

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX – AN OPERATIONAL VIEW

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Abstract: *When given a situation to deal with, an operational commander finds himself in a box. That is defined by four variables: time, space, force and information. The way you think of your situation at a moment in time comes from understanding the relationships and the leverages that you influence or act upon, in order to affect this framework. A commander needs to visualize what is required of him (mission) and how to accomplish it (intent). Simply put: how to exit that box.*

Keywords: *commander, operational; time; space; force; information.*

“Learn the rules like a pro, so you can break them as an artist”
- Pablo Picasso

INTRODUCTION

Three hundred years ago, Jomini drew his operational concept in the form of a “basis of operations”, from which “the lines of operations” will take the commander to its desired end state. This is nothing else than the “operational design” that we draw today. However, at that time, the variables of the battlefield were almost constant. There was little if any change in the time and space because everybody was marching in the same way, the forces one could muster were known from the start for everybody and the information was scarce and a rare luxury for the commanders. Victory came very often from the others' mistakes than from one's mastery of war. The environment (the box) was similar to a cold substance whose

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