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progressing business

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Level 6, The Fawkner Centre,
499 St Kilda Road, Melbourne, Victoria - 3004.

Please mark the envelope as "*Application for QMS Subcontractor Position*".

progressing business
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GUEST Editorial

Welcome everyone to the first edition of Progressing Business. I am pleased to be writing the first editorial for a new online magazine for the quality and business practitioners of Australia.

The magazine was conceived from the needs of the members of Australian Organisation for Quality Inc (Queensland) (AOQ Inc) who is the administrator of the magazine. We hope the magazine provides you the articles and insights, which you expect and please feel free to provide any comments or articles because this is the only way our new magazine will prosper and grow in line with our professions. I would like to use this first editorial to highlight some of the programs and initiatives, which AOQ Inc is proudly running. All of these services and much more can be found on the AOQ Inc website at www.aoq.org.au.

Main services we provide members are our networking opportunities. In 2007 we commenced providing members' nights in Brisbane twice a month with a good attendance at all meetings. We also instigated Breakfast Meetings with topics and guest speakers different to those at members' nights. These have received a good response and we intend continuing these in 2008. Another major service we continue to provide is our training courses and consulting services. This year our consulting has been very successful with contracts with some of the bigger organisations around town including the Queensland Department of Health.

The AOQ Inc administered Divisions have been our most successful venture in recent years thanks to a lot of hard work by our Chairman, Mario Pennisi. Administering five Divisions is not an easy task but we have seen some real benefits this year. AOQ Inc administered Divisions include Aerospace, Aged Care, Six Sigma, Regulated Research & Development and Manufacturing, Entrepreneurs, with their own networking opportunities. We had an extremely well received Six Sigma Division conference in August this year which has resulted in the Division championing the generation of Six Sigma competencies for Yellow, Green and Black belts which are registered internationally. This is in partnership with RABQSA and is a great example of the strength and possibilities that the Divisions can provide industry. The Aerospace, Aged Care and Regulated Research and Development and Manufacturing Divisions have established event calendars with conference planned for 2008 along with the Six Sigma Division's 2008 conference.

Our Gold Award Program has been yet again another success. In 2007, we had seven finalists who all achieved the minimum score required to compete for the awards. We now offer three awards in the Gold Award for Business Excellence, the Gold Award for Aged Care/Health Management and the National Laboratory Management Award. Once again, JAS-ANZ was our National Platinum sponsor and we thank them and all our sponsors for supporting such an important Program. Organisations with a third party certification accredited by JAS-ANZ are eligible to apply for the Gold Award for Business Excellence. Organisations with third party certification issued by industry specific accreditation associations that are recognised by the Australian Government are eligible to apply for the AOQ Inc Industry Award for Business Management. If also eligible for the Gold Award for Business Excellence, these organisations may apply for both awards. I encourage you to visit www.aoq.org.au to find out more about the awards and start thinking about applying in 2008.

Finally, AOQ Inc strives to motivate all sectors and groups of our society to become involved in the continual improvement of our business community. I consider that the most important facet of this objective is to introduce the next generation to the principles of quality and business management. To facilitate the knowledge transfer process AOQ Inc:

- Partners with all Brisbane based Universities, sponsoring projects and providing prizes and sponsorships.
- Provides sponsorship, mentors and judges for the Griffith Innovation Challenge.
- Partners with Monash University in Six Sigma programs
- Provides mentors (from the membership) for University students
- Provides presenters from the membership for Engineering and Business programs at Universities (Undergraduate and Post Graduate)
- Sponsors and provides a judge for the Business Icon competition
- Meets regularly with Community Leaders through the Peak Industry Advisory Council

I hope you enjoy our new magazine and remember it can only be as successful as we want with the involvement of as many people as possible by providing feedback and articles. You can contact the editorial committee at ProgBus@aoq.org.au

Tapping Into The Face of Change

Dan Jackson
Founder 7SIM™ Improvement Method

Jim is the General Manager of a busy logistics business unit of more than 200 people.

Leon is a highly motivated supervisor of 10 warehousing staff and is one of Jim's key people.

The modern workplace is a complicated place. The role of management is a complex one and the challenge of leadership is not for the faint hearted.

MEET JIM AND LEON

Jim has responsibility to a global head office for the effectiveness of his business unit and is required to achieve double digit growth each and every year; the mantra of this market leading company. Clearly Jim is under pressure to perform. He manages a workforce that holds the key to Jim achieving the lofty goals placed upon him.

Leon has the responsibility for the fastest growth area in Jim's operation. This is, in no small way, due to Leon's leadership skills. Leon believes things should be done correctly the first time and when problems arise he sets about solving them. Lots of problems arise so Leon has plenty to do.

This article explores the relationship between this Senior Leader (Jim) and the 1st Line Supervisor (Leon). It is the relationship between two leaders with different styles, agendas and mandates that hold the key to bringing about rapid and effective (leveraged) improvement in the company.

JIM

Based on a wide body of research a senior leader like Jim will succeed if he does four things:

1st **Provide Clear Roles.** Jim needs to provide clear roles for staff in a structure designed to meet the needs of the company and its customers.

2nd **Provide Clear Vision.** Jim must describe clearly a direction that is clear to people and motivates them towards a sustainable future.

3rd **Support Improvement.** Jim must actively support the systematic improvement of the business. He should commission projects; one or two large reengineering efforts through to smaller team based cross-functional improvements.

4th **Encourage Openness.** Jim should promote a business environment that is candid, honest and trusting.

LEON

Leon is going to need more than enthusiasm for fixing problems to succeed in the long term. To a large extent Leon is reliant on Jim to establish an environment conducive to success. He can help. There are four things Leon can do:

A Ensure his team has clear roles and people know how they support the customer.

B Support the clear direction that Jim has set.

C Apply improvement skills to creatively bring about improvement in both the warehouse and with cross-functional processes.

D 'Walk the talk' by encouraging candid, honest and trusting behaviour among his team and with colleagues.

Jim sets the vision; Leon makes the vision a reality.

Jim provides the 'where to'; Leon provides the 'how to'.

While not diminishing the important role that middle managers play in the business, it is the clarity and direction provided by senior leaders coupled with the motivation of 1st line supervisors that provides the leverage for successful improvement.

Jim sponsors the improvement; Leon leads the team to bring about the improvement.

Jim is strategic, always assessing the organisation's capability; Leon understands the strategic but focuses on influencing cross-functional improvement with his colleagues and team.

The relationship between Jim and Leon is a vital one for a company to achieve sustained success. While not diminishing the important role that middle managers play in the business, it is the clarity and direction provided by senior leaders coupled with the motivation of 1st line supervisors that provides the leverage for successful improvement.

ACTION PLAN

If you were Jim what would you do tomorrow?

Don't try to change the culture. The desired (improved) culture in the business is an outcome of other positive activity and behaviour. Many organisations have tried to change business culture with empty, esoteric and superficial statements, self-evident expressions of values and preferred behaviours as well as token staff events and launches. The only increase detected is often one of increased cynicism about the motivation for change. So treat the desired culture as an outcome of other activity.

1st Activity Clearly define the business and roles. Prepare the business for improvement by understanding 'who you are'. From the top down, define your business from the customer's perspective. What are the customer processes you conduct? What support processes do you perform? Ensure people know where they fit and how they support the customer. Establish clear roles for people and hold them accountable through a fair and mutually agreed performance system. Remember clarity is a much more effective motivator than the 'carrot and stick'.

2nd Activity **Cast the vision.** Prepare the business for improvement by communicating 'where you are going'. This involves the setting of a Strategic Intent. This is a brief document that provides the direction and states the 'where to'. Keep it brief to leave room for creativity. Allow sub-units to focus on the 'how to'. While the Strategic Intent is concise, getting to that final document can involve quite a lengthy environmental scan, wide consultation and actively managed change.

The Major Activity - Improve the Business! Establish teams, led by competent team leaders, to turn the Strategic Intent into definable improvement projects that yield a return for the company. This involves providing your workforce with simple skills to improve the business.

Improvement Skills and Operations - A common mistake is to set up 'sections' to handle business improvement. Improvement should be the lot of the rank and file, the operational people like Leon who understand the processes and what needs improvement. To empower Leon and his team, Jim will need to provide improvement skills training in a methodology that focuses on a team effort, is rigorous but simple to apply and uses language that is free of jargon (see the attributes of 7SIM™ in the Side Bar).

In summary; the relationship between the senior leaders and 1st line supervisors is critical to achieve rapid and effective improvement. Senior leaders encourage an atmosphere for improvement by providing clarity and direction. It is the actions and inspiration of 1st line supervisors, though, that will turn the vision into real improvement. When 1st line supervisors take decisive action, making the intentions of company strategy a reality, then the company will experience a rate of improvement that will provide the fast track to market prominence.

