

## **Do You Hear That? It's Taps... Playing Softly In The Background!**

By: Michael J. Stickler

That soft mournful sound of the bugle playing Taps, it is sounding the end of business... as we know it! The choice is simple, change or become extinct! It seems like every time that I turn around I hear someone wishing for the good old days to return. What the \$%#@ was so good about them?

Frankly, I am becoming weary of the cries for the good old days. Let me refresh your memory. If your lucky (and don't get laid off after 27 years and lose your pension), you work for thirty years at basically the same job, at the same desk or station, in the same building, with the same boring people, at the same company...you retire with the fake gold watch and ride off into the sunset to die...The thought of that just makes me quiver with unbridled excitement. Boring!!!! How could any sane person think that this is the kind of life that they would want, or aspire to?

Sadly, you know there are some people that like, not needing to think, not needing to do anything different, they are happy to just exist, going through life taking up space and boring the crap out of the rest of us. All of what I've just said/written about people applies equally to companies. I recently saw this quote: by W. Edwards Deming

“It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory.”

That quote really made me think...he was right...Survival is not mandatory... it's not like death or taxes. You and your company don't need to survive; you can ride off into the sunset and die. Many companies do it every year. It's your choice! You can choose to champion change. It takes guts...or you can choose to do nothing. I had someone say to me, “there is nothing that I can do, they won't let me.” My response was...it's always easier to apologize than ask permission...what is the worse thing that could happen...they fire you? They probably would be doing you a favor.

Denny and I were recently doing a seminar on Process Improvement when we were asked, who is your competition? Our answer was simple...it's doing nothing!

How much change has really taken place in your company... in you personally? You see, it's always easier to do nothing; it's always easier to just say no, to any attempt to try anything different, anything new. It's less risky. It's very easy to do more of the same...until your extinct, kind of like the dinosaurs.

Rip off that dinosaur suit... your company needs you NOW!

Become a leader, a champion of change! Forget Taps!

Sound the call to battle, sound Reveille, to wake everyone up, and then CHARGE!