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University for Business and Technology

Faculty of Business, Management and Economics



Bachelor Thesis:

THE MILITARY DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Prepared for the degree “Bachelor of Management, Business, and
Economics”

Under the supervision
of

Prof. Dr. Robert Pichler

Submitted to

University for Business and Technology - UBT

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Decision Making is a process which is not required to be made only in the Army but also in the private life. People who work in organizations or somewhere else need and have to make decisions. Everyone in their life make decisions for things that belong to them, even children make decisions and so on. People make different decisions for different things and in different situations. They will not do anything successfully unless they make good decisions to accomplish any task or to work in any process. Even if they want to go out with their friends they have to make a plan and then to make a decision to go out or not. Same is as with children too, they decide to go to school or not, to learn or not to learn, all these are some kinds of decisions that people do in their everyday life. Sometimes, some decisions are really easy to be made in different organizations also in the Military, but sometimes are very difficult.

Decisions might be different according to their importance, situation, process etc. Decisions which are very important and have influence to others are the most difficult to make in both sides Military and private life. Sometimes, there are some difficult situations where one is so complicated and does not know what to do, what decisions to make and it will be in a very difficult dilemma. It is not so easy to make decisions for others even for yourself.

1.1. The Research Questions

The thesis will be focused mostly in the Military Decision Making Process and little bit in the Business Decision Making, in order to compare and to see the differences between decisions made in these two fields. It will be all about Decision Making where you can find the answers of the main two research questions:

1. How Decisions are made in the Military?

2. What is the difference between a Military and a Business Decision Making?

These are the two main questions that the thesis will be based and developed mostly in order to answer them. We know that the Army is a huge and a large Organization consisting of many people who have the same goals and all together want to achieve them. Its mission is to serve for the country, to protect people of the country from their enemies, natural factors, helping them in other different spheres. The Army is leaded by people who are well educated, disciplined, trained, people who have knowledge and experience. Officers are the leaders who have the responsibility for their subordinators and for everything that is under their commands and control.

Military Decisions are the most difficult decisions to be made. There are many decisions which require higher knowledge and spend a lot of time, usually important decisions when officers have to deal with difficult operations and situations which are very dangerous especially for lives. Some other decisions are not as difficult to be made because of low risk, so these do not require as much time and analyses as other decisions require.

A decisions, not only in the Army but also in the business and in everyday life require to analyze situations and go through some procedures and processes which the author will mention later on. Analyses of situations and problems, going through Decision Making Process help decision makers to choose the best Alternative of Course of Action and to avoid the risk. Decision makers have very high responsibilities. Wrong made decisions may cause dramatic losses which may loose

the lives of people too. In other hand, right and in time made decisions may benefit a lot to the whole people who are engaged and affected by the decision.

While the author's focus in this thesis is to explain and to elaborate the Military Decision Making, later on the author will discuss about the following tasks: the author will mention and try to explain Problem Solving Process in the Military which is very important to get to the decision making, about the Definition of the Decision, Who make Decisions in the Military, the Importance of the Decision Making, the Military Decision Making Process, types of Military Decision Making, then it will be discussed about the Business Decision Making and people who make decisions, the author will also explain the Difference between the Military and the Business Decision Making, and at the end the conclusion.

1.2. The Methodology

In order to develop and to accomplish any task, it is needed from everyone to use a method of doing it. Choosing the best method of doing things is not as easy because of unknowing exactly the advantages and disadvantages of the method.

The methodology that the author is using to write this thesis is gathering materials and information from many different books including military books, books that he has used in his University, information from internet, he will also be based on his experience.

By reading books and according to his experience, he will analyze thoughts and find a general idea by which decisions could be made. In other next pages it will be explained in detail everything that have to do with the Military Decision Making Process and the Differences between Business Decision Making.

II. PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS

There are many different problem solving and decision making processes which may be used by Military Decision Makers, but the important thing is to select and use the best one which is the most effective and which brings the higher success in accomplishing tasks.

