

So Why do We Need a Plan?

An organization plans a mission to maximize the mission's likelihood for success and minimize the likelihood of the loss of personnel, equipment or the organizations reputation.

1. Lack of planning is a leadership failure.
2. The goal of all normal missions no matter what the objective is, is to get your people back home alive.

Welcome to the Military Decision Making Process or MDMP Flow Chart!

This technique forces the organization's leadership, i.e. management team and the travelers to logically step through the process of planning and executing a mission.

So first the organization's leadership needs to define the mission, for this example the mission is to set up a base camp to support refugees from ISIS.

Questions that need to be answered before you can start the planning process.

1. Can the entire mission be performed internally by the organization?
2. If the organization cannot perform the mission on its own, then define the resources that the organization will need.

After answering these two questions, does the organization still want to perform the mission? If "YES", then proceed on!

PLANNING A MISSION

Life is the P.I.T.S. (Personnel, Intelligence, Training, and Supply)

The Management Team and their Roles in the Mission

A. Appoint a person to be the Action Officer or Mission Manager or the Person In Charge. This is the person with authority to call meetings, recruit people, and responsible for the overall success of the mission. This person has direct access to the real power in the organization, anything short of this and your organization is wasting it's time and resources. This person needs direct access to the organization highest levels of management in order to commit larger resources for the safe rescue or recovery of the travelers should the need arise.

B. The Mission Manager (to keep the title simple) assembles their management team with the following considerations in mind. They need to have as a minimum:

Personnel

- A. Someone from Human Relations or Personnel to assist with personnel issues that will arise like new hires, transfers, background checks, etc...
- B. One person per family involved to act as a liaison between the travelers family and the organization.

Intelligence

- A. Several personnel able to search the Internet, social media, and other means to gather atmospheric inside the destination country. Atmospheric are things like public opinion, news reports, government bulletins, etc... You may need language interpreters and people familiar with the area or who have institutional knowledge.
- B. One person designated to speak to the media if necessary and to speak to the organization to provide the larger group with updates. This is a key position, this person needs to be manageable and able to take directions from the management team. This person will be working closely with the intelligence group as the media effort will be focused on both U.S. and foreign media relations.

Training

- A. One person to review the mission and to decide if any additional training to successfully complete the mission is needed. This includes both the Management Team, Traveling Team and if necessary the families of the travelers. Particularly focusing on additional training for contingencies that could arise like medical, communications, search and rescue or recovery operations training. This training can and should extend to additional personnel that could be called to support the mission if the mission suffers a catastrophic failure.

Supply

- A. Someone with authority and experience to build a budget and to spend money for flights, medical care, food and lodging, shipping or all other costs that may arise from the mission to include any emergencies that could arise.
- B. An assistant to the supply person in the event something happens to them.

The Travelers or Travel Team

The travelers include anyone leaving the organization to perform or support the mission. They also include advance teams, recon teams, liaison teams or anybody else that is traveling to support the mission.

1. Select an experienced person to be the on the ground manager of the team of travelers. This person needs to have emotional maturity as they will be put in a very stressful position, especially if something goes wrong. This person must be well balanced and have the authority to abort the mission if necessary. This person must also be mature enough to understand that if the mission is aborted by management or if the mission profile (what's to be accomplished during the mission) changes, then the travel leader must enforce that decision with the travelers and comply with management directives.
2. The assistant leader has to be part of every meeting and must be actively involved in the entire mission process as they are the backup leader and they will be managing various groups of the travelers as the mission is in process.
3. One emergency medical technician for every 10 travelers is ideal or one per traveler group.
4. One team leader for every five travelers is a good ratio. Team leaders keep track of the travelers, their bags, sensitive equipment, they supervise their team's activities.
5. Interpreters if organic to the organization otherwise locals will have to be used, the problem is the interpreters are privy to a great deal information and may be looking to sell that information to really bad people.
6. A designated computer and communications person to assist the travelers with routine problems encountered in our ever technical world. Recommendations are COMPTIA A+, N+, very good with the computer programs being used and can operate any satellite or special electronic equipment.
7. No one operates alone, they always have a partner (or battle buddy) with them! This includes the travelers leadership as well and especially any advance personnel.

The Military Decision Making Process

Receipt of the Mission

What is your primary mission objectives?

What is your secondary mission objectives?

Why is your organization doing this?

Receipt of the Mission

We are going set up a base camp for refugees fleeing ISIS.

We will need to provide food, lodging, and medical support for 1,000 refugees.

We are doing this to prevent loss of innocent life.

Issue the First Warning Order to the Organization and key Subordinates

1. What is the situation?

2. What is the new mission or tasking?

3. What general instructions have to be given so the group can succeed?

A. Special teams or taskings that need to be identified?

B. Common uniform or equipment needed?

C. Special weapons/ammo or equipment needed?

D. Tentative time schedule for mission/tasking?
At a minimum you will need:

1. Next meeting time?

2. Estimated start time of mission?

3. Estimated departure date/time?

4. Special instructions (as needed)?

A.

B.

C.

Issue the First Warning Order to the Organization and key Subordinates

1. What is the situation? ISIS is killing innocent people.

2. What is the new mission or tasking? In 30 days this organization will deploy a team to build a base camp to house, feed and provide medical care to refugees.

3. What general instructions have to be given so the group can succeed? The management team will be asking each department for resources to support this mission.

A. Special teams or taskings that need to be identified? The management team is already staffed and will be taking volunteers by name for the actual deployment overseas.

B. Common uniform or equipment needed? N/A.

C. Special weapons/ammo or equipment needed? N/A

D. Tentative time schedule for mission/tasking?
At a minimum you will need:

1. Next meeting time? Tuesday at 2PM.

2. Estimated start time of mission? 1 July

3. Estimated departure date/time? 15 July

4. Special instructions? Persons with prior overseas experience and no major medical problems will be given priority in volunteering.

Mission Analysis (or building the Mission Profile)

Define the mission's objectives and then figure out what it will take to accomplish each objective.

Think of the mission as a "Moon Launch", you only have what you take with you and use the "cradle to grave" concept of mission planning.

This also covers implied tasks like travel, eating, weather, sleeping, time constraints, budgets and risks management. Put the implied tasks together in Annexes at the back of your plan as these tend to change several times.

Issue 2nd Warning Order to Organization/ Subordinates

Include the mission analysis or mission profile as part of the Warning Order.

The goal is to get out as much information as possible to the people that need this information and to alert others that a mission will soon be undertaken by the organization. You also need a procedure where people can bring up potential problems before the mission is supposed to begin to the Management Team.

Course of Action Analysis

Conduct a "War Game" for your mission plan and look for gaps in planning, coverage and lack of contingency plans. Feedback from your subordinates is key to improving your plan and to have the best mission possible.

This "War Game" should include all the key players and decision makers and the entire management team and the travelers.

If a primary leader opts out of the MDMP, be prepared to have them come back and change everything once the plan is in motion to suit their ego, so be prepared to ABORT the mission as the primary leader may purposefully sabotage the mission for personal gain. (I bring this up because big egos get people killed.)

Always address these three areas:

Plan A when the mission is going good.

Plan B when the mission is going bad.

Plan C when the mission goes horribly bad and the mission has to be aborted.

Organization and Subordinates

Because this document relates to personnel, foreign travel, and the organization's resources only people with a true "need to know" should get this entire document. Especially on the travelers personal information.

Two worst case scenarios:

If a crisis were to occur the information was released unfiltered to the media for worldwide distribution.

The information is sent to the destination country and the travelers walk into a trap.

The following situations at a minimum also need to be addressed in Annexes.

Decide the conditions that warrant:

Aborting the mission.

Replacing a key leader.

Sending more supplies.

Investing more money.

Replacing travelers.

Bringing travelers back home.

Sending more travelers.

Issuing press releases.

Include all special instructions, annexes and all the contingency plans. Include operational budgets, points of contact with all internal and external groups involved. Stay focused and produce a complete product that is useable.

This includes a table top exercise with all key leaders, the Management Team, Travelers and a group to act as the Observer/Controllers. These are actually very easy to do so here's how it works.

