

# POSITION PAPER

POSITION PAPER  
ON  
QUALITY AIR FORCE

1. This paper addresses the importance of embracing and implementing Quality Air Force (QAF) tools into the Air Force. QAF tools are proven management techniques that allow better decision analysis and decision-making, but many do not recognize their usefulness. Several of the tools are based on supported measurement (metrics) and, like tools in a master carpenter's toolbox, they work well when properly used.
2. Traditionally, we have been taught to depend on our leader to analyze and solve problems. Based on the leader's experience and "analysis," many of those decisions were excellent, but not all. Today, we can better analyze problems using a quality tool called a flow chart. This tool asks people involved in, and thoroughly aware of, a process to examine and display the process steps so it can be analyzed and improvements can be made. This allows a logical and more "fact-based" improvement decision. Still, people say the process takes too long, it is unwieldy, and they aren't comfortable with it. So all the "improvement" decisions are made without it.
3. We must use QAF tools better. We have all bent a nail using a hammer, but how many of us blame the hammer? The same philosophy applies to quality tools. If we apply them properly, they work. We can certainly use a wrong tool to solve a problem. (We've all hammered in a nail with something other than a hammer with mixed results—QAF tools are the same.) But consider the master carpenters; they not only know and use tools more effectively they also add unique tools of their own. If we can add more "quality" tools to our toolkits, we must.
4. Using QAF tools in this time of dramatic, fast-paced change makes a lot of sense. If you haven't tried using them, do it. If you have tried once and a tool didn't work, think of all the nails you bent with a perfectly good hammer. The tools are proven performers, but we must use them and use them properly.

Lt Col Miles/ACSC/DE/3-7070/ly/14 Mar 04

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1. When you must evaluate a proposal, raise a new idea for consideration, advocate a current situation or proposal, or “take a stand” on an issue, you’ll find the position paper format ideally suited for the task. This position paper builds a case for that assertion by describing the function and format of the Air Force position paper.
2. The opening statement or introductory paragraph must contain a “clear statement” of your purpose in presenting the issue and “your position” on that issue. The remainder of the paper should consist of integrated paragraphs or statements that logically support or defend that position. Adequate, accurate and relevant support material is a must for the position paper.
3. Since a position paper is comparable to an advocacy briefing in written format, the concluding paragraph must contain a specific recommendation or a clear restatement of your position. This is where you reemphasize your bottom line.
4. The format for the position paper is the same as for the background paper—number the paragraphs and double space the text. For more specifics, refer to the background paper on pages 215-216.

**NOTE: Triple space equal 2 blank line  
Double space equal 1 blank line**

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1-inch left and right margins

1-inch top and bottom margins