

AU/ACSC/97-O607N

THE GLASS CEILING INITIATIVE:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR DOD IN THE YEAR 2000 AND  
BEYOND

A Research Paper

Presented To

The Research Department

Air Command and Staff College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements of ACSC

by

Ms. Terry Young Robinson, GM-13

March 1997

## Report Documentation Page

<b>Report Date</b> 01MAR1997	<b>Report Type</b> N/A	<b>Dates Covered (from... to)</b> -
<b>Title and Subtitle</b> The Glass Ceiling Initiative: Implications for DOD in the Year 2000 and Beyond	<b>Contract Number</b>	
	<b>Grant Number</b>	
	<b>Program Element Number</b>	
<b>Author(s)</b> Robinson, Terry Young	<b>Project Number</b>	
	<b>Task Number</b>	
	<b>Work Unit Number</b>	
<b>Performing Organization Name(s) and Address(es)</b> Air Command and Staff College Maxwell AFB, AL 36112	<b>Performing Organization Report Number</b>	
<b>Sponsoring/Monitoring Agency Name(s) and Address(es)</b>	<b>Sponsor/Monitor's Acronym(s)</b>	
	<b>Sponsor/Monitor's Report Number(s)</b>	
<b>Distribution/Availability Statement</b> Approved for public release, distribution unlimited		
<b>Supplementary Notes</b>		
<b>Abstract</b>		
<b>Subject Terms</b>		
<b>Report Classification</b> unclassified	<b>Classification of this page</b> unclassified	
<b>Classification of Abstract</b> unclassified	<b>Limitation of Abstract</b> UU	
<b>Number of Pages</b> 32		

## **Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the US government or the Department of Defense.

## *Contents*

	<i>Page</i>
DISCLAIMER .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
ABSTRACT .....	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1
What is the Glass Ceiling.....	3
THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE .....	7
Economic Indicators .....	8
Future Trends .....	8
Implications for the Future .....	9
Summary.....	10
THE GLASS CEILING INITIATIVE AND OTHER INITIATIVES .....	12
U.S. Department of Labor’s Glass Ceiling Initiative.....	12
The Glass Ceiling Commission .....	13
Summary.....	16
Private Sector Initiatives .....	16
The Dupont Company .....	16
The Digital Corporation.....	17
IMPLICATIONS FOR DOD .....	19
Recommendations and Conclusions.....	21
Measurements .....	21
DOD Glass Ceiling Commission .....	22
Compensation .....	23
Mentoring .....	23
Cultural Diversity, Women, and Work and Family Issues.....	24
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	26

## *Acknowledgments*

To fulfill partial graduation requirements for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Women's Executive Leadership (WEL) Program, I participated in a Cluster Group presentation on *Breaking the Glass Ceiling*. The other participants were Ms. Beryl Boshier (U.S. Marine Corp.), Ms. Jean Druce (Federal Aviation Administration), Ms. Kathy Luft (U.S. Army), Ms. Veronica Wales (U.S. Navy) and Ms. Melaine Small (U.S. Food and Drug Administration). This twelve month project culminated in a presentation at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Bethesda Maryland on February 24, 1992. The OPM WEL forum provided an initial opportunity to explore the glass ceiling, and the basis to continue the research in this paper.

I would like to acknowledge my research advisor, Major Scott Morgan for his encouragement in continuing my research on the glass ceiling. Major Morgan provided invaluable advice and assistance in Organizational Culture and Leadership.

*Abstract*

The purpose of this research is to examine information on the glass ceiling, and determine if a glass ceiling exists within the Department of Defense (DOD). Several key studies and initiatives on both private and public sector organizations are presented. The focus of this research project defines the glass ceiling, addresses economic and demographic trends, and their impact on organizational culture, and finally shows the relevancy of the glass ceiling to DOD. In the final chapter, five specific recommendations are made for DOD that will be instrumental in breaking the glass ceiling. The recommendations are (1) measure the extent of the glass ceiling within DOD; (2) establish a DOD glass ceiling commission; (3) review compensation packages for both military and civilian employees against those in the private sector for competitiveness; (4) establish an effective mentoring program; and (5) embrace cultural diversity, women, work and family issues. Implementation of these recommendations, coupled with proactive leadership from top managers, can prepare DOD to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

*In the first decade of the third millennium, we and our children will look back at the later half of the 20th century and remark on how quaint were the days when women were excluded from the top echelons of business and political leadership, much as we today recall, when women could not vote. How naive were the men and women of the 1980's, we will say, those people who, believed in something called a "glass ceiling" and thought it would forever exclude women from the top.*