More info: Request **Dan** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au

DAN JACKSON

Dan Jackson is a Strategy Consultant, Principal of CALM Consulting and founder of the 7SIM™ business improvement method. Dan was an Adjunct Faculty member for the Australian Graduate School of Management's Executive MBA, Examiner for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (USA) and member of the Australian Business Excellence Evaluation Panel. He has seen his fair share of systematic (and unsystematic) improvement in organisations.

Dan is most at home encouraging leadership groups in the disciplines of strategy development, business performance management and systematic improvement.

SKILL OPERATIONAL PEOPLE IN BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

Too many companies set up separate sections to deal with business improvement. They skill analysts and other clever managers with qualifications and 'belts' assuming that brain power alone will achieve successful change. Well brain power will, but not just with this specialist group. The research suggests a better way.

That better way is to provide operational people with the competency to conduct systematic improvement. In other words, embed improvement activity within the line operations of the company, not separated from the real customer action.

7SIM™ is the improvement method designed specifically to tap into the creativity of those involved in the operations of your company. It is the research-based method and has 7 steps that are Simple, Inclusive and Methodical.

7SIM is a rigorous method that achieves dramatic improvement. 7SIM also taps into the key issues of change, increasing its effectiveness. When these key issues of change, drawn from a wide body of research are addressed, then successful change is guaranteed. These keys include:

A An unrelenting focus on the customer. Set your improvement horizon beyond the business to those who should benefit most from your improvement – the customer.

B Senior Sponsors that are interested and supportive. Identified by research as a 'silver bullet' to successful improvement – leaders should be active and passionate about the improvement.

C A crystal clear vision. This includes a comprehensive scoping of the improvement to ensure everyone understands the what, where, when, why, how and most importantly what success will look like.

D Plain spoken and extensive consultation. Self evident but for some reason very hard for businesses to achieve.

E The best people on improvement teams. The 1st Eleven (or for Netballers 1st Seven) should be on the improvement team. Do not put people that are available on the team. Perhaps you should question why are they available?

F Actively managed change. This is about being deliberate in managing improvement projects as a normal part of a manager's work pattern.

G An understanding that people transition through change differently. Supported by the influential work of William Bridges, this is about being real when assessing people's buy-in to change.

7SIM will allow you to empower the people who work the process to engage in the improvement activity. This will ensure there is buy-in from the most effective change agents in your company.

[For information on the research referred to in this article please refer to the Research section at www.7SIM.com.au]

Lean and Six Sigma Workplace Training

Roger Hilton
Chairperson, Six Sigma Division AOQ Inc, Principal, Six Sigma Academy, Workplace Trainer and Assessor, SkillUp Australia

Lean and Six Sigma training is being provided by a number of Training organisations and up until the last few years the focus has been at the middle to upper management levels.

There is a trend to train the supervisors and operators in these skills as well, especially in manufacturing, health and banking. Some private RTOs (Registered Training Organisations) are providing this training through the Nationally recognised programs in Competitive Manufacturing at the Certificate and Diploma levels.

The difference is that the trainee gets a twofold advantage of skills and knowledge in principles of the Lean Enterprise and in the Six Sigma methodology and a qualification at Certificate or Diploma level in Competitive Manufacturing.

The focus during this latter program normally over 12 to 24 months is that projects are selected based on the businesse's immediate needs and the trainee is measured for competence based on the impact of the project both culturally and from a triple bottom line perspective.

In my experience this approach at the workplace can produce profound improvements in the workplace culture and buy-in from all employees (if of course the trainer coaches and mentors the sceptics and strategically influences the relevant managers and unions, if necessary).

Coming from an initial background working as a statistician for ICI in the 1980s I am always intrigued at the ability (?) of training people in design of experiments (fractional factorial, etc.) and other more complex statistical subjects over a few hours and showing people how to use Minitab and other statistical software over an equivalent period. Sometimes a little bit of knowledge can be dangerous and the likelihood that the trainee does not realise the data being non-normal may create spurious analysis.

A colleague of mine who spent a number of years teaching statistics at one of Victoria's universities once estimated recently that "to cover the American Society for Quality's Six Sigma body of knowledge would normally be an 18 month (3-semester) course".

Therefore, in summary, Lean and Six Sigma training probably needs to be taken over a longer period than the workplace training approach that a number of private training organisations are taking may create different Six Sigma experts at the end of the day.

To assist with alleviating this possibility, the Six Sigma Division recently championed a project with RABQSA and industry to develop and register a set of competencies for Yellow, Green and Black belt Six Sigma. In developing these competencies a number of Lean competencies were also included.

More info: Request **Roger** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au

MJ Ahern Medal Awarded

The M J Ahern Award is the highest award presented to an individual member of the Australian Organisation for Quality (AOQ Inc). It is made in recognition of a member's outstanding contribution to AOQ Inc and the business community for promoting business improvement through the philosophies, principles and practices of quality management.

This award is a rare honour and has only been presented to four other recipients since its inception in 1990. Prior to 2007, the awardees were Lance Andrews, Ian Ogle, Leonard Mahon and Fred Travis.

2007 is one of those special years for AOQ Inc when a nomination for this award was accepted by the adjudication committee.

AOQ Inc is proud to announce that the M J Ahern Award was presented to Mario Pennisi at a Gala Breakfast Meeting on 7th November.

As has been custom since its inception, the award was presented by the Patron of AOQ Inc, the Honourable Mike Ahern.

Mario's contribution to the principles of Quality Management and AOQ Inc spans more than 35 years and involves a wide range of involvement, including:

- Council member of the Australian Organisation for Quality (previously Australian Organisation for Quality Control):
- Chairman Queensland 1976-1982, 2002 to present
- Member of National Council 1976-1982, 1983, 2002 to 2006
- National President 2004/05
- National Chairman 2005/06
- American Society for Quality (previously American Society for Quality Control)
- Senior Member (approx 1996)
- Council Member-Management Division 1993 to 1997. Coordinated co-hosting of Qualcon 98
- Council Member and Web Master-Human Development and Leadership Division 2002 to present. Coordinated co-hosting Qualcon 2005.

TECHNICAL JOURNALS – EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

- Quality Australia - The Business Improvement Journal, the official Journal of the Australian Organisation for Quality from 2000 to 2007. Readership about 12,000.
- Powder Coater Painter, since its inception in 1996 to 2000. This is a quarterly newspaper directed at powder coaters and fabricators in Australia and New Zealand. Readership about 12,000.
- Coatings and Fabrication, since its inception in 2002. This is a quarterly newspaper directed at metal finishers and fabricators in Australia and New Zealand. Readership about 12,000.

COURSES DEVELOPED AND PRESENTED

- Quality Control - The Use of AS 1821-3, October 1987.
- Good Laboratory Practice May 1985.
- Laboratory Methods and Costing July 1985.
- Good Laboratory Practice July 1986.
- People and Quality November 1986.
- Good Laboratory Practice July 1987.
- Quality Conferences Organised
- Chairman of Steering Committee Qualcon 86-Towards 2000 Conference 1984-5.
- Convenor Pan Pacific Qualcon 98.
- Convenor Qualcon 2001.
- Convenor Qualcon 2005.
- Convenor Six Sigma 2006.
- Industry Awards Committees
- Chair Gold Award Committee-1994.
- Chair Gold Award Committee-1995.
- Chair Gold Award Committee 2006.
- Coordinator Peak Industry Advisory Council-2005.
- Standards Association of Australia Standards Committees
- Member of numerous Standards Committees including QR008-Quality Systems, 2005 to present.
- Quality Conferences attended (*Papers presented)
- 1980: Bi-Annual Conference of AOQC -SA.
- 1982: Bi-Annual Conference of AOQC - VIC.
- 1984: Bi-Annual Conference of AOQC - TAS.

