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The Gurus

Last month we introduced Philip B. Crosby as one of the influential figures in the field of Quality Assurance. This month we are introducing W. Edwards Deming for you to decide whether his views are appropriate to your organization.

Deming

W. Edwards Deming was an American statistician, perhaps best known for his work in Japan in the 1950's where he helped set up a census of Japanese population. There he taught top management and engineers statistical process control (SPC) – a set of techniques that allowed them to manufacture high-quality goods without expensive machinery. In 1960 he was awarded a medal by the Japanese Emperor for his services to that country's industry. He is mainly associated with quality management theories, particularly, "14 points", the "Deming cycle" and his "Deadly Diseases".

Deming's 14 points

Below is a summary of his 14 points, which is a complete philosophy of management.

1. Create constancy of purpose towards improvement of product & service
2. Adopting the new philosophy. Management take on leadership & responsibilities for change.
3. Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality.
4. Build relationship with suppliers.
5. Improve constantly the quality and productivity, and thus decrease costs.
6. Institute training on the job. Making everyone responsible for their own quality.
7. Institute leadership. Supervision must change from chasing to coaching and support.
8. Drive out fear of improvement & change.
9. Remove any organisational barriers that prevent quality improvement.
10. Eliminate slogans, posters and numerical goals.
11. Eliminate work standards or quotas.
12. Remove barriers to pride of workmanship.
13. Institute education and self-improvement.
14. Action plan to accomplish the transformation.

Deming Cycle (PDCA)

Deming maintains that the PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) cycle is a universal improvement methodology. He originally called it the "Shewhart Cycle" after the founder of statistical quality control, but later it was named after Deming himself. The idea is to constantly improve in order to reduce the difference in requirements of customers and the performance of the process.

Deming Deadly Diseases

The "deadly diseases" of quality, referred to by Deming, are really a severe criticism of Western management and organisational practices. Some of the "diseases" he refers to are peculiar to American industrial companies. Those that are not include:

- Lack of constancy of purpose.
- Emphasis on short term profits.

- Evaluation of performance, merit rating or annual review.
- Too much staff mobility
- Over-dependence on financial figures.

IT standards

Over 100 information technology standards have just been made available online during a market trial to promote the use of IT standards developed by ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission). The ISO/IEC JTC 1 market trial is intended to look at ways of improving the interface between the availability of standards and the industry needs, as well as looking at new approaches to meet both ISO and IEC member and customer needs for a more efficient way to purchase these standards. On completion of the trial, the ISO/IEC JTC 1 Market Trial Project Team will study the results and deliver its recommendations to ISO and IEC Councils in the first half of 2003. For more information please visit www.iso.org

New standard for managing business records

The first International Standard for management of business records, published by ISO (International Organization for Standardization), ISO 15489, *Information and documentation - Records management*, focuses on the business principles behind records management and how organizations can establish a framework to enable a comprehensive records management programme. ISO 15489 consists of two parts, and is available from ISO Central Secretariat (sales@iso.org). The standard will provide a common international language for people to record and file material, in any medium or format or in any combination of media. Regardless of the size of the enterprise or the type of organization, users can benefit from reviewing their record keeping activities against the standard's best practice. For more information please visit www.iso.org

Improved edition of environmental management manual

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) has published a new, improved edition of its Environmental Management and ISO 14000 manual. The first edition was published in 1999 as part of ISO's series of manuals for developing countries, but it proved to be equally as appreciated by readers in developed countries. The new edition has been updated to take into account the latest developments in environmental management standardization and gives an account of the standards published to date and those in preparation by ISO technical committee, ISO/TC 207. The manual is available from ISO Central Secretariat (sales@iso.org). For more information please visit www.iso.org.

Europe's largest satellite

The largest earth observation satellite ever built in Europe, known as Envisat, is due to be launched from Kourou spaceport in French Guiana early next month. The £1.4bn spacecraft carries 10 scientific instruments. Two of the ten instruments on board the spacecraft were built in the UK. Envisat will monitor the Earth for signs of pollution and climate change and therefore help us understand much more about the environment we live in and the impact we have on it. The data would be used to decide how to protect the planet from climate change, ozone damage and other environmental problems.

Britain has contributed about £300m towards the cost of constructing this satellite. The information gathered by Envisat will be shared among the 14 participating countries - 13 members of the European Space Agency and Canada.

The satellite will be launched on a giant rocket known as the Ariane 5. This rocket has failed three times in the past, but reports are that the rocket has been modified to prevent it from failing again.

Antibiotics in Honey

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is calling for the withdrawal from sale of all jars of Chinese blended honey. Tests were carried out following concerns about a lack of control on the use of veterinary drugs in China. They revealed traces of an antibiotic called chloramphenicol in ten out of 16 samples. In larger doses chloramphenicol can cause cancer. It is also considered a contributory factor in developing aplastic anaemia, a rare but serious blood disorder that affects 50 to 100 people a year in the UK. It is estimated that between a third and a half of all blended honey on sale in the UK comes from China. Approximately 80% of honey consumed in the UK is blended. The Honey Association has advised all its members to withdraw any blends containing Chinese honey from sale, and to seek alternative sources of honey until acceptable standards of monitoring are introduced in China. In a statement, the association said: All existing stocks of Chinese honey in the UK will now undergo very stringent tests and will only be released for production if they fully comply with the EU standards.

Road safety and dozy drivers

It is believed that dozing off on the roads has overtaken drink-driving as a cause of fatal accidents. Researchers at Edinburgh University are looking for the help of 3,000 bus drivers as they study a condition known as sleep apnoea. It is a serious condition in which airflow from the nose and mouth is restricted during sleep. Sufferers snore loudly and often feel very sleepy during the day. It is estimated that about 2% of middle aged men could be suffering from this condition, which can be treated with a simple device costing £250. Bus drivers were chosen for this study because they tended to be middle aged men. The three-year research project is being backed by the Transport and General Workers' Union.

E-learning website

These pages are dedicated to Quality Assurance learning or more specifically QA e-learning. <http://www.qmt.co.uk/courses/e-learning.htm> There are two e-learning sites available. The first offers a fairly straightforward QA Quiz. The second site opens up an exciting new world of QA e-learning opportunities and possibilities. It is a much more extensive site and demonstrates with on-line quizzes the capabilities to deliver Quality Assurance in an e-learning mode. No other QA training provider appears to have developed a site with these extensive educational opportunities that this e-learning site provides. This interactive QA site includes e-learning training associated with:

- QA motivation,
- QA awareness,
- QA skills & improvement,
- QA education,
- QA tools and techniques ,
- QA competence assessment,
- QA auditor e-learning,
- and much, much more.

Quality Assurance E-learning sites:

- QA Quiz - Straight forward QA quiz - see how you fair
- QA Interactive - Much more extensive site (will require you to initialise some additional capabilities of your Browser)

If you would like to learn more about QA e-learning capabilities, e.g. adapting the material for your own organisation, comments regarding the material, or just to chat about e-learning possibilities please contact the e-learning specialist John Beal at john@qmt.co.uk

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