



# Managing time, organizing, prioritizing and executing A DDJC employee's support to the Warfighter

By Emily Blubaugh, DDC Public Affairs

"If we are not managing our time, we are not managing the mission." This phrase has become Yvonne Hicks' motto after participating in the "Advanced Leadership Development: A Closer Look at Managing Time" course. Hicks, distribution process worker supervisor at Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, Calif., attributes much of her success as a supervisor to the course, which assisted her in executing key actions established in her Managing Time Action Plan.

Hicks is such a supporter of the course that she volunteered to be a Distance Learning Course manager when DDJC commander United States Army Col. David Rodriguez asked for a graduate of the course to volunteer, and has even brought her entire team on board with what she calls their "Time Management Plans."

"Before my team and I established our Time Management Plans, we were often stressed and frustrated—we were reacting. Now, we are much more organized, because if a task is on the Time Management Plan, it is a priority. Empowerment and accountability has increased with our group. Everyone knows what they have to do, so ownership is very high, and it is less stressful," says Hicks.

Encouraging her team to utilize their time wisely and understand the impact and results of doing so, both good and bad, has been one of Hicks' focuses. "When people on my team get side-tracked, which

can happen in a warehouse where priorities rapidly change, the team finishes the activity required, and quickly goes back to their Time Management Work Plan to get back on track," said Hicks.

"We also use the terminology of 'time blocks.' We use time blocks very effectively, so we are not stressed," she continues.

Hicks feels that the implementation of the plans is making a huge impact in production, which she reviews in DSS once per quarter, acquiring a baseline, and tracks the team's progress. This inspires her team with their accomplishments and creates a baseline to start from for monitoring future team work. The result is a highly-motivated group, constantly striving to "beat" the previous quarter's numbers and demonstrating that their plans are making an impact, not just on their stress levels and organization, but also on performance.

"Each department, including receivers, packers, warehouse folks, know when to address key issues. The Time Management Plans help everyone to understand what comes first, second, and third. And, now we all have the same understanding of the priorities," said Hicks.

Prior to participating in the course, Hicks managed a small team and was very shorthanded. The team became backlogged in stow checks. To manage this process and time, Hicks used the concepts from the Managing Time course related to organization by zones and



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categories. The team created a box and divided the work by locations. She then delegated the project to each warehouse employee and requested they set aside time blocks each day to complete stow checks for their responsible areas. The objectives were met: eliminate the backlog and reduce errors in location by checking stow locations immediately. Using these techniques, Hicks helped her team turn what could have been a discouraging project into a success. Since the introduction of Time Management Plans to the team, their stow check box has been empty or contained the previous day's stows.

Hicks' goal for her team is zero defects. They have achieved this goal of no mistakes in various locations. The goal relates to inventory in the system, no shortages, and no overages. Hicks believes the focus on time and

## Executing the mission:

generating Time Management Plans for each specific area has greatly contributed to this.

“Yvonne has been a major contributor toward DDJC moving closer toward its goal of continuously and consistently meeting the depot’s metrics by managing time. Her focus on time and generating a Time Management Plan for each warehouse area has greatly contributed to making this happen,” said Rodriguez.

The impact of Hicks’ changes to her team’s processes was so significant that first quarter, Fiscal Year 2010, she was recognized as the Defense Distribution Center Commander’s Mission Impact Award winner.

Hicks hopes to help everyone on her team feel that they have the power and time to take a step back, review their Time Management Plan, review the mission priorities, organize, and complete tasks without stress.

“The course, alongside support from my senior leadership, has

made a lasting impact on our team’s productivity and effectiveness, and it is fulfilling to pass these benefits on to the Warfighter by ensuring they are receiving the right item, in the right place, in the right time. This is the ultimate goal,” said Hicks.

*This article is the second in a series highlighting the continuous process improvements being implemented throughout DDC’s depots as a result of the Advanced Leadership: Managing Time class and its impact on DDC’s way forward.*

## DDDE supports U.S. Marine participation in Africa’s largest military exercise

By Emily Blubaugh, DDC Public Affairs

Recently, Defense Distribution Depot Europe received requisitions for Meals Ready to Eat, Unitized Group Rations, and Ultra High Temperature milk in support of Exercise African Lion, an annual military exercise held in Morocco which includes a variety of bi-lateral training evolutions including small-arms and crew-served weapons training, and live fire and maneuver ranges.

DDDE workers pre-stuffed and positioned four 20 ft. containers for quick departure to support troops participating in the exercise.

African Lion is a month-long combined exercise with the Royal Moroccan Army. Marines from the major subordinate commands under Marine Forces Reserve participate in the exercise annually. The goal is to promote improved interoperability and mutual understanding of each nation’s tactics, techniques and procedures as well as foster relationships.

Since the first exercise in 2004, African Lion has progressively grown to become the largest combined exercise in Africa.



**Pictured are four containers which were filled with Meals Ready to Eat, Unitized Group Rations, and Ultra High Temperature milk by Defense Distribution Depot Europe employees in support of Exercise African Lion, an annual military exercise held in Morocco.**