



JROTC Virtual Learning

LET 3 & 4/ Staff and Leadership Positions

May 7, 2020



Lesson: May 7, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

Students will:

Examine common JROTC battalion command and staff structures

Describe typical functions of a battalion commander and staff

Define key words: command channels, coordinating staff, logistics, personal staff, staff channels

Instructions for the Lesson

Read through the lesson and examine how the battalion is organized and what the function of each position is.

As you study the positions imagine how you would accomplish each role if you were assigned it in the future.

Think about what skills that you bring to each position and how could you prepare yourself for that position in the future.

Write an explanation of where you could have the most positive impact on the battalion next year.

Command and Staff Roles



Key words

- command channels
- coordinating staff
- logistics
- personal staff
- staff channels

What You Will Learn to Do

Explain how command and staff roles relate to leadership duties in your battalion

Linked Core Abilities

- Build your capacity for life-long learning
- Communicate using verbal, non-verbal, visual, and written techniques
- Take responsibility for your actions and choices
- Treat self and others with respect

Learning Objectives

- **Examine** common JROTC battalion command and staff structure
- **Describe** typical functions of a battalion commander and staff
- **Define** key words: command channels, coordinating staff, logistics, personal staff, staff channels

Essential Question

What are the roles and responsibilities of commanders and staff as they plan and conduct battalion training and operations?

Introduction

As commanders or staff officers in your Cadet battalion, you need to be prepared to meet the challenges of your position. Your success or failure may not only depend upon your abilities as a leader, but on how well you execute command and staff actions. You also need to work well with subordinate commanders and staff officers of the battalion.

In this lesson, you'll learn about command and staff authority, command and staff actions, and staff organization and operations. When you complete this lesson, you will have a better understanding of command and staff roles relate to your duties in your Cadet battalion.

