

Name of game: SUBTLE (SUBTerranean Learning Exercise)

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Topic: A fast and somewhat metaphorical game about keeping planning on track. Players collectively and abstractly represent the staff officers of a brigade, trying to construct a path of route segments across a grid – representing formation and completion of a workable plan. Each player in turn maneuvers a single “S-3” marker (which represents the current focus of the efforts of the team) exploring through a field of inverted counters and creating a route past Hazards that are nullified by Enablers. Problem: some players are actually “agents of chaos” who may mean well but lead the route of the plan astray or place obstacles in its path

Game length: about 30 minutes (Game is forced to an end when all the tiles on the grid have been revealed, marking that the team has run out of time and must cross the Line of Departure with the plan it has.)

Players: 3-10 (solo not possible)

Comments on design:

- As illustration of the concept that some planners are unwitting saboteurs, see: <https://taskandpurpose.com/news/16-people-make-every-operational-planning-team/> . Fear the Debater, the Guy From Band Camp, and above all the Seagull.
- A bit of a metaphorical exercise (perhaps too much for some) and the Hazards and the Enablers that resolve them have a subterranean/urban theme – navigation failures, structural collapse, civilian detainee problem etc. – but this could be changed for other settings.
- The game has simple components – a one-page blank grid, 60 markers and some optional small reminder cards.

Layout of game:

