

## THE MILITARY BRIEFING - A TYPE OF INFORMATIVE SPEECH

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**Abstract:** *Speech is important in the life of any military officer. Each officer must be a competent communicator. The primary job of every commander or staff officer is to get things done through the people who are in lower positions in the chain of command. This means that they must be able to speak accurately, briefly, and clearly.*

*Most speaking in the military field is done to make something clear or to achieve agreement concerning a plan or a policy of any kind. The response attended is usually understanding in preparation for some actions that had been suggested in the briefing.*

*The present paper intends to underline the purpose of a military briefing, its most important traits, the best way to organize the material so the audience could understand better.*

**Key word:** *briefing, informative speech, accuracy, clarity*

The military briefing is a formal version of the informative speech. As such the primary purpose of the true briefing is to inform. The best military briefings are concise and factual. They may have any one of three specific purposes:

- to assure the listener's understanding of a particular mission, operation, or idea,
- to enable the listener to follow a specific procedure,
- to give the listener information on which to base decisions.

A good briefing is a service. It saves the time that each listener would otherwise have to spend in acquiring needed information. All people in the military need information concerning their contributions to the success of the overall operation. No one could possibly read all the material important to the operation and take the needed information from it. Therefore, the commander delegates this job to selected staff officers. Each of these officers checks the source materials and takes what is important to his/ her specialty. The work of this fact-finding team is then presented in an orderly and concise manner to the commander and the staff.

Every briefing has three important traits:

- It is accurate.
- It is brief.
- It is clear.

These could be considered the ABCs of briefing. Accuracy and clarity are important to all good speaking, but brevity separates the briefing from other types of informative speeches.

The word "brief" suggests conciseness and directness. This does not mean that a briefing should contain no extra unnecessary material. In preparing to brief others, you should first ask yourself, "What does my audience need to know?" The answer to this question is the key to what to include in the briefing.

Many times several officers participate in a briefing. In briefing a commander on an operational plan, for example, a couple of officers might brief on the administrative and operational areas while another officer might brief on the mission. In order for the commander to understand all the information as a unit, each briefer must give only the essential information in as few words and as few minutes as completeness and clarity permit.

When you are preparing to brief others, you normally study a mass of information. You must choose the really important facts and organize them carefully. Your explanation must be simple and pertinent; jokes or amusing stories have no place in a military briefing. The listeners are prepared for a serious talk. They want to hear the vital information on a specific subject as quickly as possible. Since you are speaking to a specific kind of audience and one which is there for a specific reason, you need to analyze those present according to their rank and experience. Whether your audience is to be a commander and his staff or some other group, try to discover how they like information to be presented. Even if you cannot always say what they want to hear, try to speak in a manner which they can easily understand.

As with the simple informative speech, clear, thoughtful organization of your material will help your audience to understand better. In organizing the introduction, body, and conclusion to the briefing, keep the overall purpose of the briefing in mind. Use an organizational plan that will best suit your purpose and inform your audience.

The purpose of your briefing might be to give your audience an understanding of a particular mission, operation, or idea, or it might be possible for the listeners to perform a particular procedure. In either case, a simple topical organization would be suitable. A topical organization is one which

presents each of the major areas of the briefing as a separate, easily identifiable section of the presentation. These major areas to be presented in the briefing are the topics to be developed and explained.

If the purpose of the briefing is to provide your listeners with information on which to base decisions, a problem-solving plan of organization, such as would be used to approach problems and prepare staff studies, may be the most effective. In a problem-solving organizational plan, you usually begin by locating and defining a difficulty and then analyzing that problem to discover its cause. Then you weigh the good and bad points of possible solutions and choose the one which seems best. Finally, you may best test the solution and suggest acceptance and action. It is important that the organizational plan of your briefing be thoughtful and clear to your audience. As an example to illustrate the form and the outlines an informative speech must present, we usually give our students the following format. Take note that the information use to fill in the form was provided to us by a student.

### **Weapons and ammunition safety**

#### **Introduction**

The attention to detail and the avoidance of sense of security when using weapons and ammunition in garrison and tactical environments is prevalent.

#### **Objective:**

Apply RISK MANAGEMENT to weapons, ammunition in garrison, fire range or during operations for ACCIDENT PREVENTION.

#### **Reasons for errors**

The major reasons for errors related to all accidents and injuries are:

- Lack of self-discipline.
- Failure to enforce standards.
- Inadequate training.

### **Weapons and Ammunition**

When handling weapons and ammunition the most common injury-producing factors are:

- Failure to follow procedures
- Improper or inadequate clearing
- Untimely loading/unloading
- Personnel in the path of recoil or back-blast
- Fratricide

#### **Scenario**

While on deployment in Afghanistan, a junior officer was in his barracks room handling another officer's 9mm pistol when the weapon accidentally discharged, striking him in the left palm.

#### **Result**

The injured was transported to an allied hospital where he underwent surgery. The round had destroyed two metacarpals, the adjacent muscles and the ulnar artery and nerve.

#### **Factors leading to the injury:**

- Failure to follow procedures
- Improper or inadequate handling of weapon

#### **Most common injury-producing areas in the handling of weapons and ammunition**

- Failure to properly observe safety features
- Improper procedures
- Improper attention - in the recoil or back-blast area
- Faulty simulator - premature or inadvertent discharge

#### **Policy**

- The safe conduct of soldiers firing, detonating explosives, and maneuvering on ranges is a command responsibility.
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- Any individual observing a dangerous firing condition will immediately announce a cease-fire.

#### **Accident & Malfunction Reporting**

- Accidents and malfunctions will be reported in accordance to RG.....

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