Model Cadet Battalion Organization

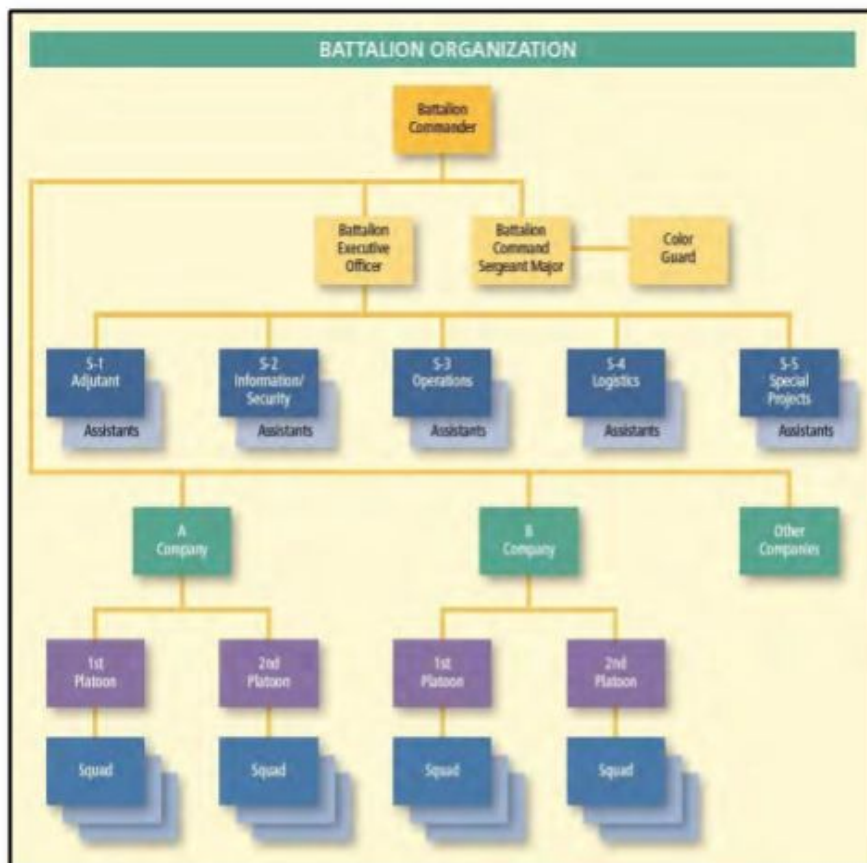


Figure 1.1.1

Now that you are in a principal leadership position in your battalion, your job may require you to coordinate activities or work in conjunction with the personnel assigned to those positions. To be an effective leader, you need to know all of these positions and their related duties. Studying them will also reinforce your knowledge of the chain of command. The battalion organization chart in [Figure 1.1.1](#) is a model chart. Your Cadet battalion may contain additional positions or list different duties for them.

Command Authority and Responsibilities

Command is the authority that a commander lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment. With authority comes responsibility. While there is no legal basis for command in a Cadet battalion, commanders and other key leaders exercise authority given to them by the Senior Army Instructor (SAI).

JROTC commanders function as commissioned officers—they can command everyone in their battalion. In contrast, non-commissioned officers carry out the commander's orders. Commissioned officers are like the head of a company while non-commissioned officers are like middle-managers.

Commanders are responsible for everything their unit does or fails to do. Through a chain of command, commanders hold each subordinate commander and staff officer responsible for all that their unit or section does or fails to do.

The battalion commander has the most demanding job. He or she must be mature, willing to accept responsibility, able to delegate authority, and be competent at supervising others. Commanders are Cadets who have demonstrated leadership ability and good academic standing.

In Army JROTC, the battalion commander:

- Is responsible for all battalion activities
- Sets battalion goals and objectives
- Manages officer promotions and assignments
- Provides planning guidance for battalion activities
- Approves battalion plans and orders
- Prepares the battalion for the JROTC Program for Accreditation (JPA)
- Supervises the battalion executive officer (XO), command sergeant major (CSM), and company commanders
- Provides guidance to company commanders—duties and responsibilities
- Prepares and delivers the battalion commander part of the battalion briefing
- Conducts periodic inspections



Figure 1.1.2

Commanders have a mission to accomplish. In order to succeed, they must effectively use available resources for planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling members of the battalion. No one individual can personally direct, coordinate, and supervise the operation of a battalion-size unit or larger. Regardless of how capable, educated, experienced, or energetic commanders may be, they must have assistance. This assistance comes from a group of officers and senior non-commissioned officers (NCO). These officers are called staff.

The following paragraphs describe typical battalion staff organization and function. Your battalion may be different and that's ok. Details about how your battalion staff operates should be contained in your battalion standing operating procedures (SOP).

Staff Responsibilities

Each year, JROTC instructors choose Cadets who will become battalion staff members. They bond and work together to become an effective team. The battalion staff is the glue that bonds the organization together. Staff keeps the battalion running like a well-oiled machine.

Staff reduces their commander's burden by accomplishing as many of the routine matters of command as possible. This leaves commanders to serve in leadership roles as intended. A Cadet battalion typically has two types of staff:

- **Personal staff** – The CSM and the color guard
- **Coordinating staff** – The XO and all of the staff positions the XO supervises

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR (CSM)

The CSM is the senior non-commissioned officer in the battalion and is the principal assistant to the commander on junior enlisted personnel and NCO matters. The CSM provides input on battalion goals and objectives and supervises the battalion color guard. The CSM leads the NCO support channel. He or she works through subordinate NCOs (First Sergeant, Platoon Sergeant, and Squad Leader) to accomplish the mission, goals, and objectives established by the chain of command.

