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QUALITY LEADERSHIP IN A CHANGING WORLD

by

**Lawrence E. Mercker
Colonel, USAFR**

**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM
REQUIREMENT**

Advisor: Colonel Michael D. Kozak

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Colonel Lawrence E. Mercker is a full time Air Reserve Technician in the Air Force Reserve. After commissioning in the U. S. Army Field Artillery Officer Candidate School and a two-year tour as an Army Intelligence Officer, he entered the Army Reserve Program. In 1975, he transferred to the Air Force Reserve Program and attended pilot training. In 1984, he entered the full time Air Reserve Technician Program at Dover Air Force Base where he was a C5A Flight Examiner Aircraft Commander in the Associate Reserve Program. He served as the Assistant Director of Operations during the C5A unit conversion at Westover Air Reserve Base, MA from 1986-1991. During that time the unit was activated for Operation Desert Storm/Shield, and he received an Air Medal and the Kuwait Liberation Medal. He holds a Master of Education from Westfield College, MA and a Master of Political Science from Auburn University.

Colonel Mercker has attended four Quality Courses in his career and is very interested in the progress of the cultural changes that are anticipated from the Quality Air Force Approach. He is a graduate of the Air War College , Class of 1994.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Quality Air Force is a leadership commitment and operating style that inspires trust, teamwork, and continuous improvement everywhere in the Air Force."¹ -- These are inspiring words that any Air Force member would take to heart much like the Christian maxim "love thy neighbor as thyself." They may be, however, equally difficult to put into practice.

The introduction of Quality Air Force training fueled some lively debate in the Air War College class of 1994. Discussion became more intense between classmembers outside of the formal classes, where the true "culture" of the Air Force lives. Questions included: In the aftermath of Desert Storm, why do we need to change our operating style? Isn't Quality Air Force something that we have been doing all along, anyway? Isn't Quality just another list of "buzz words" for good leadership and mission accomplishment? I like military structure and discipline, why change what has worked for decades?

The Purpose of the Paper.

As a classmember of the Air War College class of 1994 and a student of Deming's 14 Points, I designed a survey to surface the concerns of the classmembers. Using the results of the survey as a basis for discussion, this paper will :

- 1) Address the need for change and define the Deming Quality Approach.
- 2) Address the barriers to change and the problem of cultural stability.
- 3) Recommend some specific changes in the current Air Force modus operandi using Deming's 14 Points as a framework for discussion.

4) Draw some conclusions concerning the measurement for culture change.

Throughout these discussions, I will endeavor to support the following thesis: **Given the inherent stability of a culture and the individual's resistance to change, senior Air Force leaders must embrace Deming's concept of the empowered worker and leadership to support empowerment if they are to successfully change the culture of the Air Force. Appropriate measures of cultural change must be applied to monitor the progress.**

The issue of Quality in the military has been addressed in philosophical terms by many writers. The Air Force has made much progress in training on Quality concepts, in the use of Quality tools, and in process improvement. But much less progress has been made on the institution of a Quality culture and the use of the Quality principle of empowerment in military leadership. There are, of course, logical reasons for this. Today's successful leaders have grown up in, lived in, and have been promoted in the old "top down" culture, and that culture is very difficult to change.

In researching the subject of Quality in the military, one finds that there is much written on Deming's Quality philosophy and on the successes of American corporations that have adopted the philosophy in order to survive in the world competitive market place. In contrast, there is little written to specify exactly how the Air Force can achieve a Quality culture under Quality leadership. There are some major differences in military organizations vs. civilian corporations that need to be addressed if the Deming philosophy is to gain cultural approval.

Many Air Force leaders advise their subordinates to accept from Deming what works in the organization and discard the rest. This author will argue that this is a form of resistance and will, in the end, promote the stability of the old culture rather than the growth of the new. One leader who, by his authoritarian

style, destroys the innovation of his people can subvert the growth of the new culture.

This is not to say that the Air Force as an institution cannot modify Deming's philosophy. But, there are two Deming concepts that must survive any modification if the new culture is to be called "Quality". These are the empowered worker and leadership that supports empowerment. Without the institution of these concepts, one would have the old culture with some new window dressing, and not a new culture.

Given that the senior leaders of the Air Force truly want to change the culture of the organization, a problem arises regarding the measurement of cultural change. Mission accomplishment is not the appropriate measure because the job gets done in a superior manner under the old culture. An appraisal of how the mission gets accomplished and a survey of how empowered people feel would be a more precise measure.

The Survey Methodology.

It was noted that, during the Quality course of instruction at the Air War College, many classmembers were "talking the talk" during the seminar discussions, and then referring to "this Quality crap" during the free time. Quality techniques taught in the trimester were not used during the three-day exercise at the end. And during a discussion with the Air University Commander a student was shouted down when asking why the students were not allowed to keep the Deming books that were issued.

The intent of the survey was to allow the classmembers to voluntarily offer their opinion as a basis for this paper. The survey form used and a summary of the

results are displayed in the appendix. The actual survey responses are available for review upon request.

