

Imposition Of Quality Systems

Imposed from Outside

Quality Assurance is most often introduced at the insistence of customers. There is however, a clear difference between organisations that adapt because they recognise changes in the market or want to improve their efficiency, and organisations that do not detect trends and on whom the change is forced.

There are three separate forces pushing this change:

- ✎ The Government, through legislation (in areas such as food, pharmaceuticals, and more recently, textiles, clothing and footwear, motor vehicles and steel), through encouragement, and through purchasing policy.
- ✎ Customers, through inclusion of quality requirements in purchasing arrangements.
- ✎ Internal forces within the organisation, through a recognition of market trends, or through a strategic decision.

Unfortunately, it is not always the same quality system that will be developed through the operation of these different forces. The table shows the differences.

Imposed from Inside

Equally dangerous is the risk of the system being imposed on the people within the company by a process that excludes them from involvement.

Commonly, systems are defined by managers for their departments (or for the entire organisation). In other cases, a nominated department (usually the Quality Department, if one exists) is given the task of defining the system for the entire company.

The likely result of these scenarios is a system that reflects the views and agendas of the people who developed the system, but not necessarily the needs and problems of those doing the job.

It is essential that the process of developing the system involve as many of the people doing the job as possible. There are a number of ways this can be done:

- ✎ Summarise the requirements of the company and the Standard for the activity. Discuss this with the people involved in the task, and define the new system based on their comments. Ensure they are given the chance to review and accept the documentation before it is finalised. The advantage of this approach is the results: an optimised system that everyone will own. Its disadvantage is speed.
- ✎ Summarise the requirements of the company and the Standard for the activity, and draft a suggested procedure. Discuss this with the people involved, and use their comments in fine tune. Ensure everyone is given the chance to review and accept the documentation before it is finalised. The advantage of this approach is the speed. Its disadvantage is that people may not feel as much ownership of the results, particularly where the culture is not one of open consultation.

Anthony's Law: Don't force it, get a larger hammer.

Imposed And Voluntary Adaptation To Quality Management: Differences		
	Imposed Adaptation	Voluntary Adaptation
Strategic Objectives	Short Term: Survival and Profit	Long Term: Growth and Pride
Design Philosophy	Meeting Customer Specifications and Legislative Requirements	Satisfying Customer Needs and Reducing Company Costs
Defect Emphasis	Detection and Sorting	Prevention and Improvement
Departmental Emphasis	Emphasis on Production	No Departmental Emphasis, Except Where Most Improvements Required
Cost Emphasis	Costs of Control (Prevention and Appraisal)	Costs of Failure (Internal and External)
Complaints	Handled through Credits	Handled through investigation, corrective action and reporting
Cost Effectiveness	Not Required	Essential
Problem Solving	Find someone to blame (and sack him)!	Find cause of problem, and eliminate it
View of Quality	An overhead, a cost centre, an interference to production	A line function, a profit centre, part of everybody's job.
View of People	People are the Problem	People are the Answer
View of Suppliers and Customers	The Customer Wants too Much, the Supplier is out to get us	Suppliers and Customers are Partners
Driving Force	Profit Driven	Customer Driven

Preventing baldness is simple.
Just knot your hair from the inside.