- 1986 * Annual Conference of NZOQA - NZ.
- 1986 * Bi-Annual Conference of AOQC - QLD.
- 1986 * Course Good Laboratory Practice (AOQC) - QLD.
- 1986 * Course People and Quality (AOQC) - QLD.
- 1987: Bi-Annual Conference of The Australian Organisation for Quality Control (AOQC)-NSW.
- 1987 *Annual Conference of American Society for Quality Control (ASQC) - Minneapolis, USA.
- 1987 * Annual Conference of Australian Quality Circles Association (AQCA) – VIC.
- 1988: Annual Conference of the American Society of Quality Control (ASQC) - Dallas Texas.
- 1990: Annual Conference of the American Society of Quality Control (ASQC) - San Francisco.
- 1992: Annual Conference of the American Society of Quality Control (ASQC) - Management Division, Irvine.
- 1993: Annual Conference of the American Society of Quality Control (ASQC) - Management Division, Tampa.
- 1994: Annual Conference of the American Society of Quality Control (ASQC), Las Vegas.
- 1996: * Annual Quality Congress 1988: Annual Conference of the American Society of Quality Control (ASQC) - Chicago.
- 1998: Qualcon 98, Brisbane Queensland.
- 1999: Annual Quality Congress, American Society for Quality
- 2000: Qualcon 2000, Sydney, New South Wales
- 2001: Qualcon 2001, Brisbane, Queensland
- 2002: * NZOQ Conference, Nelson, New Zealand
- 2003: Qualcon 2003, Melbourne, Victoria
- 2004: *NZOQ Conference, Auckland, New Zealand
- 2004: *Qualcon 2004, Adelaide, South Australia
- 2005: Qualcon 2005, Surfers Paradise, Australia
- 2006: Qualcon 2006, Sydney, Australia
- 2007: *Six Sigma 2007, Melbourne, Australia

As well, papers on quality and business improvement topics were presented to a number of metal industry conferences worldwide.

BOOKS PUBLISHED

- 16 books as author, co-author or editor.

PROFESSIONAL AWARDS

- Fellow Australian Organisation for Quality
- Fellow Institute of Metal Finishing (London)
- Honorary Life Member Australasian Institute for Metal Finishing
- Senior Member American Society for Quality

PERSONAL AWARDS RECEIVED

- American Society for Quality-Outstanding Service Quality Management Division International Region 25 Councillor 1993-1999.
- Standards Australia Award 2005-Outstanding Service Community, Materials and IT Standards.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- 1975: Chairman of the Board, The University of Queensland Talsa Credit Union Limited (now Universities Credit Union)
- 1977-1983 and 1986-87: President, Clairvaux Parents and Friends Association.
- 1974-6 and 1984-5, Honorary Secretary, Clairvaux Parents and Friends Association.
- 1983, Member of The University of Queensland Senate
- 2002 to present, Rotarian
- 2003/4, Secretary Rotary Club of Brisbane

Continuous Improvement in Aged Care:

A Journey with Lots of Roundabouts

Dr Devi Ranasinghe

Director, Total Quality Management Training Service Pty Ltd, Chairperson Aged Care Division

The journey of continuous quality improvement in aged care has many roundabouts. To achieve core concepts of continuous improvement, the organisations must implement appropriate adequate systems and processes. This requires a great deal of knowledge and skills at all levels. The best way to achieve desired results and sustain the viability of the system is to ensure management develop their organisation as learning organisations.

The aged care industry is at a roundabout; trying to find the right exit so they can create their organisation as a learning organisation.

> *'Real learning gets to the heart of what it means to be human. Through learning we re-create ourselves. Through learning we become able to do something we never were able to do. Through learning we explore the world and we extend our capacity to create…. By learning the principles of the disciplines, teams begin to understand how they can think and inquire, so they can collaborate in discussions and in working together create the results that matter (to them)'* (Wikipaedia 2007).

Continuous Improvement is not a difficult task once the organisation develops a learning culture. Table 1 indicates the core concepts and core steps of implementing continuous improvement to apply to any industry and it is no different to aged care. Understanding who the customers are and meeting and/or exceeding the expectation of customer needs are the most important components of continuous improvement. Currently, most of the aged care providers concentrate on monitoring delivery quality (through audits) and put most of their efforts on correcting processes. There is no doubt that overall, customers in aged care (residents) receive better care. Some may exceed their customers' (residents') expectations. The distinctive thing about continuous improvement in aged care is that staff must learn about customer's individual needs and make every effort to meet those needs.

Table 1 illustrates the core concepts of continuous improvement and the steps required to implement continuous improvement. These core concepts are not well conversed in aged care, let alone the implementation of continuous improvement appropriately and adequately. In aged care, continuous improvement has not become a natural part of everyday work nor has the matter of identifying variation in processes or applying the scientific method to test and refine changes. Aged care continuous improvement will not go forward without having an understanding, and knowledge, of application of these core concepts.

> ***During the last 10 years, the aged care industry has developed an endless auditing culture. This culture needs to be changed.***

Despite the fact that continuous improvement was introduced to the aged care sector 10 years ago (1997), the aged care organisations still find difficulty in forming a team to participate in quality activities. Many aged care providers, managers and authorities are concerned about the lack of involvement of employees in quality efforts, despite the fact that many aged care organisations have facilitated opportunities for employees to participate in such activities. Several factors cause this lack of participation.

TABLE 1

Core concepts of continuous improvement
- Quality is defined as meeting and/or exceeding the expectations of our customers (residents).
- Success is achieved through meeting the needs of those we serve.
- Most problems are found in processes, not in people. CQI does not seek to blame, but rather to improve processes.
- Variation in processes can lead to unwanted variation in outcomes.
- It is possible to achieve continual improvement through small, incremental changes using the scientific method.
- Continuous improvement is most effective when it becomes a natural part of the way everyday work is done.

Core Steps of implementing continuous improvement
- Form a team that has knowledge of the system needing improvement.
- Define a clear aim.
- Understand the needs of the people who are served by the system.
- Identify and define measures of success.
- Brainstorm potential change strategies for producing improvement.
- Plan, collect, and use data for facilitating effective decision making.
- Apply the scientific method to test and refine changes.

(Iowa State University)

While gathering information from employees in a number of aged care organisations it became clear that general understanding of continuous improvement is alarmingly low. Most employees perceive continuous improvement in aged care as:

- extra work,
- requires extra time in order to improve the quality of life of their customers (residents),
- is providing compassion and tender loving care which they have been providing to their customers,
- is for the accreditation purposes only as some of their customer's (residents) quality of life cannot be improved due to many medical (end of life) problems,
- is not necessary as they are already doing a great job and provide high standard care and services,
- believe that industry as a whole has done very little to improve their work life,
- could not necessarily improve because their roles are task oriented rather than person and process oriented,
- will not improve efficiency as they believe that getting work done as quickly as possible is efficiency.

It has been stated in the literature (Bruce 1990; Downey, T E, 2000; The Johns Hopkins School of Public Health 1998) that the staff members' knowledge and experience are among an organisation's most important resources and the employees who perform a task daily know best what may go wrong and why. They also may have the most practical ideas about how to improve the process. To improve quality, top managers must recognise and value the knowledge and experience of staff members at every level. They must give staff members the authority and responsibility to improve quality (Jaques, E, 1992). Thus empowered, staff members often can solve problems and improve quality quickly and effectively.

Human resources and continuous improvement theorists jointly advocate that workers, who participate in decision-making, typically feel committed to making the proposed course of action work. Participation generates enthusiasm and increases workers' motivation. Solving problems, even small or simple problems, gives staff members a sense of achievement and boosts their self-confidence.

So where are we going wrong in this journey?

What are we doing wrong in this process?

Continuous Improvement is not a difficult task once the organisation develops a learning culture.

Many people see in-service training as the remedy for many quality problems. Education and training can improve staff performance and the quality of care by building skills and improving knowledge. The Author also believes strongly, and advocates that in order to improve quality in care and service delivery in aged care facilities, that employee's education and training must be the first priority. No amount of audits and surveys will substitute staff knowledge and skills. Count et al (1994) conducted a study to measure the attitudinal effects of variable levels of participation in TQM initiatives among a large group of staff nurses. The working hypothesis was that increased exposure to TQM activities would enhance job satisfaction and related work attitudes across different types of staff nurses. The study partially supports an affirmative response.

However, one school of thought stated that formal training, in which staff members attend an in-service workshop or course, might not be the best option for many employees. Formal training is essential when workers lack some necessary skill or knowledge that no one on-site can teach them. To be effective, formal training must address the specific requirements of the job. However, many formal training programs fail to change trainees' everyday practices.

This is due to many factors. Some of the education and training provided in aged care is not job specific and lacks practicality. Presently, there are large numbers of direct care workers in aged care who lack English proficiency. While they can manage day-to-day conversational English, they may find it difficult to comprehend the contents of the subject being delivered, let alone transfer the skills and concepts learned and putting them into practice; if the education and training is purely based on theory and no practical examples.

Transferring knowledge to skill requires some level of experience. Employees who are unable to transfer their knowledge to skills may need extensive mentoring or support from employees who have knowledge and experience. Literature reveals that competency based training, where the participant must demonstrate mastery of the skills and knowledge that they will use on the job before being certified, are more effective in transferring knowledge into practice.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (2007) professes to provide continuous skill-oriented interactive training programs for all staff to update their knowledge of current guidelines. The Institute will:

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Wikipaedia, T F E., 'Learning Organisation', 2007.