The author considered the Air War College Class of 1994 a representative cross section of the future leadership of the Air Force because classmembers were selected from a pool of highly qualified Air Force officers from all disciplines in the organization. The survey was completed immediately after completing an extensive two-week Quality Air Force course of study. The purpose of this survey was to gain some insight into the acceptance of Deming's fourteen points by the future senior leaders of the Air Force. Interest level was high as 112 of 255 class members voluntarily responded to the survey.

Three questions were asked to determine the opinion and feelings of class members regarding Deming's Fourteen Points. Question #1 was designed to determine a rank order of the importance of Deming's Points. Some of the speakers at the War College indicated that they did not agree with all of Deming's Points. The response to this question produced a base line rank ordering to be used as a basis for comparing the responses of the next two questions. Question #2 was designed to indicate class member opinion on the perceived strength of the support for Deming's points in the senior leadership of the Air Force today. This most certainly is not an accurate indication of the actual support that is in the minds of senior leaders, but the perceptions of individuals are an important indicator of culture. Question #3 was designed to indicate class member intent to use the Deming principles when they return to the field. Respondents could have selected all 14 of Deming's Points in question #2 and #3, thus 100% is a perfect score. A remarks section was provided for those who wished to elaborate. This is a good time to review the survey results in the appendix as they will be referred to throughout this paper.

CHAPTER II

DEMING QUALITY CULTURE

Why Do We Need It?

A wise philosopher once said that change is the only constant in the universe. In this era of information and technology, it appears that the pace of change is ever increasing. This is no less true in the world political arena. Today, the pace of change is challenging the military establishment of the United States. The Soviet Union, a nation that fielded the largest active military force in the world, suffered an economic collapse from within. The Soviet Union is no longer an immediate threat to the security of the United States.

In the aftermath of a successful air war a, Desert Storm, the Air Force faces massive budget and personnel cuts. Historically, a democratic people will only pay for defense based on a perceived threat to their democratic institutions. After every war in American history, the reward to the military establishment was, ultimately, massive budget cuts and down sizing. Today, the Cold War has been won, and the currents of democratic history are about to reshape the American military force.

The Clinton budget is focused on the domestic economic agenda. The American people have made the domestic economy a priority for all political leaders who want to keep their jobs. This could mean a declining defense budget for the foreseeable future. For the Air Force it means doing more with less if capability is to be maximized. The Deming approach was designed to do just that.

Military leaders do not want to see American military power dissipate to the extent that it did in 1919 after World War I or in 1946 after World War II. One

solution to this problem is to do more with less. But, how is that possible given the current structure of the military? A second alternative would suggest that the structure and culture of the American military must change. One must "harness the collective genius of his or her organization"² in order to make it happen. The quality philosophy is designed to change the focus from "leader power" to "people power" in the Air Force through the process of empowerment.

Thus, the establishment of a Quality culture as described by Deming is an attempt by senior Air Force leaders to be proactive. It is not an attempt to fix something that is broken, rather it is a visionary approach to problems that are foreseen in the future. These problems are a rapidly changing world political environment and a shrinking domestic budget.

What is different about Quality?

Although Deming's fourteen points listed in the appendix provide a framework to understand the Quality Culture, there are certain key concepts that clearly demonstrate the differences between the old culture and the new. The concept of teamwork, the theory of human motivation, and the theory of leader-follower relationships are three key areas where traditional military thinking and quality philosophy clash.

Teamwork has always been acknowledged as essential to military operations. General George S. Patton said that "individuality was a bunch of crap - an army fights as a team." But individual team member efforts are acknowledged and rewarded. Thus, under the old culture, a team is a coordination of individual efforts and individual accomplishment drives promotion, awards and decorations.

Under the Deming philosophy, this individual competitiveness hurts the productivity of the team. Deming writes:

Teamwork in a company, except for putting out fires, is impossible under the existing annual appraisal of performance. Everybody, once the fire is conquered, goes back to his own life preserver, not to miss a raise in pay.³

Federal Express Corporation, winner of the 1990 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, views the entire corporation as a team, thus a bonus is paid to all or none, to include the chief executive officer, based on the success of the company team.⁴ This concept of team work motivates all team members to cooperate and pull together, rather than compete for recognition within the team. Rewards for the perceived achievement of individual accomplishments will almost always inhibit cooperative teamwork.⁵

Theories of human motivation have two extremes that are represented by the carrot and the stick. The carrot is reward and the stick is fear. To many people, military leadership is synonymous with authoritarianism.⁶ Authoritarians rule by fear. This could be a perception driven by the necessities of war. Fear is ever present on the battle field. In the past, military leaders have effectively used fear to motivate troops. General Patton said of his troops in North Africa, "they will lose their fear of the Germans, I only hope to God they never lose their fear of me." Air War College survey comments indicate an acceptance of fear as a motivating force.

