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# A Study of Organizational Identity at AFN-Europe

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by

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Nicholas N. Abbondante

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Kevin H. Beverage

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Barry V. Cipriano
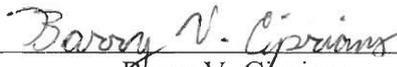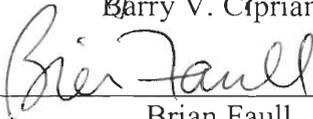
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Brian Faull

Date: May 5, 2000

Approved:

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Professor Wes Jamison, Advisor IGSD

## Abstract

AFN-Europe requested a study on the state of organizational identity and morale among its employees.  Interviews and focus groups were used to gather qualitative information from employees, while a survey was used to quantitatively measure the feelings of the entire organization.  The main issues affecting the morale and organizational identity of AFN-Europe were structure, communication, workload, purpose, care of personnel, and recognition.  Recommendations were made based upon these findings.

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## 1 - Introduction

The American Forces Network-Europe (AFN-E) is responsible for American radio and television broadcasts in Europe to military personnel and their families. AFN-E headquarters is in Frankfurt, Germany, with affiliate stations located in Germany, Italy, Belgium, Bosnia, and Turkey. Each station is staffed by a diverse group of people, comprised mostly of members of the US Army, Navy, and Air Force, as well as US civilians and local nationals. The Frankfurt headquarters employs approximately 70 staff members of about 270 Europe-wide.

Recently, AFN requested a study about the state of its organizational identity. The AFN especially wished to improve its internal and external organizational image. Additionally, it wanted to improve its ability to manage the workload and personnel situations. The AFN wanted to conduct a study to determine the state of its organizational identity in an effort to find ways to improve it. It was hoped that by improving the staff's view of the organization a better external image would be created, as well as a better work environment.

The project team traveled to the AFN-E headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany to conduct a study on the state of the organizational identity. Data collected during on-site focus groups and interviews was used to aid in the design of a survey that was then mailed to each individual AFN staff member. The project team used the results to identify sources of employee dissatisfaction, and ways to increase employee job satisfaction. After the data had been collected, content analysis and statistical calculations were performed. The project team then developed a list of recommendations for the improvement of AFN's organizational identity.

Chapter two of this report presents an extensive review of the literature pertaining to job satisfaction, organizational structure, and internal and external organizational image as background to the problem. These concepts are first defined as they pertain to this project. The literature review then focuses on possible sources of job dissatisfaction and poor organizational identity, followed by methods for alleviating these problems. The review concludes with a description of the standard methodology for surveying, interviewing, and conducting focus groups.

After the literature review, a comprehensive account of the methodology used in the study is presented in chapter three. The methods used in this study were focus groups, interviews, and surveys. The focus groups and interviews were conducted with various AFN personnel to gather qualitative data. A survey was used to collect quantitative data to extrapolate information to the entire population. The purpose of this section is to detail exactly what techniques the project team used.

Chapter four includes a detailed account of the data collected throughout the project and the analysis performed on it. This includes data from surveys as well as data collected through content analysis of focus groups and interviews. Chapter five consists of the overall conclusions of the study, based upon the use of triangulation, from the three sources. The main issues affecting the morale and organizational identity of AFN-Europe were structure, communication, workload, purpose, care of personnel, and recognition. Chapter six is a description of the project team's recommendations for AFN-Europe, as well as recommendations for future studies and details about the weaknesses of the study.

## 2 - Literature Review

The intent of this project was to measure and improve the corporate identity of the American Forces Network (AFN) in Europe. Areas that were investigated in the background literature included job satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational structure. The following literature review covers topics necessary to the understanding of the project, including job satisfaction, corporate image, and organizational behavior. It contains methods for qualitatively measuring satisfaction and identity, problems frequently encountered within organizations relating to these items, and actions used to resolve these problems. Previous studies are presented, demonstrating what other organizations have done in addressing the areas of job satisfaction and corporate identity. These items provide a background of how to measure and improve the identity of an organization, which helps in the understanding of the methodology and analysis included later in the report.

### 2.1 - Definition of Terms

Before the issues central to the topics of corporate self-image, loyalty, and job satisfaction can be explored, the terms must be defined. By clearly defining the meaning intended by each term, confusion about statements presented in this text can be avoided.

#### 2.1.1 - Job Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Performance

Job satisfaction is defined as the favorable or unfavorable feelings with which employees view their work. Satisfaction is a measure of the relative pleasure or pain with

which an individual sees his job. For instance, "I enjoy going to work everyday" is an example of a statement that demonstrates job satisfaction. This differs from objective thoughts, an example being the statement, "My job is difficult" (Davis & Newstrom, 1989). The difference in these two items is that the statement of job satisfaction represents personal feelings and opinions about a job, whereas the objective thought is a factual statement about a job. Feelings and opinions are more difficult to obtain from employees since a contradictory opinion to that of a manager may lead to retribution.

Satisfaction can be viewed in two ways. Quinn and Staines (1979) used the terms "facet-free" and "facet-specific" (cited in Kerce & Booth-Kewley, 1993). Facet-free satisfaction is seen as the overall attitude toward one's job. A facet-free satisfaction level may be measured by a single question, such as "Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?" In contrast, facet-specific satisfaction is the attitude towards certain components of a job. This is a measure of how much an employee likes each individual aspect of their job. This includes things such as work hours, vacation time, office space, and decision-making abilities. Typically, facet-specific satisfaction levels must be measured by a series of questions, each examining a single aspect of one's job.

Job involvement is another term often used when understanding job satisfaction. Job involvement is a measure of the role one's job plays in one's life. This is similar to organizational commitment, which is the degree to which an employee identifies with an organization and wants to actively participate in it. Organizational commitment reflects an employee's belief in the mission and goal of the organization and the willingness to expend effort to achieve these goals. Job involvement and organizational commitment are terms often used interchangeably (Davis & Newstrom, 1989).

When studying job satisfaction, a common assumption made by organizations is that satisfied employees will be more productive workers. Handy (1993) states that there is little evidence a satisfied worker works harder; however, he does stress that, "Although satisfaction does not necessarily lead to productivity, productivity can often lead to satisfaction" (Handy, 1993, p. 154). This satisfaction stems from a sense of pride and achievement for being part of a productive and effective organization. According to Davis and Newstrom (1989), satisfied employees tend to work at the same level of performance that previously brought them satisfaction. A more accurate assessment is that high performance leads to high job satisfaction, given that high performance often leads to awards such as promotions or raises. Studies conducted by Butler and Waldroop (1999) found that organizations assume that productive employees are happy with their jobs. Yet, the truth is productivity does not always represent job satisfaction. These studies show job satisfaction is not a reliable way to increase productivity and that productivity is in no way a measure of how satisfied an employee is.

According to Crow and Hartman (1995), too much concern is often placed on job satisfaction and its impact upon organizational effectiveness. They state that work habits and attitudes tend to stay the same regardless of satisfaction levels. Their research indicated that it is more important to concentrate on removing job dissatisfaction and increasing job involvement. Instead of trying to create ways to make employees happy, an organization should focus on removing items of dissatisfaction. Crow and Hartman (1995) state that these two actions are a more productive approach to improving organizational effectiveness.

Satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment were all important in the study of employee attitudes. Specifically, these factors often relate to the morale among employees. Morale will prove to be a significant part of this study. In addition, these three items may have impacts on employee retention, reenlistment, and attitudes in general.

2.1.2 - Turnover, Absenteeism, and Reassignment

Turnover, or the rate at which employees leave an organization, is another concern for an organization. Loyalty is the dominant factor in predicting employee turnover. Voyles (1999) says a common misconception is that a satisfied employee is a loyal employee. He states loyalty is demonstrated by an employee's actions and is a long-term behavior pattern. In contrast, job satisfaction is predominantly an attitude and is subject to frequent changes. Voyles' research indicated that employee loyalty is earned when organizations offer opportunities for growth, provide a supportive work environment, and recognize employees for their contributions. Handy (1993) offers the view that employee satisfaction is important because there is "strong evidence" satisfied employees tend to stay in the same organization (Handy, 1993, p. 154). However, Handy's study was not as complete as Voyles' study. Handy's study only measured satisfaction, not employee loyalty. This oversight may have led Handy to draw incorrect conclusions based upon his collected data.

Turnover is a concern since it can have several negative consequences for organizations. There are many costs in replacing departed employees, including the

inefficiency of the departing employee, associated coworkers, and the incoming employee, as well as a loss of productivity while the position remains unfilled, and the costs of training and adjusting a new employee to the new work environment (McConnell, 1999). Turnover can also have benefits for an organization. These include increased opportunity for internal promotion and the infusion of ideas from newly hired employees (Davis & Newstrom, 1989).

Besides turnover rates, absences and tardiness are another way employees may express job dissatisfaction. However, the correlation between job satisfaction and these factors is not significant. This is because employees are absent sometimes for legitimate reasons, such as illness. Dissatisfied employees may not intend to be absent more frequently, but may find it easier to respond to opportunities to do so. These attitudinal absences often occur with great frequency among certain groups of employees and typically occur on Mondays and Fridays. These absences can create problems within small organizations, typically when they occur over a large percentage of the population (Davis & Newstrom, 1989).

Government bureaucracies such as the military often experience frequent reassignments. Within the military, there is frequent rotation of duty assignments among personnel. These reassignments are sometimes by choice, other times not. Often the question is raised about the advantages of producing well-rounded personnel as opposed to personnel who excel in one area. Although well-rounded personnel can be placed in most any situation and perform well, there will be few who have expertise in any specific field. Personnel must go through training frequently for their different positions, which takes away from the actual time they are working. According to Wilson (1989), the truth

of the situation is that personnel prefer the frequent reassignment. Duty assignments vary in their appeal to personnel. Since everybody wants to have a fair chance at these choice postings, they support a system in which they have the greatest chance of obtaining one of these assignments through frequent rotations. The same reasoning applies to the opportunities for career enhancing positions. Since there are small numbers of positions that may lead to promotion relative to the demand, frequent reassignment allows a fair way for all personnel to have an equal chance at them (Wilson, 1989).

## 2.1.3 - Organizational Behavior

Organizational behavior is the study and application of knowledge about how people act within organizations. It applies to all types of organizations, such as business, government, school and service organizations. The key elements of organizational behavior are people, structure, technology, and environment. Structure is the term for the formal relationships within an organization. Technology refers to the resources people work with and which influence their working relationships. All organizations exist in an external environment whereby organizations interact and influence one another (Davis & Newstrom, 1989). Understanding an organization is not as simple as understanding what each person's role is, but understanding how these roles interact with one another (Wilson, 1989).

According to Wilson (1989), there is great truth in the view that the people that compose an organization are important and not the organization itself. However, Wilson states that this view has two significant errors. The first is that "people are the products, not only of their biology, family, and schooling, but of their organizational position"

(Wilson, 1989, p. 24). A person cannot help but be affected by his position in an organization as it shapes his beliefs and goals. The second error involves failing to acknowledge that a person's abilities are related to the level of autonomy he possesses within the organization and the resources to which he has access. Employees are less productive when they have less authority in decision making and when they do not have the necessary materials to complete a task (Wilson, 1989).

2.1.4 - Corporate Identity, Image, and Reputation

There is often confusion on the use of the terms corporate image, corporate identity, and corporate reputation. Although they have similar connotations, they have very distinct meanings. Corporate image is how external people perceive an organization. This is different from corporate identity, which describes the way an organization is viewed by its employees. Corporate reputation is the overall way an organization is viewed, including both employees and the public (Fombrum, 1996).

Corporate image is often of concern to an organization since it can greatly affect its position in the community. Recent research (e.g. Chajet, 1992) has shown that internal staff is an important part of an external image. Employees are eager to identify with an organization (Landry, 1998); however, the employee must be kept informed of an organization's plans in order to successfully achieve this. According to Buxton (1999), when trying to establish a new corporate identity, the backing of the employees is absolutely essential, since if they do not take an active role then the plan will surely fail. Large organizations can easily overlook the importance that employees play in corporate identity. Chajet (1992) states that if an organization wants to create a new identity, then

the employees must know it, accept it, and feel they have a role in it. If employees are not fully aware of this new identity then gaps will exist between the desired and achieved identities.

Corporate image is not always an accurate reflection of corporate identity. Corporate image is distorted by factors such as an organization's attempt to manipulate the public through advertising or other forms of self-presentation and rumors from unofficial statements made by employees to peers, analysts, and reporters. An organization can have many images, and if these images are inconsistent then the reputation of the organization will suffer. Thus, many programs that aim to improve corporate image focus on creating a single image (Fombrum, 1996). Abratt (1989) argues that creating this single image is "the formal articulation of a corporate philosophy which is highly specific to the organization" (Abratt, 1989, p. 70). This corporate philosophy, formally known as a corporate mission statement, is a brief statement of an organization's values and goals that clearly defines what the organization represents (Garbett, 1988).

Government organizations often run into problems when trying to define a mission statement. This stems from the fact that "government agencies, much more than business firms, are likely to have general, vague, or inconsistent goals about which clarity and agreement can only occasionally be obtained" (Wilson, 1989, p. 26). There are a variety of reasons for this lack of coherency within government organizations, often due to poor communication among agencies and the overlapping that occurs from many agencies being involved in the same area of work. Wilson says, "Often any effort to clarify them [goals] will result in either the meaningless production of verbiage or the

exposure of great disagreements" (Wilson, 1989, p. 26). Knowing the goal of an organization may not necessarily lead to a deeper understanding of how to obtain it. Therefore, the focus is often placed upon tasks. These tasks are more descriptive and intuitive statements about how an organization can go about trying to solve a problem. Tasks and goals are not completely independent, but "are related... in a way that is often complex and uncertain, especially in government bureaucracies" (Wilson, 1989, p.26). Thus tasks are often the focus of government organizations since the goals are not always clearly defined.

Defining tasks rather than goals is an important part of how employees of government agencies perform their job. "When the goals are too vague or ambiguous to permit them to become a ready basis of task definition, the tasks will often be shaped not by executive preferences but by the incentives valued by the" employees (Wilson, 1989, p. 48). This infers that an organization needs to define tasks well if it wants employees to perform their jobs appropriately. When employee tasks are vague, they will act accordingly to what they perceive as the mission of the organization (Wilson, 1989).

Certain bureaucracies do have the ability to create a strong mission statement. When this is possible, many benefits can be derived from it. First, when the mission of an organization is clearly defined, managers can be assured that employees are carrying out the interests of the organization even in the absence of supervision. Employees are able to better know what they have to do and they are more inclined to want to do it. There also tends to be less miscommunication throughout the chain of command since there is a common understanding of the overall mission. There are negatives associated with a strong mission statement as well. Tasks which are seen as not benefiting the

organization's purpose will not be performed as diligently as those which have direct connections to the goal. Also, employees who are interested in furthering their careers will tend to stay away from jobs which do not directly benefit the organization's mission statement (Wilson, 1998).

There are two additional facts to keep in mind when considering corporate image. Boyle (1996) explains that public awareness is an essential part of corporate image; the more the public knows about an organization's purpose, the more likely it is to be favorably regarded, as long as the interests of the company coincide with the interests of the community. The second is that the image of the industry affects the image of the organization. An example Boyle gives is that an honest politician is still a politician. People associate certain ideas with certain industries and nothing can change this fact. An organization must accept the popular view of its industry and learn ways of how to improve its image in spite of that view.


## 2.2 - Problems in the Workplace

Now that the ideas of corporate identity, job satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational behavior have been explained, topics involving common problems in the workplace may be addressed. Although there is great variation among individual employees and among organizations, certain generalities can be identified. In order to address employee feelings on the topics of corporate identity, job satisfaction, and loyalty, factors that influence these issues must first be identified. Sources of this dissatisfaction include economic impetus, social stresses, political concerns, and other types of general frustration.

Though the existence of employee dissatisfaction is becoming more widely recognized, not all people see dissatisfaction as an issue. Some believe that people should not expect to be satisfied with their jobs. Others do not see evidence that job dissatisfaction is a problem, or do not believe that a large number of people are dissatisfied (O'Toole, 1974). These topics become points of dissention and argument, as it is not easy to measure job satisfaction or morale. There is no definitive metric of "healthy or unhealthy" job satisfaction (O'Toole, 1974).

Though this information is about 25 years old, it is important to address it from an historical standpoint. Many changes in society were occurring around this time, one of which was changing views about the workplace. Some employees became increasingly more vocal about their everyday dissatisfaction issues, and comparing their jobs to others' jobs. Organizations today are becoming much more aware of employee attitudes. Businesses and other groups are realizing that employee attitude can affect efficiency and quality of work (Haasen & Shea, 1997).

Before discussion of employee complaints, a few common misconceptions should be defined. As outlined in the definitions section, misconceptions are prevalent and varied in nature. One misconception is an assumed correlation between job satisfaction and employee morale. An employee may be satisfied with his job, but have low morale. An example of this situation is a construction worker. He may be satisfied with his job in terms of his pay, job security, and the small amount of work after hours, but not inspired to work hard or vigorously. The morale or enthusiasm of such an individual may be low because of complacency or indifference toward the actual job. The converse of this is also possible; there could be an unsatisfied worker who has high morale. An example of

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this type of employee is an enthusiastic worker with many good business ideas, who has a burning desire to become upper-level management.

Another common misinterpretation is a correlation between satisfaction and performance. On the one hand, satisfied employees do not necessarily perform better than unsatisfied employees. An example of this is an employee who is quite happy in a job, but whose skills are not adequate for his position. On the other hand, dissatisfied employees do not always perform more poorly than satisfied employees (Haasen & Shea 1997). These misconceptions are common, and may affect survey responses and personal discussions. It is important to be aware of these misconceptions to properly design questions, and also to provide context to responses. Both satisfaction and performance are important, but they are not always related. The following sections outline some of the qualms that employees may have about their respective workplaces.

2.2.1 - Affect

One important aspect of job satisfaction that must be acknowledged is an individual's indigenous disposition. In a study of "Trait Negative Affect" of part-time military personnel who also held civilian jobs, Schaubroeck, et al. (1998) concluded that certain people have a negative view of work in general. In the report, the authors state that some employees "have enduring traits that predispose them to view different contexts in consistent ways" (Schaubroeck, et al, 1998, p. 553). An effect of this is that employees may view both of their different jobs negatively, based only on their innate negative affect toward their work in general. Furthermore, "high [negative affect] employees... are particularly likely to remain expressively dissatisfied on self-report

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measures, despite improvements" (cited in Schaubrook, et al 1998, p. 555). Thus, employees who have these "negative affect" traits may exaggerate job-related stresses. They may also not respond positively to adjustments or improvements in the workplace designed to appease or improve their negative feelings (Schaubrook, et al, 1998).

The negative affect study concluded that certain individuals do have a negative feeling toward jobs in general, and may exaggerate job-related sources of stress. However, the correlations were slight and difficult to measure (Schaubrook, et al, 1998). Therefore, trait negative affect will not be as evident in a study of employee attitudes as it was in the study just described. The study of AFN personnel will not be conducive to analyzing employees' other jobs in an attempt to judge if particular employees have this negative affect trait. It will nonetheless be acknowledged from the standpoint that some people will report a negative feeling toward their jobs simply from their innate personality, rather than the characteristics of the job.

In summary, the existence of trait negative affect is important to be aware of, but not to study. The responses will be based on the employee attitudes and feelings, which are equally pertinent regardless of trait affect. Even if employees exaggerate their negative feelings for a particular situation, they are reporting their feelings as they see fit. The data collected may be slightly exaggerated, but accurate in the sense that it reflects the feeling of the employee. This measurement error will be offset by accurate and complete descriptions of the responses and their meanings, as well as by triangulated results.

## 2.2.2 - Compensation

Common causes of employee dissatisfaction can now be addressed. Only after these sources of dissatisfaction are outlined can changes be made to increase worker morale. One must be aware of the factors that cause dissatisfaction in employees.

O'Toole (1974) argues that economic pressures can cause employees to become frustrated. They may feel underpaid or unhappy about inadequate pay raises. Wages may remain constant even though the cost of living increases.

O'Toole also states that social issues may negatively influence corporate identity. This may cause dissatisfaction among employees with respect to promotion. Those people who have worked hard to increase their status may be frustrated to find out that others have "failed to earn their rights [to high status] in the conventional fashion" (O'Toole, 1974, p. 44). Due to these instances, which may seem unfair, some may begin to doubt the axiom that hard work is beneficial (O'Toole, 1974). Employees may view this as favoritism. This alone may be enough to frustrate, alienate, or disillusion some employees. Classic values of effort, success, equality, liberty, competitiveness, and morality have been replaced by the newer 'self-first' philosophies of anti-authority, individuality, rationality, as well as psychological and aesthetic concerns. These new and different values may conflict with older, classical business practices and can be frustrating to both new and old employees (Mindell & Gorden, 1981).

## 2.2.3 - Management

Another issue that some employees see as a problem is management practices. If employees feel unneeded or unimportant, they will be less likely to work efficiently or

strive for quality work (Nash, 1985). Management can have these types of negative effects on employee morale.

Today, companies are turning to new and experimental management practices and organizational structures to increase employee morale and organizational identity (Haasen & Shea, 1997). Though these new, radical practices are not guaranteed to improve conditions in all organizations that elect to implement them, they have been proven effective enough in some companies to warrant the risk of change. Haasen and Shea (1997) outline certain companies' success stories, and what reforms the companies have implemented. These companies have experienced varying degrees of success with greater productivity, higher employee morale and job satisfaction, and a better internal image of the company among its employees. The greater productivity and more widespread satisfaction are results of the organizational practices of the company (Haasen & Shea, 1997). Thus, there are ways to increase employee satisfaction. However, the factors that have caused this dissatisfaction must first be identified. This information can then guide the organization's changes.

Improper management can play a role in employee discontent. Douglas MacGregor (1967) published two theories about management personnel types, which he called Theory X and Theory Y (Haasen & Shea, 1997). Characteristic practices of Theory X and Theory Y managers are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1:  Comparison of Theory X and Theory Y Manager Characteristics.**

| Subject Area | Theory X Feelings and Characteristics | Theory Y Feelings And Characteristics |
|---|---|---|
| 1.  Managerial Role | Director/dictator | Guide/mentor |
| 2.  View of self | Crucial, pivotal | Helpful |
| 3.  Employee Attitudes | Poor work ethic | Good attitude, if nurtured |
| 4.  Employee Purpose | Workhorse, only | Valuable resource |
| 5.  View of Employees | Complacent, whining | Important source of feedback |

MacGregor (1967) believed that most managers operated by Theory X practices. These practices include characteristics that may be detrimental to the organization. Theory X managers tend to feel that managers are crucial to ensure proper operation of the organization. They feel that if managers were not present, the organization would not be able to function correctly.  Furthermore, the managers must be active in their direction of employees, otherwise the business will not run smoothly and the employees will be inefficient and ineffective.  Theory X also states that many managers view employees in general as "indolent, gullible, unambitious, and resistant to change" (cited in Haasen & Shea, 1997).   In addition, Theory X managers feel employees care firstly about themselves, followed by their fellow employees, and lastly about the organization.  Some employees may notice these misconceptions their managers have.  This realization could lead to feelings of bitterness toward the managers, possibly hindering good feelings of organizational identity (Haasen & Shea, 1997).

Theory Y managers are quite different in their views of employees and the organization as a whole.  Theory Y managers are compassionate and view employees as valuable resources.  These managers acknowledge the fact that employees may have good ideas and suggestions.  Employee views of a company may differ greatly from that

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of the managers; theory Y managers realize this and value input from employees (Haasen & Shea, 1997). Nash (1985) believes that if Theory Y is practiced, employees will be happier and more inspired to work well and efficiently. Because of this wide spectrum of effect, managerial techniques and their effect on employees must be examined in a study of organizational satisfaction.

Ibrahim (1998) illustrates another reason why the behavior of managers or other leaders is important. Managers can be role models for citizenship in a company. Ibrahim (1998, p. 533) states, "A great deal of people's behavior is acquired vicariously by observing other people's behavior." Since managers in a company are much more visible than other employees, more learned behavior will originate from the managers. Thus, manager actions are important in this way as well.

Ibrahim continues by stating that supportive leaders help in the cultivation of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). OCB's are unprompted actions of individuals that are not rewarded, but which help the performance of the organization. Some examples of this include instances of proactive actions, such as organizing shared resources (i.e., file cabinets), or arranging employee activities or discussion sessions. Such activities are perhaps not necessary to the proper functioning of the organization, but are significantly positive in effect. The main point is that OCB's are prompted by an "intrinsic motivation" (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 530), rather than by external influences. If employees notice that their managers are engaging in such unprompted actions, employees may respond by mimicking these types of OCB's. OCB's are desirable because they "improve efficiency and effectiveness in both public and private organizations" (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 530).

2.2.4 - Additional Sources of Dissatisfaction

Mindell and Gorden (1981) believe that employee attitudes are changing in other ways as well. Whereas many people used to be willing to trade nearly any work for a paycheck, people today tend to be much more selective in their choice of employment. This causes a relative lack of interest in jobs that may be less desirable, such as maintenance or custodial work. Employees today tend to look for satisfaction in their jobs. This is in contrast to previous tendencies to work for money so their families can be satisfied. Life satisfaction now seems to be much more dependent on job satisfaction than it was in the past (Mindell & Gorden, 1981).

Other sources of distress and dissatisfaction include job insecurity, work overload, and status. Employees who are overworked, who are low in status, and who not feel their jobs are secure all may display feelings of discontent. Physical conditions such as temperature, light, sound and office design can also affect employee attitudes. Thus, poor working conditions can make employees unhappy (Quick & Quick, 1984).

Some major sources of discontent include never seeing the finished product, two-faced supervisors, and poor communications. Employees in these situations may feel that they are being intentionally excluded from some aspects of the business. This may lead to feelings of alienation. Factors such as poor working conditions, being reassigned or transferred, or change in management may lead employees to believe that they are not needed or not wanted. They may not feel like they are taking an active role in the success of the company and therefore are wasting their time at such a job. Feelings of boredom or that they are in the wrong job can also result.

Employees are especially frustrated when given unclear responsibilities. Nash (1985) believes that this is the most important source of dissatisfaction. When employees are uncertain about their responsibilities, this confusion can lead to feeling lower in self-worth, feeling unneeded, and ultimately result in apathy.

## 2.2.5 - Symptoms

Dissatisfied employees may exhibit certain symptoms of dissatisfaction. Signs of dissatisfaction can be either on an individual basis or on an organization-wide scale. The individual signs include characteristics such as absenteeism, apathy, low quality of work, or low efficiency in work. If employees do not feel needed or important, they will have a lower desire to produce good work, work effectively or even show up to work. On an organization-wide basis, if employees are sufficiently dissatisfied with their jobs, they may be compelled to take drastic measures such as refusal to work, strikes, demonstrations, or even quitting. All of these should be clear signs to the employer that the employees are displeased with their work or working conditions.

One additional sign of dissatisfaction can include high turnover rate. This may indicate that employees are not staying in the organization very long for some reason. This may be caused by the innate nature of the job and researchers have found that this could also be an indicator of low job satisfaction. Job tenure will be more complex in a military environment such as the AFN. This is due to factors such as the relative amount of difficulty to remove an individual from a position and the nature of post assignment (Chesney, 2000). For instance, it is possible that an employee may be assigned to work at some location for two years. In this case, job length would have little meaning.

However, employees may be given a choice of assignment, or the opportunity to stay. If employees choose to continue working at the organization, or choose to transfer to the organization, this is a positive sign for the organization. This indicates that there is a desire to work at the organization for some reason.

Some positive points can also be extracted from studies about job satisfaction and corporate identity among employees. O'Toole (1974) states that some jobs are innately better than others: not all jobs are pleasant, nor can all jobs be made equally satisfying. That is the nature of work. However, he continues by noting that almost all jobs – even bad jobs – can be improved at least slightly. This can be achieved by removing items of dissatisfaction rather than trying to add items of satisfaction (Crow & Hartman, 1995). The way in which the workplace can be improved depends on many factors, including the types of employees, the nature of the organization, and the current state of the organization. There is no exact formula for improving the workplace, only suggestions that can be adapted and applied to a specific situation.

