



Profiles in Quality

The 2017 International Quality
Award Winners and Their Stories



“Courage and integrity are two of the key traits demonstrated by our International Quality Award winners”

Foreword

One of my favourite books has always been John Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage*, written when he was a relatively unknown Senator from Massachusetts.

The book details acts of courage and integrity on the part of United States Senators through history, chosen because they took a stand contrary to popular opinion, the perceived wisdom of the times or challenged vested interests.

Courage and integrity are two of the key traits demonstrated by our International Quality Award winners, and when we first talked about compiling all of their stories into a single book, I knew I wanted to call it *Profiles in Quality*.

This book is very much about people and the difference they can make, often fighting to be heard, battling to change perceptions or succeeding against the odds. Whether it's persuading a northern

UK engineering company to install some much-needed quality procedures; battling ingrained attitudes towards quality at a major port; or putting in place mission critical quality procedures at a Canadian hydro-electric dam project, the quality professionals profiled in this book have stuck to their guns, changed attitudes and made a real quantifiable difference to their organisations and the projects they have worked on.

In the process, they have elevated themselves to the pinnacle of their profession and provided a benchmark to which all quality professionals can, and should aspire.

These are their stories and I very much hope that they can inspire other quality professionals to take their ideas on board and follow their example.

Vince Desmond
Chief Executive, Chartered Quality Institute

The Importance of Quality

The origin of the International Quality Awards lies in our determination to celebrate those Quality Professionals across the globe, who are striving, day in and day out, to make their organisations perform better.

Our objectives have always been to hold up the work that individuals and teams are doing, spread best-practice and bang the drum for quality across business, the public sector and voluntary organisations.

In 2017 we received nearly 150 entries from 31 countries. The entries came from sectors that have traditionally been highly focused on quality, such as aerospace, construction and manufacturing, but also new sectors, such as medical care.

The winners' stories are many and diverse, but there are a number of distinguishing features that have helped the winners raise themselves above other entrants.

Firstly, they made it personal. It's about them, their trials and tribulations, their drive and ambition to overcome the challenges before them, and make quality a key component in their organisation's on-going success. They have a personal belief in quality and make it their mission to spread the word.

Most importantly, their entries took us into the heart of their work and made us feel part of it. We were, for a short time, able to walk in the shoes of a quality manager for a massive hydro-electric dam project, or sense what it is like to have responsibility for quality procedures on the production line at Jaguar Land Rover.

The second distinguishing feature of the winners is that they told us, not only what they'd done, but also how they measured it, and then explained why those measures were important for their organisation.

The winners produced quantifiable improvement, which is vitally important, because if you can't justify your activities to the judges, then you won't have been able to defend and promote your activities to your own organisations.

The final distinguishing feature of our winners is bravery. Yes, they had leadership, drive and ambition to make things better, but they were also willing to take on vested interests, insist that the correct quality procedures were in place

150
award entries

31
countries

before the commencement of a project, and stare down any "we've always done it this way" attitudes.

These are their stories, which I hope you find both inspirational and educational. If other quality professionals can read their stories and say: "That's a good idea. I can use that in my current and future roles", then we've done our job.

Finally, my message to quality professionals across the world is: do please consider entering the awards. Just entering helps raise the profile of quality within your organisation and is a vital step in securing buy-in and enhancing your own credibility.

Thank you once again to all our 2017 entrants and best of luck in 2018.

Estelle Clark
*Director of Policy at the
Chartered Quality Institute*



QUALITY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR | WINNER

Name: John Feltham

Role: Systems and Standards Compliance Manager

Company: Portsmouth International Port

Location: Portsmouth, United Kingdom



John's journey into quality began in 1974. Fresh out of Brunel School, Portsmouth, John gained his first taste of working life as a quality control inspector.

Having quickly realised the potential of a career in quality, John decided to study with the CQI (or Institute of Quality Assurance, as it was then known), being awarded with a Diploma in the late 1980s. He now works at Portsmouth International Port, one of Britain's best-connected ports for ferries, cruises and cargo travelling to and from France, Spain and the Channel Islands.

"My role is a wide-ranging one, but it has the application of quality at an operational and a strategic level at its heart," John says. "It's pretty complicated. We're owned by Portsmouth City Council, but we also have a wider network

"To be a successful quality professional, one needs to be adept at dealing with different people. I try to be pragmatic – a role-model rather than a dictator. After all, it's not my management system, it's the organisation's. I'm just the custodian."

of stakeholders, including: The Home Office; border force; HMRC; ferry, freight and cruise companies; the emergency services; and the general public."

John is responsible for managing key processes within the harbour, such as controls, embarkation and disembarkation of vessels, border controls, security, and the safe movement of vehicles and people.

He says: "I oversee the quality standards for each process, but I also monitor environmental issues, sustainability activities and general business continuity management. In order to do my job properly and monitor our KPIs, I need to maintain a dialogue with all of the port's interested parties and capture any changing needs as part of a wider integrated management system. I also need to be adaptable and flexible. We must be aware of our carbon footprint, ensure visitors are able to walk about the port safely, and keep on top of the latest terror threats. There's lots at stake if we get it wrong."

John has made a measurable impact to the port's quality systems but admits that getting through to the team was sometimes challenging. "Many of my colleagues saw quality as a negative influence on the port's operations," he states. "I needed to bring them on side and demonstrate the value of quality, without imposing it on them."

John used visual tools, as well as qualifiable data, to help the team understand his role, as well as where they fit within the value stream. "Quality isn't just about improving the port – it's about improving the working lives of the people employed there," he says.

John is now seeing a measurable improvement in his colleagues' knowledge of quality management and is sought out for advice as the port's quality expert.

"Without the support I received, and continue to receive from the CQI, I would not have achieved this level of success," he says. "That's what the CQI is all about: sharing knowledge and making a difference to society as a whole."

"It's up to the quality profession to bring people on-side so that we can all do what we need to do. The port will always need a quality management system in place. My job is to leave a legacy – a successful integrated management system that will ensure the success of both; the port and its employees for years to come."

