



A STUDY ON QUALITY CIRCLES AND QUALITY CIRCLES FORUM OF INDIA (QCFI)

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Abstract

Quality Circles are organizational options that are aimed at helping employees at all levels to achieve greater job satisfaction; they seek to increase productivity and product quality through direct employee participation. The underlying assumption is that such participation will result in useful suggestions for improving work methods, product quality, communications, etc, and for increasing employee commitment to implement these changes. Most Quality Circle developments have taken place with industrial blue collar workers. However, wherever there are groups of people, in or out of industry, Quality Circles can be formed with success. Whether the implementation of a Quality Circle is part of short- or long-term planning does not matter, the rules remain the same and the philosophy remains unaltered. A Quality Circle is composed of a small group of employees who genuinely care about others, preferably doing similar work, meeting voluntarily with a leader on a regular basis, to identify problems, analyze the causes, recommend their solutions to management and, wherever possible, implement solutions.

Key Words: *Quality, Total Quality Management, Six Sigma, Quality Control, Team Building.*

Abbreviations: *QC-Quality Control, TQM-Total Quality Management, QCFI – Quality Circles Forum of India.*

INTRODUCTION

QCFI was established in 1982, as a non-profit body, with Hyderabad as its headquarters. QCFI is the National Organization for promotion, propagation and advancement of theory and practice of Quality circles as a part of TQM Quality begins with awareness. One important parameter of quality is the gap between the customers and the supplier's process capacity. The minimal, the gap the better is the meeting point of minds of the customer and the supplier Quality is to be viewed both from the view point of the customers' expectations, and from the product specialties attributed.

In this connection, the words of advice from “**Mahatma Gandhi**” are apt to be called and remember as, “A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us, we are dependent on him. He is not an interruption on our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not outsider to our business. He is a part of it. We are not doing favors by serving him. He is not doing us a favor by giving an opportunity to do so” In a linguistic sense, the term QUALITY originates from Latin word QUAILS, which means, “such as the thing really is”. Quality is usually meant to distinguish one organization, its product, service, process, person, result, action, communication, etc., from another.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the organisation of QCFI
2. To identify the services offered by QCFI
3. To identify the objectives of Quality Circles.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bio data of Dr. K. Ishikawa an organization of Quality Circle concept: Dr. K. Ishikawa was born on 13th July, 1915. His father Mr. Ichiro Ishikawa was the founder of JUSE (Japanese Union of Scientists & Engineers) and he was the tenth chairman of Keidanren that is Japan's most powerful group. Ishikawa after his graduation from the department of applied chemistry at the Tokyo in March 1939, was employed by a company engaged in coal liquefied acquired experience in the fields of design, construction operation. From May 1939 to May 1941 he was commissioned as a naval technical officer. Out of the 24 months of duty, ten months was of education and training. Then he was made in charge of six hundred workers in order to construct a factory on 245 acres of site.

There helped him in his later years to return to the university of Tokyo. He becomes a serious student of quality control and thus he was one of the persons who were responsible for the Japanese Quality revolution.

Dr. K. Ishikawa is the father of Quality Circle

Objectives of Quality Circles

The objectives of the Quality Circles observed are as follows:

- Ensure participation.
- Enables team building.
- Creates better inter relations.
- Improve productivity.
- Enhances Job satisfaction.
- Increase problem-solving capacity.
- Brings better communication.
- Steps up problem-prevention ability.
- Encourages self-development.
- Leadership development.
- Inculcates self-discipline.
- Improves safety awareness.
- Catalyses attitudinal changes.
- Reduces defects.

QCFI – ORGANISATION



An executive board with elected Directors from the members manages the affairs of QCFI. A president elected by the executive board is the head and Board also elects two Vice-Presidents and one Honorary Treasurer. Regular administration is with the Executive Director and he carries out the activities as per the forum's policy and decisions taken by the Board, from time to time.

QCFI has chapters all over India in 19 places to propagate QC or other quality concepts integrated with TQM. Each chapter has Governing council that functions in line with QCFI's policies and procedures. Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer elected from amongst its members are responsible for all ongoing activities. Chapters draw in members from the industries, institutions, circles and individuals keen to contribute, to carry on the activities.

