The Value of the Military Skill Set â€“ Part X

Description

Part X â€“ Process Engineering, Continuous Improvement, Total Quality Management, Total Quality Leadership, or what ever you call it. The bottom line title: Making â€œitâ€• better

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At a mandatory briefing about getting out and working in the Ã¢â‚¬Å“realÃ¢â‚¬Â• world, the briefer said in many cases, you wonâ€™t know how to make money for you employer, but if you can show them how to save money, there is the same result on the bottom line: Financial increase.

It took the surge of the â€œTotal Quality Leadershipâ€• (TQL) push under Admiral Kelso as Chief of Naval Operations to get me to see there was something we had already been doing for the same reason, but we didnâ€™t know what to call it. We constantly did things with an eye towards spotting trends, so we could figure out how to do things better, or to see things coming off the tracks, by catching the trends early on. I was Ã¢â‚¬Å“exposedÃ¢â‚¬Â• to the formalized TQL methodology as a senior Lieutenant Commander, and then used the methods more effectively for the rest of my career. While getting my training in TQL, I realized processes carried out by those around me, most notably the engineers aboard ship, during my initial sea tours many years before were, in fact, the very methods discussed under TQL.

As time passed over the next several years, the culture of the Navy adopted more to the process control mentality, and much of it became almost subconscious. The great part, was even the skeptics, who thought the time involved in sitting down and looking at how things were done was a waste of time, were gradually converted, as improvements couldnâ€™t be denied after a while.

In addition to the formal drive to make things more efficient, donâ€™t forget the human condition of trying to get things done with the least amount of effort is a powerful force, especially in the enlisted ranks. I say that as a compliment, not in a derogatory manner, because it made the system work better.

If the goal was to get it done, and the way there faster was to spend a few minutes gaming it out, so you could â€œhit the beachâ€•Â• earlier, then you could see that in action.

The fall out of all of this TQM/TQL/CI/Process Engineering experience, involving many levels of the pay structure, is it has become a way of routine business for many service members. This means you can reasonably expect these people to come to you, unafraid of figuring out how to look at systems and procedures and then consider how to make it work better. This means more efficient operations, and therefore, more $$$ in the bottom line.

Category

1. Military

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