—Megatrends 2000

Perhaps the most impressive definition of the glass ceiling was developed by Ms. Rene' Redwood, Executive Director of the now expired Glass Ceiling Commission in speech to Network 2000, a group chartered to promote women in top executive positions. According to Ms. Redwood, "thousands of qualified women and minorities are routinely denied top level management jobs in corporate America but instead of calling it sexism, racism, or xenophobia, we call it the glass ceiling."<sup>1</sup> A wealth of information has been written on the chic phrase; but very little pure research, and even fewer concrete initiatives have resulted in a significant change in the workplace. In reality, the glass ceiling is just another means of addressing issues that have prevented women and minorities from moving from the bottom of the corporate ladder up to the top level managerial and executive positions.

It is also ironic that the first major glass ceiling study was initiated by the Department of Labor, as a federally funded project that addressed contractors conducting business with the federal government. Within the ranks of the Department of Defense (DOD) itself, an opportunity exists for leadership to conduct studies and analyses concerning overwhelming change in the workforce of the future. The study of federally funded contractors was a step in the right direction. However, if DOD is to take a leadership role and set the standard, then perhaps a glass ceiling initiative within DOD is in order.

The evidence clearly indicates that the workforce of the future will represent a major transformation. We are already seeing this transformation in the development of core values, core competencies, and new mission statements by DOD as well as corporate America. So much so that it will soon become necessary for organizations to change the way they recruit, train, and retain workers. These transformations in the workplace will dictate changes to the organizational culture. According to Edgar H. Schein, organizational culture may be defined as “a pattern of basic assumptions that the group learned as it resolved problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to the new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.”<sup>2</sup> The question is, can we retrain people with new values and core competencies as they enter the workforce. The anticipated changes in the workforce of the future will drive a revolution in organizational affairs. Corporations, albeit public or private must not flounder but manage this change. The importance of the changes cannot be understated because change affects the ultimate survivability of the organization. The survivability of

the organization will be determined by its ability to compete for a shrinking pool of professional and skilled workers.

In the past, there were too few jobs for too many people. The abundance permitted employers to choose the best and the brightest from the talent pools. This abundance will not be the case in the workforce of 2000 and beyond. Considering a review of the research, there will not be enough people available to satisfy the demands of the workplace. In addition, the available labor pool may not have the right mix of education, experience, and skill levels. These revelations combined with the fact that the workforce will be older, more racially diverse, and composed of predominately female workers will not only cause a revolution in organizational affairs but also cause a major adjustment in the way our human resources are viewed. In the housing market, we commonly refer to a buyer's market or sellers market to indicate who has the market advantage. In the workforce of 2000 and beyond, the market will favor employees.

### **What is the Glass Ceiling**

In 1986, an article appeared in the Wall Street Journal that coined the phrase called "the glass ceiling."<sup>3</sup> The phrase has been used by many organizations and individuals when referring to those artificial or invisible barriers that are based on perceptions, attitudes, and organizational biases that prevent qualified women and minorities from advancing upwards into top-level management positions.<sup>4</sup>

On October 23, 1991, then Assistant Secretary of Labor, Ms. Carrie Dominguez testified before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Employment and Productivity, the Committee on Labor and Human Resources. In her testimony, Ms. Dominguez stated

that working hard, sacrificing, and paying your dues will get you but so far. The real, yet invisible barrier can keep women and minorities from realizing their goals. It prevents women and minorities from turning their dreams into reality.

Coincidentally, and on the same date of Ms. Dominquez's testimony, The Honorable Constance Berry Newman, then Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) testified before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Governmental Affairs. She stated that in some cases, the most significant barriers to the advancement of women and minorities exist in the minds of the officials who select candidates for promotions and developmental assignments. Since World War II, women and minorities have worked diligently to hone their skills in both technical and professional areas. This technical and professional competency is not new. What is new, is that the glass ceiling reveals other factors, those vague, nebulous, and intangible barriers that prevent career growth and development for women and minorities.

Arlene Johnson, Program Director at Catalyst Magazine has indicated that up to a certain point, brains and competence work; but then fitting in becomes very important, and it's at that point that barriers against women set in. Women and minorities have been told that the magic formula for career advancement is that hard work and paying your dues would equate to promotion or career advancement. The importance is that besides brains and competency, the glass ceiling phenomenon suggests that perceptions, attitudes, and organizational biases compound the problem by further preventing women and minorities from reaching their goals.