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

"John's journey to become a quality professional has been nothing short of impressive. He's been instrumental in influencing a culture of change at all levels of his organisation and embodies quality at every turn. He clearly loves his role and is personally invested in the success of the port."

QUALITY PROFESSIONAL IN A NEW PROJECT | WINNER

Name: Yele Odofin-Belo

Role: HSEQ Supervisor

Company: ATCO Two Rivers Lodging
Group Limited Partnership

Location: British Columbia, Canada

It's not every day that a quality professional inherits a project in which a failure to hit KPIs could result in financial penalties. For Yele Odofin-Belo, a Health & Safety advisor at ARAMARK Remote Workplace Services, this was all part of the job.

"I was brought on by ATCO to head a quality team for BC Hydro's Clean Energy Dam project," he says. "ATCO had been assigned to

a remote workplace contract which required the design, construction and operation of a luxury worker accommodation facility at the site."

The \$470million project was considerably complex and strictly audited. ATCO began by creating a subsidiary – ATCO Two Rivers Lodge (ATRL) - the quality team of which was managed by Yele. Underlining ATRL's activity would be a number of KPIs and expectations stipulated in the 1148-page Project Agreement.

"A failure to meet KPIs would result in financial penalties for ATCO, which ranged from \$1,000 to upwards of \$2million" states Yele. "Infringements could be anything from long queues at mealtimes, to power failures and evacuations. This placed both me and my team under a lot of pressure. I needed to be sure that we could handle the responsibility, and that everyone understood the terms set out in the Project Agreement."

In the project's initial phases, the ATRL team underwent a period of transition. "We suddenly found ourselves with a number of unionised construction workers, many of whom did not have the skills required to effectively meet our quality-based expectations," Yele says. "I initiated an in-house training programme for all workers, as well as a site-specific mentorship programme for new hires. These initiatives helped workers to deliver KPI results within the operation's pre-defined acceptable margin of error."

"CQI membership offers many professional opportunities, but it also provides a number of resources that can be practically applied to your work," he says. "The CQI's Competency

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

"Bold, brave and incredibly confident, Yele stepped up to a complex project, when a lesser quality professional may have walked away. In facing the challenge head-on, Yele managed to hit KPIs, avoid financial penalties, and develop, diversify and strengthen the quality capability of his team."

Framework has been particularly beneficial to my current project and my career as a whole." Yele has also defined and initiated several other methods for project analysis and review, including guest satisfaction programmes, outreach events, and investigative tools such as Five Whys, Taproot and Incident Causation.

"With the support of my team, I've been able to articulate all of this quality activity into one actionable business model, which has seen failure rates decrease from 1.67 per cent to 0.30 per cent over a five-month-period."

"By implementing the right structure and effective governance, we have achieved a culture of quality in which measurable results have demonstrated the positive impact we have made."

"I relish the opportunity to be part of a large and complex venture, but when I first considered joining the ATCO / BC Hydro project, I was struck by the contract's negative deductions. Financial penalties for failing to hit KPIs is hardly in your average clause. This didn't put me off, though. On the contrary, it's what made me apply."



EMERGING TALENT | WINNER

Name: Charlotte Laverty

Role: Contracts Audit Manager

Company: Alan Auld Engineering

Location: Doncaster, United Kingdom

It's not every day that one makes the decision to move from beauty to engineering, but that's just what Charlotte Laverty did when she joined Alan Auld Engineering, a small Doncaster-based business specialising in shaft and tunnel design.

"There were less than 15 employees when I joined, with no formal quality system in place," she says.

Alan Auld completes projects for clients across a variety of sectors, and the work can often be dangerous. If environments are not properly audited, they can lead to injury. The business, therefore, needs to comply with a number of industry standards, including ISO 9001:2015.

"Why do I stay in the quality profession? Because I enjoy what I do and I'm good at it. I'm proud of what I've achieved."

"I had to develop a Quality Management System that would help us meet all of our industry standards and regulations," Charlotte states.

Charlotte started by implementing various analysis techniques to identify issues. She also created an 'Interested Parties' analysis, which identified key project stakeholders. From this, she identified several areas in which the company's quality control systems could be improved.

"As well as ironing out a few regulatory details, I also noticed that our engineers were using two contradictory documents for the same process," she says. "This was causing confusion and frustration amongst the staff."

"I worked with all stakeholders to combine the two documents. This renewed their faith in the value of a quality management system!"

The road hasn't been smooth for Charlotte, and misconceptions of quality and its role have often been challenging. She says: "As a young woman in a male-dominated industry, I have struggled with my confidence. It's hard to raise awareness of quality and drive engagement, particularly when many people are set in their ways!"

"Being a member of the CQI has helped me to feel a part of something bigger.

I've also developed a range of quality management skills – not to mention a higher level of confidence – by networking with other quality professionals."

Alan Auld Engineering is now expanding its quality team to build on Charlotte's systems. "The business has hired an additional auditor to make sure no stone is left unturned. I'm also working with a mentor so that I can develop my career and my confidence further," she says.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

"Charlotte has so much enthusiasm. It's amazing to see the contribution she has made to her organisation, despite being at such an early stage of her career. She's the perfect example of what the next generation can, and will bring to the quality industry."



LEADERSHIP AWARD | WINNER

Name: John Holland

Role: Head of The Jaguar Land Rover Way
(Senior Manager)

Company: Jaguar Land Rover Automotive plc.

Location: Coventry, United Kingdom



Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) represents more than high-end, luxury cars. It's a symbol of British manufacturing excellence – a source of pride for the Nation's engineering sector.

For 20 years, John Holland has been a part of JLR's journey. Four years' ago, however, he noticed that the business's infrastructure was struggling to keep up with the many changes the company, as a whole, was experiencing.

He decided to develop a single location for articulating and communicating the business's purpose, context and strategic priorities. Thus 'The JLR Way' was born, and John hasn't looked back since. "I didn't start out as a quality professional, and I didn't create the JLR Way

“At Jaguar Land Rover, everyone needs to be a quality professional. The JLR Way makes everyone responsible for quality and connects business performance improvement with standards and process improvement in the mind of every employee.”

to kick-start a career in quality”, he states. “I developed it because I felt strongly that such a programme would be vital to the future success of a company to which I have belonged for the past two decades.”