Because people differ greatly in their social and psychological nature, they have different needs and expectations from their jobs. O'Toole (1974) notes that these characteristics are more pertinent to job placement than other factors. An employee's commitment to his job is of utmost importance to both himself and his company. The individual, workplace, and the society as a whole all benefit from employees that are satisfied and committed. These ideas can then be used in part to help improve working conditions.

After an in-depth study of the factors leading to low organizational identity and low job satisfaction at AFN-Europe, these data can be compared to data from other

organizations. This, along with discussions with employees, will help provide context to the answers and also aid in formulation of suggestions for improvement for the AFN-Europe.

## 2.3 - Improving the Workplace

Once problems in a workplace are identified, steps can be taken to remedy them. This section addresses specific ways of improving the workplace with respect to job satisfaction, company loyalty, and corporate self-image. Factors such as the work environment, compensation, recognition, and individual life goals are discussed. The linkage between employee job perception, loyalty, and job satisfaction is explored. The significance of a feeling of personal involvement in the company is also examined. Information from previous studies in improving the workplace is presented as well.

### 2.3.1 - Work Environment

One of the factors that affect employee job satisfaction and corporate image is the environment in which the employee is required to work. As a recent experiment, the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) renovated their workplace with a focus on "privacy, flexibility, comfort, and access" ("Redesigning", 1999). Comfort was improved by installing soft lighting and noise-reducing carpet to reduce distraction and make the work environment more aesthetically pleasing. By centrally locating shared company information and providing adequate open workspace, access was made easier for employees. This made their jobs easier. The new office design also encouraged more

employee interaction, while still providing privacy to each individual worker. Following the renovation, ASID's executive director noted "increased productivity and communication among staff, with less disruptive noise" ("Redesigning", 1999).

A study by ASID reports that almost 75% of today's workforce dislikes their work environment. Most of this is due to privacy issues ("Redesigning", 1999). A dislike of the work environment will translate directly to a dislike for the company that is providing the work environment. This results in a loss of productivity and loyalty to the company. A dislike of work can be detrimental to the other employees, and to the image of the company in the customer's eyes.

2.3.2 - Compensation and Recognition

Possible sources of employee dissatisfaction are salary and benefits. If employees feel that they are being overworked without proper recognition, they will become dissatisfied with their job. They may also seek out a new one with less work and more compensation. Thus, by improving employee compensation, the employee's perception of the organization can be improved.

Rachel Fox (1999) conducted a study on the individual topics of compensation in the form of a paycheck, bonus, or benefits. For each topic between 30-60% of employees surveyed rated that topic as a priority regarding job satisfaction. In comparison, 90% of employees rated respect (a feeling of worth and esteem) from their manager as a priority. The employees overwhelmingly indicated that respect from their manager was more important than compensation in any form. In another recent study of information technology professionals, the workers indicated that they were dissatisfied with their pay,

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especially concerning bonuses and non-monetary compensation such as awards or citations. However, when asked to describe their company's benefits, they rated them as being good or at least indicated some level of satisfaction (Radcliff, 1999).

These findings indicate that whatever salary employees receive is less important to them than recognition for their actions. An overworked employee whose actions are treated by the company as nothing above and beyond the normal job requirements will grow to resent the company. However, if that person's actions are recognized, whether by a bonus, special incentive plan, or awards meeting, then the employee is more likely to feel appreciated and useful to the company, fostering a good opinion of the company in general. In addition, if employees do not make enough money to meet their needs, they will seek out other job opportunities that are more lucrative.

Compensation can affect organizational identity in more ways than one. Employees may feel that compensation is handled unfairly, with benefits and extra pay going to employees that don't deserve it. Michael Carney (2000) says that in a recent survey of a technical college's staff members, the majority indicated that they would like to see pay directly relate to job performance. By implementing staff evaluations that relate directly to compensation, the problem of fairness with compensation can be addressed. However, the flaw with this finding is that evaluation criteria are ultimately a subjective item and there can be no one fair evaluation system. This leads to a difficulty in being able to create an evaluation system by which all employees are evaluated.

### 2.3.3 - Employee Interests

Employee interests can be pivotal in determining job satisfaction and organizational loyalty, and the general perception the employee has of the organization. Everyone has long-term life goals. Whether it is to create something or to teach or to accomplish anything else, these are the interests that guide one's decision making. Butler and Waldroop (1999) state that by discovering what drives employees, supervisors can place them in positions that allow them to fulfill some of their life goals, resulting in increased job satisfaction, company loyalty, and productivity. Dennis Taylor (1999) says, "A satisfied professional is more likely to be productive and less likely to search for alternative employers."

Butler and Waldroop (1999) contend that it is optimal for a supervisor to develop a working dialog with his employees. This fosters a feeling of personal involvement with the employee and it allows the supervisor to get to know the employee. They further state that due to the linkage between employees' interests, their duties, their job satisfaction, and productivity, it is undesirable to hand off job placement to a separate department. If an arbitrary department dictates job placement by procedure, then employees can be placed in jobs that do not interest them. Rather, when job placement is determined by an employee's supervisor, who knows the employee best, then the employees can be put into positions that fit not only their capabilities but their interests, resulting in happier workers. This requires that the supervisor have some degree of personal involvement with their employees.

## 2.3.4 - Personal Involvement

Another way to increase employee loyalty and job satisfaction is to focus on the personal aspects of an employee's life. Specifically, attention to an employee's need for a family life outside of work and personal involvement in their job can result in improved performance and increased loyalty. Studies show that the majority of employees care about their ability to spend time on family life. In one particular survey, 95% of respondents said that family life was important to them (Leonard, 1999).

"Companies that help employees juggle the demands of work and family will be the big winners in the competition for good employees," says Dr. David Stum ("Employee loyalty", 1999). Many companies pretend to support family life, but do not follow through with the support when it comes to policy. This occurrence is called a "Psychological Contract Violation" ("Employee loyalty", 1999). This kind of behavior on the part of the company can lead to the employee resenting the company for its empty promises. The resentment can lead to the employee retaliating by purposely neglecting duties or leaving the company (Turnley & Feldman, 1999). Avoidance of psychological contract violations can be accomplished by being honest and up front with employees about information regarding their job, such as job requirements and opportunities for advancement.

Another aspect of personal involvement that influences an employee's perception of the company is the employee's personal relationship with their bosses. This is partly because the supervisor is an employee's most direct liaison to the company, and by building a strong personal relationship with their supervisor employees will translate the relationship to the company as a whole. This leads to the employee feeling more

important to the company as opposed to a nameless worker that is no more than a peon useful only for accomplishing a task. Additionally, if a supervisor develops a personal relationship with their employees, they will get to know the employees better, allowing the supervisor to determine more easily what tasks the employees are best suited to perform (Turnley & Feldman, 1999).

It is important for employees to develop feelings of personal involvement with their supervisors, but it is also important that employees feel the same way about their duties as well. Employees may feel like they are performing unimportant tasks or that their job is pointless. This will have a negative impact on their perceptions of the organization, and they will not feel like they are contributing much to the organization. Mark Shadur (1999) states that "Employee involvement has long been seen as an important aspect of organizational life and a key to achieving increased organizational effectiveness and positive employee perceptions." He goes on to say that a positive relationship had been found between employees' feelings of being valued by their company, and the level of productivity and company loyalty that the employees demonstrate. For these reasons, it is imperative that employees be made familiar with the reasons their job is necessary. By emphasizing an employee's role in the organization as a whole, the employee's job perception and satisfaction can be increased.

Another important part of organizational behavior is self-esteem within groups and among individuals. Self-esteem is a reflection of individual traits as well as past and current group relationships. Efficacy and competence are two major influences on self-esteem, since they can be a source of pride and praise for individuals and groups. Efficacy is the ability to produce a desired result, while competence refers to one's skills,

knowledge, and ability. Previous studies show that when working groups are cohesive and have high morale they are more productive towards their goals, which is of great benefit to the organization (Swogger, 1993). Self-esteem can be increased by recognition for the group's or individual's actions, and by emphasizing the importance of the tasks assigned to them.

According to Haasen & Shea (1997), getting the employees involved directly in the planning process can be beneficial as well. When a start up company involved their employees in the manufacturing design process, the employees reacted enthusiastically, resulting in increased productivity and reduced manufacturing cost without sacrificing quality. This technique not only improved worker performance, but also aided in building a strong, trusting relationship between the employees and their supervisors. The employees felt like their opinions counted after seeing management act on them. In fact, it can be detrimental to organizational morale to not act on employee suggestions (Carney, 2000).

A recent survey conducted by Mastery-Works, Inc., found that:

> Managers who get to know their people, respect and trust
> the competency of their employees, and listen continually
> for how employees are doing relative to their aspirations,
> quality of work life and sense of career advancement will
> have a far greater chance of developing and retaining their
> employees. The survey also revealed that even though
> most people would rather stay in their organization so they
> would not have to rebuild their reputation, networks,

comfort level and confidence all over again, they would

definitely leave if valued work ethics were lacking in their

current situation. (Fox, 1999)

This emphasizes the importance of developing a trusting relationship between the

supervisor and the employee.

## 2.3.5 - Previous Studies

One partially completed study examined what made an outstanding manager who

was able to keep employees satisfied. The study suggested that straight book

intelligence, or the ability to empathize emotionally is not enough. The key to keeping

people satisfied is spiritual intelligence (Kellaway, 1999). The outline states that all

people are seeking "a sense of purpose" (Kellaway, 1999, p.13). Spiritual intelligence is

the ability to understand human psychology and cater to the needs of employees while

they're at work. This type of caring is intended to improve worker attitudes toward their

job and in turn increase their performance. It re-iterates the need for supervisors that can

understand their employees, involve them in the company personally, and make them feel

like their job is an important contribution to the entire organization.

Yet another recently published study says that a balance with work and family life

is the main influence in job satisfaction. Influences such as one's boss, money, and

relationships with coworkers were determined to not be as important as family and non-

work life. Indeed, an emphasis on life balance yields the highest levels of job satisfaction

(MacDonald, 1999). The researchers found that "a growing number of the skilled

workers want to telecommute to better balance work and personal life" (MacDonald,

1999).  The companies that offer flexibility and benefits for life balance will benefit as well as their employees, as demonstrated by the "technology firms [which] lead the way in these kinds of packages" (MacDonald, 1999).  Since few other companies are following the lead of the technology field, they are losing workers to organizations that do offer the flexibility that people desire.  Many workers want the convenience of being able to work at home, or wherever they are at the time.  They have this attitude because the greater flexibility and time off is very attractive, and allows them to be more satisfied with their life and job while still fulfilling their duties.  This is especially important due to the increasing problems with childcare.  Many women want to pursue careers.  This means that a way of raising children while both parents work is sometimes necessary.  The ability to telecommute or have a flexible schedule allows employees to become mothers or fathers and continue to support their family while raising their children.

A similar study conducted in Canada found that the size of a company was related to the amount of satisfaction perceived by employees.  The most job satisfaction was found among the self-employed and workers at small businesses ("Study examines", 1999).  This is because of the much higher levels of communication between workers and the management staff.  Large and medium sized companies respectively were next on the list, and government workers showed the lowest levels of job satisfaction.  It was found that the smaller businesses could easily have great employee-employer trust, a key factor in perceived satisfaction ("Study examines", 1999).  Small businesses also showed five times the internal communication than the government sector, and three times that of large businesses on a per capita basis.   People feel much more satisfied when they can communicate effectively and trust their employer.  Additionally, in small organizations it

is much easier to see the importance and effects of an employee's actions, making them feel more a part of the organization. In an organization the size of the US government, these attributes can be lacking. Even small branches within large organizations can be affected by poor communication between the many different branches. The structure of AFN is organized as a large headquarters building with smaller affiliates throughout Europe. This study would indicate that employees in AFN-E's smaller affiliates would have a higher level of satisfaction than those working within the larger headquarters.

Implementing improvements within an organization relies heavily on the organization's ability to identify the problems. There are numerous ways in which an organization can discover what problems need to be addressed, especially when those problems are directly related to its employees. The next section addresses different methods of collecting data from employees within an organization.


## 2.4 - Data Collection Techniques

In order to analyze the views and beliefs of the employees at AFN, certain data collection techniques such as personal interviews, focus groups, and surveys must be used. Combining the results of these methods through triangulation reduces the inherent biases of each. Triangulation is a very important step toward accurate results and will be described in this section. Additionally, this section will explore different techniques available for data collection, as well as the pros and cons of each method (refer to Appendix B for table).

2.4.1 - Questions

Essential to all types of data collection is the question style, placement, and wording. Questions used in any interview fall into one of the following four categories: essential, extra, throw away, and probing (Berg, 1998). All questions are chosen in a manner such that each one will lead to the next with relevance to the goals of the interview (Berg, 1998). The most important of these is the essential question, which is used to gather specific information about a theme (Berg, 1998). The standardized interview uses mainly essential questions, for example, in an interview about exercise, an essential question may be "Do you lift weights?" Essential questions are simple to answer and provide a basis for understanding the thoughts and feelings of respondents.

Similar to the essential question is the extra question, which is one of the previous essential questions, reworded in order to provide a measure of reliability with the answers of the interviewee. Extra reliability questions are necessary in order to prove that respondents understand the questions and are giving consistent, truthful responses. Their reliability can be tested using a method called scaling where "instead of writing just one question…[interviewers] write a series of questions…[and] look for patterns in how people answer…" (Salant & Dillman, 1994, p. 88). However, scaling is sometimes very difficult, and requires complex statistical analysis. Sometimes, too many essential and extra questions can overwhelm the respondent and cause him to answer carelessly. As a method to avoid this, there are other types of questions that carry less meaning and provide low-stress transitions in the interview session.

To avoid barraging respondents with important essential and extra questions, there are throw away questions that are used at certain points during the interview to

break the sequence. An interviewer may use a throw away question to take the subject's mind off an emotional issue or to build momentum at the beginning of the process. An example of a throw away question could be, "What did you do last weekend?" These questions should be related to the subject, but just enough to keep them interested while being less important to the overall results.

Almost opposite to the throw away question is the probing question, which is used to elicit more information about a previous answer through eliciting elaboration of a previous answer. Probing questions are used extensively in unstandardized and semi-standardized interviews to gain depth from a response. Probing questions are usually something to the effect of, "Could you expand on that?" or "What do you mean?" In all question categories, wording is essential to the usefulness and reliability of the responses.

Respondents can easily misinterpret poorly worded questions and give an answer that is totally inconsistent with their true beliefs. For this reason, it is important to keep the wording simple and straightforward with use of familiar terms and jargon so that all respondents will have an equal understanding of the questions. Also, to keep people from being biased, questions should be worded "so that respondents cannot readily determine which answers are expected or desired" (Edwards et al., 1997, p.49).

In addition to bringing about an equal level of understanding, the wording of a question also determines its type. A question can be worded so that it is open-ended, meaning there are no responses provided, and the respondent must formulate an original narrative answer. For example, an open-ended question could begin with "How do you feel about…" or "What problems do you see with…" Open-ended questions are demanding on respondents as well as being difficult to analyze (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

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However, they do add more meaning and personality to the answers, since respondents are given the opportunity to elaborate and express their emotions (Edwards et al., 1997). The difficult analysis stems from the fact that people will give many different answers when asked open-ended questions as opposed to the finite list of a closed-ended question.

In the closed-ended question, a respondent is given a list of probable answers to choose from. The choices can either be arranged as a scale of different levels of the same response (ordinal choices), or a list of four to five different responses (unordered choices). "Each [ordinal] choice represents a gradation of a single concept" that will keep answers within a desired range (Salant & Dillman, 1994, p.82). According to Edwards (1997), closed-ended questions with ordinal choices are "fast and easy to answer" and easily analyzed. It is easy to see trends in peoples' feelings when the choices are levels of feeling about one possible unordered choice. The unordered choices are slightly more difficult for both the respondent and the interviewer. This type of closed-ended question provides a list of answers that require the respondent to think about which one most closely represents their feelings. Closed-ended questions can be combined with open-ended questions to make the partially-closed question. Partially-closed ended questions provide a list of answers like the normal closed-ended question, and also leave the opportunity open to give another, unlisted response. In a simple list of responses, for example, there would be a blank line under the list of given answers for "other" responses (Salant & Dillman, 1994). These questions tend to be very difficult to analyze due to the variety of responses that are given.

The placement of questions is critical. Questions that pose risk for respondents are typically presented in what is known as a funnel design. In a funnel design, the first

questions are general in nature and are used to get the respondent talking and feeling comfortable with the interviewer. As the interview progresses, probing questions are used to key in on relevant topics that were mentioned by the respondent and guide them toward a few essential questions. Near the end of the interview when trust has been established between the respondent and interviewer, the essential questions are asked. Not only placement, but also style and wording of questions are extremely important to the success of all data collection techniques.

2.4.2 - Personal Interviews

Personal interviews are one of the important methods of data collection. A personal interview is considered to be a conversation with a purpose. The interviewer guides the interview like a normal conversation with the purpose of collecting specific information. The level of guidance can vary based upon the style of interview and the desired responses. There are three basic styles of personal interview that are used depending on the nature of the information and interviewer preference. These are standardized, unstandardized, and semi-standardized.

Standardized interviews are guided very rigidly and formally, with a specific and pre-determined group of questions that are asked at every interview. In order to keep answers to the questions similar and comparable, they must be worded in a simple manner that allows them to be understood equally by everyone. This simple wording is called zero order communication, or writing to the lowest level of the target audience. Assumptions are to be avoided at all costs when using the standardized interview questions. Standardized interviews are used when there is low risk for the respondent to

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answer truthfully. Although the standardized interview provides responses that are easy to compare, sometimes more in depth and personal answers are desired (Berg, 1998). When asking about people's attitudes and behaviors, there is much more risk involved for the respondent and unstandardized interviews are used.

The unstandardized interview moves away from the rigidity and simplicity of the standardized interview in search of a personal touch and deeper responses. This type of interview tends to be much more like a natural conversation than the strongly directed standardized interview. With this style, interviewers "do not know in advance what all the necessary questions are" (Berg, 1998). The lack of pre-determined questions allows for adaptation and changing of the questions based upon how the subject is feeling and responding. Since the interview nearly follows the course of a conversation, it can be much more interesting and relaxing for the subject and thus provide more honest and meaningful results. Since there are no pre-determined questions to guide the interview toward its goal, it is possible that the conversation will not follow the desired path and no useful information will be obtained. When a mixture of these two approaches seems to be the best option, they can be combined into a third type of interview format called semi-standardized.

Semi-standardized interviews are a combination of the standardized and unstandardized interview styles. This type of interview consists of a certain number of pre-determined questions but carries with it the expectation of follow-up questions and probing for expanded, in depth answers such as one would receive from the unstandardized interview. The types and placement of the questions are determined by the goals of the interview, the attitude of the interviewee at the time, and responses to

previous questions. The advantage of this interviewing format is that it combines the easily compared data of planned questions with the personal, in depth responses of follow up questions (Berg, 1998). A shortcoming of the semi-standardized interview is that it can be time consuming to analyze because of its combination of qualitative and quantitative responses.

2.4.3 - Focus Groups

A focus group is another type of interview that is conducted with a small group of people at the same time, rather than just a single individual. The focus group is a much more time-efficient means of data collection from a specified population of people than the personal interview. More dynamic than the personal interview, a focus group "allows one participant to draw from another or to brainstorm collectively with other members of the group" (Berg, 1998). Similarly, Salant and Dillman (1994) say the focus group will "stimulate people's thinking and elicit ideas about a specific topic." This type of interaction can bring up issues and comments that never would have been mentioned otherwise, but at the same time takes away some of the purely personal responses. Peer influence makes the focus group become less precise through what is called suppression of dissension. This affect occurs when people may be more reserved in a group for fear of contradicting the majority beliefs. Respondents may fear retribution from superiors for disclosing sensitive information and remain quiet. Peers in the groups can cause the same effect and prevent others from talking through their body language or comments. The interviewer can use hypothetical situations to get people to overcome their reluctance and talk about situations in general. Insights into a particular subject and reliability

support are what are important to the interviewer, not the personal attachment to responses (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

The main purpose of the focus group is to "provide a head start on knowing which questions to ask in a survey" (Salant & Dillman, 1994, p. 30). It is also a good way to find out what language to use in these questions by picking up jargon and acronyms familiar to the target population.

Focus groups can be very useful and are set up using a very similar format to that of the personal interview regarding question order, style, and opportunity for expansion. It is best to start with general questions (throw away) and proceed to more and more specific essential and probing questions. The best setting for a focus group is a quiet room without any distractions and either theater style seating for people who know each other, or circle style seating for strangers. In order to keep participants engaged in the group conversation, snacks and drinks should be provided and an entire meal offered at the end. The reason for these actions is to create an atmosphere where respondents feel the cost of giving honest responses to the group is low. The information gained from focus groups can be invaluable in the formation process of the ensuing survey.

2.4.4 - Surveys

A survey is a neatly presented set of questions designed to yield quantitative feedback on the overall feelings of a sample. A set of survey questions is formed from the useful information obtained in focus groups and interviews to extrapolate results to the population as a whole. Since a survey is used to get quantitative results, it is important to prevent as many errors as possible by taking active measures to increase the

accuracy. There are several approaches to conducting a survey, including through the mail, over the telephone, face to face, drop-off, and through e-mail.

Mail surveys are sent out through the mail to the desired population and then, once completed, sent back to the researcher for analysis. This type of survey gives respondents privacy in hopes that they will be more open and honest with their answers (Salant & Dillman, 1994). Certain questions are often skipped over by respondents because they are not understood, are too personal, or are simply too long. For this reason, the questions must be pre-tested and edited before the survey is sent out. Pre-testing prevents measurement errors that result from questions being misunderstood. Mail surveys tend to take a large amount of time to collect and analyze, while the telephone survey is much quicker.

A telephone survey occurs when a research team calls all desired respondents and gives them the survey orally. To ensure equal understanding of entire questions and all of their respective choices, the survey must be written in a simple, straightforward manner. Sometimes respondents may tend to choose the last choices in a list more often than the first simply because they are fresh in their memory (Salant & Dillman, 1994). These surveys are quick and allow researchers to gather and analyze data in a short period of time. However, long distance calls get expensive and available directories omit significant segments of the population.

Face to face surveys are "suited to … populations for whom there is no list, or who are not likely to respond willingly or accurately by phone or mail" (Salant & Dillman, 1994, p. 40). A researcher will go to houses and conduct the survey in a fashion similar to a personal interview. For this reason, face to face surveys have many of the

same advantages as personal interviews, but one unique disadvantage. When the selected respondent is not home, it becomes time consuming and expensive for the researcher to continue returning to the same house (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

A drop-off survey is a combination of mail and face to face surveys. As the name implies, researchers personally hand the survey out to selected respondents who then fill it out and mail it back to the researcher. This method eliminates the need to return to houses where people were not home and also increases the likelihood of response over the mail survey.

Finally there are e-mail surveys. E-mail surveys are surveys that are sent through e-mail to respondents. These surveys are simpler to create and much easier to send than mail surveys. However, these surveys "are more limited with regard to visual stimulation and interaction capabilities, and provide fewer options for dealing with difficult structural features of questionnaires" (Dillman, 2000, p. 354). These surveys are relatively new given the recent increase in e-mail usage. However, these surveys are prone to many types of error. Coverage error is prevalent since there is a large portion of the population still does not have access to e-mail. Also, many people often share a single e-mail account, in which case the intended respondent may not be the actual respondent. In organizations such as AFN where employees all have their own e-mail accounts this becomes a negligible problem.

Another problem with e-mail surveys is the likelihood of the recipient deleting the survey. For this reason it is very important that an initial e-mail is sent out explaining to respondents that they will be receiving a survey via e-mail and when to expect it. This helps to ensure that respondents do not delete the e-mail when it comes from an

unfamiliar source. Also, a clear subject line is important to preventing recipients from deleting the e-mail before reading it (Dillman, 2000).

Surveys play an important role in research. They must be carefully planned to produce statistically valid results. Indeed, failure to plan the survey instrument properly may result in error.

2.4.5 - Error

The four sources of error as presented by Salant and Dillman (1994) are coverage error, sampling error, measurement error, and non-response error. Each source of error has a different cause, but they all yield inaccurate results.

The first source of error, coverage error, occurs when not all respondents have an equal chance of responding to a survey. This is caused by either an incomplete list of the target population or by respondents not having the ability to respond, such as in an e-mail survey where a respondent may not have e-mail access (Salant & Dillman, 1994; Dillman, 2000). A respondent's inability to respond produces coverage error where only members of a population with a certain characteristic can respond. An example of this would be a phone survey, since all members of a target population may not have a phone. An incomplete list eliminates the possibility of providing every member of the population an equal opportunity to be surveyed. If this happens, results cannot be representative of the entire population, but only the segment on the list because the potential respondents who were not considered could seriously alter findings. A complete list can still cause error if an appropriately random sample is not taken.

Sampling error is the result of a sample not being random and therefore not representing the entire population being examined (Salant & Dillman, 1994). If the method for choosing respondents is anything but random, bias is introduced, reducing accuracy with sampling error.

With a completely random sample of everyone in the population, results can still be biased by measurement error. Measurement error is caused by unclear questions that are misinterpreted by respondents (Salant & Dillman, 1994). Misinterpretation can yield results that are inaccurate and useless to the goal of the research. For this reason, questions must be extremely clear and pre-tested to ensure all people will read and understand the question equally.

Non-response error is the result of a significant percentage of the sample failing to respond to the survey. It is essential that a majority of the sample responds, or situations similar to those causing coverage error or sampling error will result. An effective way to raise the response rate of any sample is to follow up with mail contact urging completion of the survey. Salant and Dillman (1994) suggest four steps to gain the highest response rate in mail surveys. The first is to send a personalized letter in advance to notify the respondent of the upcoming survey. Secondly, approximately one week later, a personalized cover letter is sent along with the survey itself, including a return envelope. Next, four to eight days later, postcards should be sent to everyone thanking them for a timely response, or requesting that they complete the survey as soon as possible. The last step is to send another personalized letter to anyone who has not yet responded, along with a new survey and return envelope in case they misplaced the first one.

## 2.4.6 - Triangulation

Triangulation is a method for gathering data from many sources and looking at them together. Feedback is acquired through a variety of different methods about the same subject. This feedback is then analyzed as a whole to compensate for the biases introduced by personal interviews, focus groups, surveys, or any other single method alone. Triangulation helps to give a clearer picture of people's thoughts and actions than a single source (Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997). Focus groups and interviews are used to gain qualitative information about respondents. Since only a small sample is used in the focus groups and interviews, the results gained are heavily biased toward the respondents who participated. Surveys are used to gain quantitative information about the entire population that can be counted, tabulated, and compared. When they are put together through triangulation, the interviews and focus groups add context to the responses found in the survey. Not only does the interviewer obtain the quantitative answer from the survey, but also the reasoning behind why the answer was given. Biases are removed by showing that the entire population does not agree with the interview or focus group respondent and the trends shown by the survey have meaning. Focus groups are used before the survey to pre-test questions and language issues, and interviews are used throughout the process of collecting and analyzing data to give some insight into survey responses. Both focus groups and interviews are used again after the survey as a follow up to add additional context to the survey.

Triangulation assists accurate results and "when feedback from all these sources is presented within a framework that gives people the chance to practice key behaviors and plan for improvement, it can serve as a lever to bring about real, measurable changes

in people's behavior" (Lepsinger & Lucia, 1997, p.10). Since a complete view of an AFN employee's job satisfaction and corporate image is desired, triangulation could provide the most accurate representation. Another necessary ingredient for accuracy is a sample that has been chosen for the specific application.

