

### FYI ... BRIEFINGS IN THE JOINT ENVIRONMENT

In the Air Force, the term *briefing* is loosely applied to almost any oral presentation given in the context of military activities. The following list was adapted from Army FM 101-5, and serves as a reference for those who may find themselves in a joint assignment. This terminology is not commonly used in the Air Force; the intent is to familiarize you with what else is “out there.” If you are in a joint assignment, you may hear briefings defined and named according to their purpose. Here are four types of briefings and their characteristics.

**Informative briefing:** Purpose is to keep listener abreast of the current situation and supply specific information.

- Designed to inform the listener and gain his understanding
- Deals with
  - High priority facts and information requiring immediate action
  - Complex information on complicated plans, systems, statistics, or visuals
  - Controversial information requiring explanation
- May have conclusions or recommendations

**Decision briefing:** Purpose is to produce an answer to a question or obtain a decision on a specific problem.

- Briefer must be prepared to present
  - Assumptions
  - Facts
  - Alternative solutions
  - Reasons/rationale for recommended solutions(s)
  - Coordination involved
  - Visual information
- Briefer states he/she is looking for a decision; asks for decision if one is not forthcoming at conclusion.
- Advises appropriate staff elements of commander's decision after the briefing.

**Staff briefing:** Main purpose is to secure a coordinated effort and

- Rapidly disseminate information orally
- Aid group decision-making
- Secure a united effort
- Most widely used and most flexible briefing—used at all levels of command
- Visuals will make complex issues clearer
- Keeps commanders/staffs abreast of situation
- May involve an exchange of information, issuance of directives, or presentation of guidance

**Mission briefing:** Purpose is to impart information that is used to elaborate on an order, give specific instructions, or instill an appreciation for the mission.

- Briefer must exercise care to avoid confusion or conflict with orders
- Use maps and graphic representations of the situation
- Mission briefing format varies from command to command