The JLR Way is a business management system that enables all employees to deliver improvements and address issues that could be inhibiting performance. This has now developed into a global online portal, managed by an entire team of process and content owners. “The JLR Way is the company's integrated management system, bringing every aspect of the business together under a common framework”, John says.

“JLR has grown rapidly since 2010. As a result, we've had to develop new processes, define clear ownership and accountability, transform old ways and keep up with new technologies. Because of this, standardisation has become vital to securing stable working practices, clarity of process and reliable working instructions.”

Collaboration with employees from across the business has been a big part of John's success. Since the JLR Way was implemented, he has appointed a number of employees from different divisions and at varying levels of seniority, to help move the JLR Way forward.

“From the moment the programme began, the commitment of top-level leadership has been vital,” he says. “For this reason, I've worked hard to maintain an engaged, committed and visible sub-group of senior management as 'Executive Sponsors' of the programme. Successful collaboration lies at

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“John came from outside the industry to make things better. Since then, he has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to his professional development. His personal ambition, as well as his ambition for The JLR Way, has shone through at every turn, along with his vibrant personality and inspiring professionalism.”

the heart of the JLR Way, which is why I've also appointed a cross-functional council and operational administrators network to drive policy and facilitate deployment.”

The JLR Way is now embedded within the fabric of the organisation, due in part to relentless global deployment efforts, such as talks, instructor-led training, e-learning and team engagement workshops. John concludes: “The JLR Way is something I am accountable to and responsible for. I strongly believe that professional process ownership will improve our company, and I am dedicated to engaging with people from across the business to improve their way of working, day-in, day-out.”

QUALITY TEAM OF THE YEAR | WINNER

Name: Al Zahra Private Hospital, Dubai

Location: Al Barsha, Dubai



“Teamwork is our strongest asset. Our tasks require multi-disciplinary teams, from statisticians and clinicians, to the quality professionals themselves. Getting it right means more than hitting a KPI – it means ensuring the safety and wellbeing of every single patient and staff member in the hospital.”

There is arguably no other setting in which quality is more vital than in a hospital. Everything, from infection control to waiting times, needs to be monitored and improved in order to keep patients and hospital staff safe.

The Al Zahra Private Hospital in Dubai is no exception. Located on Sheikh Zayed Road in the West Dubai residential development of Al Barsha, the 187-bed hospital is quickly establishing itself as a premium provider of medical care in the Middle East. Its mission is to provide evidence-based, personalised care in a safe environment, while meeting the needs of its patients and building patient trust.

To ensure that this is achieved, the hospital has a small but experienced team of professionals within clinical auditing, risk management, accreditation & performance improvement, and data management. Its job is to oversee, analyse and improve the hospital's quality management systems, while meeting various national and international standards and accreditations.

“Our department's involvement is critical in ensuring the adequacy, suitability, effectiveness and efficiency of services,” says Mervat Mansour, director of quality and patient safety

at Al Zahra Hospital. “The team regularly performs reviews to ensure compliance with national and international regulatory requirements and maintains relationships with units and affiliates to promote standardisation, improve communication and enhance the efficiency of quality systems.”

The quality team must also factor in the hospital's strategy and objectives. These are based around respect, excellence in quality & patient experience, safe delivery of care, responsibility, learning, and teamwork. “In order to align with the hospital's Growth Strategy, we need to understand our customers' needs and expectations,” explains Mervat. “To do this, we analyse and report on a number of feedback systems, including Patient Satisfaction Committees, opinion meters, patient satisfaction surveys and mystery shopper programmes.”

“Many policies and processes within the hospital have been revised as a result of patient feedback. For example, we now have customised Anaesthetic Centre consent forms that are procedure-specific. We also send automated messages to patients when their reports are ready and are currently working

on a mobile app that can assess a patient's feedback after each visit.”

Internally, the team is working on building quality into each and every process. “All projects are data-driven, evidence-based and benchmarked”, says Mervat. “We have also developed a Quality Curriculum for staff based on any identified organisational needs.”

The success of this small team is already making an impact on the reputation of the hospital. “We've achieved 98 per cent success in re-accreditations, and most of our 100 KPIs are better than, or equal to international benchmarks”, says Mervat. “Each employee is now encouraged to grow in every aspect of quality, while aligning themselves with the hospital's overall strategic goals.”

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“Despite being a relatively small team, the Al Zahra Hospital quality division has made a significant impact, achieving a great deal in a short amount of time. Each member of the quality team has demonstrated impressive levels of expertise and leadership, making them invaluable to the hospital and its work.”

HONORARY AWARD | WINNER

Name: Andrew Wolstenholme

Role: Chief Executive

Company: Crossrail

It is one thing to deliver Europe's largest infrastructure project on time and on budget. It is another entirely to attempt, during construction, to leave a legacy of lessons that future generations can follow.

Andrew Wolstenholme, Chief Executive of Crossrail, has done just that. He recognised the ground-breaking nature of the Crossrail project, and that it was his organisation's duty to share this knowledge with others, capturing all relevant information and sharing it immediately, rather than waiting until after the project had finished.

The result is the Crossrail Learning Legacy Programme, which aims to share knowledge and insight through case studies, technical papers and interviews – all of which are freely available to be 'pinched with pride'.

Andrew recognised, from the outset, that quality professionals would be the key to the successful delivery of Crossrail. When he first took the job, he asked his Tier 1 suppliers how they were going to deliver quality and enquired about the qualifications of their in-house quality professionals.

When most couldn't answer, he pointed them in the direction of the CQI and we delivered a series of fast-track training courses for over 100 construction industry quality professionals to get them up-to-speed. Many of them are now running the same approach with their suppliers - a real knock-on effect through the construction supply chain.

