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concept of the operation. The intent is not a restatement of the concept. Its purpose is to guide the action of subordinate units and leaders when events become wrapped in the confusion of battle.

Clausewitz wrote more than 100

years ago that, "Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult." The soul of the mission order is in the intent—the "simple thing" that must be accomplished and that commanders must therefore keep in mind throughout the operation.

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# To The New XO At Any Level: Some Practical, Hard-Learned Advice

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT G. BOYKO

You have been chosen to serve as an executive officer—at company, battalion, or brigade level—the second-in-command of an Army unit, one heartbeat away from the top job. You are probably both excited and apprehensive about this new assignment. Having served as an XO at each of these levels, I would like to give you some practical, hard-learned advice on how to succeed as an XO—at any level.

First of all, let me be brutally frank: If your new title of executive officer conjures up images of you replacing your fallen commander in the heat of battle and leading your troops to victory, you need to think again. There is always that possibility, of course, but it is quite remote. Furthermore, the actual amount of time you will spend leading the unit, even in peacetime, is not likely to be more than five percent. What you should do during the other 95 percent is what this article is all about.

Your marching orders as an XO can best be stated as follows: You are in charge of all the things your boss doesn't want to do or doesn't have time to do. This means that arms rooms, supply rooms, personnel action centers, and motor pools will see more of you than the lead track or the lead platoon during the next conflict or the next combat training center rotation. In short, you

are the man behind the scenes who makes things work.

The life of an XO is not glamorous, but it is necessary. In an ideal Army, the commander at every level would be involved in every facet of his unit's existence, but this ideal can never be realized. The commander does not have the time or the energy to be everywhere, and that's why he needs you.

The best of commanders must spend most of his time planning and conducting training and operations. At battalion and brigade levels, he has an energetic and competent operations officer (S-3) to help him. This means that although your tactical ideas may be valued, if you're heavily involved in training and operations as an XO, you're probably being misused.

So what are your duties?

The answer to this question begins to emerge during a face-to-face meeting with the commander, preferably before you take over as XO. He will talk and you will listen. Hopefully, he will give you his vision of where he wants to take the unit. A good commander will also give you his ideas on what you should do and what specific areas he wants you to concentrate on. But he will not define the job for you; you will have to do that for yourself.

The next step after meeting the com-

mander is to formulate your own vision of what you want to accomplish. Take time to define your goals. These goals may include successful deployments to major training events, successful performance at those events, and successful redeployments. They can also focus on definite goals for each functional area. This vision should be the basis of your officer evaluation report support form. The goals provide a road map for your focus as XO. Over time, the people affected most by your goals—the commodity leaders and staff members—should know your specific goals for their respective areas.

Once you are armed with your vision, the next step is to meet your subordinates. Who they are is determined by the level at which you are serving, but at any level they fall into two groups: those who work primarily for you (whom you rate) and those who work for someone else but who support you or are supported by you.

At company level, the people who work for you will be the commodity managers—supply sergeant, armorer, and so on. At battalion and brigade level, they will be the primary and special staffs. The people who work for someone else but who are vital to your success at company level will be the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants.

At battalion and brigade level, they will be the XO's of the subordinate units and the leaders of the combat support and combat service support units that support yours.

Although these two groups are equally important to your success, you must deal with them differently:

The group of people who work for you includes the staff members (except for the S-3, who is a special case). Your job is to see that they are all pulling in the same direction (talking to each other); that they are working efficiently; and that they accomplish their missions. I have found the best way to meet all three of these objectives is to have a 15-minute staff meeting each morning. This allows the staff members to update each other; it gives you a chance to give guidance to the group; and it brings the staff together to facilitate coordination. (I have not found any substitute for frequent face-to-face coordination between staff members.) These meetings must start on time and end promptly. Don't allow the staff members to stroll in five or ten minutes late or let the meetings drag on.

Always acknowledge initiative on the part of a staff member (for purposes of this article, this also includes the commodity managers at company level). I can't think of any attribute that is more highly valued in a staff officer than initiative.

Force the staff members to plan ahead. You need to be very directive in this area, because they may tend to assume that the future, unlike the past, will be problem-free. But that assumption is never correct. Focus them on the future; otherwise, they will tend to get caught up in day-to-day operations and get behind in planning for upcoming events. This leads to confusion, short-cuts, and the feeling in subordinate units that the higher headquarters has deserted them and they must fend for themselves. Needless to say, example is always the best teacher. You must be the master planner in the unit. If you find yourself constantly reacting to events, your planning is inadequate.

Give your staff reasonable suspenses, and then stick to them. No one wants to

be moved around from one project to another, and all projects do not have to be completed immediately. Give the staff guidance and as much time as possible to complete an action. Then leave them alone.

For major projects, you need to schedule periodic updates to make sure the staff is on track. Always work to reduce confusion and to resist the efforts of others to make changes that do not really contribute to the good of the unit. Be available to answer questions, but don't stand over your people.