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- evaluate the educational needs of staff,
- schedule in-service routinely,
- use expert, mentor, or specialists for education,
- consider using care management conferences to encourage guideline-based practice,
- identify resources for obtaining emerging or updated information and ensure that staff has easy access.

Effective, less expensive, and less disruptive alternatives to formal training are supportive supervision, informal on-the-job training, coaching, and job aids such as flowcharts, wall charts, flip charts, and checklists. When supervisors or co-workers instruct staff (especially for personal care workers) on the job, they can tailor their advice to the individual needs of each staff member and to the setting, and they can offer immediate feedback. On-the-job training is a common way to refresh, update, and expand staff knowledge and skills; it will also increase the education provider's knowledge and skills.

It has been also stated (Rudy, S Sep 2, 1998) that before turning to extensive training programs, managers should analyse the causes of poor staff performance, which often lie with systems that discourage providers from applying their knowledge and skills effectively. Common obstacles to good performance include inadequate equipment and supplies, little supervisory support, few rewards, inappropriate evaluation, limited opportunities to practice skills, flawed recruitment or job assignments and shortage of qualified and, in some cases, unqualified staff.

During the last 10 years, the aged care industry has developed an endless auditing culture. This culture needs to be changed. Aged care needs to look into creating learning organisations to broaden the staff knowledge and skills. The staff knowledge and skill is fundamental to any type of improvement. Sustainability of the system and processes is dependant on staff knowledge and understanding of the system. Staff must understand why, where, what and how the systems and processes work. Without converting aged care organisations into learning organisations and continuously providing knowledge of the core concepts of continuous improvement, no amount of audits or surveys will improve continuous quality improvement in aged care.

No amount of audits and surveys will substitute staff knowledge and skills.

More info: Request **Devi** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au

Customers Behaving Badly

Jillian Mercer is Director of Mercer Management Consulting Services

(Ed Note: This article is adapted from one first published in the February/March 2006 edition of the National Accountant.)

Australian customers are throwing tantrums, swearing and making physical and other threats (including bomb threats) to staff of businesses!

And why?

Because those customers are sick of bad service. The University of Queensland revealed this disturbing aspect of doing business in Australia in research results released in November 2005.

The research further revealed that the main triggers for the rage that we are witnessing and experiencing in the service context are rudeness, incompetence and indifference from staff of businesses.

What has happened to the service experience that customers are displaying such unmitigated rage?

Is this the way we wish to conduct business?

DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS?

I am of the view that difficult and angry customers do not start their days wanting to behave in this manner. It is when they encounter our bad business processes that customers tip in to the rage realm. Any processes which are set up for the convenience of the business and which are not customer-focussed are more likely to aggravate your customers. Such processes impair your staff from giving the good service that they so often wish to.

This contributes to a deterioration in the relationship between your brand and your customer. The customer contacts you and either:

- wants to give your business some of their hard-earned money (in exchange for a service or product that suits them); or,
- already has given you money and is attempting to have a service or product fault rectified to ensure the money they have spent is not wasted.

A problem arises when your staff:

- are unable to supply service or product to meet the customer's expectation; or they,
- act as if nothing could possibly have gone wrong with the initial service transaction.

CUSTOMER EXPECTATION

Customers do have a right to expect and trust that you can do and deliver what your advertising says you can. It is when that trust is lost that customers move to anger.

The answer to either preventing customer anger in your business, or in recovering your business reputation in the face of customer anger is to understand what the customer's first emotion was. Inevitably, it will be a more benign emotion than anger. When analysing customer anger, it is always important to remember that anger is a secondary emotion, which is always preceded by another such as loss of trust, disappointment, embarrassment, powerlessness, shock, and resentment.

You then need to assess what went wrong to cause the initial emotion.

WHAT DO CUSTOMERS WANT?

It is important to explore what customers want.

The customers of my consulting business are businesses, which are seeking assistance and advice in improving their service to their customers. Often these companies have not given any thought to the fundamentals of good service and do not realise you cannot deliver "Wow!" service without having the basics in place.

SERVICE FUNDAMENTALS

If you meet the fundamental requirements of good service there is far less likelihood that your customers will turn on you and your staff in anger when things go wrong.

To assist companies with a framework to assess their capabilities in providing the fundamentals of good service throughout their business I have developed ©Nine Rules of Good Service. They are derived from many of the other service frameworks I have been exposed to in over twenty years in this area of business. Implementation of the rules can insure that staff at the front line are never in the impotent position of being unable to assist a customer because of difficult business processes and policies.

The nine rules are:

- Provide the highest standards of prompt, convenient service including:
  be open and available at times to suit your customers,
  deal willingly and positively with anything that goes wrong,
  communicate well by listening to your customers and ensuring that they are understanding everything you are saying about your business and its services.
- Provide information to your customers about what you can do for them and the rules of engagement with you.
- Be honest and upfront about what you cannot do for your customers.
- Offer choice to your customers.
- Consult with your customers by asking them their views on improving your business.
- Be courteous to your customers.
- Be helpful to your customers so they get what they want.
- Put things right when they go wrong.
- Provide value for money within the limitations your business can afford.

These are supported by some 30 SPIs (Service Performance Indicators) which facilitate an understanding of the deep complexity of each service transaction.

WHY NINE RULES?

There are nine rules because service is a complex issue, which requires rigorous management at both operational and strategic level.

The rules meet the need for a comprehensive framework to understand and work with service in businesses. There is nothing new or "easy" about the nine rules - they are just based on common sense.

THE SERVICE TRANSACTION

On the one hand is your business and the work you do providing either a tangible product or a less tangible service for which customers are prepared to pay money. On the other hand is your customer, and he or she is the only person who knows what they want from you and how they want it delivered. To know accurately their needs, you need to ask them about what they want from you in relation to the service transaction.

The service transaction is the set of behaviours and actions between your staff and your customers, which are designed to provide your customers with products or services they want in exchange for money or other benefit. Millions of minutes of service transactions between your staff and your customers are occurring in any year in your business.

It is in this transaction between business and suppliers and their customers that the Nine Rules of Good Service© apply. They provide the key to understanding how to manage that space between you and your customers.

SERVICE TRANSACTION GOES WRONG

It is vitally important to have a good understanding of what to do when the service transaction goes badly wrong. It is here that the seeds of anger are planted if failure to deliver the fundamentals of service occurs.

This may be a result of your business practices not meeting good standards of service; or, it may be because the customer is behaving in an extreme manner that lies outside the boundaries of normal interaction.

As well, understanding how we manage what is going on when two humans (your customer and you or your staff) clash over a service transaction issue assists us to manage difficult customers.

In business, you need to be clear and to differentiate between difficult customers who are more common and customers "from Hell" (who are very rare).

Angry customers are great barometers for risk management because they are letting you know where their tolerance levels are. Often they are representative of many other customers who simply do not tell you what is wrong, who just walk away and do irreparable commercial damage to your business by bad-word–of-mouth advertising.

FROM RAGE TO RECOVERY

We can find ourselves perplexed about what to do when the service transaction goes badly wrong and the customer is angry.

How do you turn around a customer who is locked into rage and is directing that rage at your staff?

This requires great skill and specialist competency.

Firstly, you must understand the customer.

However, there are times when customers may just be really bad, or just mad. There are special ways to deal with such customers. In my book, May I Help You? Great Customer Service for Small Business, the 10th chapter, Dealing with difficult customers, details steps to take (Allan and Unwin, 2003).

In summary, with the very small percentage of customers who are "from Hell", never accept, tolerate or excuse behaviour which is verbally or physically threatening and/or violent. If, in the view of you or your staff, it is evident that a customer may become violent, I recommend that you immediately leave the presence of that customer as a matter of urgency.

DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS VERSUS DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Difficult customers range from just irritable (and irritating) through to irrational, bullying and dangerous. Difficult customers are often the product of difficult business and service processes in our business that we try to make customer adapt to.

Do not fall into the trap of treating all your customers as if they are "from Hell'. Many "difficult" customers are that way because your business systems and processes prevent them from receiving the service standards they expect from any competent business operator. They become difficult in response to their frustration at your staff because you have created difficult business and service situations and expect them to navigate them.

RECOGNISE THE DIFFERENCE IN VIEW

With "difficult" customers, the key issue is that at the time of the conflict with you, their perception of the issue differs from yours. Because it is your business, and you are the one who wants the customer to give you some of their money, it is incumbent upon you to work to understand the customer's perspective - not the other way around. The one way to do that is to try to stand on the customer's side of the counter in a non-judgemental way. Then, try to work out what is missing in the customer's information frame so that you can provide the information to help the customers understand. Recognise also, that the learning that may occur is that your business has made a mistake and needs to fix it for the benefit of the "difficult" customer.