This was a big, bold intervention that, at one stage, was potentially in danger of making the project start late. Andrew truly believed that placing quality at the heart of Crossrail

would make all the difference and that his people would catch-up if they had competent professionals in place. He's been proven right.

However, Andrew's, and his team's real legacy is much more than taking the time to collate and disseminate thousands of documents from procurement processes through to project management.

When I talk to people working on other major infrastructure projects one of the first things they ask is "How did Crossrail do it?". And Crossrail is always eager to share.

He has changed the mindset of the construction industry and demonstrated the value of placing quality at its heart. For this reason, we are delighted to give him this honorary award.



Vincent Desmond
Chief Executive,
Chartered Quality
Institute



HONORARY AWARD | WINNER

Name: John Oakland

Role: Chairman

Company: Oakland Consulting LLP

When you want to learn about any topic associated with quality you automatically think of the books written by John Oakland.

However, his landmark works, which include Total Quality Management & Operational Excellence, now in its fourth edition; The Future Face of the Quality Profession; and Statistical Process Control, which is now in its sixth edition, barely scratch the surface of his contribution to the quality profession over the last four decades.

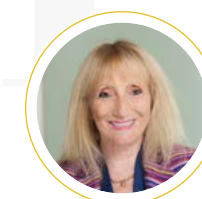
His work at Oakland Consulting, the management consultancy firm he set up in the mid-1980s, has benefited blue chip companies across Europe, including names as familiar as ABB, Airbus and EDF. Quality professionals and senior managers over the world trust what Oakland Consulting says and place their faith in the robustness of the advice they receive.

In recent years, John has set up the Oakland Institute, an academic research institute that sits alongside Oakland Consulting. He is also Emeritus Professor of Total Quality Management at Leeds University Business School and a fellow of the Chartered Quality Institute.

Most importantly, he has retained his enthusiasm for the quality profession and his work. When the CQI was looking to develop a new competency framework, John joined our task force, free-of-charge, as Chairman to lead the project. He insisted that we threw out the old framework in its entirety, and

develop a new framework, which better suited the work of quality professionals in the 21st Century.

He endlessly and enthusiastically gives his own time to the CQI as part of our Membership Council, and allows us to benefit from support from other members of the Oakland team. He's just one of those people who, if you need a five-minute phone call or even a day or two of their time, he'll do it without question. At a time when we are perhaps a little distrustful of the qualifications of many gurus, he is certainly worthy of the term and thoroughly deserving of this honorary award.



Estelle Clark

*Director of Policy,
Chartered Quality
Institute*



QUALITY TEAM OF THE YEAR | WINNER

Name: Banaskantha District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Ltd (Banas Dairy)

Location: Gujarat, India

“Dairy husbandry in India is mostly done by women. By improving the quality structure of this industry, we have been able to strengthen their economic empowerment and provide them with more disposable income, which they can then spend on health, nutrition and education for their children. An agent for societal and environmental change: that is the true potential of quality.”

The story of how Banas Dairy grew to become India's leading dairy cooperative is both an inspiring and fascinating one. Established in 1969 as part of the Gujarat Cooperative Societies Act 1961, the dairy has grown to become the largest in India, selling products such as milk, butter, ghee and ice cream to a global customer base.

The dairy has also been instrumental in the economic empowerment and well-being of thousands of dairy farmers and their families in Gujarat. Bipin Patel, In-charge Managing Director, explains: “The milk producers are the real owners of the organisation. Their interests are our interests.”

To emphasise this, the cooperative has a Board of elected members, all of whom represent the region's milk producers. “Our Board acts as a representative of the dairy farmers,” says Bipin. “They help us to build policies based on the interests of the producers and advise us on support services such as animal breeding, husbandry and disease prevention.”

But what role does quality play in this? Essentially, it can be broken down into three key areas: maintaining the wellbeing of the local community, maintaining a consistent and professional approach within the business, and building a global brand reputation.

Bipin states: “Our employees are our best asset, so we need to ensure that they have

the knowledge and skills they need to best perform their duties.

“As this is the food industry, this knowledge includes everything from best practice for quality to food safety, conservation and the efficient handling of operational issues.

“We've also integrated a quality system across the supply chain, and have been experimenting with new management concepts, such as Six Sigma, which has helped us to maintain consistent output within process management.”

Since the cooperative was first formed, it has had a particular focus on the empowerment of women, who traditionally manage dairy husbandry in India. By investing in the training and development of its dairy farmers, the cooperative has brought economic empowerment to each community, allowing families to have more disposable income for vital services, such as health, nutrition and education. The cooperative has also implemented conservation efforts across the 1,290 dairy cooperative societies it represents.

The business is now working on establishing itself as a global brand and is hoping that its model will inspire other cooperatives, as well as traditional businesses across India.

Bipin says: “We need to ensure that we set an example for professional excellence.

In doing so, we can revitalise the economy and improve the wellbeing of communities across India and, eventually, around the world.”

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“The Banas Dairy team has an incredible story to tell, achieving amazing results across a large and disparate group of people, many of whom did not have access to any formal education. An organization with a difference, that is making a difference. This dairy cooperative is built on ever-improving quality principles and systems. It has not just created a model for its country – it has created a model for the world.”



QUALITY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR | FINALIST

Name: Kerli Saarnik

Role: Quality Manager

Company: BFK / Crossrail

Location: London, United Kingdom

“As an industry, quality is receiving more attention than it used to. There’s a realisation that quality needs to lead and inform everything you do – that it isn’t about red-tape or bureaucracy, but about setting the standard, right from the start, to optimise the performance of every part of a process. A quality professional should be a problem solver, not a police officer.”

When one first meets Kerli, a project quality manager who currently works as part of the Crossrail project, one is struck by her enthusiasm, her knowledge and, above all, her strong belief in the transformative role of quality.

“Quality ensures that a project is meeting customer expectations”, she states. “It allows us to advise and support our team, to make sure that we are delivering on our promises.”

Kerli’s team provides quality assurance to BFK (BAM, Ferrovial and Kier), as well as the client, Crossrail. Its job is to monitor quality management systems, track KPIs, and conduct independent audits of off-site and on-site subcontractors.