"There is a need for discipline which includes elements of respect and a little fear."⁷

"At times you need an ax over people's heads to influence their behavior."⁸

This is the old cultural perspective and may still be necessary on the battlefield today. But, how much time is spent on the battlefield? In war, the entire democratic nation becomes more authoritarian with military drafts, material

rationing and government control of vital industries. The president gains near dictatorial power as the nation focuses on survival. After the crisis, the nation reverts back to democratic principles. In the military, this battlefield mentality necessary to win wars, need not permeate daily operations.

For a new Quality Culture to endure, it is imperative that we drive out fear. Fear is a great inhibitor of innovation and creativity. In America, fear drives employees to play it safe, keep their mouth shut, and preserve the status quo.⁹ Fear forces leadership to rely on quotas, inspections and directives to manage the work force. Survey comments reinforce this perceived need for inspections to ensure compliance in the military today.

"Inspections remain a valid method of insuring compliance."¹⁰

"The military system currently is centered around inspections and numerical quotas for measures of success."¹¹

"Without inspections, [you] may find out too late that the process is bad."¹²

This perceived need to motivate by fear was addressed by William J. Schoefield, Eastern Region Vice President for Federal Express Corporation, during an Air War College seminar discussion. Mr. Schoefield acknowledged that a certain level of anxiety, that is short of fear, is a motivational factor. This anxiety is not, however, produced by management, but by the competitive environment. The leader-worker team realizes that company survival is not guaranteed and depends upon their ability to satisfy customer requirements. Management serves the worker who is in daily contact with the customer.

For fear to be driven out, the traditional leader-follower relationship must be changed. Under the old culture the leader was at the top of the organizational pyramid. The leader's primary role was to control workers and tell people what to do.¹³ The leader used his/her own innovation and creative skills to direct the

solution to problems. The leader solicited advice and then decided, not only what to do, but how to do it. This is true not only for the American military but for American industry as well. Mary Walton writes: "It was in America [not Japan] the he [Deming] became aware of the tyranny of fear, of barriers, of quotas and sloganeering."¹⁴

Under the old culture, it was assumed that the worker could not be trusted to do his/her job and, thus, the concept of empowered workers was unthinkable. The new Quality philosophy assumes that workers want to do a good job and that it is the process and system that inhibits production, not lazy workers. Given this assumption, the old system must be the problem. By focusing on customer satisfaction and not "boss satisfaction," this philosophy reorients the traditional organizational pyramid. It becomes inverted. Leaders serve their subordinates, who become their customers.¹⁵ Leaders inspire their subordinates through trust and empowerment. They rely on the fact that this willing worker has the solution to process problems. The focus is on process problems and not on lazy workers. In this way, the leader can harness an enormous reservoir of knowledge and experience.¹⁶

This becomes a win - win proposition for the leader and the subordinate. Both focus their efforts on the customer and the process. The worker gains a pride of workmanship and the leader gets more productivity from his organization. The American Management Association has identified what set Federal Express apart from traditional American companies.

Employees who feel empowered through open communication, training opportunities, quality improvement tools, and excellent leadership... most fundamental, a people-first environment that acknowledges employee satisfaction as the primary corporate

objective, and nurtures a culture from which customer satisfaction and profits spring.¹⁷

The separate terms "quality" and "leadership" have always been important concepts in the Air Force. This fact would prompt some to say that the Quality Air Force philosophy is nothing new; that it is just good leadership with some new W. Edwards Deming terminology. Research indicates that nothing could be farther from the truth. In this paper, the term "Quality" (with a capital Q) will not have it's dictionary meaning, "a degree or grade of excellence"¹⁸, but will refer to the W.E. Deming management philosophy which is a modus operandi that maximizes the creative contributions of the individual in order to produce excellence. The word quality (with a small q) will have the dictionary meaning.

The Air Force has a proud tradition of quality people producing quality products. It is difficult for many Air Force people to see why a drastic change in culture is required. Mission accomplishment and self sacrifice has been the focus of Air Force people and, as Desert Shield/Storm has shown, Air Force people know how to get the job done. The old culture works. Air Force people are comfortable with the old culture.

A culture change is one of the most difficult things to do because it entails not only changing procedures, but changing patterns of behavior, long-held beliefs, and organizational norms. The focus of Air Force leaders must be on belief in the new culture, setting the example, and inspiring subordinates to use their individual innovative, creative power. The present environment is not the best for a culture change. Organizational down sizing affects morale and takes away the positive attitude needed to empower others. The survey results in the appendix clearly show that, while some progress has been made in the training area, a pure "Quality

Culture" has not yet evolved in the Air Force. Although a pure Deming philosophy may not be possible in a military environment, a hybrid that embraces empowered people and leadership to support empowerment is entirely possible.

