

BRIEFING GUIDE

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US ARMY SERGEANTS MAJOR ACADEMY FORT BLISS, TEXAS

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SECTION I. BRIEFINGS

ACCURACY

BREVITY

CLARITY

Briefings are a means of presenting information to commanders, staffs, or other designated audiences. The techniques employed are determined by the purpose of the briefing, the desired response, and the role of the briefer.

{Extracted from FM 101-5, Appendix C, paragraph C-1}

There are four types of military briefings:

[Information](#)

[Decision](#)

[Mission](#)

[Staff](#)

INFORMATION BRIEFING

The purpose of the information briefing is to inform the listener. This briefing deals primarily with facts, not conclusions or recommendations. Use it to present high priority information requiring immediate attention; complex information involving complicated plans, systems, statistics, or charts; and controversial information requiring elaboration and explanation. Situation briefings

that cover the tactical situation over a period of time usually fall into this category. The following format works well for an information briefing.

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Greeting. Use military courtesy, address the person(s) receiving the briefing, and identify yourself.
- b. Purpose. Explain the purpose and scope.
- c. Procedure. Indicate procedure if briefing involves demonstration, display, or tour.

2. BODY

- a. Arrange main ideas in logical sequence.
- b. Use visual aids correctly.
- c. Plan effective transitions.
- d. Prepare to answer questions at any time.

3. CLOSE

- a. Ask for questions.
- b. Give closing statement.
- c. Announce the next briefer, if applicable.

DECISION BRIEFING

The purpose of the decision briefing is to obtain an answer or a decision. Personnel in higher headquarters use this briefing for most tactical matters requiring command decisions. In division headquarters and below, personnel often use a more informal modified decision briefing. The decision briefing compares to an oral staff study and generally follows the same format.

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Greeting. Use military courtesy, address the person(s) receiving the briefing, and identify yourself.
- b. Purpose. State that the purpose of the briefing is to obtain a decision and announce the problem statement.

- c. Procedure. Explain any special procedures such as a trip to outlying facilities or introduction of an additional briefer.
- d. Coordination. Indicate accomplishment of any coordination.
- e. Classification. State the classification of the briefing.

2. BODY

- a. Assumptions. Must be valid, relevant, and necessary.
- b. Facts Bearing on the Problem. Must be supportable, relevant, and necessary.
- c. Discussion. Analyze courses of action. Plan for smooth transition.
- d. Conclusions. Degree of acceptance or the order of merit of each course of action.
- e. Recommendation(s). State action(s) recommended. Must be specific, not a solicitation of opinion.

3. CLOSE

- a. Ask for questions.
- b. Request a decision.

4. FOLLOW UP

Note. If the chief of staff is not present after the briefing is over, the briefer must inform the staff secretary or executive officer of the commander's decision.

MISSION BRIEFING

1. Use the mission briefing under operational conditions to impart information, to give specific instructions, or to instill an appreciation of the mission.
2. In an operational situation or when the mission is of a critical nature, it may become necessary to provide individuals or smaller units with more data than plans or orders provide. You may do this by means of the mission briefing. The mission briefing reinforces orders, provides more detailed requirements and instructions for individuals, and provides an explanation of the significance of their individual role. You must present this type of briefing with care to ensure that it does not cause confusion of conflict with plans and orders.

3. One briefing officer usually conducts the mission briefing. This officer may be the commander, an assistant, a staff officer, or a special representative, depending on the nature of the mission or the level of the headquarters.
 4. There is no prescribed format for the mission briefing. It should possess the ABCs of military briefings: accuracy, brevity, and clarity. In some cases you may use the operation order (OPORD) format if it doesn't result in unnecessary repetition.
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STAFF BRIEFING (GENERAL)

1. PURPOSE

The staff briefing is to secure a coordinated or unified effort. This briefing may involve the exchange of information, the announcement of decisions, the issuance of directives, or the presentation of guidance. The staff briefing may include the characteristics of the information, decision, and mission briefings.

