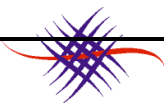


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# **BUILDING A QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

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## Building Quality Competence

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**A Quality Management System** is a way of working to assure sustained success. It is a way of working that is:

- Vision-directed
- Values-driven
- Customer-focused
- Analysis-based
- Learning-enabled
- Team-facilitated
- Process-managed
- Quality-controlled
- Results-oriented

In this process the behavioral skills that are of most importance are those skills that encourage a set of actions to create successful outcomes even in quality-deficient scenarios. Managing is more about sociology than it is about technology.

- Values define attitude
- Attitude influences behavior
- Behavior creates culture
- Culture reinforces values

In order for a Quality Management System to exist, a majority of those involved in the system must be competent. Competence is the ability to perform required tasks at a “role model” level of behavior. There are four component parts leading to competence:

1. **Aptitude:** a person's innate ability to perform a task. An organization must learn how to screen individuals in such a way that the innate abilities needed to perform in that organization exist in potential employees.
2. **Skills:** a person's learned ability to perform a task. An organization must provide appropriate training so that individuals who have the innate abilities can learn what is needed to perform effectively.
3. **Knowledge:** the conscious understanding of the theoretical principles, data and its interpretation, and integrating themes for a particular subject. An organization and specifically its managers must provide essential, clear and consistent information to allow members of the organization to perform effectively.



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4. **Behavior:** the actions that a person takes. The managers of a quality management system must provide ways to measure, encourage, evaluate and reward effective behavior. They must do this in such a way that everyone involved in the organization is motivated to improve and to contribute to the overall success of the organization.

**BEHAVIOR CHANGE IS THE MOST DIFFICULT KIND OF CHANGE TO FACILITATE! In order for competence to filter through the organization upper management must have:**

- A clear understanding of job requirements with a defined set of job objectives and performance measures which demonstrate that customer expectations will be met or exceeded.
- An approach to performance and performance evaluation which embodies the values of the organization and uses methods and tools that have been demonstrated to deliver cost-effective results to customers and makes employees feel that they are a significant part of the process.
- An approach which has been implemented throughout the organization and has been integrated in consistent and routine work patterns.
- An implementation strategy which consistently results in outcomes that measurably demonstrate desired performance relative to customer requirements.

Efforts must be made to identify behavioral competencies which drive successful performance and to create a survey instrument that permits each member of the organization to assess their own performance and develop an improvement plan. **Members of an organization who have confidence that the managers of the organization will give clear assignments; clear and effective feedback and regular assistance to make improvements, will enter into a process of growth and development which will eventually make significant contributions back to the organization. Members of an organization who lack this confidence will often act out of fear (fear of displeasing upper management) which will ultimately destroy that individual's ability to make effective contributions to the organization.**



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**According to recent research, successful organizations have all been found to have managers who are:**

1. Customer-oriented:
  - Express sincere gratitude (for complaining) and regret (for the problem) to customers who report difficulties, while neither disclaiming or confirming responsibility.
  - Take action to research complaints and establish the limit of company responsibility.
  - Present examples of other companies who have been successful because they listen and rapidly respond to the issues and concerns of their customers.
  - Follow-through in replacing faulty equipment or making other appropriate correction of problems.
  
2. A Customer advocate:
  - Explicitly adopts the viewpoint of the customer.
  - Acts as if the customer complaints or requests are legitimate--even when they are not.
  - Goes out of the way to meet directly with customers.
  - Uses own customer visit experiences to increase the company's interest in customer inputs.
  - Insists others take customer concerns into account.
  - Takes on the customer's problem as their own.
  
3. Organizationally astute:
  - Understands the organizational, functional, or group dynamics associated with a particular situation.
  - Acts based on knowledge of the role and significance of different internal and/or external groups or units.
  - Recognizes the strengths and limitations of existing procedures with respect to how individuals respond.
  - Identifies differences among cultures and groups in appropriate response to policies and procedures.
  
4. Influencing:
  - Uses data to persuade others.
  - Makes an effort to change the behavior of others.
  - Uses well-chosen symbolic events or examples to persuade, motivate, or influence others.
  - Appeals to shared interests.
  - Specifically aligns self with key influential others.
  - Offers resources in exchange for commitment or support.