The military has a proud tradition of service to country and individual self-sacrifice. This tradition will, in some basic ways, clash with Demings proposed Quality Culture. It will clash: 1) where individual effort is de-emphasized and team performance becomes the only metric, 2) where the commander is the supplier and his troops are his customers (the inverted pyramid), 3) where individuals are not constrained by compliance-oriented inspections and empowered to use their own innovation and creativity to accomplish the mission, and 4) where fear cannot be used as a motivational tool.

CHAPTER III

BARRIERS TO CHANGE

What is Different about the Military?

The military has some unique problems in the application of the Deming philosophy. First, the military organization is not rewarded for good work with growth and prosperity as the Federal Express Corporation would be if it had done well in the market place. For its success after every major war, military organization is reduced in size and funding. Even empowered workers are reluctant to work themselves out of a job. Leaders must design a system to rapidly expand and contract military organizations that will limit the impact of job loss on the successful empowered worker. Perhaps more reliance on the Reserve Component is the answer.

Second, it is very difficult to identify the customer. Current philosophy is that we are all customers and we are all suppliers at various times in the work cycle, but this is very nebulous and difficult to focus on. Who is the ultimate customer, and what are his requirements? Is it the American taxpayer? Is it the Congress or the President? Is it the troops on the front lines? Or, is it the commanding officer? Leaders must clearly identify their concept of "the customer".

Third, people join the military for a contractual period of time, and a code of military justice restricts their range of actions. If a soldier disobeys the boss or fails to show up for work or tells company secrets, he can go to jail. If soldiers are not satisfied with their position or working conditions, they cannot resign. The conditions must be tolerated or face criminal charges. Weak leaders use this as a

motivational tool. It is as if a fear-driven motivational system has been institutionalized.

Fourth, in war time, the job of the military is to execute lawful orders without question. The military authorities do not want the crew of a bomber carrying nuclear weapons to do any thing more that execute their orders. They are empowered to execute their directives only. War is a special category of crisis management. Leaders tend to carry this crisis management style into daily operations using the maxim, "we must train like we fight." Deming acknowledges the need for timely, decisive action in a crisis but cautions that every day cannot be a crisis or the process is not working.

Fifth, the military has a proud tradition of service to country and self-sacrifice that should not be dismantled in this cultural revolution. There must be a synthesis of military tradition and Quality culture that includes the ability to fight wars but also the ability to solicit creativity and innovation through empowerment.

The Problem of Cultural Stability.

A clash of cultures arises from the inherent stability of the old culture and the individual's resistance to change. People joined an organization, worked in that organization, and were promoted in the existing culture of that organization. Why should they want to change? Can Air Force leaders direct the change or must they inspire a cultural change?

The survey produced some interesting remarks that reflect deeply held beliefs. A sample of these comments follow:

"Deming's points don't readily translate into military leadership"¹⁹

"Everything in QAF is found in Army/Marine Corps leadership manuals - this is not new"²⁰

"...it seems communistic to me."21

"Fear can be a motivator if tempered with understanding"22

"the Air Force is studying civilian management techniques to learn military leadership which has been practiced successfully for thousands of years."23

"Quality is just good leadership, using other terminology."24

Why all of the resistance? The Quality Air Force training at the Air War College was comprehensive and provided information on all aspects of the Quality Air Force philosophy. The answer might be explained by the natural tendency of cultures to remain stable and the tendency of individuals to resist change. The survey results reinforce the existence of the problem. It is very difficult to change culture.

What exactly is a culture? One must begin with the basics.

CUL-TURE (kul' ch er) n....5. The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population.25

Culture has been characterized as an iceberg. One-tenth of it is above the water line and is clearly visible. The other nine-tenths is nebulous, under^o water and invisible at first glance. The paper charts, organizational wiring diagrams, rules, regulations, training classes and public pronouncements are the visible, above-water parts of the culture iceberg. What comprises the other nine-tenths? "These are manager's and employee's values, habits, ways of thinking, and unofficial operating principles that combined with (and sometimes contradicting) the official view, constitute an organization's culture."26 If culture is to be

In the adoption of this new philosophy, J. M. Juran points out that upper management must mandate that quality-related training requires trainees to apply the new knowledge to their jobs.³⁰ Empowerment is the great commandment of the Quality initiative. In order to empower, leaders must believe in their people, trust them to service the customer through moderate risk taking and innovation, and have the courage to stay the Quality course when problems arise.

Peter Block has some insightful wisdom regarding start up problems.

Some people are not ready to take responsibility for their own actions or their own unit. Experiments have been conducted in organizations that give people more autonomy and more control. The immediate aftereffect of loosening control is a period of floundering, chaos, and lower productivity. People are so conditioned to operate in a highly structured environment that when some of the structure is taken away in the service of an entrepreneurial objective, there is a period in which people will test how much authority they have. They'll act in their own interest and unpredictable events - some of which will not be in the best interest of the organization - will take place.³¹

Along with empowerment comes responsibility. Empowered workers must be held accountable and, at the same time, they must be given a chance to understand their empowerment. Initial problems with the new philosophy will prompt some leaders to revert back to directive management. To adopt the new philosophy is to believe in it and to work with its concepts to maximize productivity.