“We always make sure that the products and services delivered are hitting the right standard for our customers,” Kerli explains. “Company reputations shouldn’t suffer as a result of quality failures.”

Kerli’s attention to detail has often helped her to identify failures or non-compliance in even the most well-established companies.

“We recently had a UKAS-accredited testing house perform a test on our site – something they have done for numerous other railway stations across the country. We carried out a standard surveillance on their work and noticed several instances in which they did not comply with our standards.”

Kerli manages a team of just three people, which often makes it hard to separate control and assurance.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“It’s not always easy being a female quality professional in what remains a very male-dominated industry, but Kerli’s infectious positivity and determination have led her to become a highly successful and influential leader in quality for the construction industry.”

“I’m a hands-on manager, but I do delegate some of my tasks so that other team members can learn, develop and demonstrate their capabilities to management.”

“An achievement of which I’m particularly proud was getting the construction teams to take ownership of quality by checking their work and preparing handover documentation. This demonstrates how quality can (and should) be built, rather than inspected, into standard business processes.”

Kerli is also the first quality professional to receive Crossrail’s Employee of the Year Award. “I’ve positioned my role as one of a problem-solver. I want my team to respect me and seek my advice as an expert in my field.”

“Being a member of the CQI has definitely benefited my work,” she says. “I have access to a wealth of information. As a community of quality professionals, it’s a great way to build your industry knowledge, keep up-to-date with the latest trends and, perhaps most importantly, learn from each other’s mistakes.”



QUALITY PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR | FINALIST

Name: Arlene Aguilar

Role: Quality Assurance Manager

Company: Faithful + Gould

Location: Qatar



“Generally speaking, the Quality Manager’s role is one of process improvement and development. However, it’s also about embedding an open culture, encouraging feedback and suggestions, and building bridges between different process owners. A quality manager is a communicator, enabling her company to win and deliver, time and again.”

As a global project and programme management consultancy, Faithful + Gould supports high-value construction projects across a range of industries, including nuclear energy, commercial property and education. Its work must always embody its three core values: professionalism, collaboration and productivity.

In Qatar, it is Quality Manager, Arlene Aguilar’s responsibility to make sure that these values are maintained at all times, both by the business and its suppliers.

“My quality activity must be aligned to that of the group as a whole,” she says. “We have a global quality team that oversees the execution of our business assurance programme and associated audit schedules. I then build this into my job, which is primarily focused on projects in the Middle East.

“One of my main responsibilities is to grow our digital strategy and increase the success of our digital systems within the construction

industry. I ensure that we are recording any lessons learned from current construction projects and share these across the business. Any failures in systems or manual processes can then be noted and corrected for future projects.”

Faithful + Gould has consulted on a number of large-scale, not to mention visually-striking construction projects in the Middle East. These have included the Mall of Saudi in Riyadh, the Fairmont Hotel and Serviced Apartments in Abu Dhabi and the Royal Atlantis in Dubai.

Arlene says: “I regularly conduct risk-based audits to ensure that the organisation’s policies, processes and plans reflect the client’s needs. We call this being ‘client-centric.’”

“We also identify problems by allowing each member of the team to speak freely and openly. These risks are then relayed to the right people who, by following our governance processes and audit systems, can give us the answers, support and solutions we need.”

Arlene has been IRCA-certified since February 2012. “It’s not always easy being a Lead Auditor and I often need to prove my honest intentions in order to earn the trust and respect of the people around me. Being a member of the CQI has definitely helped to bring out the best version of myself.”

For Arlene, the role of Quality Manager is one of both a communicator and facilitator: “I need to listen to, seek out and influence open conversations, and make sure that feedback is heard by the right people,” she concludes. “Ultimately, I want to create an organisational culture that has quality at its heart. This can only be achieved when you lead by example.”

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“Arlene is a quality professional who clearly embodies her company’s values. As a passionate communicator, Arlene understands her role as an ambassador for quality, and is seen by many in her team as a teacher, mentor and coach. These efforts have been recognised by numerous company awards and speaking opportunities over the course of her career.”

QUALITY PROFESSIONAL IN A NEW PROJECT | FINALIST

Name: Rashad Issa

Role: Director

Company: Workplace Options

Location: London, United Kingdom

Workplace Options identifies itself as fast-paced, entrepreneurial and innovative. "We're the leading provider of global Employee Assistance Programmes, and work-life and wellness services," says Rashad Issa.

Originally joining as a Quality Manager, Rashad was determined to keep the company's fast-paced culture, while making it easier for different departments to collaborate and interact.

"I noticed that the operations and service delivery departments needed to work effectively together while embodying a cost-effective approach," he says. "Some efforts were being duplicated and certain projects or departments were operating in silos. In other words: people weren't talking to each other."

Rashad was tasked with setting up a project management office to support operational strategy in a way that involved everyone, from senior executives to front-line professionals. "There was resistance at first," he states. "Many in the company were concerned that project management would damage the flexibility and speed of our organisation by being too obstructive and confining any innovative ideas to spreadsheet tombs."

Rashad introduced new project management and risk-tracking tools, most notably the ASANA tool, which has since grown from 50 registered users to 150 within the organisation. He also set up a Review Committee for Strategic Goals, which identifies risks and opportunities, and reviews the company's strategy.

"The visibility of our strategy and the increased interactions between departments led to our IT, Business Analytics and product development teams creating and synchronising their roadmaps for the first time," he says.

Rashad has also set up an internal training and development programme for project management skills. This has since become the longest-running programme within the organisation.

"Project management sounds cumbersome, but if we can make it easy for an organisation to implement and demonstrate positive results, we can build momentum in a way that they will have never experienced before."

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

"Rashad's demeanour is so confident and polished, he wouldn't look out of place in the boardroom of a top FTSE100 company. He is a quality professional who means business and can deliver quality in a way that even the uninitiated will recognise and understand."

His continued success has recently led to his promotion as head of project management, quality & internal training.