CURE AND PREVENT

To identify where a mistake has been made, be very familiar with the Nine Rules of Good Service© - they will help you to analyse and unravel the various issues imbedded in the customer complaint which is the basis for anger. By addressing and providing redress for each of the issues (both service-based and product-based), you and your staff are in a better position to deal with the angry customer. From this basis, you can create a recovery where the customer can be turned around to be an advocate for your business who talks to others and engages in good-word-of-mouth advertising - which is the cheapest and most effective advertising there is.

FOLLOW UP

http://www.business.uq.edu.au/news/media_releases/release149.phtml University of Queensland media release

www.nocustomerservice.com.au (a customer complaints information exchange website or "scratching post").

www.mercermanagement.com.au (for follow up advice and assistance on complaints-management and managing difficult customers).

http://www.socap.org.au/ (the research page for information on research into customer emotions and complaints handling).

www.iso.org (http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/CombinedQueryResult. Combined Query Result? queryString=complaints+handling) (for information on the international standard on complaints handling, ISO 10002:2004).

Jillian Mercer is Director of Mercer Management Consulting Services. Regarded as an expert on customer focus, she is passionate about helping businesses better understand and improve the service transaction and writes and presents on this topic in Australia and throughout Asia and the Middle East. She can be contacted on (08) 92278055 or visit www.mercermanagement.com.au

More info: Request **Jillian** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au

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Declaration by Applicant

I agree that, on the acceptance of my application for membership by the Australian Organisation for Quality, I shall be governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the By-laws of the Organisation, pay my subscriptions as they become due and that I shall advance the aims of the Organisation as far as practical in my power until I resign my membership in writing. I certify that all statements contained in this form are, to the best of my knowledge, true and correct.

Signature of Applicant: ________________________________ Date:__________

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JAS-ANZ Appoints New Chief Executive

The Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ), announces the appointment of Dr James Galloway as Chief Executive.

Dr Galloway was most recently Director, Industry and Government Liaison at the research organisation National ICT Australia (NICTA). Previously he has held a range of positions in government and industry associations with a focus on the role that technical infrastructure organisations such as JAS-ANZ play in promoting trade and delivering economic benefit.

In announcing the appointment, JAS-ANZ Chairman David Peaston commented; “Dr Galloway will bring a unique blend of technical conformity assessment knowledge and government and industry liaison skills to JAS-ANZ.”

“This will be especially valuable in creating opportunities to extend the benefits accredited certification and inspection schemes offer to government, industry and the community.”

Dr Galloway received his PhD in history at the University of Adelaide, and has a Master of Government and Commercial Law (Australian National University).

Dr Galloway will commence with JAS-ANZ on 21 November 2007.

More info: Request **JAS-ANZ** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au

Regulated Research & Development and Manufacturing Division

Wendy Free
Committee Member, Regulated Research and Development and Manufacturing Division

Within our daily lives, medications are often regarded as somewhat of a commodity item; we take much of them for granted, "this tablet will treat my headache". Similarly, we assume that when we become unwell, medical science will have a cure on hand, specifically tailored for our condition.

The 'Panacea' named after the Greek goddess of healing, Panacea, was supposed to be a remedy that would cure all diseases and prolong life indefinitely. Sought by the alchemists as the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone, the panacea was a mythical substance that would enable the transmutation of common metals into gold.

Perhaps we should question whether or not gold was a literal or figurative substance in this endeavour. Despite billions of dollars invested in this industry over the last century, we are yet to find the definitive cure-all. And yet, we continue to invest in research and drug development, some seeking the cure, and some, the gold.

A short history of Pharmaceutical Research, Development, Regulation & Manufacture

Nicholas Culpeper (1616 – 1654) was an Astrologer-Physician who began his apprenticeship in an apothecary in England. Dedicating much of his life to the investigation and documentation of medicinal herbs and their virtues, he is arguably one of the founding forefathers on modern pharmacology.

Only 58 years after Culpeper's demise, the first snake oil remedy was patented in England, in 1712; Richard Stoughton's Elixir. Had the concept of identity been understood at this time, it may have been understood that oils extracted from Chinese water snakes were high in eicosapentaenoic acid, but not all species of snake could elucidate this active substance. Rarely did medicine salesmen or manufacturers have the skills in analytical chemistry to evaluate medications, thus the 'miracle' of snake oil became the epitome of hoax.

Of course, not all of the tonics and cures were deliberately bogus. Some derived from homespun remedies that - by trial and error - were sometimes found to be effective treatments.

In America in the 1820s, health sciences, educational institutions, and the legal framework continued to lag behind European nations. Unscrupulous traders exploited this opportunity with medications that were "good enough for America". This influx of poor quality medications led to the establishment of the first pharmacy schools and the publication of the United States Pharmacopoeia.

There were no US regulation concerning safety and effectiveness of drugs until the 1906 Food and Drugs Act. Although significant, America's 1906 Act was riddled with shortcomings; it failed to regulate medical devices or cosmetics, and failed to define their explicit authority to conduct facility inspections.

One of the most famous outcomes of this failure is the story of Sulfanilamide, September 1937. Sulfanilamide Elixir was a 'pleasantly flavoured' liquid preparation, a new anti-infective wonder drug, which contained a new solvent, diethylene glycol. The inclusion of untested diethylene glycol lead to 107 deaths, many of them children; before the FDA became aware of the circumstances. The company maintained that the deaths were due to cross-reactions to the sulphur drugs, and as a result could be prosecuted only for distributing a misbranded drug; because an "elixir" had to contain alcohol as a solvent.

More recently, the name 'Thalidomide' has also become synonymous with tragedy. First prescribed during the late 1950s and early 1960s, in the first few months of pregnancy, to relieve morning sickness, it tragically caused unpredicted and serious birth defects.

The Australian Drug Evaluation Committee (which still exists today), the predecessor to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) was established in 1963 as a direct result of the Thalidomide experience. It took a disaster of this magnitude to bring home to Australian health officials that there were not only benefits but also significant potential risks from the use of therapeutic compounds; until that time regulation had been State based.

MEDICINES TODAY – AN AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVE

We continue to seek to the "panacea". Our focuses and methods employed have however changed. History teaches us that no one substance will 'cure-all' and that stringent controls are required to reduce the risks associated with potent medications.

Medicines design, research, development, assessment and manufacture uses sciences like molecular biology, biochemistry, biophysics, genetics, and immunology as well as traditional learning in the attempt to create substances that can contribute to our improved quality of life.

We understand that there are risks and benefits associated with every medication, and attempt to thoroughly investigate, define and manage these key criteria using a number of internationally recognised quality management systems; including

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The Australian Organisation for Quality Inc (AOQ Inc), Regulated Research, Development and Manufacturing Division (RRDM) seeks

1 To promote and contribute to the science, understanding and practice of Regulated Research & Development and Manufacturing;

2 To recognise and to advance the status of the natural persons engaged in Regulated Research & Development and Manufacturing;

3 To disseminate knowledge of the science and practice of Regulated Research & Development and Manufacturing;

4 To initiate, conduct, supervise, and assist in research and investigations into the science and practice of quality management, quality assurance and business excellence in Regulated Research & Development and Manufacturing;

5 To advise AOQ Inc regarding the impact of relevant regulations on Regulated Research & Development and Manufacturing and assist AOQ Inc as required with representing these interests to the wider community;

6 To assist AOQ Inc in the fostering of mutually beneficial relationships with relevant quality assurance and quality management organisations.

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The More Things Change…

Dr Brendan Coutts, Hawthorne Academy

Once upon a time, there was a business where management's impression of what was happening in their organisation was significantly different to what was actually taking place.

In this organisation, although management believed that their workers were working to their capacity, the workers were actually deliberately doing less work than they were able. Without management knowing, the workers spent time in a range of illegal activities such as playing games – sometimes leaving the premises to do so, sleeping, socialising, and engaging in physical and verbal violence.

It was a very political environment and factions and rivalry amongst the workers emerged. In the competition between people and cliques, the workers were ingenious. They were able to manipulate their environment to get rivals punished, or sacked. Workers would deliberately withhold valuable information from colleagues. They would deliberately allow or cause others to make mistakes in order to get them in trouble. They would manipulate their work in ways that put rival workers under pressure. They would aid friends and sabotage rivals. They would start fights in ways that made others appear to be the aggressors, so it would be the others that would attract disciplinary attention from management. They were able to get management to act in ways that served the workers own agenda.

