

## Do you think Lean?

By Linda Bowers, DDOO MEO Team

No, I'm not referring to fat-free diets or working out in the gym, although that's not a bad idea. *Lean Thinking* is a book written by James P. Womack and Daniel T. Jones that describes the management process of identifying what is of value to your customer and necessary steps to obtain that value. Using the examples of Toyota, Pratt & Whitney and other leaders in the production industry, Lean Thinking teaches the basics needed for a successful management plan. When Toyota began making cars, many considered them toy cars because they were unreliable and cheap products. Today, they are one of the most desired and very dependable vehicles on the highway.

Many companies and government agencies are jumping on the Lean bandwagon and changing the way they do business to increase their efficiency and bottom line. At Tinker, the Air Force has contracted a company to do an extreme makeover in one of their buildings. By using the Lean principles, they will save hundreds of hours in completing depot maintenance. Knowing that DDOO's customer is streamlining their process indicates DDOO will be providing more parts more quickly to meet their and our "just-in-time" philosophy of having the right part at the right time.

Lean management eliminates the wasted time waiting on a product. We are often frustrated by the amount of time wasted by waiting, either in line or on the phone, and the energy wasted going somewhere unnecessarily. By eliminating wait time and unnecessary energy, we are "Leaning" our life, business, warehouse, etc.

Lean principles reduce labor, space, capital, and time in delivering the right products or services to the end customers by eliminating non-value added steps. They are adaptable not only to production facilities and for warehouses, but to the flow of information within the office. Lean management principles will energize the workforce with value added work and the elimination of extra time and touches being expended for non-value tasks. As we improve our work areas, we can take pride in our jobs. DDOO is beginning with baby steps that will eventually lead to giant strides. Team DDOO is getting on the "Lean" trail and wants to see great results.

## Process improvements enhance DDOO's customer service capability

By Mary McHenry and Delayne Dye, DDOO

Recently, the Defense Distribution Depot Oklahoma City, Okla. (DDOO) Most Efficient Organization (MEO) Team met with the DDOO Commander, Deputy Commander, Division Chiefs, and Branch Chiefs to the review the status of nearly 60 process improvements and other initiatives that have as their overall goal to improve DDOO's core mission of receiving, stowing, shipping, and packaging.

Many of these improvements have already been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. During the past month the MEO Team has been working on several process improvement efforts including moving inactive stock, making equipment available and the purchase of a new Tiger Truck.

Movement of inactive warehouse stock, material that has not been issued for four or more years, to DDOO's Building 18 has begun. By placing inactive stock in Building 18, DDOO frees up space in the more active warehouses. DDOO has started by moving the inactive stock in Building 510. Once Bldg 510 is emptied of inactive stock, other warehouses will be scheduled for this effort.

Having the right equipment is important to making DDOO an effective and efficient organization. DDOO management and the MEO Team have been working on providing more efficient equipment. New equipment includes mobile computers on carts.

There are three of these carts currently being used, two in receiving and one in off-base shipping. These carts allow the material handler to move to the material so receipts or shipments can be processed more quickly. There is a need for additional carts and members of the team are researching several sources to acquire them.

Another new piece of equipment is a modified Tiger Truck. A metal box with multiple compartments, shelves, and roll-up doors is being fitted on the bed of a Tiger Truck to increase DDOO's ability to more quickly manifest and deliver local on-base issues. As the truck drives through DDOO's Building 416, the driver will stop to pick up local issues that have already been manifested and are ready to be delivered. Trays of material are placed in the appropriate compartment on the truck. Each compartment represents a specific delivery point. Using this process saves the additional steps of sending material to the south end of the building for manifesting and pick up. The first prototype of the modified Tiger Truck will be ready for service soon and there are plans to modify four additional trucks.

For quite a few of the process improvements, the reasons for making the changes were obvious. The changes going on are intended to help DDOO meet the overall goal of becoming a lean organization equipped to provide best value to the taxpayer.