"Considering I'm a team of one, operating out of London, working with a company that operates out of the USA, Canada, the Republic of Ireland, France, India, and Singapore, I feel very proud of what I've accomplished," he states.

Rashad is now also a Chartered Member of the CQI, an experience that he has described as "very enriching". "Working with core competencies and understanding how different industries apply them have been particularly enlightening," he says.

"The quality profession is often perceived as an unnecessary roadblock. I want to change that and embed a quality culture across a whole company."



QUALITY PROFESSIONAL IN A NEW PROJECT | FINALIST

Name: Suzanne Burge

Role: Quality and Assurance Manager

Company: ISS World

Location: London, United Kingdom

The phrase “audit-ready” strikes fear into even the most stoic of hearts. Imagine then, that you are managing compliance and risk for a company with over 21,000 employees in the UK alone, seven certified standards by which you must adhere and the possibility of being audited up to 200 times a year.

“It’s the objective – it’s what the client needs,” says Suzanne Burge, Quality and Assurance Manager for facilities services provider ISS World. “That’s what it’s all about – making sure the client can trust you and maintaining that relationship between the client and your company.”

She continues: “This particular client is large and complex, which is why my job is focused solely on managing our relationship with its property department.

“When I was first assigned, I knew that I needed to be confident with the client’s context and needs. I worked hard to build relationships with key personnel to better understand their requirements and expectations.”

Suzanne has responsibility for ensuring certification compliance within its property department. She began by building an

“Quality is about trust. It’s about making sure your stakeholders are with you every step of the way, and that they feel empowered, confident and autonomous in doing what they need to do.”

“Assurance Team”, including establishing and filling two new roles: Assurance Coordinator and Management Information Manager. She also implemented a Governance, Risk, Compliance (GRC) system – Curoson - to help manage compliance obligations within document control, audit management and risk.

“We needed to make sure that the property department was “audit-ready” at all times,” she states. “We began by tackling document control. It was difficult to establish who/ what had been audited, as audits were arranged directly between the two parties. We emphasised the importance of using the Assurance Team to schedule audits and report back with their results.

“We were also tasked with moving away from paper-based systems, to device-based ones, which would suit our mobile teams much better. Self-assessment audits, for example, can now be done through an app.”

Suzanne and her team have been instrumental in streamlining compliance and risk management systems for their client.

She says: “As a team, we need to know which standards are in place and how to provide evidence that we’re adhering to them, all the while ensuring that we continue to carry out the services we are contractually required to do and support the client with their audits.”

“ISS’s client relationships are key and we place a large focus on autonomy and trust. Long standing clients like this one are important examples of why quality can, and should be embodied as part of any client-facing role.”

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“Achieving “audit-ready” status for clients that are as large and complex as ISS is no mean feat by anyone’s standards. Yet, from the outset, Suzanne has demonstrated her ability to take charge. She’s a real champion of her team, and of the quality industry as a whole.”



EMERGING TALENT | FINALIST

Name: Sonia Mills

Role: Project Quality Representative

Company: Fluor Limited UK

Location: Farnborough, United Kingdom

“It’s tricky being a young woman in this industry. I constantly need to prove myself. Being nominated for this award validates the work that I do.”

Quality wasn’t something that struck former nanny Sonia Mills as a career choice. “I came into it,” she says. “After moving from Poland ten years ago, I joined an oil & gas company. After its UK operation closed, a recruitment company introduced me to the quality industry.”

Sonia started in administration, but soon decided to develop her skills. “I was excited at how varied the quality industry is. You can find yourself working in anything from pharmaceuticals to construction. I was keen to move into management and auditing, where I could take on more responsibility and make more quality-based decisions,” she says.

Sonia is currently Project Quality Representative at Fluor Limited UK, a business providing integrated engineering, procurement, construction management, maintenance, and project management services to EMEA clients.

“I have to liaise with different departments and coordinate any engineering activities from the perspective of a Project Quality System,” she says. “We use the Fluor Operating System, which defines the requirements for executing each project. This must feed into every project baseline, alongside any quality requirements specified by the client.

“I also ensure that deliverables and quality services meet requirements using a range of techniques, including project audits, spot-checks, surveillances and approved audit programmes.”

Sonia continues: “I love what I do because it helps both clients and my company as a

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“The organisational structure of Sonia’s company is very interesting and will provide a range of challenges and experiences to help her continuing development.”

whole. Clients can be confident that they will meet their quality goals, and we can constantly improve our internal systems.”

Sonia recognises that quality teams are often perceived as burdensome – an image she’s working hard to disprove. “The quality profession is highly collaborative and can benefit any project department,” she states. “I liaise with all affected parties to make sure that everyone is kept informed and can input their views. This helps me to do my job to the highest possible standard.”

Sonia is now keen to gain more experience, particularly within oil & gas. “I’d love to learn more about quality and how it is applied to other industries,” she says. “I would especially like to be part of the team developing the next ISO standards.

“Always ask yourself: ‘How can quality help me, or others, to get our tasks completed to the highest possible standard?’ Therein lies the true value of quality.”



EMERGING TALENT | FINALIST

Name: Ashleigh Pritt

Role: Quality Engineer

Company: Jacobs Engineering UK

Location: Carlisle, United Kingdom



“Quality isn’t your average job – no two days are the same and I’m hardly ever desk-bound. I think it’s vital that future generations are aware of this.”

Ashleigh Pritt may be young, but what she lacks in years, she makes up for in enthusiasm. “My work tends to be reactive, so a confident, proactive approach is vital in order to stay ahead,” she says. “Working for such a large, international organisation also requires me to keep on top of what our subsidiaries, partners and offices are doing.”

Since joining Jacobs Engineering UK as an apprentice at the age of 17, Ashleigh has become a key member of the company’s Quality Management team. “Jacobs is one of the world’s largest providers of technical, professional and construction services,” she states. “As well as 54,000 employees based in more than 230 locations, we also have a number of joint ventures with different businesses at both a national and local level.

“This often makes things complicated. Each partner has its own quality system in place, as do some of our international offices. It’s my job to make sure these align.”