Leaders will be involved in problem solving daily. Some problems are simple and only require the leader to use his intuition, experience, and best judgment. At other times, however, leaders will face problems that are more complex. These require the leader to follow a systematic approach to define and analyze possible solutions, choose the best solution, and implement a plan of action. The amount of time and resources the leader apply to any give problem depends on its complexity, the amount of time available, and the experience.¹

Commanders may use different processes in solving problems according to the situation. The Problem Solving Process helps the decision makers to ensure that their decisions are right, rational and logical decisions. Before he goes more in detail, he will explain the meaning of the problem solving and the decision making.

Problem solving is a set of activities used to analyze a situation systematically, to find, implement, evaluate and control solutions, whereas:

Decision Making is a process of making choices between two or more alternatives. Decision Making is a part of problem solving and it is a continuous process occurring in every step of Problem Solving Process.²

According to the nature of the problem, some problems are very complicated and very hard to be solved. Some problems require more attention and knowledge in comparison with some other problems which require less attention. The Military life

¹ Foundations of Leadership MSL II, pp.277

² Decision making and Problem Solving, August, 2002,pp. 2.1

itself is so complicated and confused with many serious problems which require a higher knowledge and focus in solving them.

In the Military, many different problems may occur to a group or to an individual which have to be solved by them. Everyone in the Military is trained somehow to solve problems and to make decisions in different cases. Usually, the person who solves problems and makes decisions is the commander of a unit who is a Military Officer, but it is not excluded the case where also the soldiers have to solve some problems and make decisions which belong to them personally or to their friends of the group.

Problems which are very serious and by which the group or the unit may be damaged or influenced are solved by the commander who also involves and should involve his subordinates in solving it in order to find the best possible solution. Some people think that the one who has to do everything in solving problems and making decisions in the Military is the commander himself, which is wrong. There are some cases truly where the commander has to decide by his self, but in many cases, the effective leader or commander should involve also his subordinates to come to a common conclusion.

Mainly, tasks which are done by a team consisted of two or more people are more successful and certain. When more people are involved in solving a problem or making a decision, there may be many ideas given by everyone which may give a high opportunity to the team to find and select the best idea about a decision which they see as the most important.

Effective leaders or commanders in a high developed Army give an opportunity to their subordinates to involve in planning, organizing, solving problems, making decisions and so on. This is a way through which an Army may have a success in the performance of their duties. It is also a way by which soldiers are motivated and have responsibilities, they also consider themselves as a part of the team and make them thinking that they are able to contribute to their team.

III. THE FIVE STEPS OF PROBLEM SOLVING

There are many different Problem Solving Processes that one can use. One of the best Problem Solving Process which is used mostly by modern Armies is the Five Steps of Problem Solving Process. The process of five steps which is shown below has proven a high success in many different situations. The Army of United States of America (USA) and also the Kosovo Protection Corps (TMK) use this process of problem solving. The USA Army which is a high developed army achieved a very high success in solving problems by using this five steps process.

When using this process, each step may be followed and completed in order to solve problems quickly and properly. This problem solving process consists of five steps which must be considered:

- Step1. Identification of the problem;
- Step2. Development of the alternatives;
- Step3. Selection of an alternative;
- Step4. Implementation of the solution;
- Step5. Evaluation of the situation;³

In many USA Military books, it is explained and told about this process as the most effective one. By knowing that the use of this process benefits a lot to the USA Army, the TMK also wanted to put it in the use of their program. The cadets of the TMK who are being trained to be officers are learning to use this process in solving problems in which the author belongs personally too. Below, it is given a clear explanation of each of the five steps and how one can apply them to solve problems.

³ Decision Making and Problem Solving, August 2002, pp. 2.6

3.1. Identification of the Problem

The identification of the problem is the first step of the problem solving process. It is the most important and the most difficult step in the process. All other steps depend on this first step. If the identification of the problem is not being identified properly and correctly, all other four steps may go wrongly and will lead to a wrong solution.

Before the author goes further, he clarifies the meaning of the term ‘problem’. The problem is a situation or a condition of the people or the organization that exists or will happen in the future, that is undesirable and unacceptable by members of the organization.⁴ Leaders or commanders should be able to identify the nature of the problem which is a very important factor. If the problem is identified clearly and properly, then it is easier to develop other four steps and in general to solve the problem, but sometimes can happen where the identification of the problem is identified wrongly. The most two common mistakes that commanders can make at identifying a problem is wrong identification of the problem and wrong identification of the source of the problem.