2.4.7 - Sampling

To ensure that a survey can be accurately extrapolated to represent the population as a whole, a reliable sampling method must be used. Sampling is the term for choosing who is interviewed, and it strongly influences the validity of the results (Berg, 1998). Sampling can be divided into four main categories: random, systematic, stratified, and purposive.

Random sampling is a method where all members in a population have an equal chance of being picked to respond in hopes of obtaining a representative perspective of the whole. According to Salant and Dillman, "every member of the population that the researcher is trying to describe [should] have an equal (or known) chance of being selected for the sample." Systematic sampling is a derivation of random sampling where a list of people is divided into the desired number of samples and every "$n^{th}$ name on the list is interviewed" (Berg, 1998). Large populations are easier to sample using the systematic method because it gives some order to choosing random respondents (Salant & Dillman, 1994). It is essential that a systematic method be used to ensure that sampling error is minimized and everyone is represented by the results.

Stratified sampling "is used whenever researchers need to ensure that a certain segment of the identified population …is represented in the sample" (Berg, 1998, p. 229).

This method divides the population into sub-groups (strata) so that a representative from each strata is certain to be included in the results. With this method, all segments of the population are analyzed even though it is not random. The results from a stratified sample cannot be extrapolated to the entire population, but all segments are equally represented. Stratified sampling is best suited to situations where "majority rule" is not most appropriate.

Researchers sometimes use their knowledge of a population to choose respondents that will give results the researcher desires. This method is known as purposive sampling. Purposive sampling can be used to find interview and focus group participants who will have views that are important or new to the study. Purposive sampling yields results heavily biased in favor of the interviewer's preferences and the respondent's beliefs. Since the information gathered from the interviews and focus groups is qualitative, samples can be deliberately chosen to discover the feelings of some people. This information is placed into the questions of a survey to find out how many others agree with the beliefs brought up in the focus group or interview. Triangulating in this manner removes the bias introduced by the purposive sampling. The survey itself is what is used to represent the entire population quantitatively. Random or systematic sampling is used for surveys so the whole frame is equally represented. This randomness is necessary for accurate quantitative results since certain large groups can have the same beliefs. A survey of these groups alone would reveal that the entire population felt the same way.

With any type of sampling, it is extremely important to follow up on the first contact with respondents in order to raise the response rate. A high response rate from a

relatively small sample is much better than a poor response rate from a large sample or census (Salant & Dillman, 1994). This is because sampling error and measurement error are introduced when large amounts of people do not respond. Despite the sample being perfectly random, the people who did respond were probably not an equally random representation of the whole. A situation such as this could convert results from a systematic random sample into results equivalent to those of a purposive sample. "When the population is small, [however], efficiency may not be a big concern" because the survey probably deals with something important to the respondents and they will want to respond (Salant & Dillman, 1994, p. 53). In addition to a representative sample, confidentiality is also a key element in finding accurate results.

2.4.8 - Confidentiality

A drawback to all types of data collection that could hinder accuracy is the fear of some respondents that their responses will get out to the wrong people and they will suffer retaliation. In order to calm the fears of these participants, confidentiality must be assured and maintained for them. All types of interviews may be hindered by strong concerns about confidentiality that prevent respondents from disclosing information that could potentially be important to the goals of the interview. For this reason, if they are not absolutely certain that their identity will be protected, they will be less inclined to answer truthfully about personal subjects for fear of being exposed. Especially with questions about corporate image and job satisfaction, respondents do not want their boss to hear and become upset about their complaints concerning work environment and corporate image.

There are two different types of confidentiality: explicit and implied. Explicit confidentiality is defined and presented to the respondent in written form clearly stating the measures that will be taken to ensure confidentiality. The researcher agrees to uphold the promised level of confidentiality and remove all traces of respondents in their records. Implied confidentiality consists of the same promises, but nothing is written. The respondent just assumes that the researcher will uphold confidentiality. In order to avoid confusion, explicit confidentiality is a safer choice because it puts both the researcher and the respondent on the same level concerning promises and responsibility. Although it is ultimately dependent on the honor of the interviewer not to disclose information, an official contract ensuring confidentiality is a great reassurance to everyone who agrees to participate. After confidentiality is assured, and data is collected, it must then be analyzed with respect to the goals of the project (Berg, 1998).

2.4.9 - Content Analysis

After the data is collected, it is then analyzed to obtain useful results. When analyzing the results of interviews and focus groups, many factors aside from strictly the answers to the questions must be accounted for in the results. The qualitative results can be analyzed quantitatively though a process called content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic method of counting different aspects of the given responses. The analysis counts words, themes, characters, paragraphs, items, concepts, and semantics in the results of interviews and focus groups (Berg, 1998). These numerical counts are combined with information such as body language and emphases to provide results. The counts provided by content analysis ensure replicability of the results in case another

researcher attempts the same study at a later date or tries interpreting the current results. Through study of the specific counts, another researcher should be able to easily arrive at the same conclusions, or at least follow the path of the previous researcher. The analysis requires that the methods and counts used be clearly explained and justified so anyone who needs to know the exact method used will be able to follow and understand the method.

Today's technology has moved the work of counting to computers once the data have been entered and coded into numerical format (Berg, 1998). Computers provide many clear displays such as graphs and tables of data that make trends easy to see and compare. Once these quantitative results are finalized, they must be contrasted against the qualitative results before any real meaning or assumptions can be made from them. The added context provides some clues about why people answered the way they did.

## 2.5 – Literature Summary

The background research indicated that organizational identity was based upon many various factors, including employee satisfaction, management, work environment, and the purpose of the organization. A key point to organizational identity is creating a common goal or mission for the organization. This aids employees in understanding their purpose within the organization and the overall purpose of the organization. In certain agencies, clear goals cannot be defined, creating the need for task orientation rather than goal orientation. Based upon this background information, a methodology was devised with which to accomplish the project. The next chapter outlines the process of conducting this study.

## 3 - Methodology

The methodology section contains a detailed description of the methods of data collection and analysis performed in this study. This chapter discusses the initial contact phase, interviews, focus groups, surveys, triangulation, and content analysis. The methodology used several proven methods to obtain data relevant to the project and triangulation to remove any biases from the individual methods.

### 3.1 - Initial Contact

The initial contact was an important part of the data collection process. The initial contact made respondents aware of the purpose of the project. This contact was very important because it began the process of informing respondents of who was conducting the study and why. It let employees of AFN know that the study was not being conducted by AFN personnel but by student researchers and that all information gathered was strictly confidential. This was critical to the study, since respondents would have been more likely to give honest responses if there was less risk of AFN associating responses with an individual. It also began to establish trust and rapport with respondents. If initial contact was not performed in this way, the study would have been less successful since employees would have been uninformed of what was happening and not understood the reasons behind the study.

The initial contact phase was divided into two stages. The project liaison made the first initial contact. This contact was in the form of an e-mail sent out to the employees of AFN-Europe. A sample contact letter was sent to the liaison as a template

of what the letter should have looked like and included (see Appendix C). This sample

included both a statement of consent by the organization saying that the project group had

permission to conduct the study and the arrival date of the group. Confidentiality was

stressed in the sample letter as well as the fact that AFN was totally uninvolved in the

research process. This was to assure employees that they could be open and honest in

their responses, as well as demonstrate the professionalism of the researchers and the

study as a whole. The sample memo also contained a description of the purpose of the

project as well as a brief background of the group's qualifications. The sample letter was

modified from its original content before being sent to the employees of AFN-Europe via

e-mail (see Appendix D). This e-mail informed employees about the researchers, the

project, and the time frame over which it would take place. Unfortunately, this e-mail

may have biased the survey since it did not stress the confidential nature of the project.

The team made the second contact upon its arrival in Germany. This contact was

a letter sent by the group to the employees (see Appendix E). This letter served several

purposes. First, it introduced the group and emphasized that it was not affiliated with

AFN. The purpose of the study was next explained, as well as how the study benefited

them. The respondents had to be told why the study was important to elicit their

involvement. If employees felt this study would benefit them, they would have been

more likely to become involved. This letter also told respondents that all employees of

AFN were being contacted to make them aware of how they were chosen in the study.

Another part of the initial contact letter involved thanking participants for their time and

effort. Finally, it emphasized the confidential nature of the survey and provided

respondents with contact information, allowing participants to contact us if necessary.

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All of these items were important to a successful beginning of the project because they informed respondents of what was happening and why.

In the initial contact letter, it was important to express that the research was confidential. Confidentiality was important to the success of the project. If employees felt that they could have been identified by their responses, they would have been reluctant to participate and would not have responded as openly and honestly. Confidentiality attempted to assure employees that AFN would not have access to their responses and that they should have felt free to speak their mind. Ensuring respondent confidentiality entailed limiting access to tape recordings and documents to the researchers only and destroying all materials after they had been used. The statement of confidentiality is included in Appendix F. Even though confidentiality was emphasized and promised to respondents, there was still considerable skepticism presented throughout the study in regards to confidentiality.

Non-affiliation with AFN was also very important to this study, beginning with the initial contact letter. Letting respondents know that neither AFN nor the United States government was conducting the study attempted to promote honest and open responses from employees, since their fears of retaliation from superiors would have been eased. For the same reason, it was essential that AFN remained passive in regards to project involvement so employees did not get suspicious about AFN involvement. Identification as university researchers also assured respondents of the legitimacy of the study through affiliation with a respected institution other than the military.

One problem encountered early in the project was the inability to obtain a separate return mailing address for the surveys and letters sent out to AFN employees.

Due to military postal regulations, all mail had to be sent through the office of the liaison. This presented a significant concern to the researchers since all mail was being sent to the organization and not the research team. Respondents may have felt that their answers would be read by the organization. Alternative methods of mailing, such as mail being sent to the researchers' home address, were impractical due to the amount of time necessary for mail to travel between the United States mail system and foreign mail systems.

Two measures were taken in an effort to minimize the negative affect of this on the project. First, a statement signed by the liaison and the commander of AFN was included in the survey booklet assuring employees that the returned items would only be given directly to research team members and no AFN employees would read them (see Appendix G). The second measure performed was to code each survey with a number that would allow only the researchers to identify the respondent, further ensuring confidentiality.

## 3.2 - Interviews

After the initial contact, the process of gathering information began. Site specific information had to be obtained to determine the validity and cultural acceptability of questions. Even though extensive background research was performed, final adjustments had to be made to questions that were intended for the surveys, interviews, and focus groups. It was impossible to know before hand exactly what was unacceptable or offensive to respondents at AFN-Europe. Thus, questions were pre-tested with both military and civilian employees for comprehension and acceptability. Offensive or

otherwise unacceptable questions were reworded, restructured, modified for content, or discarded.

Personal interviews were an excellent way of testing comprehension and acceptance of potential questions since the respondent could state his understanding of the question without peer pressure or other external influences. Personal interviews were also used to collect possible ideas or subjects that may have been unintentionally omitted from the study. Initial interviews were important to refine questions, and to glean out such information that may have been overlooked. Respondents to the initial interviews were chosen by the liaison from two different frames. These were civilian and enlisted personnel. These frames were chosen in an attempt to cancel any biases that were introduced by any one specific group. The team felt these groups would have differing opinions working within a military organization, since the two groups were held to different work principles within the organization.

The study used a semi-standardized interview style. Semi-standardized interviews involved using a predetermined set of questions with some amount of discussion outside of the questions. By allowing the conversation to digress from the predetermined questions, the dialogue could be guided in the direction of the desired information. At the same time, this method also didn't discourage respondents from volunteering any other information that may have been useful in the study. When dealing with a sensitive subject, it was important to question the respondent correctly and prevent them from becoming defensive or terminating the interview entirely. This method for questioning is called the funnel design, which begins with broad questions to get the respondent talking and to build trust. As the interview progressed, questions based on

statements made by the respondent were used to guide them toward important information desired by the interviewer. Near the end of the interview, it was hoped there was a high level of trust between interviewer and interviewee. At this point the questions that posed risk to the respondent were asked. Defensiveness or termination was unlikely because of the increased level of trust built between interviewer and interviewee (Berg, 1998).

Care was taken to keep the interviews as homogenous as possible in terms of technique and questions (See Appendix H for question list). Deviation from the chosen format may have biased the results. By keeping the interviews very similar, they could be accurately and properly compared and contrasted. If the interviews were administered in ways that were too dissimilar, the data could not have been compared rationally. Sources of bias, such as style, wording of questions, and the tone of the interviewer's voice, were avoided as best as possible.

Interviews followed the guidelines set by Berg's Ten Commandments for Interviewing shown below (Berg, 1998, p. 87-88)

- Never Begin an Interview Cold
- Remember your purpose
- Present a natural front
- Demonstrate aware hearing
- Think about appearance
- Interview in a comfortable place

- Don't be satisfied with monosyllabic answers
- Be respectful
- Practice, practice, and practice some more
- Be cordial and appreciative

The interviewer began by talking with the respondent for several minutes to build trust before getting to the relevant interview material. This helped the respondent to relax and feel more at ease. The purpose of the interview was the guiding factor in the course of the questioning and probing, helping the interviewer decide which of the questions to

go into further detail.  The interviewer presented a natural front, appearing relaxed and conversational even though the questions were prepared.  Demonstrating aware hearing helped to get data that was more accurate, more thoughtful, more applicable, and more readily offered.  Examples of this include statements of interest such as "I see," or "thank you" statements, and also "that's useful information," or "that's helpful to know."  Appropriate dress and room setting were used when conducting the interview.  The use of probing questions helped the interviewer get more in-depth answers than simple yes and no answers.  Probing questions included statements like, "what do you mean by that" or "could you elaborate more on…" and other similar statements.  The respondent was shown respect and made to feel that they were an integral part of the research.  At the conclusion of the interview, the respondent was thanked and any questions they had were answered.

Interviews were not only conducted at the beginning of the study to collect information about local ideas and colloquial language, but also throughout the study.  These interviews helped to provide qualitative information to the study.  This qualitative information provided greater insight into the study which surveys would not be able to provide.

In addition to one-on-one interviews, group discussions were implemented to obtain information in a different forum.  Focus groups had distinct features that make them more attractive and more useful in certain situations.

## 3.3 - Focus Groups

Focus groups were used since they were the most time efficient means of collecting data from a specified population. The purpose of these focus groups was to elicit ideas about problems and working conditions at AFN, and also to pretest questions included in the survey. These goals were addressed in different focus groups. The focus groups allowed employees of AFN to help clarify two major parts of the survey. These parts were the determination of what problems needed to be addressed and what information was needed to solve them (Salant & Dillman, 1994). This information was used to refine the survey before its distribution.

The focus groups were scheduled upon arrival at AFN and also during the fifth week of the project. There were five focus groups, each consisting of two to five people. The first three focus groups were held at the headquarters of AFN, and the remaining two were held at local affiliates.

The setting for the focus group was a key aspect. The room used was a quiet conference room with comfortable chairs arranged in a circle around a table. In hotter periods, a ceiling fan was turned on and windows opened to keep the climate comfortable. This setting minimized the number of distractions and kept the group engaged in discussion. Refreshments such as soda, water, and pretzels were served during the focus group. There were two group members present, one to mediate the focus group and the other to take notes on group actions and behavior.

The focus groups began by thanking the attendees and stating the purpose of the focus group. The confidential nature of the group was explained in depth, the participants were asked if they were comfortable, and refreshments were offered. They

were given a written confidentiality statement that explained the steps that would be taken to ensure confidentiality (see Appendix I) and asked to sign it. The respondents were also asked for their permission to record the discussion. If there were no objections, the tape was started. For the second and third focus group, surveys were handed out to participants to fill out before discussion began. In all groups a brief period of small talk was led by the mediator to relax the atmosphere and lead into the main part of the focus group. The questioning began with general questions, which gradually lead to deeper discussion about current conditions at AFN and how employees view AFN. Several key questions were asked in the focus groups, and other questions were drawn from statements made by the group during discussion. The most sensitive and most important questions were gradually alluded to and finally directly asked toward the end of the discussion instead of at the very beginning. The schedule of focus group questions is given in Appendix J. This process was used to gain the trust of the respondents first. By doing so, the respondents were more likely to respond truthfully and completely. At the conclusion the focus group, members were thanked and encouraged to contact the research team with any further questions.

The groups held at AFN-E headquarters consisted of a mix of personnel at AFN-Europe. The first focus group was a heterogeneous mix of both military and civilian employees, including two enlisted and three civilian personnel. These demographics were specifically chosen this way for three reasons. First, there were no officers chosen from the military personnel to reduce the possibility of suppression of dissention among group members. If all respondents were of similar status, this suppression of dissention was less likely to occur. Likewise, this group composition allowed us to get ideas from

both military and civilian personnel about the working conditions at AFN. Last, and perhaps most important, this group composition allowed us to discover what these personnel thought about the work conditions for others in the group. An example of this would be to find out from a civilian worker how they saw the military personnel being treated and what their views were on this. This focus group was used to primarily gather background information about the current conditions at AFN-Europe.

The second group was composed the same as the first group with a mix of two enlisted military and three civilian personnel. The purpose of this group was different in that it was used to pre-test survey questions as well as gain new information about the organization. The survey pre-test group members had to be different from the first group's members, since the survey needed to be tested on a group who had not been involved in the discussions leading to its formulation. Respondents in the first focus group would have been biased since they had active input into the creation of the survey and it needed to be tested on people who had no knowledge of what the research team was trying to measure in the survey. The group had many helpful critiques and comments that led to some new survey questions and slight formatting changes.

The third group consisted of one high-ranking officer and three upper level management civilians. A second high-ranking officer was invited but absent from the focus group. The choice of this particular group allowed the attitudes of higher-level employees of AFN to be studied away from the people who work for them. This composition provided a much different perspective on issues at AFN-E than by the first two groups. These new ideas became an important part of the study and were integrated into the survey.

There were two focus groups conducted at local affiliates. One group consisted of two enlisted military personnel. The other group consisted of three enlisted personnel and one civilian. The purpose of these two focus groups was to discover attitudes of employees away from AFN-E headquarters. These two groups helped to provide insight into affiliate attitudes within the organization. This was important since employee attitudes outside of the headquarters building may have been different than those within headquarters. This could stem from various reasons, such as level of communication with headquarters or staffing differences.

The first focus group was important in the design of a preliminary survey. The second and third focus groups were important for refining that survey to avoid measurement error. Without these groups, the survey instrument would not have been well designed for collecting data from AFN employees.

## 3.4 - Surveys

After collecting data from interviews and focus groups, the survey was constructed to quantitatively measure the thoughts and feelings of AFN employees. Previous research and the information gained from respondents in the interviews and focus groups provided the basis for the survey questions. After pre-testing in the focus groups, both the language and wording of the questions were clarified in meaning to minimize the potential measurement error. Likewise, scaled responses with five choices for each topic were used to accommodate and measure feelings toward a question. Scaled responses were chosen since they result in the least amount of error and bias in statistical analysis and comparison.

Since the group was told a complete list of all AFN-E employees and their addresses was available, a mail census survey was implemented and no sampling of the population was needed. It is agreed, "if the population is less than 200, the entire group should be used" (Edwards et al., 1997, p. 63). The AFN population is approximately 250 based on the list we received, and the recommended sample size for a 95% confidence interval is close to 70%-80% of the total (Salant & Dillman, 1994). For this reason, a census was used to achieve a higher response rate, allowing for lower response rates to still provide statistically valid results with slightly increased error levels. Also, by surveying every member of the AFN population, there was nearly no chance of omitting any specific group of people and introducing sampling error. Error can quickly destroy the accuracy and credibility of any survey and was accounted for with specific measures.

The mail survey was sent out to all AFN employees following the guidelines presented by Salant and Dillman (1994). An advance notice letter was sent out one week before the survey to inform all respondents of the forthcoming survey. Next the surveys were sent out along with return envelopes. After another week, postcards were sent to everyone reminding them of the survey and its importance. The following week, a second personalized letter stressing the importance of the study was sent to all people who had not responded, as well as a second survey and return envelope. This method is used to makes respondents aware that their participation is important and helps increase the response rate.

A week after the survey was sent out several employees contacted the group in regard to the code numbers included on the surveys. They were under the impression that the survey was intended to be anonymous instead of confidential. This led to concern for

why code numbers were included on the survey. In response to this, an email was sent out to all employees restating the confidential nature of the survey and that the code numbers were solely for the researchers' use. A copy of this e-mail is included in Appendix K.

Although the group obtained a complete listing of all AFN-E personnel, the list proved to be out of date. This was discovered from returns in our survey mailings and from contact with detachment commanders in other affiliates. In order to obtain an updated list, the group first inquired within the headquarters for a list. After having no success, each detachment commander was contacted and asked for an updated list of personnel. Unfortunately, only six detachments responded to the request for an updated list and it proved impossible to receive an updated list. The group was able to find a list of all the users e-mail addresses though through the AFN-E e-mail server.

For personnel who failed to respond to the mail surveys or who may not have ever received one, an e-mail survey was prepared and implemented for back up support of the mail survey (see Appendix L). This e-mail survey was exactly the same as the mail survey, with the exception of providing checkboxes for respondents to mark their answers and an abbreviated cover letter (Dillman, 2000). It was necessary to implement this e-mail survey during the sixth week due to low response rates (less than 50%.) The introduction of coverage error resulted from not having an updated employee list, and we attempted to counteract the error through the use of e-mail. An e-mail survey was implemented as opposed to another mail survey because of its relatively quick response time. Coverage error through the e-mail survey was considered to be acceptable, given

that all employees should have had e-mail access and it was less than the coverage error in the mailing survey due to the outdated address list.

## 3.5 - Survey Error

Survey error can result from any of four sources. The first source for survey error is called coverage error. Coverage error results from researchers having an incomplete list of the target population, or frame. When this happens, certain groups of people, possibly with similar beliefs, can be omitted from the research entirely. It is essential that the frame be known in its entirety so everyone has an equal opportunity to be a respondent (Salant & Dillman, 1994). The error stems from the gathered information being representative of only of the people on the list rather than the whole population. The complete list of AFN employees that was provided should have helped to minimize coverage error. However, due to the inaccuracy of the list, coverage error was significant. Since coverage error was to be minimized, the project group contacted the commanders of the various AFN-E detachments and obtained a more accurate list. The backup method of the e-mail survey then avoided most coverage error because of the accurate population list.

A second source of survey error is sampling error. This type of error occurs when drawing a sample that is not representative of the entire population. Researcher bias in choosing respondents or failure to take active steps to randomize a sample can result in sampling error. Sampling error was avoided since the survey was indeed a census and no sampling was necessary.

Measurement error results from respondents misunderstanding questions and answering incorrectly (Salant & Dillman, 1994). Questions worded so that there are two choices as responses can result in measurement error, since there is a large gray area between the two responses that may be confusing to some. The researcher may expect everyone in this situation to answer a specific way, but the correct way may be unclear to the respondent. An example would be if a controversial question were asked such as "Do you drink a lot?" If a yes or no choice were given, some people may interpret the question differently, such as someone who drinks once a month and considers that to be a lot, and therefore answers, "Yes, I drink a lot." The researcher may only be looking for people who drink more than two times a week to answer yes to the question, and therefore, the question has inherent measurement error. The results from such a question are useless since there is an equal probability that respondents who fall in the gray area will choose either one. The survey questions designed for AFN were carefully worded and pre-tested in focus groups and interviews to avoid measurement error. Scaled responses, such as a scale from one through five, were used to reduce confusion and measurement error. Having a five point scale rather than a four point scale minimized measurement error, since an evenly distributed scale was provided and respondents were not made to choose either a positive or negative response. After accounting for these three types of error, actions to reduce non-response error still had to be taken.

Non-response error is the fourth source of error in a survey and is caused by members of the target population failing to fill out and return the survey (Salant & Dillman, 1994). Non-response errors can be similar to coverage and sampling errors in that they omit people who were important to the study's reliability. In order to minimize

the non-response error, four steps toward increasing response were used. An advance notice letter was sent to all respondents, followed one week later with a survey, cover letter, and return envelope. The next week, reminder notices were sent thanking those who completed the survey and asking those who did not to do so. After this, a second cover letter, survey and return envelope was sent to the remaining members of the population who did not yet respond. Implementing the backup method of e-mail survey also decreased non-response error. Once data started to be collected, it was incorporated into the continual process of analysis (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

## 3.6 - Analysis

Content analysis and statistical analysis were both used to systematically interpret the results collected by each of the three methods. During and after the collection of data, content analysis was used to interpret the interviews and focus groups through obtaining counts of certain categories. The categories that were counted in the content analysis process were repeated or common words, themes, characters, paragraphs, items, concepts, and semantics (Berg, 1998).

Respondents used different ways of expressing the same themes, so there were not many repeated words and we concentrated on counting similar themes. The counts allowed easy visualization of trends in the data and the ways in which people thought and felt. Content analysis was a systematic way to analyze qualitative information and allowed for easy replication of conclusions. The analysis was conducted by reading through the transcripts of interviews and focus groups, taking note of what themes were being talked about and supporting evidence, such as quotes and phrases.

Once all of the transcripts had been analyzed in this way, the analysis sheets were looked at together for similarities. Eyeballing the data was the most efficient way of doing content analysis of the themes. This entailed counting the number of times each theme was repeated. These counts were tabulated using a spreadsheet program listing themes versus the interviews and focus groups. After all the data were entered, the total number of times each theme was mentioned in the interviews and focus groups were counted. The number of interviews and focus groups in which the themes were mentioned were also counted to give a measure of the frequency with which themes came up. The sums were then sorted by descending frequency so the themes that were most common were first on the list. This method provided a numerical way to interpret the verbal responses given in the interviews and focus groups. In this manner, biases from researcher opinions were reduced and other researchers could look at the transcripts and spreadsheets to draw similar conclusions.

Statistical analysis was used to extrapolate survey data to the entire population. Statistical analysis involved counting the number of specific responses or percentages of respondents who answered in the same way. The survey responses were coded with numbers so they could easily be entered into and analyzed by a computer program. An elaborate spreadsheet program was used to analyze the data and provide descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics were items such as mean and standard deviation used to describe general characteristics of the data. The mean and standard deviation of each survey question were calculated and analyzed to give information about the responses. The questions that contained important and interesting results were then included within the data section of the report. Results were presented with the mean and standard

deviation, along with graphs, tables, and other visual representations. These results provided a broad picture of how AFN employees were feeling at the time of the survey, and additional context was added by the content analysis of interviews and focus groups.

## 3.7 - Triangulation

Triangulation is the concept of using many sources of data and combining them in order to reduce any bias that may be present in interviews, focus groups, or surveys alone. Uniting results from the content analysis of interviews and focus groups with the results of the survey, triangulation was used to aid in reducing biases present in any one data collection method. The combination of deep qualitative personal feedback from the interviews and focus groups with the broad quantitative measures obtained by the survey provided a clear picture of AFN attitudes. When three different sources all indicated the same thing, it was more likely to be an accurate finding. An analogy would be identifying an item as an apple by looking at it, feeling it, and tasting it. All three sources indicated that it was an apple, which was indeed the case. However, if only one source was used, such as sight, to determine that it was an apple, it would have still been possible for the apple to be plastic. More data should have been collected to triangulate before any conclusions were made.

Purposive sampling was used for interviews and focus groups, causing sampling error and bias to be present when looking at the entire population. However, the presence of this sampling error was of minor consequence since the survey was the instrument used to extrapolate to the population. The qualitative interviews and focus groups only provided context and meaning, which was either supported or refuted by the survey.

Once the results were triangulated with the survey results, the biases were accounted for and minimized in the results. The results obtained through the data methods and triangulation are included in the data and analysis sections (chapter 4) of this report.

## 4 – Data and Analysis

As stated at the end of the previous methodology section, triangulation was the key to accounting for the inherent biases that were present in the data gathered through each of the three methods of data collection. The following is a presentation of the data found through each of the three individual methods. Analysis of these data is also presented in this section. The data and analysis of each method are given separately so the similarities and differences can be examined. Some common themes were present throughout, but each source had some unique topics that were not found in the others. The focus groups, for example, did not yield information about certain things as a result of the make up of the group and suppression of dissention. Later, the results from the interviews, focus groups, and survey are synthesized using triangulation and common themes are analyzed in the conclusions section.