While doing all this, the workers continued to be moderately productive, were equipped with a range of plausible reasons for reduced performance, and behaved like model employees whenever management was present. The supervisor, who was the link between management and the workers, aligned himself with the workers in order to retain their friendship and respect. The workers informally controlled all avenues, through which management could have been made aware of what was really happening in the workplace. Management never saw, or heard, anything they did not want to see or hear.

So successful were the workers' schemes for isolating the reality of the workplace from the awareness of management, that management did not question the performance of the workers and believed that any significant increase in productivity could only come from technological advances and lean operations initiatives.

Although the workers were frequently breaking the formal rules of the organisation, their behaviour was highly regulated. Amongst themselves, there were a number of unwritten, informal, rules, which were vigorously enforced through their own techniques of discipline and reward. The most serious crime a worker could commit in this environment was to reveal to management that the 'illegal' behaviour was taking place. When one worker decided to blow the whistle on his colleagues, he was ruthlessly ostracised and targeted. All his suffering amounted to nothing though, as management were so sure that they knew what was really happening in the workplace, they did not believe him, and took him for a troublemaker.

No doubt, the organisation described above appears highly dysfunctional. It may not surprise readers to know that organisational dynamics like these were found in a factory in the early days of industrialisation. The Hawthorne Experiments were a series of studies conducted in a huge Chicago factory in the 1920's and 1930's, and one of these studies (the Bank Wiring Room) uncovered behaviour much like that described above. Management was shocked when the reality of the situation was revealed, but other research showed that behaviour like this was commonplace at the time. This type of situation was extremely widespread, perhaps even pervasive, but no one believed it was happening in their organisations.

One of the findings of The Hawthorne Experiments was that the sort of behaviour described above did not occur because workers were vindictive, or because they hated management, the organisation, or their work. In fact, the workers had no ill will towards management; they liked their organisation, and did take some pride in their work. The rivalries were not even fundamentally due to personal dislikes between workers.

It was found that all the illegal and counterproductive activities were essentially driven by the worker's need to bring more meaning to their work lives. Because the organisation sought to control and coerce the workers behaviour solely towards productivity, any other needs (emotional, social, etc) were suppressed and the workers were forced to express these needs informally and illegally. In another of the experiments (the Relay Assembly Test Room), an environment where workers were trusted more, experienced greater freedom, had more influence on their environment, and were more appreciated, resulted in spectacular improvement in performance, teamwork, self-direction and morale.

Partly because of the Hawthorne Experiments, organisations began to adjust their approach to relating to their workers. In subsequent decades, great strides have been made in providing workers with a range of benefits - financial and non-financial - in order to attract, retain and motivate staff. No doubt, the workplaces of today are vastly different to those of pre-depression factories, and there is a perception now (as there was then) that the sort of behaviour described above does not happen any longer. The Hawthorne Experiments are granted only historical significance in Organisational Behaviour textbooks today.

This is interesting because in fact, the description of the organisation above does not come from an early industrial setting, but from a recent review of an existing Australian business.

It is virtually certain that it is also to a significant extent a description of any number of other organisations around Australia and the world. In many years of consulting, we have rarely found an organisation, which does not display at least some of the symptoms of the Bank Wiring Room. This has been the case whether it be blue or white-collar industries – from manufacturing and construction to health and professional services.

Despite the developments in staff benefits that have occurred over the last 70 years, organisational theorists regularly emerge with the same message.

Chris Argyris has found that by far the most common organisational environment is characterised by a particular set of beliefs and values, including - that effectiveness is dependent on a top-down approach, the ability to control unilaterally; and the suppression of feelings. He found that these beliefs are acted out by management, even when they think they do not hold such beliefs.

He also found that in these environments, the following symptoms arise: information is hidden; there is low openness and trust; there is a lack of awareness of what is really happening, and of the consequences of actions; there is a failure to recognise that significantly greater effectiveness is possible; learning is limited; defensive group dynamics arise; counterproductive intergroup dynamics arise; and threatening issues are covered up.

This is a remarkably accurate description of the symptoms present in the organisation described above and in the Bank Wiring Room. Other Organisational Theorists (eg Douglas McGregor, in his 'Theory X') have found similar assumptions and beliefs are pervasive in organisations, with similar results. We find them in most of the organisations we visit and see some of the consequences played out in high profile organisational incidents: the Challenger disaster, Enron, the Bundaberg hospital,… - in all of these cases the reality of the situation was known to people working in the organisation, but management only listened to what they wanted to hear.

While disasters of the magnitude of these cases will not happen to all organisations, the evidence suggests that at the very least, most organisations are not reaching their potential and do not know this to be the case. The phenomenon is insidious, as even though it is pervasive, its very nature is to mask its existence from management. Whether this type of limiting dysfunction exists in an organisation or not, management will probably believe that it does not.

WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US?

We have found that external confidential interviewing can uncover much of what is really happening in an organisation. To a lesser extent, some confidential surveying can also indicate areas of organisational dysfunction. However, it remains that the root of the divide lies in the beliefs prevailing within the organisation, particularly with management. Interviewing or surveying may uncover information which challenges those beliefs, but for this to be of any benefit, there must be a willingness to accept the reality of the situation and acknowledge that there could be other beliefs which might serve the organisation and it's people better.

Both Argyris (Model II) and McGregor (Theory Y) suggested belief systems, which could result in greater effectiveness, and hopefully many organisations are moving towards these systems. Perhaps the growth in business coaching is due to recognition that through a greater understanding of our beliefs we can adopt ones that lead to greater effectiveness.

Nevertheless, our experience is that enormous potential is wasted in most organisations each day, and that there is a widespread ignorance that this is so.

In the case outlined at the start of the article, when the facts were presented to a board member, he was shocked, angry, and felt that the workers were behaving in this way because 'they are saying "F—k You!" to management'. When I asked one of the workers, why the workers behaved in this way, his response was 'because they're bored…or no, it's because they are looking for more…meaning in their work…yes, that's it – they are trying to find more meaning.'

More info: Request **Brendan** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au

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Supply Chain Security

Richard Gunawan
Marketing Manager, Lloyds Register Quality Assurance Limited

When it comes to quality management, the majority of blue chip companies seem to have some kind of process to control their product and services. However, very few international companies are paying attention to securing their supply chain.

Security has become increasingly important given the threat from terrorism, but one should not underestimate physical failure risks that will have the same catastrophic impact. Supply chain security goes beyond the threat of terrorism.

Recent global product recalls in manufacturing industry and food have shown the lack of emphasis on controlling supply chains. As reliance on subcontractors and outsourcing grow, organisations need to be assured that these business partners are managing quality and cost effectively. Reports in the media about machinery theft closer to home have documented the growing risks that organisations face and the need to manage them.[1]

The risk of human factors, control of security and other manufacturing activities may also have disastrous consequences to an organisation's performance and public standing.

WHAT CAN ORGANISATIONS DO TO IMPROVE THEIR SUPPLY CHAIN SECURITY?

The ISO Committee (International Standards Organisation) has launched the ISO/PAS 28000:2005 standard recently. The standard may be used:

- to minimise risks associated with supply chain management by businesses that are going out to tender for their services
- to provide a consistent approach by all service providers in a supply chain
- to benchmark IT service management
- as the basis for an independent assessment
- to demonstrate the ability to meet customer requirements
- to improve services

For further detail, copies of the ISO/PAS 28000:2005 standard can be obtained from www.iso.org.

According to Charles Piersall, the chair person of ISO/TC 8.

> *"Disruptions to international trade can have drastic consequences for everybody. International problems truly need international solutions to mitigate potential threats. Unilateral government actions won't work and are not enforceable globally. ISO is providing a focal point that provides industry with a clear, uniform global approach for implementation of supply chain security requirements.*
>
> *The new documents are designed to enable better monitoring of supply flows, to combat smuggling and to respond to the threat of piracy and terrorist attacks, as well as to create a safe and secure international supply chain regime."*

According to the ISO committee, ISO/PAS 28000:2005 can be implemented on its own. Nonetheless, it is designed to be fully compatible with ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 14001:2004. Companies already using these management system standards may be able to use them as a foundation for developing a security management system according to ISO/PAS 28000:2005. As an internationally recognised standard, it provides acknowledgment of your organisation's commitment to supply chain security.

The new ISO documents can be used by a broad range of organisations - small, medium and large - in the manufacturing, service, storage and transportation sectors at any stage of the production or supply chain. According to ISO, their implementation will reassure business partners that security is taken seriously within the organisations with which they deal.

HOW CAN ISO/PAS 28000:2005 CERTIFICATION BENEFIT MY ORGANISATION?

Certification to ISO/PAS 28000:2005 helps create a systematic framework in which organisations drive continual improvement. ISO/PAS 28000:2005 is a new management system specification that provides, for the first time, a framework for organisations that operate or rely on any aspect of the supply chain. It can help all sectors of industry assess security risks, implement controls and make arrangements to mitigate or manage potential security threats and impacts from the supply chain in the same way that other fundamental business principles such as quality, safety and customer satisfaction are managed.