2. PROCEDURES

- a. Commands normally schedule staff briefings on a periodic basis. The attendees are usually the commander, his deputy, chief of staff, and senior representatives of coordinating and special staffs. Sometimes commanders from major subordinate commands may attend. In combat, commands hold additional briefings as the situation requires.
- b. The chief of staff usually presides over the staff briefing. He opens the briefing by identifying the purpose of the briefing and reviewing the mission of the next higher headquarters. He then restates the command's mission and gives the commander's concept, if applicable. He then calls on staff officers to brief their areas of responsibility. The normal sequence is S2, S3, S1, S4, and S5. Special staff officer participation varies with local policy. The commander usually concludes the briefing, and he may even take an active part throughout the presentation.

3. SITUATION BRIEFING

The tactical situation briefing is a form of staff briefing used to inform persons not familiar with the situation at the level at which the briefing is taking place. The briefing goes back in time as far as necessary to present the full picture.

4. UPDATE BRIEFING

When the main intent of regularly scheduled staff briefings is to achieve coordinated effort within a headquarters, the substance of each officer's presentation is only an updating of material previously presented.

SITUATION/UPDATE BRIEFING FORMAT (S2)

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Greeting.
- b. Identification of self, if appropriate.
- c. Scope: Define the coverage of the briefing in terms of time, geographic limits, or specific topics.

2. BODY

- a. Weather report and forecast.
- b. Terrain, if appropriate.
- c. Recent and present enemy activity.
- d. Other appropriate items (i.e., there has been a change in mission, enemy situation, weather, etc.).

3. CLOSE

- a. Conclusions, if applicable.
 - b. Solicitation of questions.
 - c. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefing, if any.
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SITUATION/UPDATE BRIEFING FORMAT (S3)

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Greeting.
- b. Identification of self, if appropriate.
- c. Scope: Define coverage in terms of time, geographic limits, or specific types of operations.

2. BODY

- a. Mission of next higher headquarters.
- b. Summary of past operations.

- c. Current operations, including own mission, disposition, composition, and strength.
 - d. Projected operations.
 - 3. CLOSE
 - a. Solicitation of questions.
 - b. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefer, if any.
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SITUATION/UPDATE BRIEFING FORMAT (S1)

- 1. INTRODUCTION
 - a. Greeting.
 - b. Identification of self, if appropriate.
 - c. Scope: Define coverage in terms of time, organizational level, or other specifics.
- 2. BODY
 - a. Personnel status.
 - (1) Casualties.
 - (2) Replacements.
 - (3) Present for duty strength.
 - b. Problems.

- 3. CLOSE
 - a. Solicitation of questions.
 - b. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefer, if any.
-

SITUATION/UPDATE BRIEFING FORMAT (S4)

- 1. INTRODUCTION
 - a. Greeting.
 - b. Identification of self, if appropriate.

- c. Scope: Define coverage in terms of time, organizational level, or specific categories.
2. BODY

- a. Equipment status.
- b. Maintenance status.
- c. Supply status.
- d. Problems.

3. CLOSE

- a. Solicitation of questions.
 - b. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefer, if any.
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SITUATION/UPDATE BRIEFING FORMAT (S5)

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Greeting.
- b. Identification of self, if appropriate.
- c. Scope: Define coverage in terms of time, geographic limits, or other applicable specifics.

2. BODY

- a. Summary of past civil-military operations (CMO).
- b. Current CMO.
- c. Projected CMO.
- d. Problems.

3. CLOSE

- a. Solicitation of questions.
 - b. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefer, if applicable. If no briefer follows, statement that this concludes the staff presentations.
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SECTION II. STAFF ESTIMATES

The presentation of staff estimates culminating in a commander's decision to adopt a specific course of action is a special form of staff briefing. Staff officers usually follow the format prescribed for the written staff estimate for this staff briefing.

INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE (ORAL) (S2)

1. GREETING

2. MISSION

3. THE AREA OF OPERATIONS

- a. Weather.
- b. Terrain.
- c. Other characteristics.

4. ENEMY SITUATION

- a. Disposition.
- b. Composition.
- c. Strength.
- d. Recent and present significant activities.
- e. Peculiarities and weaknesses.

5. ENEMY CAPABILITIES

- a. Enumeration.
- b. Analysis and discussion.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- a. Effects of the area of operation on our courses of action.

