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.