

PQA and Other Stuff

By Kelley Stevens, AML-30



PQA... Award Criteria... Site Visits... Change Champion Speakers... PQA Merit Award Winner... Excellence in Government Conference... PQA Examiners... Change Agents... PQA Program Finalist...

All of this stuff is about CHANGE... that is changing for the sake of continually improving the products and services we provide, as well as, how we conduct our business.

I know the last thing you want to hear about at this point is more change, but the fact is that change is constantly surrounding us, everywhere we go. Think about it for a minute:

- Change at home (Are you remodeling? Planted flowers/shrubs? Moved the furniture?)
- Change at work (ISO-9000, WIs, COEs, Fee-For-Service, etc.)
- Change at the mall (Grand openings, store closings, store renovations)
- Change at restaurants (Menu items added/taken away – price increases)
- Change at the gas station (almost daily the price of gas increases)
- Change on the roads (when was the last time you drove on a highway that was not under construction?)



James Harmon, right, and Regina West with interested exhibit visitor.

The Excellence in Government conference is an annual trades show for government agencies and conference sponsors that are leading change throughout the federal government sector. The

conference is held in conjunction with the OPM's annual award ceremony for the Presidential Quality Award (PQA). In short, the PQA program is managed by OPM and recognizes federal organizations for continuous improvement through the application of quality management principles and practices.

As an examiner for the PQA program, I can honestly say that while many organizations are affecting change, our organization (the FAALC) is one of the only ones I know of that implemented

simultaneous change rather than sequential change. Rather than wait and make one change at a time, we chose as an organization to make many changes all at once. Think about all of the changes that have been made in the past few years (e.g. ISO-9000 certification, fee-for-service). We are operating very differently.

As a participant at this year's Excellence in Government conference and a representative of the FAALC, I must say that I was truly surprised and a little shocked at the level of interest people outside the FAA expressed in who we are and what we are doing to change. I knew that we had been affecting rapid change and that we were not the same as we had been historically, but I never dreamed that other government organizations would know who we are and want our help implementing some of the change initiatives that we have effectively implemented.



Kelley Stevens, left, explains our changes to a booth visitor.

As a result of participating in the conference and the PQA cycle, I now realize that many federal agencies are just now beginning to change. They are starting out where we were back in 1995 and they are looking for guidance. Because we have worked hard and made so many effective changes in not only how we operate but also how we conduct our business, we are in the unique position to offer that guidance through sharing our stories.

As a PQA Merit Award Winner (2000) and a PQA Program Finalist (2001), we need to realize that we are in fact all change champion speakers and everyone of us has a story to tell about how the FAALC has changed over the past few years and how we have all (organizationally and personally) managed to survive and thrive! ●



Our booth with our blue ribbon on display.

Two Cents Worth

By Greg Ramoly, AML-5020

Are you fed up! Tired of change! The Logistics Center has had more than its fill of change in a short period of time. It seems every time one change initiative ends, three more begin! We are not alone however. Many if not all, government organizations are going through or just starting the same types of changes we've been through.



Don Claypool, left, and Greg Ramoly, center, answer questions.

I had the opportunity this year to attend the Excellence in Government Conference and work the Logistics Center's exhibit and I'm here to tell you, it was an eye opener. Prior to the conference, I was thinking to myself what would it be like, boring, uneventful, will anyone even care why we are there? I have to admit, I was surprised! As soon as the conference began, hundreds of people came shuffling through. Some were just after the trinkets and squeeze balls that are customarily handed out for advertising at these trade shows, but some were there for a purpose. They were seeking knowledge and experience. The knowledge and experience of government change. They were searching for someone to help and guide them through the necessary changes to make their organizations more efficient and competitive in today's fast paced business climate.

Among the many "knowledge seekers" to visit our exhibit, was the USDA. The USDA has just

begun the ISO certification process and stated they are in dire need of help. After a half hour conversation, the USDA requested we guide them in their effort. They may even come and Benchmark the Logistics Center! Another "knowledge seeker," I believe from DOD (too many to remember) stopped by and asked, "Oh boy, what's the Logistics Center up to now." Obviously, our reputation precedes us.

Throughout the day we were plagued with organizations asking us questions like "How did you do it?" "What pitfalls should we watch out for?" "How long did it take you?" These are just a few examples for there are far too many to list. I guess the point is that all organizations, companies, etc. both private and government, are going through these changes not only to excel, but to survive in today's business world. So remember, if you get "fed up" with all the changes, like I do, you're not alone. Most agencies and companies are going through the same thing. Many of them are just beginning and they may be looking to us for help!



Everyone busy at the booth! Lots of interest.

