

The Quality Management FORUM



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Leadership Vision and Strategic Direction

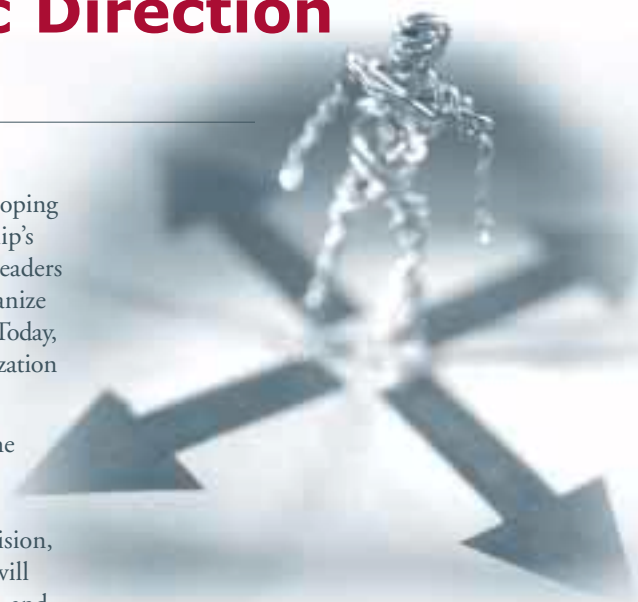
By Don Brecken

Creating a compelling vision and developing a strategy to achieve it, is one of leadership's primary functions. Historically, only top leaders understood the vision well enough to organize human and material resources to achieve it. Today, however, leaders at every level of the organization must understand the vision.

This article provides an overview of the leader's role in creating the organization's future. It examines leadership vision, the underlying themes common to effective vision, and how vision works on many levels. It will also examine how leaders formulate vision and strategy. Finally, this article will discuss the leader's contribution to achieving the vision.

Strategic Leadership

Excellence in organizational performance does not come about by accident. It is a conscious choice made by organizational leaders. Top leaders know their organization's environment, have a five- or ten-year vision for the organization, and set believable plans to achieve their vision. However, in this complex and ever-changing world, anticipating the future can be very difficult. The authors of "Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge," Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, agree and add that the "...problems of organizations are increasingly complex. There are too many ironies, polarities, dichotomies, dualities, ambivalence, paradoxes, confusions, contradictions, contraries, and messes for any organization to understand and deal with."¹ This complexity explains why many leaders are more comfortable focusing on clear, short-term goals than on uncertain, long-term visions.



But what will the future hold for those who fail to consider it? Failing to anticipate your customer's future needs, for instance, could put you at risk of losing business to competitors who do anticipate these needs and are able to fulfill them. This means leaders must anticipate their future needs and position their organization properly to fulfill those needs. It is the responsibility of organizational strategic leadership to consider the external and internal business environment and make sense of complexity when creating the organization's vision, mission and strategies, and planning their implementation.

Leadership Vision

Organizational leaders must create a compelling vision that will inspire and motivate their employees. A vision is more than just a dream. "It is an ambitious view of the future that everyone in the organization can believe in, one that can realistically be achieved, yet offers a future that is better in important ways than what now exists."² Vision is what guides

The password for the members only section on the ASQ-QMD Web site is: **w04frm**

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From the Chairman

Fellow Quality Management Division (QMD) Members

By John Bauer

I'm writing this message shortly after returning from ASQ Headquarters in Milwaukee. In May and November each year, the ASQ Division Affairs Council and Section Affairs Council meet to discuss the latest initiatives and proposals for the operation of the American Society for Quality. As your Division Chair, I represent the QMD members at these meetings. The following are a few of the more important items that were discussed:

1. ASQ Branding Initiative — You're probably aware by now that ASQ has a new logo. This new logo is part of an initiative to better define and identify the role of ASQ in the world marketplace. I'll talk further about this subject as more information becomes available.

2. Community Good Works Initiative — The role of community advocate is one that ASQ takes very seriously. To highlight the potential of quality to benefit humanity, ASQ has launched the Community Good Works Program, providing matching grants and knowledge transfer to improve local communities and create a body of evidence that documents the efficacy of quality.

Candidates for matching grants include not-for-profit, community-based or community-serving organizations with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Local government agencies are also acceptable.

Additional information on grant eligibility and pilot projects is available at the ASQ members-only Web site.

3. Stakeholder Dialogues Initiative — In short, this is a process where one of the senior ASQ members (Chair, Chair-Elect, Executive Director) holds a 3 – 4 hour formal ASQ/Quality briefing for a group in any location requested by a company, ASQ Section/Division or community group. Almost any group can ask for one of the briefings, all they have to do is provide the venue and do the local promotion. This seems to be working very well and looks to me like a great opportunity to promote ASQ and Quality. Contact ASQ Headquarters at **1-800-248-1946** if you're interested in sponsoring one of these briefings.

4. New ASQ Membership Model — The ASQ Board of Directors has authorized development of a new member model. This model will be designed to support ASQ's vision in making ASQ "the community of choice for everyone in the world who seeks quality technology, concepts or tools to improve themselves and their community." The model is to be flexible, fluid and defined by each member. There is extensive information on the different categories of membership on the ASQ members-only Web site under the subject Living Community Model.

In previous issues of the *QMD Forum*, I briefed you on the activities of the QMD Business Planning and Implementation Committees. The committees have completed their work and have made the following observations and recommendations:

- We have declining membership as a division.
- Our market is shifting from traditional quality systems (quality professionals) to process improvement (many professions and needs).
- We must be market focused (and structured), not product focused.
- We have to deliver perceived value to all customers.
- We can do this by:
 1. Defining clear priorities and keeping them in front of us at all times (mission, objectives, strategy, tactics).
 2. Constantly studying markets and measuring ourselves.
 3. Broadening and deepening the organization by involving more people.
 4. Developing and delivering initiatives that are market based.
 5. Structuring ourselves for flexibility and market needs.

In response to the committees' recommendations, the QMD Council approved a new organizational structure for the Division (see the organization chart on page 19) and an implementation plan for accomplishing the near-term tactical plans of the division.

Quality Management Conference 2004

By now, you should have received your brochure describing the 16th Annual Quality Management Conference in Dallas March 1-5, 2004. With a New Frontiers of Quality theme, the conference will offer our members and other academicians, practitioners, consultants and researchers the opportunity to participate in a variety of forums to include pre- and post-conference tutorials, presentation sessions, keynote addresses, panels and workshops. Pre-conference tutorials will run in half-day, full-day, two- and three-day formats Monday, March 1 – Wednesday, March 3. The conference will begin with a reception the evening of Wednesday, March 3, followed by two days of keynote speakers and conference presentations on Thursday, March 4, and Friday, March 5. The conference committee is looking forward to offering — for the first time — a full day of post-conference tutorials on Saturday, March 6. If you haven't received your brochure, call ASQ headquarters at **1-800-248-1946** and request a copy.

The Ultimate Quality Management System: Part 2

In the previous issue of the *Forum*, I talked a little bit about my experiences with the National Quality Program Criteria. In this issue, I'd like to talk about the self-assessment aspects of Baldrige.

Leadership Characteristics for Quality Performance

By Rudolph C. Hirzel

Over the past fifteen years, I've had the opportunity to participate in many organizational self-assessments using the Baldrige Criteria and Scoring Guidelines as a basis. As the leader of my own organization's self assessment and examiner for state and local awards based on Baldrige, I've been exposed to the value of the self-assessment process. The organizations I've dealt with will never apply for the National Quality Award, but they use the criteria to improve their operations by comparing themselves to a set of world-class business system criteria and the scoring guidelines. To learn more about this valuable and interesting process go to the Baldrige Web site (<http://baldrige.nist.gov/>) and download the pamphlet, "Getting Started with the Baldrige National Quality Program." It contains a Guide to Self-Assessment and Action and a 10-step process for conducting your own assessment.

Meet a Fellow QMD Member

Dean L. Bottorff has 25 years' experience in organizational development projects. Dean developed the OrgCulture Diagnostic Model, which studied cultural and performance factors in over 300 organizations. Dean has facilitated hundreds of process improvements in manufacturing and in transactional applications, such as marketing and culture development. He has presented at several domestic and international conferences, including the keynote address at the 2003 ASQ Six Sigma Conference. Dean has also taught business ethics courses to many leading companies, and has contracted to teach companies on behalf of Lehigh and Illinois State Universities. Dean is the principal of Ethics Quality, Inc., has a BA in Managerial Economics from Marietta College, an MBA from Robert Morris College, is a CQE and CSQE, the founder of the Pittsburgh Six Sigma Focus Group, a Past Chair of the ASQ Pittsburgh Section, and serves on the Board of the ASQ Quality Management Division. Reach Dean at (412) 262-9050 or at DLB@ethicsquality.com.

