

IMPORTANCE OF TOTAL PARTICIPATION IN IMPLEMENTATION OF TQM

* MAHANTESH HALAGATTI

** Dr. POORNIMA M. CHARANTIMATH

*** Dr. A. R. ARYASRI

Abstract :

Total Quality Management, TQM, is a method by which management and employees can become involved in the continuous improvement of the production of goods and services. It is a combination of quality and management tools aimed at increasing business and reducing losses due to wasteful practices. TQM involves the active participation of every employee from the top to the lowest echelon. All efforts of the organization are organized and integrated to focus on customer satisfaction. A successful TQM environment requires a committed and well-trained work force that participates fully in quality improvement activities. In this paper we are trying to highlight the importance of total participation by all levels of employees using the practices followed at enterprises which have successfully implemented the principles of TQM.

Keywords: Quality, Participation, Training, Transition, customer satisfaction

Introduction :

“No matter how high or how excellent technology may be and how much capital may be accumulated, unless the group of human beings which comprise the enterprise work together towards one unified goal, the enterprise is sure to go down the path of decline.”

—Takashi Ishihara, President, Nissan Motor Co...

Total Quality Management is a management approach that originated in the 1950's and has steadily become more popular since the early 1980's. 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.

TQM views an organization as a collection of processes. It maintains that organizations must strive to continuously improve these processes by incorporating the knowledge and experiences of workers. The simple objective of TQM is “Do the right things, right the first time, every time”. TQM is infinitely variable and adaptable. Although originally applied to manufacturing operations, and for a number of years only used in that area, TQM is now becoming recognized as a generic management tool, just as applicable in service and public sector organizations.

TQM involves the active participation of every employee from the top to the lowest echelon. All efforts of the organization are organized and integrated to focus on customer satisfaction. Steering and working committees are formed, from the pool of managers in the organization at each division and department level so as to provide the framework for participation by their subordinates. Special task forces comprising professionals are formed to look into breakthroughs in quality problems, complaints, automation programmes, process improvement projects, etc. manager and professionals are also involved as facilitators in Quality Circle activities while the circle members are directly involved in solving quality problems existing within

* Assistant Professor, KLS Institute of Management Education & Research, Belgaum, Karnataka

** Professor, KLS Institute of Management Education & Research, Belgaum, Karnataka

*** Director, School of Management Studies, JNTUH, Kukatpally, Hyderabad, A.P

their workplace. A mass-participation by any employee who has an improvement idea that will benefit the company. Therefore, for total participation, there must be some core activities that have to be organized to allow it to happen. The core activities are as follows:¹

- Training
- Suggestion schemes
- QC Circle
- Vendor Participation
- Publicity and Promotion

Total Participation :

Employee participation

A successful TQM environment requires a committed and well-trained work force that participates fully in quality improvement activities. Such participation is reinforced by reward and recognition systems which emphasize the achievement of quality objectives. On-going education and training of all employees supports the drive for quality. Employees are encouraged to take more responsibility, communicate more effectively, act creatively, and innovate. As people behave the way they are measured and remunerated, TQM links remuneration to customer satisfaction metrics.

A TQM culture²

It's not easy to introduce TQM. An open, cooperative culture has to be created by management. Employees have to be made to feel that they are responsible for customer satisfaction. They are not going to feel this if they are excluded from the development of visions, strategies, and plans. It's important they participate in these activities. They are unlikely to behave in a responsible way if they see management behaving irresponsibly - saying one thing and doing the opposite.

Implementation Principles and Processes³

All aspects of TQM can be achieved only through total participation from all employees of the company. All division and employees must commit to a customer focus and desire to produce the best goods and services to meet consumer demands. Managers must train, educate and develop the customer focus strategy in each employee working in the company. Solid communication lines must also be created between management and employees; this allows the company to react quickly to any issues that affect the TQM process in the company.

A preliminary step in TQM implementation is to assess the organization's current reality. Relevant preconditions have to do with the organization's history, its current needs, precipitating events leading to TQM, and the existing employee quality of working life. If the current reality does not include important preconditions, TQM implementation should be delayed until the organization is in a state in which TQM is likely to succeed.