### *4.1 - Qualitative Data and Analysis*

The data being used for this project was collected from both qualitative and quantitative methods. Both showed similar feelings from the employees of AFN-Europe. However, each method also returned interesting and unique results. The data from our qualitative methods were obtained using interviews and focus groups. This data was then systematically analyzed using content analysis techniques to extract useful information.

Transcripts of the interviews and focus groups were read to pinpoint key topics under discussion at any one moment. Then the surrounding text was screened for key words, quotes and examples as supporting evidence for the theme. After going through this process for all interviews and focus groups, the themes were entered into a spreadsheet for numerical analysis. The worksheet was constructed in such a way to count both the number of times a theme was brought up and also how many interviews or focus groups specifically talked about it. These categories were then sorted by frequency to show the trends that were expressed in the interviews and focus groups. A variety of topics were spoken of in the interviews, focus groups, and surveys. This section describes the data collected from the two qualitative methods.

4.1.1 - Interviews

The first set of qualitative results came from the interviews, which were conducted with employees of different ranks within the Frankfurt headquarters. Respondents, who were lower to mid-level enlisted and civilian personnel, were interviewed using a semi-standardized interview technique. The list of questions for each interview was the same to allow for comparisons, but probing questions were also used when deemed necessary by the interviewer to explore certain topics in depth. The data from these qualitative studies were not, by themselves, able to be extrapolated to the entire population, but gave context regarding what things to look for in the survey.

One subject that came up in almost every interview was the organizational structure of AFN-Europe. Out of six interviews, the structure was mentioned in five,

being a theme of discussion a total of seven times. The top of the chain of command was referred to as having problems several times, with some saying it was too "top heavy." This meaning respondents perceived a disproportionately large number of high-level employees of AFN-Europe when compared to the number of low-level workers. Some respondents described a "firewall around the commander," which caused him to be "blindsided a lot." The "firewall" was said to be comprised of high-level personnel who report to the commander and give orders to other lower personnel. The personnel in these positions are a mix of both military and civilian. In one interview, the respondent gave a little laugh and a smirk when asked about the structure before replying that "it's screwed up." Many of the comments referred to the presence of three commanders within the same building at the Frankfurt HQ as being "confusing" and "redundant." It was also mentioned that "many people don't know whom they are supposed to report to." This type of confusion can lead to frustrations, which can affect efficiency and quality of work (Haasen & Shea, 1997).

The mix of civilian and military personnel was another frequently mentioned topic that is related to the structure of AFN-Europe. This topic ranked second, being mentioned in five of six interviews a total of six times. It was stated that civilians "do not understand how to manage military workers." Also, the two groups have different career goals and views about AFN-Europe, which cause conflict in prioritizing tasks (Wilson, 1989). Indeed, one person said, "there are too many civilians in this building [Frankfurt]." This type of conflict, and the resultant negative feelings toward other workers, is also not something that helps the productivity and satisfaction of workers. Some interviewees stated that civilians were sometimes "not open to changes" brought in

by the military and refused to accept their new ideas. This reluctance to change and also a so called "civilian buffer," which was another term given for the aforementioned "firewall," were given as some sources for conflict between the two groups. These comments indicated that the employees of AFN-Europe were not happy with or did not approve of the current organizational structure. Some of these structural issues were described as the cause for communication breakdowns seen at AFN-Europe.

The top-heavy arrangement at headquarters seemed to be a detriment to the level of clear communication and productivity of the organization. As was mentioned in the interviews, the "firewall," or "buffer," between the high command and the workers at AFN-Europe was also a contributing factor to the same problems. The wall prevented the transfer of accurate information in both directions and gave the command a false picture of what was actually happening in the organization. Some of the redundancy could have easily been avoided if only the communication lines were open and everyone was kept informed.

Another topic from interviews was that people liked their jobs and enjoyed what they did on a day-to-day basis. This was mentioned in four of the six interviews a total of five times. Many military people indicated that they would want to continue doing the same type of work once they left the military, and civilians said they did not have a desire to leave. The reasons given included the "great peers," "good equipment," and "providing a service" to appreciative people. Military personnel especially enjoyed the experience and training that would help them to succeed in a career after they leave the military. Others liked the host culture surrounding the installations and the job they were currently doing and did not want to change. This could be one of the factors causing

civilians to be non-receptive to changes suggested by military personnel, which could result in a move or job change. Also mentioned five times in four interviews as a positive aspect of working at AFN-Europe was the "freedom of action" given to employees in the completion of their tasks. Employees liked the fact that "[they were] given a goal and a deadline, and it was of no concern how [they went] about doing it so long as it was done." They said it allowed them to use their creativity and be able to take the credit for a job well done by their own devices. The ability to make their own decisions about the manner in which something is done causes people to be much more interested in their work and maintain higher morale. Employees are eager to identify with an organization and being able to act independently within the organization allows them to do this (Landry, 1998).

One aspect that employees indicated they liked in three interviews and a total of four times was the learning and training they received while at AFN-Europe. They appreciated the training on state-of-the-art equipment and said the learning would benefit their future career plans by "increasing their worth to outside companies." On the other end of the spectrum, it was stated four times in three interviews that meaningless tasks often got in the way of completing the real job and took away from the enjoyment. Some people were also told regularly to do odd, meaningless tasks such as sweeping, or picking up, that took time away from their production quality.

The meaningless tasks were also part of an explanation about quantity versus quality. Employees felt that the tasks they were given often prevented them from concentrating on their main job leaving the quality suffering. Some of the people with whom we spoke felt that there was a push toward "getting the numbers out" instead of

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caring about quality. This perceived partiality toward quantity over quality was indicated in several of the interviews. Many of the employees, especially the lower level, or juniors, took pride in their work and tried their best to put out the best possible work. Some had been told "not to do such good work, or it will be expected constantly." They still had to produce more of the product, only at a lower standard, and they quickly lost pride causing the quality to go down drastically. Also, if employees feel that they cannot take pride in the quality of their work because of forces beyond their control, they can quickly become frustrated and negative about the organization (Shadur, 1999). Some of these meaningless tasks could be eliminated for these people if the organization supported a larger workforce.

Personnel were the subjects of conversation in a number of interviews. Employees said that AFN-Europe is understaffed for what it has to do, and recent personnel cuts, mentioned in four interviews, have been a problem in causing this. Employees have to do meaningless tasks that they are unfamiliar with, as well as important tasks. This is all on top of the tasks they are familiar with and have to do. Similarly, it was indicated eight times in three interviews that some people felt that they were overworked. They said they frequently stayed for twelve or more hours per day just to get the job done. They also mentioned "[they] were getting the mission accomplished well with the amount of people and now they [AFN] want to put more work on the plate." Similarly, another related comment was that "the expectations are unreasonable." When work begins to intrude on home life, the "life balance" which yields the highest levels of job satisfaction is reduced (MacDonald, 1999). Being overworked and not being able to produce a product of the level of quality desired by the worker is also frustrating and

causes people to lose satisfaction at the workplace. Also, many did not feel that they were adequately recognized for the good work that they did, which tended to lower motivation and subsequent job performance.

The topic of recognition was brought up once each in five of the six interviews. It was stated that frequently, long hours and hard work were not mentioned, but any slight mishap was immediately pointed out. Some said thank-yous from peers and community members were all they needed. Others said they had accepted that their jobs were more behind the scenes and would not be as noticed. It was mentioned in one interview that "the only way to get an award for something is to write it yourself." This lack of recognition combined with the feelings of being overworked can make employees feel unappreciated. Employees tend to feel that recognition is more important than monetary compensation in terms of overall satisfaction (Radcliff, 1999). Two of the six interviews stated that the recognition at AFN-Europe was good, and they felt it was adequate and appropriate. Neither gave any elaborate details, but just said that they believed recognition to be adequate and appropriate.

The ability to talk to superiors was mentioned in four interviews a total of seven times. Some felt that they could talk to their immediate supervisors effectively about anything, while others felt that only the higher-level personnel would listen. They mentioned that they liked the "open door policy" of being able to speak to anyone at anytime. However, when they were expressing a problem, it was questioned "whether or not they [high-level] will listen…" and take action. Sensing sessions were mentioned, as "two hours that I will never have back" since people see that their concerns seem to be considered but "nothing is ever done." Some respondents feared "retaliation" from the

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middle management for talking with the high command, even though they felt comfortable doing so. The feeling that people did not listen when something was said led some of the employees to believe that the organization did not care about them.

The topic of caring about people was mentioned five times in three interviews. Sensing sessions were again talked about and it was stated that "people's comments, questions, and complaints are just blown off…for all [they] can see." People saw that requirements of the Army are not respected or kept up to date. Things such as PT (physical training), regular "counseling," and the yearly field training are simply ignored and Army members felt that they were "not prepared to go to another Army post." However, they were dedicated to their work at AFN-Europe and believed it was quality work. Military personnel who were serious about their military career took offense to the disregard of military requirements. They felt that since AFN-Europe was a mixed organization, the command should care for all the different types of people employed or stationed there.

There seemed to be some disagreement on what the exact purpose of AFN-Europe was, with four of the six respondents saying it was to get the command information out, while the other two said it was to entertain and boost the morale of the soldiers. When employees are certain about a clear mission statement, they are more likely to know what tasks have priority and be enthusiastic about doing them (Wilson, 1989). The confusion could be the result of the communication within the organization.

Communication throughout the organization was mentioned three times in two of the interviews. Communication is the binding thread that runs through many of the different topics mentioned by respondents in their respective interviews. Concerns were

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raised about "a lot of…word of mouth….and e-mail" communication which tends to either get miscommunicated, or not reach people. When word of mouth and e-mail are the primary sources of communication, the value of personal contact, the original intent of the message, and the knowledge of effective delivery are lost. Also, sensing sessions were again mentioned as being an example of either poor or one-sided communication. Some of the structure issues also contributed to the communication issues. Since people did not know who to report to, the multiple commanders could be a cause of not only structure, but also communication, problems. As mentioned before, the "firewall" or "buffer" zones were the main borders through which messages were exchanged, and each successive iteration was distorted a little more, just like a game of telephone. However, it was brought up three times in two interviews, that the high command was "excellent" and "easily approachable" as well as having a "great vision" for what AFN-Europe should do. This implies that the high command communicates well and the problems arise at another point in the chain.

Some other minor themes were seen only once in the six interviews. These themes were not widespread enough to merit in depth examination into organizational implications. Some examples are the separation between work and home. Some felt that they could "leave work at work," and "leave home at home," and have an enjoyable home life. Others thought the on site barracks, especially, were not good for employees since there was not enough separation between work and home and it caused "poor morale" and a dislike of the environment. There being "no typical day" of work, stress levels, and the rewarding cooperation between the different military branches and civilians at AFN-Europe were other infrequent topics from the interviews and focus

groups. Our other qualitative method, focus groups, provided additional information, as well as some new information to compare to the interview and survey data.


4.1.2 - Focus Groups

There were five focus groups conducted during the course of this project. These focus groups provided qualitative data about the feelings and attitudes of AFN employees. As with interviews, these results were qualitative and were not necessarily representative of the population as a whole. The respondents of the focus groups were both military and civilian. Military personnel ranged in rank from low level enlisted personnel to officers. Civilians also came from various positions within the organization. As was discussed in the methodology, suppression of dissention was an important factor to consider during the focus group process. Respondents may not have answered as openly and honestly as they would have in interviews. This suppression was avoided as much as possible by organizing focus groups of individuals of similar rank. In these focus groups, many common themes emerged. Through the use of content analysis, these themes were quantified.

The structure of AFN was mentioned in three of the focus groups a total of eight times. The overall feeling was that the structure of AFN was poor and, as put in one focus group, top-heavy. The focus group respondents expanded upon this poor structure theme by highlighting the inefficiency and redundancy of the current system. This theme came up once in three different focus groups. The topic of inefficiency came up in different ways. One discussion about inefficiency detailed the fact that there were too many hard copies of documents and not enough ways to do paperwork electronically.

One employee reported that he had to file 7 copies of a document to several different departments. The suggestion was made by an employee to improve efficiency was to convert some documents into electronic form. Inefficiency was also brought up in discussion when one employee made a comment that something he had inquired about hadn't yet been looked at since it had been brought up "only eleven months ago," with laughing agreement from the fellow group members. Redundancy was another topic of discussion, with one employee stating "we have duplicate structure within our organization" followed by a general consensus of that statement.

The organization being top-heavy came up in two groups. One such comment was that the organization was much like a tree with a very skinny trunk and a big top. This comment referred to the fact that there are many more high level workers than low level workers below them. The employee went on to note that one day a "big wind" may come along and blow it over. Nods and glances around the room seemed to affirm this statement. Other comments made indirectly on this topic included statements that the organization had "too many people in charge," "not enough workers" and "too many chiefs, not enough Indians."

In three groups, communication came up as a theme associated with structure. Communication between headquarters and affiliates was viewed as relatively good. Within the headquarters, employees explained that the communication "gets to you in such a round-about way that it's not the correct communication that started." This topic of miscommunication was brought up in two of the groups. Comments made about the lack of communication included use of the phrases "terrible" and "not ever improved." The word "frustration" also came up twice in concern with communication within the

headquarters building. Communication between employees and direct superiors was viewed as poor. Statements such as "communication with superiors is bad" showed this. In another group, employees felt that their ability to talk to superiors was good. They felt superiors were receptive to their comments and that they would indeed listen to their thoughts and opinions. Being able to talk to superiors without fear of retribution varies with department and supervisor.

Associated closely with the thoughts on the existing structure was the topic of restructuring. This theme came up in three of the focus groups, with a great difference in view on this topic. The higher level employees felt that attempts to restructure the organization were in the best interest of the organization, making it more "participatory." One employee looked and sounded very excited when speaking about reorganization. This shows the high level of interest of this employee. Lower level employees felt that reorganization occurred too often. When prompted to answer what they would like to see done with the organization, one employee responded "less reorganization." Two other employees present agreed to that statement with nods and verbal affirmations.

Another topic that came up among respondents in one of the focus groups was that they often felt unaware of what was going on with the reorganization attempts. Words and phrases used by employees to describe their feelings included "frustrated and lost," "don't have any control over it," "they know there's nothing that can be done about it." They discussed the "rumors going around" about a new reorganization and how they "don't know if that's for the sake of making things better, hopefully that's what the goal is." These statements all express employees' lack of awareness of the plans of the higher level command. A shrug or a glance away from the discussion were gestures frequently

made by the employees while making these comments. This seemed to emphasize their feelings of not being informed, and their inability to find out more information about this subject. Perhaps they had even given up on trying to find more information. These ideas were also expressed in another focus group. The statement made was "There won't be anything announced. There are enough people that know that we're looking at restructuring, but there's nothing announced about how or when, or anything like that."

Another topic that came up in three focus groups about the organization itself was the fact that AFN is a mixed organization. No respondents from any of the focus groups had a problem with the organization being composed of both civilians and military personnel. It must be noted that four of the five focus groups were composed of both military and civilian personnel. Three focus groups brought up that this mixed organization creates conflict and division sometimes. One group brought up the fact that each division tends to be its "own little entity." Another group stated that "there are two different worlds here" and that the "army plays games one way, the air force plays the game another way, and the navy plays it another." The tone of voice, vocal inflections, and other statements of the respondent seemed to indicate acceptance of this fact, but seemed also to hint that it may be a source of minor conflicts. A positive statement made about the mixed organization was that it was sometimes rewarding to be able to work cooperatively on something between the various branches of the military and with civilians.

Besides the mix of civilian and military, there were many other personnel issues brought up in focus groups. One issue was general job satisfaction. This topic came up in two focus groups. In one group, several employees stated that they "love" their jobs

and they would work here again. Other employees held different opinions. One employee stated that he wanted "out of here," and others were yet unsure whether they would reenlist or not because of their experience at AFN. The vocal inflections used by the employees in both cases emphasized their decisions.

Another common concept discussed was the topic of staffing. One focus group mentioned personnel cuts and understaffing they saw within the building three times. Another group mentioned the topic seven times. One statement made was that when people leave to do other tasks, there is no one left to fill-in for them. Another comment made three times was that in general the organization was short staffed. Respondents also made mention to being "pulled and pulled and pulled." This referred to the shrinking staff and growing number of tasks within a department.

Three focus groups made reference to employees feeling overworked. One group stated that working at AFN meant always trying to keep up, that they couldn't "finish one task without getting hit with two more." The phrase "killing us" was used three times, referring to the amount of work an employee had to do. A frustrated tone of voice accompanied this statement. Another statement made was "you can only do so much at a certain pace," making reference to the amount of work given to personnel versus the amount of time they have to actually perform the job. Another phrase used once was that employees were "beaten up" by the amount of work that they have to do. One respondent indicated a feeling of completing tasks in a "half-assed" manner. This employee was very frank and adamant about this subject. The employee even said "I feel very strongly about this."

One phrase that came up repeatedly was the concept of quantity over quality in programming. This came up in three focus groups and was mentioned a total of eight times. There were many comments alluding to the fact that quantity versus quality was stressed at AFN. One employee stated "here at AFN, anyway, it's all about the numbers and the count, it's not about the quality and the heart that goes into a story." The general theme brought up by employees in their work was "numbers, numbers, numbers." They stated the organization was only concerned with "meeting quotas" and "pumping out numbers." These numbers were important to management since their evaluations were based in part upon the numbers. However, to lower level personnel "numbers don't mean anything to us… but when we hear we did a good job on a story, that does affect us." Raised eyebrows and a quiet voice accent this statement. The employee is simply asking for more recognition. It was then stated that "you have to do it [products] so fast" that "it ends up being cookie cutter productions and nothing original." Employees also mentioned "my standards have gone down as far as my job performance but being able to get those numbers up, that they want." The employee sounded unhappy, almost ashamed that his standards had gone down.

The quantity over quality theme was also related to morale among employees at AFN. Two focus groups stated that morale was poor among the workers within the organization. One group related this poor morale to the fact that the constant push for quantity rather than quality did not allow for employees to take pride in their work. The simple "cookie cutter production" as opposed to allowing employees to be creative and produce high quality shows was something mentioned as a detriment to morale. The

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topic of being overworked also came out as having a negative effect on morale among the workers in the organization.

Equipment was another topic brought up in two focus groups. Both groups said that most of the equipment was excellent. In fact, they were proud and impressed with the quality of equipment at AFN. This was mostly in concern to broadcasting equipment. One comment was "you won't find better equipment anywhere else in the government." However, some equipment, such as computer equipment, was said to be "outdated" twice in an affiliate focus group and to be "excellent" three times in a headquarters focus group. This showed a difference in opinion of the quality of equipment between an affiliate and headquarters. The actions of the employees seemed to indicate a general feeling of frustration over the outdated equipment.

Job training and equipment training were mentioned in three of the focus groups. One group mentioned that training was "inadequate." Another group mentioned that often employees must "figure [the job] out as you go." The reason given by employees was a lack of personnel to devote sufficient time to training. This same group also mentioned that training in recent years had gotten better. It was stated that "I know I'll have the skills and training… to get a good job [after AFN]." This comment was accompanied by a satisfied nod. Employees also said they were exposed to a broad spectrum of jobs at AFN. The improvement in training was also discussed in the other focus group, where it was stated that efforts to improve training were being implemented.

There was also mention of military training. In this area, two groups discussed the lack of adequate military training. It was said that it is difficult to get promoted in the military at AFN, since employees are too busy with work to work on military training. A

third group discussed the fact that the organization was trying to "grow leaders" and was concentrating on training more and more.

Another topic brought up in focus groups was recognition. Once again, there were differing opinions on recognition. This difference in opinion could have been caused by a variety of factors, such as one's job within AFN or his personal beliefs about how active the organization should be in recognizing employees. One group stated that recognition was fairly good among people at AFN. Two groups discussed how the current recognition from superiors was lacking. Employees said they were only noticed when things go wrong. The "stars" of programs were seen as receiving more "privileges" than the people working behind the scenes, such as not having to do chores around the building. One suggestion made by an employee was that employees need to be told they're needed and that they were doing good work.

One last major topic of discussion within the focus groups regarded the purpose of AFN-Europe. From one focus group, three major missions for AFN were proposed. These three missions were providing command information, providing American entertainment, and improving morale among military personnel and their families. The respondents differed in opinion about which mission was most important. The group mentioned five times that the purpose of AFN was to provide command information. Once it was also suggested that entertainment was the purpose. Increasing morale was mentioned four times as the mission of AFN. Of these goals, the group agreed command information was the actual mission of AFN, but that morale was the most important mission to them. This shows a general theme incongruence of mission. Some respondents gave other respondents surprised glances or raised eyebrows, perhaps

indicating that the fact that employees did not know that other employees had differing opinions on the subject.

Analysis of the focus group data revealed several key points that employees had discussed. The first area was that of structure. Employees of AFN felt the structure was poor. The top-heavy structure led to much redundancy within the organization. Some employees felt that the organization would be improved if there were less people in charge and more people actually doing the work. AFN as a mixed was seen in general as causing some minor conflicts and division but not as a major problem.

The structure was also a key element in the topic of communication. Respondents talked about how communication was good among headquarters and affiliates. Communication between employees and superiors was viewed as poor. The chain of command often made communication difficult because it had too many layers within it and was poorly defined. Good communication is important within an organization since good communication leads to better productivity and an increase in idea sharing, as well as employee involvement (Butler and Waldroop, 1999).

Organizational restructuring was viewed negatively by lower level employees. They felt that they were left in the dark by higher level personnel about the changes and were left hoping that the changes were indeed for the better. This also contributed to the theme of poor communication since lower level employees were not receiving clear messages about the organization's intent from their superiors. Haasen and Shea (1997) talk about how involving employees in changes affecting the organization leads to improved productivity and higher levels of trust between employees. Wilson (1989) places importance upon everyone knowing the intents of the organization when forming a

new mission statement. Keeping employees uninformed about an organization's plan leads to an inconsistent identity.

Focus group participants strongly stated their opinion that they were being overworked. They felt that they were given too many tasks and not enough people to do them. The argument was that employees could only do so much and they were being pushed to the limits. Part of being overworked was the idea of quantity rather than quality of programs. Overall, employees felt pushed to produce programs to get "numbers" up for their supervisors. Since the personnel producing the programs were being judged more on quality than quantity, they wanted to have time to take pride in producing a good program. However, this desire conflicted with the superior's desire to have higher numbers, which was part of what they were judged by. It is important for employees to be able to take pride in their work. When employees feel proud of what they do, that helps to create a better image for them and for the organization (Butler & Waldroop, 1999).

The inability to take pride in one's work and the push for higher numbers of programs was expressed as a serious negative factor in morale. Other mentions of poor morale included discussion about the understaffed departments and that employees were overworked. Also, recognition was another factor in considering morale. Recognition was discussed as being both good and bad. Some people felt that their superiors adequately recognized their efforts. Others felt that recognition was very lacking. A suggestion made regarding recognition was that employees need to be told they were doing well and that they were important.

Job training and military training were two other topics discussed within the focus groups. For job training, employees felt that training was inadequate, although it had improved over the past years. However, they felt that after being employed at AFN they were adequately prepared for a career in their occupational field. As far as military training was concerned, this topic related back to being overworked and morale issues. Since there was a great amount of time and effort that needed to be spent on doing one's job, there was little time left to do things that had to be done for the military. This led to problems with employees not being prepared for advancement to the next rank within the military or being prepared for their next post. This could have affected morale since military personnel were discouraged by the lack of advancement in their military career.

One last topic that was discussed was the purpose of AFN. This is the most important item when discussing organizational identity. Without a strong mission, employees within an organization could not hope to achieve a sense of what the organization represents (Wilson, 1989). Since there was division over whether the purpose of AFN was to provide command information, to provide American entertainment, or to improve morale, this indicated that AFN did not have a strong identity. This could have led to other problems surfacing within the organization, such as poor communication with superiors. This could have occurred because there was not a mutual understanding between employee and supervisor of what the goals of the organization were.

The preceding information, though presented quantitatively, was obtained in a purely qualitative manner. This qualitative data does not provide information that can be

extrapolated to the entire population. In order to provide a breadth of meaning, quantitative data was necessary and a survey was implemented.

### 4.2 – Quantitative Data Analysis

A survey was implemented to provide a statistical base to the study. It was intended to be a census study of all AFN-Europe employees. The primary survey distribution method was via mail, and a backup survey was sent via email to non-respondents.

The original employee list was grossly inaccurate. The result of this was that many people on the original list were no longer employed by AFN-E, and there were a number of people that were employees but not on the list. This was corrected for when an email list was obtained. A new census list was compiled from the AFN global email list. In order to address the problem presented by the employees that were never originally on the list, the non-responses and new list entries were emailed an electronic copy of the survey to fill out and email back. The response rate to the whole survey was 53% of the total AFN population, with 141 responses out of a population of 267. The number of respondents, N, is given for each chart in the document. A mean response is the average of all the responses, and a standard deviation is the interval around the mean in which 67% of responses lay.

The primary demographics used in the survey were age, branch, rank, and location. These demographics were used as filters on the survey responses, allowing survey results to be compared between different groups within the demographic, such as Army, Navy, Air Force, and civilians. However, certain groups were eliminated from the comparison due to their small size of less than 25 people. This is because with small

samples the results are less statistically accurate, and with small groups of people it becomes easy to determine the actual identities of respondents, which breaks confidentiality.  Comparisons within each demographic grouping are presented later on in the discussion.

## 4.2.1 – Statistical Survey Analysis

### Goals of AFN

Questions one and two of the survey were focused on the goals of AFN.  The first survey question was a six-part question.  It addressed how well AFN accomplished a given set of goals.  Answers were given on a five-point scale, with 1 being worst and 5 being best.



**Figure 1: How well AFN-E accomplishes its goals.  Mean responses are shown, with standard deviation given next to the category name.  N=133**
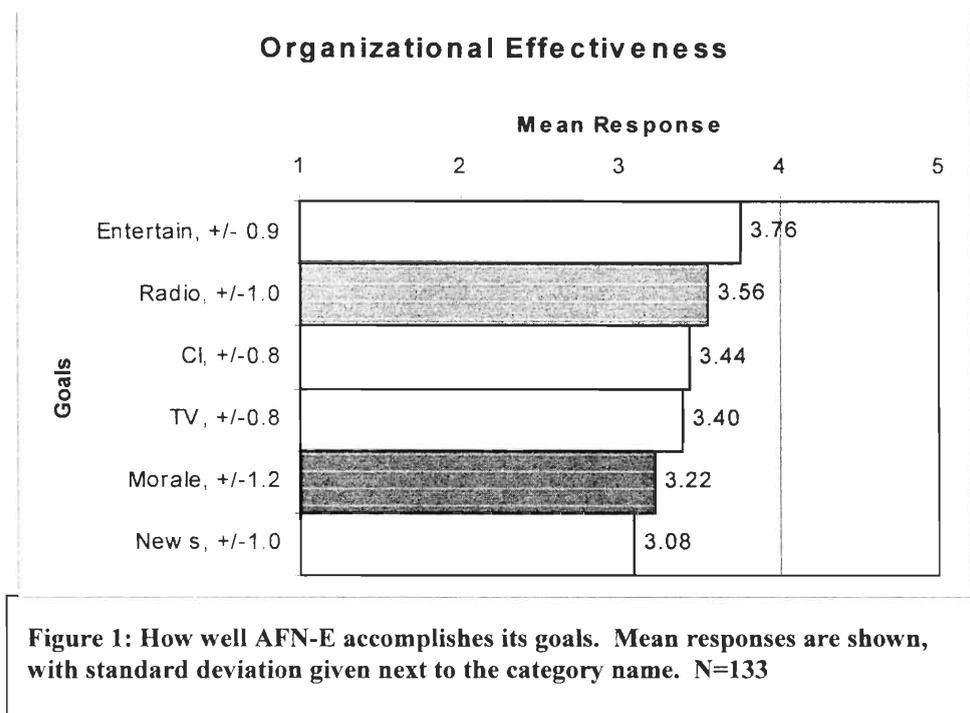
Figure 1 is a graphical representation of the answers given for question one.  The mean response for each goal is shown.  The results rank entertainment as the most

successful of AFN's goals, radio service as second most successful, then command

information and television service, ranking roughly the same. The goals that AFN-E is

rated lowest in involve increasing morale and providing up-to-date news. All of the

means fall between three and four on the five point scale, which means that overall,

AFN-E employees feel that AFN-E accomplishes its goals satisfactorily.