When we talk about leadership, what do we mean? Is it big — the kind of leadership that moves a people or a nation to action? Or is it personal — what we do everyday to help others do their best? Is it the directing of operations, activities or performance? Is leadership the guiding of people on a way? Is quality leadership the same as quality management? Or is it separate?

These are interesting, if not perplexing, questions. And a clear, single definition of leadership, although discussed and pondered for centuries, somehow remains beyond our grasp. What we do know is that leaders, including quality leaders, are identified by what they are able to do. The Human Development and Leadership Division (HD&L) of the American Society for Quality (ASQ) has defined what leaders do through the development of "competencies" contained in the Division's Body of Knowledge (BoK). Based on the primer, "A Meta-Analysis of Current Thinking on Leadership," written in 2000, the Division's BoK represents a consensus view of the six competencies (or roles) of leadership. Where the primer represented a summary of more than 50 authors' thoughts on leadership, the BoK represents an updated view of what the Division considers the cornerstone for human development and leadership.

A leadership competency within the BoK is defined as "a cluster of knowledge, skills and attitudes that can result in excellence in leading regardless of position, industry or geography and that can be measured and improved through training and development." Leadership competencies are not dependent on position or authority, but rather come into play whenever we show an individual, or individuals, how to perform a task or how to improve performance. As a result, every quality professional — from inspector to manager — has the capacity to become a quality leader. Why six competencies and not a single definition? Because no single definition seems to sufficiently capture the intricacies of what a leader needs to do.

And a single competency by itself is insufficient to make a good leader. The best leaders always seem to exhibit an integration of several roles, actions and deeds. The six competencies defined by HD&L represent, when viewed together, the roles that leaders must be able to assume to be effective. The six competencies for leadership as defined by the HD&L BoK include:

Navigator — creates shared meaning and provides direction towards a vision, mission, goal or end-result. This competency may entail risk taking and requires constant evaluation of the operating environment to ensure progress in the appropriate direction is achieved.

Communicator — effectively listens and articulates messages to provide shared meaning. This competency involves the creation of an environment that reduces barriers and fosters open, honest and honorable communication.

Mentor — provides others with a role to guide their actions. This competency requires the development of personal relationships that help others develop trust, integrity and ethical decision-making.

Learner — continuously develops personal knowledge, skills and abilities through formal study, experience, reflection and recreation.

Builder — shapes processes and structures to allow for the achievement of goals and outcomes. This competency also entails assuming responsibility for ensuring necessary resources are available and the evaluation of processes to ensure effective resource use.

Motivator — influences others to take action in a desirable manner. This competency also includes the evaluation of people's actions to ensure they are performing consistently with the mission, goal or end-result.

(LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS, continued from page 3)

Even as the Division was discussing these “roles” of leadership, however, there was awareness that there existed another aspect of leadership that was not encompassed by what leaders do. This is evidenced by an exploration of the Navigator’s role. This role, as assumed by a quality professional, is distinguished by the creation of a quality statement for the organization. The ability to capture the quality mission and vision is certainly an important part of leadership excellence, but we often apply moral judgment to the role also. For instance, quality leaders have to be able to envision a future for their departments or companies that will show their co-workers a new level of quality performance. But there are those leaders that seem to corrupt quality values and those that support them. So what distinguishes “good” leadership from “bad” leadership? Within the BoK committee, it was discovered that a collection of personal characteristics underlie the six competencies. These personal leadership characteristics provide the foundation for leaders to implement, or apply, the competencies described above. The seven personal leadership foundational characteristics are as follows:

Accountability is taking responsibility for the organization, community or self that the leader serves. It means not being afraid to measure performance and not shying away from those times when performance is below par. Accountability serves as the touchstone for obtaining honest, informed feedback on how well the leader is implementing the leadership competencies.

Courage comes from the heart. It is the mental or moral strength to venture, persevere and withstand danger, fear or difficulty with a firmness of mind and will. Courage is the characteristic that allows the navigator to venture into the unknown. It is what gives the leader the ability to take a risk, to build new structures and work to build new follower skills, to help someone improve without thought of reward or compensation.

Humility is what gives excellent leaders their ability to mentor, communicate and learn. If leaders already think they know all the answers or believe they lead from a

superior position, how can they work in the best interest of those around them? Humility is what defines the best leaders — those that understand that they are merely servants of those that follow them.

Integrity is an ability to discern what is right from what is wrong and the ability to commit to the path that is believed to be the right one. Although sometimes a fine line may exist between right and wrong, it is the commitment of an individual to a better future and the communication of that future to others that causes that individual to rise to a position of leadership.

Creativity is the ability to see possibilities, horizons and futures that don’t exist yet. It is the constant search for new solutions to old problems and the ability to apply these solutions to help people create shared vision, learn new tasks and understand the importance of taking a new path.

Perseverance is sticking to a task or purpose, no matter how hard or troublesome. It is the ability to continue on a path even when the road gets rough and resistance is high. A leader needs to have perseverance to overcome obstacles when building the structures to achieve a goal and especially for helping to motivate people to follow those structures once built.

Well Being defines a leader’s ability to stay healthy both in work and in play. Through a healthy example and a willingness to continue learning, the excellent leader demonstrates to their followers the importance of always being ready to implement leadership competencies when called upon.

The seven personal characteristics, like the six leadership competencies, are integrated and work in conjunction with each other. The above summaries represent just a brief glimpse of how the characteristics can impact each individual’s ability to become an effective leader. Further surveys conducted by HD&L within the ASQ community provide some insight into how the personal characteristics can be applied to quality. A summary of the results is as follows:

To demonstrate accountability, the quality professional can provide explanations

of the quality requirements when needed, spend time learning what others in the organization do to affect quality, and take responsibility for quality outcomes.

To demonstrate courage, the quality professional can speak out when actions are taken that are not consistent with quality policies, fight cost cuts that fail to regard human capital, and initiate changes to programs that don’t work anymore.

To demonstrate humility, the quality professional can use passion, not ego, to solicit support for quality initiatives, let others make decisions that impact them, and provide compliments for work well done.

To demonstrate integrity, the quality professional can connect quality values with work systems, speak up when something is being done that undermines quality values, and take corrective action even when under pressures not to.

To demonstrate creativity, the quality professional can develop new ways of implementing quality programs, develop training courses on quality principles, and always look for ways to meet quality objectives in more cost effective ways.

To demonstrate perseverance, the quality professional can continue on the path to improvement in spite of obstacles, keep working to change poor perceptions about quality, and continue to learn about quality even though it does not seem to be appreciated.

To demonstrate well being, the quality professional can encourage a healthy work place, organize work so stress is reduced, and work to align personal goals with those of the organization.

These represent just a sampling of the data collected by HD&L. Each of the personal characteristics, and the competencies for that matter, by themselves are insufficient to define what a quality leader truly needs to do. It is the integration of the competencies and characteristics that gives leadership its complex nature. The path to becoming a quality leader lies in learning to implement all of the competencies and characteristics in a balanced way. HD&L is currently

Why certify?

“Information is not knowledge. Let’s not confuse the two.” W. Edwards Deming

As the world becomes more complicated, our success increasingly depends on our ability to use a wide variety of information; to define, plan, organize, control and complete a variety of complex, interdependent tasks using a finite set of data and resources. To enhance our value, we must develop the critical knowledge, interpersonal skills, technical tools and management techniques needed in today’s evolving workplace environment.

The business case for ongoing training and certification is compelling. Indeed, the value of certification has never been higher than it is today. Many senior executives realize that employee certification can improve their company’s bottom line and enhance business processes due to increased efficiency, less down time and higher quality decisions. With the application of training from one of ASQ’s Certification Exam Bodies of Knowledge, you learn how to prioritize and plan to do the right things, and you learn the best techniques to do the right things right.

WHAT’S SPECIAL ABOUT AN ASQ CERTIFIED EMPLOYEE?

The exams are focused on soft skills as well as technical tools. The interactions between your role and the diverse functions within your company are emphasized. You are equipped to see the “Big Picture” in terms of quality or reliability, thus enhancing your career growth. In fact, ASQ’s salary survey shows that employees with a job-related certification often earned an average 10 percent higher salary than those without the certification. ASQ members have also listed the following benefits of certification:

- improving performance on the job
- contributing to attaining a promotion
- increasing personal development and pride
- providing documented peer recognition
- contributing to securing a new job
- providing confidence and peace of mind

Everyone can benefit from learning and applying knowledge from one or more of the certifications listed below.

- Quality Manager
- Quality Engineer
- Mechanical Inspector
- Quality Improvement Associate
- Quality Technician
- Reliability Engineer
- Quality Auditor
- Software Quality Engineer
- Calibration Technician
- Six Sigma Black Belt

A broad range of quality, leadership and technical tools are covered by the exams, and the test questions focus on real-life process management, problem solving and measurement techniques.

Indeed, as Deming said, information is not knowledge. We are bombarded with information, data and opinions. The task of preparing for an ASQ Certification Exam can ensure that you have the skill to turn information into knowledge and make your organization successful.

