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SOLVED IN TWO WEEKS...



The Eight Elements of TQM

Nayantara Padhi February 26, 2010 8

Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management approach that originated in the 1950s and has steadily become more popular since the early 1980s. Total quality is a description of the culture, attitude and organization of a company that strives to provide customers with products and services that satisfy their needs. The culture requires quality in all aspects of the company's operations, with processes being done right the first time and defects and waste eradicated from operations.

To be successful implementing TQM, an organization must concentrate on the eight key elements:

1. Ethics
2. Integrity
3. Trust
4. Training
5. Teamwork
6. Leadership
7. Recognition
8. Communication

This paper is meant to describe the eight elements comprising TQM.

Key Elements

TQM has been coined to describe a philosophy that makes quality the driving force behind leadership, design, planning, and improvement initiatives. For this, TQM requires the help of those eight key elements.

These elements can be divided into four groups according to their function. The groups are:

- I. Foundation – It includes: Ethics, Integrity and Trust.
- II. Building Bricks – It includes: Training, Teamwork and Leadership.
- III. Binding Mortar – It includes: Communication.
- IV. Roof – It includes: Recognition.

I. Foundation

TQM is built on a foundation of ethics, integrity and trust. It fosters openness, fairness and sincerity and allows involvement by everyone. This is the key to unlocking the ultimate potential of TQM. These three elements move together, however, each element offers something different to the TQM concept.

1. Ethics – Ethics is the discipline concerned with good and bad in any situation. It is a two-faceted subject represented by organizational and individual ethics. Organizational ethics establish a business code of ethics that outlines guidelines that all employees are to adhere to in the performance of their work. Individual ethics include personal rights or wrongs.
2. Integrity – Integrity implies honesty, morals, values, fairness, and adherence to the facts and sincerity. The characteristic is what customers (internal or external) expect and deserve to receive. People see the opposite of integrity as duplicity. TQM will not work in an atmosphere of duplicity.
3. Trust – Trust is a by-product of integrity and ethical conduct. Without trust, the framework of TQM cannot be built. Trust fosters full participation of all members. It allows empowerment that encourages pride ownership and it encourages commitment. It allows decision making at appropriate levels in the organization, fosters individual risk-taking for continuous improvement and helps to ensure that measurements focus on improvement of process and are not used to contend people. Trust is essential to ensure customer satisfaction. So, trust builds the cooperative environment essential for TQM.

II. Bricks

Basing on the strong foundation of trust, ethics and integrity, bricks are placed to reach the roof of recognition. It includes:

4. Training – Training is very important for employees to be highly productive. Supervisors are solely responsible for implementing TQM within their departments, and teaching their employees the philosophies of TQM. Training that employees require are interpersonal skills, the ability to function within teams, problem solving, decision making, job management performance analysis and improvement, business economics and technical skills. During the creation and formation of TQM, employees are trained so that they can become effective employees for the company.
5. Teamwork – To become successful in business, teamwork is also a key element of TQM. With the use of teams, the business will receive quicker and better solutions to problems. Teams also provide more permanent improvements in processes and operations. In teams, people feel more comfortable bringing up problems that may occur, and can get help from other workers to find a solution and put into place. There are mainly three types of teams that TQM organizations adopt:

- A. Quality improvement teams or excellence teams (QITs) – These are temporary teams with the purpose of dealing with specific problems that often recur. These teams are set up for period of three to twelve months.



- B. Problem solving teams (PSTs) – These are temporary teams to solve certain problems and also to identify and overcome causes of problems. They generally last from one week to three months.
- C. Natural work teams (NWTs) – These teams consist of small groups of skilled workers who share tasks and responsibilities. These teams use concepts such as employee involvement teams, self-managing teams and quality circles. These teams generally work for one to two hours a week.
6. Leadership – It is possibly the most important element in TQM. It appears everywhere in organization. Leadership in TQM requires the manager to provide an inspiring vision, make strategic directions that are understood by all and to instill values that guide subordinates. For TQM to be successful in the business, the supervisor must be committed in leading his employees. A supervisor must understand TQM, believe in it and then demonstrate their belief and commitment through their daily practices of TQM. The supervisor makes sure that strategies, philosophies, values and goals are transmitted down through out the organization to provide focus, clarity and direction. A key point is that TQM has to be introduced and led by top management. Commitment and personal involvement is required from top management in creating and deploying clear quality values and goals consistent with the objectives of the company and in creating and deploying well defined systems, methods and performance measures for achieving those goals.

