(U//FOUO) What Does a Chief of Staff Do? And What Change Would Improve the Agency? -- An Interview With ██████████

FROM: SIGINT Communications
Unknown
Run Date: 06/12/2006

(U//FOUO) SIDtoday talks to ██████████████ *, Chief of Staff for the Customer Relationships Directorate (S1):*

1. (U//FOUO) You've spent the majority of your career working Analysis and Production missions. What were your expectations in moving over to the Customer Relationships side of the house? Were there any surprises?

(U//FOUO) Before I took this job, I had indeed spent a lot of time in S2 - working as an analyst, branch chief, staff positions, etc. I was familiar with S1 mainly through reporting policy/dissemination, the SINIOs and Customer Gateway's account management. I thought I knew a fair amount about the directorate, with the possible exception of the military-related offices such as the IWSC*. As it turned out, I was surprised by how much was going on that I *didn't* know about!

(U//FOUO) Coming in, I may have wondered, "What do they do over there? What's the value-added?" Soon, however, I found myself admiring how far Customer Relationships had come. Customer Gateway had been asked to become the customers' front door, but they had to figure out from scratch how they should go about doing this and be productive. I was struck by how many smart people had worked hard to get this mission up and running. New tools were being deployed that would streamline our dealings with customers, but we still maintained the "human touch" that the customers wanted. NSRP* was also introduced - it wasn't perfect, but we were on the right track.

(U//FOUO) We've come a long way... People in S2 now consult with staff in S1, because they recognize that we can add value. Besides improving our relations with customers, we're also building relationships within the building.

2. (U) What do you see as the primary role of the S1 Chief of Staff?

(U//FOUO) **My job is to help keep the organization running.** We're given resources - people, money, space - and we need to use them wisely. That task falls to me. We need to balance our mission needs with our corporate needs.

(U//FOUO) I also support the SID Chief of Staff and the Agency as a whole, and look to the lower-level chiefs of staff to help me do that. Finally, as the third in command of S1, I have to stay aware of events so that I can substitute for the S1 Director or Deputy Director when needed, without making a misstep.

3. (U//FOUO) You are slated to become a Senior Operations Officer in NSOC later this year. Are you looking forward to it? Is there any way one can prepare for that job?*

(U//FOUO) I'm excited about it. A lot of people said to me, "Congratulations - I think!" (especially since NSOC is going to 12-hour shifts). But I've been doing support functions for some time, and look forward to getting more involved in mission-related work again. This should be an exciting time to join NSOC, with better linkages to the MMC* and NTOC* being put in place.

(U//FOUO) SOOs-to-be go through a rigorous training schedule. I have a good handle on SID, but I still have a lot to learn about IA* and facilities issues. I'll also need to learn more about other NSA organizations and functions - although you can't realistically know it all. I'll need to rely on my team members who have their own networks in place. I think in the end, a SOO must

think on her feet, trust in her own abilities, and know when to ask for help, if she's to be effective.

4. (U) What would you say has been the most exciting job or experience you've had since joining the Agency?

(S//SI) Well, my career may not be too exciting compared to some, but I would say the most *satisfying* job I ever had was to lead an economics branch in the Office of Russia. When I joined the branch, it had become rather set in its ways, and there was a need to take a fresh look at our people and processes. We got everyone in the branch together and diagrammed our work processes, which brought to light some shortcomings. We talked as a group about improvements, getting buy-in from the analysts, and became a positive-energy place. The result was that each analyst took responsibility for the whole process - what I call "soup-to-nuts analysis."

(S//SI) After 9/11 the branch was disbanded. Was I bothered by that? Not at all! -- There were higher priority missions to pursue, and I think the personnel in the branch had the skills they needed to accomplish great things working other targets.

(S//SI) I also worked in Deployment Services right after 9/11, and, believe it or not, found that very exciting! We got to be creative in figuring out how to assign people to where they were needed most, to plan for training and hiring -- starting from scratch. It was painful work sometimes, but it was exciting to contribute to meeting the challenge.

5. (U) If you could effect one change at the Agency, what would it be?

(S//SI) It's clear to me that we need to shore up our business processes and infrastructure. For example, we say - rightly so -- that people are our greatest resource, but there is no single database in place that will allow me to see how many analysts we have with certain skills, whether based here at the Fort or in the Extended Enterprise. I've had to pull up spreadsheets and total figures line by line. At other times, Product Line managers have had to meet and compare notes in order to get those figures... And the following year we'd have to go through the same process again. **There is no transparent, repeatable, accurate process for managing our workforce.**

(S//SI) How can we have a strategy for managing our people if we don't know what we have? ...and how can we assure our overseers that we are doing the right thing to move ahead if we don't have ready access to the data? I think we have a similar problem in regard to finances, although there are positive moves underway with the " lanes ." I know that other managers are aware of these shortcomings, as well. I hope that a solution can be found.

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*(U//FOUO) Notes:
IWSC = Information Warfare Support Center
NSRP = National SIGINT Requirements Process
NSOC = National Security Operations Center
MMC = The Counterterrorism Mission Management Center
NTOC = NSA/CSS Threat Operations Center
IA = Information Assurance

(U//FOUO) Our last interview was: (U) What We Can Learn from "Play Station," Grooming Leaders, and More: An Interview with ██████████ .

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