That’s why an exam certifies knowledge useful in any type of organization. It’s all about the fundamental skills that drive performance excellence, whether your company is small or large, or supplying products or services.

If you enjoy the prestige that comes from being the best in your field, then you’ll appreciate the professional advantages derived from becoming an ASQ certified professional.

- Enhance your professional image.
- Increase your value to your organization.
- Affirm your commitment to excellence.
- Advance your career.

Get Certified

To learn more, go to www.asq.org and read about how to prepare and apply for an exam.

(LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS, continued from page 4)

working to develop training programs and tools to assist with this learning. For more information on the efforts of HD&L or to comment on this article, please contact Rudy Hirzel at ideawork@big-tools.com.

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specializing in performance improvement tools and techniques, team facilitation, and leadership training, and teaches math and science for Vincennes University.

(LEADERSHIP VISION, continued from page 1)

everyone in an organization down the same path and at the same pace. When a vision is clearly articulated and followed "... everyday decisions and actions throughout the organization respond to current problems and challenges in ways that move the organization toward the future rather than maintain the status quo."² An organization's vision must link the present to the future, energize people and garner commitment, give meaning to work and establish a standard of excellence.

Vision links the present to the future ...

Vision is about getting from here to there; from what's going on today to what must happen tomorrow. The trouble with today's organizations is that managers spend most of their time dealing with current problems and relatively little time contemplating, visualizing and preparing for the future. Successful leaders are those who handle the daily challenge of obtaining short-term goals and focus on the future as well.

Vision energizes people and garners commitment ...

A powerful vision will challenge people to give their best effort. "Vision needs to transcend the bottom line because people are willing, and even eager, to commit to something truly worthwhile, something that makes life better for others or improves their communities."²

Vision gives meaning to work ...

Employees need to know their work has meaning. Work is more than just a pay-check for many. People love having a larger purpose for what they do and they want to feel pride in their work. A good vision can give larger meaning to work by clarifying its purpose, its interrelationship with other work and its impact on the organization as a whole.

Vision establishes a standard of

excellence ... Vision provides measures by which contributions to the organization are gauged. "A good vision brings out the best by speaking to the hearts of employees, letting them be a part of something bigger than themselves."² A good vision clarifies an image of an organization's future, lets employees see how they can contribute, and enables employees to reach higher-levels of excellence.

Is there a standard "how to" book for creating leadership vision? Not according to Max DePree, author and chairman and CEO of Herman Miller, Inc., who writes, "Leadership is an art, something to be learned over time, not simply by reading books. Leadership is more tribal than scientific, more a weaving of relationships than an amassing of information,"³ Powerful and effective visions, however, have five common themes: "they have broad, widely shared appeal; they help organizations deal with change; they encourage faith and hope for the future; they reflect high ideals; and they define both the organization's destination and the basic rules to get there."²

Mission Statements

Organizations with powerful and effective visions will likely have a mission statement. "The mission is the organization's core broad purpose and reason for existence. It defines the company's core values and reason for being, and it provides a basis for creating the vision."² An organization's mission should communicate what the company is about. As such, it should be persistent and not change too often. Typically, a mission has two parts: *the core values* and *core purpose*. The core values are what guide the organization. The purpose "...captures people's idealistic motivations for why the organization exists."²

Some companies choose to combine their vision and mission statements. What is important to remember about the two is that the vision continually evolves, while the mission remains relatively constant. The mission should endure to lend stability to the organization in times of change and guide strategic choice and decisions about the future.

Strategy Formulation

Strong, powerful organizations require more than just vision and mission statements to be effective. They need to formulate strategies to translate vision, values and purpose into action. This is called strategic management. "Strategic management is the set of decisions and actions used to formulate and implement specific strategies that will achieve competitively superior fit between the organization and its environment so as to achieve organizational goals."² The strategic leader must find this fit and translate it into action. The leader must develop strategies. Strategies are the general plans of action that consider the allocation of resources and other activities that help the organization meet its goals.

"To remain competitive, leaders develop company strategies that focus on three qualities: core competencies, developing synergy and creating value for the customer."² *Core competence* is what the organization does well. Synergy occurs when two or more elements of the organization combine to produce something greater than the sum of the individual parts. *Value creation* is the basic value a customer receives from the purchase and use of a product or service. Failing to formulate strategies that translate vision, values and purpose into action will be wasteful of an organization's resources and not provide value.

Strategic leaders find ways to create value for customers by formulating strategies that focus on core competence and attainment of synergy. Richard Hays, author of "Internal Service Excellence," hints at this synergy when he writes, "The value provided to [the] final customer is created through the contribution of a sequence of separate incremental actions, each a link in a 'chain of value' that produces final customer need satisfaction."⁴ These separate incremental actions described by Hays are the result of strategy formulation.

Strategy in Action

Transforming an organization's vision, mission and core competence into strategies is not enough to achieve organizational excellence. Leaders must also ensure these strategies are implemented. This is the most important and the most difficult part of strategic management. Strategy implementation involves using several tools to turn strategy into action. Strong leadership is the most important tool for strategy implementation. Leaders need to ensure the new strategy is resourced properly, understood and implemented, and people are motivated to adopt the new strategy. Authors Bennis and Nanus contribute by adding, "Leadership is 'causative,' meaning that leadership can invent and create institutions that can empower employees to satisfy their needs."¹ Therefore, leaders are responsible for making decisions about changes in structure, systems and policies to support their organization's strategic direction.

The Leader's Contribution

Leaders can make a significant difference in their organizations. "One of the most critical jobs of the leader is deciding the vision for the future and linking the future with strategic actions."² Although today's successful organizations depend on the active involvement of all employees, leaders are still ultimately responsible for establishing organizational direction through vision and strategy. When leaders fail to fulfill these responsibilities, their organizations struggle. When leaders succeed in fulfilling these responsibilities, they can make a big impact on their organization's future.

Leaders decide the direction for their organizations based on facts, rational analysis, intuition, personal experience and imagination. Consequently, a leader's contribution and impact can be measured by the extent to which they are able to:²

- articulate the vision, mission and strategies
- allocate the resources required for their implementation
- inspire those who must embrace and achieve the organizational goals

- provide rewards appropriate to those who contribute to achieving the vision

Finally, strategic leadership is about gaining control over the direction an organization is heading. It's also about change — transforming the organization from its present state to a more meaningful future state. Tom Peters, author of "Thriving on Chaos," calls this a paradox. "The core paradox," writes Peters, "...that all leaders at all levels must contend with is fostering (creating) internal stability in order to encourage the pursuit of constant change."⁵ A successful leadership vision will consider this paradox and establish a strategic direction that manages the organization's transformation to achieve its vision.

Don Brecken earned his Masters of Business Administration degree in Strategic Management from Davenport University's Sneden Graduate School. He also has a Bachelor of Business Administration in General Business, a Bachelor of Science in Human Resource Management and a Bachelor of Science in Management with a Technical Specialty in Quality Leadership.

Don is an ASQ Certified Quality Manager, RAB Certified Quality Management System Lead Auditor, and Membership Chair for the American Society for Quality — Section 1001 of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Don is currently employed at Steelcase Inc. in Grand Rapids. He is also Adjunct Faculty Instructor of management courses for Davenport University and Contract Quality Auditor for Perry Johnson Registrars and SQA Services Inc.

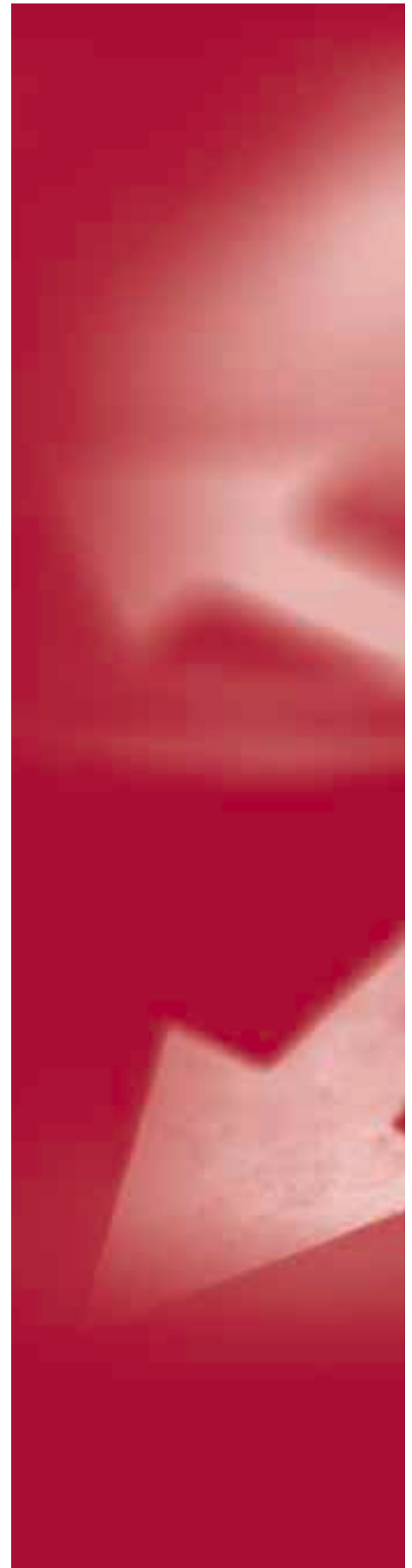
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Quality Leadership, Situational Style

By Mike Ensby

As someone who has worked for pay, both as a subordinate and a supervisor, in parts of the past four decades, I can say that there is a difference between management and leadership. From my experiences, both are critical for organizations to succeed. From each boss fate placed in my path, I learned something about overseeing activities and leading the people who carry out those activities. As the old adage goes, “everyone can be an example, even a bad one!”