Question two asked survey respondents to rank the given goals of AFN-E in order of importance. The results, as shown in Figure 2, indicate that at AFN-E respondents consider providing command information (CI) to be the highest priority of
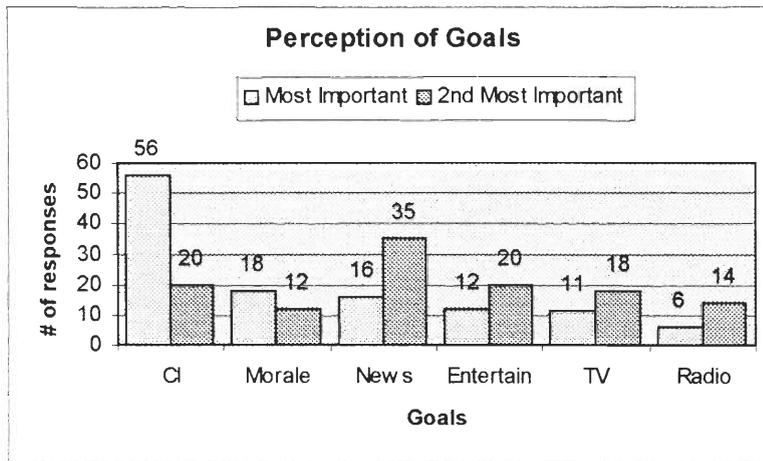


**Figure 2: Ranking of the importance of AFN-E's goals. Six goals are given. Bars represent the number of respondents that ranked the corresponding goal as most important (blue bar) or second most important (red bar). N=119**

AFN-E, with providing up-to-date news information as the second most important goal.

Increasing morale follows next, then providing American entertainment, television

service, and radio service. Command information is local command-oriented news that

AFN-E inserts into its broadcasts in place of commercials. CI is intended to keep the

audience informed of important occurrences that may directly affect them. It is

interesting to note that the goals of AFN-E that rank lowest in importance (entertainment

and radio service) are the goals that AFN-E is ranked best at accomplishing in Figure 1.

Furthermore, while it is apparent to most of the organization that providing command

information is the main purpose of AFN-E, there is still some confusion regarding what else the organization should be focusing on.

## Work Environment

The third survey question was focused on the adequacy of different aspects of AFN's work environment. It was split into three sections. The first section addressed general items pertaining to the work environment. The second and third sections were split into five items specific to office or work space. The second section focused on office areas, while the third section focused on working areas. This was done because focus group participants mentioned that their work space was often different than their office space. Answers were given on a five point scale with 1 being very poor and 5 being excellent.

Figure 3 shows the average response regarding each aspect of the employee's

**Workspace, General**

**Mean Response**

| Category | Value |
|---|---|
| Telephone, +/-0.9 | 4.04 |
| Computer, +/-1 | 3.94 |
| Fitness, +/-1 | 3.57 |
| Office Supplies, +/-1 | 3.44 |
| Mail, +/-1.1 | 3.42 |
| Recreation, +/-1.2 | 2.73 |
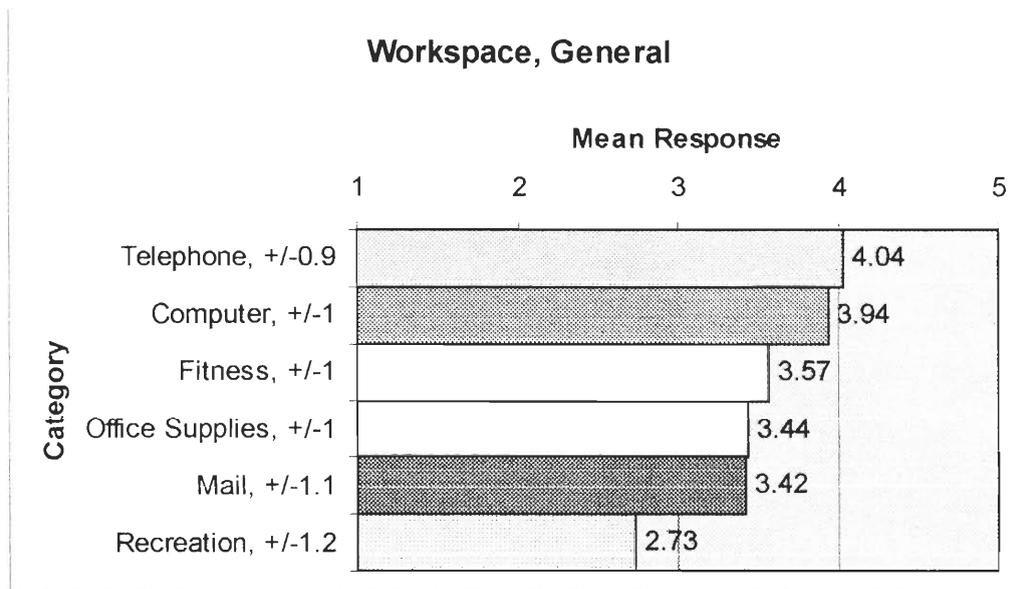
Figure 3: Average responses rating different aspects of the AFN-E workspace. Standard deviation is indicated next to each category. N=133

workspace. The general workspace items rate highly, with computer, email, and telephone access averaging "good" at almost 4, and the remainder achieving results between "satisfactory" and "good." The only one that drops below "satisfactory" is access to recreational facilities.

Figure 4 compares the average responses of participants for the office area section and the work area section. The office and work area questions rate closer to "satisfactory," with noise level being the best rated item, and privacy being rated lowest for both questions. Overall, AFN-E employees indicate that their environment is at least acceptable, although office areas rank higher in every category than work areas.
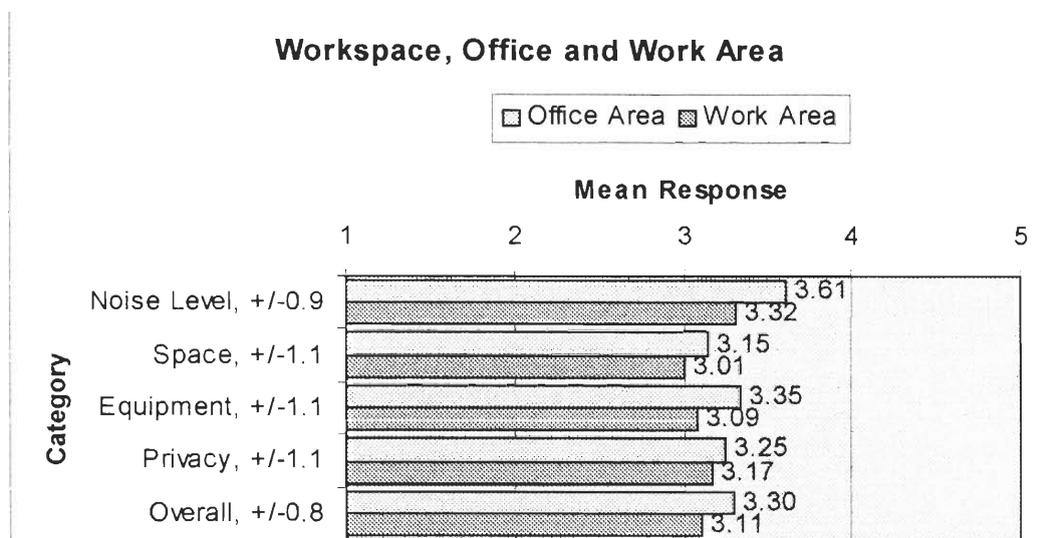


**Figure 4: Comparison of mean responses for different aspects of work and office areas. Standard deviation is given next to each category. N=131 for Office, 81 for Work area.**

## Workload

Workload was another topic that the survey addressed. Question five asked participants to indicate how many hours per week they typically worked, in an effort to

determine the workload of AFN-E employees. Respondents selected the response that indicated most accurately how many hours they worked per week. A related question queried participants on how often they felt overworked at AFN-E. Answers were selected from a five point scale, with 1 as never and 5 as always. Following this line of thought, questions seven and eight asked employees how they would rate their work compared to people of similar pay grade or rank.

When asked in question five whether they thought they were overworked, AFN-E employees state that they are moderately overworked, with 71% of respondents working more than a 45-hour work week. The remaining 28% work normal hours. Only 1% responded that they worked less than 35 hours a week. See Figure 5 for details. Since a standard full time work week is 40 hours in the US and 37.5 hours in Germany, this shows that AFN-E employees do an excessive amount of work.

Responses to question six agree with those to question five. Employees were asked to select from categories ranging from "never" to "always" regarding how frequently they find themselves overworked. Figure 6 shows the number of responses for each category in the question. Overall, the responses to the question are evenly distributed with most respondents choosing "moderately." However, approximately fifteen more respondents chose "frequently overworked" than "infrequently overworked", shifting the mean towards being overworked.

Question seven asked people to indicate how much work they do compared to other people in the same pay grade. Once again, answers were given on a five point scale, with 1 being much less work, and 5 being much more work. Question eight asked survey participants to rate the difficulty of their work in comparison with other people in

## Hours/Week



7%  1%

24%

28%

40%

Legend:
- Under 35
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- Over 65
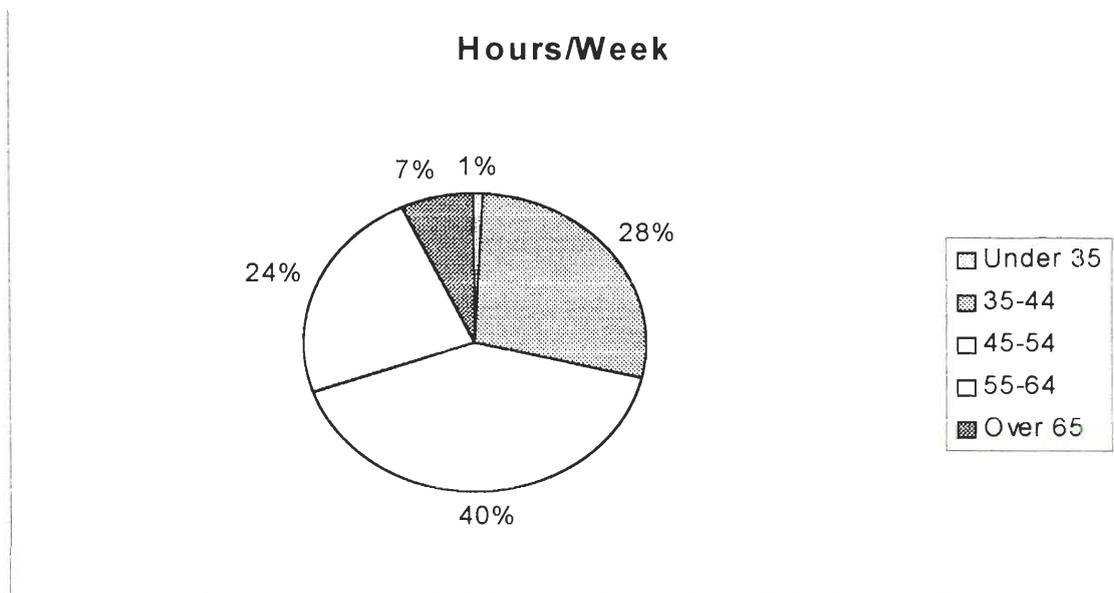
Figure 5: Participants are split into groups by the number of hours worked per week. 71% of the organization works more than 40 hours per week. N=131

## Frequence of Overwork



# of responses (y-axis): 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50

Bar values:
- Never: 10
- Infrequently: 28
- Moderately: 44
- Frequently: 40
- Always: 10

Answer choice (x-axis)
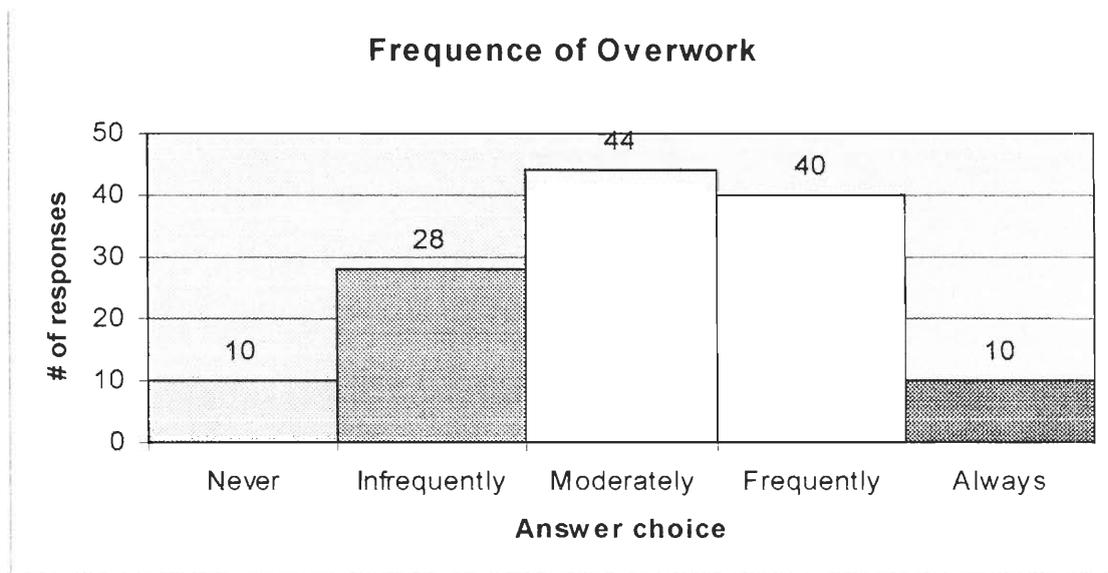
Figure 6: Number of responses by category regarding how often AFN-E employees perceive themselves to be overworked. N=132

the same pay grade as them. A five point scale was used, with 1 representing much easier and 5 representing much harder. Figure 7 shows the results of questions seven and eight together for comparison purposes. Almost all responses to either

94

question are grouped between "same" and "much more." This response indicates that the majority of AFN-E employees feel that working at AFN-E puts them in jobs that are more demanding, both in workload and difficulty of tasks, than their peers in other organizations.

## Work in Comparison to Peers

Amount ▣ Difficulty



Figure 7: Peer comparison of work, by amount and difficulty. The number of responses for each category is indicated. N=132
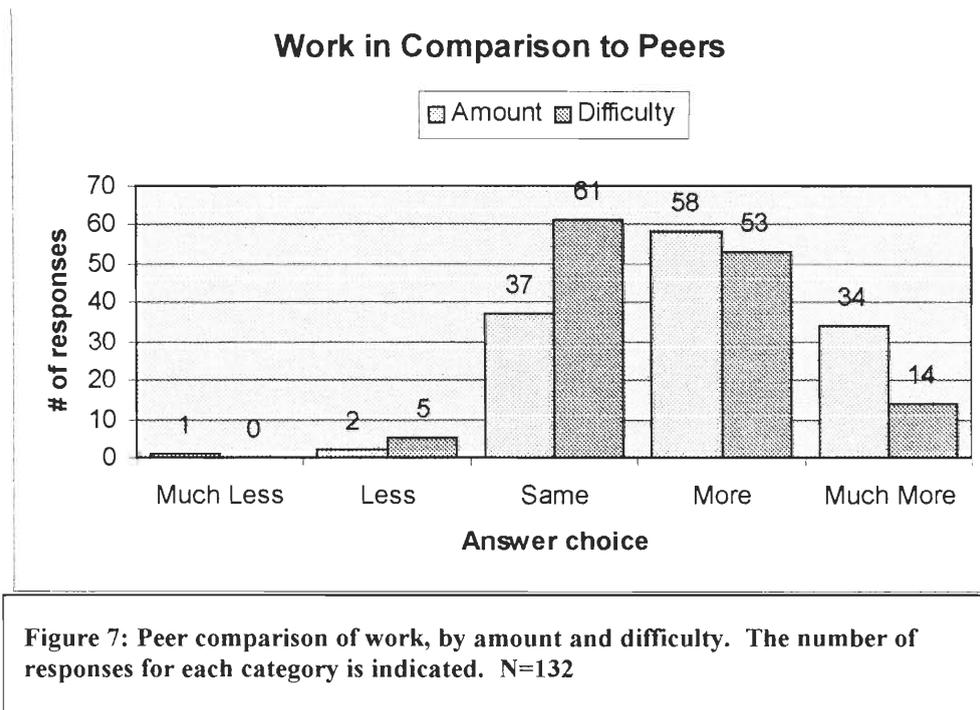
Question eleven addressed AFN-E's reaction to less than satisfactory work. It used a five point scale. On the scale, 1 represented never, and 5 represented always. Figure 8 shows the percentage of respondents that selected each answer category. 63% of respondents believe that AFN-E does not deal appropriately with less than satisfactory work, with 21% choosing "never" and 42% choosing "infrequently". Only 11% of respondents thought AFN-E consistently dealt with this problem effectively. This shows that there is a tolerance of less than satisfactory work, perhaps because of the heavy workload of the employees.

# Frequence of Corrective Action
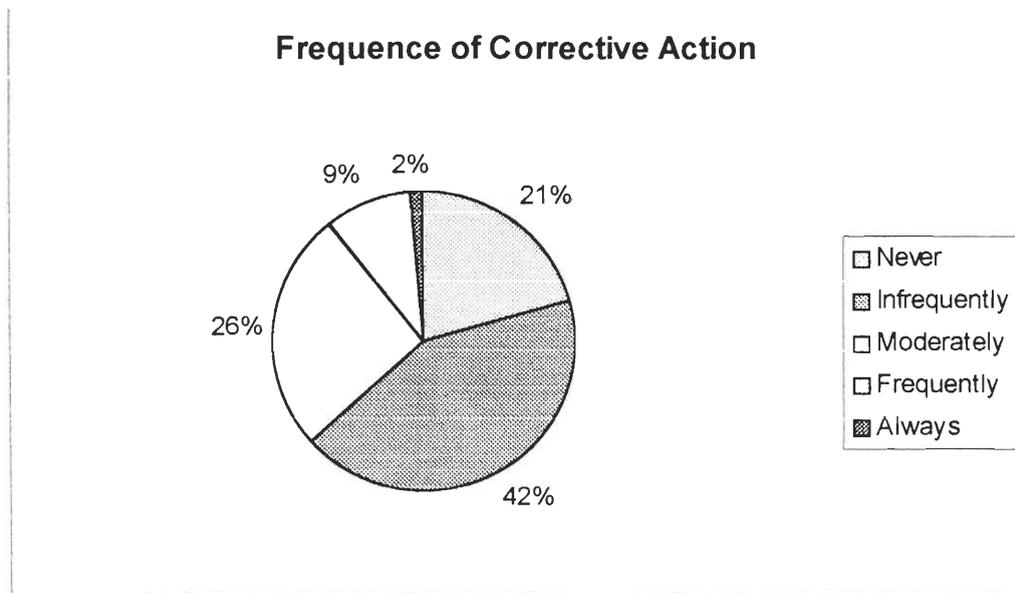


**Figure 8: Percentage response from each category regarding how often AFN-E deals appropriately with less than satisfactory work. N=133**

## Recognition

The tenth question in the survey, "Do you feel that your work and efforts are adequately recognized by the organization?" had respondents evaluate the recognition they received from AFN-E for their actions. It used a five point scale, with 1 as "never" and 5 as "always." Figure 9 is a chart that shows the percentage of responses for each individual answer category. 45% of respondents chose either "never" or "infrequently" for this question, while 36% chose the median response and the remaining 19% thought that AFN-E consistently recognized employees for their actions. Employees feel they are not receiving very much recognition for the large amount of work that they are doing.

## Frequence of Recognition for Actions



**Figure 9: Percentage response by category to the question regarding the amount of recognition employees receive for their actions. N=133**
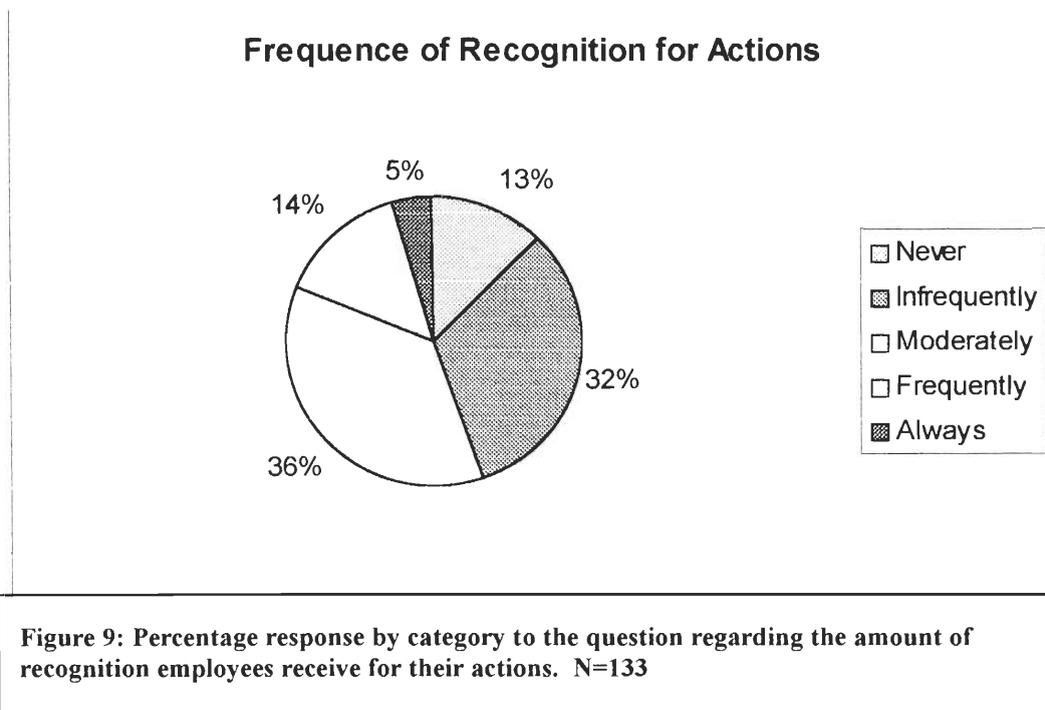
## Management

Questions twelve through seventeen addressed management issues. Question twelve was intended to determine how clearly tasks and goals were communicated to AFN-E employees. The scale used ranged from "never" at 1 to "always" at 5. Question fifteen was meant to determine how much employees perceive that their supervisors at AFN-E actually care about how employees feel toward their jobs. A five point scale was used, with 1 as "not at all" and 5 as "extensively". Question sixteen had employees rate how involved their superiors were with the employees' jobs. The scale was the same as question fifteen. Question seventeen addressed the approachability of superiors. A five point scale was used, with 1 for "very easy" and 5 for "very difficult". Figure 10 shows the mean response given on each management topic. The responses average slightly lower than the median value of 3 for each topic except for the concern of superiors for the views of employees. Clarity of tasks is ranked lowest of all of the topics. The reason for

this may be related to the confusion regarding the goals of AFN-E as an organization, as

well as the fact that AFN-E employees have large workloads with a variety of tasks.
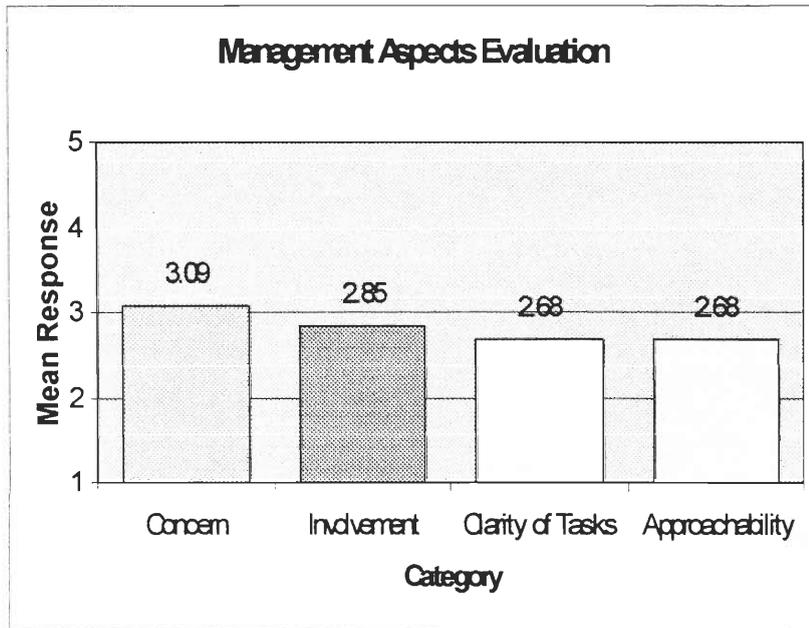


Figure 10: Evaluation of aspects of management by category. Average response is shown. The standard deviation is between 1.1 and 1.2 for each category. N=132

Questions thirteen and fourteen were skipped if an answer of "never" was given for question twelve. They were follow-up questions, intended to give more depth to the results of question twelve. They asked the participants to indicate to what degree lack of communication and conflicting statements from superiors were responsible for their answer to question twelve. A five point scale was used, with 1 as none and 5 as extensive. Figure 11 elaborates on the topic of clarity of tasks, showing results for the follow up questions. The chart plots the number of responses for each answer category for lack of communication and conflicting statements, two possible causes of unclear tasks. The results for conflicting statements are centered around the median response of 3, showing a moderate amount of conflict regarding individual tasks. This may be because of redundancy in the organizational structure of AFN-E. For the topic of lack of communication, the results are skewed towards the higher end of the scale, with most

## Reasons for Unclear Tasks

☐ Lack of Communication ▨ Conflicting Statements
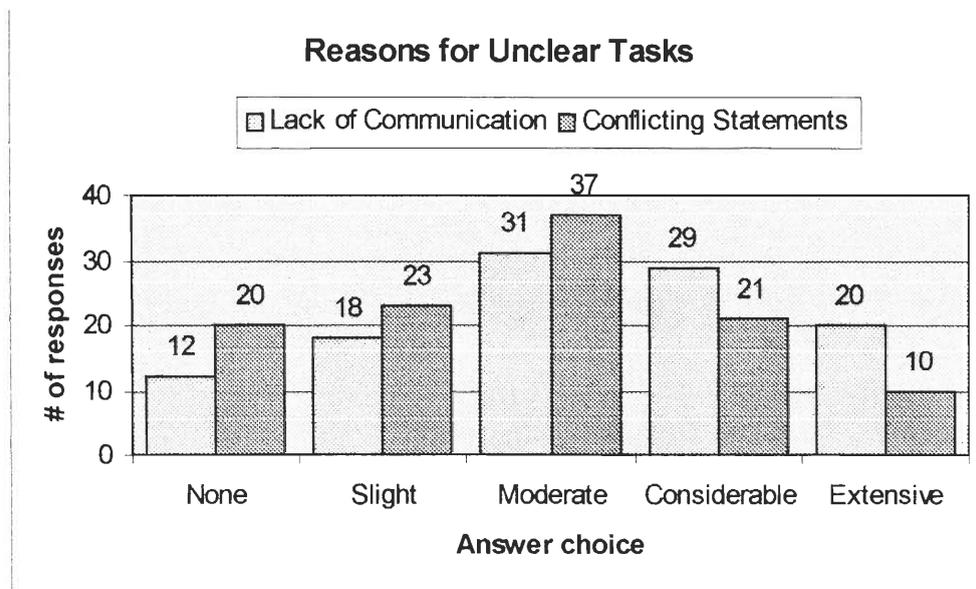


Figure 11: Follow up regarding sources of unclear tasks. The chart shows the number of responses for each category. The two sources examined are lack of communication and conflicting statements from superiors. N=111

answers being between "moderate" and "extensive." This indicates that although lack of clarity may be due to conflicting goals or statements, it is more often due to a lack of adequate communication from superiors to subordinates regarding tasks that need to be accomplished.