The most two common factors that lead commanders to make a such mistakes at identifying the problem is stress and gathering or collecting wrong information about the problem. In the Military, the commanders always try to find and to collect reliable information on which then their decision will be based on. Since, they are responsible for their soldiers and for everything that may happen to them, they pay a very high attention on gathering as much reliable information as possible and in the decision making.

In every mission for whom the leaders have to make decisions in order to accomplish the mission, they give orders to a group of their soldiers consisting of two or three people to make the reconnaissance in order to collect as much information as possible. Sometimes, because of the limited of time, they do not have much time to

⁴ Decision Making and Problem Solving, August 2002, pp. 2.7

have all the information needed for making the decision. Leaders always are aware of that the information may not be accurate, so they ensure which information is accurate and they can use it, and which is not. They use only that information which they consider as reliable information to find the source of the problem and at the end to find a solution.

The five steps problem solving process helps the leader to solve problems, but it does not mean that one may have solved it properly. It is not enough to use only these steps of the process, but it depends very much also on the leader's knowledge, character, values, critical thinking, experience and the way of thinking which have direct influence on solving problems and making decisions.

Identifying and defining a problem accurately, commanders in the Military use a set of questions which they see as very helpful way of identifying and defining the problem. They also analyze the situation to determine problems.

Commanders usually use these questions for identifying, defining and analyzing problems:

Is it a new problem?

Is the problem clearly and precisely stated?

What assumptions they make about the problem?

What data are known about the problem?

Is the available information accurate?

What additional information and facts are needed to analyze the problem?

Is he the one who may make the decision about the problem, or is someone else? If the decision is to be made by someone else, who is he or she?

These are only some of the most important questions using in the Military which help leaders or commanders to identify, define and analyze the problems.

3.2. Development of Alternatives

The second step in the problem solving process is to develop or explore alternatives of solution related to the identified problem which is done in the first step of the process.⁵ This is an important step which requires attention and creativity from the leaders.

After identifying, defining, analyzing and having enough and reliable information about the problem, the commanders or leaders are ready to develop alternatives or course of actions. Developing as much alternatives as possible, it is easier to come to a certain and accurate solution. As much information the leaders have about the problem, as easier they have to develop a huge number of alternatives.

If there are many people involved in solving problems and making decisions, there is a higher opportunity to have many ideas and alternatives to find a solution. Usually in the Military, the leaders involve also their soldiers in the process of solving problems and give an opportunity to them to express their ideas and what they feel and think that it is right. By doing this, there may be many alternatives or course of actions. Whereas, if there is involved the leader alone, then he has to think a lot and to be very creative at finding solution.

In order to have as much and right alternatives, leaders have to forecast too. Around 60% of the accurate problem solving could be solved by forecasting the advantages and disadvantages of the problem, whereas 40% is by improvisation. In case of time limited, usually there must be at least two or three alternatives or Course of Actions, but if there is enough time to think, there must be more than three alternatives. There are two techniques for developing or generating alternatives: Brainstorming and discussion groups.

Brainstorming is a technique for generating alternatives which can be done individually or in a group. This technique requires an environment in which the

⁵ Decision Making and Problem Solving, August 2002, pp. 2.8

participants or the members of the group are free to think and give ideas. Participants give many ideas as possible within a specified period of time. The ideas given by them are recorded all and after time period ends, then evaluation of the ideas begins.

Discussion groups consist of those people who are directly involved in the problem solving. They discuss about the problem by giving ideas and analyzing. These techniques help Military leaders to solve problems and finding a desirable solution. After generating or developing alternatives, leaders have to analyze and evaluate them.⁶

3.3. Selection of an Alternative

Selection of an alternative is the third step in the problem solving process. This step is to select the best alternative or course of action developed or generated in the second step of the problem solving process. After having evaluated each alternative, one alternative should be selected out with the most advantages and the fewest disadvantages which solves better the defined problem.⁷ The leaders usually develop and identify advantages and disadvantages for each alternative, and then they logically analyze each advantage and disadvantage for every each alternative or course of action.