Even before I got into the quality business, process has always been more interesting to me than outcomes. In my estimation, there’s no chicken or egg paradox between the two. Process drives results and leadership trumps management when it comes to engaging people in their day-to-day activities. Unlike other disciplines, such as engineering and mathematics, where due diligence can allow the investigator to derive a single, supported methodology, organizational studies are a messier affair. For every theory, there is an equal and opposing point of view. Unfortunately, systems and the people who work inside them cannot be boiled down to first and second derivatives. So how did the field of quality, with much of its original history tied up in statistical methods, get itself into the position where practitioners are more confounded by the ambiguity of people-related issues than measuring conformance to specification? The journey has been interesting to say the least. Basically, it’s all situational.

Reviewing the Bidding

America can trace its roots in the modern quality movement to 1980, with the airing of the NBC special, “If Japan Can, Why Can’t We,” focusing on W. Edwards Deming’s efforts to revitalize the Japanese economy and the remarkable improvements in the automobile and electronics industries. Since then, the various forms of quality programs — most of which were (and are) adaptations of the Shewhart Cycle and its focus on continuous improvement through the use of discrete problem solving tools — have struggled mightily to reign in process variation, the enemy of precision. Over the past 20 years, a wide range of initiatives have come and

gone, and while overall quality has improved, the gains don’t reflect the amount of time and resources that went into the effort. Basically, organizations and senior leaders are looking for the magic elixir that will make everyone truly inspired to create a quality experience for every customer.

This is not going to be another treatise on why things didn’t work out as planned. When the Total Quality Management (TQM) approach came out of Deming’s re-emergence into U.S. quality, many organizations did not pay attention to the most critical of the “deadly diseases” and “14 obligations.” Deming wasn’t so much concerned with the ability of the firm to manage by fact as he was that it lead by the right example. Tools are easy to use, but leadership is difficult to do. After nearly a quarter century of trying to get people to reduce process variation in environments where baselines change constantly, maybe the answer lies in acknowledging the fact that most workers want to do the right things, but don’t know how to drive out the fear.

What is really needed is a rational alternative, one that requires continuous action on people, not continuous improvement of processes. Six Sigma, while requiring more active leadership at the senior levels and incorporating organizational change readiness strategies, doesn’t prescribe the one-on-one interactions between supervisor and subordinate at the third and fourth process levels. And instead of managers and supervisors being frustrated by front-line employees not adapting to the newest quality program and the new and improved process, take a chapter out of Peter Hersey and Ken Blanchard’s book — adapt the approach to the development of the subordinate.

Situational Leadership Revisited

My first introduction to the situational leadership approach to organizational development and improvement came via the late 1940s film starring Gregory Peck, “12 O’Clock High.” Partially drawing on the real experiences of the U.S. Army Air Corps, this movie focused on the fictional 918th Bomb

Group and its tenuous position at a critical point in the war above the European continent. For the first time, Allied Forces were taking on Nazi Germany’s industrial infrastructure, and the results were falling short of customer expectations. The real world implications at the point in time the movie depicts can be traced to British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill’s growing frustration with the lack of results in slowing down the German supply chain via this new and unproven American process. Churchill wasn’t particularly sold on the “cost-benefit analysis,” while the actual commander of the 918th, Lieutenant Ira Eaker, was attempting to prove that low-altitude, precision, daylight bombing was a potential catalyst (i.e., root cause) in turning the tide of the war.

Watching this film while being exposed to Hersey and Blanchard’s model and in an Air Force officer-development program was one of those “ah-ha” moments. Some six months earlier, I had read Deming’s *Out of the Crisis* as part of my “advanced topics in production management” course during my senior year in college. While I can point to Deming as the person who most influenced my initial foray into the world of quality, it was the Situational Leadership Model that really made continuous process improvement possible in my various supervisory roles that followed. Successful projects and operations were the outcome of appropriate leadership styles, and when I didn’t get it right, the root cause was a result of guessing wrong on the ability or willingness of the team or individual I was working with.

Since the purpose of this paper isn’t to “teach” the reader the “Situational Leadership Model,” I will dispense with a serious review of the concepts. However, for discussion purposes, the framework is presented in Figure 1 (*right*). This model offers a relatively simple thesis. Success as a supervisor depends on the willingness and ability to work within the willingness and ability confines of each subordinate. Development drives supervisory approaches, and those managers who adapt their style to others instead of forcing it the other way will be more successful. That developmental scale is comprised of two sub-

factors. Ability — the aptitude for performing one or more tasks — is something that can be learned through teaching. Willingness depends on two distinct, but equally important criteria. Not only must there be a confidence on the part of the subordinate, but that person must also be able to harness an internal drive. That confidence has a direct bearing on the subsequent level of motivation, but doesn't guarantee it. As was demonstrated in viewing the movie while following along with the model, when the leader employs the wrong style, despite what the follower development is showing, the results are less than optimal.

issues around ability are fairly straightforward. The behaviors and corresponding results are readily apparent and measurable against some standard of performance (e.g., specific work procedure or job description.) Someone either has the aptitude for the task or they don't. Set the standard, explain the actions necessary, train for specific skills, observe, offer feedback on gaps, retrain to overcome weak areas, and validate the individual's capability to sustain the performance and/or handle increasingly more difficult tasks that pertain to a particular work package.

The more difficult component of the subordinate development equation is identifying

and requires time and energy to determine. Unfortunately, being able to assess both ability and willingness factors are the key to supervisory success.

With a new subordinate who has little to no ability and lacks the confidence and commitment to carry out his/her duties, the supervisor must become a micro-manager, providing continuous oversight in a "telling" mode. The goal of supervision isn't to make the supervisor feel good about doing the work, it's about ensuring the work turns out well and the subordinate learns how to do the task efficiently and effectively, leaving little room for discussion of the "why fors." As follower development evolves, supervisor style changes to meet the current situational variables. It's easy to delegate to willing and able subordinates, but first you have to work with them through directive and coaching behaviors while they are still in the formative stages.

"Qualitizing" the Model

Going back to the discussion of Deming's "obligations" and "deadly diseases," the tie-in to the situational mode is this, "constancy of purpose." Yes, the original intent was organizational constancy of purpose, but it only happens when leaders create the environment where everyone is moving toward the same goals and objectives. It's one thing for the firm to develop an overarching corporate strategy that provides a long-term purpose. However, translating broad goals into the day-to-day work of the average employee is a more challenging proposition. Frankly, most workers aren't focused on the mission statement. Rather, the work is what makes the mission to the average person, but the good news is that most people want to do a good job and would even do better if they had two things: (1) clear direction and (2) the right mix of skills, knowledge and ability.

A comprehensive training program with able, energetic and knowledgeable facilitators seems like an effective approach to meeting those aims. Many of these classes, especially in the Six Sigma realm with an emphasis on



Figure 1 — Situational Leadership Model Source: P. Hersey, Center for Leadership Studies, Inc.