LRQA is the first certification body to approve Dubai Ports World (DP World) for ISO/PAS 28000:2005.

Lloyd's Register Group's Area Manager for the Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Tony Muncer, stated that LRQA is delighted to be working with DP World, an organisation which is clearly placing security at the top of its agenda and showing the rest of world that management systems are an imperative tool for managing supply chain security risks.

Mr Muncer said: "We believe that all businesses that are reliant on the supply chain for business continuity will benefit by adopting the sound management principles in ISO/PAS 28000:2005. LRQA's 'business assurance' approach to assessment will ensure that clients' assured under ISO/PAS 28000:2005 will gain maximum benefit from the standard."

Paul Lightburn, Lloyd's Register's Group Product Manager for ISO/PAS 28000:2005 emphasises the importance of this specification because it helps companies demonstrate to their supply chain partners and stakeholders that they have top management commitment and sound operations arrangements in place for identifying threats and managing risks. More companies are now expected to comply with codes and regulations like C-TPAT, the World Customs Organisation's Framework of Standards and the EC's Regulation for Enhancing Supply Chain Security. However, they will only achieve the necessary operational objectives if companies have in place a sound management systems framework, like ISO/PAS 28000, to ensure requirements are implemented and verified.

LRQA can help assess and certifiy organisations based on the specifications required by ISO/PAS 28000:2005. In a broad sense, these specifications require an organisation to provide:

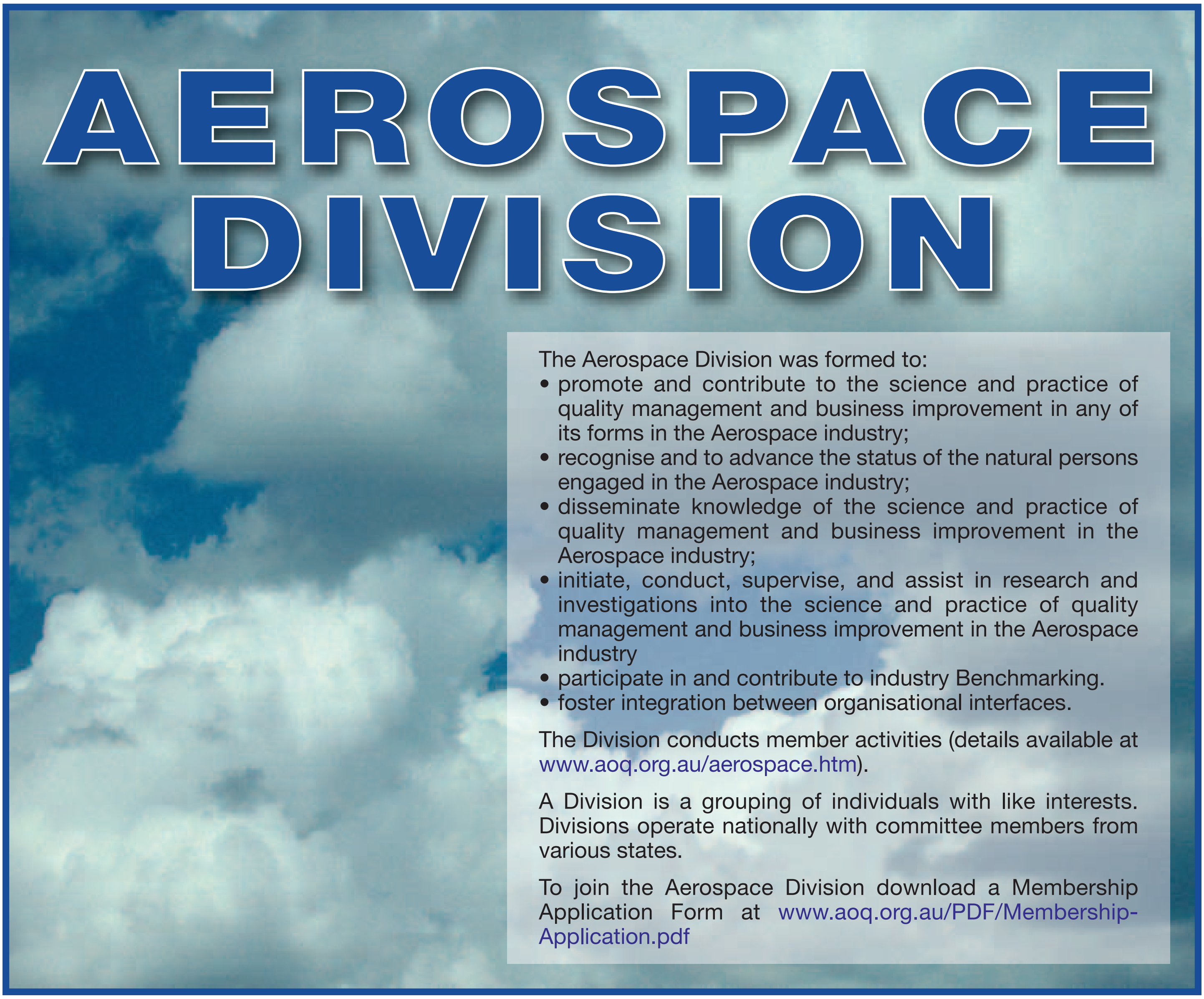
- Statement of Coverage that defines the boundaries of the portion of the supply chain that is covered by the security plan
- Security assessment report that documents the vulnerability of the chain to defined security scenarios. It also defines the impact expected from each of the threat scenarios if carried out.
- Security plan that describes security measures in place to manage existing security threats.
- Training program to enable supply chain personnel to meet any assigned security related duties.
- To undertake the security assessment used to produce the security plan the user will need to:
- Identify the threats posed.
- Determine how likely a person attempting to carry out such security scenarios on the supply chain would be to succeed.

Managed effectively, assurance of your supply chain can be a means to building significant business advantage, reducing cost, increasing satisfaction and loyalty while expanding your capability. In addition to ISO/PAS 28000:2005 certification, LRQA can also offer training services. For further information please write to: Richard.gunawan@lrqa.com.

REFERENCE

1 http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2007/11/03/1193619205938.html

More info: Request **Richard** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au



The Search for Australia's Next Top Product

2008 Australian International Design Awards – Official Launch

The Australian International Design Awards, a division of Standards Australia, has opened its doors to all professionally designed products on the Australian market and is calling for entries to the 2008 program.

Executive Director of the Australian International Design Awards, Australia's peak design awards body, Brandon Gien said the Australian Design Awards has evolved into a global design assessment and promotion body, and has become the Australian International Design Awards.

"From this year onwards, entry is open to all professionally designed products available for sale in Australia, and products professionally designed by Australians for overseas markets," said Gien.

"The decision has been born out of industry feedback and a demand for the program to better reflect the changing climate of design in Australia and around the world. This is a natural expansion that better reflects the global nature of the design industry.

"The reality is that Australian design is no longer immune to international competition. Up to 80 percent of design business in Australia is now being commissioned by international organisations.

"This new approach will expose Australian designers to an international client base and provide consumers with a clear, consistent indicator of good design across all products at point of sale, not only those designed in Australia. This exciting initiative will place Australian design on the world design map.

"With exposure to international influences through the Australian International Design Awards, Australia is set to become more globally competitive in design." said Mr Gien.

More than 50 key stakeholder groups including some of Australia's most reputable product design and manufacturing companies were consulted, and strong industry support was gained to expand the eligibility criteria of the Awards.

The Australian International Design Awards provides a low-cost launch pad for designers to seek that much needed competitive edge. Entry covers a broad range of industry sectors including:

- Consumer
- Business and Technology
- Medical and Scientific
- Automotive and Transport
- Sport and Leisure
- Housing and Building
- Agriculture and Heavy Machinery
- Public Spaces
- Furniture and Lighting
- Materials and Textiles Innovation
- Packaging and Point of Sale
- Student

Applications close 14th December

For information visit www.designawards.com.au or phone + 61 2 9237 6090 or write to mail@designawards.com.au.

Managing Depression in the Workplace

Narelle Stratford, Psychologist, Director of Live Life 2 The Max!

What does it cost you to have someone absent from work, 3 or 4 days a month, due to depression? How much over 12 months? What are the costs of decreased productivity, effects on sales and lowered staff morale as the remaining team attempts to cope and cover for someone who is away every month? It costs millions of dollars annually.

But what is depression? How can you recognise it?

WHAT IS DEPRESSION?

