

## DDC's Tactical Teams Lock on Target The Mission: Improve DDC Corporate Culture and Climate

By Jessica Walter-Groft, DDC Command Affairs

The Defense Distribution Center's (DDC's) newly created Tactical Teams met in December to develop a strategy to continue building employee morale and enhance employee job satisfaction by continuing to improve the DDC culture and climate.

Using the feedback provided by DDC employees on the DLA Culture/Climate survey, the teams identified areas needing improvement and created plans of action.

"Our employees are the most critical resource we have," said Tactical Team leader and Commander of Defense Distribution Depot San Diego, CA (DDDC), CAPT Frank Lindell, SC, USN, "and we want to do everything we can to ensure their satisfaction on the job."

The teams include personnel representing DDC's 26 distribution sites along with staff from DDC headquarters. Together, they gathered and analyzed the results of the survey in order to create plans for improvement.

"Employees are the key to our success," pointed out Roberta Campbell, Wood Worker Supervisor from Defense Distribution Depot Oklahoma City, OK (DDOO).

Acknowledging the impact the A-76 public/private competition process has on the morale of the workforce, five teams were formed: Distribution centers that have completed A-76 with a contractor award, distribution centers that have completed A-76 with an in-house award, distribution centers with A-76 decisions pending, DDC's two strategic distribution platforms (Defense Distribution Depots Susquehanna, PA, and San Joaquin, CA), and overseas distribution center along with DDC headquarters.

The discussions and briefings during the two-day event focused on improving overall employee satisfaction including

helping employees work together as a team. "To better support our troops and carry out our mission, we need and must function as a team," said John Brown, Materials Handler Supervisor from Defense Distribution Mapping Activity (DDMA).

For most of the team members, the best advantage of the session was the ability to share lessons learned and gather climate-enhancing insights from personnel from other sites to take back to their own employees. "This was an opportunity to learn . . . and to discuss issues that affect employees, managers, and customers alike," said Carter Boxiley, Supply Management Officer from Defense Distribution Depot Anniston, AL (DDAA).

One area in which almost every site acknowledged room for improvement was communication.

Defense Distribution Depot Puget Sound, WA (DDPW), CGA Team Lead Susan Earle stressed the importance of communication to encourage team growth while Tim Radford, Deputy Commander of Defense Distribution Depot Richmond, VA (DDRV) agreed and noted the importance of supervisors in the communication process. "The first line supervisors are very important in this effort, and, with their help, we have been communicating to the entire workforce that their opinions are important and valuable."

The ability to communicate effectively with employees is considered critical to mission success, so much so that DDOO sent all employees, not just supervisors, to a communication class to promote effective communication and teamwork.

After the Tactical Teams session, each participant returned to his or her distribution center to work on a plan to improve the corporate climate at that site. One main priority for many team members will be to increase employee participation in the DLA Culture/Climate survey so that they continue to receive valuable employee feedback.

"We are planning to meet with small groups to explain the purpose and use of the Culture/Climate survey and put more emphasis on employee participation," said DDMA's Brown.

### How do good leaders demonstrate that employees are valued?

We asked this question of DDC employees and they had a lot to say. The response was so tremendous we can't publish them all in this issue. So if you don't see your answer here, check the next issue of the DDC Review. If you would like to share your thoughts, go to [www.ddc.dla.mil/Review/feedback.asp](http://www.ddc.dla.mil/Review/feedback.asp).

A common yet complex response was, "Listen, and get out of the way." So we are trying to do that. Your responses follow (we couldn't help but bold some of our favorites):

I feel good leaders demonstrate that employees are valued by giving them **respect. Expect the best from the employees, people do what is expected of them and most times your expectations are met.** Communication is also very important. Get out and talk to the employees, let them know they are important and what a good job they are doing. Delegate duties and don't micro-manage. Remember the employees are the ones who get the job done.

*Marge Satterlee, DDPW*

A simple thank you, or a pat on the back, lets you know you're appreciated. Of course monetary awards are also nice.

*Diane King, DDJF*

Most employees are easy to please, some really love their job and some just like their job and some just want the pay check. I feel that to make an employee feel valued is to have respect for all employees if you have respect for that employee that employee will have just as much respect for you and also feel good about her or him self. Give a pat on the back when needed and **always listen** to the employee.

*Steve Sorgenfrei, DDPW*