You need three rooms, one for the Travelers, then for the Management Team to meet in and one for the Controllers. The Controllers need to decide on a series of incidents to happen with the Travelers and Management Team and then see if both groups use the Annexes and procedures and to look for any "holes" in the mission profile that need to be fixed prior to the Travelers leaving.

For Example:

Tell the travelers that one of their group has been detained by TSA, then the controllers will see how the team reacts and reports to management. Then in turn they will observe how the management team reports and works within its group. (All reports generated by the management team, that would normally go to upper management, instead go to the observer/controllers).

Things like lost baggage, damaged equipment, traveler being ill should go quickly and easily as these are the most common occurrences while traveling.

As the exercise moves along, throw in the "Go Run and Hide" scenario, as this will take a great deal of coordination with all layers of management, plus a great deal of thinking, planning and acting by all parties.

Execution of the Mission

This is the actual mission in motion, with all groups fully focused on mission accomplishment. Also all parties involved are taking notes to improve the next mission.

Simple Rules to Remember:

1. Keep the living alive.
2. Don't let egos over ride capabilities.
3. Always have more options than you need.

General Comments about the MDMP Process

You are either tasked with a mission or you decide you want to do your own mission (self-initiated).

So the first thing is to mentally "Own the Mission".

be successful in the planning, resourcing and execution of your mission.

2. Your staff prepares to "Analyze the Mission". Here is where they shine out in their areas of expertise. Think big picture items like what your group does and does not do, maps of the area, known terrorist groups, friendly groups, and other big picture stuff. Also consider things like language training, logistics
3. Conduct the initial assessment. You are looking at available time you have to plan and execute your mission and planning is a time intensive process. You also need to staff resources like training, money and other "show stopper" things.
4. Figure out how much time you have before you HAVE to act and set things in motion.
5. Leadership's or the Commander's Initial Guidance. This is where the scope of the "mission" is decided on. This is where the length of mission, the mission's objectives are set and places that need liaisons, prior coordination and initial reconnaissance on the locations and arrangements begin.
6. Issuing the Warning Order to your organization as many things need to begin happening, especially the need to get people thinking about the upcoming "mission". Warning orders give the type of mission, location of mission, initial time line and any subordinate

More Advanced Notes:

1. Look at the mission that you are going to do.
2. Conduct your intelligence preparation of the battlefield, yes it's a battlefield now and the quicker you can wrap your head around that fact the better you will be able to perform. Include things like: Weather, terrorist and criminal events, supporting churches resources, groups already on the ground. This is where you identify friends, enemies and special resources.
3. Determine tasks that need to be performed, skills sets that are required and any implied tasks everyone "assumes" will "just happen".
4. Review available assets, resources, personnel and skills already in place.
5. Determine all your constraints, which are normally people, money and time and any outside constraints like

foreign governments, weak infrastructure, etc...

6. Establish your facts and assumptions, like we know we will be robbed, the weather will be very hot, transportation troubles, i.e.

7. This step is very important....Conduct a Risk Assessment! For example: When a group is traveling you need to split the group up in case their plane goes down. What do you do if someone is kidnapped? Injured or gets sick? (We'll deal with it when it happens gets "Type A" personalities beaten up and sued by grieving relatives...along with your organization!)

8. Determine what the commander or leaders Critical Information Requirements are from their support staff and workers. Things like having a terrorist attack a mile from your mission location, epidemics, food shortages, phone system shut down, think things that could go wrong that everybody needs to know about as quickly as possible.

9. Develop and issue the initial reconnaissance annex, think of this as what does your recon group need to look at. Checklists are king in this world.

10. Develop your mission master calendar and list major tasks and milestones that need to be accomplished in order for the mission to be successful.

11. Write out your mission plan. Be as detailed as possible so people really understand what they are about to get into.

12. Conduct mission analysis briefing to the staff and leadership.

13. Approve the restated mission, normally this is something a military commander does, but an organization's leadership can be equally effective.

14. Develop initial intent commander's intent, these are the purpose, key tasks and most importantly the end state that the mission commander hopes to accomplish.

15. Commander's guidance, comes from them listening to what the staff has to say up to this point.

16. Issue the second warning order to the organization and workers. This helps to better focus people and assets.

17. Review all the facts up to this point and review all the working assumptions.