Guidance, reasonable suspenses, letting people do their jobs—I'm sure all this sounds great to subordinates, and it can be, provided they don't miss suspenses. Never overlook a missed suspense. If a staff officer needs more time, he should come to you before the eleventh hour and ask for it. I record all suspenses in a little notebook, so there is never any doubt of what has been requested or when it is due. Some of your subordinates may feel under the gun, but this approach shows that actions assigned are actions that must be completed. A good suspense system teaches the staff discipline.

### S-3 RELATIONSHIP

A special area of staff concern is your relationship with the unit S-3. He has a direct line to the commander, he's usually the busiest person in the unit, and he doesn't need or want you to do his job. An old XO told me when I was S-3 that his job was to make me look good, and I think that's sage advice for any XO. You do this by being a sounding board for his ideas; by ensuring that the rest of the staff supports his plans; by ensuring that outside agencies support the unit; and finally, by ensuring that no operation fails for lack of support. In a unit, the commander, the XO, and the S-3 work as a team. Each has a powerful voice when discussing ideas with the others. Give the S-3 the credit he is due, and don't ever betray him. The commander has plenty of respect for both of you.

Since a unit transmits important

information to its subordinate units through orders, you should be intimately involved in the orders process.

At company level, you, your commander, and the first sergeant write the order. Your job is to make sure the necessary support from outside the company is available and that it arrives at the right place at the right time. (We have all seen operations fail because the requested trucks didn't arrive on time.)

At battalion and brigade levels, the deliberate orders process should include all the primary staff members and the leaders of the attachments involved in the operation. Hasty (fragmentary) orders should include at least you, the commander, the S-3, the S-2, and the fire support officer. The S-3 leads the orders process, and you ensure that the staff supports his plan. Don't ever force the S-3 to worry about logistics or transportation.

The other major group—those who do not work directly for you but who will have a direct bearing on your success—are the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants at company level; the company XO's at battalion level; and the battalion XO's at brigade level. If you always remember that they don't work directly for you, they will be receptive to your advice and help.

In dealing with these subordinate units, your job is to support them and help them whenever and wherever possible. Supporting subordinate units is an easy idea to articulate but a difficult one to practice, especially with the current cutbacks in headquarters units. The trend in the Army is to centralize support at battalion and brigade levels. Here are a few principles you need to follow:

- Make sure your headquarters provides the support required by current Army doctrine. If maintenance is centralized at brigade level, for instance, don't force the battalions to have "shadow" mechanics.

- Require outside agencies to support your units. In the day-to-day confusion, these agencies sometimes forget that your infantry unit is their reason for being, and you must tactfully remind them. Draw on the support that is sup-

posed to come from your higher headquarters. For example, the division transportation office is to support major deployments and has the expertise to do it; your subordinate units should not have to assume these tasks.

- Support your subordinate units by protecting them from the unreasonable support demands of higher headquarters. (Your commander and S-3 will protect the unit from unreasonable demands that adversely affect training.) Quite often, combat service support officers, especially at higher headquarters, do not understand the effect their requests—for detailed information, complicated turn-in procedures, or resupply requirements—have on lower units. Having been in the trenches yourself, you know when a demand is unreasonable.

- Do not make unreasonable demands on your own subordinate units. For example, statistics that take a lot of time to accumulate and update may not be really necessary. (It seems to me that the Army spends too much time making charts.) If the data is so important that you must track it, have your own staff do it.

- Finally, support your subordinate units by wisely using the resources you have. This means you must establish priorities (with the commander's concurrence). A deploying unit, for example, may get all the maintenance support your unit can provide while the others have to wait. This is a hard fact of military life. Simply dividing everything evenly is not establishing priorities at all.

The next key area of your job is serving as an ambassador for your unit. Although the commander represents the unit at most high-visibility events in day-to-day interchanges between units, you are the true ambassador. Outside agencies won't necessarily make or break your unit, but they will certainly contribute to its success or failure. Be guided by the following principles (and see that your subordinates also follow them):

- First, *compromise* is not a bad word. Everyone needs more support than is available, so don't be a whiner

who gets 95 percent of what he needs but continues to talk about the five percent he doesn't get. Instead, find a way for that unit to support yours with transportation or maintenance and still meet its other commitments. Any adjustments you have to make in your plans will be worth the trouble in the long run.

- Reward the people who support your unit well. The reward doesn't have to be elaborate. Simply telling a person's boss (in writing) that he did a good job supporting your unit can do wonders. These combat service support people have a difficult job, and they need a lit-



tle credit once in a while.

- Use criticism, too, if you're not getting the support you need, but only after you have learned all the facts and have tried to correct the problem at your level. Then, take the problem to higher headquarters. Just don't burn your bridges. You don't have to coddle support agencies, but neither should you beat them into the ground in front of higher commanders. You may win the battle but lose the support war.

- Maintain your credibility. If you say you'll have the trucks back by 2300, you'd better have them back. If you promise a combat service support unit instructors for its local defense training, either deliver the instructors or let the unit know well in advance that circumstances beyond your control will prevent

it. Combat service support units don't like making schedule changes any more than you do.

