A Battle Book
For the Company XO

CAPTAIN THOMAS D. DINACKUS

One of the most challenging transitions facing a young combat arms officer is the move from platoon leader to company executive officer (XO). Success in this new position demands both an increase in the scope of the officer's knowledge and his quick attainment of an extremely high level of proficiency. Gone are the days when he, as a platoon leader, might expect to have his mistakes overlooked as "learning experiences."

Unfortunately, there is no single Army reference work designed to make the XO's job easier; he is left with an obvious but far from ideal solution—fabricate his own battle book. If it is designed properly, it can serve equally well in field and garrison operations.

If you are a new XO, these three general guidelines should help you prepare your first battle book.

First, your battle book should include only the information that is critical for the performance of *your* mission. For example, as long as you have access to a complete copy of your unit's SOP, there is no need for your battle book to include every obscure report ever created by your higher headquarters.

Second, do not hesitate to rewrite or reorganize reference material or status charts and reports to fit your own needs. At 0200 on the third day of an ARTEP is no time to discover that the field manual's description of simplified fallout prediction is something less than self-explanatory.

Finally, your battle book should be a constantly evolving tool that becomes more finely tuned with every use and every subsequent modification.

I assembled my battle book in a standard size three-ring notebook, which fits easily in an issue map or courier bag. Smaller formats are probably feasible, but they would be more difficult to read in low light conditions and to work with generally. Each page should be covered with acetate to protect it from the elements, preferably with the kind that accepts pencil and both water and alcohol based pens

The book will contain several major sections:

Tactical reference data. Being second in command, you must be prepared to step forward at any time and lead your company in tactical operations. An important part of that role is issuing a company level operations order (OPORD). Foremost in the tactical portion of the book should be an OPORD outline to facilitate the quick formulation of tactical operations orders.

You should also include reference material on the capabilities of all weapon systems likely to be attached, such as the range, weapons control status, and warning system used by air defense weapons; the range, typical times of flight, and illumination capabilities of 81mm and 4.2-inch mortars and 155mm howitzers; and the capabilities, limitations, and procedures that apply to ground surveillance radars.

Finally, if your unit uses a system of markings to facilitate long-range identification of each vehicle's unit, the unit symbols should be illustrated.

Tactical SOP reports. Probably the most frequently used portion of your battle book will be the multitude of reports in the tactical SOPs of your unit and all higher headquarters. When creating this section, eliminate reports that duplicate others and those that are rarely used, and highlight the kind of information you will need regularly. This should include noting the "time due" and "as of" times for reports due at regular intervals and distinguishing these reports from those sent only in response to a particular event.

Some of the most important reports you will use are those that deal with your unit's status on Classes I, III, and V supply, vehicle maintenance (deadline), and personnel. In compiling this information, you will be coordinating with your company's subordinate elements; not only must an accurate total be submitted to your next higher echelon, but you must also keep accurate records of each sub-element's needs to ensure efficient distribution once your requests have been filled. (In your records, the units should be represented as they are task organized for tactical operations.)

It is also useful to have a record of the requests you have submitted to your S-1 and S-4, with the quantity requested and the date/time group of the request. A suggested format that meets these requirements is illustrated in Figure 1. As shown here, this chart depicts ammunition requirements for a company team equipped with the M60 tank and the M113 series of vehicles. The 1st and 2d Platoons are mechanized infantry; the 3d Platoon is an attached tank element. (Only selected entries are shown.)

Using this format, you would enter the line item code used in your unit in the "Item Identifier" column, enter the current amount of supplies needed by each subordinate unit in the appropriate

Item Identifier	Description	1st Plt	2d Plt	3d Plt	AT Sec	Mortars	Cmd GP	Maint	Total	First Request	Second Request	Third Request	Remarks
AA	105mm APDS			20					20	120800 20			
AB	105mm HEAT			30					30	120800 30			
B	M2 .50 Cal	1,200	1,500			200	200	100	3200	110900 2000	120800 3200		
C	M85 .50 Cal			1,500					1500	100800 400	110900 900	120800 1500	Shortage
D	7.62mm	1,000	1,500	1,000	400				3900	120800 3900			
E	5.56mm	2,000	2,200			100		100	4220	120800 4220			

Figure 1. Sample Logistics Status (LOGSTAT) Report (Ammunition Shown)

column, and use the blank columns for attached units. You would enter the company's total requirement in the "total" column and enter the amount requested and date/time group for the last three unfilled requests.

From these entries it is easy to see that requests for 105mm APDS, 105mm HEAT, 7.62mm, and 5.56mm rounds are being promptly filled; only the most recent request, at 120800, remains open. The M2 .50 caliber ammunition has not been delivered as promptly, however—the last two requests, sent in at 110900 and 120800, have yet to be received. Finally, M85 .50 caliber ammunition is in short supply. The last three requests, for ever-increasing amounts, have yet to be filled, and the S-4 has indicated a shortage.

Submitting these logistics status reports will be easier and faster if you have handy a comprehensive body of reference data. The battle book should contain the fuel and ammunition basic loads and the authorized personnel levels (by MOS and skill level), for all subordinate elements and units likely to be attached. This information will enable you to submit realistic and timely requests even without accurate reports from subordinate unit leaders.

Maintenance. Your maintenance mission will also be simplified and improved, both in the field and in garrison, by a useful body of maintenance related information. Figure 2 illustrates a suggested format with selected entries. The data on this chart falls into three categories: Information identifying the type of vehicle or component in the second column (to facilitate maintenance procedures); information identifying the serial number of a vehicle or component in the third column (to facilitate supply accountability); and information indicating when maintenance must next be performed in the fourth column. These charts should include the serial number of each piece of equipment that is likely to require turn-in for repair or calibration.

