leader must inspire confidence and motivation through their order; failure to do so puts their Marines at an immediate mental disadvantage.

- **All Hands**
  When the tactical situation permits, issue your order to all your Marines. Otherwise identify the key leaders in your unit required for all orders.

- **Oral Communication**
  When possible, issue your order in person. Written orders are best reserved for larger units whose size preclude oral presentation of orders.

- **Succinct**
  Keep orders short and to the point.

- **Know Your Order**
  Rehearse issuing your order. Referring to notes while issuing an order is acceptable, but do not read your order. You will have difficulty inspiring confidence in your plan if you are reading it.

- **Questions**
  You will want the recipients to be clear on the orientation, so allow questions before you begin your actual order. However, before beginning the Situation, instruct the group to hold all questions until the end of the order. This will eliminate interruptions or questions that may be answered later in the order.

- **Interaction**
  Focus on the Marines. Once you finish delivering your order, answer questions and then ask questions of subordinates. Demand back-briefs from key subordinate leaders to ensure there is full comprehension.
Troop Leading Steps: 6

SUPERVISE

**Inspections & Rehearsals**

**Pre-Combat Checks & Pre-Combat Inspections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example: Minimum Areas for Inspection</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Marines’ understanding of the <strong>mission</strong>, commander’s <strong>intent</strong>, and their specific <strong>responsibilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ All <strong>weapons, optics, and ammunition</strong> (clean/functional, weapons/optics zeroed, test-fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ <strong>Uniforms</strong> and individual <strong>equipment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Inventory <strong>first aid kits</strong> and combat <strong>life-saving equipment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ <strong>Mission essential/special equipment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ <strong>Maps, compasses, and navigation equipment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ <strong>Communications</strong> (operation check equipment, batteries, primary alternate communication plans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ <strong>Rations and water</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ For <strong>vehicles</strong>: fuel, recovery and repair kits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DO NOT assume that your subordinates are executing in a fashion that meets your standards. Failure to supervise frequently results in mission failure.