Lesson 1

IDENTIFY THE TROOP LEADING PROCEDURE

OVERVIEW

Lesson Description:

In this lesson you will learn to identify the troop leading procedure (TLP) and its relationship with the estimate of the situation. You will learn to identify each of the eight steps in the TLP.

Terminal Learning Objective:

Action: Identify and understand the eight steps of the troop leading procedure process.

Condition: Given the subcourse material contained in this lesson.

Standard: The student will demonstrate his comprehension, knowledge, and understanding of the eight steps of the troop leading procedure process including; the mission, warning order, the plan, issuing an operation or frag order, and supervisory procedures.

References: The material contained in this lesson was derived from the following publications:

FM 7-8.
FM 7-70.

INTRODUCTION

The troop leading procedure (TLP) is the basic tool that you use as a leader to prepare for combat. Your ability to use the TLP is crucial to the outcome of combat. To use this tool, you must understand your mission and the tactical situation. You must make a plan and execute it. If you can do so quicker than your enemy, then you are more likely to defeat him. This lesson will teach you the troop leading procedure. Later lessons will teach you to do an estimate of the situation as an integral part of the procedure. Figure 1-1 outlines the eight steps of the TLP.
Figure 1-1. Steps of the Troop Leading Procedure.

Step 1. Receive the mission.
Step 2. Issue a warning order.
Step 3. Make a tentative plan.
Step 4. Start necessary movement.
Step 5. Reconnoiter.
Step 6. Complete the plan.
Step 7. Issue the complete order.
Step 8. Supervise

The process which you the leader follow in receiving a mission, planning the mission, and then executing the mission is called the troop leading procedure. The troop leading procedure is a continuous process whose steps must all be completed to ensure the success of your mission. Although each individual step is important, the exact order of their completion must remain flexible. In accomplishing the TLP, only you can determine the best order of completion. Circumstances unique to each combat situation will determine the exact order each step is completed.

In accomplishing the TLP you must remain flexible and ready to act at a moments notice. You must fully understand the tactics to be employed by your leaders and be able to adapt to a constantly changing battlefield. The TLP will describe the process you must use as you prepare to accomplish the mission.

It will not tell you what to think, but rather how to think. The distinction is critical to your success.

The process described below will require time to complete. If time were unlimited, you could accomplish each step in great detail and be perfectly prepared for each mission. However, the battlefield seldom allows the luxury of unlimited time. As time is reduced you must increasingly depend upon previous training/drills, and unit standing operating procedures (SOPs). Regardless of time, cover all the steps, even if only in abbreviated form to be sure your men understand the mission and prepare for it.
Part A

MISSION, WARNING ORDER, TENTATIVE PLAN AND
STARTING NECESSARY MOVEMENT PLANS

1. **STEP 1 - Receive the Mission.**

Missions may be received in the form of either a warning order, an operation order (OPORD), or a fragmentary order (FRAGO). On receipt of the order, you, as a leader, must analyze your mission and plan the use of your time.

First instructions are usually in the form of a **warning order**. In the warning order, the leader is given enough information so that his unit can start to prepare.

Unit SOPs should prescribe the actions to be taken when a warning order is received; for example, drawing ammunition, rations, water, and communications gear.

As soon as you have the order, you should ask yourself these questions:

- **What is the MISSION?**
- **What is known about the ENEMY?**
- **How will the TERRAIN and WEATHER affect the operation?**
- **What TROOPS are available?**
- **How much TIME is available?**
- **What SUPPLIES and EQUIPMENT are needed?**
- **What SPECIAL TASKS need to be assigned?**

You make a time schedule. As a rule, the platoon leader should take no more than one-third of the available time and leave the rest for squad preparation. The unit must be told when to be ready. You identify the things that must be done. You work backwards from the time you want the men to be ready for the mission, allowing your men enough time for each task. This is reverse planning. Here is an example of a squad leader's schedule:

- **1420**: Ready time.
- **1415**: Check assembly area. (Make sure all Clay mores are recovered and that no ammunition, etc., is left behind.)
2. **STEP 2 – Issue a Warning Order.**

The platoon leader issues his warning order to the squad leaders, platoon sergeant, and forward observer. Each squad leader issues his warning order to his entire squad.

The warning order should at least state:

- the mission,
- the time of the operation
- any specific instructions, and
- time and place for issuance of the complete order.