Point Three: Cease Dependency on Mass Inspections. (survey senior leader support = 19%; classmember support = 44%) Results of the Quality Culture survey suggest that most military people feel that compliance inspections are necessary. I would relegate inspections to the crisis action mode only as compliance inspections limit individual innovation to solve problems. Deming

notes that "Quality comes not from inspection but from improvement of the process".³² Empowerment is the tool for process improvement.

Point Four: End the Practice of Awarding Business on Price Tag Alone. (survey senior leader support = 18%; classmember support = 27%). While this^o is a good idea, there are some legal considerations. Military acquisition is very much controlled by public law, and changing the law is outside the purview of military leaders. The concept, however, is still a valid one. Congress should allow the military to consider Quality as an integral part of the bidding process.

Point Five: Improve Constantly and Forever the System. (survey senior leader support = 39%; classmember support = 61%) "Only management can initiate improvement in quality and productivity. Production workers on their own can achieve very little."³³ This is an appropriate time to address the frequency of military moves. It is difficult to build teamwork and competency when individuals are constantly juggled throughout the system. A minimum of five years at each location should be rigidly enforced. In this way, the Air Force can translate continuous personnel training into continuous improvement in team effort and innovation.

Points Six: Institute Training. (survey senior leaders support = 65%; classmember support = 66%) and Point Thirteen: Institute a Vigorous Program of Education and Retraining. (survey senior leader support = 64%; classmember support = 57%) These two points are closely related and are well supported in the Air Force today. Quality Culture survey results give today's leaders the highest scores in this area. There needs to be no changes except for empowerment training during the basic training cycle.

The Concept of Quality Leadership

Point Seven: Institute Quality Leadership. (survey senior leader support = 47%; classmember support = 75%) This point ranked number one in class member support and is the key to the culture change. There are three things that today's leaders must do in order to expedite the cultural change.

1. All leaders must inspire the cultural change by their personal example. One cannot direct that people change how they view the organization or what they believe to be true. I observed one General Officer's frustrating response to numerous questions about Quality. After some feeble attempts to field questions, he finally said, "Everyone needs to understand that Quality is here to stay and if you don't like it, there is the door." Needless to say, this General Officer did not change anyone's beliefs even though we all responded with "yes, sir". Leaders who inspire the change must believe it themselves and candidly address the concerns of their people.

2. All leaders must clearly define the Air Force Quality Philosophy as opposed to the pure Deming philosophy. Most Air Force leaders do not intend to do away with such tools as annual appraisals, as Deming demands, so the exact Air Force philosophy must be defined as it is in this paper. It is not good enough to say that one can use what you like about Quality and disregard the rest. Culture cannot change with that loosely defined guidance because those who chose to continue the old culture will subvert the evolution of the new.

3. All leaders must measure how the customer is being satisfied. They cannot define themselves as "the customer." In the old culture, the boss was the only customer, and boss satisfaction got people rewarded and promoted. In the old culture, the bottom line was defined by mission accomplishment. If the job got done, no one asked how it got done provided laws were not broken. Leadership

style was left to the individual, and mission accomplishment was the only benchmark. It was natural for the military leader to rely on his/her own innovation and pass out orders and directives to insure mission accomplishment.

The old way worked in the past, and today's Air Force leaders are professionals who are committed to mission accomplishment. When it is perceived that Quality is not working, there is a strong tendency to revert back to the old way. If a cultural change is to be made, it is imperative that leaders be evaluated and rewarded based on HOW the customer, who is not the boss, was satisfied. Leadership evaluations must address the following questions:

1. HOW did the leader empower his people and did they feel empowered to use their own innovation and creativity in satisfying the customer?
2. HOW did the leader effectively use teams and discourage individual showmanship?
3. HOW did the leader reward responsible risk taking regardless of the results?
4. Is this organization held together by FEAR?
5. Do the people of this organization take pride in their workmanship?

Point Eight: Drive Out Fear. (survey senior leader support = 13%; classmember support = 60%) This point goes hand in hand with the last. Fear has no place in a Quality organization, and only Quality leadership can drive out fear. This is a tremendous challenge for all managers because it is human nature to default to threats if there is bad news or disappointing surprises. "The challenge will be especially hard for those who have envisioned positions of organizational leadership as ones of unquestioned status and authority."³⁴ Quality leaders must inspire and teach. They must believe that their people want to do a good job.

Some view Quality as "touchy-feely" participatory management that uses a group hug to solve all problems. Driving out fear does not mean an absence of discipline if it is proven that someone is breaking the established rules or stealing from the organization, there are penalties to include firing. Driving out fear does not mean to sacrifice customer or mission focus. It is the responsibility of the empowered worker to focus that empowerment on the customer. General H. T. Johnson once said in a briefing at Air Mobility Command Headquarters, "I did not empower my people to do dumb things." Empowerment is not a blank check, and Quality leaders must maintain a sense of order and discipline regarding customer focus.