The glass ceiling has also been called concrete because some women and minorities believe that it cannot be penetrated.<sup>5</sup> In 1986, The Center for Creative Leadership

reported the results of a study called the Executive Women's Project. The study found that women in top positions often suffer from what was referred to as "the glass house effect. These women believed that everything they do is exceedingly visible, and many believed that the visibility gave them little room for error without jeopardizing either their own future or the opportunities given to other women in the corporation."<sup>6</sup> If we believe that there is merit to what these women who participated in the Executive Women's Project have experienced, then it is important for us to examine the glass ceiling phenomena, and how it affects the career progression of women and minorities in DOD, both military and civilian.

Therefore, the intent of this research is to define the glass ceiling phenomena, its impact on the organizational culture, to determine the relevance to DOD and provide recommendations on how DOD can prepare itself for challenges of the future. The glass ceiling is approached through four sections. First, the glass ceiling concept is introduced and discussed. Projections are used to analyze the composition of the workforce in the year 2000 and beyond. In analyzing predictions about the workforce, a follow on examination of the Glass Ceiling Initiative from the U. S. Department of Labor, and a discussion of the existence of a glass ceiling in public and private organizations. Finally, the relevancy of the glass ceiling to DOD is explored, and recommendations are made for the year 2000 and beyond.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Rene' Redwood and Dawn Hyde, "Breaking the Glass Ceiling: A Summary Report." *Network 2000*, 11 December 1996, n.p.; on-line, Internet, 24 January 1997, available <http://www.wacsc.au.af.mil/yahoo>.

## Notes

<sup>2</sup>Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 1992) 12-13.

<sup>3</sup>Rene' Redwood, "The Glass Ceiling," *Women in Technology International (In-Motion)*, September 1996, n.p.; On-line, Internet, 24 January 1997, available <http://wwwacsc.au.af.mil/yahoo>.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 2-3.

<sup>5</sup>Ann M. Morrison, Randall P. White, and Ellen Van Velsor, *Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Can Women Reach the Top of America's Largest Corporations* (Greensboro, NC, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1996) 23-38.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 35.

## Chapter 2

### The Workforce Of The Future

*There are barriers in the workplace that are preventing women and minorities from fully sharing and participating in the American dream. These barriers are known as “The Glass Ceiling.” It is called the glass ceiling because you can see through it; you can see the next rung of the corporate ladder, but the glass keeps you from grasping it.*

—Ms. Carrie Dominguez, Assistant Secretary  
U. S. Department of Labor

While predictions are not an exact science, many trends that will shape the future are clear. Some of these trends are economic while others are demographic. The 1990's have presented the most challenging decade that the business community has ever confronted. *Workforce 2000*, a report published by the Hudson Institute predicts that competition will become more intense, more global, and concerned with productivity. U.S. and international corporations, from the newly wealthy Asian countries to Europe, are competing with each other to expand new business opportunities abroad while trying to maintain their domestic market share. The rapid changes that are predicted by *Workforce 2000* would indicate that future market standards must focus on quality, variety, convenience, and timeliness. Meeting these new competitive standards will require business to change the way they manage and organize their human resources. The glass ceiling is not only a set back to two-thirds of the population, but a serious economic problem that takes a huge financial toll on America's businesses.”<sup>1</sup>

## **Economic Indicators**

*“If our end game is to compete successfully in the global market, then we have to unleash the full potential of the American work force.”*

—Ms. Lynn Martin  
Assistant Secretary United States Department of Labor

*Workforce 2000*, predicted that the shift away from manufacturing will continue and business will be driven more and more by information and technology. By the year 2000, more than 50% of all new jobs will be in the service sector, which includes highly skilled professions such as lawyers, scientists, and health care professionals.<sup>2</sup> The emergence of knowledge based industries such as, computers, communications, and bio-technology will continue to rise. These jobs will require new skills, and workers with the highest level of education and training will be in the greatest demand.

The economy is predicted to evolve to match changes in the workforce. The U.S. workforce is under-going a vast shift in its composition and quality more than ever before.