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5. Interpersonally diagnostic:
    - Identifies the specific strengths and limitations of others, and of one's positional relationship to others.
    - Puts self in a specific other's position in order to identify their concerns and interests.
    - Adjusts behavior according to the reactions or concerns of specific others.
    - Assesses individual motivations and takes a flexible approach to situations in order to build consensus for actions.
  
  6. Goal-oriented:
    - Identifies specific goals for self and others.
    - Allocates resources and efforts to achieve the maximum results or impact.
    - Emphasizes adherence to and acceptance of appropriate performance measurement systems for self and others.
    - Demonstrates a sense of urgency in resolving a problem or issue.
    - Describes business implications of quality plan.
  
  7. Persistent:
    - Executes plans and projects over an extended period of time.
    - Follows up on issues to ensure that commitments or expectations are being met.
    - Makes repeated efforts to overcome obstacles, achieve results, or get a message across.
    - Takes special efforts to maintain long-term relationships with colleagues.
  
  8. Organized:
    - Prioritizes own activities.
    - Develops a plan of action before proceeding.
    - Delegates activities to appropriate others.
    - Orchestrates the activities of others.
  
  9. Mentoring of subordinates:
    - Provides individuals with specific guidance on how to improve their performance.
    - Ensures subordinates own responsibility for their activities.
    - Provides subordinates with resources needed to achieve success.
    - Delegates responsibility for activities and also decisions to subordinates in order to develop their competence.
    - Encourages subordinates to assume additional challenges or assignments.



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10. Collaborative:

- Adjusts own position in order to accommodate interests or concerns of others.
- Enlists the support of influential others before taking action.
- Actively solicits the involvement of relevant others to identify problems, and develop or implement solutions.
- Pulls together teams or task forces quickly.

11. Initiating:

- Takes steps to address an issue before it becomes a crisis.
- Champions new approaches to improve productivity and quality of work.
- Owns responsibility for, or volunteers for, additional assignments beyond normal responsibilities.

12. Professional:

- Aware of own strengths, limitations and growth areas and behaves accordingly.
- Maintains calm when personally confronted and open to criticism.
- Assumes responsibility for the mistakes or decisions of associates.

13. Conceptual:

- Identifies key issues in complex situations.
- Identifies underlying themes, cross-cutting issues or patterns that help to explain a situation.
- Identifies major threats and opportunities for the business.
- Uses potent metaphors and symbols to articulate a vision or describe a situation.

14. Innovative:

- Willing to take risks.
- Identifies "new" solutions to problems.
- Responds positively to explicit challenges.
- Sets goals that go significantly beyond established standards.
- Expend an exceptional level of effort to achieve a desired goal.

15. Communicative:

- Describes a positive impact as a result of having made a presentation or other communication.
- Tailors communications to the needs of the specific audience.
- Puts considerable effort into formulating a communication to ensure that the "right" message comes across.
- Consciously reflects on the form, content, and impact of discussions with others.



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16. Self-confident:

- Assumes leadership role in difficult or poorly structured situations.
- Takes a strong stand on controversial issues.
- Presents and defends a position despite unfavorable reactions from senior managers or others.
- Treats senior managers as peers.
- Presents forceful, unambiguous description of own role.

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This same research (Watson\*) has also shown that a majority of organizational failures occur due to a prevalence of "fast decisions" made by managers with the following characteristics:

- Usually takes the initiative to formulate and force group decisions.
- Pushes the group to make conclusions.
- Emphasizes the outcome over group process.
- Forces subordinates to follow their lead.
- Over-confident and directing of others through controlling behavioral actions and forceful argument or administrative directives.

**And** a consistent practice of micromanaging which communicates a complete Lack of trust in employees.

\* Pre publication release of research done by Greg Watson with the American Society for Quality and the International Standards Organization.

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**The requirement to improve business is a journey without end, which necessitates that managers have both a personal desire to win, and a total commitment to the continuous development of their competence to manage and lead. This commitment leads them to create an environment, which fosters a desire to develop competence on the part of all employees and provides the opportunities for competence to be developed.**