It is a wrong idea to think that the alternative with the highest advantages or with the fewest disadvantages is the best alternative to use. In the most cases it is true, but by measuring the importance of every each advantage and disadvantage, there could be also the best alternative with the fewest advantages which are very critical in solving problem, and with the highest disadvantages.

However, choosing and implementing an alternative may not be so easy, it is a critical step. Before selecting an alternative, the leaders in the Military measure the effects of the solution or alternative carefully. When selecting an alternative, leaders

⁶ Decision Making and Problem Solving, August 2002, pp. 2.12

⁷ Decision Making and Problem Solving, August 2002, pp. 2.15

will consider factors that affect their decision making about the problem. These factors may include: political factors, safety factors, financial factors, ethical factors and environmental considerations. Sometimes, may not be able to recognize all these factors for problem solving and decision making as a result of the limited information.

3.4. Implementation of the Solution

Implementation of the solution is the fourth step of the problem solving process. This is a very important step. After being done all the three previous steps, then the alternative or the solution should be executed or implemented.

In this step, all duties are clear and everybody knows what to do, also the performance standards being set. The commander or the leader of the team delegates the duties to each member of the team, so each one knows what to do, what resources do they need, when do they have to accomplish the tasks, how much time do they have to finish it and so on.⁸ They know the standards of the performance of their duties and they also know the mission goal.

When the commander delegates the duties to his soldiers, he always ensures and plans that they have enough time to perform their duties successfully. When the time management is not planned properly, it will cause that the duties to be performed not successfully.

While implementing the solution or the alternative in the Military, there may occurs many barriers which increase the impossibilities of performing the action. In these situations, leaders are flexible and act depending on the situation and immediately decide what actions to take, what to do because the time is limited. They usually have to be patient and not to give up.

⁸ Decision Making and Problem Solving, August 2002, pp. 2.19

The patient is a component that the leaders have to possess because it is very important and helpful to many critical situations. Sometimes it is very difficult, patient, eventually when the big changes occur. So, the problem solving process ends only when the leaders solve the problem.⁹

3.5. Evaluation of the Situation

The evaluation of the situation is the fifth and the last step of the problem solving process in the Military which is applied at the end after the action is performed. It is a process which improves the process of planning and the decision making. In this step, the commanders or the leaders evaluate the situation and the course of action which they have implemented and they develop e system to ensure that their subordinates have performed their duties in time. They evaluate whether the taken actions showed the expected results or not. They check for the accomplishment of the tasks being done by their soldiers, did they perform according to the standards, identifying the barriers of task performance.

By evaluating the situation and the action, the leaders may be able to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the implemented alternative or course of action. If they see that the problem is not solved totally, they look for other alternatives by analyzing the situation, requiring help from others if they need, use other methods which may be more applicable and successful land then they go through all five steps again.

⁹ Foundations of Leadership MSL II, pp. 283

IV. THE DEFINITION OF THE DECISION

The term decision itself has a wide meaning which may be interpreted in different ways. In the Military, the term decision means a choice between two or more alternatives or opportunities. Until the leaders come to a decision, there are some procedures and activities to be followed. The most important one is to collect as much reliable information as possible, and then to develop alternatives. After developing alternatives, leaders have to decide which alternative is the best one which makes possible to accomplish the task or solve the problem.

It is mentioned above that people in general make many different decisions during their life, but the Military decisions may differ from other decisions outside of it. The one thing among of many other things which makes the Military decisions different from other decisions is its importance and the ability to make decisions.

The ability to make the right and in time decisions is the main factor that distinguishes the good leader from bad one. It is the leader's responsibility to make a higher quality decisions which benefit mostly and to decide as faster as possible in critical situations. If the leaders are late on making decisions or if they leave it all, it may create a hesitation, confusion and loose the trust within the team or unit, or it may failure the mission.

Many times, the Military leaders come to a situation when they do not know what to do and what decisions to make. Sometimes, they have no much time to think or to analyze the situation and the problems, but they should be very patient, not to loose the control and never ever to give up. In many critical situations, such as crisis, war and so on, their plans may be influenced and changed by the situation. In these cases, the leaders should be flexible and change the plan according to the situation.

