STAFF ORGANIZATION, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Key Points

1. Basic Staff Structure
2. Characteristics of a Staff Officer
3. Staff Responsibilities and Duties
4. Staff Positions—Specific Staff Duties and Responsibilities

Success demands a high level of logistical and organizational competence.

GEN George S. Patton, Jr.
Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the foundations of staff organization from battalion to corps level, but will focus primarily on the battalion level. The Army uses standardized staff organizations to benefit from consistency in performance, responsibilities, training, and resources. This chapter also addresses basic Army staff roles and responsibilities, and characteristics of staff officers.

Staff section abbreviations are:

- Personnel (G-1/AG/S-1)
- Intelligence (G-2/S-2)
- Operations and training (G-3/S-3)
- Logistics (G-4/S-4)
- Civil-military operations (G-5/S-5)
- Command, control, communications, and computer operations (C4OPS) (G-6/S-6)
- Information operations officer (G-7/S-7) (corps, divisions, and selected brigades only).

The commanding officer’s rank determines whether the staff is a G staff or an S staff. Organizations commanded by generals have G staffs. Other organizations have S staffs. Army regulations and laws establish special relationships between certain staff officers and the commander. For example, AR 20-1, Inspector General Activities and Procedures, AR 27-1, Legal Services, Judge Advocate Legal Services, and AR 165-1, Chaplain Activities in the United States Army require the inspector general (IG), staff judge advocate (SJA), and chaplain to be members of the commander’s personal staff.

Commanders use their professional knowledge, experience, and leadership styles to organize their individual staffs. Several factors influence staff organization:

1. Size and diversity of responsibilities
2. Local (distinct) requirements
3. Amount of relevant information (RI) each section manages
4. Availability, qualifications, and performance of personnel
5. Organization and locations of command posts (CPs)
6. Mobility requirements
7. Requirements for 24-hour operations and security
8. Ability to combine related activities
9. Desired span of control
10. Preferences of the commander and chief of staff.

GA Eisenhower Forms SHAEF

During World War II, one of GA Eisenhower’s duties as Supreme Allied Commander in the European Theater of Operations was to form his theater headquarters, the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). GA Eisenhower had to create an environment in this multinational headquarters in which staff members from the different Allied armies could work together harmoniously. It was one of GA Eisenhower’s toughest jobs.
The forces under his command—American, British, French, Canadian, and Polish—brought not only different languages, but different ways of thinking, different ideas about what was important, and different strategies. GA Eisenhower could have tried to bend everyone to his will and his way of thinking; he was the boss, after all. But it’s doubtful the Allies would have fought as well for a bullying commander or that a bullying commander would have survived politically. Instead, he created a positive organizational climate that made best use of the various capabilities of his subordinates. This kind of work takes tact, patience, and trust. It doesn’t destroy existing cultures but creates a new one.

Basic Staff Structure

Major Commands (Corps and Divisions) G-Staffs

The staff of a major command has each of the major staff groups: coordinating, special, and personal. In corps and divisions, deputy or assistant commanders extend the commander’s span of control over areas and functions the commander designates.
Smaller Units (Regiments, Brigades, and Battalions) S-Staffs

Smaller-unit staffs generally perform the same functions as larger staffs. However, the operational nature of smaller units sometimes requires modifications. For example, staff activities such as advising, planning, coordinating, and supervising may be more informal at lower levels. Often supporting unit commanders—for example, the engineer battalion commander at maneuver brigade level—serve as special staff officers for their individual fields of interest.

In combat service support units, commanders usually combine the S-2 and S-3 sections and add a support operations section. Like a personal or special staff officer, the support operations officer works directly for the commander and is responsible for external support of the unit’s mission. There may also be other coordinating staff officers, depending on the command’s mission. Commanders may form other staff sections when the Department of the Army or the Army service component commander authorizes. For example, in units where the TOE or TDA does not authorize an S-5, commanders assign responsibility for civil-military operations functions to another coordinating staff officer (usually the S-3). In brigades and battalions not authorized a specific special staff officer, commanders assign responsibility for those functions to another staff officer as required.

Staffs at every echelon are structured differently; however, all staffs are similar. The basic staff structure includes an executive officer (XO) at the brigade and battalion level and a chief of staff (COS) at higher levels of command, and three staff groups: coordinating, special, and personal. The number of coordinating, special, and personal staff officers within each staff group varies at different levels of command.

