

So much of talk, is there enough of walk?

There has been so much of activity in the field of quality that you wonder if quality can further improve, but are people really practicing it ? The region, and particularly United Arab Emirates have made significant strides in the field of quality. Thanks to Department of Economic Development, Dubai Quality Group and significant recognition and encouragement from the ruling family that has been provided to government and private companies in the United Arab Emirates.

Everyone is talking of quality, this is excellent! But we all know talk alone do not get you there. The first area I want to emphasize on is how we define quality? Ask 20 experts and you get 21 quality definitions, therefore let us first simplify this issue, the one definition that I recommend is

“Understanding, Meeting and Exceeding customer expectation/s at minimum cost through effective utilization of resources, particular human resources”.

In Dubai some of the major organizations like Emirates, DUBAL, Free Zone, Department of Economic Development, Economic Chamber of Commerce, Land Departments etc. have continued to exceed customer satisfaction in a very short time. This becomes only obvious when we travel abroad to other countries including the developed countries. To a significant extent these organizations are indeed walking the talk.

The results are obvious, Dubai is one of the fastest growing city in the region. The need, however, is that, the continuous success can only be sustained if larger organizations support the medium and small establishments in the region. A large part of any economy is small and medium organizations. They might seem insignificant, collectively they make a significant contribution to the economy (estimated at over 70%). It is therefore very important to recognize that outputs depend on inputs. Large organizations very much depend on the quality of suppliers and these suppliers happen to be the small and medium organizations.

The second part of my quality definition concentrates on Human Resources. While Dubai continues to be dominated by expat community in many cases seen as cheap labor, but the cost of an employee is far greater than the salary and the benefits. It is therefore logical to make the best use of this resource. The high turnover and the increase in labor disputes clearly indicate significant waste. If Dubai wants to continue to be at the peak of quality revolution then this is an area that can enable quick benefit and significant enhancement to the quality of product and services. When an employee is hired we think of what his hands and legs can do, that is OK because we decide his pay package on this basis. There is something free comes with every employee, his or her Brain. Employee involvement is an area every one can improve. Organizations that have worked

on this aspect have reaped tremendous benefits, thus not only minimizing the cost of operations, but also enhancing effective utilization of the work force and customer satisfaction.

Shawqi Sajwani is a native of United Arab Emirates. In 1957, when Shawqi was born, there were no proper/formal schools in the UAE, but Shawqi grew up to graduate as an Industrial & System Engineer from Georgia Institute of Technology USA, in 1979 he subsequently acquired a Masters Degree in Quality Management from University of Wollongong (Australia).

Shawqi initially worked for General Motors in the USA for a short while and then joined a soft drink manufacturing company in Dubai, in 1985 he joined DUBAL as an Industrial Engineer and until recently was working as Manager, Quality Assurance. He has recently been promoted to lead a new division in the capacity of Manager Environment, Health & Safety.

Since 1985 Shawqi has been working for DUBAL. Shawqi's career has been in the field of System designing and Quality Management through employee participation.

Shawqi is considered an authority on Quality Management systems in the region. He has advised and assisted major organizations in the UAE, Bahrain & Oman on the subject.

Shawqi has played a leading role in the development of Quality Culture at DUBAL.

DUBAL's Quality Management System revolves around Employee Involvement and Shawqi is a firm believer that Quality and Continuous Improvement go hand in hand and one defines the other and the only way we can survive and thrive is employee involvement in every aspect and activity of our business.

What Shawqi preaches, he practices. Dubai Aluminium Co. has achieved an international reputation for its products and services. A virtually unknown smelter – located in one of the smallest countries in the world is one of the best producers of Aluminium. In the last 18 years DUBAL has not produced a single metric ton of Aluminium that was not pre-sold.

Shawqi served as the Chairman of Dubai Quality Group during 1999 & 2000 and is currently on the Board Of Directors. This organization is in the forefront of creating Quality awareness in the Middle East.

On the personal side he is a Golfer and loves Mountaineering and Desert Driving.

By,
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