

# Review

Business



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I. Quality Assurance A. Concept Quality Assurance is any systematic process of checking to see whether a product or service being developed is meeting specified requirements. Many companies have a separate department devoted to quality assurance. A quality assurance system is said to increase customer confidence and a company's credibility, to improve work processes and efficiency, and to enable a company to better compete with others (Anon., 2011).

Quality Assurance, in its broadest sense, is also any action taken to prevent quality problems from occurring. In practice, this means devising systems for carrying out tasks which directly affect product quality (Anon., 2011).

With a sound Quality Assurance in place, customers and end users of products and services of a particular company is guaranteed that its output conforms with the required quality of such product and service that will meet and exceed the customer's need.

B. Two systems associated with the management of quality. Describe their relationships, limitations and applications.

There are two popular systems associated with the management of quality that I am aware of, they are Kaizen and Total Quality Management or TQM. Kaizen is a Japanese Quality Assurance system of continuous improvement in quality, technology, processes, company culture, productivity, safety and leadership. It is a system that involves every employee - from upper management to the cleaning crew. Everyone is encouraged to come up with small improvement suggestions on a regular basis. This is not a once a month or once a year activity. It is continuous quality improvement process. Japanese companies, such as Toyota and Canon receive a total of 60 to 70 suggestions per employee per year which are written down, shared and

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implemented (Anon., 2011). The limitation of Kaizen is that it is dependent on communication due to the nature of its system improvement coming from suggestions. Any breakdown in communication will impair its efficacy.

TQM on the other hand is a comprehensive and structured approach to organizational management that seeks to improve the quality of products and services through ongoing refinements in response to continuous feedback (Anon., 2011). TQM requirements may be defined separately for a particular organization or may be in adherence to established standards, such as the International Organization for Standardizations ISO 9000 series. At its core, Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management approach to long-term success through customer satisfaction. In a TQM effort, all members of an organization participate in improving processes, products, services and the culture in which they work (Anon., 2011). TQM as a matter of quality principle is not known to have limitation but only the employees who are implementing it.

C. The main principles that should be included in quality management systems. This should include a systematic approach; documentation of procedures, standards and specifications; innovation; review and audit; measurement and evaluation.

Since the business is still new, the best quality assurance approach that is applicable to our company is Kaizen as this allows continuous improvement of the system, policies and procedures that would make the company responsive to the customer's needs. Kaizen's openness to change and improve processes to save on cost will also do well for our company.

D. Steps in implementation of our intended quality assurance system.

1. Document guidelines on how to do the key tasks, its processes and

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systems – documentation of guidelines is necessary because documented tasks are easier to improve, savings us time and resources in reviewing tasks that are properly recorded.

2. Continuously improve the readability of the documented tasks – the purpose for this is the continuous improvement of the readability of the documented tasks so that tasks are easily understood and can be easily communicated to those who will perform them.

3. Make those information available to each workstations – this way each employee knows the key tasks and how to execute them.

4. Create a work flow system considering the key tasks identified and documented – since the company is still new, work process are yet to be drafted for further improvement as the business evolves.

II. Choose a business that has an established quality assurance system in place and provide a summary about the business that clearly identifies the sector it operates in (manufacturer, retailer or service), its size, its main operations and its purpose or mission. With reference to the business operation you have selected, identify and describe:

The business chosen is Toyota, an automobile company known for its high quality, cost effective cars. This particular company is the biggest threat to US automakers. The cornerstone of Toyotas quality control system is the role of the team members in the production process. The principles on which Toyota was founded are employed at the Georgetown plant. Toyota’s quality assurance principle is encapsulated in their statement “ Customer satisfaction is at the heart of all Toyota activities. In order to satisfy customer needs Toyota includes all Members in quality control activities.

Everybody from research and development to manufacturing, retailing and

servicing contribute to the quality control process. All Members have two roles, their own job and quality assurance. At Toyota we call this “ Company wide quality control” (Anon, 2011).

Toyotas quality system involves seven primary features all along the supply chain. It aims to reduce setup times by reviewing and organizing procedures and enabling employees to set up their own stations; produce in small lots to take advantage of the reduced setup time to broaden the capability to produce a variety of goods on the same line; empower employees by continual training and adding responsibilities, encouraging them to treat other employees as customers and involving the team leader as one of the workers on the line; maintain quality at the source through empowered employees who not only can detect problems as they occur but repair the problem, minimizing downtime; maintain equipment as the primary means of maintaining quality, with workers at the source monitoring machines, thus in the best position to diagnose and repair as problems occur; pull production through constant communication up and down the line, to deliver only the amount of material and work needed to keep the line flowing, minimizing inventory; and involve suppliers by training and taking responsibility to deliver their products to the main line with the same level of quality and efficiency that the main line strives for (Anon., nd).