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**Figure 1.2** Basic Smaller-Unit Staff Structure (Brigade and Battalion)

**Notes:**
1. In CSS units, the functions of the S-2 and S-3 are usually combined.
2. In units where the TOE or TDA does not authorize an S-5, the commander gives an officer (usually the S-3) the responsibility for civil-military operations functions.
3. Selected brigades only.
4. For brigades and battalions not authorized a specific special staff officer, the commander appoints an officer to perform the function as an additional duty, if required. The command may form other staff groups when Department of the Army or the ASCC authorizes.
5. In support battalions, a support operations officer is added to the coordinating staff.
The Chief of Staff/Executive Officer

The chief of staff (COS) or executive officer (XO) is the commander’s principal staff officer. He or she directs staff tasks, oversees staff coordination, and ensures efficient and prompt staff actions. The COS oversees coordinating and special staff officers. He or she does not necessarily oversee the personal staff officers, although he or she normally interacts with them. The commander normally delegates authority to the COS or XO for executive management of coordinating and special staff officers.

Coordinating Staff Group

Coordinating staff officers are the commander’s principal staff assistants. They are directly accountable to the COS (XO). They have functional responsibilities over one or a combination of fields of interest. Collectively, through the COS or XO, coordinating staff officers are accountable to their commander for all their responsibilities. The staff is not accountable for fields of interest the commander decides to control personally.

Commanders may designate coordinating staff officers as assistant chiefs of staff, deputy chiefs of staff, directors, or regular staff officers. These positions generally reflect the degree of authority the commander delegates to them and the scope and complexity of operations conducted by the command. However, commanders establish a staff officer’s actual authority if it is not inherent in the position’s title.

Coordinating staff officers’ authority is limited to advising, planning, and coordinating actions within their individual fields of interest. They also exercise planning and supervisory authority over designated special staff officers. Commanders may also delegate to coordinating staff officers additional authority to act on specific matters within the staff officers’ field of interest.

Normally, coordinating staff officers have a direct interest in other staff officers’ fields of interest. Clearly defined staff responsibilities are necessary to facilitate coordination and eliminate conflict. Unit standing operating procedures (SOPs) or organization and functions manuals contain procedures that specify primary responsibilities and coordination requirements.

Coordinating staff officers are responsible for collecting information and analyzing its implications and impact on the command. More importantly, coordinating staff officers provide timely and accurate recommendations to their individual commanders to help them make the best possible decisions. While doing so, they often request and receive information and recommendations from special staff officers.

Special Staff Group

Special staff officers help commanders and other staff members perform their functional responsibilities. The number of special staff officers and their duties vary with the level of command. Special staff sections are organized according to professional or technical responsibilities.

The commander delegates planning and supervisory authority over each special staff function to a coordinating staff officer. Although special staff sections may not be integral to a coordinating staff section, there are usually areas of common interest and habitual association. For example, the battalion chaplain’s mission may not be an integral part of the S-1’s daily mission, but the battalion commander may assign the S-1 planning or supervisory authority over the chaplain. Special staff officers usually deal routinely with more than one coordinating staff officer. For example, the chemical officer usually functions under the G-3, but may also coordinate with the G-1, G-2, G-4, G-5, and G-7.
Personal Staff Group

Personal staff members work under the commander’s immediate control. They also may serve as special staff officers when they coordinate with other staff members. When performing their duties as special staff officers, personal staff officers may work through the COS or XO and under a coordinating staff officer for coordination and control purposes. Members of the personal staff include:

- Personal assistants, such as aides-de-camp
- Personnel the commander desires to supervise directly.

Critical Thinking

Can you identify the coordinating and special staff officers in your Cadet battalion? Which of your cadre members perform the duties of coordinating or special staff officers for your PMS? Is the battalion HRA a member of the PMS’s coordinating, special, or personal staff?
Characteristics of a Staff Officer

This section describes the characteristics required of staff officers at every echelon, from battalion through corps. Most officers serve in a variety of staff positions throughout their careers. Although much of what staff officers do is not noticed, their competence is crucial to all that the Army accomplishes.

Commanders always retain the ultimate responsibility for final decisions. Staff officers contribute to achieving the commander’s intent by fulfilling their functional responsibilities within the authority the commander delegates to them. Effective staff officers provide commanders with correct and timely relevant information and well-analyzed recommendations. FM 6-22 discusses the values, attributes, skills, and actions expected of all leaders. As Army leaders, staff officers are expected to possess and develop those characteristics; however, staff work requires specialized applications of them. A good staff officer demonstrates the following:

- Competence
- Initiative
- Creativity
- Flexibility
- Confidence
- Loyalty
- Team player
- Effectiveness at management
- Effectiveness at personal communication.

