

Coming Soon! Quality Day

Question:

Sam,

My company is really focused on quality after a series of defects adversely affected customer shipments. In fact our company President stated that if we don't improve quality our company may not survive. What advice would you give us to turn quality around?

Linda

Answer:

Linda,

It is very important that quality reports be favorable. A few years ago we also faced a similar quality story. Our Quality Manager kept stating we have poor quality in the monthly reports. My manager stopped this by firing the Quality Manager. The new Quality Manager also reported similar problems and he was fired as well. Now with our new Quality Manager our quality reports have improved dramatically. Reports each month point out the high quality job we are doing.

Now I understand that in your organization the managers may not be so powerful and decisive. Fortunately I have other advices as well. Otherwise what would be the use of my staff calling me the Greatest PM in the World?

Here is a technique that has worked for us – Quality Day. Every year we set aside one day to focus on quality. Maybe for the entire year the quality suffers, but during this day we focus on quality and hope to make things better in the future. Here is an example of the Quality Day from last year.

- 8:00-9:00. Everyone gets together for exercise and breakfast. We need the greasy sausage to help pick us up from the night before. Many people in my country are a little too serious in their nightly quality drinks. But then, we are known around the world for the quality of our drinking.
- 9:00-10:00. A few words from our President. This speech is a chance for him to tell everyone what a good job he is doing. However, true to the theme of the day he always reserves a few minutes at the end of his speech to talk about the importance of quality.
- 10:00-10:30. Quality break. We serve small sandwiches and Tihjkm – a local blend of vodka and beets.
- 10:30-11:30. Various quality pastries are brought in, along with mid-day snacks and meats. This is a time for everyone to talk about how hard they work and the high quality they produce.
- 11:30-12:30. Our Quality Manager comes in and discusses the state of quality. As I mentioned previously we usually hear of the high quality we have produced in the past year.

- 12:30-2:00. Full quality lunch including many local quality beers. The beers in our region are known throughout our region.
- 2:00-3:00. Discuss the creation of quality banners and slogans that will motivate us for the coming year.
- 3:00-3:30 Quality break. This time we have quality cookies, biscuits and beer.
- 3:30-4:30 Open forum. In this hour we all discuss any quality problems that exist in the company. The President and all senior managers are in front and invite anyone to speak about quality matters. This usually includes many people saying what a good job the managers are doing. For many of us it is also a time to sleep from the good quality foods and beer of the day.
- 4:30-5:00. Final words from the President, thanking us for our time and wishing quality gets even better in the future.

There you have it. Our customers, newspapers and government officials may say we have poor quality, but you see that our Quality Day continues to stress what a fine job we do on quality. I encourage all organizations to do something similar. In fact, I offer my services as a professional speaker to come and tell you all the things I know about quality – including Quality Day. My fee is very high but as you can see our company focus on quality will make this a valuable experience.