

Total Quality Management and Project Management

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SYNOPSIS

This case describes the use of project management principles as an excellent tool for implementing total quality management (TQM) in any organization. The author stresses the fact that TQM is people dependent and relies on the use of cross-functional teams. The paper also presents guidelines on how to implement TQM through projects management and discusses how project management and TQM fit.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Through the discussion of this case, students should gain a better understanding of:

- teams
- the matrix organization
- the relation between planning and implementing
- the wide applicability of project management.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND POSSIBLE ANSWERS

1. The author recommends the implementation of TQM through project management (i.e., TQM implementation is considered a "project"). What are the key elements that define a project?
 - a. The case uses reference 5 (Kerzner) to define a project: "A project, on the other hand, is an undertaking that has a beginning, an end, and is carried out to meet established goals within specific costs, schedules, quality objectives."
 - b. The *PMBOK Guide* glossary defines a project: "A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service."
 - c. Cleland, in *Project Management: Strategic Design and Implementation*, 2nd ed., p. 4, states: "A project consists of a combination of organizational resources pulled together to create something that did not previously exist and that will provide a performance capability in the design and execution of organizational strategies."

2. What is the difference between a project and a program? Is TQM a project or a program?
 - a. A program is an ongoing resource-consuming endeavor that has a specific purpose, for example, a productivity improvement program, a corporate suggestion program, a new hire training program, etc. Programs are often composed of different projects. In a productivity program several projects could be involved such as machine tool modernization, employee training, or reengineering projects.
 - b. Some might say TQM is a program; some, a project; still others may say it is neither. The case really focuses on TQM implementation as a project. TQM is actually a set of management philosophies and practices that may include both specific projects and programs.
3. The author states that the matrix structure is part of the transformation of the organization toward TQM. What are the shortcomings of the matrix organization?
 - a. H. Kerzner, in *Project Management: A Systems Approach to Planning, Scheduling, and Controlling*, Chapter 3, Organizational Structures, as paraphrased, among others identifies the following disadvantages: multidimensional information and work flow, dual reporting, changing priorities, opposing management and project goals, potential for conflict, difficult monitoring and controlling, biased functional managers, and difficult to manage functional/project organization balance of power and role ambiguity.
4. Teams are inherent to any TQM endeavor. What are the features that differentiate teams from just groups of people?
 - a. From the case: "They produce high-quality and high-value products and services. They perform well against known internal and external standards. They use significantly fewer resources than one would expect. They generate a sense of enthusiasm and excitement among their members and those who come in contact with them."
 - b. From Bursic, Karen M., *Self-Managed Production (Manufacturing) Teams* in Cleland, David I. *Field Guide to Project Management*.
 - Teams typically consist of anywhere from five to fifteen members with different skills and knowledge.
 - Teams are a formal, recognized part of the organization and create a departure from traditional organizational designs.
 - Teams are intentionally established with a common purpose and particular tasks.
 - Team members participate in regular meetings for various purposes.
 - Teams allow for shared authority, responsibility, and accountability for decisions and results through participation and involvement.
 - Teams participate in activities such as team-building sessions, problem solving training, implementation of team decisions, and presentations of results to management. During these activities workers are specifically referred to and defined as teams.
5. What project management tools and techniques can be applied to the implementation of TQM?
 - a. Answers to this question are many but might include the use of scheduling techniques such as PERT and CPM, the use of a cost management

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system, establishment of a project manager and team, scope management to define the project boundaries, and so forth.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION POINTS:

The author stresses the importance of the implementation phase of the project and states: "The lesson may be that a complete formula without method for company-wide implementation will not guarantee the desired final product." In small groups, the students should discuss the importance of the implementation stage and its relationship with the planning phase.

PMBOK Guide, Section 3.3, Process Interactions, gives a general framework of the relationship between the design and implementation phase.