The Next Step

The Newsletter devoted to comment and discussion within the QCDSM process

How can a company ensure that its goals are being met?

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Greetings

It is all about meetings goals! How can you ensure that all in your company are not only aware of the goals that have been set but have a method to achieve them?
The QCDSM process permeates the company in such a way that while every area is able to manage itself, nevertheless the achievement of the company's overall goals is paramount.

The Green Room meetings present their attendees with their performance metrics compared to the targets for that area which are clearly displayed on the charts. Any variance, including better than projected, is discussed within the meeting so that every person has an opportunity of not only knowing where their area stands in relation to the goals set but can also participate in improving their performance in accordance with the company goals.

Your people are your main resource. The main tool that they use to achieve their goals is the development, testing, training and auditing of the procedures that they use. These Detailed Process Sheets (DPSs) are the means whereby they can achieve their goals and thus contribute to the goals of the company. Every measurement is a reflection of whether these processes are working or not. Every deviation is measured against the procedure and in this way they control their outputs.

A NEW APPROACH USING QCDSM.

The best way of ensuring that the people of an area control their outputs is to give them the tools they need to achieve this control. The tools needed to control their goals are standardized procedures, scorecards (charts) and the opportunity to share their expertise and experience. The QCDSM method installs this three point approach in each area thereby giving each employee a forum to exercise their contribution.

We have found that where employees are empowered in this way that the performance in those areas increases and concern for their performance

becomes the way in which they measure themselves whenever they meet.

In the past, while being the implementers of QCDSM, we have always recommended the appointment of a QCD Coordinator whom we would work with. We did the training, lead the implementation and during this time, gave support to the appointed coordinator who would be responsible for ensuring that QCDSM took hold. These selected persons sat in on the same training but were never trained to train the system.

The problem we experienced with this approach was that those persons responsible for continuing the process within the company did not really understand nor have the tools they needed to make it happen. Often they had other tasks over and above QCDSM. We tried to fill this 'gap' through emails, audit visits etc.

Much thought has gone into overcoming this real 'gap' in our implementation process. How could we rectify this?

One of the real assets which we have is the Try Z Seminar. For those not familiar with this seminar, allow me to summarize it before explaining why we decided that this seminar would be the key to our new strategy.

THE TRY Z SEMINAR

The Try Z Seminar was always the first step in our implementing QCDSM. We targeted the top management, area leaders, supervisors and prospective Green Room leaders as the first participants in the seminar. The ability of those who have participated in the seminar to transfer this knowledge into the work area has been the key to QCDSM's success in companies.

The 'gap' we were always aware of was the disconnect between the Try Z Seminar and the implementation of QCDSM. The Try Z seminar presents QCDSM in an understandable way. During the 2.5 day seminar they are taken through the exercise of developing a DPS to build 15 plastics units using 6 operators.

After the first build, using this DPS, they examine their results within a Green Room process and, based on the data on their charts, they would rectify their DPS and then would build a second run of 15 units. After the second run they would notice their remarkable improvement but would still need to make more improvements. After the third run they realized that this improvement was made by themselves and within their control.

This experience helps them to realize that the QCDSM process, translated to their areas, will work in the same way. By developing DPSs, testing them, training them and auditing them after training would ensure that if the DPSs are accurate and produced the results, then they would be able to control their area in the same way.

Based on this background we realized that focussing on the Try Z Seminar followed by properly trained personnel would be the better way to introduce QCDSM into a company. Therefore, we have arrived at this new strategy to overcome the 'gap.'

When a company decides to implement QCDSM, the first step will be to hold a Try Z seminar for their key personnel. With that purchase they will also be purchasing our services for a year from the date of the seminar. This will be to train their selected persons to be the implementers of QCDSM. No extra consulting nor per diem costs will be incurred. The company will only be responsible for our travel, board and lodging and training materials to train their people and for further support when required.

THE INTRODUCTORY OFFER

The cost of each Try Z for the rest of 2007 will be $9000.00. This allows a minimum of 12 with a maximum of 19 persons to attend. This excludes the cost of travel, board and lodging for 2 trainers. It also excludes a $900 charge for the transport of parts per Try Z. Training manuals for each seminar will be $500.

