

FlowRATE Newsletter - March 2015
The Quality Corner

W. Edwards Deming “14 Points” of Quality Management

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William Edwards Deming was an American engineer, professor, statistician, author, and management consultant. Among his many credits focused on quality, Deming championed the work of Dr. Walter Shewhart, including Statistical Process Control and the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) Cycle. Statistical Process Control, or SPC, is a method applied in order to monitor and control a process. PDSA is a straightforward, problem-solving model used for improving a process or carrying out a change. Both of these are examples help drive change through an organization. Deming was also a pioneer in the improvement of product testing in the workplace, assuring a higher level of uniform product quality, and as an electrical engineer, he focused on the betterment of design of products to improve service. Can you tell he was one of my favorite Quality gurus?

One of Deming’s most famous works includes what has become known as “The 14 Points for Management”, which are essentially 14 key principles for management to follow to significantly improve the effectiveness of a business or organization.

1) Create constancy of purpose for improving products and services.

This means planning for quality in the long term, not just reacting with short-term solutions. **Proactively predict future challenges as those can turn into opportunities.**

2) Adopt the new philosophy.

Embrace quality throughout the organization and walk the talk. **It’s about leading, not simply managing.** Put your customers’ needs first, rather than react to competitive pressure. Design products and services to meet those needs.

3) Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality.

This is a different mindset than quality thinkers had in the past. **Inspections are costly and unreliable and they don’t improve quality, they merely find a lack of quality.** Build quality into the process from start to finish and rely on statistical process control to monitor and prove that the process is working. **Monitor your supply chain and view your suppliers as your quality partners.** Encourage them to spend time improving their own quality. Monitor your Cost of Quality and focus on eliminating non value-added steps.

4) End the practice of awarding business on price alone; instead, minimize total cost by working with a single supplier.

Quality relies on consistency; the less variation you have in the input, the less variation you’ll have in the output. While this point makes sense from a quality perspective, you could debate this point from a procurement standpoint.

5) Improve constantly and forever every process for planning, production and service.

Continuously improve your systems and processes. Plan, do, check, act. And do it all again if you don’t get the desired results. Emphasize training and education so everyone can do their jobs better. **Incorporate safety into your quality plans as employees are your most precious resource.**

6) Institute training on the job.

Train for consistency to help reduce variation and build a foundation of common knowledge. This will help each employee have a vested interest in the overall quality goal. Encourage staff to learn from one another, and provide a culture and environment for effective teamwork.

7) Adopt and institute leadership.

Don’t simply supervise, rather provide support and resources so that each staff member can do his or her best. **Figure out what each person actually needs to do his or her best and find ways for all employees to reach his or her full potential.**

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8) Drive out fear.

Allow people to perform at their best by ensuring that they're not afraid to express ideas or concerns. **By making workers feel valued and by encouraging two-way communication, you can foster a culture of teamwork and continuous improvement.**

9) Break down barriers between staff areas.

Build a shared vision between departments and recognize that each department or function serves other departments that use their output. **Focus on collaboration and consensus.**

10) Get rid of unclear slogans.

Let all employees exactly what you want. Mission statements, Quality and Safety Policies, and Quality Goals and Objectives should be clear-cut and measurable. **Outline your expectations, and then praise people face-to-face for doing good work.**

11) Eliminate numerical quotas for the workforce and numerical goals for management.

Look at how the process is carried out, not just numerical targets or colorful graphs and charts that become "wallpaper" and not useful. **Measure the process rather than the people behind the process and make the process as repeatable as possible.**

12) Remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship.

Treat workers the same, and don't make them compete with other workers for monetary or other rewards. **Over time, the quality system will naturally raise the level of everyone's work to an equally high level.**

13) Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement for everyone.

Encourage people to learn new skills to prepare for future changes and challenges. Build skills to make your workforce more adaptable to change, and better able to find and achieve improvements.

14) Put everybody in the company to work accomplishing the transformation.

Everyone is responsible for quality! Analyze each small step your organization takes toward quality, and understand how it fits into the larger picture. Use effective change management principles to introduce the new philosophy and ideas in Deming's 14 points.

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