- b. Probable courses of action.
 - c. Enemy vulnerabilities.
 - 7. CLOSE
 - a. Solicitation of questions.
 - b. Concluding statement and announcement of the next briefer, if any.
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OPERATIONS ESTIMATE (ORAL) (S3)

- 1. GREETING
 - 2. MISSION
 - 3. THE SITUATION AND COURSES OF ACTION
 - a. Considerations affecting the possible courses of action.
 - (1) Characteristics of the area of operations.
 - (2) Enemy situation.
 - (3) Own situation.
 - (4) Relative combat power.
 - 4. Enemy capabilities.
 - 5. Own course of action.
 - ANALYSIS OF OPPOSING COURSES OF ACTION
 - COMPARISON OF OWN COURSES OF ACTION
 - RECOMMENDATION
 - CLOSE
 - a. Solicitation of questions.
 - b. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefer, if any.
-

PERSONNEL ESTIMATE (ORAL) (S1)

1. GREETING

2. MISSION

3. THE SITUATION AND CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Intelligence situation.
- b. Tactical situation.
- c. Logistic situation.
- d. Civil-military operations situation.
- e. Personnel situation.
- f. Assumptions.

4. ANALYSIS

For each tactical course of action, when appropriate, analyze all logistic, civil-military operations, and personnel factors, indicating problems and deficiencies.

5. COMPARISON

- a. Evaluate deficiencies.
- b. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of each course of action from own standpoint. Indicate corrective action required.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Indicate whether command can support the mission, which course of action we can support best, and what major deficiencies we need to overcome.

7. CLOSE

- a. Solicitation of questions.
- b. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefer, if any.

LOGISTIC ESTIMATE (ORAL) (S4)

1. GREETING

2. MISSION

3. THE SITUATION AND CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Intelligence situation.
- b. Tactical situation.
- c. Personnel situation.
- d. Civil-military operations situation.
- e. Logistic situation.

4. ANALYSIS

For each course of action, analyze personnel requirements, civil-military operations, and logistic factors, indicating problems and deficiencies.

5. COMPARISON

- a. Evaluate deficiencies.
- b. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of each course of action from own standpoint.
Indicate corrective action required.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Indicate whether command can support the mission, which course of action we can support best, and what major deficiencies we need to overcome.

7. CLOSE

- a. Solicitation of questions.
- b. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefer, if any.

CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS ESTIMATE (ORAL) (S5)

1. GREETING

2. MISSION

3. THE SITUATION AND CONSIDERATIONS

- a. Intelligence situation.
- b. Tactical situation.

- c. Personnel situation.
- d. Logistic situation.
- e. Civil-military operations situation.
- f. Assumptions.

4. ANALYSIS

For each course of action, analyze action from own standpoint. Indicate corrective action required.

5. COMPARISON

- a. Evaluate deficiencies.
- b. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of each course of action from own standpoint. Indicate corrective action required.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Indicate whether command can support the mission, which course of action we can support best, and what major deficiencies we need to overcome.

7. CLOSE

- a. Solicitation of questions.
- b. Concluding statement and announcement of next briefer, if any.

BRIEFING CHECKLIST

1. ANALYSIS OF SITUATION

- a. Audience
 - (1) Who and how many.
 - (2) Official position.
 - (3) Knowledge of subject.
 - (4) Personal preferences.
- b. Purpose and type.
- c. Subject.

d. Physical facilities.

(1) Location.

(2) Arrangements.

(3) Visual aids.

2. SCHEDULE PRESENTATION

a. Complete analysis.

b. Prepare outline.

c. Determine requirements.

d. Schedule rehearsals.

e. Arrange for final review.

3. CONSTRUCT THE BRIEFING

a. Collect material.

b. Prepare first draft.

c. Revise and edit.

d. Plan use of visual aids.

e. Practice.

(1) Rehearse.

(2) Isolate key points.

(3) Memorize outline.

(4) Develop transitions.

(5) Use definitive words.

4. DELIVERY

a. Posture.

(1) Military bearing.

(2) Eye contact.

- (3) Gestures and mannerisms.
 - b. Voice.
 - (1) Pitch and volume.
 - (2) Rate and variety.
 - (3) Enunciation.
 - c. Attitude.
 - (1) Businesslike.
 - (2) Confident.
 - (3) Helpful.
5. FOLLOW UP
- a. Ensure understanding.
 - b. Record decisions.
 - c. Inform proper authorities.
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BRIEFING TIPS

DO NOT SUMMARIZE

DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS

DO NOT EMOTIONALIZE

USE AIDS

BE FACTUAL

BE FORMAL

BE FLEXIBLE

BE BRIEF