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The venue costs etc. are part of your internal costs. QCD Systems has always worked with its clients in the matter of cost and availability and we will continue to do this.

The rationale behind the change.

The success of QCDSM depends not only on the will of the major players in the company, promoting and supporting the system, but it also depends on the details that make up the system being followed and used correctly. The appointed QCD coordinators usually were not full time promoters and they also did not have the training to ensure compliance. The 'gap' between our implementing the system and the company assuming this responsibility is what we needed to focus on. We had to rethink our implementation strategy.

How would the new approach overcome the 'gap'?

Firstly, the commitment to introduce QCDSM will have to be made based not on our implementing it but by the company taking on the responsibility for making it happen. This would mean that we would not be there to ensure compliance but that the company would have to take on that responsibility and they would need to be trained to do this.

Secondly, as we would not be doing the implementation, we would fully train whoever is selected to be that champion and our role would be to remain in the background. Therefore the success of the implementation and its subsequent success would rest with the coordinator and the person/s he or she reports to.

Thirdly, we would be available to measure compliance. Whereas adaptation of the process to the needs of individual companies would always be recommended, the basic philosophy would need to be maintained. The successful users of QCDSM are those companies that have accepted this responsibility and have driven the process from the top as well as from within each department.

The major stumbling block in ensuring that the QCDSM process is maintained is the routine of collecting the data, ensuring that it is posted correctly and of making sure that the Green Room meetings are fruitful. This requires attention to detail, the mentoring of the leaders of the meetings and most important of all, making sure that the next level meetings, up to and including

the plant manager's meeting, are held correctly and consistently.

A further and most important requirement is the way in which the Ideas and Suggestions of the people are monitored and implemented. We have been very impressed with the feedback from those companies that have set up a process for reviewing, allocating responsibilities and ensuring feedback to each Green Room of their ideas and suggestions. This commitment from the company demonstrates to their people that they are serious about listening to their employees and this in turn makes the whole exercise for the employee worthwhile. We have also found, as a result of feedback and auditing, that where companies neglect this process of managing ideas and suggestions that the whole process of QCDSM begins to wind down.

A further requirement is for the company to be serious about the Customer Concerns methodology. After all, one of the main reasons for using QCDSM is to be able to know, in detail, what is taking place at all levels of the company on a minute by minute to day by day basis.

The data generated in the Green Room tells this tale. The Customer Concern charts in each Green Room, the data on which is generated by the customers of each Green Room, and the subsequent data base generated is a most important snap shot of what is going right, what is going wrong and what is being done to correct the issues.

Each meeting, at whatever level in the company, is now able to know where the bottlenecks are, what issues are creating through-put problems within the supply chain and where their resources need to be focussed.

Again, the feedback from those companies diligently using this data base and instituting a process to manage the data, have found that they are able to respond to issues very quickly. This has improved their efficiencies and productivity and most important of all, have given their employees the confidence that when issues occur they will be dealt with.

All the above and many other benefits will result when the company is the driver of the process and not the consultant.

For this reason we are confident that our new strategy will benefit companies greatly.

Based on our previous history with Companies we know that only one Try Z seminar is not the norm. QCDSM requires that these seminars be given to all their key persons and we have records which indicate that the norm is between 4 - 6 with the initial implementation. An average of another 3 - 4 Try Z's are requested post implementation. We have companies that are at present hosting their 20th Try Z since implementation and are commissioning us for more in 2008.

Based on this we are able to change our strategy especially if our travel, board and lodging is taken care of when fulfilling our year long commitment to assist with your QCDSM process. Our analysis indicates that this is a far better use of our expertise and training materials.

We therefore encourage you to consider this new strategy because it is our commitment to you that we will train your personnel in the fundamental principles of QCDSM leaving you to decide how best to adapt it to your particular needs. We will always be available to assist in this adaptation thereby ensuring that while you do customize you are not losing the basic philosophy of the process. We see this as a win-win situation.

Please visit our web site where the introductory offer is explained and where you can obtain the manual entitled 'The Next Step.'

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