Jacobs operates an Integrated Management System that combines the requirements of ISOs 9001, 14001 and 18001, as well as the

company’s standard operating procedures and value-enhancing practices.

Ashleigh uses all of these to plan and measure the success of quality-related activities. She says: “I produce a Quality Plan, in which I detail a project’s procedures and deliverables. I also conduct regular audits and reports, which have often been commended by my clients. In some cases, they have implemented my audit systems themselves!”

Over and above her work as a Quality Engineer, Ashleigh is working hard to engage the next generation. “I started out as an apprentice, so I know how tough it can be,” she says. “You have to be ready to learn and exploit every opportunity you can. I’m currently taking my Level 5 Diploma in Quality, but my educational development won’t stop there.”

Ashleigh also makes use of her membership with the CQI to further her training and development. “Being in the CQI has benefited my work greatly,” she states. “It has allowed me to train and network with other members and has definitely been a boost to my career.”

As a Quality Discipline Lead and a STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) ambassador, Ashleigh is now working closely with new and potential engineers. “My department has taken on more apprentices recently and I’ve been appointed to mentor them,” she says. “I also work at schools to promote engineering and quality as possible careers and to give advice.”

“I’d like to become a Quality Manager one day, but I’ll also continue working with younger generations to prove just how rewarding and valuable a career in quality can be.”

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“Articulate and passionate, Ashleigh’s awareness of her organisation and its quality systems is impressive. Her commitment to supporting and advising the next generation of engineers means we may just have a future industry leader in the making.”

LEADERSHIP AWARD | FINALIST

Name: Tony Blanch

Role: Business Improvement Director

Company: Costain

Location: Maidenhead, United Kingdom

The Costain Way is more than just a code of conduct for new employees at the UK's leading voice for construction projects. It's a guideline for quality that is embodied by every employee at the 4,000-strong firm.

The man behind its implementation and development is Business Improvement Director, Tony Blanch, who leads a community of over 70 quality professionals across both contract-specific and central team roles.

"Costain has a clear, customer-focused strategy, which it has developed over many years," he says. "A detailed understanding of the Costain Way is a pre-requisite for any quality professional looking to join the team. It's also a key part of their on-boarding process and is reinforced throughout their time here by regular assessments."

Many in the industry view Tony as a credit to the profession. During his time at Costain, he has defined the role of the quality professional by providing a clear structure for both his team and the business. He now works directly with the Board to ensure a strong culture of quality is maintained at all times.

"Many years ago, I led the establishment of a risk-based management system, which helped

to stabilise the business," he says. "This has since become the foundation upon which subsequent improvements have been made and has led to the development of my most important KPIs: leadership engagement and employee ownership."

Tony maintains an open dialogue with quality professionals across the industry and has also liaised with the Chartered Quality Institute for the provision of training and employee development programmes. He ensures that his team fully understands its roles and responsibilities within the context of The Costain Way, using innovative solutions such as smartphone apps to increase employee engagement.

"The CQI's Competency Framework of governance, assurance and improvement, together with leadership, has provided the

"I envision a future where a quality team exists as the second or third line of defence; a future where quality is hardwired throughout an organisation, with everyone taking responsibility for getting it right first time."

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

"Tony is a born leader. He cares about his team and is proud of what he has achieved. The reputation of both Tony and his team precedes them everywhere they go. People across the industry are taking note of Tony's successes and want to work with him."

business improvement team with a consistent structure and focus," he states.

"Employee ownership remains a key factor. They need to maintain an understanding of how quality fits into their job and feel empowered to make quality decisions. Being a member of the CQI consolidates this understanding, and gives them a framework for their personal, and professional, development."

Tony's activities have certainly paid off, with Costain securing 90 per cent repeat business from customers. The company also declared its best-ever financial results in 2016.

Tony concludes: "I want to keep this momentum and find new ways to ensure that quality remains a top priority for everyone. Right now, we're applying behavioural science to quality in order to establish antecedents and consequences, which will ultimately drive the adoption of desired behaviours throughout the organisation."



LEADERSHIP AWARD | FINALIST

Name: Emma McNab

Role: Business Excellence Director

Company: Taylor Woodrow

Location: Watford, United Kingdom

“A successful quality culture is one of continuous improvement; one in which the entire team can learn and develop. My job is to ensure that all communication can be heard and understood by the entire business, regardless of an employee’s role or seniority. I want everyone, from the graduate to the executive, to understand why quality must be an important part of their work.”

The role of a quality leader isn’t that of a dictator; but of a collaborator and integrator. That’s according to Business Excellence Director Emma McNab, whose influence has led to the adoption and ownership of quality-based initiatives across the whole company.

“I’m a firm believer that the best way to develop a quality strategy is to be collaborative,” she states. “You need complete

engagement, not just from within the quality team, but across every company department.”

Emma leads a quality team at Taylor Woodrow, the civil engineering division of VINCI Construction UK, Founded in 1921. The business has been behind iconic construction projects such as Mulberry Harbours in the 1940s, the world’s first nuclear power station in the 1950s, and, more recently, the Western Concourse at London’s King’s Cross. “Taylor Woodrow takes a customer-focused approach,” she says. “The business has five core values: excellence, collaboration, innovation, integrity and discipline. As a quality team, we need to embody and disseminate these values across everything we do. This is not always easy to achieve. We’re a widely dispersed team, often split across more than ten projects at any one time.”

For this reason, Emma needed to find ways of synchronising activity within the quality team and maintaining an open dialogue. “We started by defining all of the business’s requirements and objectives, which are usually driven by external stakeholders,” she explains. “We then added two quality-focused business objectives concerning defect-free, right-first-time delivery, and the cost of non-conformances. We rolled these out across the whole company via a Business Management System.”

Defect-free deliveries and non-conformance reports have now become KPIs for Emma’s quality team, which has reported a 95 per cent year-on-year increase in the number of defect-free inspections since the Business Management System was rolled out.