Warning order content may also include: Enemy situation; earliest time of move/degree of notice; administrative and logistic requirements.

A platoon warning order may look something like Figure 1-2.

---

**OUR MISSION IS TO ATTACK THE TOWN OF BURG AT 1430. THE ENEMY HAS SOME GOOD POSITIONS IN THE BUILDINGS. THERE MAY ALSO BE ENEMY TANKS IN THE TOWN. DRAW SIX GRENADES FOR EACH MAN, AND ONE LAW PER MAN. EACH SQUAD WILL CARRY 10 BLOCKS OF C4, 10 NONELECTRIC BLASTING CAPS, 10 FUSE LIGHTERS, 100 FEET OF DETONATING CORD, AND 10 FEET OF FUSE. THE PLATOON SERGEANT WILL TELL YOU WHERE AND WHEN YOU CAN PICK IT UP. LET ME KNOW BY 1145 IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH RADIOS OR WEAPONS. MEET ME BACK HERE AT 1105. AT THAT TIME, WE WILL MOVE UP TO THE RIDGE, OVERLOOKING THE TOWN, WHERE I WILL GIVE THE COMPLETE ORDER.**

---

**Figure 1-2. Platoon Warning Order.**
After hearing the platoon leader's warning order, each squad leader gives his squad a warning order similar to that in Figure 1-3.

**OUR MISSION IS TO ATTACK THE TOWN OF BURG AT 1430 AS PART OF THE PLATOON. THE ENEMY HAS WELL-PREPARED POSITIONS IN THE BUILDINGS AND PROBABLY HAS TANKS WITH HIM. EACH MAN WILL CARRY SIX HE GRENADES AND ONE LAW IN ADDITION TO THE STANDARD LOAD FOR RIFLES AND GRENADE LAUNCHERS. SERGEANT EVANS, YOUR TEAM WILL HANDLE OUR DEMOLITIONS; DRAW 10 BLOCKS OF C4, 10 NON-ELECTRIC BLASTING CAPS, 10 FUSE IGNITORS, 100 FEET OF DETONATING CORD, AND 10 FEET OF FUSE. MAKE SURE YOU TEST-BURN THE FUSE. PRIVATE SMITH, GRAPPLING HOOK. SPECIALIST GEORGE, CARRY THE TA-312 AND DRAW TWO ROLLS OF ASSAULT WIRE. THE PLATOON SERGEANT WILL BE HERE IN 20 MINUTES TO TELL US WHERE AND WHEN WE CAN PICK UP OUR AMMUNITION AND EQUIPMENT. I'M LEAVING NOW TO GET THE PLATOON ORDER; SERGEANT JONES IS IN CHARGE UNTIL I GET BACK. WE WILL MEET HERE AT 1205 FOR THE OPORD.**

**Figure 1-3. Squad Leader's Warning Order.**

3. **Step 3 - Make a Tentative Plan.**

Based on mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops, and time available (METT-T), you make a tentative plan. The plan gives you a start point that can be used to coordinate, reconnoiter, organize, and move.

- What is a platoon's MISSION? (We must attack to seize that objective; or, We must prepare to defend this position by 0400.)

- What ENEMY troops oppose us? What size units and where are they? What other weapons, artillery, or engineer units do they have in support? Will they be mounted, dismounted, or both? How will the enemy react?

- How can we use the TERRAIN and WEATHER to our advantage? To get an answer to this question, the leader examines the observation and fields of fire, cover and concealment, obstacles, key terrain, and avenues of approach.

- Observation and fields of fire influence decisions on where squads, Dragons, and machineguns must be positioned to kill the most enemy. In the offense, the fire element must be positioned where it can support the maneuver element.
In the defense, weapons must have observation and fields of fire covering avenues of approach. You, as the platoon leader, also look at observation and fields of fire from the enemy's point of view. Your defensive positions, or routes for an attack, which will be covered and concealed from the enemy's vantage points.

° Cover and concealment influence the choice of routes, positions, and targets.

° Obstacles also influence the choice of routes in the offense and the choice of positions in the defense.

° Key terrain has a bearing on decisions regarding the selection of objectives and routes in offense and on the choice of positions in defense.

° Avenues of approach are considered in conjunction with all the other factors. They influence the choice of routes and the direction of attack in the offense; and the assignment of positions, sectors of fire, and targets in the defense. Enemy avenues of approach or withdrawal are viewed as to how they can affect the platoon's operation.