This list provides a basis for counseling and professional development sessions on what commanders expect of staff officers.

Competence

Effective staff officers are competent in all aspects of their functional responsibilities and know their duties. They are familiar enough with the duties of other staff members to accomplish vertical and lateral coordination. Commanders expect staff officers to analyze each problem and know—not guess at—the correct answer before making a recommendation. Staff officers must possess the moral courage to admit to their COS, XO, or commander when they do not know something. Providing the commander with a flawed recommendation or guesswork may cause the commander to make a decision that he or she would not have otherwise made—a decision that can cost the lives of Soldiers in combat.

Initiative

They anticipate requirements rather than waiting for taskings. They do not wait for orders. They anticipate what the commander needs to accomplish the mission and prepare the answers to those questions before they are asked. Effective staff officers know the commanders’ intent two levels up and operate within their own commander’s intent. They do not hesitate to take advantage of opportunities. In the commander’s absence, they exercise the authority delegated to them to achieve the commander’s intent. When exercising initiative, staff officers report their actions to the commander as soon as possible.

Creativity

Commanders are always looking for new and innovative solutions to problems. Thus, effective staff officers are creative in researching solutions to difficult and unfamiliar situations. If they cannot recommend a course of action (COA) in one direction or area, they find an alternative. As team players, staff officers draw on the creativity of all staff and...
command members. Staff officers brief solutions, not problems. A good staff officer never brings a problem to the attention of the commander without first having at least one, preferably three, feasible COAs. The staff always gives the commander a recommended COA.

**Flexibility**

Staff officers require the maturity and presence of mind to keep from becoming overwhelmed or frustrated by changing requirements and priorities. Commanders often change their minds or redirect the command after receiving additional information or a new mission. They may not share with the staff the reason for such a change. Staff officers must remain flexible and adjust to any changes. They effectively set priorities when there are more tasks to accomplish than time allows. They learn to juggle multiple commitments simultaneously. Staff officers must meet all suspenses; the commander and other staff members depend on their contributions to decision making. If it is inevitable that a suspense will be missed, staff officers must request an adjustment to the suspense in enough time to allow the COS or commander to make a decision. Waiting too late to inform the commander of an impending missed suspense will reduce the “maneuver space” the commander has at adjusting his or her plan or intent. The old adage that bad news does not get better with time certainly applies when a staff is about to miss a suspense.

**Self-Confidence**

Staff officers possess mental discipline and self-confidence. They understand that all staff work serves the commander, even if the commander rejects the resulting recommendation. Staff officers do not give a half effort when they think the commander will disagree with their recommendations. Effective staff work helps commanders make the best possible decisions. Staff officers develop multiple sides of an issue. They do not bias the evaluation criteria in favor of any COA. Staff officers give the commander an unbiased look at a problem and recommend the best possible solution. Staff officers understand that a five-minute answer for the commander may require 10 hours of staff work. Spending that much time may not appear worth the return. This is not true. In-depth research by staff officers relieves commanders of that task; it allows them to focus on the overall operation. Further, the knowledge staff officers develop for the commander is a form of professional development. It gives them experience upon which to base future decisions as staff officers and commanders. During a crisis, this knowledge of what works provides the basis for the self-confidence that underlies subordinates’ initiative.

**Loyalty**

Staff officers are loyal to the commander and the Soldiers of the command. This means staff officers tell the commander what they know or believe, not what the commander wants to hear. Staff officers require moral courage. They must be willing to tell the commander the good, the bad, and the ugly news. Any staff work eventually affects Soldiers, who must execute staff officer recommendations approved by the commander. Staff officers must never forget that their work and recommendations affect Soldiers.

**Team Player**

Staff officers are team players. They cannot complete staff actions and staff works in a vacuum. They must advise, consult, and cooperate with others. They are prepared to sacrifice individual interests in order to represent or execute the work of others when the overall good requires it. Staff officers must maintain a pleasant and supportive demeanor, especially to lower commanders or headquarters. Higher staff should always support and assist requests for information or assistance from lower staff or commanders. This practice contributes to effective cooperation and coordination from top down and bottom up.
Effectiveness at Management

Good staff officers effectively manage time and resources. Time is always critical. Staff officers consider not only their own time, but that of other staff members and subordinate units as well. Staff officers recognize that not all projects can be the highest or second highest priority. They set reasonable suspenses, especially for subordinate commands and staff, that allow completion of lower priority (but nonetheless important) projects. Staff officers are good stewards of resources (people, environment, and money) which the nation entrusts to their care. They are diligent in efforts to efficiently manage these resources and preserve the environment. They avoid waste, destruction, and duplication of effort.