In addition, any differences in vehicles that could affect maintenance should be noted, such as which unit APCs are M113A1s and which are M113A2s.

A comprehensive list of maintenance information would include the following for all vehicles:

- Vehicle registration number.
- Vehicle U.S.A. number.
- Date of last Q-service.
- Date of last PMCS, DA Form 2404.
- Date portable fire extinguisher was last weighed and inspected.

For all M113 series vehicles, the list would include:

- Serial numbers of driver's M19 IR periscope, all TOW components (for M220A1 and M901 ITVs), and gun tubes (for M106 and M125 series mortar carriers).
- Date fixed fire extinguisher was last weighed and inspected.
- Date of last borescope/pullover (for M106 and M125 series mortar carriers).
- Date of last verification (for TOW and Dragon systems).
- Date of generator's last service (for M577 series TOC).

For all M60A1 tanks, it would include.

- Serial numbers of track commander's M36 IR sight; gunner's M32 IR sight; driver's IR sight, searchlight and all components, radio (if permanently assigned to vehicle), gun tube, and breech ring.
- Date of last borescope/pullover/recoil exercise.
- Number of EFC (equivalent full charge) rounds left on gun tube.
- Searchlight type.
- Engine type.
- Active versus passive IR.
- Date fixed fire extinguishers were last weighed and inspected.

For M578A1 or M88A1 recovery vehicles:

- Date fixed fire extinguishers were last weighed and inspected.
- Date boom/sling was last calibrated.

You will need to modify this list, of course, to include your unit's equipment.

Finally, a vehicle status chart will prove indispensable to field maintenance. Enough room should be left on the chart to record for each vehicle its location by six-digit grid, its specific maintenance problem, the time the vehicle is due up, and any other pertinent information. The chart should include all assigned vehicles with extra room for vehicles from attached units.

Bumper Number	Vehicle Type	Driver's IR Periscope Serial #	Last Q-Svc Performed
B 11	M113A1	XXXXXX	XX XXX XX
B 12	M113A2	XXXXXX	XX XXX XX

Figure 2. Maintenance Data Chart

NBC Operations. While an executive officer rarely serves as the unit NBC defense officer, logic dictates that you will supervise many of the unit's NBC defense operations, including fallout prediction, radiological calculations, nuclear and chemical strike warnings, and decontamination operations. Because this information is critical to the unit's tactical performance (and difficult to memorize), a major portion of your battle book should be devoted to NBC reference data and status charts. Unfortunately, there is no single comprehensive source of NBC information, and you will have to consult a number of publications. Your book might include the following:

- NBC Task Organization Chart (showing what type of NBC equipment is carried on each vehicle).
- Radiation Exposure Status Chart. (See FM 17-95, Calvary—Draft—December 1981.)
- Chemical Contamination Status Chart.
- Notes on simplified and detailed fallout prediction. (See FM 3-22, Fallout Prediction, October 1973.)
- Data on nuclear weapons effects. (See FM 101-31-1, Staff Officer's Field Manual: Nuclear Weapons Employment Doctrine and Procedures, March 1977, and RB 100-34, Operations on the Integrated Battlefield, U.S. Army Armor School, 1981.)
- Data on nuclear radiation transmission factors for various vehicles and shelters (RB 100-34).
- Notes on conducting radiological surveys (route, pre-selected dose rate, and point techniques) and preparing the appropriate reports.
- Notes on preparing NBC 1 through 4 reports.
- Format and procedures for unit strike warnings.
- Data on MOPP levels (FM 17-95).
- Data on chemical weapon effects (RB 100-34).
- Data on duration of persistent chemical contamination and downwind chemical hazard (RB 100-34).
- Notes on conducting personnel and vehicular decontamination. (See FM 3-87, NBC Reconnaissance and Decontamination Operations, February 1980.)

Finally, your battle book can also be used as a repository for various other useful documents, and you should create status charts or reference material that will help manage any areas of special "command interest" in your unit. These miscellaneous materials might include the following:

- Load plans for headquarters platoon vehicles.
- Current battle roster.
- Prescribed load list with current Zero Balance Report.
- Julian calendar.
- Extra signature cards for Self Service Supply Center and Class IX pickup.
- Dry cell battery status chart showing requisition dates, quantity ordered, and current status.
- Communications equipment deadline chart (showing deficiency, date turned in, and current status).
- Searchlight deadline chart (showing deficiency, date turned in, and current status).

You will find that constructing a good battle book is a time-consuming task, but rest assured that the resulting efficiency will be well worth the effort, especially since much of the work can be done during time that otherwise might be wasted, such as downtime during gunnery.

Once you have experimented with the book and have arrived at a format that meets your needs, try providing a copy for your unit TOC, and see if operational and logistical reporting does not improve significantly.

As a combat arms executive officer, you occupy a unique position of great responsibility and broad scope. A well-designed battle book will help you perform this critical mission and will also help ensure that your unit is able to fight effectively on the modern battlefield.

Captain Thomas D. Dinackus has served as a troop platoon leader, squadron S-3 air, and troop executive officer with the 2d Squadron, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Bliss. He is currently a member of the Individual Ready Reserve and an attorney in Washington, D.C.

The Battalion Adjutant
A Perspective for the Commander

CAPTAIN ANTHONY J. TATA

A battalion commander, in choosing his primary staff, usually gives considerable thought to filling the S-3 position. For the S-1 and S-4 slots, however, he may accept officers who are waiting for company commands or buying time for other reasons, without seriously considering their qualifications.

A prudent commander, however, will select his adjutant and logistician with the same care he exercises when choosing a battalion operations officer. In particular, one of his most important decisions is his selection of a battalion adjutant.

Because of the close relationship between the commander and his S-1, every commander should weigh a potential adjutant by three criteria—his abilities,