If an organization has a track record of effective responsiveness to the environment, and if it has been able to successfully change the way it operates when needed, TQM will be easier to implement. If an organization has been historically reactive and has no skill at improving its operating systems, there will be both employee skepticism and a lack of skilled change agents. If this condition prevails, a comprehensive program of management and leadership development may be instituted. A management audit is a good assessment tool to identify current levels of organizational functioning and areas in need of change. An organization should be basically healthy before beginning TQM. If it has significant problems such as a very

unstable funding base, weak administrative systems, lack of managerial skill, or poor employee morale, TQM would not be appropriate⁴.

However, a certain level of stress is probably desirable to initiate TQM. People need to feel a need for a change. Kanter (1983) addresses this phenomenon by describing building blocks which are present in effective organizational change. These forces include departures from tradition, a crisis or galvanizing event, strategic decisions, individual "prime movers," and action vehicles. Departures from tradition are activities, usually at lower levels of the organization, which occur when entrepreneurs move outside the normal ways of operating to solve a problem. A crisis, if it is not too disabling, can also help create a sense of urgency which can mobilize people to act. In the case of TQM, this may be a funding cut or threat, or demands from consumers or other stakeholders for improved quality of service. After a crisis, a leader may intervene strategically by articulating a new vision of the future to help the organization deal with it. A plan to implement TQM may be such a strategic decision. Such a leader may then become a prime mover, who takes charge in championing the new idea and showing others how it will help them get where they want to go. Finally, action vehicles are needed and mechanisms or structures to enable the change to occur and become institutionalized.

CASE1: Team Xerox Experience⁹

Workers at Xerox are vested with authority over day-to-day work decisions. And they are expected to take the initiative in identifying and correcting problems that affect the quality of products or services. Both salaried and hourly personnel have embraced these added responsibilities.

The phrase "Team Xerox" is not an empty slogan. It accurately reflects the firm's approach to tackling quality issues. Xerox BP & S estimates that 75 percent of its workers are members of at least one of more than 7000 quality improvement teams. In 1988, team in manufacturing and development were credited with saving \$ 116 million by reducing scrap, tightening production schedules, and devising other efficiency and quality enhancing measures.

Teamwork also characterizes the company's relationship with many of its 480 suppliers. Suppliers are "Process qualified" through a step-by-step procedure to analyse and quantify supplier's production and control processes, suppliers receive training and follow-up in areas such as statistical process control and total quality techniques; and they credit Xerox with improving their products and operations. For BP & S, increasing reliance on qualified suppliers over the last five years have reduced the number of defective parts reaching the production line by 73 percent.

CASE 2 : The principles followed at the Toyota for developing People and Partners¹⁰

- *Growing your leaders rather than purchasing them:* Toyota does not go shopping for 'Successful' CEOs and presidents because their leaders must live and thoroughly understand the Toyota culture day by day. Since a critical element of the culture is *genchi genbutsu*, which means deeply observing the actual situation in detail, leaders must demonstrate this ability and understand how work gets done at a shop floor level within Toyota. According to the Toyota way, a superficial impression of the current situation in any division of Toyota will lead to ineffective decision-making and leadership. Toyota also expects its leaders to teach their subordinates the Toyota Way, which means they must understand and live the philosophy. Another important leadership tenet of the Toyota Way is the effort leaders make to support the culture year after year so it can create the environment for a learning organization. In Deming's terms, Toyota uses "constancy of purpose" throughout the organization, which lays the groundwork for consistent and positive leadership as well as an environment for learning.

- *Develop exceptional people and teams who follow your company's philosophy:* at Toyota they follow four stages of team development learned from Ken Blanchard.

- *Stage 1-Orientation.* The group needs strong direction from the leader and must understand the basic mission, rules of engagement, and tools the members will use.
- *Stage 2-Dissatisfaction.* In this stage, they continue to need strong direction from the leader but also need a lot of social support to get through the tough social dynamics they do not understand.
- *Stage 3-Integration.* the group starts to develop a clearer picture of the roles of various team members and begins to exert control over team process.
- *Stage 4-Production.* The group puts it all together and is functioning as a high-performing team with little task support or social support from the leader.