Effectiveness at Personal Communication

Effective communication is crucial for staff officers. They must be able to clearly articulate and effectively present information orally, in writing, and visually (with charts and graphs). Staff officers routinely brief individuals and groups. They know and understand briefing techniques that convey complex information in easily understandable formats. They can write clear and concise orders and plans, staff studies, staff summaries, and reports. Efficient staff officers use current computer technology. This includes being able to produce visual briefing aids such as charts, graphs, slides, and multimedia products. They are proficient in using computer technology such as word processing, electronic mail, and other available resources to manage time and solve problems. Staff officers frequently prepare briefings and written documents for the commander or higher staff officers. They prepare these products as if they were going to sign them or brief them personally.

Staff Responsibilities and Duties

The commander’s staff must function as a single, cohesive unit—a professional team. Effective staff members know their respective responsibilities and duties. They are also familiar with the responsibilities and duties of other staff members. The paragraphs below describe the responsibilities and duties commonly performed by staff officers assigned to the headquarters of Army organizations in the field, from battalion through corps. AR 10-5 describes the responsibilities and duties of the Army Staff. FM 6-22, Army Leadership, contains information about the responsibilities of installation staffs. This section first discusses the common responsibilities and duties of all staff members. It then discusses specific responsibilities of the COS (XO) and of coordinating, special, and personal staff officers.

Staff activities focus on assisting the commander to accomplish the mission. The staff contributes to making and executing timely decisions. Commanders and staffs are continually alert for opportunities to streamline cumbersome or time-consuming procedures. The following paragraphs discuss activities, responsibilities, and duties common to all staff members.

Advising and Informing the Commander

Staffs continuously provide relevant information (RI) to their respective commanders on the progress of operations. This RI helps commanders remain aware of and understand the situation. One piece of information alone may not be significant; however, when combined with other information from the common operational picture (COP), it may allow the commander to formulate an accurate visualization and make an appropriate decision. Staff members inform and advise the commander and other staff members concerning all matters pertaining to their individual fields of interest and related functional responsibilities, specifically on:
• Capabilities, limitations, requirements, availability, and employment of resources
• Capabilities, limitations, and employment of supporting forces
• Directives and policy guidance from higher headquarters.

Preparing, Updating, and Maintaining Staff Estimates

Staff sections prepare and maintain running estimates to help commanders make decisions (see FM 5-0). Effective plans and successful execution hinge on current staff estimates. Staff estimates always include recommendations for anticipated decisions. During planning, commanders use these recommendations to select feasible courses of action (COAs) for further analysis. During preparation and execution, commanders use recommendations from running estimates to make decisions. Failure to maintain running estimates may lead to errors or omissions that result in flawed plans or bad decisions.

Making Recommendations

Staff members make recommendations to help commanders reach decisions and establish policies. They also offer recommendations to each other and subordinate commanders. These recommendations are for information and assistance only.

Staff members present recommendations orally or in writing. Presentations may take the form of briefings, written estimates, or staff studies. Whether procedures are formal or informal, staff members carefully analyze and compare all feasible COAs, using the best information available. They candidly and objectively present alternatives, clearly explaining advantages and disadvantages of each. They are thoroughly prepared to recommend the best COA from the perspective of their individual fields of interest. Preparing recommendations includes coordinating with staff members whose fields of interest the recommendation might affect. Staff members prepare recommendations in a form that requires only the commander's approval or disapproval. Within their fields of interest, staff members make recommendations regarding:

• Command policy
• Guidance concerning force capabilities, limitations, and employment
• Policies and procedures to enhance force capabilities
• Priorities for employment, distribution, and support
• Acceptable risk
• Organization for combat, resource allocations, and command and support relationships
• Resource allocation and employment synchronization of all organic and supporting assets (including those of other services)
• General unit locations and movements.

Preparing Plans and Orders

Staffs coordinate all necessary details in order to prepare and issue plans and orders to execute their commander’s decisions, (see FM 5-0). Commanders may delegate authority to certain staff officers to issue plans and orders without the commander’s personal approval. Commanders assign a single staff officer, normally the G-3/S-3, responsibility for preparing and publishing plans and orders. Other staff members prepare portions of plans and orders that address their fields of interest. Examples include:

• Formulating the concepts of operations and support per the commander’s intent
• Identifying specified and implied tasks needed to accomplish the mission
• Developing a concept of operations to support each COA
• Adjusting plans and orders based on feedback
• Identifying limitations and constraints.