## Training

The eighteenth question in the survey asked about the effect that working at AFN-E has on opportunities for employees to advance in rank or Government Service (GS) level. It used a five point answer scale with 1 representing "not at all", and 5 representing "extensively". Question number nineteen was similar to question eighteen. This question addressed the applicability of experience obtained at AFN-E to later jobs that an employee may hold. Once again, a five point scale was used with 1 standing for "not at all" and 5 standing for "extensively." Figure 12 compares the responses to each

question. For question eighteen, respondents indicate that they do not feel that AFN-E is training them adequately to receive promotions or rank advancements, as the majority of respondents chose "not at all" or "slightly" helpful. Conversely, the answers indicate that respondents find AFN-E to be considerably helpful for obtaining career-related

**Training Adequacy**

☐ Promotions ▦ Career Experience
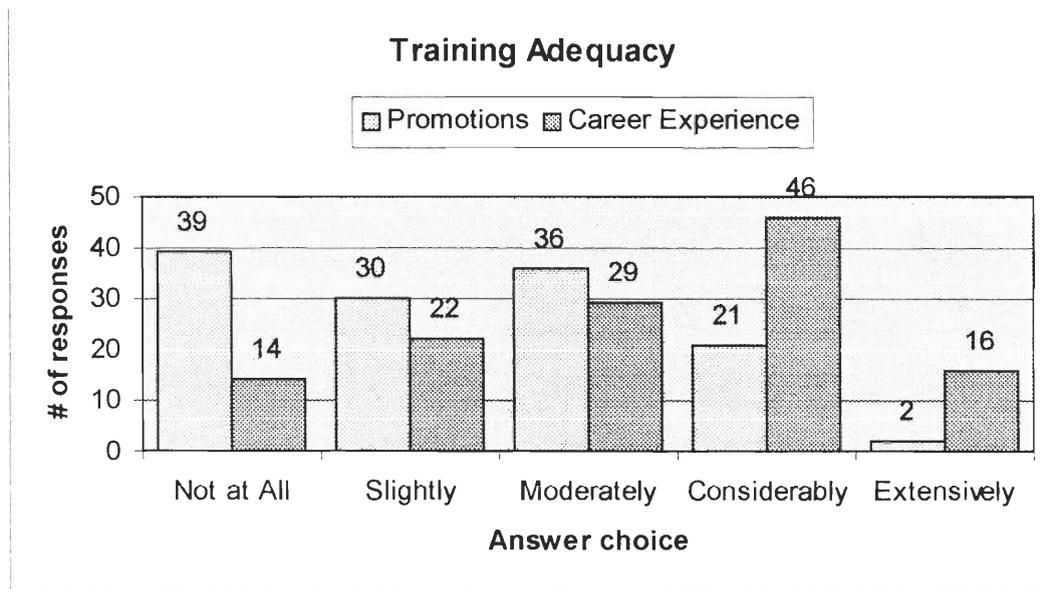


Figure 12: Training received by AFN-E employees specifically regarding promotions and career-related experience. The number of responses for each category is indicated, in a comparable fashion. N=129

experience. The contrast between the two different answers to these questions highlights the fact that AFN-E employees spend most of their time working on broadcasting or related fields, with very little time devoted to military training or other needs. This may be due in part to the organizational structure of AFN-E.


**Structure**

Question twenty was "What is your opinion of the organizational structure of AFN-E?" A five point scale was used, from "very poor" at 1 to "excellent" at 5. Figure 13 shows the results for this question. Each answer choice is shown, with its

corresponding number of responses. Very few participants rated the structure as "excellent" or "good," with most respondents choosing "poor." This indicates that employees of AFN-E for the most part think the structure of the organization is ineffective. Questions twenty-one and twenty-two ask for examples of things at AFN-E that are good and should be kept the same, as well as things that should be changed. The participants were given blank space to write their answers in. The results of these questions are discussed in section 4.2.2.

## Organizational Structure
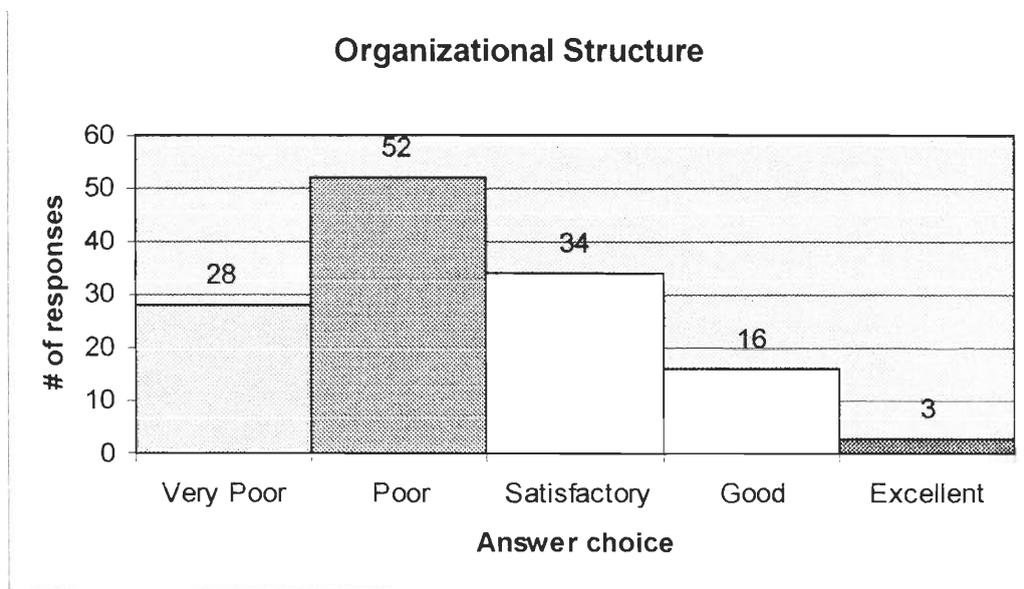


Figure 13: Employee opinion of the organizational structure of AFN-E, showing the number of responses for each answer category. N=133

## Turnover

Question twenty-three asked employees to indicate whether they would continue working for AFN-E if the opportunity was available. The wording used was "On the following scale, ranging from definitely not to definitely, please indicate whether you would want to continue working at AFN-Europe, provided the opportunity was

available." The question was worded this way because military personnel do not usually get a choice about where they are assigned. By asking participants to answer the question on the basis that the choice of working at AFN-E was available, this discrepancy in the sample population was minimized. A five point scale was utilized, with 1 representing "definitely not" and 5 representing the answer "definitely." A response of 3 meant "unsure." Figure 14 shows the percentage of respondents that chose each particular response category. 34% do not intend to continue at AFN-E, while 22% are unsure, and 44% would continue working at AFN-E. Although many people intend to continue at AFN-E, over half of the staff do not or are unsure about it. This is indicative of some pros and cons of AFN-E. These are addressed in question twenty-four, which is an open-



**Re-enlistment Plans**

17%

24%

17%

20%

22%

☐ Definitely Not
▦ Probably Not
☐ Unsure
☐ Probably
▦ Definitely
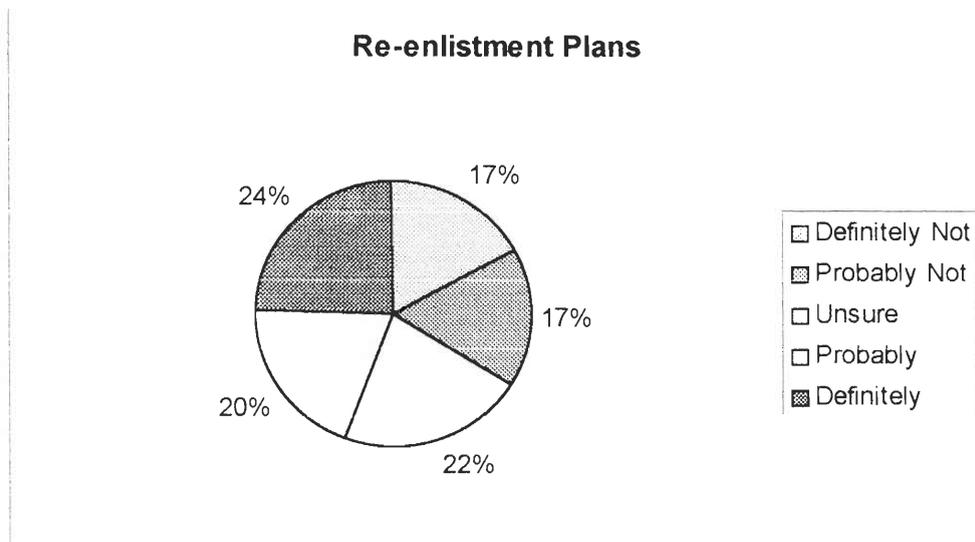
**Figure 14: Career intentions are indicated by the percentage of employees that choose each category, ranging from "definitely not" to "definitely" continue working at AFN-E. N=133**

ended question that allows participants to explain their choice for the previous question. The results of this question are discussed in section 4.2.2.

## Culture

Questions twenty-five through thirty were culture-related questions. They were

intended to determine how well AFN-E employees were prepared to live in a foreign

culture before their arrival. These questions all used a five point scale, with 1 as "not at

all" or "never", and 5 as "extensively" or "frequently". Figure 15 shows the average

**Culture**

**Mean Response**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Interaction, +/-0.9 — 4.11
Enjoyment, +/-0.8 — 4.08
Comfort, +/-0.8 — 3.99
Preparation, +/-1 — 3.50
Language, +/-1 — 3.00
Sponsor, +/-1.3 — 2.69

Category

**Figure 15: Comparison of average responses for culture-related questions.**
**Standard deviation is indicated next to each category. N=125**
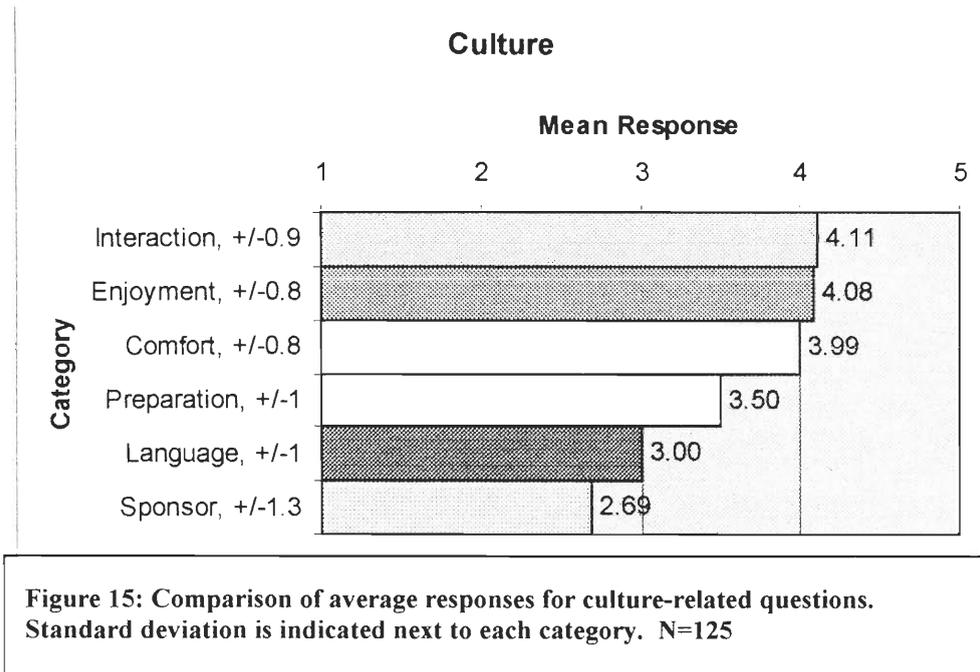
response to each culture question grouped together so that they can be easily compared.

Concerning preparation, participants indicated that they were moderately well prepared to

interact with the host culture, with a decent grasp of the language. However, the

responses indicate that the sponsor was not exceedingly helpful, perhaps because of the

large workload they also had to deal with. Sponsors are people within the organization

assigned to help prepare new employees for interaction with the host culture. This is in

addition to their normal workload, making a sponsorship program less viable due to the

shortage of personnel at AFN-E. When rating their interaction with the local culture,

respondents said they frequently interacted with the host culture, and they enjoy doing it

as well. This means that the negative feelings of employees at AFN-E are not necessarily attributable to the fact that they are living in a foreign culture.

## Demographics, Location

When the responses are filtered by location for the AFN-E HQ detachment, similar trends are followed with a few notable exceptions. Figure 16 demonstrates that employees at AFN HQ find themselves less overworked and work less hours per week on average than AFN-E as a whole. A larger percentage of employees from the HQ building

**Comparison of Hours Worked per Week**

□ AFN Overall ▨ AFN HQ Building

Figure 16: Comparison of percentage response for each category between AFN HQ Building and all of AFN. N=131 AFN Overall, 70 AFN HQ
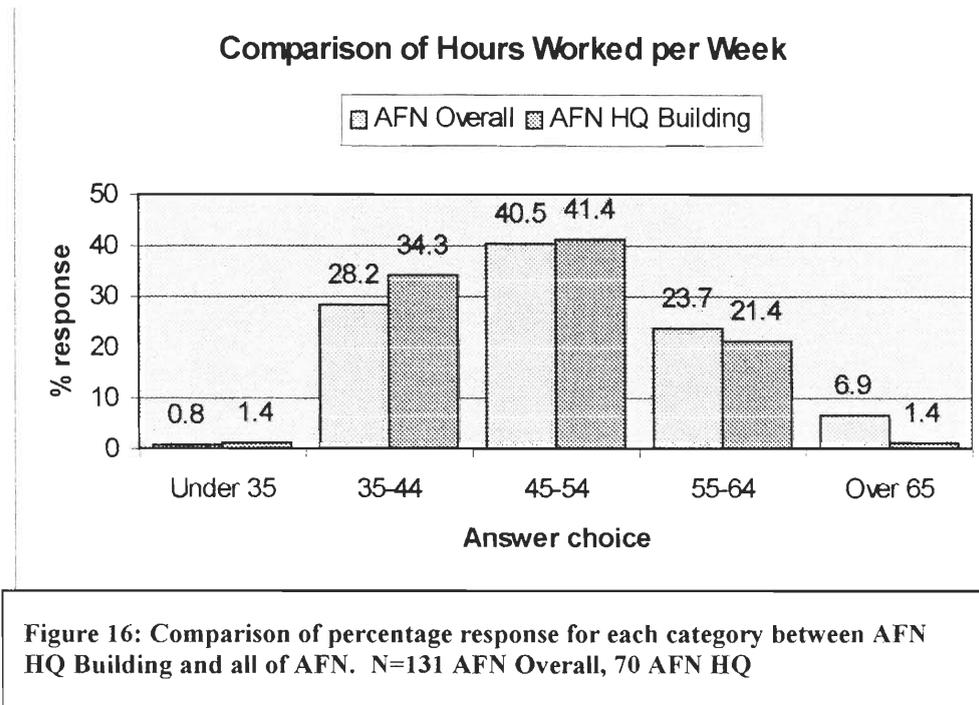
work less than 45 hours per week than from AFN overall. Also, respondents as a whole have larger percentages than AFN HQ for work weeks in excess of 55 hours per week. This may indicate that the affiliates are undermanned compared to the HQ, since the affiliates must be the reason that the results from AFN overall for over 55 hours per week are higher than for the AFN HQ building. Another interesting trend appears when overall

results for question twenty are compared to results for the HQ building. Figure 17 compares results for question twenty regarding organizational structure between the AFN HQ building and AFN overall. It indicates that employees feel that the organizational structure is worse within the HQ building than in the overall organization. This

**Comparison of Structure**

□ AFN Overall ▨ AFN HQ Building
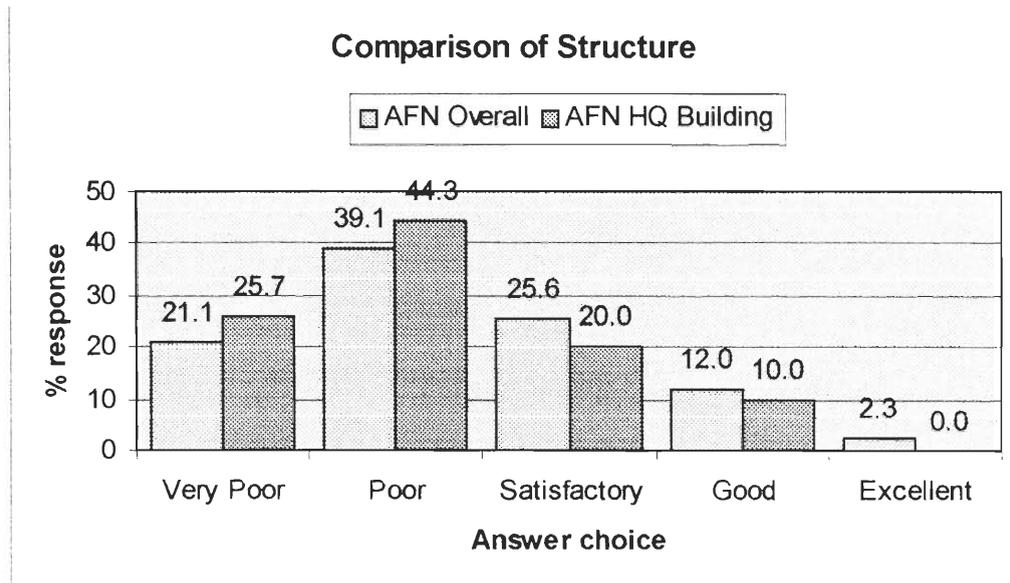
Figure 17: Comparison of percentage response by category for the question regarding organizational structure. The comparison is between AFN overall and AFN HQ building. N=133 AFN Overall, 70 AFN HQ

conclusion is reached because a higher percentage of respondents from the HQ building rated the structure as "very poor" or "poor" than from AFN overall, and a lower percentage of respondents from the HQ building as opposed to AFN overall claimed that the organization was satisfactorily structured or better.

**Demographics, Age and Rank**

When the responses are sorted by age, once again the overall trends are followed, with some notable exceptions. Filtering by rank was found to have a very similar effect on the results. This is because the ranking system is stratified by junior enlisted, middle
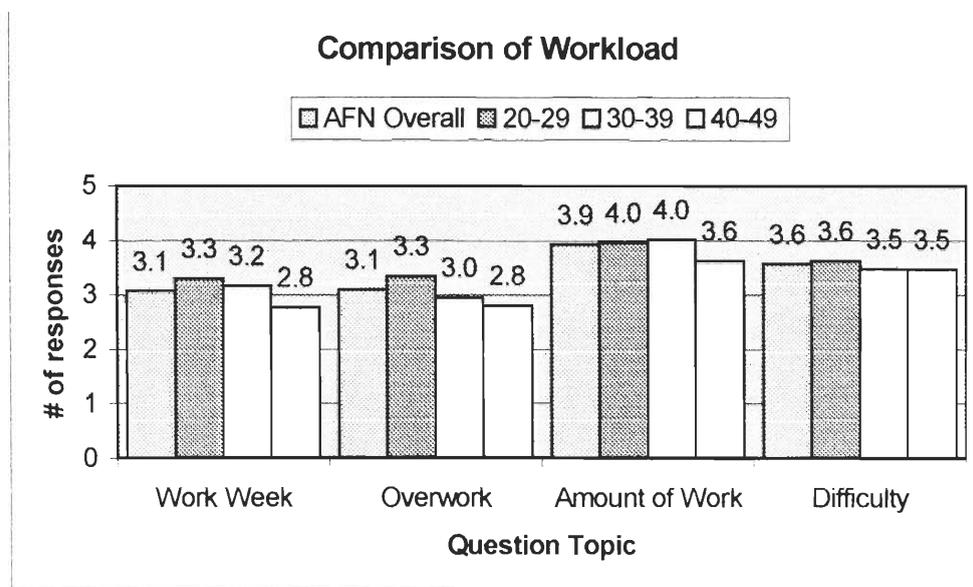
**Figure 18: Mean response by age group for various work categories. Mean for AFN Overall is given for comparison. Standard deviation is between 0.6 and 1 for each group. N varies by demographic and question.**

enlisted, officers and senior enlisted, and civilians. These groups, excepting civilians, are comprised mostly of people of similar age, and it turns out that the rank groups and age groups largely overlap, so the results are presented here together.

When asked how many hours per week employees worked, the pattern found was that as age increases, the number of hours worked per week decreases. This can be seen from Figure 18, where for nearly every category, the average response goes from more work to less work as age increases. This trend holds almost without exception on questions five through eight, where younger people perceive that they are more overworked than older people do on the topics of work week, frequency of overwork, amount of work, and difficulty of work. Younger people find that their duties compared to their peers are harder and come in greater quantity. Additionally, while older people follow the overall trends concerning recognition for their actions, younger people find themselves

considerably less recognized, with a rating of nearly 2.2 as compared to nearly 2.8 for other age groups, as shown in Figure 19. Figure 20 compares the results to questions eighteen and nineteen,
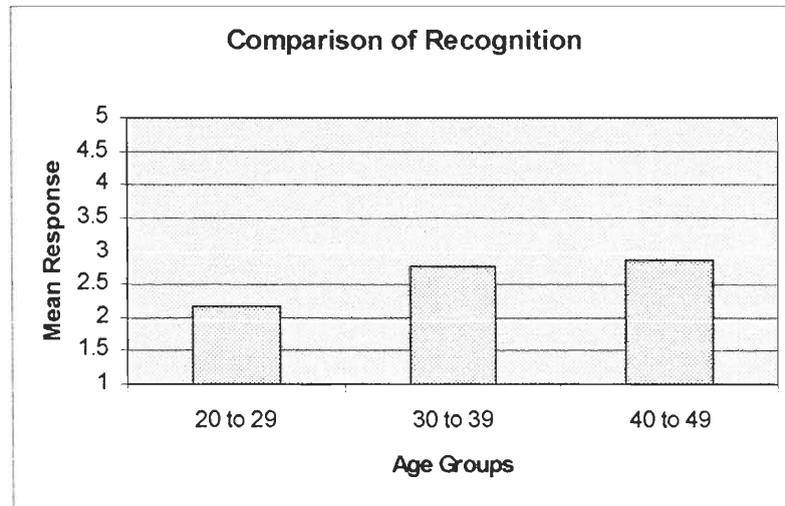


**Figure 19: Comparison of mean results by age group for question regarding recognition received for employee actions. Standard deviation is 0.9, N=43, 42, and 30, respectively.**

regarding training. Young people find AFN-E less helpful than any other age group for advancement, but more helpful than any other age group for gaining career experience.
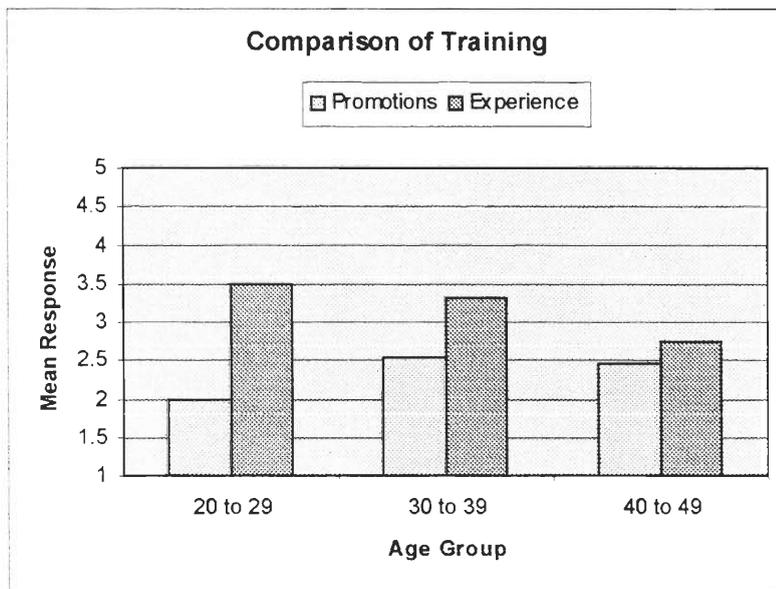


**Figure 20: Mean responses by age group regarding training. Standard deviation is between 0.9 and 1.1, N=43, 42, 30 by group.**

This is probably because they do not have time to train as necessary due to their large workload, but through the variation of tasks they perform, they gain experience in many areas. Finally, the largest difference in response between age groups is for question twenty-three, which asks whether employees would continue on at AFN-E if

possible. Figure 21 gives the average response to this question sorted by age group.

Responses for 20-29 year olds to this question average between 2 and 2.5, as compared to all other age groups, which average at around 3.5. This shows that young and low ranking personnel do not plan to

**Turnover**



Figure 21: Responses to question twenty-three regarding turnover by age group. Mean response is shown, with standard deviation of 1.3 and N=43, 42, and 30 respectively.

continue at AFN, compared to all others, who do plan on continuing at AFN. Perhaps this is due to the large amount of work and low level of recognition that young organization members experience.

## Demographics, Branch

Sorting responses by branch results the categories Army and civilian. All other categories were too small and had to be eliminated. This is because the groups were fractions of the populations that they represent. There were not enough responses in each category to be able to extrapolate the results to the entire sample. The remaining categories do have enough people in them to meet statistical requirements. When looking at differences between the average responses of each category, some interesting things become apparent. One correlation can be made from questions five through eight about

overwork. The Army finds that it works more hours per week and feels more overworked than civilians. The Army also has more and harder work compared to others of a similar pay grade than civilians. The most noticeable difference is the number of
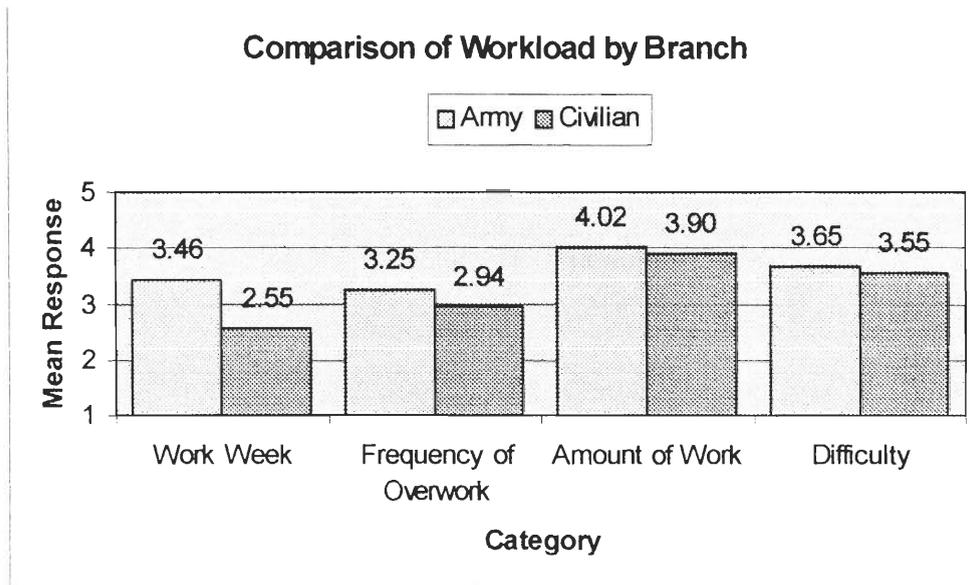


**Figure 22: Comparison of average response by branch for questions five to eight. Standard deviation is between 0.8 and 1.1 for individual categories. N varies.**

hours worked per week. The Army averages 3.5 (45-64 hrs/wk) while civilians average 2.5 (35-54 hrs/wk). This can be seen in Figure 22, where a breakdown of average responses by branch is given for the workload questions number five through eight.