Other responsibilities of the CSM include:

- Maintaining the national, state, and battalion Colors
- Entering color guard participation into the Cadet Record (JUMS)
- Coordinating with battalion Senior NCOs (First Sergeant and Platoon Sergeant) and other staff Officers.
- Giving input to battalion plans and orders
- Preparing and delivering the battalion CSM portion of the battalion staff briefing
- Managing NCO/Cadet promotions
- Ensuring cleanliness and maintenance of all battalion areas



Figure 1.1.3

Key words

personal staff:

A commander's command sergeant major and the color guard

coordinating staff:

A commander's executive officer and all of the staff positions the executive officer supervises

EXECUTIVE OFFICER (XO)

The XO supervises and coordinates staff to prevent overlapping efforts and ensure that the commander's goals are achieved. He or she sets specific goals for the staff and supervises them. The XO keeps staff informed of policies and projects. If the battalion commander is absent, the XO is in charge. Other duties of the XO are to:

- Stay abreast of the battalion long range calendar (extra-curricular)
- Coordinate battalion staff actions (staff works as a team)
- Review battalion plans and orders prior to commander approval
- Prepare the battalion staff for the JPA
- Supervise preparation of the battalion staff briefing
- Prepare and deliver the battalion XO portion of the battalion staff briefing
- Formulate, recommend, and announce staff operating policies
- Keep the commander informed
- Approve staff actions
- Supervise the execution of orders

Staff positions work in five different areas of responsibility. All staff positions are responsible for:

- Setting the goals and objectives of their area
- Keeping current with the battalion long range calendar
- Coordinating with other staff officers
- Providing input for their area to battalion plans and orders
- Preparing their section for the JPA
- Preparing and delivering their portion of the battalion staff briefing



Figure 1.1.4

1 (ADJUTANT, PERSONNEL)

The S-1 Cadet is the battalion adjutant and has many administrative duties. The S-1 uses the JROTC Unit Management System (JUMS) to record enrollment in JROTC, promotions, demotions, leadership assignments, awards, team membership, and event participation.

2 (SECURITY/INFORMATION)

The S-2 Cadet is the battalion security officer. They are responsible for maintaining the battalion arms rooms and keeping an inventory of all sensitive or pilferable government property (including computers, laptops, mobile devices, drill rifles, and air rifles).

S-3 (OPERATIONS AND TRAINING)

S-3 is in charge of battalion plans, operations, and training. The S-3 Cadet integrates battalion and school activities. They publish orders and are responsible for planning major battalion activities and briefing companies. The S-3 prepares risk assessments for all major battalion activities, keeps a school year training calendar, and publishes the weekly training schedule.

S-4 (LOGISTICS)

The S-4 Cadet is in charge of **logistics**. The S-4 Cadet is responsible for maintaining battalion supply rooms, inventories of supplies, issuing uniforms, and alerting the Army Instructor (AI) if supplies are low. They are also accountable for battalion property and provide supplies for all major battalion activities.

Like other staff position, the S-4 is an expert in JUMS and maintains Cadet uniforms and equipment records in the system. The S-4 also helps issue Cadet uniforms and accessories.

S-5 (SPECIAL PROJECTS)

The S-5 Cadet is typically the public affairs officer (PAO). Unlike other staff positions, the S-5 usually does not work with JUMS recordkeeping, but instead focuses on getting the word out about battalion activities, events, awards, etc. The S-5 also:

- Develops the battalion recruiting plan
- Coordinates with school yearbook and newspaper (if available)
- Maintains bulletin boards in the school
- Maintains the battalion historical scrap book
- Ensures photos are taken of battalion activities
- Prepares a periodic battalion newsletter
- Prepares and submits articles to local news media



Figure 1.1.5

Staff Organization

Regardless of its organization, a staff must apply the principles of unity of command and direction, span of control, delegation of authority, and the grouping of compatible and related activities. Consequently, staff organization depends upon the following factors.