Steps in Managing the Transition⁵

Beckhard and Pritchard (1992) have outlined the basic steps in managing a transition to a new system such as TQM: identifying tasks to be done, creating necessary management structures, developing strategies for building commitment, designing mechanisms to communicate the change, and assigning resources.

Task identification would include a study of present conditions (assessing current reality, as described above); assessing readiness, such as through a force field analysis; creating a model of the desired state, in this case, implementation of TQM; announcing the change goals to the organization; and assigning responsibilities and resources. This final step would include securing outside consultation and training and assigning someone within the organization to oversee the effort. This should be a responsibility of top management. In fact, the next step, designing transition management structures, is also a responsibility of top management. In fact, Cohen and Brand (1993) and Hyde (1992) assert that management must be heavily involved as leaders rather than relying on a separate staff person or function to shepherd the effort. An organization wide steering committee to oversee the effort may be appropriate. Developing commitment strategies was discussed above in the sections on resistance and on visionary leadership.

To communicate the change, mechanisms beyond existing processes will need to be developed. Special all-staff meetings attended by executives, sometimes designed as input or dialog sessions, may be used to kick off the process, and TQM newsletters may be an effective ongoing communication tool to keep employees aware of activities and accomplishments.

Management of resources for the change effort is important with TQM because outside consultants will almost always be required. Choose consultants based on their prior relevant experience and their commitment to adapting the process to fit unique organizational needs. While consultants will be invaluable with initial training of staff and TQM system design, employees (management and others) should be actively involved in TQM implementation, perhaps after receiving training in change management which they can then pass on to other employees. A collaborative relationship with consultants and clear role definitions and specification of activities must be established⁶.

In summary, first assess preconditions and the current state of the organization to make sure the need for change is clear and that TQM is an appropriate strategy. Leadership styles and organizational culture must be congruent with TQM. If they are not, this should be worked on or TQM implementation should be avoided or delayed until favorable conditions exist.

Remember that this will be a difficult, comprehensive, and long-term process. Leaders will need to maintain their commitment, keep the process visible, provide necessary support, and hold people accountable for results. Use input from stakeholder (clients, referring agencies, funding sources, etc.) as possible; and, of

course, maximize employee involvement in design of the system.

Always keep in mind that TQM should be purpose driven. Be clear on the organization's vision for the future and stay focused on it. TQM can be a powerful technique for unleashing employee creativity and potential, reducing bureaucracy and costs, and improving service to clients and the community.

Conclusion :

TQM encourages participation amongst shop floor workers and managers. There is no single theoretical formalization of total quality, but Deming, Juran and Ishikawa provide the core assumptions, as a "...discipline and philosophy of management which institutionalizes planned and continuous... improvement ... and assumes that quality is the outcome of all activities that take place within an organization; that all functions and all employees have to participate in the improvement process; that organizations need both quality systems and a quality culture."

Footnotes And References :

1. Gilbert, G. (1992). Quality Improvement in a Defense Organization. *Public Productivity and Management Review*, 16(1), 65-75.
2. Hyde, A. (1992). The Proverbs of Total Quality Management: Recharting the Path to Quality Improvement in the Public Sector. *Public Productivity and Management Review*, 16(1), 25-37.
3. Martin, L. (1993). "Total Quality Management in the Public Sector," *National Productivity Review*, 10, 195-213.
4. Swiss, J. (1992). Adapting TQM to Government. *Public Administration Review*, 52, 356-362.
5. Tichey, N. (1983). *Managing Strategic Change*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
6. Hill Stephen, 1991. "Why Quality Circles failed but Total Quality management might succeed." *British journal of industrial relations*, 29(4), 541-568.
7. Ishikawa, K, 1985. *What is Total Quality Control? The Japanese way*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall.
8. Smith, AK, 1993. *Total Quality Management in the Public sector*. *Quality Progress*, June 1993, 45-48.
9. *Total Quality Management in Small Business*, parag Diwan, Vanity Books International, New Delhi
10. *The Toyota Way*, Jeffrey Liker, Tata McGraw Hill, New Delhi