According to the Diagnostic & Statistical Manual IV – Revised (DSMIV), depression is a constellation of symptoms that affects a person's mood and thinking ability. The diagnosis is dependant upon the number of symptoms, how long the symptoms have been present for, and their severity[1].

RECOGNISING DEPRESSION

At work or home, most people can learn to recognise symptoms of depression, and can offer assistance to their friend, colleague or family member. However, some people have an incredible ability to mask their feelings and can appear confident and happy, so be careful.

Symptoms of depression that you may be able to observe in others:

- An inability to make decisions
- Withdrawal – perhaps avoiding receiving and making phone calls, or face-to-face contact
- Avoiding social events
- Tiredness and fatigue
- Under-eating or over-eating
- Flattening of the facial features, with loss of animation, skin colour and muscle tone
- Increased anger, irritability or frustration
- Short-term memory loss – misplacing keys, wallet, sunglasses and/or an inability to remember little and big things that need to be done
- Teariness

The following symptoms may not be so easily spotted:

- Inability to cry
- Feelings of helplessness and/or hopelessness
- Loss of confidence and self-esteem
- Inability to see a future for oneself
- Loss of sex drive
- Anhedonia – loss of pleasure in things normally enjoyed
- Thoughts of suicide

WHAT CAUSES DEPRESSION?

Numerous factors may contribute to depression, including a genetic pre-disposition based on a family history of depression in your parents, grandparents and so on[2].

Combinations of the following factors will increase the likelihood of depression:

- **Poor Nutrition**
  You need to eat well to feed your brain and maintain a good mood! Protein foods such as eggs, fish, chicken, meat, nuts, and chickpeas are particularly good "brain foods" [3].
- **Alcohol**
  Reduce alcohol intake. Alcohol is a depressant to the nervous system and makes a poor bedfellow as sleep worsens with long-term alcohol use.
- **Stress and Trauma**
  When someone has experienced excessive levels of stress or trauma, depression often goes hand in hand.
- **Low Self-Esteem**
  Naturally, this can be depressing.
- **Health**
  Serious illness often has an accompanying depression. Diabetes, hormonal imbalance, kidney problems, heart problems, cancer… it stands to reason that people become frightened, anxious and depressed.
- **Exercise**
  Exercise increases endorphin levels and endorphins are known as the happy hormones. People who exercise daily have high amounts of endorphins in the blood stream, and this claim is supported by research that shows exercise does reduce depression[4].
- **Personality factors**
  A low level of internal resilience or inability to bounce back following stress, can also contribute to depression. The more optimistic one is, the better one is able to handle life's stressors.

WORKPLACE FACTORS THAT MAY CONTRIBUTE TO DEPRESSION

- **Deadlines**
  Pressure to achieve, and little or no support or acknowledgement of problems, can cause susceptible people to have escalating stress levels and as frustration grows, depression may result.

- **Management or "Boss" Style**
  Managers and CEOs can be domineering, arrogant, narcissistic or just plain sociopathic. Known as "monsters" in the workplace, they bully, frighten and alternatively cajole leaving their victims a mess, or turning them into replicas of themselves.
- **Failure**
  Failure that continues relentlessly causes huge dints to self-esteem and confidence which can over time, be a contributing factor to depression.
- **Lack of knowledge or skills**
  When people are not properly trained, they may find it difficult to manage the role or other people on the team. This creates conflict and constant stress for the Manager.
- **Unmet and unspoken work expectations**
  Everyone has expectations, and if they are not met, it can cause stress. By extension, every employee has expectations of their work place. The Work Expectations Profile looks at 10 key issues, for example: Autonomy, Balance, Career Growth and Diversity. If only half your work expectations were met, you would not be happy, would you? And you may feel betrayed which causes resignations.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

If you recognise the symptoms for yourself, go and see a psychologist. Lots of great help is available. If at work, then see what you can implement from the suggestions below:

- **Educate first.** Get information on depression and provide it to staff. Call your local psychologist who will be delighted to provide a training session on Depression at your workplace.
- **Get Work Expectations Profiles completed.** As an employer, when you know the priority of work expectations for your employees, and meet many of those expectations, it can solve many issues that could contribute to depression as well as reduce staff turnover.
- **Demonstrate you care.** Show you care on a regular basis. Just by stopping and having a quick chat in the corridor for a few minutes, you will demonstrate empathy and support for staff or colleagues.
  Team or staff member depressed? Don't offer time off, as many depressed people will only slip further into the depression, through lack of motivation, lack of achievement and apathy. Caring and concern means that the depressed person has irrefutable evidence that they are worthwhile, rather than hopeless or worthless.
  Provide a list of psychologists or organisations for EAP or consultation.
  Other treatment methods may include acupuncture, Neuro Linguistic Programming, hypnosis, stress management training and Rational Emotive Therapy.
- **Alternatives to alcohol.** Offer water, soft drink, juices and healthy snacks at Friday afternoon drinks or social occasions, instead of alcohol and deep fried fatty foods.
- **Incorporate Wellness Lunchbox sessions.** You can cover a variety of topics: nutrition, Pilates or yoga, tai chi, healthy meals, stress management and meditation.
- **Physical Activity.** Get people into health clubs and have team sporting events.
- **Training.** Provide training in how to communicate when conflict occurs, how to get people to listen to you and Management training on managing difficult people!
- **Resource Library.** Provide a library of books and resources around workplace issues, self help books, creativity and innovation, communication.
- **Profiles reduce conflict.** Get profiles done to understand each other and reduce conflict, with DiSC, Myers Briggs Type Indicator and other personality tools[5].
- **Humour** in the workplace is absolutely vital. If everyone has lost their sense of humour, you will all become depressed.

In summary, adopt a whole of life approach in the workplace, and at home. Work/life balance is a buzz word and it is plain common sense! Depression is an illness, it is treatable, and the sooner you get help, the better it is for everyone.

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4. http://www.beyondblue.org.au/index.aspx?link_id=9.379 On Depression and exercise www.beyondblue.org.au is a great resource website for those experiencing depression and those who wish to learn more about it.
5. Work Expectations Profile and DiSC Behavioural Profiles are available through Sales Champions and Narelle Stratford. Visit www.saleschampions.com.au

More info: Request **Narelle** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au

RABQSA International Launches Six Sigma Training Certification

RABQSA in conjunction with the Six Sigma Division of the Australian Organisation for Quality – Queensland Inc (AOQ-QLD) convened an industry-based committee to document the knowledge-based competencies for Six Sigma Yellow, Green and Black Belts.

The committee, under the chairmanship of Roger Hilton, Chairman of Six Sigma Division, comprised representatives from the following international companies: Segla International, Minitiab, Snowden, SGS Australia Pty Ltd, SAI Global, National Australia Bank, Quality Associates International, and Pragmatic Improvement and the Six Sigma Division of AOQ-QLD. "I believe these are the Australian Six Sigma leaders with vision," said Mario Pennisi, Chairman of AOQ-QLD.

He continued: "In 2004 AOQ-QLD identified there was a need for a set of competencies when AOQ-QLD went to the marketplace to source programs for Green Belt Six Sigma programs. The vast range of proposals provided did not allow a comparison of value against the training as none addressed competencies to outcomes".

Training providers can apply to RABQSA against the 3 competency units under RABQSA's accredited Training Provider and Examiner Certification Scheme (TPECS). TPECS allows training providers and examiners the opportunity to think outside the box in their approach to the examination of knowledge, including e-based, role-play and face-to-face methods.

"I believe the development of the Six Sigma competencies will help to ensure standardisation of training throughout the Six Sigma community and therefore strengthen the qualification", remarked Lisa Muratore, Learning and Development Director of Segla International Pty Ltd.

"The value to organisations hiring Six Sigma personnel trained to these competencies is that they know the basic set of skills that each individual possesses", stated Mario. "The potential trainee can compare training programmes against outcomes measured in competencies gained."

Roger Hilton, Chair spoke in favour of the competencies: "The recent work on Lean Six Sigma competencies by some very dedicated individuals will allow training providers to have a well researched standard to train and assess to. The competencies will help to recognise competent Black Belts and more importantly allow Black Belts to make an improved and more (statistically) significant contribution to a business bottom line and culture."

"Whilst the concept of Yellow, Green and Black Belt certification is not a new concept", stated Peter Holtmann, RABQSA International Vice President and Executive Director Asia Pacific, "the standardisation of examination outcomes from training providers has never been formally addressed, subsequently there was no clear set of prescribed competencies to be demonstrated under examination and against each Belt. Now we have consistent, internationally developed criteria that measure outcomes against industry expectations."

Details on the Six Sigma TPECS units are available on the RABQSA website at www.rabqsa.com

More info: Request **RABQSA** to ProgBus@aoq.org.au