The last area I want to cover is that of problem solving. As an XO you are paid to plan, teach, and solve problems. According to an old adage, the more planning you do the fewer problems you will have, and vice versa. This is true, but no matter how thoroughly you plan there will always be problems. (That's what makes your job interesting.)

Another adage states that you should never solve a problem for a subordinate that he can solve for himself. This is also true, but in the interest of time, you often have to intervene. It has always bothered me when someone in a support agency says "No" to a sergeant or a lieutenant and then completely changes his mind when the XO calls with the same request. Sometimes you need to go ahead and use the weight of your position to solve a problem.

Before you can solve a problem, though, you have to know what the problem is. Your subordinates may be reluctant to tell you, and your job is to try to change this tendency. Be tough on subordinates who don't come to you until it's too late, or until the problem has become too big to solve. Good planning and open communications between you and your staff members will reduce the number of problems and their severity; despite your best intentions, though, sometimes the only way to solve a problem is to ask an agency or other unit for a favor. In such situations, the good will you have built earlier will serve you well.

Some of the problems you see will be systemic ones, such as a vehicle maintenance system that is not up to speed, or a legal system that is too slow. How do you solve such problems?

To examine systemic problems, you must first be able to find the details. Given the maintenance problem, for example, if you have only enough time to inspect either the operator maintenance of ten vehicles or the entire maintenance program of one vehicle, you will be better off inspecting the total maintenance program of one vehicle. Start at the operator level; go to direct

support, check the records, check the TAMMS (Total Army Maintenance Management System) clerk and the prescribed load list. Are spare parts on order? Are they coming in? What about scheduled maintenance?

Sometimes you have to search out systemic problems. I remember one case in which my battalion always blamed the brigade legal section for the slow processing of administrative separation cases. A smart brigade XO did a thorough investigation of the process and found that the biggest delay was at company level. This led my battalion to

change the way we handled the legal business. A cursory inspection of a perceived problem may be almost worthless, but once you find the root of the problem, you have the clout to make the necessary changes.

Being an XO at any level is a challenge. Don't expect to lead that assault in the next war or to grab a lion's share of the medals. But if you perform your duties well, you will have the satisfaction of knowing you helped keep the unit going through thick and thin. By taking care of all the tough, thankless jobs the commander doesn't want to do

or doesn't have time to do—in the arms room, the supply rooms, the motor pool, and the personnel center, you free him to do his own job of commanding the unit.

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# Enhanced Land Warrior Program

CAPTAIN MARK A. CONLEY

Our Infantry—as the centerpiece of a smaller, more lethal, and more readily deployable Army—must have the weapons, clothing, and equipment to survive in various environments and types of terrain, and against various threats. To make the most of its combat power, the Army must base its future modernization efforts for the individual soldier on an integrated system.

The Enhanced Land Warrior Program is the focal point of such a system. It includes improvements to the weapons, equipment, and clothing the soldier carries or wears in a tactical environment. These improvements are designed to make the best possible use of a unit's lethality, command and control, survivability, sustainment, and mobility. The program takes a modular approach to outfitting the infantryman. Instead of linking equipment to a particular equipment design, the subsystems in this program are mission and task-oriented, so commanders can tailor their forces for specific missions.

The overall Enhanced Land Warrior Program is intended to be a continuing

process that includes three near-term programs (Land Warrior, Air Warrior, and Mounted Warrior) and one far-term program (21st Century Land Warrior).

The genesis of research and development for an integrated soldier system was the Soldier's Integrated Protective Ensemble (SIPE), the first successful soldier-oriented advance technology demonstration (ATD). The SIPE ATD developed, fabricated, and demonstrated a modular, head-to-toe, integrated fighting system that offered better combat effectiveness while also protecting the individual soldier against numerous battlefield hazards. Instead of focusing on hardware, the SIPE program demonstrated technology that would clarify and define requirements for the Enhanced Land Warrior Program.

### Land Warrior

The first of the near-term programs, Land Warrior, is scheduled for field testing in 1997. This program will be a complex of emerging technology subsystems that offer a "leap-ahead" combat capability for the dismounted

soldier. These technologies will include improvements in the soldiers' individual and collective performance at night and in obscured and chemical environments by improving lethality, command and control, survivability, sustainment, and mobility.

The development of Land Warrior will revolutionize the Army's employment doctrine, tactics, training, leader development, and force design for the dismounted combat soldier. Its benefits will include the following:

**Computer.** A small computer for the soldier will provide the helmet-mounted, heads-up display (HUD), semi-automated information ranging from global positioning system (GPS) information with digital maps and compass bearings to information in the form of messages, operation orders, and reports. Built-in data menus will enable the soldier to send electronic battlefield reports and intelligence data to higher headquarters. The program will enable the soldier to hand off fire control and to accurately identify and send digitized call-for-fire information to artillery, mortars, and