Emma says: “I’m now seeing teams other than mine take ownership of quality initiatives. There’s also an open and creative dialogue concerning quality and what it means. One employee, for example, recently demonstrated the importance of inspection and test plans using the act of cooking breakfast as an analogy!”

For Emma, open communication is a vital part of any collaborative, quality-led company infrastructure. “I always try to lead the quality culture by example, and continually challenge

business leaders to discuss quality more openly,” she states. “Being a member of the CQI has helped. Exposure to the wider quality management community helps to inspire new ideas and alternative points-of-view. All of this can be brought to my work, where it can reach more people and improve their own quality processes. This means that we can make better decisions, while also balancing the pressures of time, cost, and health and safety. The impact of this on a business’s finances, reputation and employee morale cannot be understated.”

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“Right from the start, Emma impressed us with her commitment and approach to open communication. Through her strong leadership as a Business Excellence Director, she has built a culture of sharing and learning, in which everyone is encouraged to acknowledge failures, celebrate successes, and continue to grow as a team.”



QUALITY TEAM OF THE YEAR | FINALIST

Name: Costain

Location: Maidenhead, United Kingdom

"It's important to go back to basics when designing a management system," says David Sanders, a member of Costain's Business Improvement Team. "We need to ask ourselves: 'what do people want to know?' and 'how do we want them to use this system?'"

Established in 1865, Costain provides consultancy, complex delivery, technology and asset optimisation services to projects across the UK's energy, water and transportation infrastructures. Growing from two jobbing builders to a business of more than 4,000 employees, Costain has become the leading industry voice for major construction projects in the UK, including the Thames Barrier and Magnox Bradwell's nuclear processing facility.

"Our strategy is 'Engineering Tomorrow', states David. "We need to demonstrate that we are capable of delivering projects in a safe, cost-effective and environmentally-friendly way, particularly if they involve hazardous materials like nuclear waste."

Costain's quality team is one of the most well-established in the industry. Known as the 'Business Improvement Team', it works with process owners and management to implement The Costain Way through practical user guides, engagement with top-level management and forums on incorporating quality into business strategy.

"We work with 'The Costain Way', which is the business's formal management system," David says. "It defines the processes and procedures Costain needs to minimise risk exposure and must be understood and actioned by everyone in the business."

"We're one of the few quality teams in our sector to be accredited by, and contain, certified quality professionals," says David. "We therefore need to make sure that this knowledge is disseminated throughout the business and we do this by holding regular training sessions, particularly in areas in which our audits have identified potential problems."

"We also use the CQI's Competency Framework to structure our business improvement approach and have adopted the

CQI's World Quality Day as World Quality Week, which has helped to reinvigorate our drive for excellence."

The team has had a highly positive impact for Costain. "We have great relationships with senior management and embody ideals of leadership and mentorship. It's important that the rest of the business works with us, so we need to demonstrate the value in doing so."

It seems they certainly have, if recent successes are anything to go by. "The Costain Way has now been adopted by a number of our business partners," David states. "We've also made business assurance a Board-level concern, on a par with health and safety. As far as I'm concerned, it's all one and the same thing!"

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

"The Business Improvement Team's pride and confidence in what they do is evident. Through their efforts and the support of business leaders, they have made quality a board-level priority – a pretty impressive achievement for the construction sector in particular!"

"The Business Improvement Team at Costain is good at what it does. Being a finalist at the CQI International Quality Awards is a great way of showcasing that. It's an affirmation from an independent organisation that we're doing the right thing."



QUALITY TEAM OF THE YEAR | FINALIST

Name: Crossrail

Location: London, United Kingdom

“For Crossrail, quality is paramount. Take care of quality, and safety will follow. Crossrail has a strong safety record thanks to a strong quality culture that is built – not inspected – into everything we do.”

It's the construction story that's been the talk of London – an innovative excavation project bringing further connectivity to one of the world's leading subterranean railway networks.

As spectators, we've come to associate the Crossrail project with some striking visuals, from its giant tunnelling machines, to the purple-clad ribbon-cutting attended by the new line's namesake, Queen Elizabeth herself. What we may not have noticed, however, are the hundreds of professionals behind the scenes keeping the project running smoothly.

“Our team consists of quality professionals from across civil, mechanical, electrical and rail systems engineering,” says Christopher Titterton, Head of Quality. “Many of them have prior experience in major rail developments, such as the Channel Tunnel, the Jubilee Line Extension Project and Thameslink. It's like one big family, moving through its career, from one project to the next!”

The team at Crossrail is made up of 150 employees, as well as 100 contractors, all of whom are required to have at least one certified quality professional as part of their team.

Christopher says: “The Crossrail project will be expected to operate safely and with minimal maintenance for centuries to come. We therefore need to assure sponsors, including the Department for Transport and Transport for London, as well as infrastructure managers and the general public, that the programme is being governed and delivered correctly to the highest possible standards.

“We use a Crossrail Management System, which is accessed via a web portal. This sets out and mandates the governance processes and procedures adopted at corporate level, and outlines all strategies, policies, plans, procedures and guidance notes in a formalised content management system.”

The Crossrail Management System meets the requirements of BS EN ISO 9001 for quality, BS EN ISO 19001 for environment, and BS OHSAS 18001 for occupational

health and safety. Its main role is to ensure that each member of the team is properly briefed, understands the full extent of his responsibilities, and can identify areas of improvement on a six-monthly basis.

“All of our quality professionals understand that the good governance of our organisation relates directly to the standard of the finished product,” Christopher says. “Applicable assurance requirements form the backbone of each quality team member's job description.

“Crossrail's quality model is ten years ahead of the rest of the construction industry. We've run a series of events since 2013 to raise awareness of, and drive improvement in quality management across the Crossrail project.

“It's my hope that this approach will transform construction quality for the better. It's simple really – no quality management, no Crossrail!”

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“The construction industry has a shortage of certified quality professionals, but there's a clear passion at Crossrail to change this. Crossrail is definitely putting its money where its mouth is. The organisation is committed to the quality capability of its staff and contractors and is determined to demonstrate the value of a ‘right first time’ approach to as wide an audience as possible.”





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