*Workforce 2000*, pinpoints five demographic trends causing this shift:

1. The U.S. population and the labor force will grow slower than any other time since the 1930's.
2. The average age of the population and the workforce will rise, and the pool of young workers entering the labor market will shrink.
3. Minorities will be a larger share of new entrants in the labor force. Non-whites will make up 29% of the new entrants into the labor force, twice their current share.
4. Immigrants will represent the largest share of the increase in population and the workforce since World War I.
5. Women will make up one of the fastest growing segments of the labor force. Two-thirds of the new entrants into the workforce will be women.<sup>3</sup>

## **Future Trends**

In conjunction with the composition of the workforce, demographic trends indicate that the new workers entering the workforce in the year 2000 will be much different from

those who are in it today. A new culturally diverse workforce is evolving, one that will profoundly affect the workplace of the 21st Century. Keeping a close watch on demographics, and on the bottom line, employers have no choice but to begin to educate themselves on who their workers are, increasingly their most important resource. Since most of the new growth in employment will be women and minorities, employers now have even greater incentives for reaching out to them.

The days of women and minorities as some rather protected class appears to be rapidly ending. Unless the demographics change, the new minority or protected class in the workforce may be white, U. S. born men. As indicated in *Workforce 2000*, by the year 2000, approximately 47% of the workforce will be women and that number is increasing.<sup>4</sup> Appropriately, women's issues such as flexible work arrangements and family issues will emerge as the most significant source of change in the work place of the future.

### **Implications for the Future**

The implications for the future are that fewer people entering the workforce will make the labor force tighter and more competitive. Employers will be compelled to compete for scarce human resources, and to utilize all potential workers. American businesses must begin to understand that their profit margin depends upon their ability to recruit and retain top performers.

It can be concluded that the increase of women and minorities in the workforce will significantly have an impact on the 21st Century. As the pools of skilled workers shrink, and an ethnically diverse workforce emerges, corporations must change and begin to reexamine its organizational culture and climate.

While *Workforce 2000* clearly predicted that economic, demographic and market change will likely become a reality, change is not always a welcomed partner. Therefore, if the workplace of the 21st Century is to be composed of the best and brightest of the available talent pool, then it will require the combined efforts of government, industry, and individual participants.

## **Summary**

From an economic perspective, the world today is more globally integrated than ever before. Revolutions in computing as a means of moving information from one country to another in nano-seconds, facsimile machines, and electronic data and funds transfers has made it possible to merge the U.S. economy with the economies of foreign countries. The long term implications are clear, to maintain the U.S. position as one of the strongest economies in the world, we must not undermine the people who made it possible for the U.S. to obtain its position of strength.

Without the vital human resources to run them, corporations in both the public and private sector would not exist. It is increasingly important to address these human resource issues as the workforce transitions to demand that people from all segments of the population will be relied upon to sustain the economy, promote economic growth and prosperity, and foster trade in open market societies.

## **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>Diane Quinn, "The Glass Ceiling Commission Unanimously Agrees on 12 Ways to Shatter the Glass Ceiling," *U. S. Department of Labor News Release, USDL 95-483, n.p.: on-line Internet, 24 January 1997, available from <http://www.acac.au.af.mil/yahoo>.*

## Notes

<sup>2</sup>William B. Johnson, Arnold H. Packer, and the Hudson Institute, *Workforce 2000, Work and Workers for the Twenty-first Century*, (Indianapolis, IN: Hudson Institute, 1987), 77-103.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 75-76.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, 84-85.

## **Chapter 3**

### **The Glass Ceiling Initiative and Other initiatives**

The glass ceiling is a complex issue and not everyone agrees on how to shatter it. Some sources maintain that mere demographics will result in increasing numbers of women and minorities in the workplace, others indicate that the progress is not fast enough. Perhaps the most revealing study on the glass ceiling has been the Department of Labor's Glass Ceiling Initiative or corporate management reviews.

#### **U.S. Department of Labor's Glass Ceiling Initiative**

The U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) conducted a study on the glass ceiling initiative. The study reviewed nine federal contractors in a special review process. The reviews were higher organizational level evaluations of companies based on the firms Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Programs.

In reviewing the results of the study, the glass ceiling was found to be industry specific. Each company's system of awards and methods of advancement were different. Consequently, the glass ceiling took on a different shape in each company. Often, reviewers found, after a certain level, actual procedures for individual advancement were not written as policy or documented. The reviews revealed that the glass ceiling exists at

much lower management level than anticipated. The glass ceiling for minorities was significantly lower than for women overall. Definite barriers were documented based on attitudinal and organizational bias that resulted in denying opportunities to women and minorities.