Deming points out, however, that the "economic loss from fear is appalling."³⁵ Fear of being fired for saying the wrong thing. Fear of surfacing a problem and upsetting the boss. Fear of making a job related decision that has less than a one hundred percent chance of working. Fear has no place as a motivational tool in the Air Force.

Point Nine: Break Down Barriers between Staff Areas. (survey senior leader support = 23%; classmember support = 73%) Today's military staffs are always in the crisis action mode that hinders empowerment and individual innovation. Leaders must address this problem. I recently attended a staff briefing at Air Mobility Command headquarters. I was a representative of the Air Force Reserve headquarters. The Commander In Chief had proposed a test to validate moving aircraft generation maintenance personnel into the operations group to comply with the objective wing concept. The Colonel that briefed the group said, "The chief wants this to happen. We are calling it a test, but we are really here to make it happen." This was the first that the reserve staff had heard of this

proposal, and there were many problems to be worked out in reserve associate units.

Barriers in the military come from staff officers who see their jobs in terms of "boss satisfaction" and not customer satisfaction. Each commander's staff will try to execute the boss's wishes and not work with the field units and other staffs to surface the best solution. Staffs cannot remain in the crisis action mode all of the time. The Quality leader must empower his/her staff to find the most productive answer and not simply execute the commander's agenda.

Point Ten: Eliminate Slogans. (survey senior leader support = 10%; classmember support = 32%) Deming says they generate frustration and resentment.³⁶ Point Eleven: Eliminate Numerical Quotas. (survey senior leader support = 7%; classmember support = 26%). Slogans and arbitrary quotas are directive in nature and restrict the empowered worker from maximizing productivity. An example of this in Air Force terms is the yearly close out of flying time for flying units. The commanders report card was written based on his ability to fly all of his allotted flying time. Many pilots can relay stories of non-productive flying at the end of every fiscal year just to zero out the flying time. I was personally told to fly a C-5 aircraft for four and one half hours with no training requirements just to zero out flying time. At \$13,000 per hour, that quota cost the company \$58,500 in one unit for one day. Let the willing worker do what is needed for customer satisfaction and save.

Point Twelve: Remove Barriers to Pride of Workmanship. (survey senior leader support = 36%; classmember support = 67%) This point relates to the idea of ownership. The worker must feel this ownership and feel empowered to make decisions regarding what he/she owns in order to develop a pride of workmanship. Examples are the empowered mechanic who found a better way to repair "his"

aircraft or the empowered staff officer who found an idea that the commander had not considered before or the empowered pilot who found a more cost effective way to fly "his" mission. A Quality leader must create a culture that produces these feelings of ownership, of empowerment, of pride.

Point Thirteen was discussed earlier as it relates to education and training. Point Fourteen: Take Action to Accomplish the Transformation. (survey senior leader support = 59%; classmember support = 52%) It is interesting to note that classmembers gave today's leaders slightly higher marks that they gave themselves on point 6, 13 and 14. These points relate to training and education and perhaps a reluctance to take drastic action to accomplish the transformation.

Empowerment and a leadership that supports empowerment will have to be a evolutionary process. Today's senior leaders have taken the first step. The survey clearly shows that classmember support for Deming's points is stronger across the board that perceived senior leader support. No one wants a Quality revolution that violently topples the organizational pyramid. The Quality approach is a evolutionary journey that builds on each generation of leaders. -- A journey that builds trust, teamwork, and continuous improvement in the organization. -- A journey into a new culture that is better able to handle the challenges of the future.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The Quality journey will not be easy and many will actively resist the change. In his article on the role of leadership, Richards identifies three transitional problems: 1) the tendency to blame workers for process problems;³⁷ 2) the tendency to believe that these leaders' problems are different and, thus, are not applicable to Quality, and 3) the dilemma of non-support from the management chain.³⁷

Total Leadership commitment is the catalyst for any change but especially for a change in culture. Culture cannot be changed by words and training classes alone. General H. T. Johnson, Commander in Chief of Transportation Command, said, "It is easy to say we empower our people. But you have to prove it through continuous action."³⁸ General Mike Loh, Commander of Air Combat Command, said, "Quality is not the product of a detailed management system. It is a comprehensive leadership style that permeates an organization."³⁹

The Air War College class on 1994 is a representative cross section of the middle leadership of the Air Force. Of this group only 13% believed that senior Air Force leaders were committed to drive out fear. Instituting Quality leadership and creating a constancy of purpose were ranked first and second in applicability yet, less than half of those surveyed believed that senior leaders were committed to do that.

Leaders at all levels of the Air Force need to assess the norms and beliefs on his/her people before concluding that they have a Quality organization. The

survey given to the Air War College of 1994 would suggest that the progress of the cultural change is slow and basic beliefs about the organization remain intact.