V. DECISION MAKERS IN THE MILITARY

In every organization, group or team is a person usually called the leader who has the responsibility for everything and has to make decisions for them which may influence all the members of the organization, group or team. The Military itself is an organization which consists of many smaller units. In every unit, there is a person called the commander or the leader of the unit who is responsible for it.

The person who makes decisions in the Military is the leader or the commander of the team or the unit. The leader or the commander is well trained and educated about leading with people and making different decisions. Usually, they are officers with ranks. Leaders of the smaller units are with lower ranks of the officers, whereas leaders of the larger units are with higher ranks. The leaders are the one who make decisions in the military. Their duty is very difficult, because they are responsible for everything that can happen within their unit.

There are some decisions easy to make, but some other are very difficult. When they have to make difficult decisions which impact to all members of the unit, they find themselves in a difficult situation where they have to be very serious and patient on making the decision. It does not mean that always only the leaders have to make decisions and the other members of the team not to be involved.

The effective leaders involve also their subordinates in the process of the decision making who can help the leaders and make it easier for them to make a decision. Members involved in the process, at least give an opinion about the problem, feel responsible and support the decision. So, when the members of the leader's team support the decision, the leader is more comfortable and is less under the stress. By this we mean that involving others in decision making, may come to a successful solution which benefits to all.

VI. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MILITARY DECISION MAKING

Making decisions in the Military is the most important process that leaders do. The ability to make right and timely decisions during difficult situations and events is a critical process. Taking good decisions can solve problems, exceed different bad situations and help the community and the team to prevail from events more quickly. In other way, taking poor decisions or ignoring taking any decision can result negatively to the organization, team and may lead to the injury and death of the people. Making decisions by using standard problem solving process will help ensure that decisions are rational and logical. Since it is seen that poor decisions or ignoring doing it cause injuries, death and failure of mission, The author says that it plays a very important role.

Advantages of taking decisions are many. When leaders take decisions it is clear that every one in the team knows the specific jobs and duties with what they are charged and it is also clear the mission and the standard performance. This is an important factor that helps the team as a whole to achieve the mission. Sometimes, event taking worse decisions is better than not taking any, but taking good decisions is the best solution. Taking good decisions is one of the most important processes which affect and save the lives of the team members.

Decisions have also the disadvantages but the wrong ones. The absence of making decisions is the worst process or activity. Sometimes leaders make wrong decisions which affect negatively the members' life, mission, environment and the community. Poor or wrong decisions may lead to the death or injury of the people, material damages, loose of equipment etc. Leaders make wrong decisions because of lack and inaccurate information, lack of time, no experience, lack of knowledge etc.

VII. THE MILITARY DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The Decision Making is a process of selecting a course of action or alternative among two or more alternatives which helps solving problems and accomplish the mission.¹⁰ The problem solving process is part of the decision making. Before making decisions, the leaders use the five steps of problem solving process. Problem solving process and decision making are related to each other. The leaders cannot make any good decision and it is impossible unless using the problem solving process.

The Military Problem Solving Process provides a standard, systematic method to define and analyze a problem, develop and analyze alternatives or solutions, choose the best alternative or solution and implement the best one that solves the problem. Problem solving process applies to all activities in the Military in order to make a good decision.

Military operations are uncertain and unpredictable. Commanders face many nature difficulties and events which might occur by enemies. They can never be certain how enemies will act or how events will occur. They make many decisions during operations in an environment with uncertainty, unpredictability of the events and in time pressure. In the smoke, noise, and general chaos of battle or even in noncombat operations-making sound decisions can become even harder.¹¹ There are many cases when the leaders do not have enough time to think and to go through all five steps of problem solving deeply, but it does not mean to escape from any. They go through all five steps but very quickly in case time limited and other events.¹²

Commanders use the Military Decision Making Process to organize their planning, to inform others the aim of mission and their intent, and develop effective plan and orders. This process helps the commanders or leaders to achieve the goals and reach the mission as surely as possible.

¹⁰ Developmental Leadership MSL 401,pp.270

¹¹ Applied Leadership MSL 302,pp.145

¹² Developmental Leadership MSL 401,pp.270

VIII. THE SEVEN STEPS OF THE MILITARY DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The Military Decision Making Process is a process which helps commanders to make right and timely decisions. It helps them also to examine a battlefield situation, reach logical decisions and planning.¹³ There is nothing worse for a commander than to have to make decisions without having right and accurate information available. However, not making a decision is worse than making the wrong one. This is a thought and a concept that commanders of the American Army say which is very important.

