

Chapter 4

Theoretical Underpinnings of Deming Management Method

ABSTRACT

Chapter 4 analyzes the 14 points of Deming's management method. More specifically, this chapter is structured into three subchapters, indicating that the 14 points of Deming's management method are included in three key areas of understanding. These are Deming on Leadership, Deming on People and Deming on Systems. The subchapter Deming on Leadership, presents leader's responsibility for introduction, dissemination and implementation of a continuous culture improvement in the organization. The subchapter Deming on People reveals the humanistic side of Deming's management method. It describes the strategies adopted by management, that will empower employees and create the necessary work conditions, which will make them feel joy and satisfaction for their jobs and the efficient operation of the organization. The subchapter Deming on Systems, deals with leadership's obligation to use statistics in order to continuously improve the organization's procedures and provide appropriate tools and precise instructions for staff and suppliers to ensure the viability of the organization.

DEMING ON LEADERSHIP

Constancy of Purpose for the Improvement of Product and Service

W. Edwards Deming, is considered as the “the man who discovered quality” (Gabor, 1992; Creech, 1995), a quality pioneer (Aguayo, 1991) who developed his management method of quality the half of twentieth century. Although Deming (1986) is associated with total quality management (TQM), he did not specifically use that term to describe his quality management philosophy. He used to talk about “continuous quality improvement” and “transformation of traditional management practices” instead (Walton, 1986).

Deming as a physician emphasizes on measurements and the use of the scientific method (Knouse et al., 1993). So, he followed Frederick Taylor’s philosophy of scientific management that was grounded on data-based decisions (Taylor, 1911). The difference between Deming and Taylor, was on the concept of the One Best Way. Taylor (1911), considered that through the objectivity and science, managers could find the best way to face any business situation. Once that Best Way was discovered, there was nothing further to be gained from posterior research and effort for further improvement. Deming (1986), on the other hand, argued that because customers, technology, and economic environments were constantly changing, organizations following these changes, must continually improve.

For the company that hopes to stay in business there are two kinds of problems: problems of today and problems of tomorrow. Problems of today encompass maintenance of quality of product and services that is easy to be effectively addressed. Problems of the future command first and foremost constancy of purpose and dedication to improvement of competitive position to keep the organization alive and to provide jobs for their employees through *innovation, research, constant improvement, and maintenance* (Deming, 1986).

Establishment of constancy of purpose means obligation of *innovation*, allocating resources into research and education, and improving design of product and service. One requirement for innovation is faith that there will be future. Innovation, the foundation of the future can be established as soon as the top management states constant commitment to quality and productivity. Middle management and everyone else in the organization will be skeptical

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