At the upper echelons of the organizations under study, there were no women and minorities. Minorities plateaued at lower levels of the workforce than women. The study found that Equal Employment Opportunity monitoring was almost non-existent at the upper levels of the organization. Perhaps this was a means of maintaining the status quo. The research also indicated that hiring officials tend to hire people who look just like them. Finally, it was disappointing that performance evaluations and placement or career broadening opportunities were not monitored.

### **The Glass Ceiling Commission**

In September 1991, U.S. Senator Bob Dole introduced legislation that proposed the establishment of a Glass Ceiling Commission, and an annual award for companies that promoted a more diverse and skilled workforce at the management and decision making level. The commission would study how businesses fill management positions, compensation programs and reward structures, and how training and development opportunities were used to foster advancement. The commission's report would include policy recommendations on removing barriers, and increasing opportunities.

The Glass Ceiling Commission, chaired by then Labor Secretary Robert B. Reich, made 12 recommendations for business and government to eliminate barriers that prevent women and minorities from moving up the corporate ladder. It was determined that

equity demands that we destroy the glass ceiling, and smart business demands it as well. <sup>1</sup>

The commissions final report, *A Solid Investment: Making Full Use of the Nations Human Capital*, recommended that the government lead by example and that industry follow that lead. The report indicated that women and minorities make up two-thirds of the population, two-thirds of the consumers, and fifty-seven percent of the work force. In addition, “the mean income or average salary of white-non-Hispanic male population (executive, administrators, managerial) with a bachelors degree is \$47,181.00. In comparison, their female counterparts earn \$31,338.00 or \$15,643.00 less than white non-Hispanic males. African American men with a bachelor’s degree earned \$32,001.00, or \$15,180.00 less than the white non-Hispanic male population. While African American women on the average earned \$754.00 less than white non-Hispanic women. The unequal compensation for similar jobs and skills further highlights the national mean income disparities.<sup>2</sup> The wide disparity in income would also suggest that educational attainment does not automatically guarantee fair compensation, and equal treatment under the law, and further dispels the myth that hard work and paying your dues should equate to career advancement. In reality it reinforces the glass ceiling effect, that those vague, nebulous, and intangible factors such as perceptions, attitudes, and organizational biases prevent women and minorities from fully participating in the American dream.

The Glass Ceiling Commission made recommendations for businesses, government, and society at large to bring down their respective glass ceilings. They include:

1. The CEO must communicate visible and continuing commitment to workforce diversity.
2. Efforts to achieve workforce diversity should be an integral part of corporate strategic business plans.

3. Business should use affirmative action as a tool to help ensure that all qualified individuals have equal access and opportunity to compete based on ability and merit.
4. Business must expand their traditional executive recruitment networks and seek out candidates with non-customary backgrounds and experiences.
5. Business must train their entire workforce in the strengths of ethnic, racial and gender diversity.
6. Companies must act now to prime the pipeline by: identifying objective performance, skills, and knowledge criteria for advancement; instituting formal succession planning; and providing rotational non-traditional job assignments to broaden the base of a candidate's experience and visibility.
7. Work and family policies should be adopted.
8. Companies must implement high performance workplace practices that include participation, innovative compensation policies, employment security, information sharing, and continuous learning.
9. Government has a role in breaking the glass ceiling and must lead by example and make equal access opportunity available to all.
10. Enforcement agencies must increase their efforts to enforce existing anti-discrimination laws such as the Equal pay Act of 1963, strengthen interagency coordination and update policies and regulations to keep up with the changing workplace environment.
11. Improved data collection should be instituted to give a clearer picture of the progress women and minorities are making and by pinpointing areas where improvements are needed; and increased disclosure of diversity data is an incentive to develop and maintain innovation and effective programs to break the glass ceiling, while developing a process for social change through corporate employment practices.
12. Government must ensure that adequate resources in funding and personnel are available that are essential for enforcement agencies to fulfill their legislative requirements.<sup>3</sup>

As a final recommendation, the Glass Ceiling Commission identified the media as a key contributor in developing and eliminating stereotypes and barriers. A special request was made for the media to review its own representation of women and minorities, distortion in reporting, and accurate diversity portrayal. The educational system was another institution that received noteworthy mention for having a responsibility to encourage women and minorities to learn a second language and to support "take your daughters to work day" programs.

## **Summary**

The Glass Ceiling Commission was the first of its kind to address the lack of progress of women and minorities on the national level. The initiative was responsible for renewed interest in the subject, legislative action, and media attention. However, six years later, the commission is now defunct, and not much has been done to continue its efforts. In fact, the whole glass ceiling initiative has plunged. Fortunately, the study was instrumental in identifying to the business community, both public and private that changes are looming over the horizon.