Personal perceptions are important and need to be considered in the institution of cultural change. Regarding individual belief, perceptions are reality. If people do not feel empowered, then they are not. If people do not feel that senior leaders are serious about cultural change, then they are not. Beliefs must be changed by example if they are to be changed at all. Negative perceptions will reinforce the old culture. If senior leaders don't practice the new process then followers will label the quality approach as just another management "buzz word" that doesn't really apply. Some examples of negative perceptions that occurred during the War College school year follow.

During the Quality Air Force Symposium '93 in Montgomery AL, the three presentations made on the subject of "Quality Leadership" were made by an Air Force Captain, a Major, and a civilian Ph.D.⁴⁰ Are these the leadership experts in today's Air Force? During a planned Air War College Quality Leadership panel discussion November 1993, two of the three leaders who were to be panel members did not show. As this did not happen for the panel discussions about Vietnam or Desert Storm, it was perceived that this "Quality business" wasn't as important.

The only way to change a culture is to demonstrate commitment. People look for the non-verbal signs that reinforce verbal statements before they change long held beliefs. No one ever believed that the inspector was there to help you because the non-verbal signs did not support that statement.

The solution to the problem of culture change is found in a simple diagram published in The Quality Approach manual by the Air Force. The triangle enclosing the quality focus, the improvement process, and quality in daily

operations is surrounded by a larger triangle that represents leadership.⁴¹ Leadership surrounds the quality process, and without leadership it cannot happen. Thus, if it has not happened, then it is because of leadership. An authoritarian "top down" leader can negate empowerment, destroy initiative, and subvert the quality culture with style alone.

The traditional top down approach has worked well for two hundred years. This is the largest barrier to changing the culture. Today's military leaders have lived with, have been brought up in, and promoted in the old culture: A culture where it was the norm to salute smartly and carry out orders to the letter: A culture where the boss was the customer and it was the job of the subordinate to keep the boss happy: A culture where innovation was seen as "non-compliance with directives." This culture simply will not change without a leadership commitment that starts at the very top and permeates the organization. The organizational triangle must be inverted, not only on paper, but in reality.

Quality culture is not just about producing "quality" products. It is about maximizing individual potential and job satisfaction. Deming postulates that a quality product will automatically emerge from a quality culture. This is why it is so important to this culture change to measure how customers are satisfied. The Pharaohs of Egypt built quality pyramids that have lasted for thousands of years. That doesn't mean that they empowered their workers, that they drove out fear, or that their workers had a pride of workmanship. The old way of getting the job done does work, but at what expense? Can a democratic nation afford that expense in today's environment. It is time for a Quality Culture in the Air Force. Only leadership commitment to the cultural change can make it happen.

My final recommendation is for the Air Force to develop a professional survey that would scientifically measure the cultural change. Professional psychologists could devise a survey that could measure changes in employee values, habits, ways of thinking, and degrees of empowered feelings. An employee is not empowered unless he feels empowered. Leaders need to know where their organization stands on the cultural change and "mission accomplishment" is not the correct measure. Mission accomplishment is not the correct measure because Air Force people have always focused on getting the job done and they have always performed in a superior manner. Deming advises -- look at the process and not the product. Measure how the job got done and one will have a measure of culture change.

APPENDIX

QUALITY CULTURE SURVEY

The survey form found at the end of this appendix was distributed to all 255 Air War College class members of the Class of 1994 on the week after the Quality Air Force instruction was completed. 112 surveys were completed and returned.

Results of Question #1 - Circle the three points that you feel are the most applicable and X out the three points that you feel are the least applicable. The raw score was computed by adding one point for each circled Deming point and subtracting one point for each Deming point Xed out. The rank order for Deming's fourteen points are:

<u>RANK</u>	<u>DEMING'S FOURTEEN POINTS</u>	<u>RAW SCORE</u>
1.	7. Institute leadership.	+68
2.	1. Create constancy of purpose.	+44
3.	9. Break down barriers between staff areas.	+24
4.	12. Remove barriers to pride of workmanship.	+17
5.	5. Improve constantly and forever the system.	+15
6.	13. Institute a vigorous program of education and retraining.	+11
7.	6. Institute training.	+07
8.	8. Drive out fear.	+06
9.	14. Take action to accomplish the transformation.	+04
10.	3. Cease dependence on mass inspection.	-09
11.	2. Adopt the new philosophy.	-33
12.	4. End the practice of awarding business on price tag alone.	-35
13.	11. Eliminate numerical quotas.	-45
14.	10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations and targets for the workforce.	-57

Question #2 and Question #3 raw score is the per cent of the 112 respondents that selected a particular Deming point. Each respondent was free to circle all fourteen points in he/she felt that they were being supported. Rank order follows:

Question #2 - Senior Leaders of the Air Force support the following points.