The process consists of seven steps which have to be considered by commanders during making decisions. Each step of the process needs to have adequate information in order to be more accurate. Every step depends and influences other steps. If, a step is made wrong, then also the other steps may go wrong, so commanders always require and collect as much accurate information as possible.

The seven steps of the military decision making process are:

1. Receipt of the Mission;
2. Mission Analysis;
3. Development of Course of Action;
4. Analysis of Course of Action;
5. Comparison of Course of Action;
6. Approval of Course of Action;
7. Issuing orders;¹⁴

¹³ Theater Logistics Handbook,2003 (FM 101-5, chapter 5), pp.3-6

¹⁴ Theater Logistics Handbook,2003 (FM 101-5, chapter 5), pp.3-7

8.1. Receipt of the Mission

The receipt of the mission is the first step of the Military Decision Making Process. Before any activity, commanders receive the mission from higher commanders or headquarters to accomplish any activity required from them. The commanders of the smaller units receive orders or missions in written form or orally. They have to be very sure that they understand the mission and they are able to accomplish it.

After receiving the mission, commanders start analyzing it, creating an action plan and issue a warning order to their subordinates. In order to do it, they begin to gather as much information as possible needed for the accomplishment of the mission. The information helps and allows them to develop assumptions that are necessary at creating a plan.

Sometimes, the orders received from headquarters for accomplishing a mission have a lot of information about it, but sometimes only few. The main information included in the order are: the mission, time of action, the deadline of the mission accomplishment, information about the enemy or the problem, needed equipment, place of action and so on. Commanders manage their time very carefully after receiving and during the mission because it is an important factor.

It is a rule in the Military about the time management. Commanders allocate a maximum of one-third of the available time for themselves for planning and the remaining of two-thirds of time is for their subordinates to prepare and to be ready for the mission. During the two-thirds of time, commanders with their staff do their own preparation for the mission.¹⁵

¹⁵ Theater Logistics Handbook, 2003 (FM 101-5, chapter 5), pp.3-7

8.2. Mission Analysis

The mission analysis is the second step of the Military Decision Making Process which is used after receiving the mission. It is the fundamental step of military decision making process. The mission analyses help commanders better to understand the situation and the mission.¹⁶

Mission analyses consist of some tasks that commanders have to analyze very carefully which help them to avoid risks and misunderstandings. They analyze the higher headquarters' orders by which they ensure the complete understanding of the headquarters' intent, mission and the concept of the operation.¹⁷ By analyses, commanders also determine the specified and essential tasks given from higher commanders.

According to the nature of the mission, commanders may need different equipment and knowledge. They always analyze and put in consideration the assets and the knowledge of their personnel. They see whether the available equipment and the personnel they possess is enough to accomplish the mission or not, or do they need any support from other units, is there any limitation or constraints that they have to follow, for example rules of war which are set by International Convents.

They also perform the risk assessment. After identifying the risks or hazards, they analyze the damages that may cause and the probability of the occurrence. They focus very much on risk assessment because a small mistake causes a dramatic loss on people and equipment.

¹⁶ Organizimi dhe Funksionimi i Shtabit, Prishtinë 2002, pp. 89

¹⁷ Developmental Leadership MSL 401, pp.275

8.3. Development of Course of Action

After receiving and analyzing the mission, the commanders develop courses of actions or alternatives to accomplish the mission. The reason why the development of alternatives is used by the commanders is because of creating as much alternatives as possible that give them an opportunity to find the best solution to accomplish the tasks. The availability of developing alternatives depends on the available information that commanders have.

Every course of action developed by the commanders must comply with the commander's guidance and with the mission. Developing a number of actions related to the mission help the commanders to select the best alternative with higher positive effects and lower negative effects.

8.4. Analysis of Course of Action

The course of action analysis is a process which includes rules and steps that help commanders understanding, analyzing all available actions and identifying which course of action is more suitable and best accomplishes the mission with minimum casualties.¹⁸ Commanders pay a high attention on analyzing alternatives. They identify advantages and disadvantages of every each alternative.

