

200 SQUADRON AIR TRAINING CORPS

BRIEFING TECHNIQUE

Overview

Briefings are an effective tool for leaders to communicate information to their team members to ensure that everyone is aware of what is to happen. This could be for a simple task such as issuing cleaning duties for a Squadron Open Evening or organising a Fieldcraft Training Exercise.

Indications of a Poor Briefing:

- The exercise/activity fails due to team members not knowing what they were supposed to be doing.
- People get injured in the exercise/activity.
- A general lack of enthusiasm during the exercise/activity.
- Nobody enjoyed the exercise/activity (this may also be due to the actual activity itself).

Tasking Roles

Prior to any briefing assign any roles to members of the team. This will allow them to know which information within the briefing is most important to their role. Typical roles for a task could include:

- 2I/C – If the leader is in some way incapacitated then someone else will need to take command.
- Timekeeper - If there is a time critical element to the task then the clock starts now.
- Standards/Safety Control – If there are dangerous elements or chances of limitations being infringed someone needs to keep an eye on the task.

SMEAC

There is a method used in the ATC to give briefings that follows the mnemonic 'SMEAC'.

S – Situation

- Give an introduction to the activity. If it is a field training exercise then set the scene, give the background information, location and any other relevant details.

M – Mission

- What is the actual objective for the exercise/activity? This should be short and use simple language so that everyone understands. **Repeat this twice.**

E – Execution

- Limitations: Are there any factors which may restrict the options the team has to completing the task? E.g. only 15 minutes to complete a task or a bridge for a river crossing may only support two people at a time.
- Resources. What people or equipment is available for use during the task?
- The Plan. What is the leader's detailed plan for completing the task?

A – Any Questions?

- Ask the team if they have any questions regarding what you have just told them. If it is an activity that will be carried out again then take a mental note of questions asked, so that you can include them next time you give the briefing.

C – Check Understanding

- This is where you check to see if the team actually understand and are not embarrassed to ask silly questions. You ask them questions about the briefing to check if they were listening.

The benefits of using a standardised model like *SMEAC* is that the leader and the team follow a set pattern and get used to the way their briefings are delivered. This increases the efficiency of the briefing because people will not be wasting time asking questions about items that are normally covered later in the briefing.

More Complex Tasks (SMEAC-EAC)

The above *SMEAC* model is simple to use for simple tasks. If the leader is confident with the task then they don't need to ask for ideas from the team. Sometimes the leader is presented with a more complex task that either they are unsure of what to do in order to complete the task or are not 100% confident in the plan they have devised. The leader can utilise the team to come up with feedback and ideas to form a more concrete plan. For this we can use the extended *SMEAC-EAC* to deliver the briefing and come up with a plan without losing control over the team or losing their confidence in their leader.

S – Situation

- As before.

M – Mission

- As before.

E – Execution (Limitations & Resources)

- Limitations & Resources: As before. Note: There is no plan stated here.

A – Any Questions?

- As before.

C – Check Understanding

- As before.

Ideas Stage

The leader now looks to the team for possible ideas on how to approach the given task. They may go around one by one asking each team member if they have any suggestions. For those that do not have any ideas tell them to keep thinking and listen to the other suggestions from the team as it will help to keep them engaged and it may trigger other ideas based on what they hear.

E - Execution (The Plan)

- The Plan: With more ideas drawn from the team the leader can decide what the best course of action is and this is now to be briefed to the team to ensure everyone understands the final plan.

A – Any Final Questions?

- Any questions relating to the final plan.

C – Final Check of Understanding

- Confirmation of understanding. Also a good time to receive a remaining time update from the Timekeeper.

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