III. Binding Mortar

7. Communication – It binds everything together. Starting from foundation to roof of the TQM house, everything is bound by strong mortar of communication. It acts as a vital link between all elements of TQM. Communication means a common understanding of ideas between the sender and the receiver. The success of TQM demands communication with and among all the organization members, suppliers and customers. Supervisors must keep open airways where employees can send and receive information about the TQM process. Communication coupled with the sharing of correct information is vital. For communication to be credible the message must be clear and receiver must interpret in the way the sender intended.

There are different ways of communication such as:

- A. Downward communication – This is the dominant form of communication in an organization. Presentations and discussions basically do it. By this the supervisors are able to make the employees clear about TQM.
- B. Upward communication – By this the lower level of employees are able to provide suggestions to upper management of the affects of TQM. As employees provide insight and constructive criticism, supervisors must listen effectively to correct the situation that comes about through the use of TQM. This forms a level of trust between supervisors and employees. This is also similar to empowering communication, where supervisors keep open ears and listen to others.
- C. Sideways communication – This type of communication is important because it breaks down barriers between departments. It also allows dealing with customers and suppliers in a more professional manner.

IV. Roof

8. Recognition – Recognition is the last and final element in the entire system. It should be provided for both suggestions and achievements for teams as well as individuals. Employees strive to receive recognition for themselves and their teams. Detecting and recognizing contributors is the most important job of a supervisor. As people are recognized, there can be huge changes in self-esteem, productivity, quality and the amount of effort exhorted to the task at hand. Recognition comes in its best form when it is immediately following an action that an employee has performed. Recognition comes in different ways, places and time such as,

- Ways – It can be by way of personal letter from top management. Also by award banquets, plaques, trophies etc.
- Places – Good performers can be recognized in front of departments, on performance boards and also in front of top management.
- Time – Recognition can given at any time like in staff meeting, annual award banquets, etc.

Conclusion

We can conclude that these eight elements are key in ensuring the success of TQM in an organization and that the supervisor is a huge part in developing these elements in the work place. Without these elements, the business entities cannot be successful TQM implementers. It is very clear from the above discussion that TQM without involving integrity, ethics and trust would be a great remiss, in fact it would be incomplete. Training is the key by which the organization creates a TQM environment. Leadership and teamwork go hand in hand. Lack of communication between departments, supervisors and employees create a burden on the whole TQM process. Last but not the least, recognition should be given to people who contributed to the overall completed task. Hence, lead by example, train employees to provide a quality product, create an environment where there is no fear to share knowledge, and give credit where credit is due is the motto of a successful TQM organization.

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Comments



Akhil Kar: 23-05-2010, 18:36

These eight elements are not enough for ensuring TQM implementation. In the foundation there should be many other dimensions. In Building Bricks portion dimensions are very poor. This model should be modified for ensuring TQM in any organization in the present context.

[Reply](#)



George: 05-09-2012, 05:44

Hey if you saw something wrong with the model then why don't you suggest something better, add them up in the model.

[Reply](#)



Sreeraj.R.*17-07-2012, 03:27

As a CA Student, I think that proper auditing can't be possible without examining the above eight elements sincerely

Reply



Abdul Maleque*07-09-2012, 07:18

An employee when gets safety and security of himself and his family members from the organization, he or she will employ best of the efforts to perform his/her assigned duties for the improvement of the org. I think tqm should include this pre-condition with others.

Secondly, Yearly recognition of the performance of the employee should be recorded on be half of the org. and announced so that rest of employees get inspired.

Thirdly, Practice, study and documentation must go ahead parallel.

Reply



Ibrahim shour*30-08-2012, 13:15

these 8 elements are the key factors for improving organizational performance and creativity

Reply



Sam*20-10-2012, 09:30

Are their any simpler way? just asking

Reply



madhumitaroy*07-10-2012, 09:22

as a mba student i think communication part get distorted when your boss is biased

Reply



Sam*20-10-2012, 09:00

Donnt you think communication, auditing, and training is a very powerful tool to ensure TQM?

Reply