A quick review of the situational approach to supervision includes the following truths. First, for those in supervisory roles, there are four general styles of leadership — directing, coaching, participating and delegating. Most of us find that one of the styles comes more naturally than others. However, deployment of a leadership style should not be driven by personal preference, but rather by the development and readiness of the group or person being supervised. Therefore, the most critical function of the supervising leader is to ascertain where the "target" is in terms of their ability and willingness to carry out the task(s). Typically,

the willingness to carry out the action plan. You must answer two fundamental questions. First, is the group/person confident in their ability to meet the standard? This may or may not correlate to the second question, which is, "how internally motivated is the person I'm dealing with?" Someone who is new and sincerely interested in doing good work and moving ahead in their career, but is tentative in their approach to the job must be handled differently than the long-term employee who is confident in their ability to get the tasks at hand accomplished, but lacks any enthusiasm for the work itself. The root causes of gaps in willingness are not always readily apparent

(QUALITY LEADERSHIP, continued from page 9)

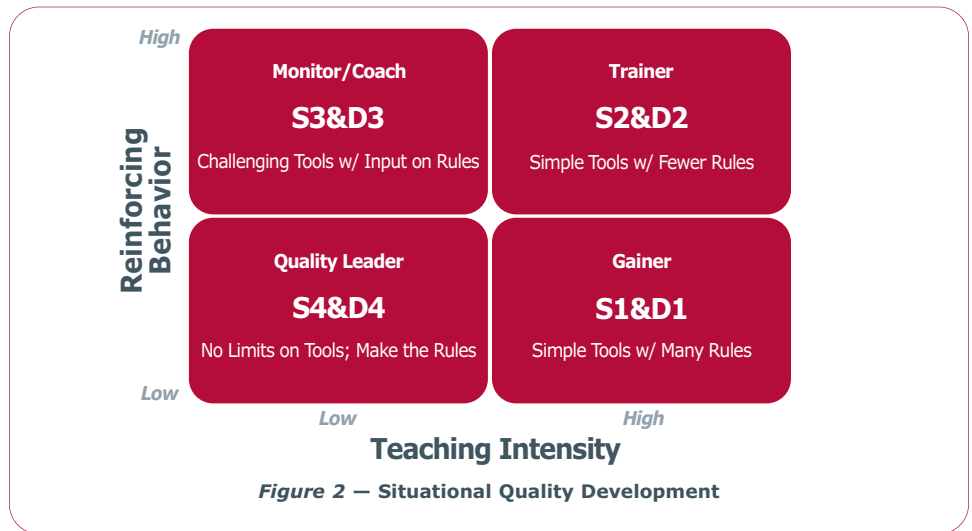
applying the tools of quality to a real world project, do pretty well in a couple of areas. Specifically, attendees learn the lingo, or as Deming called it, “operational definitions.” If quality is to become part of the culture, the natives must first learn the language. However, not everyone responds equally to the words. Constancy is difficult when the ability and willingness is unequal to begin with. So what’s the answer? The reality is that nothing beats hard work like hard work. The best one can ask for are some coping strategies. What follows is an approach with a strong fundamental principle. The original Situational Leadership Model takes a generic look at the workplace. It provides a framework for the supervisor to select a style based on the developmental maturity of the subordinate. This approach focuses on bringing constancy of purpose through the application of a quality tool.

The Scenario

Assume that you’re the manager of a precision machining operation in a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility. Your firm has capitalized on new technology, invested heavily in modern equipment, recruited well and developed capable processes to turn out high-quality baseplates for printed circuit boards. Your entire career you’ve been waiting for an opportunity to work in a superior facility; now is your chance. Because of the precision-based nature of the work, your subordinates are recently degreed engineers, mostly eager, but without previous quality training. Prior to starting work in the new facility, everyone received two weeks of Six Sigma training from a reputable consulting company. Now, it’s time to go to work.

Assuming “Gainer” Leadership Style

Using Figure 2 (above) as a guide, your first assignment is to capitalize on the opportunity to paint on a new canvas. Given the nature of your audience, begin with a fairly robust tool, the control chart. In the supervisory role, you must respond to the preparedness of the audience. While formally educated and having just had a good overview into quality, the subordinates are full of potential, but they lack context. A good manager will



avoid the tendency to jump into the “coaching” role and focus on the real need. The newly hired, whether they are “new economy” professional roles or traditional line employees need to focus on the basics. The appropriate role is that of “gainer.” You’re dealing with skeptics. They can be won or lost depending on how they are developed from the outset. Mess it up and you have a group of young cynics on your hands!

The way to avoid that is to keep it simple. Instead of introducing the whole control chart, start with the checksheet. As a way of explaining the various aspects of the production system, identify the in-process measures that impact performance, productivity and efficiency. Data is the key to meaningful information. Capturing the right measures ensures a systematic hunt for root cause and continuous process improvement. That much is true regardless of quality system employed. At this juncture, the emphasis is in gaining the subordinate’s compliance to working within a system. The goal in this particular example is to show them what data to collect, how often to collect it, and instruct which variables go into which file, in order to create the corresponding control chart. Multiple employees doing the same types of activities increases the potential effects of variance, not just regarding special cause variation, but also in relation to common cause. At the outset, a manager must assume nothing about employees working in new task environments. The fundamental constitutional principle that all

people are created equal applies here — there is little subordinate proficiency (ability) and enthusiasm should not be confused for willingness. This is a mostly one-way relationship, with the manager telling and the worker doing.

At the point where one or more of the newbies begins to show consistency in collecting and presenting the data in proper form, it’s time to shift style, but not for everyone — just those who are ready for the change. While you will still need to maintain a “gaining” style with those still in the Gainer quadrant (see Figure 2 above), it is important to begin grooming the “willing novices” for increased expectations and responsibility. This is where the training function really begins. When people begin to understand why they are doing what they are doing, they begin to make value judgments about the work. Left unchecked (the supervisor not responding to the changes in subordinate development in a timely manner), the attachment to the work will break down.

At this stage of the model, subordinates are still enthusiastic, eager to learn, and becoming confident in their ability to meet the output standards. However, their real ability is usually somewhat lower than they perceive it to be.

Shifting to “Training” Leadership Style

Continuing on with our previous example, these educated young professionals will not be content with data mining alone, especially as their familiarity with the process(es) and environment grows. This becomes an opportunity for the leader to take the role of an educational “trainer.” A way of improving the control chart process started in the gainer quadrant is to incorporate the output standards (specification limits) within the confines of the control limits. This not only adds complexity to the measures, but it also becomes the venue for explaining the “big picture” to employees who have demonstrated an initial commitment to making a positive impact. The impact can be more significant if they know some of the “whys” of what they are doing. As the responsibility for quality is being pushed lower and lower in the organization and traditional control mechanisms (and the associated human resources) are being removed, then those doing the tasks need to understand “cause and effect” before they can identify it. The primary goal in the “trainer” quadrant is not to do problem solving; it is to help subordinates to become process thinkers. Data is much more powerful if it becomes information. A control chart with both specification and control limits informs process users of what the system is doing in relation to customer needs.

Moving to “Coaching/Mentoring” Leadership Style

The transition from the “training” to “coaching/mentoring” role is critical for future success. By this time, you’ve made your “cuts.” Those that haven’t been able to overcome the fear of failure and/or develop a minimal level of skill proficiency should be moved out. While still maintaining the chameleon-like ability to move in and out of the “gainer” and “trainer” roles for those still in those development areas, the focus in the third quadrant is to get the problem solvers up and running. In my many years of working with supervisors (experienced and inexperienced) I have heard them state that they like to let their folks take care of the work and sit back and wait to provide guidance when they have questions. This is passive style of trusting subordinates to do the right things right is com-

mendable, but can set both sides up for failure when the process begins to break down which, according to the sag principle from Kaizen, occurs over time. A proactive approach with a goal of systematically increasing task and decision-making autonomy works better at this point. Workers in the third quadrant are unquestionably able and most likely confident, but the real question is whether or not each one is internally driven to problem solve. Believe it or not, not everyone lives to work. Those that are working to live are not typically driven to do more than what it takes to continue drawing a paycheck. They’re just not fully engaged in the system or process. The key to managerial success here is to place folks in the correct sub-grouping at this level of development. The “enthusiastic committeds” need mentoring, and you can continue to coach from the sidelines those who are “participating ables.”

Using the control chart example, continue coaching the “ables” on the importance of monitoring their process variables and reducing variation. However, save your energy for the “committeds.” The regular control charts now can be conversation starters for the problem solving process. In the instances where there is noticeable process variation, set up relatively broad parameters for these employees to investigate the system. Suggest other quality tools that will aid them in their search for root cause(s) of the process inconsistency. What they have now that they didn’t have during the initial awareness training is context. Regular reviews of their progress toward establishing the root cause is a better approach than letting individuals or teams get to the point where they are recommending potential solutions as the first reporting “gate.” The biggest risk in quadrant three is having to tell someone they are wrong after they have invested significant effort chasing after a “red herring.” The role of the mentor is to monitor, monitor, monitor. Review the selection and use of tools at each step of the problem solving process. Give precise and concise feedback on what you see as beneficial application of “tools to rules” and offer suggestions on what needs additional work. Just as bosses don’t like surprises, neither do subordinates.

By the time you reach the final stage, you will have less of a crowd than you started with, but as long as you have compartmentalized well up to this point, you get to see the payoff. You have developed knowledge workers. They no longer need your brain. As a matter of fact, you’ve gained yourself additional intellectual capital. Good thing, because it will be required to sustain the quality system. The two and three sigma systems are now operating in the mid-four range. Systems problem solving is actually becoming systematic, but the gains are slowing down. There is a natural tendency for complacency to settle in and to let one’s guard down a bit. Of course, that’s when zap can occur — a sudden shift in technology, competitor encroachment, a change in customer expectations, whatever.

The wise leader will always be thinking ahead to the day when the system will be realigned. As a matter of fact, the true leader will look to those in the fold who are more than prepared and equally ready for a challenge, and ask them to “break the system.” While the control chart may still be an integral part of the “toolbox,” what you’re asking this select group to do is to begin painting on their own clean canvas, just like you did at the beginning of the development process. Together, agree on a vision of what the change needs to accomplish, then let your “A-team” loose. This is the real meaning of empowerment, but it is not given lightly. Only those who have earned it get to operate with the freedom and creativity that makes work truly meaningful.