QCFI Headquarters and chapters play an important role for human resource development in manufacturing industries, services organizations and public utility services, including government, thus quality, productivity and capacity utilization.



SERVICES OFFERED BY QCFI

QCFI is privileged to have members from all over India, persons who have held or holding senior executive positions with vast experience on implementing various quality concepts.

Hence, even though QCFI's main focus is to propagate quality circle movement in India, it undertakes total responsibility to Institutionalize:

1. Quality Circle integrated with TQM.
2. Quality improvement teams/six sigma goals attainment.
3. Learning problems solving techniques/new seven tools.
4. Five "S" and Kaizen.
5. Total productive maintenance (TPM).
6. ISO 9000:2000 and ISO 14000.
7. All other quality concepts.

QCFI is recognized as an institution serving the cause of quality with special focus to quality circle movement in India. QCFI represents the country in the International Co-ordination Committee of 13 nations set up for organizing International Conventions on Quality control circles annually in rotation.

QCFI regularly brings out educational and training material in various languages like English, Hindi and regional.

QCFI conducts in-house training and orientation programs in organizations as per their needs. Programs are also conducted at headquarters as well as at chapters on a regular basis.

QCFI has conducted a number of in-house programs on Quality circles integrated with TQM and related concepts such as quality improvement teams. Five "S" Kaizen, TPM ISO 9000, ISO 14000 etc.

Some of the skills development program done as part of above right from the circle members to different levels is:

- Small group activities.
- Problem solving skills.
- Application of QC Statistical Tools.
- Decision making skills.
- Interactive skills.
- Group process and team working skills.
- New 7 tools application skills.
- Meetings/Process and effective meetings.
- Planning and implementing skills.
- Goals/Objectives alignment process.
- Bench marking process.

MEANING OF QUALITY

Earlier quality meant "conformance to specification". Then the concept of "fitness for use" started making the rounds.

However, some of the classical definitions of quality are as follows:

1. "Quality is physical or non-physical characteristics that constitutes the basic nature of a thing or is one of its distinguishing features".

"Web star New World Dictionary"

2. "Quality is fitness for use".

"Joseph Juran"

3. "Quality is conformance to requirements".

"Philips Crosby"

4. "Quality should be aimed at the needs of the customer present and future".

"Edward Deming"

Currently, quality is defined as “Total customer satisfaction” with regard to a product or service which means that:

- The product conforms to drawings and specifications.
- The product is fit for use in the intended applications.
- The product works satisfactorily, and without any failure, during its normal life time.
- The product is packaged properly and attractively.(If the product fails, it is repaired / replaced quickly.
- The product is eco-friendly.
- The product is priced right and competitively.
- The product is delivered on time and when needed.
- The product total life-cycle cost is economical to the user.
- Disposal does not pose a hazard to people or the environment.
- Queries and complaints are handled promptly and politely.

In the early 1900’s **F.W Taylor**, “The father of scientific management”, emphasized on quality by including product inspection and gaining in his list of fundamental areas of manufacturing management.

In 1924, **W. Shewart** introduced statistical control charts to monitor production. Around 1930, **H.F Dodge**, and **H.G Roamin** introduced tables for acceptance sampling.

There was a dramatic increase caused by World War-2, in emphasis of quality control.

During 1950’s the quality movement evolved into quality assurance. **W. Edward Ending** introduced quality control (QC) methods to Japanese manufacturers to help them to rebuild their manufacturing base and to enable them complete in the world markets.

At the same time, **Joseph Juran** began his “Cost of Quality” approach, emphasizing accurate and complete identification and measurement of “Cost of Quality”.

CONCLUSION

The QC’s are playing a vital role in recognizing the inherent skills and talents of employees. Thus employee is motivated to involve in the work so that the problems at the work spot can be identified, analyzed and suitable remedies are evolved for productivity. Quality is a competitive weapon for attaining organizational goals. The QC’s are inspiring team work and oneness among the members of the QC’s.

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