## **Private Sector Initiatives**

Research by Catalyst, a New York based Management Consulting Organization has shown that whenever the glass ceiling exists in an organization, breaking it involves a change to the organization's culture. Catalyst, reported on several private sector organizations who were successful in changing their corporate culture, and how they accomplished it.

### **The Dupont Company**

The Dupont Company has heaved some concrete blocks at the glass ceiling and decided outright that a deliberate effort was required because the advancement of women and minorities would not occur without a culture change within the organization. The company committed itself to shattering the stereotypes and preconceptions of women and minorities. Dupont has been involved in diversity education for more than twenty years. It started work and family research and programming in 1985. The term "workforce partnering" describes a new way of looking at, and dealing with, an increasingly diverse

family of employees. The Dupont Company formed a workplace partnering division to communicate and implement its programs. In addition, Dupont has created workshops that address gender issues, bias resolution for managers, networking, and mentoring programs.

### **The Digital Corporation**

The Digital Corporation found themselves faced with an increasingly diverse workforce. Their Valuing Differences Program evolved out of the Equal Employment Opportunity resolution process. Digital developed a corporate philosophy to maintain a process of continual improvement that assisted employees in feeling empowered to make their best contribution to the company. The Valuing Differences Program was instrumental in opening clogged lines of communication, such as those between the Engineering and Manufacturing Divisions. The program identified several discrete steps in the process: 1) identifying and discarding myths and stereotypes, 2) building genuine relationships with different people to broadening and understanding, 3) learning how to identify the assumptions that may reinforce differences, 4) raising personal empowerment levels by abolishing individual or group imposed limits, and 5) exploring and identifying group differences.

Companies such as Digital and Dupont have made significant headway in changing their corporate cultures as a means of breaking the glass ceiling. Catalyst, conducted additional studies on corporate culture and revealed that certain elements in a work environment foster greater opportunities for the development and advancement of women. To accomplish this, the organization should place more emphasis on performance based contributions such as production or sales, and less emphasis on networking or face-

time (time spent making yourself more visible and noticed, as opposed to actually doing work). Organizations that desire change to the organizational culture must understand that tangible and intangible factors help to shape the work environment. The glass ceiling is called glass because it can be transparent and often requires an in-depth examination to discover its existence.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>Diane Quinn, "The Glass Ceiling Commission Unanimously Agrees on 12 Ways to Shatter the Glass Ceiling," *U. S. Department of Labor News Release, USDL 95-483, n.p.: on-lineInternet, 24 January 1997, available from <http://www.acac.af.mil/yahoo>.*

<sup>2</sup>Redwood, 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 4-8.

## Chapter 4

### Implications for DOD

In a 1991 *Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report*, Ms. Linda Levine, a Specialist in Labor Economics reported findings on the glass ceiling within the federal government. Ms. Levine cited a *Government Executive* study that surveyed 375 of the 602 women in the Federal Executive Service (SES) in 1987.<sup>1</sup> More than half of the respondents believed that a lack of opportunity was the primary reason more women were not in high level Government jobs.<sup>2</sup> Women were excluded from networking activities such as “going out with the guys for a beer” or golfing with supervisors who gave preference to other males when hiring. Again, the tendency to hire someone who looks just like them.

In addition, women were concentrated in limited positions such as personnel where advancement was difficult or nonexistent. Another study cited by the CRS examined a broader spectrum of the federal workforce and found that differences in education, age, and federal experience cannot explain that white males remain far more likely than women and minorities to supervise other employees.<sup>3</sup>

The study showed that women and minorities are underrepresented in the higher grades of the executive branch of government.<sup>4</sup> Women account for 50% of the federal

civil service employees at all levels but only account for 13-29% of the higher graders from GS 12-15. Women account for almost 1 out of every 10 executives.

This *CRS Report* supports the existence of a glass ceiling within the federal government for women and minorities who are underrepresented at the executive levels in government positions. However, additional research is required to pinpoint any specific implications within DOD and subsequent changes that may be required since almost no research has been done to determine if a glass ceiling exists in the civilian and military both officer and enlisted ranks. Because the military services reflect the general population as a whole, one could assume that a glass ceiling does exist within the military as well. The same impenetrable barriers that exist for civilians within the private sector could also apply to military and civilian employees of DOD.

