



Defense Distribution Center (DDC) commanders at the bi-annual Leadership Conference, held August 22-25, 2005, at the DDC Headquarters.

Lenny Petrucci on one of DLA's top initiatives, Customer Relationship Management (CRM). "Our strategy is around service, sales, and marketing," said Petrucci. "It is not just about sales, but improving customer readiness for our customers."

A Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Road Show was another highlight of the conference that afternoon. Col Lou



DDDE Commander LTC Lance Koenig, USA, (right) received an Inventory Update Award from DDC Commander BG Mike Lally, USA, (left) during the leadership conference for achieving 100 percent accuracy in all categories on the last sample inventory. DDDE has consecutively made the goal in every category, along with maintaining a consistently low denial rate and Absolute Adjustment Rate. DDDE has expended intensive efforts in cross-training its entire workforce and promoting the culture of inventory accuracy.

DDC senior leaders complete first executive leadership program

DDC senior leaders learn how change is needed to improve organization's culture

By Jessica Walter, DDC Command Affairs

To continue to achieve the enterprise-wide goal to improve the agency's climate and culture by enhancing the capabilities of DLA leadership, senior leaders from across areas of the Defense Distribution Center (DDC) attended the first session of the Executive Leadership Program this summer.

"The DDC Executive Leadership Program is the front end of DDC's Leadership Academy. Our intent in establishing this portion of the academy is a 'lead from the front' effort to expose all of the DDC senior leaders to a scaled-down version of the Leadership Academy curriculum and ensure that DDC leaders, from top to bottom, are pointed in the same direction to improve our climate/culture," explained DDC Chief of Staff COL Ed Visker, USA.

In addition to receiving training on core leadership competencies like communication, consistency, motivating employees, performance management, integrity and teamwork, the students, all senior leaders within DDC, also received instruction on how to establish a culture of accountability and empowerment.

"This section of the course struck a cord with the participants," said Kevin Cummings, Director of the DDC Transformation Office that heads the effort to improve DDC's climate and culture.

"The best research on organizational effectiveness demonstrates that high performing organizations exhibit a powerful culture of accountability and empowerment," Cummings explained. "That becomes the driving force for strategic and operational execution."

COL Visker, who also attended the course, pointed out that achieving this type of change would mean "changing our style

Neeley, USAF, told the group that there were over 1,000 BRAC recommendations developed; the outcome of the 33 Joint Cross Service group meetings went with 222 recommendations in the end. He said that all are available to the public online at <http://www.defenselink.mil/brac/>.

Day three of the conference concentrated on communications and the challenges of change. Topics ranging from relating to your audience, to trust and credibility, to message development, to non-verbal communications provided the attendees lots of ideas for consideration. Dr. Terry Flynn, Frontlines Communication President, led the training that included practical exercises simulating employee/supervisor interactions.

BG Mike Lally, USA, kicked off the last day of the conference with a look at Distribution Transformation Initiatives, which include DLA Afloat Distribution Center, DLA Deployable Depot, and Theater Consolidated Shipping Point.

The next DDC Leadership Conference will be spring 2006.



Left to right: DDPH Deputy Commander Mike O'Brien; DDAG Commander Maj Mark Campaigne, USMC; DDMA Deputy Commander John Stroup; DDC Transformation Office Chief Kevin Cummings; DDNV Deputy Commander Bob King; DDC Command Support Services Director Gene Surmacz; DDC Chief of Staff COL Ed Visker, USA; DLA – DDC J-8 PA Financial Operations Director Marian Ryan; DDJC Deputy Commander Dave Ennis; DDAA Deputy Commander Frank Van Hatten; Program instructor Ed Sketch; DDSP Commander CAPT Jim Naber, SC, USN; DDWG Deputy Commander Donna Fielder; DDC General Counsel Director George Sisson; DDTP Deputy Commander John Heuberger; DDOO Commander Col Jim Reiman, USAF; DDC Strategic Plans Director Charlie Nye; DDC Commercial Activities Program Office Director Twila Gonzales; DLA CSO-N Supervisory Human Resources Specialist Darlene Ferrante.

from brilliant improvisation to disciplined process management.”

The way to begin? With each individual supervisor.

“Each of the leaders understood that change must start with them,” Cummings said, “but research shows this is not enough to sustain long-term organizational change.”

Long-term change, said Cummings, requires a disciplined process approach where planning is crucial and important organizational issues are addressed up front. Some items to consider include how managers are measured and rewarded, how to reinforce positive management behaviors (including building trust, establishing consistency, and improved fairness in hiring practices) and how to identify and manage the barriers that inhibit positive behavior.

“Our long-term success will depend on managing these barriers and perceived constraints, both internal and external, while leveraging the enabling activities that reinforce the leadership behaviors that DDC is trying to develop,” Cummings added.

Innovation-- A Catalyst for Improvement

By Jerri Taylor, DDRV Commander

Of the nine DLA managerial competencies, the last one, innovation and initiative, can appear to be the most challenging to achieve, especially for a first line supervisor. Being innovative when you are at the bottom of a hierarchical, structured organization with large automated systems can seem a daunting, unrealistic expectation. Sure you can demonstrate initiative, work hard, and are extremely committed, but what about innovation? How can you be innovative when system change requests take forever, new equipment is expensive, processes seem driven by extensive regulation, and your boss isn't receptive to any idea with risk?



Jerri Taylor, DDRV Commander.

To tackle the innovation competency, it helps to redefine the term. Most of us think of innovation as a major change, revolutionary innovation like wireless communications or robotics, but innovation isn't always revolutionary. The Ninth House Technology and Innovation course provides a definition which simplifies and defines innovation in achievable terms. “Innovation is the value-added result of vigorously seeking opportunities and exploiting novel ways of making things happen.” Taken in this context, innovation can start simply by searching for a new method to do work. It might be a quicker way to accomplish a task, a different way to achieve a goal, or a more effective way to execute and evaluate the objective. There are always opportunities to accomplish the task more efficiently and effectively. Innovation is a hands-on effort; it isn't achieved from a distance. Who better to innovate than a first line supervisor?