

Chapter 94

Best-Practice of Reducing Risk through a Culture of Total Quality Management

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ABSTRACT

There have been many projects that have not met expectations or have completely failed. Yet, these projects that have not reached a desired outcome may have undergone extensive planning. However, the planning for these failed projects may have omitted some critical concepts. These projects may have employed technical tools such as Gant Charts or current project management software while neglecting the use of appropriate project management tools or neglected incorporating Total Quality Management (TQM) concepts. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate, through practitioner reflection with an example, how the risk of failure may be reduced through the employment of TQM principles. The 14 points for TQM are reviewed and related to the project management processes.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose this study was to reflect on practitioner risk management experience, and suggest a best-practice for applying an organizational culture of Total Quality Management to reduce uncertainty. More so, the ideology was positivistic, empirical, to use practitioner project examples in order to illustrate how the project risks may be reduced through the incorporation of TQM principles into the management processes. Businesses, community organization, other groups and individuals continuously attempt to complete projects. However, not all projects reach a successful completion. Thus, this paper will be of interest to both project management practitioners and the organizational stakeholders.

It is the contention of this author that the risk of failure will be reduced through the incorporation of the principles of TQM into project management. This will be accomplished through discussing a real world situation where total quality management was employed during the management of a project. Regina Woodard (2014) has listed the top two pitfalls in project management as (1) being late and (2)

being over budget. The examples in this paper will demonstrate how the application of the principles of TQM will help to eliminate these top listed pitfalls.

A recent survey has shown that many faculty members teaching at the college level believe that the area of project management should be taught to students early in their college program. However, many colleges are only introducing these important skills late in the curriculum and some do not teach these skills. This may be the result of the fact that only recently has the area of project management obtained frameworks, structure, systematic tools and techniques to implement projects (Kwak, 2003).

Entrepreneurs and executives manage companies and projects on a daily basis, so it is vital to employ sound project management principles. It is critically important to employ project management skills and tools. Research has been completed in this area to demonstrate the importance of the project management area. However, too often, Total Quality Management (TQM) is ignored as projects are completed.

For the purpose of the study, PMI's definition of Project Management will be used, "Project Management is the area of management that is a cross disciplinary function which strives to achieve goals of scope, cost, quality and time (PMI, 2008). Another way to express this would be that project management achieves activities where plans are set to accomplish the achievement of a particular goal and where the process includes defined phases: initiation, planning, execution, and closing (Strang, 2005). In addition, Project Management involves the application of various skills and techniques in the areas of communication, time management, organization and budgeting (Bialaszewski, Dennis, & Krutik, 2013).

Projects are temporary in nature and usually are designed for new and unique products and services. Project managers have to possess knowledge and expertise to carry out the plan and deliver high quality products (Strang, 2007). A time line and budget are essential for any project, clearly stated deadlines for each stage of the project, forecast anticipated costs and wisely planed funding can be crucial for completion of the project (Harbour, 2013). Thus, Project Management plays an important role in modern business.

The well known firm Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG, 2005, 2013) continuously examines Project Management issues. In 2005, KPMG involved more than 600 organizations in 22 counties – from Asia to Europe to America. KPMG experts found 49 surveyed companies had at least one project failure within a year, only two percent achieved targeted plan all the time and eighty six percent of participants lost about 25 percent of their benefits in their project portfolio (KPMG, 2005). KPMG consultants discovered the problems of Project Management that occur in 22 countries.

Therefore, it is the contention of this author that some of the failures are attributable to the lack incorporating sound TQM principles such as the 14 points provided by W. Edwards Deming (2014) in his classic work *Out of the Crisis*.

LITERATURE REVIEW LENS AND DISCUSSION

In this section we will look at a specific project that was completed while demonstrating how the incorporation of TQM principles were integral to the achieving the desired outcome upon project completion (Bialaszewski & Bialaszewski, 2010). There were several early pioneers in the development of the TQM approach. Aside from W. Edwards Deming (2014) the other important figures in the development of this area are Joseph M. Juran, Philip B. Crosby, Walter A. Shewhart, Kaoru Ishikawa, and Armand V. Feigenbaum (Partington, Pellegrinelli, & Young, 2005), as well as others. However, we will focus on Deming's work for the purpose of this study.

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