DOD draws its personnel both military and civilian from the general population, and therefore, the trends in *Workforce 2000* are also applicable to DOD. In fact, in a highly competitive environment involving compensation for top notch employees, DOD would be hard pressed to compete with the private sector. The federal civil service system is limited in the amount of compensation it can provide. A general schedule (GS) civil service employee normally must complete a one-year time-in-grade requirement before being promoted. Similar restrictions exist for the military. Compensation issues, economic and demographic trends mentioned earlier such as the shrinking labor pool will create major challenges for DOD.

## **Recommendations and Conclusions**

*Corporations cannot manage attitudes, but they can manage behavior with accountability, rewards, and punishment, as in all other important areas of concern. What gets measured in business gets done, what is not measured is ignored.*

—Edward W. Jones, Jr.: Black Managers, The Dream Deferred  
Harvard Business Review 64 (May-June 1986)

There are five specific recommendations for DOD in achieving success for the challenges that lie ahead: (1) DOD must initiate its own glass ceiling initiative, as a measurement tool to determine the extent of the impact of the glass ceiling on women and minorities within DOD, both military and civilian; (2) a DOD Glass Ceiling Commission would be in order to determine if changes are required to meet the challenges of the year 2000 and beyond; (3) because of the significant changes in the growth and composition of the workforce, the overall compensation packages for both civilian and military should be reviewed against those in the private sector to ensure competitiveness; (4) as the work force ages and baby boomers move up to mid-level and executive positions within DOD, a mentoring program should be established; and (5) a renewed commitment to cultural diversity, women, and work and family issues should be made.

## **Measurements**

A true determination of the existence of a glass ceiling that may impede the progress of women and minorities can only be made by conducting an honest assessment. The information within the Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Programs already suggest that a glass ceiling does exist within DOD. A 1989 survey by the Federally Employed Women's Program indicated that civilian women in DOD represent

70.1% of all employees in the lower general schedule (GS) grades' 1-8.<sup>5</sup> While men made up only 25.6% of the lower grades' 1-8.<sup>6</sup> Establishing a baseline is the first step to improving the opportunities of women and minorities within DOD.

### **DOD Glass Ceiling Commission**

*Whether we are talking about the near, mid, or long term, however, certain elements are, and will continue to be, high Air Force priorities: Recruiting quality people and ensuring they are trained and motivated to operate in a disciplined manner and live by the highest standards implicit to our core values. Fostering leaders who are prepared to function as joint warfighters and who cultivate an environment of trust and teamwork through the Air Force. Wisely identifying the right requirements, then planning and programming for those requirements through our time-phased modernization program. Meeting those requirements with a streamlined agile acquisition system. Together, all these elements ensure that we maintain our readiness to do what we need to when called upon to fight and win our nations' wars.*

—Sheila E. Widnall, Air Force Chief of Staff Secretary of the Air Force  
Ronald R. Fogleman, General, USAF

The Air Force Executive Guidance indicates that people are the Air Force's most important resource. Each of the respective services within DOD has developed core competencies and core values that emphasize mission accomplishment through team work. If people are DOD's most important resource, then ensuring that all people represented within the services have an equal opportunity to succeed is also important. Establishing a DOD glass ceiling commission would be DOD's ultimate commitment to its people.

The commission would provide an in-depth assessment of the perceptions, attitudes and values, those intangible factors that impede the career advancement of women and minorities. Policy recommendations could compliment the assessment by determining areas that require improvement and a means of addressing them. In this period of

downsizing the DOD, funding would present a major challenge. However, the lack of some credible efforts to address glass ceiling issues could also be equally damaging.

## **Compensation**

Compensation programs will not be the overriding factor in employee recruitment, training, or retention for DOD. However, compensation must be reviewed in conjunction with flexible work programs such as job sharing, permanent part-time positions, child care, and family issues. If the workforce of the future will be more competitive as indicated by *Workforce 2000*, DOD must have a good understanding of its compensation package, and their advantages and disadvantages, in order to be competitive with the private sector, and other public sector employers.

## **Mentoring**

In *Breaking the Glass Ceiling*, Morrison, White, and Van Velsor found that successful executive women were found to have six major success factors. One of the six major success factors included help from above or mentoring. Women and minorities are naturally at a disadvantage in moving up to higher level positions that have been traditionally held by white men. Mentoring is one way of establishing a support structure to ensure that minorities and women accomplish the organizations' goals as well as their own personal goals. Jeruchin and Shapiro, "see mentoring as the pinnacle of relationships along a continuum of work relationships, starting with a peer and moving up to coach, sponsor, and finally mentor. Each position along the continuum has an increasing amount of power (influence within the organization), and the degree of intimacy within each relationship increase along the continuum too."<sup>7</sup> The advantages of mentoring are

apparent, and once institutionalized can mean the difference between success and failure for minorities and women. Establishing a successful mentoring program is a powerful commitment to the development of women and minorities.