- *Activities conducted by the unit* – The unit’s mission(s) and its activities go hand-in-hand. For example, all of the duties and responsibilities that make up the unit’s activities—especially those required to accomplish the unit’s mission(s)—are fundamental to the organization and functioning of a staff.
- *Emphasis on broad fields of interest* – The staff positions generally cover five broad areas of interest: personnel, security/information, operations, logistics, and special projects. The emphasis placed on each of these broad fields of interest, and the specialized activities required for each, vary according to the mission and the activities required to accomplish the mission. For example, within your JROTC battalion, the S-2 may also handle public affairs matters while the S-5 could be assigned as the special project’s officer. Although military staffs may vary in

Key words

logistics:

A branch of military science dealing with movement of supplies, equipment, and personnel

organization and specific titles of its staff members, they do possess certain common characteristics. Functional responsibilities are the basis for all military staff organizations.

Common Staff Procedures

Staff officers use common procedures to coordinate staff action. In addition to staff coordination, these include visits and inspections, conferences, briefings, and reports.

STAFF COORDINATION

Staff coordination is the process of making certain that all pieces of a staff action fit together. The responsible action officer and all other interested staff officers examine and make adjustments to any sub-actions of the project. Staff officers then determine the proper action within their section's area of interest. Finally, the action officer has the added responsibility to complete the coordination with other commanders and staff sections, as appropriate.

VISITS AND INSPECTIONS

Staff officers make assistance visits to obtain information for the commander, observe the execution of orders, and assist subordinate unit commanders.

Concerning the first two points, the

information that staff officers obtain can indicate to their commander how effectively or efficiently subordinate units are at executing command decisions. Concerning the last item, a vital part of the staff officer's job is to discover and help subordinate elements to resolve internal problems. On occasion, staffs may combine staff visits with command-directed inspections.

Commanders and/or staffs conduct inspections to ascertain the condition of the command. Using checklists prepared by the various staff sections, commanders and staffs conduct inspections to collect positive and negative information from which the commander can determine the readiness of the unit to accomplish its mission(s).

CONFERENCES, BRIEFINGS, AND REPORTS

Commanders and staff officers frequently participate in conferences. Conferences often replace the need for staff visits and certain types of correspondence. Commanders and staffs call conferences to accomplish the following objectives.

- Determine and evaluate facts by exchanging information and ideas
- Solve problems (particularly new ones)
- Coordinate actions, including arriving at the best possible decision or reaching agreement in a particular area
- Formulate policy
- Instruct, counsel, or advise

Staff briefings ensure a coordinated or unified effort by the entire staff. The XO usually presides over these briefings. The XO calls upon each staff section representative to exchange information or guidance, present matters of interest to the command, or present matters that require staff coordination and decision.



Figure 1.1.6

Command Communication

There are two channels through which orders, instructions, and information flow within a command. They are the command and staff channels.

Command channels transmit all orders and instructions to subordinate units. These channels are commander-to-commander, and all orders transmitted are in the name of the commander.

Staff channels coordinate and transmit information and operating instructions to comparable staff elements and to subordinate commanders. For example, the battalion S-2 might provide information to a company commander.

Both in planning and conducting operations, staff officers of a higher headquarters frequently need to contact comparable staff elements of subordinate headquarters. However, a staff officer of a higher headquarters has no authority over the staff of the subordinate headquarters. For example, the S-1 may communicate with the S-1 in a subordinate headquarters, but he or she cannot give the subordinate S-1 orders.

Conclusion

By now, you should have a good idea about the manner in which a unit successfully accomplishes its missions. By understanding command and staff roles and procedures, you'll be better qualified to assume the top leadership positions in your Cadet battalion.

Key words

command channels:
The communication route for commanders to transmit orders to all subordinate units; all orders are transmitted in the name of the commander

staff channels:
The communication route for staff to transmit information to other staff and subordinate commanders

Lesson Check-up



- Why is it important to understand how the staff works together to facilitate battalion training and activities?
- What are the major functional areas (fields of interest) for each coordinating staff officer?
- How will the staff ensure that subordinate units understand and implement the plan once it is approved by the commander?