Staff members make similar contributions to command standing operating procedures (SOPs), training plans, reports, studies, summaries, and memorandums of instruction (MOI) or understanding (MOU).

Assessing Execution of Operations

Staffs assist their commanders by ensuring that subordinates execute their decisions. This practice allows commanders to focus on the overall operation. It relieves commanders of having to address details better handled by subordinates. Assessing keeps staffs informed of the situation and provides them with current RI. Staffs use this RI to maintain running estimates and produce progress reports for their commanders. Staff members ensure that the intended recipients receive the commander’s decisions and understand and execute them within the commander’s intent. They also recommend adjustments when circumstances require. Staffs assess by analyzing reports, messages, and reports of staff visits and inspections. Assessment actions by staff members include:

• Monitoring the execution of instructions, plans, and orders
• Ensuring subordinate and supporting units accomplish assigned tasks.

Staff Positions—Specific Staff Duties and Responsibilities

Since most lieutenants will first see staff duty at the battalion level, this section will focus on the major duties of the battalion staff. You may read more about the duties and responsibilities of the coordinating and special staffs in Annex D of FM 6-0, Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces.

The battalion XO is the battalion commander’s principal assistant for directing, coordinating, supervising, and training the staff, except in areas the commander reserves. The commander normally delegates executive management authority (equivalent to command of the staff) to the battalion XO. The XO frees the commander from routine details of staff operations and passes pertinent data, information, and insight from the staff to the commander and from the commander to the staff. Staff members inform the XO of any recommendations or information they pass directly to the commander, and of instructions they receive directly from the commander.

The value of a close relationship between the commander and XO cannot be overstated. During operations, the XO must anticipate events and share a near-identical visualization of operations, events, and requirements. The XO must understand the commander’s intent at least as well as subordinate company commanders. An effective XO understands the commander’s personality, style, and instincts as they affect the commander’s intentions.

The XO helps the commander prepare subordinate units for future employment. The XO monitors their combat readiness status and directs actions to posture subordinate units. Under special conditions or missions, the commander may give the XO temporary command of a portion of the force. Examples of these situations include deployments, retrograde operations, and obstacle crossings, and when the commander is unable to command. For these reasons, most battalion XOs will be the senior major in the battalion with a large amount of institutional knowledge of how the battalion operates.
Coordinating Staff Officers

Coordinating staff officers coordinate actions for the commander and for special staff sections over which they are assigned coordinating staff responsibility. Coordinating staff responsibility includes:

- Ensuring that special staff officers or sections have personnel, logistics, facilities, and proper support
- Coordinating actions and taskings of special staff officers across the entire staff
- Informing the XO of special staff officers’ actions.

Coordinating staff officers establish procedures for coordinating and integrating special staff activities within their individual fields of interest.

The battalion S-1 (Personnel) is the primary staff officer for all matters concerning human resource management at the battalion level. The S-1 is responsible for:

- Manning: Unit strength, personnel gains and losses, deployable status
- Personnel services: Casualty reporting, awards, finance, legal, promotions, and Serviceman’s Group Life Insurance (SGLI)
- Personnel support: Postal operations, quality of life programs, Morale, Recreation, and Welfare (MWR), Equal Opportunity (EO)
- Headquarters management: Administrative support to include leaves and passes.

The battalion S-2 (Intelligence) is the principal staff officer for all matters concerning the enemy/threat, the environment as it affects the enemy/threat, intelligence, and counterintelligence and supports security programs. The S-2 is responsible for:

- Intelligence readiness
- Intelligence tasks
- Intelligence synchronization
- Counterintelligence
- Support to security programs.

The battalion S-3 (Operations) is the principal staff officer for all matters concerning training, operations and plans, and force development and modernization. The S-3 is responsible for:

- Training and METL
- Operations and plans
- Force development and modernization.

The battalion S-4 (Logistics) is the principal staff officer for logistics and services and is responsible for:

- Logistic operations and plans
- All classes of supply
- Maintenance
- Transportation
- Facilities or installation services.

The battalion S-5 (Civil-Military Operations) is the principal staff officer for all matters concerning civil-military operations (CMO) and is responsible for:

- Establishing the civil-military operations center
- Determines the effect of civilians in the battalion area of operations (AO)
• Liaison between the civilian authorities and the commander
• Military support to civil defense and civic action projects
• Protection of culturally significant sites
• Humanitarian civil assistance and disaster relief
• Noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO)
• Emergency food, shelter, clothing, and fuel for local civilians
• Public order and safety as they apply to operations.