<u>RANK</u>	<u>DEMING'S FOURTEEN POINTS</u>	<u>RAW SCORE</u>
1.	6. Institute training.	65%
2.	13. Institute a vigorous program of education and retraining.	64%
3.	14. Take action to accomplish the transformation.	59%
4.	1. Create constancy of purpose.	47%
5.	7. Institute leadership	39%
6.	5. Improve constantly and forever the system.	36%
7.	12. Remove barriers to pride of workmanship.	23%
8.	2. Adopt the new philosophy.	23%
9.	9. Break down barriers between staff areas.	23%
10.	3. Cease dependence on mass inspection.	19%
11.	4. End the practice of awarding business on price tag alone.	18%
12.	8. Drive out fear.	13%
13.	10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations and targets for the workforce.	10%
14.	11. Eliminate numerical quotas.	7%

Question #3 - Class members intent to use Demings points.

<u>RANK</u>	<u>DEMING'S FOURTEEN POINTS</u>	<u>RAW SCORE</u>
1.	7. Institute leadership.	75%
2.	9. Break down barriers between staff areas.	73%
3.	1. Create constancy of purpose.	71%
4.	12. Remove barriers to pride of workmanship.	67%
5.	5. Improve constantly and forever the system.	66%
6.	6. Institute training.	61%
7.	8. Drive out fear.	60%
8.	13. Institute a vigorous program of education and retraining.	57%
9.	14. Take action to accomplish the transformation.	52%
10.	3. Cease dependence on mass inspection.	44%
11.	2. Adopt the new philosophy.	34%
12.	10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations and targets for the workforce.	32%
13.	4. End the practice of awarding business on price tag alone.	27%
14.	11. Eliminate numerical quotas.	26%

Sample Survey Form follows:

FROM: Colonel Larry Mercker, Box 176

SUBJECT: Quality Leadership Data Collection

TO: ALL AIR WAR COLLEGE CLASSMEMBERS

We have just finished two weeks of Quality Training. I have decided to write my long paper on "Quality Leadership in the Military Environment." General Loh has stated that Quality is a Leadership Style and that his leadership style does not accommodate all of Deming's points. Please take some time and indicate which of Deming's Points you believe you will use in your leadership style. **This survey input is important to the validity of my paper. Please put it in BOX 176 by 1 Dec 93 and I'll owe you a beer.**
Thanks.

I. Circle the three points that you feel are most applicable and X out the three points that you feel are least applicable.

DEMING'S FOURTEEN POINTS

1. Create constancy of purpose for improvement of products and services.
2. Adopt the new philosophy - mistakes and negativism are unacceptable.
3. Cease dependence on mass inspection - Quality comes from improving the process.
4. End the practice of awarding business on price tag alone.
5. Improve constantly and forever the system of production and service.
6. Institute training.
7. Institute leadership -Leading consists of helping people do a better job and of learning by objective methods who is in need of individual help.
8. Drive out fear.
9. Break down barriers between staff areas.
10. Eliminate slogans, exhortations and targets for the workforce - Let people put up their own slogans.
11. Eliminate numerical quotas.
12. Remove barriers to pride of workmanship.
13. Institute a vigorous program of education and retraining.
14. Take action to accomplish the transformation (to the Quality culture)

II. In my opinion, today's senior leaders of the Air Force support the following points.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14.

(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

III. I intend to include the following points in my leadership style.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14.

IV. I intend to disregard the above points for the following reasons.

NOTES

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4. William J. Schoeffield, Federal Express Corp., Speech delivered to the Air War College, Maxwell AFB, 4 November 1993.
5. Mike Bradley, "Systematic Rewards" Total Quality Management, Vol. 4, No. 5, October, 1992, p. 279.
6. Patrick Townsend, "11 Steps Toward Leadership: Lessons from an Ancient Source", Total Quality Newsletter, (Minneapolis, July 1992), p. 1.
7. Quality Culture Survey, p. 5.
8. Quality Culture Survey, p. 39.
9. Walton, Deming Management Method, p. 72.
10. Quality Culture Survey, p. 17.
11. Quality Culture Survey, p. 23.
12. Quality Culture Survey, p. 31.
13. Carr, Excellence in Government, p. 188.
14. Walton, Deming Management Method, p. 34.
15. Blueprints of Service Quality: The Federal Express Approach, (New York, 1991), p. 21.
16. Carr, Excellence in Government, p. 188.
17. Blueprints for Service Quality, p. 12.
18. American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. (New York, 1971), p. 1068.
19. Quality Culture Survey of Air War College Class of 1994. Maxwell AFB, November 1993, p. 21.
20. Quality Culture Survey, p. 82.
21. Quality Culture Survey, p. 6.
22. Quality Culture Survey, p. 16.
23. Quality Culture Survey, p. 19.
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25. American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. (New York, 1971), p. 321.
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28. Walton, Deming Management Method p.55.
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35. Walton, Deming Management Method p.72.
36. Ibid., p. 76.
37. John D. Richards, "The Role of Leadership in TQM, Military Review, August 1992, p. 85.
38. Karen Bemowski, "Quality in Flight" Quality Progress, Vol. 25, No. 7, July 1992, p. 28.
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