The information is a very important factor in analyzing. The lack of information causes problems to commanders in analyzing the course of action. When they have enough information for every course of action, then it is easier for commanders to decide which alternative to use.

8.5. Comparison of Course of Action

In decision making process as it is mentioned before, it is not included only the commander of the unit, but also other members of the staff of the unit. After analyzing and evaluating the courses of action by each staff officer, after identifying the advantages and disadvantages of each course of action, they compare and highlight the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative.

Commanders compare courses of action to identify which course is the best one that accomplishes the mission more successfully. The course of action with the minimum risk to soldiers, equipment and the one that brings a higher success is the best course of action and the commanders will put it in use to accomplish the mission.

¹⁸Theater Logistics Handbook,2003 (FM 101-5, chapter 5), pp.3-15

8.6. Approval of Course of Action

After completing the analysis and the comparison of the courses of action, the commanders approve the best course of action which is selected as the most productive one that has many advantages to their unit and best accomplishes the mission.¹⁹

In this step, everything is clear. The hazards are already identified and the course of action that has minimum hazards will be approved, all needed equipment and personnel are available and ready to be in use. Sometimes, even course of action is approved, commanders have to change it and their operation plan as a result of changes. This depends on the change of the situation.

If the situation changes and new information about the enemy are gathered and collected, commanders have to be very flexible and react against changes. The new information benefits to commanders better to accomplish the mission and identifying and developing a new course of action and an operation plan.

¹⁹ Organizimi dhe Funksionimi i Shtabit, Prishtinë 2002, pp. 125

8.7. Issuing Orders

Issuing orders is the last and the final step in the Military Decision Making Process. The commanders are the one who issue orders to their units to act or operate in order to accomplish the mission. After the course of action is analyzed, compared and selected, the hazards are identified and the operation plan is completed, the commanders are ready and decide to issue the orders to their unit.

The commander issues the orders where everybody within his unit is present and can listen. After issuing the order, the commander asks his soldiers or subordinates whether they have understood the order, the mission, their duties or not, or whether they have any questions to ask.

When the operation starts and during all activities the commander controls his subordinates whether they are acting as it is planned or not and evaluates the course of action how it affects the mission. If there is needed to be any changes in planning or course of action, the commander decides what should have to be changed and then he changes very quickly in case of war or in critical situation when the time is limited.

IX. BUSINESS DECISION MAKING

Decision making is a process applying not only in the Military, but it is also applying in different organizations, businesses and in other fields. It is an important concept, where both managers and leaders must frequently make decisions, and they should strive to be rational in making decisions.²⁰ As it is explained before that the army is an organization operating in many difficult situations such as crisis, war and so on where can be high damages in equipment even death of personnel. In the military, making decisions is very critical and difficult process, because a wrong decision may cause not only material damages, but also death of people.

Decision making in the businesses is not so difficult and critical process in comparison with the military decision making one. People running businesses have to deal with activities that do not put the life of people in danger as the activities in military do.

The definition of business decision making is defined same as the military one. The business decision making is a process of choosing an alternative among other alternatives.²¹ The business decision making process does not differ too much from the military one. In the business same as in the military, there is a person who is responsible for making decisions. The manager of the business is the person who is responsible for the business and for making decisions.²²

The decisions that make managers in businesses have to do with assets, activities, employment, businesses, production, sales, prices, environment and so on, but not for any battle to fight as in military. Some examples can be, to put or not to put another machinery in production, to produce more products or not, for what prices to sell the product etc, all these are examples of business decision making.

The business decision making process has six steps or stages that help managers to make right decisions. Most successful decision making follows this process

²⁰ Business Essentials (6th edition), pp.280

²¹ Essentials of Organizational Behavior, pp.84

²² Operation and Decision Sciences, pp.18

consisting of these steps:

1. Recognition of Decision Requirement;
2. Diagnosis and Analysis of Causes;
3. Development of Alternatives;
4. Selection of Desire Alternative;
- 5 Implementation of the Chosen Alternative;
6. Evaluation and Feedback.²³

Recognition of Decision Requirement: This is the first step when the manager identifies the problem with which he or she is not satisfied and see a need for a new decision. Many poor decisions come as a result of identifying the problem too late and incorrectly. If the problem is not identified correctly, may lead to a poor or wrong decision.

