



Mike Harlan – When a new program plan was developed to meet delivery dates in Project Wedgetail, Mike Harlan, AEW&C flight-test team leader, and his team were brought in to develop a flight-test plan. For his quick work, Harlan was contacted by the head of AEW&C, Maureen Dougherty, who told him his contributions had been recognized by the leadership team. “It was quite a surprise to be recognized,” Harlan said. “I was part of a team of really smart and innovative people who rolled up their sleeves and found a way forward through a challenging situation.” JIM ANDERSON PHOTO

Jeanne Simeona – Responding to an immediate need for a critical skill manager in Turkey, Human Resources representative Jeanne Simeona expeditiously worked through the procedures needed to find the right candidate for the job. Consequently, the position with the Peace Eagle program was filled quickly; and the program’s leader, Mark Ellis, brought Simeona’s good work to the attention of the AEW&C leadership team. “I’ve suggested to HR management that these leadership recognitions be made a best practice,” Simeona said. DANIEL THOMPSON PHOTO

Leadership

How an IDS program thanks employees for exemplifying leadership

By BILL SEIL

Employees in Integrated Defense Systems’ Airborne Early Warning and Control program are receiving impromptu visits from program executives. But there’s no reason for these teammates to panic. These visits are meant to thank people for a job well done.

AEW&C program executives spend time each week learning leadership lessons from their employees. Their staff meetings include time to recognize program teammates who recently have exemplified one or more of the Boeing Leadership Attributes.

“After we’ve identified someone and discussed how they specifically demonstrated a leadership attribute, one of us volunteers to contact that employee in his or her work area,” said Maureen Dougherty, vice president/program manager, AEW&C. “It’s nothing formal. We just want to say ‘thanks,’ let them know that they’ve been recognized, and reinforce the leadership qualities they demonstrate.”

Dougherty said recognizing leaders this way has been a practice in AEW&C for about a year. It was, in part, a response to the Employee Survey, which showed that employees wanted better recognition for good work. It also challenged the leadership team to spend more time focusing on the leadership attributes. “Many of these stories are inspiring and give us ideas on how we can improve our own leadership skills,” Dougherty said.

Response to the program has been good. Employees are taken by surprise when an executive shows up at their work stations to say “thank you” for demonstrating strong leadership in a tough environment. It also gets a positive response from nearby co-workers. About half the people recognized are managers, and half are nonmanagers.

In most cases, the executive contacting the employee is not part of that employee’s chain of command; instead, the executive is there representing the leadership team. Dougherty noted that this strengthens integration and collaboration across the organization.



Angia Vawter – Angia Vawter, an AEW&C procurement agent, was assigned the task of coordinating with the P-8A Poseidon program to find a common supplier to provide electronic warfare self-protection equipment for specific groups within the programs. The challenge was to develop common requirements for highly complex equipment in a short time frame. Vawter and her colleagues were recognized by her director, Steve Alberts. “This really shows how much our leadership team values individuals who are working hard to meet difficult challenges,” Vawter said. DANIEL THOMPSON PHOTO

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– Maureen Dougherty, vice president/program manager, AEW&C

The team recognizes three to five employees each week. The recognition is strictly verbal—no award, object or gift is presented—and Dougherty believes the simplicity of the approach makes it more meaningful.

While there’s no requirement that AEW&C groups use this recognition strategy, Dougherty said some are taking a similar approach. Word about its success has been spreading across IDS.

Dougherty emphasized that leadership must go beyond the management ranks for a program to be successful. “The programs and systems we’re working on are so complex and geographically dispersed, it’s critically important that we have strong leaders throughout the organization,” she said. “We need people who can use their skills and experience to step up and take on the big challenges.”

She added, however, that people must be thoughtful enough to understand when they should be leading and when they should be following. The best leaders know how to do both. ■

william.j.seil@boeing.com

Leadership, defined

The six Boeing Leadership Attributes define the company’s character and culture. Here are these attributes.

A Boeing leader

- **Charts the course.**
- **Sets high expectations.**
- **Inspires others.**
- **Finds a way.**
- **Lives the Boeing values.**
- **Delivers results.**