° Troops available have an effect on the selection of positions, routes, and formations, and on the fire plan.

° How much time is there to develop courses of action, decide on a tentative plan, and prepare for the operation. What actions must be delegated if they are to be completed in time.

You consider each of the factors and compare alternatives. From this analysis, you make decisions which form the basis for the plan, which, when firm, becomes the order.

4. Step 4 - Start Necessary Movement.

At times, the company commander will take the platoon leaders to an OP and give the complete order. To save time, he may have the first sergeant move the platoons, led by the platoon sergeants, toward the site where the operation will take place.

PART B - RECONNAISSANCE, PLANNING, ORDERS AND SUPERVISORY PROCEDURES

1. Step 5 - Conduct Reconnaissance.

To make the best use of your men and weapons, you must see and evaluate the terrain on which you will fight. If time is short, you must at least make a map reconnaissance. During this reconnaissance, you confirm or modify your tentative plan.
2. **Step 6 - Complete the Plan.**

Based on the reconnaissance, you complete your plan. In a defense, you must decide where to put your weapons and how to tie the defense together. In an attack, you must decide how to move and how to seize the objective.

3. **Step 7 - Issue The Complete Order.**

Platoon and squad orders are issued orally. For an attack, you should give your order from a point where the squad leaders can see the objective. In a defense, you will try to give the order on the ground where your troops will defend. When this is not possible, you should use either a terrain model or a sketch to help explain the order. A squad leader rarely has a chance to give an attack order from a position that lets his men see the objective. He should, however, make a terrain model for his squad to look at while he gives the order. Like the platoon leader, squad leaders can often give their defense orders on their defensive positions. Leaders must make sure that all their men know the plan.

Below is the format for an order. Orders should be given in language the men understand.

**SITUATION**

- **Enemy forces.** Information such as locations, strength, weakness, and activity.
- **Friendly forces.** The mission of the next higher unit (company in the platoon order, and platoon in the squad order); and units to the left, right, and rear (platoons in the platoon order, and squads in the squad order).
- **Attachments and detachments.** Who they are and the effective time of attachment or detachment.

**MISSION**

A clear, concise statement of the task to be accomplished by the squad or platoon (who, what, when, where, and why).

**EXECUTION**

- **Concept of operation.** The scheme of maneuver and the fire support plan. How the leader wants the unit to accomplish the mission.
- **Tasks for subordinate units.** The platoon leader tells each squad what he wants it to do. The squad leader tells each fire team or each man what he wants it or him to do.
Coordinating instructions. Platoon leaders give details that apply to two or more squads. Each squad leader gives details that apply to his entire squad. Example details are: line of departure, assault position, formation, route, time of departure, and actions during consolidation and reorganization.

SERVICE SUPPORT

Information about rations, ammunition, medical support, handling of enemy prisoners of war (EPW), and other administrative and supply matters.

COMMAND AND SIGNAL

Command. Where the leader will be during the operation, and the chain of command (the order in which subordinate leaders take charge of the unit in the absence of the leader).

Signal. Frequencies and callsigns, signals, challenge and password, code words.

4. Step 8 - Supervise.

After the order is issued, leaders supervise to make sure their men are preparing to get the job done.

Rehearsals. If there is enough time before an operation, have the squads rehearse tasks they will perform. This gives confidence and improves performance. It may also point out problems in the plan. Important tasks to rehearse may be:

- Fire and movement.
- Actions on unexpected enemy contact.
- Actions at the assault position.
- Actions in the assault.
- Breaching a minefield.
- Assaulting a trench.
- Breaching wire obstacles.
- Assaulting a bunker or a building.
- Using special weapons or demolitions.

If possible, rehearsals should be on terrain resembling that on which the unit will fight and under the expected light condition.
Inspections. The last thing done before an operation is an inspection to see if the men and equipment are ready. This may include:

- Rations.
- Water.
- Weapons.
- Ammunition.
- Individual uniform and equipment.
- Camouflage.

Leaders ask questions to see if their men know their duties, if only necessary equipment is carried, and if it is worn right and secured.

Once the operation has begun, you must see that the plan is followed, but you should be ready to change your plan if the situation requires it.