### **Cultural Diversity, Women, and Work and Family Issues**

Cultural diversity, women, and work and family issues have a common thread. The common thread is that these will be key issues in the workforce of 2000 and beyond. The workforce will be more diverse, composed of a majority of women and minorities, and issues that effect the new majority will demand to be addressed. DOD has a myriad of Equal Employment Opportunity, sexual harassment, health & family programs that are targeted at military and civilian employees. The difference in this recommendation is in DOD's approach.

DOD must become a leader in setting the example by becoming good stewards of its most important resource, it's people. This means that questions should be addressed regarding how can DOD achieve a culturally sensitive organizational culture by examining what provisions can be made to assist working women with children, and the different needs of single parent, and dual career families. These are difficult questions that are not adequately addressed in many organizations. The overall intent is to begin thinking about the abundance of the changes in the workforce, and to anticipate the needs of the workplace instead of react to them. A proactive approach would be viewed as a positive factor by employees in making career choices and longevity decisions.

In summary, the need to address the glass ceiling in DOD is necessary to protect the well being of its most important resource, it's people; and to ensure an organizational

culture and climate that promotes trust, confidence, and fosters teamwork. This paper has established that the workforce of the future is changing, and because of these changes, the workplace must also change. DOD is no exception. To achieve the most efficient and most effective organization possible in the year 2000 and beyond, the glass ceiling must be addressed to counter potential conflicts in the future. Addressing the glass ceiling, demands strong leadership, with a great deal of integrity to get to the core of seemingly transparent or invisible issues. But more importantly, it will require the participation of everyone in the organization to make a commitment to achieve a culturally sensitive organizational culture that promotes empowerment and shatters the glass ceiling.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Linda Levine, *The Glass Ceiling: Access of Women and Minorities to Management Positions*, Congressional Research Service, (Washington, D. C., Library of Congress, 1991), 6.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>3</sup>Lewis, Gregory, "Sex and the Supervisory Authority," *Public Administration Review*, January 1986, 26-27.

<sup>4</sup>Levine, 10.

<sup>5</sup>Federally Employed Women (FEW), "A Report on Women in the Federal Government" (Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, May 1991), IV-13.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., IV-13.

<sup>7</sup>Joan Jeruchin and Pat Shapiro, *Women, Mentors, and Success* (New York, NY: Fawcet and Columbia, 1992), 27.

## ***Bibliography***

- Burnell, Barbara Kennedy Ed.D. *Technological Change and Women's Work Experience*. West Port, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 1993.
- Cross, Elsie, et. al. *The Promise of Diversity. Over 40 Voices Discuss Strategies for Eliminating Discrimination in Organizations*. New York, NY: Irwin, 1994.
- Federally Employed Women (FEW). *A Report on Women in the Federal Government*. Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, 1991.
- Jeruchin, Joan and Pat Shapiro. *Women, Mentors, and Success*. Fawcett-Columbine.: New York, NY, 1992.
- Levine, Linda. *The "Glass Ceiling": Access of Women and Minorities to Management Positions*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 1991.
- Lewis, Gregory B. "Sex and Supervisory Authority." *Public Administration Review*, 1986.
- Morrison, Ann M., Randall P. White, and Ellen Van Velsor. *Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Can Women Reach the Top of America's Largest Corporations*. Greensboro, NC: Addison Wesley Publishing Co., 1996.
- Redwood, Rene' and Dawn Hyde. "Breaking the Glass Ceiling: A Summary Report." *Network 2000*. 11 December 1996, n.p. On-line. Internet. 24 January 1997. Available from <http://wwwacsc.au.af.mil/yahoo>.
- Redwood, Rene'. "The Glass Ceiling." *Women in Technology International (In-Motion)*. September 1996, n.p. On-line. Internet. 24 January 1997. Available from <http://wwwacsc.au.af.mil/yahoo>.
- Schein, Edgar. *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. (San Francisco, C.A.: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992.
- United States Air Force. *Air Force Executive Guidance (Updated Edition)*. Washington, D. C.: Air Force Strategy Division (HQ USAF/XOXS), October 1996.

DISTRIBUTION A:

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Air Command and Staff College  
Maxwell AFB, Al 36112