

Developing a Quality Culture in Organisations

(Does your organisation have the culture required to drive business success?)

CQI Corporate Partner Round Table
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Introductions – Mark Eydman



- Graduated University of Bath – BSc Hons Electrical & Electronic Engineering (Later securing an MBA through the Open University)
- Worked for nearly 30 years in the commercial building, automation industry sector with management/leadership roles in Sales, Projects and Service
- Followed a passion for Customer Loyalty into the world of Quality, finally serving as VP Quality and Customer Satisfaction – EMEA and the Americas - at Schneider Electric
- Currently Founder and Lead Consultant at Six Pillars Consulting helping organisations use deserved Customer Loyalty to drive Business Success!
- Particular interests include Quality, Customer Loyalty and Employee Engagement



Introductions – Mark Eydman



- Active member of the CQI (Currently Leicester & Coventry Network Chair, Midlands Region Chair and Membership Council Member)
- Acted as a UK Subject Matter Expert for BSI in the development of ISO 10015: Quality Management – Guidelines for competence management and people development and ISO 10015: Quality Management - Guidelines for people engagement
- Currently Chair of the QS1/SC3 (UK Mirror Committee to TC/176/SC3) and Convenor TC/176 WG25 (ISO 10010: Quality Culture in Organisations)





Organisational and Quality Culture

Culture/noun: *the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs of a particular group of people at a particular time*

Undoubtedly, organisational culture is a topic likely to encourage lively debate whenever discussion occurs with most contributors agreeing that it both exists and that it has the potential to contribute to success when positively harnessed.



Organisational and Quality Culture

Unfortunately, after the initial period of consensus, subsequent exchanges will show a lack of agreement on key principles including; what is culture, how it might be quantified and the degree to which it can be managed.

The importance of a quality culture is not a new idea. “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit,” said Aristotle (384-322 BC).

Organisational culture might be defined as the underlying beliefs, assumptions, values and ways of interacting that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organisation. **Or more simply, how people behave when their leaders are not in the room.**



So, before culture, what is Quality

So, if we start to have some definition of organisational culture, how does quality culture fit within the broader culture model? It probably helps to first repeat some shared definition of quality itself.

The CQI defines this: “Quality management is about making organisations perform for their stakeholders – from improving products, services, systems and processes, to making sure that the whole organisation is fit and effective...Managing quality means constantly pursuing excellence: making sure that what your organisation does is fit for purpose, and not only stays that way, but keeps improving.”



How do existing standards help us?

The role of a quality culture is not expansively considered in ISO: 9001. That said, culture more widely is recognised modestly. In Section 4, a founding principle for success is established in that, “The organisation shall determine external and internal issues that are relevant to its purpose and its strategic direction and that affect its ability to achieve the intended results of its quality management system”. Supporting notes direct readers that consideration of issues including culture may help with understanding of internal context.

ISO 9000:2015 (Quality management systems – Fundamentals and vocabulary) does not include a definition of culture!



How do existing standards help us?

ISO 9004:2018 (Quality management – Quality of an organization – Guidance to achieve sustained success) does not always enjoy the same prominence as 9001 but begins to develop important themes in a highly aligned manner with its more prominent cousin.

*“The identity of an organization is determined by its characteristics, based on its mission, vision, values and **culture**” – ISO 9004:2018*

In 9004 we also see our first definition of culture:

“Culture: beliefs, history, ethics, observed behaviour and attitudes that are interrelated with the identity of the organization” – ISO 9004:2018 6.2 d)



How do existing standards help us?

ISO: 9004 continues to explore the impact of culture noting it to be essential that it is aligned with mission, vision and values and that culture is reviewed at planned intervals. These principles are further developed within the self-assessment tools provided within the standard such that in a mature deployment one might expect;

- A clear understanding of the current culture together with an implemented and maintained process for considering and implementing required changes
- Active communication of 'identity elements', including culture, to all interested parties as appropriate
- The engagement of top management in these matters and processes.



How might new standards help us?



While not yet released, ISO 10018 (Quality management systems – Guidelines on people engagement) is intended to support efforts to make quality a more embedded component of all employees thinking rather than the exclusive preserve of a dedicated but smaller band of quality professionals. In outline, the new standard will look at how a range of practical drivers can be utilised in pursuit of this objective; quality culture is one of these drivers.

The standard will consider a quality culture to be one where quality is seen as central to all employees' workplace identity and where this is supported by leadership and top management who establish related unity of purpose and shared values.



Future Standards



As can be seen, while interest in quality culture is rising, and some support through international standards is in place or close to being so, there does remain scope for a more explicit response. This is now being addressed through the development of ISO 10010 (Quality Management – Guidance to evaluate and improve quality culture to drive sustained success).





Future Standards



ISO/TC 176 is Technical Committee 176 of the International Organization for Standardization, responsible for quality management and quality assurance – the ISO 9000 family of standards. In the past two years, Chinese representatives have liaised with international colleagues and developed support for the development of a new international standard, based upon the successful deployment of a China National Standard: GB/T32230:2015, Guidelines for Quality Culture Development in Enterprises. After required processes were completed, this Works proposal has recently been approved and TC/176 SC3 WG25 formed with an agreed 36 month development programme.





Future Standards

While at an extremely early stage, an early framework for 10010 suggests that it will include a broader examination of the nature of a quality culture, consideration of the associated benefits, a practical assessment model and tools to support required development in any context.

A wide audience is anticipated for the standard including organisations of all sizes, governments and non-governmental organisations. It is very much anticipated that the completed work will be highly aligned with existing and immanent ISO standards and be based on a high degree of international collaboration.





*So, does your organisation have the quality culture required
to drive business success?*

If not, what do you plan to do about it?