This completes Lesson One on the troop leading procedure. You should have a comprehensive understanding of the eight steps of the troop leading procedure process including; the mission, warning order, the plan, issuing an operation or frag order, and supervisory procedures. After reviewing all of the material presented in this lesson, you should complete the practice exercise for Lesson One. Answers and feedback for the questions in the practice exercise will be provided to show you where further study is required.
LESSON ONE

PRACTICE EXERCISE

The following items will test your grasp of the material covered in this lesson. There is only one correct answer for each item. When you have completed the exercise, check your answers with the answer key that follows. If you answer any item incorrectly, study again that part of the lesson which contains the portion involved.

Situation: You are assigned as a platoon leader. Your company is assigned to mopping up operations against several isolated pockets of resistance. Your current position will require 15 minutes of travel time to move to the enemy positions and the enemy can be viewed from your current location. The enemy has fortified himself in a rocky, rough terrain area near the base of a low mountain range. He has had sufficient time to prepare strong defensive positions. Current strength is estimated at two rifle platoons. He is likely to have taken advantage of several small caves located in his area.

1. You have just received a warning order alerting you for an attack in approximately three hours. After analyzing the mission, you should
   a. skip the unnecessary steps since you already know the situation.
   b. cover all the steps in the TLP, even if only in abbreviated form.
   c. move your troops into position for the attack without delay.
   d. use a minimum of two hours for your requirements and limit squad leader time.

2. You are preparing to issue a warning order for an attack to your squad leaders. You should
   a. make sure they have enough information to get started on their mission preparations.
   b. provide them as little information as possible to ensure OPSEC is maintained.
   c. take them to an area where they can view the enemy to issue the warning order.
   d. make a tentative plan before issuing the warning order.
3. You have received a warning order for an upcoming attack and are now planning the use of available time for preparation before the attack. You should

a. allow yourself only half the available time.
b. give yourself two thirds of the time left.
c. take no more than one third of the available time and leave the rest for squad preparation.
d. start with the time the plan is required to be completed and work backward.

4. You are ready to start necessary movement and the company commander has taken you and the other platoon leaders to OP5 to issue the complete OPORD. In this situation, you

a. must be prepared to have your platoon sergeant move the platoon to the site where the operation will take place.
b. move your platoon forward before going to OP5 for issuance of the OPORD.
c. move your platoon immediately since the attack is within three hours.
d. issue the required movement plans as part of your OPORD.

5. In working to complete your plan, you must conduct a reconnaissance. During this reconnaissance, you

a. confirm or modify your tentative plan.
b. conduct all reconnaissance prior to making the tentative plan.
c. verify weather conditions for the attack.
d. go alone to allow uninterrupted planning.

6. Since there is time for a short rehearsal, you should

a. accomplish a rehearsal of all facets of the mission.
b. rehearse on similar type terrain if possible.
c. conduct the rehearsal while adequate light is available since it will be dark in one hour.
d. accomplish the rehearsal prior to completion of the tentative plan to assist in plan development.
THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.
### LESSON ONE
### PRACTICE EXERCISE
### ANSWER KEY AND FEEDBACK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Correct Answer and Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.   | b. cover all the steps in the TLP, even if only in abbreviated form.  
      | All steps in the TLP are important and must all be completed to ensure the success of your mission. Although some steps may have to be abbreviated due to time, cover them all. (Page 2) |
| 2.   | a. make sure they have enough information to get started on their mission preparations.  
      | When issuing a warning order, you must ensure that your personnel have as much information as required to start preparing for the operation. The warning order should be issued as soon as possible after you've received a warning order from your commander, analyzed the mission, and planned available time. (Page 3) |
| 3.   | c. take no more than one third of the available time and leave the rest for squad preparation.  
      | You should make up a time schedule using no more than one third of the available time. Your squads should be given approximately two thirds of the available time to accomplish their tasks. (Page 3) |
| 4.   | a. must be prepared to have your platoon sergeant move the platoon to the site where the operation will take place.  
      | At times, the company commander will take the platoon leaders to an OP and give the complete order. To save time, he may have the first sergeant move the platoons, led by the platoon sergeants, toward the site where the operation will take place. (Page 6) |
| 5.   | a. confirm or modify your tentative plan.  
      | Along with your squad leaders, you must see and evaluate the terrain on which you will fight. You should also confirm enemy location, including troop and weapons emplacement. (Page 6) |
6. b. rehearse on similar type terrain if possible.

If possible, rehearsals should be on terrain resembling that on which the unit will fight and under the expected light conditions. (Page 8)