Summing Up

A very wise boss once told me that the key to supervisory success is the ability to connect with each person on an individual basis. His operational definition of constancy of purpose was predicated on the “mass customization” principle. Start out with a basic framework, present it to the group, and then go to work in a series of one-on-ones. The constancy is achieved by the sum of what each person gains through individual growth, not sameness but an amalgamation of the best each has to offer. In “12 O’Clock

The Physics of Change Leadership

By Dr. Russell L. Johnson

As leaders in the quality profession, we are often the instigators of an odd paradox. We diligently fight variation to try to stabilize our processes, systems and organizations to generate a consistent and predictable environment. At the same time, we are charged with positioning the organization to respond to ever-shifting customer needs and requirements by shifting our processes, systems and organizations. Therein lies our paradox.

If we fail to resolve this change/don't change dilemma, we will appear to the outside world to be continually oscillating our focus and direction. As a result, the very people we are trying to lead often see us as a little crazy, wondering where we are headed next. Many of us grow frustrated by the ever-increasing levels of effort it requires to get and maintain external support and contributions for our initiatives. All too often we reach a point where we are unable to sustain the energy to support our effort and our initiatives wither and die. Moreover, when things don't work out the way we had hoped, we frequently blame it on resistance to change.

Is it possible that we as leaders of change create the very resistance that we complain about? Is there something that we are missing in the way that we typically go about introducing change? If so, what can we or should we do differently? I believe that the answer to the first two questions is *yes* and that there is something we can do about it. I also believe that the insight we need to address our problem lies in the science of physics.

The physics of change.

Margaret Wheatley¹ provides an excellent treatise on the comparison of physics, specifically chaos theory, to organizational leadership and management. In the world of physics, a stable, balanced or unchanging environment is associated with the word equilibrium. Equilibrium is defined as a condition in which the resultant of all acting forces is zero. This is depicted graphically in Figure 1 (above), where the irregular shape represents a system and the arrows depict the various forces at play within the system. If we think about the arrows as a vector dynamics problem we see two unavoidable results, the net movement of the system

is virtually zero and the internal stress is high as the forces are pulling in opposite directions. For this system to simply survive requires tremendous expenditures of energy to keep it from pulling itself apart. This energy must come from outside the system and/or be

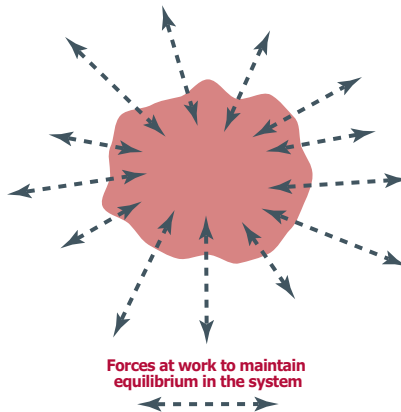


Figure 1 — A system at equilibrium in the system: High stress – Zero movement

generated within. If sufficient energy can't be acquired or produced then the system moves toward entropy and eventually fails.

If we want the system to move, we must provide and sustain sufficient additional energy to not only support the movement, but also to focus it in the direction in which we want the system to move, as depicted in Figure 2 (below). We must also be sure that the system doesn't react in some opposing way to our injection of energy, as that will require more energy to offset the resistance. If this occurs, it is likely to set off a negative feedback loop in

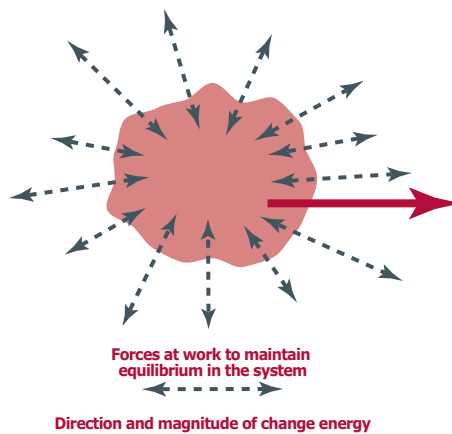


Figure 2 — A system receiving change energy

which ever increasing additions of directed force generate ever increasing levels of resistance until again, we can no longer sustain the levels of energy needed or the system self destructs.

How does this tie to our systems and organizations?

Our organizations are like the irregular shape in Figure 1. Some parts of the system interact often with the outside world while others are relatively isolated from it. The forces at play are people's expenditures of effort and consumption of resources to achieve some objective and/or succeed in some performance measurement. When the objectives are unclear or interpreted differently, or the measurements cause conflict between what is best for the parts of the organization versus what is best for the organization as a whole, the magnitude of the forces vary. The direction of the forces also varies, resulting in a greatly reduced movement of the organization towards its goals and even, at times, a net movement of zero or even a negative movement along with considerable internal competition and stress.

The energy and resources we are expending are finite and are provided, in one way or another, by money that is also in limited supply. When our efforts are not correctly focused, parts of the organization end up competing with other parts for these limited resources causing considerable amounts of our limited energies to be wasted, increasing the rate at which the system approaches entropy. Some aspects of this phenomenon were verbalized in Eli Goldratt's² book, *The Goal*, when he clearly showed that having all of the pieces of an organization busy all of the time in an effort to maximize system efficiency results in a very inefficient system filled with waste. This high level of waste makes it difficult for the system to generate and sustain the additional levels of directed energy necessary to initiate and sustain the change effort. Even in an organization that has minimal stress, introducing change still requires additional directed energy. In either circumstance, the leader of the change effort must be careful not to create resistance to change as it will require even higher levels of energy to be expended which can quickly lead to the demise of the change initiative.

What causes resistance to change?

First, let's agree on some assumptions:

1. Any improvement requires a change, but not all change constitutes an improvement.
2. People are not resistant to change; they are resistant to uncertainty and perceived risk.

As leaders in the quality profession, we are faced with providing the answer to three fundamental questions:³

1. What to change — What is it about the realities of the current system that are undesirable and/or no longer meet our needs (the symptoms) and what are their cause(s), the disease?

Our Core Problem(s)

2. What to change to — What new element(s), if introduced into our current system, would spur the new reality that we desire without creating new undesirable effects?

Our Solution

3. How to cause the change — What actions must be taken to create the new reality that addresses key issues and overcomes obstacles, and in what order must they be taken to ensure that we arrive at our desired outcomes without creating new obstacles — specifically, resistance to change.

Our implementation plan.

Any proposed change has four aspects to it. There is both a positive and negative aspect of the status quo as well as a positive and negative aspect of the new environment. If any of these four aspects are not satisfactorily identified and addressed in the proposal, people will become uncertain and perceive risk. The less clarity and validity with which the four aspects of change are addressed, the more uncertainty and perceived risk and the more reactive energy the system will create to oppose the change. The impact of this resistance to change is depicted graphically in Figure 3 (above).

When we present the solution, it is necessary to address all four aspects, (+/- of

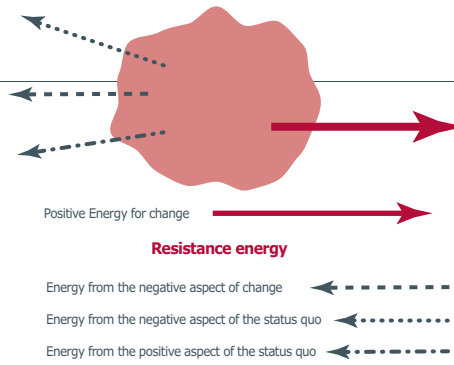


Figure 3 — A system reacting negatively to change

the current and the +/- of the future) of the change. These four aspects are discussed in detail below, including an analogy.

We must verify and get agreement that the negatives of business as usual are real not just to the organization, but also to each individual in it. What the danger is and how it will affect each person must be determined and explained. In our analogy, an alligator represents the negative of not changing. Each person must believe that the alligator is real and that they are on the menu if they don't change. Failure to address this issue satisfactorily results in resistance to change in the form of "what do I care, it doesn't effect me." Initially, this apathy may result in no positive or negative energies, but the mood is contagious causing us to loose energy from others who might have been more likely to support our effort.

We must determine the positives of the current situation and attempt to retain them or prove that they will be replaced with something as good or better in the new operational environment. This can be a very difficult task as the positives about the current situation are often simply that people have learned skills and behaviors that allow them to survive in a very difficult environment. The difficulty lies in the fact that the behaviors, if admitted, would be considered undesirable. For example, we push for resources to be busy everywhere in our organization in an effort to maximize our return on investment, assuming that people and equipment being busy equals being productive. In reality, most of our resources are actually unable to be productive high percentages of their time, because they are dependent upon other, slower resources in the system. It becomes necessary for these

individuals to find some way to be busy at all times, which often translates to *looking* busy. If they can find other work that appears legitimate they will do it, making them temporarily unavailable when productive work again becomes available. If other busy work can't be found they will stretch out the legitimate work to fill the available time. The fear is that management's discovery of these practices would not be favorable even though the workers have exhibited high problem solving capabilities in creating the solution to their circumstances. For the purposes of our analogy, let's say that the positives of the status quo are represented by a genie. It's a nice thing to have, but we are afraid it will be taken away if it is discovered. Failure to address this aspect of the change results in resistance in the form of "I don't like the current situation, but at least I understand how to survive in it." Resistive energy is generated to keep us where we are.