There are three quality control tools that Toyota uses in manufacturing their vehicles; they are Jidoka, Just in Time and Genchi Genbutsu.

a) Jidoka – meant “ highlighting/visualization of problem that quality must be built in during the manufacturing process.

If equipment malfunction or a defective part is discovered, the affected machine automatically stops, and operators cease production and correct

the problem. For the Just-in-Time system to function, all of the parts that are made and supplied must meet predetermined quality standards. This is achieved through jidoka” (Toyota, nd).

b) Just in Time – meant “ Making only " what is needed, when it is needed, and in the amount needed! Producing quality products efficiently through the complete elimination of waste, inconsistencies, and unreasonable requirements on the production line.

In order to deliver a vehicle ordered by a customer as quickly as possible, the vehicle is efficiently built within the shortest possible period of time” (Toyota, nd) .

c) Genchi Genbutsu- meant going to the root of the problem, discover the facts of the problem and solve it.

A. Factors impacting on the operation’s quality assurance system in terms of legislation and local government requirements.

Toyota exceeds the quality requirement of its host countries where it operate.

B. The way the quality assurance system meets customer needs and expectations.

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C. The way the quality assurance system meets supplier requirements.

The quality of the completed vehicle is greatly dependent upon a reliable

supply of high quality parts and materials. Toyota's philosophy is to establish a long term working relationship with its suppliers, through early selection and continuous joint development. This has enabled suppliers as well as Toyota Manufacturing UK to actively contribute improvements to design and the production process. Parts from European suppliers meet the same high standard as Japanese and some of Toyota Manufacturing UK's European suppliers supply parts to Toyota in Japan (Toyota Motor Manufacturing, nd).

D. The way the quality assurance system meets organisation and stakeholder requirements.

Part of the " Toyota Way" is " Respect for People." " People" in this case, of course, means customers, but it also includes the people in the local communities and Toyota employees. Toyota values all of its stakeholders and strives to meet the expectation of people in every part of the world for it to be a good corporate citizen" (Johnston, 2001).

### III. The Business Operation

A. Identify the objectives for the quality assurance system.

Toyota's overall objective of their quality assurance system is that " no matter where Toyota vehicles are made, they have the same quality. And on top of this, it is important that we minimize the necessary support that comes from Japan and let each of our overseas bases become self-reliant. For example, the Toyota plant that recently commenced production in Texas made maximum use of the know-how which has been cultivated over the past 20 years by the Toyota plant in Kentucky. This is just the latest example of how the localized " Toyota Way" is being passed on overseas" (Ina, nd). " Total quality control is carried out using two basic principles: quality is built

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in at every stage and quality' (Toyota Motor Manufacturing, nd).

B. Explain how effectively the quality assurance system reflects customer requirements.

Toyota has achieved a reputation for the production of very high quality vehicles in all countries around the world. This has been achieved by an approach to quality control and quality assurance, which is unique to Toyota and has been developed over many years (Toyota, nd). In a way, customer revolutionized the motor industry by offering high quality and affordable vehicles that were considered as the biggest threat in the US market. Toyota was able to produce vehicles that is within the customer's requirements of affordability and quality.

C. Explain how effectively the quality assurance system reflects organisational requirements. Your answer must cover implementation method, resource constraints, monitoring, and evaluation. It may include ISO 9000, standards and specifications for products and/or services, operational procedures, provisions for contingencies, internal audit system.

Toyota's quality system reflected the organizational requirements of efficiency without sacrificing quality. It was able to have " a production system which is steeped in the philosophy of " the complete elimination of all waste" imbuing all aspects of production in pursuit of the most efficient methods" (Toyota, nd).

Toyota Motor Corporations vehicle production system is a way of " making things" that is sometimes referred to as a " lean manufacturing system" or a " Just-in-Time (JIT) system," and has come to be well known and studied worldwide (Toyota, nd). This system made Toyota competitive in the market not only in quality but more especially in price.

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D. Review the nature and extent of staff responsibilities for quality assurance.

Toyota's workers are known to be problem solvers. They do have quality circles where they make evaluation and recommendation to any issue or any area in the process that can be improved.

E. Include recommendations, where applicable, to improve the business operation's quality assurance system.

Toyota revolutionized the pricing of motor industry as its quality assurance system enabled them to produce high quality yet affordable vehicles. The process is also perpetually and continually being improved that the business operation's quality system is considered ideal and even studied by various companies and universities.

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