


2.5 Best Practices for

Squad Orders

USE a 3x5 index card to construct a squad order in 30 minutes.

<p style="text-align: right;">3d Squad, 3 Mar 22</p> <p><u>S: I think EN mech forces will arrive tomorrow at dawn. Our platoon BLOCKS VIANDEN Bridge IOT GUARD Co (delay and report).</u></p> <p><u>M: 3d Squad ABF into EA LION IOT enable 1st Squad (Plt ME) to destroy EN vehicles exiting bridge.</u></p> <p><u>E: CONOPS-As base of L-shaped ambush, defiladed from far side, squad stops vehicles on bridge. FS—Arty, CAS. NO 60s. NO 81s. MG + (ME): ABF in EA LION IOT enable 1st Squad to DES EN. 2d Tm: ABF into EA LION IOT support MG ME with PDF. 3d Tm: @ OP on 2d floor provide ISW/security IOT protect flanks. Coord: Squad sector is (L) and (R) sides of Bridge. NO friendlies on (N) side of EA. MG is base unit (engagement & withdrawal).</u></p>	
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1. EXPLAIN the **Situation**.

S: I think EN mech forces will arrive tomorrow at dawn. Our platoon BLOCKS VIANDEN Bridge IOT GUARD Co (delay and report).

START with “I think...” Your EMLCOA *assessment* provides context. Do NOT re-state the obvious. When you issue the order, add selected adversary composition (SALUTE) and capabilities (DRAW-D). EXPLAIN the friendly HHQ Mission. Note adjacent and supporting units.

2. STATE the **Mission**—twice.

M: 3d Squad ABF into EA LION IOT enable 1st Squad (Plt ME) to destroy EN vehicles exiting bridge.

ISSUE one concise sentence as the mission—the most important sentence in the order. START with “We”—or your unit designation. USE the IOT format to link task and purpose. CAPITALIZE the verb, the task. USE precise doctrinal terms.

3. ISSUE the **Execution**, the concept of operations (**CONOPS**) to explain the operation.

E: CONOPS-As base of L-shaped ambush, defiladed from far side, squad stops vehicles on bridge. FS—Arty, CAS. NO 60s. NO 81s.

ISSUE the **Fire Support Plan**. Squad leaders usually depend on the platoon to request company or higher-level fires.

4. ISSUE concise, single-sentence **Tasks** to your team leaders.

MG + (ME): ABF in EA LION IOT enable 1st Squad to DES EN.

2d Tm: ABF into EA LION IOT support MG ME with PDF.

3d Tm: @ OP on 2d floor provide ISW/security IOT protect flanks.

CHOOSE each word carefully. USE the IOT (in order to) format to link task and purpose. DESIGNATE a ME. CAPITALIZE the verb, the task. USE precise doctrinal terms.

5. ISSUE **Coordinating Instructions**—information that everyone needs to know.

Coord: Squad sector is (L) and (R) sides of Bridge. NO friendlies

on (N) side of EA. MG is base unit (engagement & withdrawal).

CLARIFY times, movements, sectors, contingencies, and other information for all units. During the order, POST any **lists**: manifests, schedules, Rules of Engagement, or checklists.

6. PUT any **Administration & Logistics** or **Command & Signal** notes on the back of the card. Most logistics and signals details should be SOP.

A: CASEVAC to ORP (Grand Hotel). No resupply.

C: Withdraw signal—Lt Eisgruber (w/1st squad) WHITE smoke.

7. PUT **Orientation** and **Task Organization** notes on the back of the card.

O: (N). OUR River (obstacle to vehicles).

VIANDEN Bridge = OBJ 20 (58C GH 2177 8132).

TGT AE 2450 (58C GH 2182 8151). NO TGT on Bridge.

EA LION on "GRAN RUE" Street.

Trigger line is near side of bridge. ORP is Grand Hotel.

T/O @ 1900:

MG + 1st Tm (ME)

2d Tm

3d Tm

A: CASEVAC to ORP (Grand Hotel). No resupply.

C: Withdraw signal—Lt Eisgruber (w/1st squad) WHITE smoke.

ORIENT your Marines on the actual terrain or a terrain model *before* you issue your order. Standard maps do NOT have enough detail for squad orders. DRAW a large-scale sketch, or use a gridded reference graphic (GRG) if a terrain model is not available.

ORGANIZE your unit *before* the order. SPECIFY the time the task organization is effective.

Best practices

FOCUS on the critical three sentences of the order:

1. An assessment of the **situation** — “*What is the adversary going to do?*”
2. A collective **mission** — “*What are we going to do?*”
3. A list of **tasks** — “*What do you need me to do?*”

Do NOT write everything. Provide more information when you issue your order.

Do NOT write a redundant commander's intent paragraph. Your Purpose = Intent. AVOID multiple intents. There should be no “and” in the intent clause.

BRIEF orientation and coordinating instructions for the individual Marine: information that allows them to prepare and then fight.

Brevity

Each **word** in the order is critical. In the disorder of combat, simplicity is strength. An order must be understood, but extra words and extra tasks *reduce* understanding. Brevity is the mark of well-trained units with standard operating procedures. Leaders share implicit understanding. Excessive detail in an order indicates a lack of training.

There are three types of sentences in an order: (1) Mission-specific: “*H-Hour is 0900,*” (2) Micromanagement: “*ROs should carry extra rope,*” and (3) More of the obvious: “*Avoid casualties.*” **Every sentence in the order should be mission-specific.**

Develop your own orders shorthand: BPT, CATK, EN, FIT, HHQ, IOT, ME, O/O, RES, SBF. Use “+” for “attach.” The “@” is “at place,” or “at time.” CUT all adjectives and adverbs.

Timing: 30 minutes

After making an **estimate of the situation** (METT-T), the squad leader should construct an order in less than 30 minutes. If three weeks, three days, or three hours are available, the process does NOT change. When an immediate decision is needed in combat, nothing is written, and the squad leader's order is *three sentences, in thirty seconds, while under fire.*

The squad leader, hours, days, or weeks, after being inserted, cannot assume electricity, computer, printer, paper, or imagery support. A multi-page order, even if written by hand, encourages wordiness and imprecision, and is difficult for subordinates to understand.