"Transformation" Comes to Mind

By Regina West, AML-6000

I was selected to attend the Excellence in Government 2001 conference in Washington DC August 1-3, 2001. I believe our purpose for attending the conference was to tell other organizations how we were successful in instituting change. The benefit of being at the conference was the opportunity to share our FAALC success story with others. I learned that there are many organizations that want to initiate change but do not know how to get started and need coaching in that area. These organizations wanted to know our "lessons learned," in other words, what works and what doesn't work.

The conference theme this year was "New Leaders, New Opportunities," which captures the essence of many of the changes we are experiencing at the FAALC. When trying to describe what I experienced at the conference the word "transformation" comes to mind. We shared how we are going through the process of metamorphosis. Many of the visitors to our exhibit were asking how did we get started? What were the first steps we took to initiate change in our

organization? We shared that our change began with drafting our strategic plan to define our vision and performance goals. Secondly, attaining ISO 9000 certification. Thirdly, and probably most important was training provided to help transition into a different way of conducting our business with our customers. We had to become more customer-driven in our thinking, our talking and our actions. The transition has not been an easy one but a necessary one in order to meet increasing demands for our products and services in support of the NAS.

A high point of the conference was participating in the President's Quality Award luncheon and experiencing the excitement of representing the FAALC in the finalist award category. ●



Regina West, right, captures the attention of several.

The Chicken Was Involved...

By Tammy Sawyer, AML-4040



Several years ago, I attended the Reinventing Government Conference. It was the first that the Logistics Center participated in. That was the year we created the "Taste of Reinvention" Cookbook. I was proud to represent the employees here and over the years have had many great experiences representing the Logistics Center.

This year I was asked to help with the exhibit booth and the Excellence in Government conference. I was excited to have the opportunity to return. And I was not disappointed. The conference was fabulous and as you read other perspectives you will see why.

One of the things I heard over and over was people expressing recognition in our name. Other organizations that were exhibiting at the conference and people looking for information knew who we were. And they were interested in our experiences in changing how we do business. And those who have been competing for the PQA often asked, "What is the Logistics Center going do to next?"

But I'd like to focus on the things I heard at the PQA Awards Luncheon. We were one of nine organizations being recognized by the Office of Personnel Management. We were the only non-military related organization of the nine. Kay Cole James, OPM Director, made the opening remarks. She noted that the nine organizations represented the best in government. We were commended for our continuous improvement through the application of quality management principles and practices. Ms. James stated that as role models for



excellence in government, the nine recipients demonstrated sound approaches, systems and processes that have allowed them to reach higher levels of organizational performance.

Ms. Jane Garvey, in her remarks, noted that we are ordinary people doing extraordinary things. She continued saying that we are an "inspiration and a model" to other organizations and that we have a job that is making a

difference; a work with meaning.

Mrs. Gail McGinn, Department of Defense, spoke of the rigorous and exacting criteria that must be met to reach this level of recognition. She quoted Vince Lombardi when she said, "...quality is in direct proportion to commitment to excellence."

Dr. Leo Mackay, Jr., Department of Veterans Affairs, commented that the outstanding achievements of each of these nine organizations raised the bar for all government.

The Honorable Thomas E. White, Secretary, Department of the Army spoke the thing that I remember the most. He was speaking about those who are "involved" in a quality government and those who are "committed" to excellence in government. He compared it to a bacon and egg breakfast. The chicken is involved, but the pig is committed! I think the evidence shows that the Logistics Center is "committed" and we are recognized for our efforts. ●



Tammy Sawyer, left, explains our "Gold Coin" handout.

Change Champions

By Diane Haines, AML-6000



Diane Haines, right, helps a guest pick out information.

I was nominated to attend the Excellence in Government Conference that was held in Washington, DC. on Aug 1st -Aug 3rd. The FAALC's booth theme was "Change Champions." I was thrilled that so many people were interested and wanted to hear about how the Logistic Center's "change" journey had

improved our products and services. I enjoyed sharing franchise fund and ISO-9000 information with visitors. Many agencies were interested in our strategic plan, performance measures, and any lessons learned we could share with them, so they could begin their agency's transformation.

The highlight of the conference was on Friday, at the President's Quality Award Program when Jane Garvey stopped by our table and congratulated us, the employees of the Logistics Center, for a job well done! ●



Representing the FAALC:
Standing: Tammy Sawyer, James Harmon, Greg Ramoly, Darrell Thompson, Don Claypool, Steve Brown, Bill Voss, James Thompson, Bill Traylor.
Seated: Kelley Stevens, Diane Haines, Regina West.
Not pictured: George Bakula (photographer) and Norman Bowles.