The battalion S-6 (Signal Officer) is the principal staff officer for all matters concerning command, control, communications, and computer operations (C4OPS) and is responsible for:

• Command, control, communications, and computer (C4) operations
• Network operations
• Network management
• Information dissemination management
• Information assurance
• Information management.

Special Staff Officers

Every staff has special staff officers. This section addresses the general duties of each special staff officer, focused primarily at the battalion level. You can find additional information on the special staff duties and responsibilities at Annex D of FM 6-0. The number of special staff officers and their responsibilities varies with authorizations, the desires of the commander, and the size of the command. If a special staff officer is not assigned, the officer with coordinating staff responsibility for the field of interest assumes those functional
responsibilities. During operations, special staff officers work in areas of the battalion command post designated by the commander, XO, or their supervising coordinating staff officer.

**The battalion Executive Officer (XO).** The XO exercises coordinating staff responsibility over special staff officers.

**Equal Opportunity Advisor (EOA).** The EOA is responsible for coordinating matters concerning equal opportunity for Soldiers and their families. Commanders at every echelon are authorized or appoint an EOA.

**Physician Assistant (PA) or Surgeon.** The PA or surgeon works in the battalion aid station and is responsible for coordinating health assets and operations within the command, and may also function as the battalion's medical platoon leader if the battalion does not have a medical platoon leader. Organizations from battalion through corps are authorized a surgeon.

**Chemical Officer.** The CHEMO is responsible for NBC defense operations, smoke operations, and chemical asset use. A CHEMO is authorized at every echelon, from battalions through corps.

**Explosive Ordnance Disposal Officer.** The EOD officer is responsible for coordinating the detection, identification, recovery, evaluation, safe rendering, and final disposal of explosive ordnance. An EOD officer is authorized at corps and divisions, and normally serves as the EOD group, battalion, or company commander.

**Safety Officer.** The safety officer is responsible for coordinating safety activities throughout the command. Commanders at every echelon from battalion through corps appoint a safety officer. An aviation safety officer is authorized for corps staffs and all aviation units.

**Operations Security (OPSEC) Officer.** The OPSEC officer helps the G-7 (S-7) perform OPSEC functions. Commanders at all echelons, battalion through corps, are authorized or appoint an OPSEC officer.

**Chaplain.** The chaplain is responsible for religious support operations. The chaplain advises the commander on matters of religion, morals, and morale as affected by religion, and on the impact of indigenous religions on military operations. No officer exercises coordinating staff responsibility over the chaplain. A unit ministry team consisting of one chaplain and one chaplain’s assistant is authorized at every echelon from battalion through corps.

**Inspector General (IG).** The IG is responsible for advising the commander on the command’s overall welfare and state of discipline. The IG is a confidential adviser to the commander.

**Public Affairs Officer (PAO).** The PAO is responsible for understanding and fulfilling the information needs of Soldiers, the Army community, and the public. A PAO is authorized at corps, divisions, and major support commands.
This chapter is placed early in your reading assignment because it is likely that you will hold a battalion staff position or will be required to interact with your fellow Cadet staff officers during your senior year as a Cadet. This chapter will serve as an outline of the duties and responsibilities that will be expected of you as an MS IV Cadet. Early on, as well as throughout your Army career, you will serve as a staff officer or perhaps be assigned the additional duties of a staff officer. Whether performing your duties as a staff officer in the Cadet battalion, or as a commissioned officer, you should do everything possible to assist subordinate staff and commanders in accomplishing their daily tasks. If assigned the duties of a primary coordinating staff officer or special staff officer, you will be supervised and must answer to the chief of staff or executive officer, who is the commander’s principal assistant for directing, coordinating, supervising, and training the staff. Regardless of the staff position you hold, it is imperative that you coordinate with other staff members and work together as a team if you are to achieve the commander’s intent and achieve mission success. As an MS IV staff officer, it is important for you to mentor the MS III Cadets to help prepare them for their future roles as MS IV staff officers.

Key Words

coordination
coordinating staff
special staff
personal staff

Learning Assessments

1. List the characteristics of a successful staff officer.
2. Draw the basic staff structure (coordinating and special staff) for a typical battalion.
3. Describe the major duties, responsibilities, or roles of the battalion’s coordinating and special staff.
References