Just as we must validate the existence and danger of the negative of the status quo, we must also be able to validate that the positive(s) of the new environment being proposed are real and that they are accessible to all. For the purpose of our analogy, let's say this is represented by a pot of gold on a higher floor where no one can currently see or reach it. We must be able to convince everyone that our plan will create the pot of gold, that there will be enough for everyone, that they can all share in it, and that the plan includes a ladder for them to climb to get to the upper floor. Failure to successfully address this aspect of change means that we may not be able to inject sufficient additional energy into the system to initiate and maintain the change effort whether resistance is created or not.

The negative of our proposed change is in the form of concern about the implementation portion of the plan. Everyone agrees that the problem exists and that the plan will create the desired outcomes, but they are concerned that the implementation portion is insufficient to get us there and/or may create other undesirable side effects. An example of this

(THE PHYSICS OF CHANGE, continued on page 14)

(THE PHYSICS OF CHANGE, continued from page 13)

might be an organization that has averaged 20 percent overtime per week for the last three years and is now going to implement lean techniques. The change is anticipated to yield a 40 percent increase in productive capacity. The workers are going to realize that not only will this result in no overtime in the future, but it will also likely result in a reduction in workforce. Without some aspect of the plan acknowledging this reality, the workers are likely to resist implementation, as they are worried about losing their job. And even if they are still with the company, they wonder how they will be able to pay bills that were incurred based on their current pay without the overtime hours.

As the instigator of the plan and the change leader, we are our own worst enemy regarding this aspect of change. We tend to get excited about the plan and what we believe it will do and regard those raising reservations about “our plan” as nay-sayers who are always blocking progress. When we refuse to listen to these people, we often discover that they had a legitimate concern when we crash headlong into it during the implementation. When these individuals have been ignored too much, they quit trying to tell us of the problem and in extreme cases become active saboteurs of the effort. In our analogy, the implementation plan is synonymous with the ladder that everyone must not only climb to get to the pot of gold, but also be able to climb it with their genie slung over their shoulder. Because of our focus on the positives of the plan, we often build a ladder that is pretty rickety, has missing rungs, is too short, or doesn't appear strong enough to hold the climber and their genie at the same time. Successfully addressing the other three aspects of the change and failing on this one can create some of the greatest resistance to change. In our analogy it would be as if we have convinced everyone that the pot of gold and alligator is real and that the alligator is right on their heels. We have acknowledged the value of the genie and they are carrying it over their shoulder. They know that they must climb the ladder or they are going to be alligator lunch. The problem is they know the ladder is so poorly built that they are going to fall trying to climb it, break their leg and kill the genie in the fall, and have no way to escape the alligator. The more

uncertain people are about the plan, the more they will imagine the worst-case scenario and the more negative reactive energy to the plan they will generate.

So what do we do?

Our solution should never be presented without first having:

1. Identified the problem(s) — The undesirable effects (negatives) of the status quo being experienced under the current environment.
2. Identified the desirable effects (positives) of the new environment that would replace the current undesirable effects.
3. Identified the desirable effects (positives) of the current environment.

If these issues are not clearly identified and their logical causalities within the system not understood, it is impossible to formulate and test proposed solutions for eliminating undesirable effects and creating desired effects. It is also impossible to ensure that the proposed actions will not create new undesirable effects (the negatives of change) or nullify existing positive effects (the positives of the status quo).

There is at least one documented and proven technique and tool set for achieving the above process, the logical problem solving tools of the Theory of Constraints as applied to resistance to change. While these tools and concepts are published in many sources, an excellent white paper on the subject titled, “Theory of Constraints and its Thinking Processes — A Brief Introduction,” is available at the following Web site: <http://www.goldratt.com/toctpwp1.htm>

If our process of injecting change energies into the system triggers negative reactions, we will only succeed in accelerating our system's rush towards entropy and eventual death. Instead of being a change leader, we will likely experience a change of leadership with us in the lead. If, on the other hand, we can successfully inject our change(s) into the existing system without triggering reactionary energies, then our system will evolve to a new level and begin to again seek equilibrium resulting in the opportunity to be an ongoing leader of change.

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The Whole Leader: Two Approaches to Integrity

By Grace L. Duffy

Integrity is a leadership characteristic, not a management action. Being honest, sincere, straightforward, compassionate and respectful are important characteristics of integrity leadership. Integrity is a worthy end in itself, but it also plays a role in such core organizational outcomes as risk-taking, creativity and effective communication.

In rapid-paced environments where the speed of change and thought complicate decision-making, integrity is often placed at a lower priority than meeting short-term goals. There is little doubt that as complexity increases, the resulting dilemmas test a leader's integrity. However, when integrity is a top priority, and leaders are self-aware, they will intuitively use it to guide their actions.

Effective leaders are concerned with two definitions of integrity. One is the strong adherence to a code of morals or values. The other is the quality or state of being complete or undivided. This paper comments on both of these characteristics as they apply to an effective leader.

Being One Within Yourself

We must lead ourselves before we can successfully lead others. Wholeness implies not being fragmented, exhibiting inner and outer congruence. Being congruent means that leaders live and lead consistent with their values. Values are what we believe in — those principles that guide our behavior. Building congruence and conscience is about developing balance and harmony between the inner core and external behavior. There must be no disconnect between core values and actions. This balance and harmony is wholeness. When leaders are whole they do what they say. A current business term for this concept is “walking the talk.”

John Zenger and Joseph Folkman identify five fatal flaws related to our sense of wholeness as a leader.¹



Figure 1 — The Five Fatal Flaws to Leader Wholeness

1. Not learning from our mistakes

Incomplete leaders repeat failing actions because the policies or procedures say we should do it that way. Times and situations change. We must be aware of the rapid change of the organization and the world around us. It is critical for a leader to have the self-confidence to openly say *this is wrong*, and take a different approach. Hiding mistakes rather than admitting them and moving on is a symptom of a leader wishing to save his or her job rather than help the organization move ahead.

2. Poor core interpersonal skills and competencies

“My way or the highway” behavior is inappropriate in today’s team environment. Organizations need different views in order to assess the best options for improvement. Stephen Covey recently revisited his Seven Habits and reminds us to “Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”ⁱⁱ Behaviors such as abrasiveness, browbeating, arrogance and bullying are a common downfall of rising leaders. No combination of intelligence, administrative skills or hard work can overcome the lack of interpersonal skills.

When you talk to people, look them in the eye. Learn to listen, not just hear what

others are saying. Encourage openness in others by being open yourself. It takes a good self-image to accept criticism from others. Most of us find others interesting when the other person is interested in us. We can use this piece of human nature to initiate healthy relationships with others.

3. Being closed to new or different ideas

“Not invented here” is a death knell. We must remain willing to learn from others. We should listen to others before we share our own ideas. When we insist on our own position simply because it is ours, we come across as threatened by the creativity and innovation of others. Our employees and peers will quickly lose trust in us if we consistently dismiss the ideas, experience and creativity of others.

Essential to our success is making it safe for people to talk, involving all people in the solution and including them in something they already have a stake in, but don’t feel part of. It takes extra effort to involve others in new ideas. It is more comfortable for many of us to develop new ideas in private, away from the criticism and suggestions of others. Few of us are pleased when someone calls our idea ugly.

In leadership, our success often hinges on doing things we are not yet good at. Leaders may not have all the answers, but we must be adept at finding the answers and then move forward with courage.

4. No personal accountability

Accountability is defined as the willingness to personally care for the well being of the institution first, and of our unit and self, second. We accept responsibility for our actions and represent the organization to our employees. We refrain from “blaming up” or acting as a victim of upper management. Success in this arena is acknowledging the way things are and engaging in a full and frank discussion of what is happening without blame. Telling the truth in clear and concise observations is a large part of being complete within ourselves.

There are many opportunities to be accountable in the workplace including, but not limited to:

- Performance measures
- Operational goals
- Communication
- Personal development and growth
- Management of employees
- Required paperwork
- Timeliness
- Subjectivity and effort

5. Lack of initiative

Covey states that most people spend at least 25 percent of their time and energy in dysfunctional activities — interpersonal conflict, interdepartmental rivalry, finger pointing, blaming, kissing up, political game playing and other forms of protective and defensive communication.ⁱⁱⁱ Part of wholeness is taking action, following through with commitments and responsibilities. Some examples of action:

- Maintaining our physical abilities, including strength and flexibility. Movement over indecision.
- Enhancing our mind-body connection. Being congruent between internal and external behaviors.
- Exhibiting a strong work ethic. Being willing to work hard.
- Showing a love and passion for what we do. “Just doing it.”
- Staying on the competitive edge. Continuously improving our personal best.