Diagnosis and Analysis of Causes: Once the problem is identified by the manager, the next step is to find out the causes of the problem. In this step managers analyze the problem, causes and sources of the problem. Managers usually make mistakes in starting of creating alternatives to solve the problem before they find out the causes of the problem.²⁴ The main thing and very important one is to find out the cause and the source of the problem but not immediately starting solving it.

Development of Alternatives: Once the problem is identified, analyzed and found out the causes, the managers consider taking actions. In this step or stage the managers develop or generate possible alternative solutions that can solve the problem. A thing that causes decision failure is the limited search for alternatives.

Managers must develop as much alternatives as possible. In general, the more important the decision, the more alternatives should be generated.²⁵

²³ Understanding Management (5th edition), pp.205,216

²⁴ Understanding Management (5th edition), pp.218

²⁵ Business Essentials (6th edition), pp.280

Selection of Desire Alternative: This is the stage when the managers select an alternative among other developed alternatives which best solve the problem. Selecting alternatives depends on the managers' personality factors and willingness to accept risk and uncertainty.²⁶ The level of risk managers are willing to accept will influence the costs or benefits derived from the decision. The selected alternative must be the one with the minimum amount of risk and uncertainty. They select the best alternative by weighing the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative.

Implementation of the chosen alternative: This is the stage when the selected alternative has to be put in action. In this stage, the managers make the decision which alternative to take in action. The manager uses the communication, motivation and the leadership skills to motivate his employees to operate as good as possible. The success of the chosen alternative depends not only on how qualitative it is, but it depends also on how it is performed and accomplished by the employees.

Evaluation and Feedback: In this step of the decision making process, the managers gather information to see how well the decision is implemented and whether it achieved the goals or not, evaluate and control the whole process. Managers must thoroughly evaluate all the alternatives in order to increase the chances that the alternative finally chosen will be successful.²⁷ The evaluation and the feedback provide managers information about the process and the need to change the strategy or to take any different decision or not.

²⁶ Understanding Management (5th edition), pp.219

²⁷ Business Essentials (6th edition), pp.281

X. THE DEFERENCE BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND THE BUSINESS DECISION MAKING

The military and the business organizations are two different organizations. They differ from each other in missions, tasks, decision making, profession, knowledge requirement, but here the author is focused more on the military and the business decision making differences.

In the military, sometimes decisions are very complicated and difficult to be made, but they have to be made. The difficult situations such as crisis, war and limited time are the main factors that make military decisions different from business decisions.

In the military, in order to make a decision, the commanders first of all receive the orders and the mission, and then use the problem solving process and after that they start using the decision making process, whereas in the business, after the managers see something wrong and the need for a new decision, they start with the decision making process.

The time is another factor that makes the military and the business decisions making different from each other. In the business, the managers have much time to think about a problem which requires a new decision and they can follow the whole decision making process without any type of pressure, whereas in military there are many cases where the commanders do not have much time to think and they have to make a quick decision. If a poor or a wrong decision is made in the military, it will impact all members of the team and may cause the loss of equipments, people lives and many other different damages, whereas poor business decision making does not cause such of losses.

XI. CONCLUSION

In every organization there are many decisions to be made. Decision making process is a very important process and it is good to use it. The military sees the decision making process as the most important factor that helps to come to a satisfied solution.

The Military Decision Making Process is a very productive process, but the taken decisions depends not only on this process but also in other factors such as decision makers' values, character, knowledge, attitudes, moral, and so on.

As a conclusion the author, according also to his experience, concludes that military decision making is not so easy. The problem solving process and the decision making process must be followed very carefully by the commanders in decision making. In making military decisions, the commander must put in use all his knowledge, focus, attention and involve also his subordinates at least to give any idea about any possible decision.

In the business organizations, there is also a need of making decisions. The managers, who are responsible for making decisions, must use the business decision making process mentioned above because it helps them a lot, but before coming to a decision, they should gather as much information as possible about the problem, and then following the decision making process.

As a conclusion, the author concludes that business decision making is easier in comparison with the military one, but the managers should never take as an easy process because every decision has its effects and its importance.

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