

**Case Study for DRMS** (major business process engineering with significant staff reduction while maintaining high morale)

## ***DRMS Profile***

The Department of Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (<http://www.drms.dla.mil>) is the single point of service for reutilization, sale, or disposal for excess defense department goods and material.

## ***Business situation***

Prior to 1996 the DRMS organization consisted of some 4,000 plus people worldwide (U.S. citizens and local foreign nations in other countries where DRMS had operations to support military bases and operations). The Defense Logistics Agency (DRMS parent headquarters) charged the DRMS Commander with significantly reducing the workforce and operating locations (target employee level approximately 1,200) without a significant reduction in material throughput.

## ***Organizational situation***

The organizational effect of this significant workforce reduction without any significant reduction in work volume required radical business process engineering. The organization was very close knit, almost as much like family as it was workplace. Col. Robert Mansfield was the commander responsible for initially planning and affecting the changes necessary for DRMS to transform itself to the “new” staffing levels and ways of executing the DRMS mission.

## ***Solution***

The Advanced Management Catalyst (AMCat) process was utilized. In an intensive three day planning session that included the entire senior leadership team with representatives from all aspects of the organization (including organized labor), the group created a compelling vision of how it would operate from a strategic viewpoint. Following the creation of the vision, the group brainstormed current and near term actions necessary to begin implementing the new vision. The brainstormed ideas were then grouped based on the outcome they achieved. These groupings were then prioritized and the current stage of accomplishment was defined. This enable evaluating and discussing the strategic level objectives and allocating resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the desired vision. A detailed action plan was then created by further refining each strategic level objective. The plan was then communicated throughout the entire organization and implementation began immediately upon completion of the three day AMCat session.

## ***Benefits***

The entire organization was included (directly or through representatives) in creating the future they desired for themselves within the constraints and guidance from their higher headquarters. The detailed implementation plans were communicated and individuals throughout the organization volunteered or assigned to implementation teams based on the priorities and time schedules of the overall plan. Regularly schedule updates provided opportunities for working groups to report progress, receive input, and most efficiently implement the detailed work plan. As one can understand, an “organizational re-direction” of this magnitude doe not happen overnight or even over one year. This effort required several years to fully implement, yet more importantly, it caused a new wave of continuous innovation that exists within the organization some 12 years after the effort first started. DRMS transformed to a truly agile organization while remaining focused on their core mission.