- Ability to deal with pressure, not hiding from competition or conflict.

Initiating decision-making and moving forward in spite of uncertainty requires courage. Many leaders spend so much time fighting their own situation and avoiding their key responsibilities that they never lead.

Figure 2 (*below*) is a summary of the major competencies that identify personal wholeness. These five areas encompass the ideas of self-worth, skills, communication and results so essential in today’s complex business environment.

Competency	Indicator
Character	Ethical standards, positive self presence and authenticity.
Personal capability	Intellectual, emotional and skill makeup. Lifelong learning.
A focus on results	The ability to have an impact and get things accomplished.
Interpersonal skills	Communication approach and its impact on other people.
Change leadership	The ability to produce positive change.

Figure 2 — Core competencies for the Whole Leader

Our Moral Code

The second definition of integrity is less tangible. Leaders are susceptible to moral inconsistencies during periods of transition. When our personal and business environments are changing, so are our relationships. We may feel pressure to meet the high expectations of others. Good management is based on good mechanics — such as procedures, techniques, models and policies. Good leadership, on the other hand, requires more creativity, and articulating and bringing forth a vision. Leaders add legitimacy to their positions by their acceptance, trust and belief.

Conscious leaders know what is right and proper. Their awareness comes from an internal moral compass. Leadership emerges from a sense of self, not from policy, procedures, techniques and systems. During times of turmoil and change, leaders must adopt new behaviors. Often these new behaviors have not yet been tested against our existing moral code.

Although companies with formal ethical standards perform better, standards alone are not an ethical lifeline for the individual leader. True success in today’s complex environment lies within the fabric of the values-based culture. Integrity must define the structure of everything the leader does. For integrity to work, we need to

know what it is, how it works, and where it fits into our business lives.

Guidelines, rules and policies do not, in and of themselves, give us integrity. Guidelines mark the pathway we should follow within the company, but they are only guidelines. Our internal moral code influences our daily decisions and relationships with others. Ethical decision-making must be an active and dynamic process.

Identifying and being honest to our moral code is a prerequisite to effective leadership. This is where the two definitions

of integrity come together. When we are whole and secure within ourselves, we have the courage to act upon our internal values even when external pressures encourage us to subjugate our personal code.

When the organization is changing rapidly, every individual needs the same set of values guiding their daily decision-making. It is up to senior management within the organization to make public their cultural approach to integrity. Once that standard has been set, each leader must search internally to find the congruence or discord with that standard.^{iv} Cultural differences affect behavior. It is imperative that the individual leader is true to themselves or they will not maintain truthfulness and trust within the organization. There must be congruence between internal and external standards.

Living Our Values

Every leader must periodically check-in and assess where they stand with integrity. This assessment begins with an internal check of core values and purpose. This assessment is not just of our internal moral ground, but of the external manifestations of how we respond, live and work.

(THE WHOLE LEADER, continued on page 18)

(QUALITY LEADERSHIP, continued from page 11)

High,” the Gregory Peck character “checks out” at the end of the movie. At first glance it may appear that he suffers from the same symptom of his predecessor, “over identification with his men.” But let me offer this: maybe he checks himself out on purpose, because he is confident in the ability and willingness of those he leaves behind.

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(THE WHOLE LEADER, continued from page 17)

Assessing our state of integrity:	Yes	No
Are my core values present and active?*		
Am I intently aware of what I am doing? i.e., do I know the impact of my behavior on people and the organization?*		
Can I hear my conscience when it asks if I am doing the right thing?*		
Do I use my conscience to strategize with integrity?*		
Am I saying one thing and doing another?		
Am I misrepresenting the facts?		
Am I concealing the truth?		
Am I deliberately not disclosing vital information?		
Am I failing to take appropriate action?		
* For any “NO” answer, write out an action plan and goals for resolution. Seek assistance from a mentor or other trusted individual, if desired.		

Figure 3 — A Personal Integrity Assessment

Figure 3 (above) contains a list of questions from Diane Dixon, a frequent contributor to the Web site, HR.com.^v

Work from Your Strengths

Each of us must develop our own leadership integrity strategy. Once we have identified what we stand for, we can compare ourselves to this standard. Many of us built our personal strategy as a young career professional. How many of us have revisited this statement in recent years? Our statement should answer the following three questions:

1. What is my core purpose or mission as it relates to leadership?
2. What goals will make me better in delivering my mission or purpose?
3. What strategies will ensure that I am more effective this time next year?

We have a challenge as leaders to look for people with a track record of honesty and integrity in all their dealings; those who speak up, especially when it comes to matters of principle. It takes courage to stand up for our personal values in the face of external pressures. How we confront work issues and how we manage our professional development speaks volumes about our courage quotient and sets a leadership example for others in the organization.

Leaders with integrity have the courage to state their goals and then work backwards

to find ways to achieve them. They develop new models when old models don’t work. They move forward and upward, never quit, and take risks to reinvent themselves.^{vi}

Take time for daily reflection to evaluate the congruence of your integrity versus the needs of the organization. Speak freely when you see unethical behavior in the workplace. Talk and listen openly to others to understand the pressures within our complex environment. Assist others and yourself to be honest and personally whole within your daily activities. You owe it to your organization. More importantly, you owe it to yourself.

Grace Duffy is President of Management and Performance Systems, specializing in organizational improvement, communication, quality and leadership. She is on the ASQ Board of Directors and is immediate Past-Chair of the Quality Management Division. Grace is a Certified Six Sigma Master Black Belt and ASQ Certified Quality Manager. She can be reached at grace683@usa2net.net.

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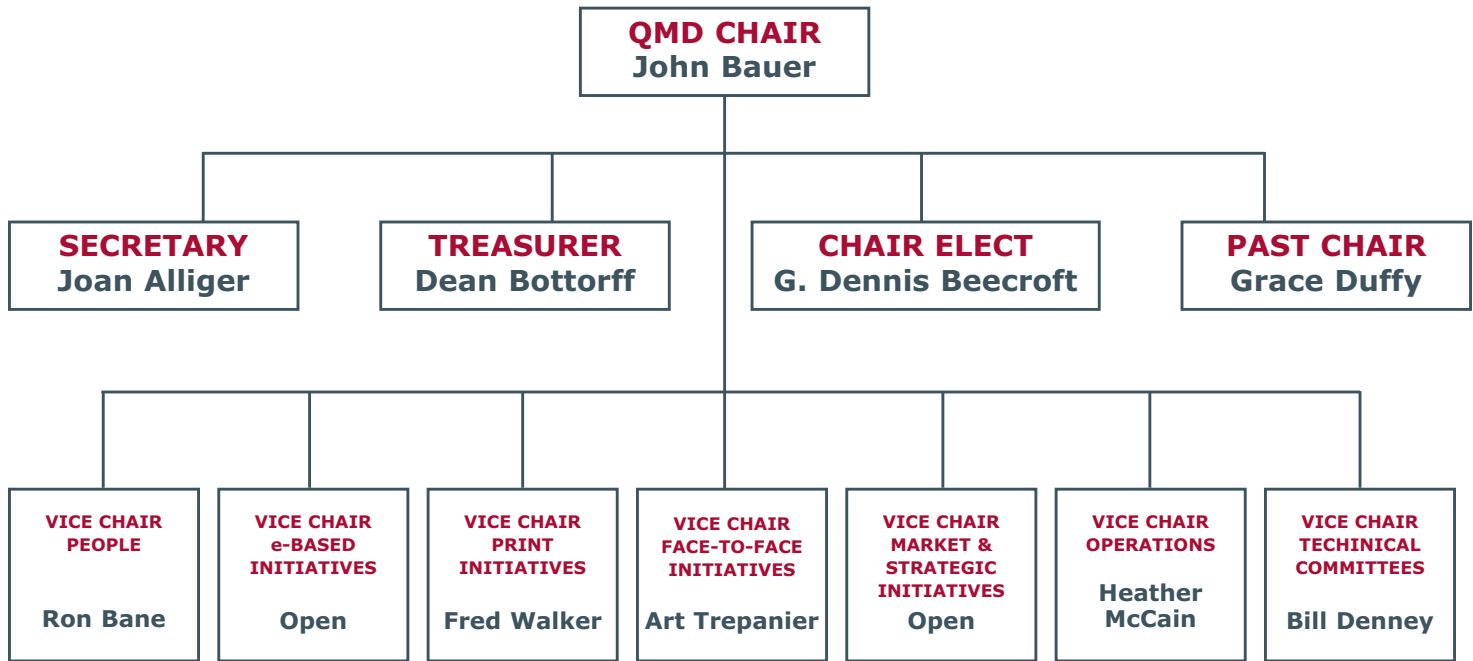
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