On the question of recognition for their actions, sorting by branch yields the result that the Army is less recognized for its actions than the civilians, with the Army averaging a response of 2.4 , and civilians averaging almost 3, as seen in Figure 23. Another difference found when sorting by branch is that while overall AFN-E personnel are unsure about continuing work at AFN-E, with an average response of 3.2, Army personnel average almost 2.8 as a response and civilians average nearly 4 as a response. This means that the only personnel that feel certain they want to stay at AFN-E are the

civilians. Figure 24 illustrates this by showing the average response for each branch. Civilians state that they would probably stay given the opportunity, the Army personnel state that they

**Comparison of Recognition**

[Bar chart showing Mean Response (y-axis, 1 to 5) by Branch (x-axis). Army bar at approximately 2.4, Civilian bar at approximately 2.9.]
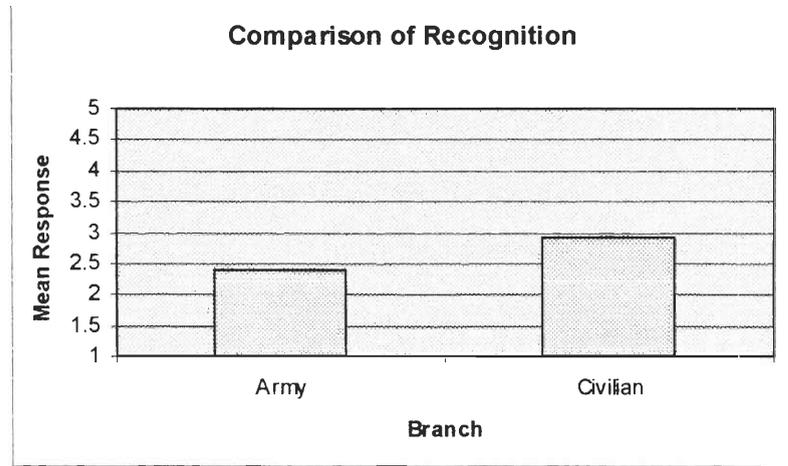
**Figure 23: Comparison of recognition received for actions by branch. The mean response is shown, with standard deviation of 1 and N=57 and 49, respectively.**

are probably not staying. This may be partly related to the practice in the Army of rotating personnel through assignments every three years; not remaining in one place for very long may become a habit.

The overall findings of the survey can be extrapolated to the organization as a whole, while the demographics have been selected to maintain both statistical accuracy and confidentiality by choosing large samples. Survey results can now be cross-referenced with

**Turnover**

[Bar chart showing Mean Response (y-axis, 1 to 5) by Branch (x-axis). Army bar at approximately 2.7, Civilian bar at approximately 3.9.]
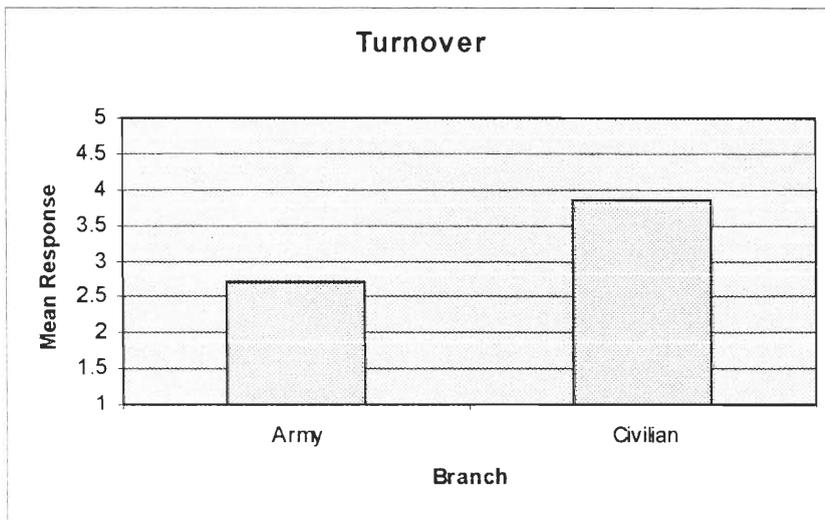
**Figure 24: Comparison of desire to remain at AFN-E by branch. Mean responses are shown, with standard deviation of 1.2. N=57 and 49, respectively by branch.**

results found using other methods in an effort to triangulate and remove faulty findings.

4.2.2 – Free Response Data Analysis

There were four questions on the survey that were presented as open-ended, free response questions. These four questions dealt with important aspects of the organization. The first open-ended question focused on good points about the AFN (those things that should be kept the same), whereas the second question asked what could be improved. The third question dealt with why the respondent would or would not choose to continue working at AFN if it were possible. The last question was a section for any comment, available for additional comments on a specific question or in general. Of the returned surveys, 115 had written in responses to at least one question. Of these, there were 91 responses to the 'keep the same' question, 108 responses to the 'change needed' question, and 112 responses for the 'would you continue' question. The results of these sections were tabulated and compared. An overview of the results can be found below.

**Positive Response**

Of the survey respondents who had answered at least one of the free response questions, 24 left the 'keep the same' question blank. A surprising 17 responses (nearly 1 in 5) consisted only of the word "nothing" or something to that effect. In fact, this was the most popular response. The rest could think of at least one thing about the organization that works well and should be kept the same.

The next most popular response was the technology and equipment available at AFN. Fifteen respondents stated that they felt the equipment that was available was quite current and, in some cases, state of the art. Some commented that most broadcast

organizations in the USA were not yet using some of the technology available at AFN. For this reason, some respondents were proud to say that the AFN was more up-to-date in terms of broadcasting and producing technology than its stateside counterparts. The respondents seemed happy about this current technology because it kept them knowledgeable and up-to-date. This knowledge could be directly applied to a similar job stateside (in the US) if they were to leave the organization. Also, with the latest equipment and proper training, many menial tasks can be automated, allowing personnel to perform other, more important duties.

Eight respondents indicated that they thought the overall structure of the AFN-E organization was good. Six commented that they thought the regional headquarters (North and South) were good at providing a helpful buffer layer between the AFN-E headquarters and the affiliates. Some respondents viewed this buffer layer to be an asset. Four responses noted that they felt that headquarters (HQ) support for affiliates was good.

Certain aspects of the affiliate locations were also regarded highly. Three respondents were pleased that the affiliates were independent and self-sufficient. Four felt the support the affiliates received from the headquarters was valuable and adequate. Other topics that were referred to included three responses praising the affiliate teamwork and seven responses about the good quality of the TV and radio programming.

Other popular comments included six comments on the quality of training and preparation for future assignments, six comments on the quality of command information presented, and six compliments on the leadership and helpfulness of a few specific high-level personnel in the organization. A few comments were made about the audience commitment, the variety of jobs available, the freedom of creativity, the fun and effective

teamwork among small workgroups, and the care that some put into their work. A few described their jobs as "rewarding" and many affiliate locations stated their feeling that they are doing an excellent job of providing service.

**Negative Response**

Responses to the second free-response question (what should be changed) were a bit more frequent. The respondents addressed many topics. The most frequent responses are outlined below with context where available and applicable. One hundred eight wrote some sort of response for this question. The response "everything" or similar responses occurred in a little over 6% of the responses. Specific responses included "scrap it all, start all over," and that the organization was "screwed up" or "dysfunctional." A few of the responses that were most frequent included the structure of the organization, communication, employee recognition, planning, and manning.

The structure of the organization was a common comment in this section. Structure was mentioned 22 times in the responses. Some employees feel that the structure of the AFN organization is "top-heavy" (3 comments) or out of balance (2). The word "flatten" was used several times as a suggestion for reorganization. It was mentioned that certain individuals feel that the command structure is too deep and too complex. The comment "too many chiefs and not enough Indians" was a representative metaphor used by two respondents to indicate the abundance of management and lack of workers. A few responses indicated that they thought the South and North have certain attitudes about themselves and each other, which are unnecessary and counterproductive. One respondent felt that the "South is put behind the North." This seemed to be implied in other comments in terms of feelings, attitudes, supplies and personnel. Suggestions to

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"drop North/South attitudes" occurred a few times. If there were fewer levels of management, the chain of command could be better defined and easier to understand. One suggestion was to "terminate regional HQ" and others suggested reorganizing it. Another suggested significantly downsizing the HQ sections, and augmenting the number of personnel at the affiliate level. In all, 15 responses included suggestions of modifying the HQ structure.

Because of the mixed civilian and military personnel at this organization, there are frequently misunderstandings and miscommunications. Respondents indicated that these misunderstandings sometimes occurred because of a poorly defined command chain. This sometimes resulted in employees reporting to the wrong person. Comments about other facets of the organization sometimes have references to the non-ideal structure of the AFN.

The most common responses were complaints about poor communication within the organization. Comments about communication occurred in 26 responses (nearly 1 in 4). These responses were spread out nearly evenly through the four classifications (Army, Navy, Air Force, civilian) in terms of percentage response, with only a slightly higher rate in the Army. Specific responses were quite varied. Some thought that the less-than-ideal communication lines were understandable because of the fact that the employees are so physically separate. Others felt that the way the structure of the AFN is defined had a detrimental effect on the communication within the organization. Having so many nested levels of command structure may interfere with the efficient flow of communication as well.

Employee appreciation was another common topic, mentioned in twelve responses. Concern for employees goes along with this topic, and was indicated in six responses. These employees feel that their work is not being appreciated, recognized, or adequately rewarded. Respondents indicated that this has a negative effect on their morale, and on their desire to produce quality work. A few responses indicated that peer recognition was much more common than the more formal recognition from managers. Two responses indicated that they have a desire to improve (a common response), but without recognition for good work and with little feedback employees find it difficult to improve themselves. Another response indicated that recognition occurred only when higher level employees saw the good work directly. This caused some to feel that others were "showing off" in front of the managers to make themselves look good, while others got no recognition for their important contributions behind the scenes. "Why do anything" if it will not be noticed, the employee asked. To this employee, this situation was discomforting and frustrating.

Comments on various personnel issues were also common. These included comments on understaffing (8), NCO (Non-Commissioned Officer) work (4), promotion (7), and better command and management (4). Some employees, especially at affiliate locations, feel that they are overworked and understaffed. Some people who are leaving the organization have no scheduled replacements. Those that do leave may be replaced months down the line. Meanwhile, the workload stays the same. Three respondents felt that expectations were sometimes unreasonable because of limited staffing. One survey comment in support of this was that the AFN has the largest audience of any Army support group, yet has the smallest staff. Others felt that better NCO command and better

management could help employees manage time better and become more efficient. Other applicable comments included comments about inefficient middle management, which also relates back to the comments on the command structure. Solutions offered included a few comments on worker involvement (2), individual initiative (3), planning (6), and holding people accountable for actions and outcomes (7). Any of these may help ease tight schedules and make the work environment more pleasant.

Relating to these personnel concerns are promotions. Some feel that unqualified people are being promoted and advancing too far in the organization. Comments include "stop promoting incompetence," that certain managers are "lazy," "old tireds," or "dead weight." Seven responses suggest promotions and hiring based more on ability and commitment. Since military personnel rotate quite often, some amount of concern is raised about "stagnant" civilian personnel. A few suggest that the civilians "rotate stateside" more frequently to become informed about newer practices and technologies.

Military personnel have some various concerns of their own. Some feel that there is a misunderstanding between civilians and service personnel. Indeed, some confusion exists between the branches. Also, civilians who were once a part of the military may have some misunderstandings. Civilians were sometimes referred to as being "out of touch." Each of the groups has its own goals, procedures, priorities, and opinions. These often conflict, sometimes causing significant tension.

In general, civilians in supervisory positions put more emphasis on "numbers" (of productions) rather than the quality of the program produced. This is opposite for the military producers, whose concern is to produce the best quality work. These conflicting attitudes can also cause tension. Some service personnel feel they are not being treated

like soldiers. Two specific comments, one by a civilian and one by several service personnel, are quite representative of the contrasting feelings. The civilian said that AFN is a broadcast organization that serves the military, rather than a military organization that does some broadcasting. This comment indicates an emphasis on the broadcasting aspect of the job, rather than on the military aspect. Most military personnel will say something to the effect that they are soldiers first, and broadcasters second. This indicates an emphasis on the military aspect of their jobs, rather than the broadcasting aspect. Another comment that was made several times was the comment of the AFN "taking the green out of the soldier." This hints (and was backed up by other responses such as that the AFN is "not soldiering") that the military training and requirements take a subordinate position to the broadcasting requirements in this organization. This puts a lot of pressure on service personnel who need to attend various training sessions. People have reported that military personnel are shipped to training without being mentally or physically prepared for the experience. For these reasons, many service personnel wish to have more of the military influence present in their jobs at AFN.

Affiliates have their own concerns which are quite different from the concerns of the headquarters. The affiliates have feelings about the headquarters, and likewise, headquarters has feelings about the affiliates. Headquarters in general feels that they are giving the affiliates good support. However, the affiliates feel as though they are given little respect (7), or looked down upon as "stupid," "incompetent," or are simply misunderstood. A few responses indicate a feeling that the headquarters has an elitist attitude. One indicates a feeling that some affiliates "pick up some of the HQ's slack." The work environment at the affiliates appears to be quite different from that at the

headquarters. The affiliates feel that their work is much more in volume, and that they are more short-staffed in general than the headquarters. Six respondents indicate that they feel that the headquarters-affiliate relations could be improved. It is the general feeling that the headquarters does not know very much about the daily workings of the affiliates. Two responses suggest that higher-ranking individuals from the AFN-E or AFN-regional headquarters visit the affiliate stations periodically; five people indicated that they think the headquarters is out of touch with the affiliates. Through these visits, it may be possible to correct that feeling. The affiliate's desire is to serve the community where they are located with accurate, up-to-date local information including command information. Four responses suggest that if the affiliates had more control over their programming that they would be better serving their community. Lastly, one feeling expressed that the HQ should place more emphasis on serving the affiliates (the people really providing the service).

The employees of this organization have very high feelings in general about the high quality and current technology of the equipment available. However, there are mixed feelings about the presence of that technology. Six responses refer to the fact that equipment is frequently broken and is therefore unusable a large amount of time. The training that people receive on these machines was said to be inadequate in eleven responses. Due to the limited time schedules, much of the practicing and training is done on the air or during production. This leads to feelings that the quality is not the best it could be, and to frustrations for people who want to produce good work, but don't have the time to fully learn the equipment.

A few other important points were brought up in the survey responses. Three responses suggested the feeling that the organization is "fighting its own command." This feeling is attributed to structure and communication difficulties. Some report that the leadership that they have is excellent, while others report that it is substandard. Those that report good leadership are usually more pleased with their job and have generally higher feelings about the organization.

Despite some negative comments about various aspects of the organization, many employees are quite happy with their jobs. Many say that the job is "rewarding," "fun," "not that bad," or that it is very good experience in the broadcasting field. It is described by a few as one of the most coveted places to work in the military. A few respondents said they were curious to see if anything would be done to improve conditions, or were skeptical that anything would change because of the study.

Despite some problems, the AFN sends a lot of quality programming out to American service personnel in Europe. One comment made was that "there IS potential" to become even better.

## 5 – Conclusions

Now that the data from each of the three data collection techniques have been analyzed separately, we can begin to analyze the data together. Each of the three data collection techniques has intrinsic biases that can cause inaccurate data when used alone. Data from these three different methods can be analyzed together to provide accurate conclusions with reduced bias. By using the method of triangulation, accurate

conclusions can be drawn from the interview, focus group and survey data. Several common themes were apparent throughout the previous data analysis section including structure, communication, purpose, workload, care of personnel, and recognition.

One of the prevalent themes which was a part of all three data sets was the organizational structure of AFN-Europe, especially within the headquarters building. The organization has a mixed structure, consisting of civilian, Army, Navy, and Air Force components. On the bottom of this structure are the low-level enlisted and civilian personnel. These are the people responsible for a wide variety of duties, including disk jockeys, production, technicians, and other things. Next above these positions are the middle-level managers, responsible for direction of each of these departments. Above this level are the managers who are responsible for a group of these smaller functions. In some cases, there are a few other levels of management underneath the detachment commander, the region commander (AFN-North, AFN-South) and finally the AFN-Europe commander. A common theme present in the various data gathered from AFN-Europe employees was the top heaviness of this structure. There are many managers in this organization, and not as many people who are assigned to complete tasks such as broadcasting. This fact causes problems for various reasons. One involves a lack of a definite "chain of command." There is a well defined chain of command, but all employees do not know what it is and it is not communicated to them who to report to. For armed services personnel, if an enlisted member has a difference of opinion with his direct superior that cannot be solved, he may exercise this chain of command and talk about the situation with the next level above his direct superior. This becomes a problem when the enlisted member does not know who to talk to after his direct superior. In some

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cases, there are multiple managers, causing a confusing situation for the enlisted person. This can cause tension and hard feelings among various members of the organization. Sometimes, the tensions are felt the most by the direct supervisors since they feel like they have been bypassed or undermined by the employee going over their head. As was mentioned in some of the interviews and focus groups, this can sometimes lead to retaliation. Although they feel comfortable talking to the upper level personnel, the mid-level will not allow it, thus breaking down the communication between upper and lower levels.

The AFN affiliates can see the structure and communication at headquarters as well through their dealings and interactions with the Frankfurt building. They commented in their focus groups and in the surveys that the structure of headquarters was not what it should and could be. They noted the same reasons as the employees who work in the Frankfurt building, with main topics being structure and communication.

Communication was one of the recurring themes from all three data sources that was related to the structural issues brought up by employees. If there are communications that must be sent either down or up the command chain, there are several levels of management to contend with. The information may become corrupt, lost, or modified at any point along this command chain. Due to the widespread use of e-mail and vocal communication, messages become especially susceptible to this kind of corruption due to multiple turnovers coupled to a lack of delivery confirmation. This may also lead to frustrations due to lost or inaccurate information that leaves employees feeling left out and unimportant. This topic came up in interviews, focus groups, and the survey. As mentioned in some of the interviews, the lack of accurate communication

through the ranks could be a result of the members of the middle management. This was not a topic in the focus groups because members of this level were present, and suppression of dissention prevented the topic from coming out. The so-called "firewall" seems to be a preventative barrier to effective communication to and from the commander and other high level employees of AFN-Europe. By passing information through several levels of people, the message can easily be distorted and filtered to what they think the next person in line needs to hear. For example, if something were to go wrong with the mid-level being placed at fault, the mid-level is unlikely to tell the commander what happened and try to take care of it themselves. The commander thus thinks that everything is fine within the organization, and cannot do anything to help the situation. Instead of receiving no information, others often receive the wrong information after the previous level in the chain of command has filtered it. This type of lack of inclusion leaves employees feeling unneeded in the organization (Haasen & Shea, 1997). Because of the similarity of the comments in each data collection technique, we can safely assume that the command structure and communication are sources of frustration in the AFN-Europe organization.

The purpose of the AFN organization was another source of dissent stemming from the poor communication. Several individuals presented different purposes of the AFN-Europe organization as being the most important. The most common response, after all data was compared, was that command information was the most important function of AFN-Europe. This was reflected in the survey responses as well as interview and focus group discussions. Many others felt that the main purpose was entertainment, or "giving the soldiers a taste of home," which indicated confusion about the purpose of

the organization. The unclearness of the purpose to all employees could be a cause of some performance problems since people are concentrating on things that are not integral to reaching the goals of AFN-Europe (Wilson, 1989).

Employees, especially at affiliates other than Frankfurt, reported that they felt overworked a large portion of time. This was due to various factors, but the themes were similar. Employees were often working long days (11 hours or more) or had too much work to get done. One source of overworking conditions reported in interviews, focus groups, and survey responses included understaffing. There are simply too few people at some locations to get all of the work done in a reasonable amount of time. Sometimes, personnel will be given tasks to complete, which are not directly related to their normal work. These situations are varied, but they interfere with the employee's ability to get his own work done. Civilians sometimes tend to be focused on listener preferences and other "numbers" in the form of quantitative data, whereas enlisted personnel are not evaluated on the same criteria. Enlisted personnel tend to focus on the quality of programming, whereas the civilians are often more concerned with the timeliness and ratings of the programming. This causes some tension because of the difference in emphasis on quality versus quantity. The lower-ranked personnel were found to be torn between their desire to produce good work, and the need to focus on the "numbers" aspect of broadcasting. Many begin by trying to produce the necessary numbers at the level of quality they want. The immense amount of work required to do this soon leads them to stop striving for the best potential quality. They still believe they produce a quality product, but they cannot take pride in the fact that it's the best possible quality. This often creates more work for

the lower enlisted personnel, leading to further feelings of being overworked and lowered morale.

For these reasons, personnel stated that they were often busy for a large part of their day. So busy, that they may not have been able to fulfill the required duties that were important to their work. In our survey, people responded in general that they were overworked, especially with respect to others in their pay grade. In interviews and focus groups, it was found that due to the large amount of work necessary, they were not able to complete certain army requirements. Not only were they unable to complete these requirements, including quarterly counseling sessions and training such as PT, Combat Training, or PLDC, but these things were neglected entirely. Some personnel are sent to training sessions without proper mental and physical preparation required to succeed in these sessions.

Finally, the topic of recognition came up in all three data collection techniques. This topic was one that sparked some emotion in the respondents. As outlined in the background section of this paper, an excellent way to keep employees happy and with high morale is to recognize their accomplishments. Recognition helps employees feel good about themselves, and helps to show them that they are appreciated. It is especially important to recognize hard work when employees are feeling overworked because the extra work will become worth something. Good deeds left unnoticed tend to leave employees doubting that anyone appreciates their hard work and efforts (Radcliff, 1999). Once again, this can lead to lowered morale levels and declining performance on the job. Some employees responded that they received very good recognition within their

department, or from their superiors. However, others reported that they were not satisfied with the amount of compensation they had received for their efforts.

These conclusions were drawn only after analysis of all three data sources using triangulation. Literature was used as another reinforcing source to give meaning to the data and provide additional context. Data were then used to formulate recommendations for AFN-Europe and indicate what areas could be researched further in future studies. Weaknesses we found with the project and its implementation are described along with these recommendations in the next section.

## 6 – Recommendations, Future Research, and Project Weaknesses

The techniques of surveying, interviewing, and focus grouping were used to collect data on which analysis was performed. These analyses provided knowledge about the conditions at AFN. Based upon the background research, recommendations are presented in the following section. After the project recommendations, discussion is included about the weaknesses of the project, as well as recommendations for future studies.

Employees felt that they were being overworked at AFN and this was attributed mainly to a lack of personnel and the heavy workload given to them. The simple solution would be to hire more personnel. Unfortunately, the Army is a bureaucracy, meaning that hiring is not controlled by the organization itself. In lieu of the inability to hire more personnel, the workload must be either reduced or redistributed. Reducing the amount of work performed by AFN would mean that the ability to get information out would suffer, but employees would have more reasonable demands placed upon them. This would lead

to a morale boost since lower morale was attributed to employees being overworked. Alternatively, rather than reducing the amount of work performed by AFN, the workload could be better distributed among employees. This would entail making sure that employees have equivalent amounts of duties and responsibilities.

The quality versus quantity concept was a major issue brought up in the study. The statement "here at AFN, anyway, it's all about the numbers" shows that employees see this as a negative aspect of AFN. This great difference in quality versus quality of work can be traced back to the way employees are evaluated. Higher level employees operate under the principle that they were judged on their ability to get out high numbers of programs. Junior employees follow a much different principle. They viewed the level of programming quality to be the top priority. Producing good quality programming was important to them because they were evaluated upon the quality and not the quantity of programming. These inconsistent goals led to poor feelings towards the organization. One way to address this issue is to have more reasonable expectations for employees. Requiring less programs from employees would allow them to create programming they are proud of, which would lead to higher morale and improved feelings towards AFN. According to the study conducted by Butler and Waldroop (1999), employees taking pride in their work would also increase loyalty and satisfaction.

Employees viewed the structure of AFN as poor. They found the structure to have too many upper level leaders with not enough people below them. The chain of command was said to be confusing because of the numerous layers within the organization. They felt that the layers within the organization were poorly defined. Employees were often unaware of who they should go to when having problems with superiors or in their

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superiors absence. Based upon employee feelings about the structure, the recommendation is to make the structure more horizontal. This would help address the problems with the complex layering of the current AFN structure. Along with this, the structure must be more clearly defined as to whom employees should go when needing to talk to someone above their superior.

Increased communication is another important topic to be addressed. Better communication among personnel would lead to many improvements. First, it would lead to a better understanding of the purpose of AFN. The purpose of AFN was unclear to some people. This was seen through the results from the survey, focus groups, and interviews. A common organizational mission is important to organizational identity. When all employees agree on what the purpose of an organization is, then their work better reflects the goals of the organization (Wilson, 1989). Increased communication can help that mission to be created.

Wilson (1989) also discusses certain organizations inability to define clear mission statements. It appears that AFN employees do not all agree on a common goal of the organization. In such a case, the organization must be made task oriented. This means providing employees with clearly defined tasks rather than an organizational mission. Defining tasks will better direct employees in their work at AFN. This is related to communication since good communication is needed to provide clear tasks to employees.

Increased communication would also lead to many other changes. Junior employees felt that they were left in the dark sometimes by the organization and that they only heard rumors. This can lead to resentment from employees since they are not being

kept informed of issues that directly affect them. Haasen & Shea (1997) suggest involving workers in planning issues that affect them within the organization. They state that involving workers is beneficial since it helps build trust and improve communication among employees. Better communication may also lead employees to better understand their purpose within the organization. Involving workers can lead to better organizational effectiveness and improved employee perceptions of the organization (Crow & Hartman, 1995; Mark Shadur, 1999).

There are many ways to improve communication among personnel, including both personal communication and work communication. Personal communication involves things such as holding social gatherings where employees can better get to know each other without having work involved. Work communication includes actions such as superiors going around to make sure junior employees have what they need to successfully perform their job. Employees were pleased with the policy of the commander of the organization holding Commander's Call, where junior employees were encouraged to speak their mind. This showed employees that the commander was truly concerned with lower personnel and helped to shrink the gap in communication between the levels of command. Holding these sessions also allowed employees to talk to the higher command without fear of retribution from their direct superiors. The suggestion is to hold more of these sessions, as employees found them very helpful. The increase in communication within the organization between higher and lower level employees would also help increase employee retention within the organization (Turnley & Feldman, 1999; Fox, 1999).

Another issue that was mentioned in the study was training, both military and job training. The statements made were that job training was getting better but it was still poor. Military training was said to be very poor. Training is very important to people within an organization since it helps people to advance in their careers. Also, when employees are not adequately trained they may feel stressed or uncomfortable performing their jobs. Efforts should be made to increase training for employees. This would let employees know that they are cared about and their advancement is a concern for the organization. This concern would lead to employees having better views of AFN as an organization since it would be seen as caring about the people in the organization. Also, the chance of retaining employees would increase (Fox, 1999).

Recognition is another way to help improve employee perceptions of an organization. When employees are made to feel they are doing a good job and that the organization cares about them, they will hold the organization in a higher regard. Management must remember that all employees are important and every one of them deserves to be told that. This recognition and caring about employees leads to fostering favorable views about the organization (Fox, 1999; Radcliff, 1999). Recognition can be in many forms, from awards and plaques to actions as simple as a pat on the back and telling employees they are doing a good job. Both of these approaches let employees know that the organization recognizes their efforts. Also, care must be taken to recognize all employees, not just those who have the more notable jobs. Everyone within an organization plays an important part in that organization.

These are the recommendations found based upon the background research performed and also upon suggestions made from AFN employees. There are many

different ways in which to approach improving organizational identity. These recommendations are in no way guarantees of improvement, nor are they the only way to go about improvement. One should feel free to take these recommendations under consideration or to research other suggested methods for improvement based upon the conditions found within AFN.

