

A New “Core” Focus in a

*By Marie Greening
DCMA Aeronautical Systems Division*

Greetings! I hope you are well on your way to a prosperous, healthy and happy 2009.

By now, your resolutions have been made, and many of us vowed to lose those extra pounds by hitting the gym and using the latest techniques such as “core training.” Core training focuses on strengthening different muscles that stabilize the spine, shoulders and torso, providing an overall solid foundation for the body.

I believe as a DCMA population that we, too, should be focusing a little on our “core” leadership qualities and values — those things that provide the strongest foundation possible for the agency, regardless of where we serve.

What are these core traits of leadership?

Pick up any leadership book and you will be inundated with the traits of leaders. You know the great ones, such as Jack Welch and Norman Augustine, who took their companies from the brink and turned them into global

powers. Can the methodologies of these corporate giants be applied to DCMA, a federal agency that some may even say is steeped in bureaucracy? I believe the answer to this is, unequivocally, “Yes!”

A quick look at Lockheed Martin Corporation and General Electric under the leadership of Augustine

and Welch, respectively, will reveal that these companies went through periods of dramatic change — downsizing, growth, expansion and ruthless competition. These corporations encountered every imaginable challenge during transformation. It was, I believe, the attitudes of these leaders permeating their organizations and



Marie Greening believes that the DCMA population should be focusing on core leadership qualities and values. (DCMA staff photo)

New Year



(Image courtesy of istockphoto.com)

instilling their corporate families with a resonating ethos.

Welch was known to embrace the saying, “Change before you have to.” Some may argue, “Yes, but we are constantly changing.” My response: “... And rightly so!” To be stagnant is to die. Thus, we, the defense industry and our warfighters, must keep moving to keep pace with technology. Our technical and business competencies must be able to keep

pace for our agency to remain viable to our nation. We must accept that change is inevitable, and we should be striving toward constant improvement.

As the agency charts a course for the future regarding our focus, direction and vision at each level of the organization, we must move forward not as a group of individuals with the question, “What’s in it for me?” but, rather, as a team, asking, “How can I

positively impact the agency from where I am?” Each of us must also understand and embrace the agency direction. To steal a phrase from NASCAR, we must, “Go, or go home.”

Change can be as simple as taking a personal interest in our professional development to remain abreast of our fields, no matter what our age or position, or it can be as complicated implementing leaner business practices. Whatever the endeavor, we must dive in and perform to the best of our abilities. As Augustine was known

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to say, “Motivation will almost always beat mere talent.” We must be motivated to grow and change.

Finally, we are moving forward in a new administration, not immediately knowing what the future holds for us. None of us can predict the agency’s future — will we have more people or fewer people? How long will our nation be at war in Iraq and Afghanistan? Will there be another conflict? Where will the defense budget go? None of us knows the answers to these questions, but what we do know is that we, together as an agency, have an extremely crucial role. We must deliver world-class products to our warfighters, and we must do it as effectively and efficiently as possible.

How we respond during periods of uncertainty will surely define us. With that, how should we move forward? We must perform as a team! Great teams have the characteristics of respect, trust,



Marie Greening, DCMA Aeronautical Systems Division executive director.

Personality Profile

By Ann Jensis-Dale, DCMA Public Affairs

Why did you choose public service?
Marie Greening (MG): As a college grad, I was very impressed with the opportunities public service offered. The opportunity and challenge to have incredible responsibilities at a young age appealed to me. I have never been disappointed in my public service career path and continue to look forward to additional challenges.

What is your greatest leadership challenge?
MG: Getting employees to truly understand that everyone wants what is best for DCMA. We may not all agree on the path, but we all have the agency’s best interest at heart. Finding the common ground in order to advance change is often the most difficult challenge.

What is something that you are really proud of and why?
MG: My son. At the end of the day, your family is what you leave as a legacy. My son works hard to do the right things and makes good decisions and choices. I couldn’t ask for a better blessing.

If you could meet anyone (dead or alive) who would it be and why?
MG: My dad. He died when I was a freshman in college. I have always felt cheated that I didn’t get to know him better and spend more time with him in my adult years.

When you have an hour of free time, what do you like to do?
MG: Hike or backpack.

What are three adjectives that describe you?
MG: Low maintenance, grateful and blessed.

Who would win in a fight — you or Marge Simpson?
MG: Me. Her hair slows her down.

hard work, candid dialogue, shared responsibility for problem-solving and decision-making and quickly confronting inappropriate behavior and managing conflict. These are traits we must all work toward to operate not only as the DCMA entity but also as the DCMA family.

So, this year, let’s work on our core leadership skills, recognizing we’re going to change, and embrace our new direction. Let’s be motivated to keep changing as an agency and as individuals because without change we will fail to keep pace with our warfighters’ needs. **C**