For future studies of AFN, the team makes the following suggestions of areas for research. One topic that the team did not explore in depth was the interaction between civilian and military within the organization. These two groups of employees operate under different philosophies. The suggestion was that civilians act based upon the interest of self-preservation, whereas the military personnel act upon different principles. An inadequate amount of information was found in our study to support this, but it is something that may be examined further to see its affects upon the organization.

Another topic that came up but was unable to be adequately explored was the concept of a "firewall" around the commander. An employee described this as higher level employees blinding the commander to the happenings within the organization and telling him that everything is fine. This topic came up twice but there was insufficient time to explore it and find conclusive evidence. However, if this "firewall" does exist, it could have severe consequences for the organization. This includes command decisions being based upon a set of assumptions about the organization that may not necessarily be true.

One last suggestion for future studies is that more focus groups and interviews should be conducted away from the headquarters building. Focus groups held at affiliates revealed new issues that were not necessarily an issue within the headquarters. The

survey also revealed that there were some different attitudes in the organization away from headquarters. Focus groups and interviews would allow this topic to be explored more in-depth and provide understanding as to why differences in employee views and attitudes exist away from headquarters.

There were various weaknesses within the project that should be addressed. This is useful for both avoiding problems in future studies as well as providing a better understanding of the current study. Overall weaknesses that had a negative effect on this project were varied in cause and in severity. These weaknesses are outlined below.

The first of these weaknesses was the initial contact letter sent by the liaison. After providing an example contact letter, the actual contact letter sent was unfortunately missing a few important items. The letter failed to mention the confidential nature of the study and overstressed the fact that the researchers were indeed student researchers, decreasing the professionalism of the study. The omission of confidentiality may have also biased the study since confidentiality was not emphasized in this letter. This situation could have been avoided by stressing the absolute importance of this letter. The liaison could have been asked to send out the letter exactly the way it was presented to him.

Another problem was that the liaison was away four out of the eight weeks of the project during the most crucial times of the project. A substitute liaison was provided to the group, but the substitute was not as well informed about the project. This was an unfortunate situation because there were several issues that came up that could have been easily solved, but they posed much more serious problems because of a lack of contact

with the liaison. Some of these issues included issues with acquiring supplies and problems with the provided employee list, which will be discussed later.

The mail system was notably slower than expected. The group was initially told the mail system would take between one and two days to deliver mail to any person in the organization. In one case, surveys meant for the affiliates in Italy took over two weeks to arrive and many failed to even reach their intended recipients. This caused problems due to the limited amount of work time that was available for sending all the surveys out. An alternative of sending the mail through the European mail system would have been even less efficient so there was little that could have been done to remedy this situation. Alternative methods of surveying could have been chosen, but a mail survey was chosen because of our access to a list of the population and unawareness of exactly how long the mail system would take to deliver surveys. The only step that could have been taken to counter the speed of the mail system would have been to send out the surveys earlier in the project.

Sending out the survey earlier was not possible because of the scheduling of focus groups. They were not scheduled before the group's arrival in Frankfurt and instead were scheduled about a week after arrival. This led to an inability to pretest the survey early and delayed its distribution to employees. The team should have made sure that focus groups and interviews were indeed scheduled and ready for their arrival in Frankfurt in order to prevent this delay.

Another problem encountered during the project was the personnel list that was given to the team was marked as a recent list, having been updated a month earlier. Unfortunately, during the course of the project, it was discovered slowly that the list was

very inaccurate. Many people on the list were no longer employed at AFN. Other employees were not listed when they had been employed at AFN for as long as two years. The list also contained inaccurate employee information on it, such as the wrong military rank and location. The effects of this were varied, including having an unknown population size and introducing coverage error in the survey. This could have been partially rectified by obtaining a newer list than the list provided. However, the list was not known to be severely inaccurate until week five of the project. Also, attempts to obtain newer lists were unsuccessful, as no one seemed to have an accurate list after making several inquiries to personnel.

There was also an inability to get necessary supplies for the project. When assembling surveys, there was often an inability to get items such as staplers, staples, envelopes, and labels. This led to delays in the sending of the survey.

A weakness with the survey instrument itself was the coding system used. A system was used to code each survey so the researchers would know who had responded and who had not so follow-up letters could be sent to non-respondents. Due to the high level of risk associated with responding to a survey of this nature, a better coding scheme should have been used. Rather than placing numbers directly on the survey, a separate card could have been included with a code number so surveys had no identifying features on them. Some respondents did not understand the difference between confidential and anonymous, believing the survey was meant to be anonymous. The team should have made greater attempts to clarify that the survey was confidential and not anonymous, even though there were several measures taken once it was realized that respondents did

not understand the difference. Hence sending out an email explaining the coding system may have rectified the situation (Appendix K).

Besides survey weaknesses, there were also weaknesses associated with the interviews. There was a lack of interviews with civilians due to an inability to contact most of them that were referred to us by other respondents. Also, we were unable to conduct interviews at other bases due to time constraints. If the project was conducted again, the researchers could have made a greater effort in the beginning to try to conduct interviews at other bases to try to gather more qualitative data.

Overall, the project went very well given the number of problems that occurred. There were no problems that led to total failure of the project. The methods used were very effective in the successful completion of the project. Enough research was done into alternative methods such that when one failed, another one was ready as a back-up. The use of focus groups, interviews, and a survey led to a project with sound conclusions based upon several methods of data collection.

## Glossary

Anonymous - Having an unknown authorship.

Bias - Any type of outside influence that causes inaccuracies.

Confidentiality – An active effort to protect the identity of respondents in a study.

Corporate identity - The feelings and attitudes with which an employee views his organization.

Corporate image - The feelings and attitude with which external people view an organization.

Corporate reputation - The way an organization is viewed in general, which combines both corporate identity and corporate image.

Frame – The population being studied.

Mission statement - A brief statement of an organization's values and goals that clearly defines what the organization represents.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) - Unprompted actions by members of an organization that are not rewarded, but which positively affect the organization.

Respondent – A study participant.

Sensing Session – The military equivalent of a focus group. Sessions are called approximately every six months to get employee feedback.

Suppression of dissent - An occurrence in a group setting when any idea contrary to popular group belief is suppressed.

Trait Negative Affect (TNA) - an individual's innate tendency to view work environments negatively, regardless of job type.

Triangulation – A technique of using more than one data collection method in an effort to reduce the inherent bias in each method.

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**Appendix A – Liaison Contact Information**

American Forces Network – Europe

Mr. Roger Williams
HQ AFN Europe
UNT 29405
APO AE 09175

Telephone: 011-49-69-15688335

Fax: 011-49-69-15688373

E-mail: williamsr@afn.frankfurt.army.mil

Alternative e-mail, via Public Affairs Office: pao@afn.frankfurt.army.mil

# Appendix B – Pros and Cons of Data Collection Techniques

| Technique | Pros | Cons |
|---|---|---|
| **Personal Interviews** | • Depth of Meaning<br>• Comfortable for Respondent | • Time Consuming<br>• Difficult to Arrange |
| Standardized | • Low Cost to Respondent<br>• Simple Wording<br>• Easily Comparable<br>• Quick | • Little Depth |
| Unstandardized | • Deep Meaning<br>• Adaptability<br>• Interesting | • No Set Agenda<br>• Difficult to Compare<br>• Lack of Focus |
| Semi-Standardized | • Deep Meaning<br>• Comparable<br>• Easy to Guide and Follow Trails | • Time Consuming Analysis<br>• Qualitative and Quantitative |
| **Focus Groups** | • Efficient<br>• Cueing / Brainstorming<br>• Deep Meaning<br>• Language Pre-Test<br>• Post-Survey Context | • Suppression of Dissension<br>• Reluctance<br>• Not Entirely Personal<br>• Sampling Bias |
| **Surveys** | • Breadth of Meaning<br>• Representative of Population<br>• Quantitative | • Time Consuming<br>• Reminders<br>• Error Reduction |
| Mail | • Privacy<br>• Can be Completed at Leisure | • Necessary Reminders<br>• Time Consuming |
| Telephone | • Quick<br>• Simple | • Expensive Calls<br>• Response Order Bias<br>• Coverage Error (Incomplete Directories) |
| Face to Face | • High Response Rate<br>• Limited Measurement Error<br>• Complete List not Needed | • Time Consuming<br>• Expensive Returns<br>• Highly Trained Interviewer |
| Drop-Off | • Survey Reaches intended Respondent<br>• Encouragement<br>• Low Cost<br>• High Response Rate | • Sampling Error<br>• No Follow-up Contacts |

## Appendix C – Suggested Liaison Initial Contact Letter

To all AFN employees:

A group of student researchers from Worcester Polytechnic Institute will be arriving during the week of March 13<sup>th</sup>. They will be conducting a study of attitudes and current work conditions in the AFN. AFN has granted permission to conduct this study. Your participation is important to this study. Your honest opinions will help the AFN become a better organization. Most importantly, the study will be completely confidential. No personnel of AFN will be involved in conducting the study and the information collected during the study will be presented to AFN so as to report only the pooled findings and not to disclose any person's name or identity. Furthermore, after the study is completed, all information, names, and responses will be destroyed to insure your confidentiality. Again, AFN encourages you to give your honest opinions in hopes that we can better serve our employee's needs.

Thank you,

Roger Williams
Public Affairs Office

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, American Forces Network - Europe
Unit 29405
APO AE 09175-9405

March 8, 2000

Office of the Commander

SUBJECT: AFN Europe Corporate Image Study, 14 March through 5 May 2000

To all AFN Europe Staff Members:

Beginning 14 March you will see four young men in the halls and occupying office space at AFNE. Brian Faull, Nick Abbondante, Kevin Beverage and Barry Cipriano are undergraduate students at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Wocester, Massachusetts. The students will be conducting a research project on AFN, employees, our corporate identity, how individuals feel about the organization and how AFN individuals publicly project that image. It is hopeful that the students complete the project upon completion of their stay in Europe on 5 May 2000. If not, they will provide us a final report and documentation of their findings when finished.

Please do not consider their project as a sensing, griping or effectiveness session. They want to gather as much information as possible about employees in the AFN Europe building and possibly nearby AFN North affiliates in Frankfurt, Heidelberg and Kaiserslautern.

These students have little or no military experience but have researched organizational behavior, organizational effectiveness, corporate image management, and management and employee relationships. They are extremely ambitious, energetic, want to give us a good and beneficial product and are prepared to work long hours to help AFN get an honest and accurate pulse of the organization through your honest responses and active participation in this project.

Sincerely,

Roger G. Williams
Public Affairs Officer

## Appendix E – Group Initial Contact Letter

**WPI**

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

Organizational Research Team
Haus Martin
Loeffelstrasse 26
D-64289
Darmstadt
Phone: 0173-7396853
Office Phone: 069-15688131

To All AFN-Europe Personnel:

Thank you for taking time to read this letter. During the next several weeks, our team of independent researchers from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) will be conducting a study of employee attitudes and feelings toward AFN-Europe. AFN-E is concerned with employees' attitudes towards it, and wishes to improve conditions for its employees.

The study will involve interviews, focus groups, and a survey. The survey will be distributed during the week of Monday, March 27th to all AFN-E staff. The findings of this study will be used to help AFN-E improve employees' feelings and attitudes towards it. All information obtained through this study will be completely confidential. The results will be presented to AFN-E in a format that maintains the confidentiality of study participants. All responses acquired in the course of the study will be accessible to only the WPI research team, and will be destroyed upon completion of the project.

Your participation is extremely important to this study. It will allow you to voice your opinions and suggestions. Your response will also increase the accuracy of our findings. Please encourage your colleagues to participate as well. The responses from all of the participants in the study will be evaluated equally, with no emphasis on rank or any other distinguishing characteristic. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Our addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail are provided below. Thank you again for your participation. Without you this study would not be possible.

Sincerely,


Brian Faull
On behalf of
WPI Organizational Research Team
*E-mail:* ort@wpi.edu

**AFN Office:**

Attn: PAO-ORT
Headquarters, AFN - Europe
Unit 29405
APO AE 09175-9405

*Phone:* 069-15688131

**Darmstadt Residence:**

WPI-ORT c/o Brian Faull
Haus Martin
Loeffelstrasse 26
D-64287
Darmstadt
*Phone:* 0173-7396853

## Appendix F – Statement of Confidentiality

## Statement of Confidentiality

This statement is to ensure all participants of the study performed by the WPI project team here at AFN that the results will remain strictly confidential. The WPI project group swears not to reveal or disclose any material directly related to the study to any persons outside of the project team. In any and all published materials, any obvious identifiers of any person involved in the study will be removed. All recordings, documents, and transcripts will be promptly destroyed once all relevant information has been recorded and no persons other than the WPI project team and their advisor shall have privilege to view these documents.

We hereby swear and affirm to follow this guideline in its entirety.

_____ Nicholas Abbondante, Project Team Member

_____ Kevin Beverage, Project Team Member

_____ Barry V. Cipriano, Project Team Member

_____ Brian Faull, Project Team Member

_____ Prof. Wesley Jamison, Project Team Advisor

## Appendix G – Statement to Resolve APO Mailing Address Issue

AFN Staff Member,

      Due to the nature of the study being performed, confidentiality is of the utmost importance. We are dedicated to providing absolute confidentiality. You may have noticed that the address on the enclosed return envelope is directed to the AFN HQ commander, with attention to the Public Affairs Office, Organizational Research Team (PAO-ORT). Please understand that this is not intended to allow any AFN or government personnel access to your responses. Since the researchers are an independent, university-based research team, they are not allowed to have their own APO box. Additionally, due to the very short duration of their stay in Europe, it is unfeasible to use another method of mail communication without seriously jeopardizing completion of the study. The mail is therefore directed to the AFN HQ commander as a requirement of the APO mail system. Upon arrival at the Frankfurt HQ, the mail will be re-directed to the project team by the use of "ATTN: PAO-ORT". This mail will NOT be read by the public affairs office. The mailroom has been instructed to give any mail with this address on it directly to a project team member only. Below, please find our signatures; Roger Williams from the public affairs office and LTC McWilliams, commander of AFN-E, stating that this policy will be adhered to. We would like to re-emphasize that neither the public affairs office, nor the AFN commander or any other government employee will read this mail. Thank you for your participation in this study.

      Sincerely,

_____
LTC McWilliams, Cmdr, AFN-E

_____
Roger Williams, AFN-PAO

## Appendix H – Interview questions

1) Where else have you worked, and what were your duties there?

2) How long have you been posted with AFN?

3) What is your position within the organization?

4) What duties does this position require you to perform?

5) What are your future career plans? Explain.

6) What is your ideal job?

7) Describe a typical day here at AFN.

8) What do you believe the purpose of AFN to be? How do you see yourself fitting in to that purpose?

9) What do you like about AFN?

10) Opinion of work environment.

11) What is your opinion of the compensation system at AFN?

12) Do you think you are sufficiently compensated?

13) What is your opinion of the structure of AFN?

14) Do you feel able to discuss problems /alternative opinions openly with your superiors?

15) What about AFN could be improved?

16) Do you have any concerns about AFN or surrounding issues that have not been mentioned already?

17) Could you give us the names of two people you think we should talk to?

## Appendix I – Focus Group Confidentiality Statement

*Confidentiality Disclaimer*

In signing this I understand, accept and agree to the following terms and conditions:

1.) The recording of this session will be used only for transcription purposes, and viewed by no one other than the mediators.

2.) Both participants and mediators will regard all information, opinions, statements and other remarks included in this focus group session as confidential.

3.) Participation in the focus group is entirely voluntary. This pertains to overall participation, as well as involvement during any and all aspects, questions and subjects covered in the survey session.

---

Name in full (printed)

---

Name in full (signature)         Date

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Signature of Mediators

*These measures have been taken solely to protect all participants. It is of utmost importance that all members of the focus group feel comfortable and safe sharing individual, honest opinions and thoughts.*

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

**Please keep this bottom section as a copy for yourself**

*Confidentiality Disclaimer*

In signing this I understand, accept and agree to the following terms and conditions:

*The recording of this session will be used only for transcription purposes, and viewed by no one other than the mediators.
*Both participants and mediators will regard all information, opinions, statements and other remarks included in this focus group session as confidential.
*Participation in the focus group is entirely voluntary. This pertains to overall participation, as well as involvement during any and all aspects, questions and subjects covered in the survey session.

Date:

---

*These measures have been taken solely to protect all participants. It is of utmost importance that all members of the focus group feel comfortable and safe sharing individual, honest opinions and thoughts.*

## Appendix J - Focus Group Questions

1) What do you do?  Describe a typical day working at AFN.

2) Describe what you like best about your job.

3) Compared to other positions at AFN, would you consider your job to be more difficult, or less difficult, and why?

4) What changes would you like to see at AFN?

5) In general, how do you think the AFN staff perceive the organization?

6) What is the purpose of AFN?

7) What issues do you think we should focus on in the survey?

8) Is there any topic that you would like to go more in depth on, or that was not mentioned today, that you feel it is important that we consider?

9) Do you have any questions or comments about the focus group you just participated in?

**Appendix K – Survey Code Number Email**

Dear AFN-E Employee,

Please take just a minute to read this important information about the survey.

We, the Organizational Research Team from WPI, would like to thank everyone who has responded to our survey! We have received a number of responses already. Thank you for your participation. We truly appreciate your efforts. We also encourage everyone who has not yet responded to do so!

We have received several questions regarding the ID number on the survey. This number will be used for our own purposes ONLY. It will be used to determine who has responded, and who may need a second copy of the survey. The number will also ensure that no one submits two responses. This number will NOT be used in any other way.

ONLY our WPI team will be able to identify names with the numbers. AFN employees will NOT have access to this information. Absolutely NO ONE other than our team of four researchers will have access to this information.

We ensure that responses are confidential, meaning that your name will not associated in any way with your response. A report will be presented to the AFN at the conclusion of this study without disclosing any personal information about the respondents. This report will be made available to all who respond.

We encourage everyone to respond with honest, complete answers. This report will help the AFN-E become a better organization.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact us at ort@wpi.edu or by telephone at our private number 0173-7396853.

Thank you again for your participation in this confidential survey. Your responses are greatly appreciated! Thank you for helping to make AFN a better organization.

Sincerely,

The WPI Organizational Research Team
Brian Faull
Kevin Beverage
Nick Abbondante
Barry Cipriano


---------------------------------
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
    Worcester, MA, USA
    http://www.wpi.edu/
---------------------------------

**Appendix L – Email Survey**

Urgent: Regarding AFN Survey - Please Read

Dear AFN Employee,

      We are the independent team surveying the feelings of AFN staff. However, the staff list that we received was inaccurate. Either we haven't received your response, or you weren't on the original list. A survey is attached; please fill it out and email it back to this address. It is imperative that you respond now. Please respond and let your voice be heard. Responses after this week cannot be used. Please respond to the survey by this email rather than the hard copy if it is easier for you.

      Replies to this address are only accessible by our independent team. This survey is confidential; only our team will see your name. ALL identifying information will be destroyed before results are presented. Returning the survey by email to this address is completely secure and confidential. If you have ANY questions, please feel free to contact us at this address, or at ort@wpi.edu or at our private phone number 0173 739 6853.

      Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,
The WPI Organizational Research Team
survey@afn.frankfurt.army.mil
ort@wpi.edu

# EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS:
# A Study of AFN-Europe

Organizational Research Team
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Spring 2000

Commander: AFN-E HQ
Attn: PAO-ORT
HQ AFN UNIT 29405
APO AE 09175

Dear Recipient,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. We are an independent team of student researchers from Worcester Polytechnic Institute conducting a study of employee attitudes and feelings toward AFN-Europe. AFN-E is concerned with your feelings towards it, and wishes to improve conditions for you in order to make AFN-E a better organization. This survey is important because it will let you provide feedback to AFN-E about your feelings and opinions. All surveys are completely confidential. After results have been recorded without any identifying information, all surveys will be destroyed.

We appreciate you taking time out of your work schedule to fill out this survey. It should take you approximately 10 – 15 minutes to complete. After filling out this survey, please e-mail it back to us at ort@wpi.edu. Remember that your participation is important to improving your organization and all responses you give will be completely confidential.

All participants are entitled to a copy of the results of this study. If you would like a copy of the results, or have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to contact us via email at ort@wpi.edu or by phone at 069-15688131 or 0173-7396853.

Thank you very much,

Brian Faull
On behalf of
WPI Organizational Research Team

**Statement of Confidentiality**

This statement is to ensure all participants of the study performed by the WPI project team here at AFN that the results will remain strictly confidential. The WPI project group swears not to reveal or disclose any material directly related to the study to any persons outside of the project team. In any and all published materials, any obvious identifiers of any person involved in the study will be removed. All recordings, documents, and transcripts will be promptly destroyed once all relevant information has been recorded and no persons other than the WPI project team and their advisor shall have privilege to view these documents.

We hereby swear and affirm to follow this guideline in its entirety.

Nicholas Abbondante, Kevin Beverage, Barry V. Cipriano,
Brian Faull, Prof. Wesley Jamsion

Please answer the following questions honestly; instructions are provided when necessary. There is a space on the back cover for additional comments and elaboration on your responses.

**Q-1) Listed below are some ideas suggested as the possible goals of AFN-E. Please indicate your feelings of how well AFN-E performs each of the following tasks, ranging from VERY POOR to EXCELLENT.** (Place X in appropriate bracket)

**1.      Provide Command Information**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**2.       Provide Up-to-Date News Information**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**3.      Provide Television Service**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**4.      Provide Radio Service**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**5.      Provide American Entertainment to Soldiers and Families**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**6.      Increase Morale Among Soldiers**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-2) For the previous goals listed in Q-1, please indicate below how you would rank the top three in order of importance, placing the goal number in the bracket provided.**
    [ ] Most Important        [ ] Second Most Important        [ ]Third Most Important

**Q-3) Work environment is an important factor in the productivity of a work place and overall employee job satisfaction. Listed below are various items pertaining to the work environment at AFN. They are divided into three categories: General Items, Office Specific Items, and Workspace Specific Items. The Workspace Specific items need only be filled out if you have a work area separate from your office area. For the following items below, please rate from VERY POOR to EXCELLENT how satisfied you are with each item.** (Place X in bracket under answer)

**A. GENERAL**

Access to Office Supplies

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Fitness Facilities

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Recreational Facilities

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Mail Room Access

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Computer and Email Access

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Telephone Access

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**B. OFFICE AREA**

Noise Level

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Privacy

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Space

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Equipment

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Overall

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**If you have a separate work area that is not the same as your office, please fill out this next section.  Otherwise, please skip to next question.**

**C.  WORK AREA**

Noise Level

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Privacy

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Space

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Equipment

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

Overall

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-4) Are you a full or part-time employee of AFN-Europe?**

FULL TIME            PART TIME
[ ]                 [ ]

**Q-5) On average, how many hours a week do you work at AFN-Europe?**

| 0 - 34 | 35 - 44 | 45 - 54 | 55 - 64 | 65 OR MORE |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| [ ]    | [ ]     | [ ]     | [ ]     | [ ]        |

**Q-6) How often do you feel that you are overworked at AFN-Europe?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NEVER | INFREQUENTLY | MODERATELY | FREQUENTLY | ALWAYS |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-7) On the following scale from MUCH LESS to MUCH MORE, please indicate the amount of work you feel you do compared to other people in your pay grade.**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MUCH LESS | LESS | ABOUT THE SAME | MORE | MUCH MORE |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-8) Compared to other people in your pay grade, do you feel your work is...**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MUCH EASIER | EASIER | ABOUT THE SAME | HARDER | MUCH HARDER |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-9) In your opinion, on a scale ranging from ZERO to ESSENTIAL, how important is your work to AFN-E?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ZERO | MINOR | MODERATE | SIGNIFICANT | ESSENTIAL |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-10) Do you feel that your work and efforts are adequately recognized by the organization?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NEVER | INFREQUENTLY | MODERATELY | FREQUENTLY | ALWAYS |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-11) Do you feel that the organization deals appropriately with employees who do less than satisfactory work?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NEVER | INFREQUENTLY | MODERATELY | FREQUENTLY | ALWAYS |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-12)  How often do you find yourself having poorly defined work tasks or a limited understanding about what you need to be doing at work?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NEVER | INFREQUENTLY | MODERATELY | FREQUENTLY | ALWAYS |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**NOTE:** If you answered NEVER, skip to question Q-15.

**Q-13)  (If you didn't answer NEVER on the previous question)  How much of this do you attribute to a lack of communication by your direct superior(s)?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NONE | SLIGHT | MODERATE | CONSIDERABLE | EXTENSIVE |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-14)  (If you didn't answer NEVER on Q-12)  How much of this do you attribute to conflicting statements about a task from your direct superior(s)?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NONE | SLIGHT | MODERATE | CONSIDERABLE | EXTENSIVE |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-15)  In your opinion, how concerned is(are) your direct superior(s) with your views related to your work at AFN-Europe?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | SLIGHTLY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-16)  On the following scale, please rate how involved your superior(s) is(are) in your daily work activities.**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | SLIGHTLY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-17)  Please rate from VERY EASY to VERY DIFFICULT your ability to discuss problems related to your job with your superior(s).  Please indicate only problems directly related to work at AFN-Europe.**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY EASY | EASY | AVERAGE | DIFFICULT | VERY DIFFICULT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-18) Do you feel working for AFN-E is helping you to obtain promotions (rank advancements for military personnel)?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | SLIGHTLY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-19) Do you feel working for AFN-E is helping to advance your career skills and experience (MOS for military personnel)?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | SLIGHTLY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-20) What is your opinion of the organizational structure of AFN-Europe?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| VERY POOR | POOR | SATISFACTORY | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-21) What about AFN-Europe as an organization works well and should be kept the same?**

**Q-22) What about AFN-Europe as an organization could be improved?**

**Q-23) On the following scale, ranging from DEFINITELY NOT to DEFINITELY, please indicate whether you would want to continue working at AFN-Europe, provided the opportunity was available.**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DEFINITELY NOT | PROBABLY NOT | UNSURE | PROBABLY | DEFINITELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-24) In the space provided below, please explain the reasons for your response to the previous question.**

**Q-25)  How well do you know the language used by the local culture?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | INADEQUATELY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-26)  How well prepared were you to live in the local culture?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | INADEQUATELY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-27)  How helpful was your sponsor in preparing you to live in the local culture?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | INADEQUATELY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-28)  How often do you interact with the local culture?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NEVER | RARELY | SOMETIMES | OFTEN | FREQUENTLY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-29)  How comfortable do you feel interacting with the local culture?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | INADEQUATELY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-30)  How enjoyable do you find interacting with the local culture?**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NOT AT ALL | SLIGHTLY | MODERATELY | CONSIDERABLY | EXTENSIVELY |
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-31)  How old are you as of 1 April, 2000?**

| 0-19 | 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50 OR OLDER |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-32)  How many years have you been employed with AFN-E?**

| 0 TO 1 | 1+ TO 3 | 3+ TO 6 | 6+ TO 10 | 10+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

**Q-33)  In what type of housing do you live? (If not listed please list on blank next to OTHER)**

[ ]  MILITARY BASE        [ ]  MILITARY LEASE          [ ]  EUROPEAN ECONOMY

[ ] MILITARY BARRACKS        OTHER (Please indicate) :

**Q-34) Which of the following is your classification?**

| ARMY | NAVY | AIR FORCE | CIVILIAN |
|------|------|-----------|----------|
| [ ]  | [ ]  | [ ]       | [ ]      |

**Q-35) If you are a civilian, were you relocated to your present area?**

| YES | NO  |
|-----|-----|
| [ ] | [ ] |

**If you have any additional comments or concerns, or if you would like to elaborate on a previous question, please use the space provided below.  If you are elaborating, please indicate to which question you are referring.**

Thank you for your participation.
Please return the completed survey via email to ort@wpi.edu